

THE POLYAMORY PRIMER



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1. Introduction

As members of Community of Christ, we strive to embody the Enduring Principles of our faith, including the belief in the worth of all persons, the value of unity in diversity, and the recognition that we have the ability to make our own responsible choices. These Enduring Principles are intended to go beyond mere tolerance and toward genuine affirmation.

In recent years, polyamory has become more visible within Community of Christ, as polyamorous families are present in our pews and even serve in priesthood roles. To actualize what we hold to be our Enduring Principles, we must also actively welcome, nurture, and support polyamorous individuals and their families as integral parts of our spiritual communities. However, polyamory largely remains a mystery to the leaders of our church, and they seem unsure how to proceed.

To address this need, we, polyamorous members and friends of Community of Christ, present this primer which:

1. Provides a basic and non-comprehensive introduction to polyamory
2. Situates polyamory within the context of Community of Christ theology
3. Informs about laws that affect polyamorous individuals and their families
4. Presents recommendations to World Church on how to proceed with polyamory in Community of Christ.

2. What is Polyamory?

2.1. Etymology and Definitions

The term “polyamory” can evoke different associations for different individuals, and so it is important to be clear about what is being discussed.

From an etymological point of view, "polyamory" is a term [which was created in 1992](#) [1] which is derived from the Greek word *polús* (“many”) and the Latin word *amor* (“love”), thus the word means "many loves".

While "polyamory" is a broad term with many applications, [QueerTheology.com](#) [2], which is run by a gay polyamorous man, defines it as "the practice, intention, or desire to have multiple, consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships".

In terms of legally recognized polyamorous relationships, there are only a couple of examples of definitions, most of which we will cover in chapter 4. However, the [city of Cambridge, Massachusetts legalized polyamorous domestic partnerships](#) [3] and defines polyamorous domestic partnerships as “Two or more persons who ... are in a relationship of mutual support, caring and commitment and intend to remain in such a relationship; and ... consider themselves to be a family.”

2.2. Frequently Asked Questions

As members of the Restoration and the Reorganization, our current understanding of relationships and sexuality is deeply influenced by the experiences of our formative years. We endured sexual and relational trauma during the Nauvoo era due to authoritarian and patriarchal polygamy, which continues to affect us today. Additionally, we searched for simple and universal answers to complex questions regarding relationships and sex and ultimately crafted narratives which are influenced by the cultural ethos of the American Midwest, which privileges monogamous heterosexuality. As a result of these narratives we have excluded, marginalized, and oppressed individuals and families who did not conform to this limited and prescribed model.

In truth, the tapestry of relationship configurations and ethical sexual conduct unfurls into many diverse forms and expressions throughout the many cultures of the world. Many of these intricacies have eluded our collective awareness, which highlights the importance of actively seeking understanding and sharing knowledge about the wondrous and diverse nature of the human experience, rather than making uneducated assumptions and discriminations.

To dispel misconceptions and replace them with understanding it is crucial to address common questions that non-polyamorous people have regarding polyamory. The following is a list of frequently asked questions that polyamorous people often encounter.

Are Polyamory and Polygamy the same thing?

We must confront the painful reality that in our early days some men, driven by a thirst for power and control, misused their positions of authority within our church to exploit and manipulate women and young girls into the practice of polygamy. These abusive individuals justified their harmful actions by falsely claiming it to be God's will. The women and young girls who endured these hardships found themselves trapped with limited resources for escape. These actions, which were entrenched in secrecy and cruelty, fundamentally contradict the very essence of our faith and demand our unequivocal condemnation.

Conversely, healthy polyamorous relationships hold stark differences. We often find these unorthodox relationships in alignment with the Principles for Behavior and Relationships, as revealed in Doctrine and Covenants 164:6A. These principles prioritize mutual respect, the protection of the vulnerable, and acknowledge the inherent worth and unique gifts possessed by each person involved. In the context of polyamory, religious coercion is not only unacceptable, but many within polyamorous relationships are non-religious in general. Instead, polyamorous relationships are grounded in principles of freedom and equality, with a conscientious effort to identify and address any potential power imbalances within the relationships. Transparency and empathy lie at the heart of these relationships, as they play pivotal roles in nurturing all healthy and flourishing connections.

Is Polyamory synonymous with cheating?

Cheating is founded upon secrecy and betrayal. In contrast, polyamory is built upon transparency, consent, and clear communication. This crucial distinction highlights the ethical nature of polyamory.

Furthermore, polyamorous relationships demonstrate a proactive approach to communication that often sets them apart from their monogamous counterparts. While some monogamous couples may enter a relationship or even marriage without thoroughly discussing their roles and expectations, polyamorous individuals engage in these conversations from the outset and continuously revisit them. This ongoing dialogue reflects their recognition of the need to consider the sexual health and emotions of multiple individuals involved.

