

ASAP Steering Committee
www.asaptn.org
211 38th Ave North
Nashville, TN 37209

January 7, 2019

The Most Rev. Michael Curry
815 Second Avenue
New York, N.Y. 10017-4594

Dear Bishop. Curry,

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that Resolution B012 has yet to be implemented in the Diocese of Tennessee. As of today, more than a month past the December 2 deadline by which “provision will be made for all couples desiring to use these [trial] liturgies,” Bishop Bauerschmidt has yet to issue any policies governing the use of the Trial Rites.

While it could be argued that the provisions of the resolution are self-executing and require no action by the bishop, members of the clergy have been cautioned not to use the trial rites until receiving guidance from Bishop Bauerschmidt. Questions about Episcopal oversight, premarital counseling, venues acceptable for marriages, and the ability of retired priests, vicars and chaplains to use the liturgies are just a few of the questions that need to be addressed. At least one couple and their priest have directly contacted the bishop asking for guidance. They were asked to wait.

It is disappointing that the bishop tapped to co-chair the Communion Across Difference task force – an official, interim body of the Episcopal Church – has, to date, failed to work within the agreed upon parameters set by the governing body of that church.

While we have heard indirectly that Bishop Bauerschmidt may publish the guidelines soon, he earlier indicated they would be released by Thanksgiving. We just don't know when they will be issued. Meanwhile, couples and clergy remain in limbo. We therefore are reluctantly notifying you of this delay in making the trial liturgies available in this diocese.

Sincerely,

Henry Walker
Indie Pereira
Connally Davies Penley
Julie and Johnny Erwin
Dr. Stephanie A. Budwey, Luce Dean's Faculty Fellow Assistant Professor of the History and Practice of Christian Worship and the Arts, Vanderbilt University

Cc The Right Rev. John Bauerschmidt
The Rev. Gay Clark Jennings, President of the House of Deputies
The Rev. Susan Russell, Co-Chair, Task Force on Communion Across Difference