

134th Synod of the Diocese of Niagara Same-Sex Blessing Discussion

range of responses - positive and not.

After he issued the statement after the house of bishop's the primate called Bishop Michael and offered his profound support.

The primate will make a visit to the diocese and he will be here on January 15th for an open meeting in the evening - time and place to be announced.

Bishop's statement: [Bishop Michael Bird issues letter regarding same-sex blessings \(November 6 2008\)](#)

Thoughts from the floor:

Our parish has had several discussions about the pros and cons of the issue. We are in overwhelming favour of going forward. We do have concerns at the same time about our relationship with the wider church. We find ourselves between a rock and a hard place. We feel a need to wait until the next general synod - and at the same time to go ahead. If we go ahead we will do severe damage to our church. We support the bishop's ministry and initiatives - we believe it is the right way to go - but not now but not yet - I say this with a heavy heart.



was shocked that as this time you would choose to setup a rite. Everyone at general synod said not to proceed. The vision is about developing partnerships. We are not showing respect for our partnerships.

I am pleased to see conversation dear to my heart. I give whole support to our bishop in this courageous step. My family will be very pleased as well.



Point of clarification - 2nd paragraph- will the rite be developed with the other dioceses (Montreal and Ottawa) - Bishop commented - yet to be determined When the vote has passed - if it was a secret ballot - it might be different. An open vote is influenced by political ties. We need to respect the civil law - but we need to invite same sex couples to live the gospel.

I would like to congratulate the bishop on his courageous and wise stand. We voted overwhelmingly to bless same sex couples in our community - i thank you letting us go ahead.

Thank you thank you thank you from the bottom of my heart - for your courage - Bishop Michael.



Thank the bishop for allowing us to observe our conscience on this matter. Our house of bishops has asked us not to do this - why now. The American church is almost in civil war over this!

Alleluia! We have been hearing not yet, not yet, not now. The time for the prophetic voice is now. It's time for some courageous bishops and dioceses to move us forward.

Thank you bishop, and thank the lord.

I'm one of those conservatives and I'm still around. I was in St. George's Lowville. I haven't changed my theology very much. We have to be able to move forward. St. George's was paralyzed for 5 years by this. Some are going to need a time for forgiveness and reconciliation. We need to take recognition of this. We will be free to get on and be church.



There are many hurts. Fear is another emotion. The church has been in the grip of fear-based theology. We have been told where the presence of God is announced with "be not afraid" Thank you bishop. There are many miles to go - but a prophetic step has been exercised.

I received your communication with great delight and profound gratitude. I attended a same sex blessing in 1982. I wondered how long we would work on this issue. The debate has been unhealthful. I hope we will bridge the sides and division between us. I have come to my understanding based on my prayer with the scriptures.

The consensus in my parish - no negatives. If baptism is sacrament of full membership - then how do we say to some that they are second class citizens.

Children are hungry, adults are in abusive relationship, seniors are lonely - can we do this piece of justice and get on with the rest?

I want to say thank you thank you bishop. it's wonderful and marvelous. On behalf of my gay lesbian and gay brothers and sisters - thank you.

I have sat through every synod - I speak every time it comes. It feels like we have reached the consensus we need. I fear what we are saying though.

I have a law class in school. we talk about supreme court cases. The supreme court looks at purpose and theme. we have to look at the bible the same way. It has a lot to do with acceptance of everyone. Part of this is the acceptance of same sex blessings. Let's be the first to stand up.

I don't think we need a secret ballot - i was not intimidated when I voted against this last time. The dye is cast - we need to work on unity.

I do not agree with going ahead at this time. we are going ahead of the church structure and the house of bishops. We are in a financial crisis. Churches are closed and sold at a fraction of they cost to build and maintain. We are in a costly legal battle. The press is not very favourable to the diocesan position in this struggle. The vision we have is a vision to look forward. I think we need to solve the matter of dissenting matters - sell the buildings and pay for financial difficulties. Question: you were in England - did you discuss this with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Bishop responded that he did not personally - but our primate did. We must listen to the voice of God and where the spirit of God is leading us. We have done that for the past few years. We have not jumped - we waited - we voted again. It's not a question of majorities - but we moved listening to the spirit. I heard the decision of the house of bishops. What disappointed me - there were no reasons why. What did they hope to accomplish. I thank you Bishop Michael with the spirit that we have discerned in this body!

I thank you bishop for your courage and love in this issue. I know we value our ties with the anglican communion - I value our communion throughout the world. I also know that in other diocese - people function in ways that I am not comfortable with. We should not be afraid. Be loving and embrace all people. We have wrestled with this for many years - we have come to a place where we can move forward with love and integrity. It may not be the decision of others - but we are models of Jesus in this place!

Applause for BISHOP