

Summer Mailing

June, 2011



Pentecost News

An Invitation for us to Be A Blessing

All Saints' Church has been invited to be one of a select number of parishes in the diocese to be given permission to offer in our region blessings, by request, for committed same gender relationships.

Our parish executive and advisory board approved presenting this request to our congregation for discussion in order to determine if there is sufficient consensus that would enable us to accommodate this request.

It will be important to approach this with great care, love and sensitivity reflective of our calling.

This is not permission to marry same gender relationships. The church has not changed the marriage canon.

We acknowledge that there is diversity of people and opinion in our parish regarding this and many other matters. That is normal. There is no requirement for parish individuals to change existing beliefs and feelings related to this issue nor is it expected that we

need to be uniform or of one mind. All Saints' represents the Anglican maxim of *via media* where a middle way, acceptance and tolerance is attempted amongst a diversity of people, belief and opinion.

As Elizabeth I pronounced as a guiding principal of the Elizabethan Settlement that helped establish the future direction of the Church of England when facing similar diverse opinion in the 17th century, "We have no desire to establish windows into men's souls". In other words a certain expectation of privacy and diversity regarding individual opinion was normalized that stood in contrast to other attempts to maintain a tradition of enforced conformity.

As a result, in determining whether sufficient parish consensus exists to proceed there will not be expectation that we all need to be the same or uniform with regard to this issue. Difference will continue to be affirmed.

There will be no

parish vote which could lead to a perception of winners and losers. Rather, after parish discussion the Rector, executive and parish advisory board will determine if sufficient consensus exists to proceed.

Services of worship on Sunday, June 19th, will be devoted to presentation and discussion on this request both during worship and in facilitated group discussions to follow during the fellowship time in the parish hall following both the 8:30 & 10:30 am services. If you have questions please ensure to attend this occasion. Individual appointment with the Rector can be made for personal discussion. Contact the office.

Letters and e-mails will only be kept confidential but only acknowledged if the author is identified as anonymous comments are unhelpful.