

Regarding the Blessing of Same Sex Couples in the Diocese of Olympia



For Couples who have a State of Washington honored marriage license or domestic partnership and who desire to make a commitment to a lifelong relationship together

Requirements:

1. At least one member of the couple will be a baptized person, involved in the life of the church as a communicant in good standing.
2. A time of pre-blessing counseling and discernment by the couple as defined by the priest in charge. This should be multiple-session counseling and should mirror what is done for heterosexual couples.
3. In the case where either member of the couple has been in a prior committed relationship, the priest should communicate with the Office of the Bishop at least 60 days prior to the proposed blessing, seeking permission to proceed. If a prior domestic partnership or marriage license exist, proof of its dissolution must be supplied.
4. A signed Declaration of Intention, which outlines the church's expectations regarding the characteristics this union should exhibit:

We, A.B and C.D., desiring to receive the Covenant blessing in the Church, do solemnly declare that we hold this relationship to be a lifelong union between two people. "We believe that the union of two people in heart, body and mind, is intended by God for their mutual joy; for the help and comfort given one another in prosperity and adversity; and when it is God's will, for the nurture of children in the knowledge and love of the Lord. And we do engage ourselves, so far as in us lies, to make our utmost effort to establish this relationship and to seek God's help thereto.

5. The only approved liturgies for these blessings are attached and should be followed closely. If changes or alterations are desired these must be approved by the Bishop's Office at least 30 days prior to the ceremony.