

**TO INCORPORATE INTO THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER AN ORDER OF SERVICE OF BLESSING FOLLOWING A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP OR MARRIAGE BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE OF THE SAME SEX**

WHEREAS under the provisions of Chapter II of the Constitution of the Church in Wales the Governing Body has power to make new articles, doctrinal statements, rites, ceremonies and formularies and to alter those from time to time existing.

AND WHEREAS it is expedient that the Order of Service of Blessing following a Civil Partnership or Marriage between two people of the same sex hereinafter set out shall be adopted and authorised for use in the Church in Wales.

BE IT HEREBY ENACTED as follows:-

1. On and after the date hereinafter specified for the coming into force of this canon the Order of Service as set out in the Schedule to this Canon and entitled "Order of Service of Blessing following a Civil Partnership or Marriage between two people of the same sex" shall be authorised for use in the Church in Wales and such Order shall become part of the Book of Common Prayer which shall be amended accordingly.

2. From the same date the *Canon to authorise experimental use of proposed revisions of the Book of Common Prayer (service of Blessing following a Civil Partnership or Marriage between two people of the same sex)* promulgated on 6 September 2021 is repealed.

3. All mention of and reference to the Book of Common Prayer in the Constitution of the Church in Wales and any rule, regulation, canon, enactment, deed or other document relating to the Church in Wales shall be construed to refer to such book as amended by this Canon.

4. The Order set out in the Schedule to this Canon shall be printed and published for use in the Church in Wales.

5. No Cleric shall be obliged to officiate at a service authorised by this Canon.

6. The first rubric in the 'Blessing of a Civil Marriage' added to the Book of Common Prayer by a Canon dated 27 September 1979 is amended as follows:

*When ~~two persons~~ husband and wife have contracted a civil marriage and wish to receive the blessing of the Church upon their union, the Priest shall ask them to produce the certificate of their marriage...*

7. The first paragraph of the Notes to the 'Blessing of a Marriage Following a Civil Ceremony' added to the Book of Common Prayer by a Canon dated 11 April 2013 is amended as follows:

*When ~~two persons~~ husband and wife have contracted a marriage at a Civil Ceremony and wish to receive the blessing of the Church upon their union, the minister shall ask them to produce the certificate of their marriage...*

8. Clause 1(vi) of the Canon to Support Relations with other Churches 2005 is amended as follows:

*(vi) to assist at a service of Holy Matrimony, save for the solemnization of the marriage, and at a service of Blessing of a Civil Partnership or Marriage;*

9. This Canon shall come into force on 1 July 2026.

10. This Canon shall be known as The Book of Common Prayer (Amendment) (Service of Blessing) Canon 2025.

**BACKERS:**

The Archbishop of Wales

The Bishop of St Asaph

The Bishop of Swansea & Brecon

The Bishop of Llandaff

The Bishop of St Davids

## **SCHEDULE**

[Published as a separate document]

## EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

*(‘a memorandum explaining the reason for the bill’ – Regulation 27 (5) Chapter II (Regulations))*

This Bill seeks the permanent authorisation, by way of addition to the Book of Common Prayer, of a liturgy of blessing following the civil partnership or civil marriage of two persons of the same sex. The form of service proposed is an amended version of that previously approved by Governing Body in September 2021 for a five-year experimental period.

Clauses 1, 3, 4 approve the liturgy, add it formally to the Church’s Book of Common Prayer, and order its publication for use. These clauses are in similar form to previous Canons amending the liturgy of the Church in Wales.

Clause 2 repeals the 2021 Canon authorising the experimental form of service. This Canon is no longer necessary if this form of service is permanently authorised.

Clause 5 makes it clear that no Cleric is obliged to officiate at this service. The Notes to the published liturgy (in the Schedule to the Bill) provide further details on how this should work in practice.

Clauses 6 and 7 make a minor alteration to the existing published liturgies of blessing following a Civil Marriage (commonly known as the ‘1984’ and ‘2010’ orders, although their permanent authorisation by Governing Body was in fact in 1979 and 2013 respectively). The alteration makes it clear that the ‘1984’ and ‘2010’ services remain available for couples of the opposite sex only, the ‘2025’ service being for same sex couples only.

Clause 8 makes a minor amendment to our Ecumenical canons. It allows a member of another Church to assist at both this service, and a service of blessing following civil marriage according to the ‘1984’ and ‘2010’ rites, if they are authorised to perform equivalent duties in their own denomination. This brings services of blessing in line with the existing provisions relating to the marriage service (and various other liturgies of the Church in Wales).

Clause 9 brings this Canon into effect on 1 July 2026. It is thought prudent not to bring the Canon into immediate effect in case services under the 2021 experimental liturgy are imminently to take place with, for example, orders of service already printed.

Memorandum approved by the Standing Committee on 11 December 2025