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Yet Another Minister is “Let Off the Hook” for Blessing Same-Sex Unions

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Another mainline Protestant minister has defied church law, blessed a same-sex union, and yet escaped discipline. In this case the denomination is the [Presbyterian Church USA](#) and the minister is identified as “a direct descendant of legendary Puritan theologian Jonathan Edwards.”

From [PCUSANEWS](#):

A Pittsburgh minister was let off the hook for officiating at the wedding of two women after a church panel determined Wednesday (Nov. 15) that a complaint lodged against her for conducting the nuptials was filed four days too late.

The Rev. Janet Edwards, 56, came under scrutiny from Pittsburgh Presbytery in Aug. 2005 after she married Brenda Cole, 52, and Nancy McConn, 65, who live near Wheeling, WV. McConn is a lifelong Presbyterian and longtime member of Dallas Presbyterian Church in Dallas, WV. Cole was raised Methodist but now is a practicing Buddhist. Edwards acknowledged that she married the women in a Pittsburgh-area ceremony on June 25, 2005.

But the Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) of Pittsburgh Presbytery voted 8-0 to dismiss the charges — saying the statute of limitations had expired — after deliberating for more than an hour at its meeting in a Pittsburgh hotel Nov. 15.

The church court insisted that its decision was based entirely on procedural grounds. Nevertheless, those advocating the normalization of homosexuality and the legalization of same-sex marriage were quick to claim the decision as a victory.

Here is how Janet Edwards framed her argument:

“I am very pleased with the decision because it’s a small step toward the fulfillment of our church’s highest purpose: to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ,” Edwards said upon hearing the decision. “As Jesus said before he died on the cross, ‘When I am lifted up, I will draw all people to me.’ I look forward to the day when my church fully embraces all those who come to share in God’s love.”

This is how her attorney interpreted the decision:

“I am pleased with the decision because it creates yet another precedent in which a minister of the Presbyterian Church has not been sanctioned for officiating at the marriage ceremony of a same-sex couple,” he said.

He is exactly right. Yet another pastor has defied church law and doctrine and yet has escaped discipline. The pattern is now clear, and every precedent counts. You don’t have to be a direct descendant of Jonathan Edwards to know that.

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