As polyamorous relationships develop, those within them collaborate to establish boundaries that align with their unique comfort levels. These boundaries are not imposed unilaterally by individuals or societal norms, but rather mutually agreed upon by those within them. These boundaries serve as the framework that nurtures empowerment, understanding, happiness, and love for everyone within the relationships.

Is polyamory a fetish or kink? Is it exclusively about sex?

Polyamory is often misunderstood by monogamous people as being solely about satisfying sexual desires. While sex can be an important aspect of polyamorous relationships, it is not the sole focus. In fact, people on the asexual spectrum, those who have little or no sexual desire and/or attraction, may also be polyamorous. Like everyone else, polyamorous individuals strive to create healthy, fulfilling, and well-rounded relationships.

Are Polyamorous people sexually irresponsible?

Polyamorous individuals actively prioritize sexual responsibility by fostering open and honest communication about factors that may impact sexual health, such as birth control, condom use, number of sexual partners, and frequency screenings for sexually transmitted infections. Having these conversations before having sex serve as a testament to their care and consideration for themselves, their partners, and society as a whole.

Have polyamorous people just not found “The One”? Are they afraid of commitment?

Polyamorous people may be fully committed to multiple people and remain faithful to them for decades or even a lifetime. Additionally, polyamorous people believe that such commitment and affection is not something that they should have to only be restricted to one person. This is perhaps best articulated by someone known as “[Kelciree](#)” [4], who said:

“Most people love more than one person in their lifetime. Polyamory just means that you're allowed to love them all together if you want to. You don't have to stop loving one person to love another. It's really not as wild as people make it out to be.”

Do you want everyone to be polyamorous?

Absolutely not. What polyamorous people want is to love the people that they love and have them and their families accepted and celebrated in their communities.

Is polyamory a new fad among young people?

Polyamory is not a fad or a passing trend among young people. It's important to understand that polyamorous people have existed throughout history, including within our own church community. However, due to societal factors like limited legal protections, social isolation, and even criminalization, most polyamorous individuals have been forced to conceal their relationships and identities for their safety and well-being.

The older generations of polyamorous people still carry the wounds of past discrimination, which may make it difficult for them to be open about their identities. However, in recent years, there has been a growing recognition, understanding, and acceptance of the vast diversity of relationships. This shift towards acceptance has allowed many, especially younger generations, to feel more at ease and empowered to live openly and authentically. Our church, in particular, has built a reputation for inclusivity by ordaining members of the Queer community to the priesthood and solemnizing queer marriages.

Regardless of their age, when you see polyamorous people "coming out of the closet" within your community, it is a powerful indication that they view your community as a safe and accepting space where they can truly be themselves. It is crucial to respond to them in a way that reinforces their faith and trust in you, and show them that they made the right choice in being open about who they are.

Is polyamory a part of the queer (LGBTQIA+) community?

When discussing the relationship between polyamory and the Queer community, it becomes evident that a unanimous consensus regarding the inclusion of polyamory within this community has not yet been reached.

Polyamorous people often perceive polyamory as an inherent and uncontrollable orientation. To highlight this, they bring attention to the shared struggles experienced by the broader Queer community, such as obstacles encountered in accessing sacraments like marriage and ordination, initial participation in the Queer equal rights movement (Brenda Howard was polyamorous), discrimination faced in employment due to non-traditional family structures, and the need to conceal their authentic selves for safety in the absence of legal protections. The concept of being "in the closet," which is a term that holds significance within the Queer community, resonates with polyamorous individuals as well. They too may find themselves going through experiences analogous to coming out and being "outed." These shared challenges and the use of common language lead many to advocate for the rightful inclusion of polyamorous individuals within the Queer community.

However, not everyone agrees on broadening the circle of inclusion solely based on shared hardships and life experiences. Some individuals express discomfort with the inclusion of heterosexual and cisgender individuals, perceiving it as an appropriation of Queer culture. Others argue that polyamorous individuals do not encounter certain difficulties traditionally endured by Queer individuals during adolescence. Additionally, there are those who regard

polyamory as a choice, distinct from other forms of Queerness that are commonly regarded as inherent and unchangeable.

In the face of these diverse perspectives, it is crucial to recognize and honor the complexities surrounding the question of whether polyamory should be considered a part of the Queer community. Engaging in dialogue that navigates these intricacies necessitates an unwavering commitment to understanding and respecting each individual's life experiences and identities. We must acknowledge and respect that every person is the expert of their own narrative. By doing so, we can nurture a more inclusive and equitable environment for all.

Is raising children in polyamorous families harmful for them?

When considering the impact of polyamory on the lives of children, it is only natural for concern to arise regarding potential harm. To address this apprehension, [Dr. Elisabeth Sheff](#) [5], a renowned sociologist, [conducted a study](#) [6] on polyamorous families with children which spanned over two decades. Her study leaves no room for doubt - polyamorous families can create nurturing, loving, and supportive environments where children can flourish with confidence, independence, and security.

