



ABSTRACT

This document is intended to elaborate on what it means for members of the Community of the Gospel to be "sexually responsible" within the context of their humanness and their commitment to the sense and purpose of a monastic community within the Episcopal Church, and more broadly, the Anglican Communion. We hope that by clarifying our understanding of responsible sexuality our members know what expectations the Community has of its members as it relates to their spiritual journey.

BACKGROUND

As an inclusive community, we do not consider a person's sexual orientation to be a criteria for membership. It is not our business or concern what happens sexually between two members in a long-term committed relationship provided the relationship is honest, caring and respectful. Questions sometimes arise from members, however, about what it means to live a "chaste and holy life."

POSITION

Essentially, to respond to this question, the Community of the Gospel accepts and embraces the Resolution passed by the General Convention of 2000, known as Resolution 2000-D039, reproduced on page 2 below.

By adopting this Resolution in our Community, we:

- intend to provide a safe and just structure in which all can utilize their gifts and creative energies for mission;
- acknowledge that there are couples of both opposite genders and same genders who are living in life-long committed relationships;
- expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God;
- denounce promiscuity, exploitation, and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members;
- expect that sexual intimacy between people is reserved only for life-long committed relationships;
- intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement, and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them.

This is what we mean when we write in our CG Customary, "All members live a chaste and holy life. The Community is comprised of Brothers and Sisters living as single celibates or in honest, committed relationships."

Reviewed and approved by Council 8-10-11

Title: Acknowledge Relationships Other Than Marriage and Existence of Disagreement on the Church's Teaching

Legislative Action Taken: Concurred as Substituted and Amended

Resolved, That the members of the 73rd General Convention intend for this Church to provide a safe and just structure in which all can utilize their gifts and creative energies for mission; and be it further

Resolved, That we acknowledge that while the issues of human sexuality are not yet resolved, there are currently couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in marriage and couples in the Body of Christ and in this Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships; and be it further

Resolved, That we expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God; and be it further

Resolved, That we denounce promiscuity, exploitation, and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members; and be it further

Resolved, That this Church intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement, and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them; and be it further

Resolved, That we acknowledge that some, acting in good conscience, who disagree with the traditional teaching of the Church on human sexuality, will act in contradiction to that position; and be it further

Resolved, That in continuity with previous actions of the General Convention of this Church, and in response to the call for dialogue by the Lambeth Conference, we affirm that those on various sides of controversial issues have a place in the Church, and we reaffirm the imperative to promote conversation between persons of differing experiences and perspectives, while acknowledging the Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage.

Citation: General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Denver, 2000* (New York: General Convention, 2001), p. 287f.