

From: "L. Whitney Clayton" [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>
Date: July 21, 2015 at 10:56:29 AM PDT
To: "Mervyn B. Arnold" [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>
Cc: "Don R. Clarke" [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>, Michael Tally Ringwood [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>, Larry Young Wilson [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>, Vern Perry Stanfill [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>
Subject: Re: gay couples and baby blessings

Merv,

Until we hear otherwise, the training from October Conference 2014 and April Conference 2015 should guide us. These questions are answered in those training documents. Please encourage Gene to review those items.

1. Gay couples should be encouraged to repent. That is our first priority, so that they can enjoy the blessings of the atonement. They may and often should be placed on informal probation immediately. If they choose not to repent, then they may be informed that if they wish they may ask to have their records removed. We don't invite them to do so but do in a kind way inform them about the option. If they choose not to do request that their names be removed from Church records, then the formal disciplinary process can proceed. Again, our goal is to help them repent. This view should inform all we do.
2. Children of such couples cannot be named and blessed in a priesthood ordinance. They are treated in the same way as the children of polygamous families.

Those are the instructions we have been given. The second point may be changed but it has not been as of yet. If it is, we will let the Area Seventies know.

Please call Gene to respond to his questions and don't send him this message. This email communication should be kept at our level only. Similarly, Gene should answer the questions from stake presidents orally and not in writing.

Many thanks!
Whit

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 21, 2015, at 8:40 AM, Mervyn B. Arnold [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org> wrote:

Is there any new information from the Senior Brethren on this issue since the Supreme Court decision. What would you like me to advise? Or would you like to handle this one directly with Gene?

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Gene R. Chidester" [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>
Date: July 21, 2015 at 8:02:59 AM PDT
To: "Mervyn B. Arnold" [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>
Cc: "Gene R. Chidester" [REDACTED]@ldschurch.org>
Subject: gay couples and baby blessings

Elder Arnold,

A number of stake presidents have been asked about baby blessings for a child of gay couple. Here are my thoughts on the matter.

1. A gay couple (married or not) should face disciplinary action.
2. A baby of a gay couple should be viewed and treated as being part of a non-member family.
3. Requests to bless a baby of a gay couple can be honored but the blessing should not take place in a sacrament meeting.

Before responding I would appreciate some direction from you. I look forward to your counsel.

Gene