Polyamorous families, like any other, face challenges stemming from shifting family dynamics such as moving, divorce, and death. Similarly, polyamorous families often face societal stigma similar to that which interracial and gay families encounter. However, polyamorous families also enjoy unique advantages, such as heightened happiness for parents and abundant role models for children's healthy relationships and support in times of need.

Ultimately, an abundance of compelling evidence supports the notion that polyamorous families have the potential to provide children with a nurturing and enriching upbringing. It is imperative that we refrain from hastily labeling polyamorous families as problematic or detrimental. Instead, by acknowledging both the challenges and advantages they encounter, we can foster an inclusive understanding of what it means to be a family and cultivate a supportive community that embraces the well-being of all children and their families.



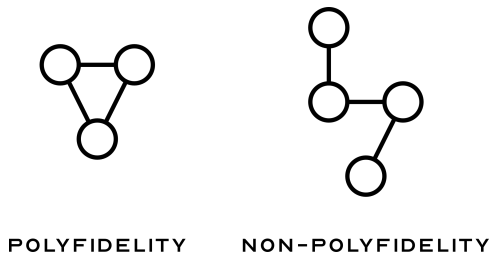
While there have been [multiple polyamory pride flags throughout history](#) [16], the one shown here was [voted upon by over 30,000 people in 2022](#) and holds significant and mindful meaning [17].

2.3. Types of Polyamory

In practice, “polyamory” is a broad term that encompasses various different relationship configurations. We will go over a few of these today, but this is far from a comprehensive list.

Polyfidelity

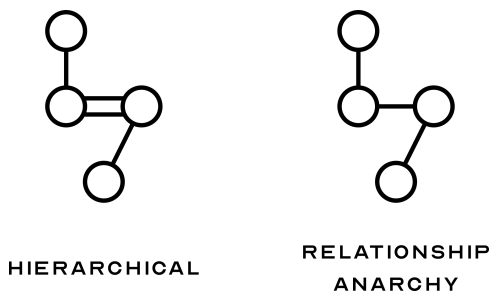
In "Polyfidelity" three or more people are mutually and exclusively committed to each other in a romantic and sexual context. This form of polyamory closely resembles the relationship dynamic of a monogamous couple, only with more people involved.



Hierarchy VS Relationship Anarchy

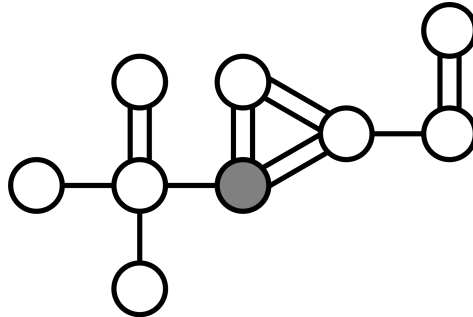
Polyamorous people may have what is described as a “hierarchy”, where they consider one partner to be a “primary” - someone that they have been with longer or are more emotionally intimate with - and another partner to be a “secondary” - someone that they have not been with as long or not as emotionally intimate with.

Conversely, there are other people who practice what is referred to as “solo poly[amory]” or “Relationship Anarchy”. With this approach to relationships they view all connections as being on the same level of importance.



Due to the many connections that can form, polyamorous relationships can form intricate chains or networks where individuals are involved with multiple partners who may also have relationships with others. These are commonly called "polycules", which is a descriptive portmanteau of "Polyamory" and "Molecule".

A partner's partner is referred to as a "metamour" or "meta" for short - kind of like a "partner-in-law". People may be friends with their metas, which is referred to as "Kitchen Table Polyamory", or they may not have a friendship with them. It depends on what each person and relationship is comfortable with.



**TASK FORCE MEMBER (GRAY)
WITHIN HER POLYCULE**

Ultimately, there are countless configurations that polyamory can take form, and these are only a few of them.

3. Polyamory and Community of Christ Theology

3.1. Doctrine and Covenants 164

The 2010 World Conference became a focal point of considerable dialogue surrounding LGBTQIA+ inclusion in church life, including ordination and sacramental access. Diverse opinions emerged, with some passionately championing this inclusion, while others expressed reservations. The debate raged on until a momentous compromise was proposed on April 11th, 2010. This document gave individual nations the ability to decide for themselves whether they want to be LGBTQIA+ inclusive or not, and it was swiftly canonized as Doctrine and Covenants 164 three days later.

By highlighting the Divine's emphasis on the treatment of individuals rather than the structural aspects of relationships and sexual encounters in verse 6A, this section laid the theological groundwork for the formal recognition of the wholesomeness of LGBTQIA+ relationships. The principles governing all behaviors and relationships emerged as what the Divine values most, and came to be called the "Principles for Behaviors and Relationships".

These Principles for Behaviors and Relationships represent a significant step in our journey towards embracing our call as a principle-based people, not a fixed rule-based people. These principles recognize the vast spectrum of perspectives on sexual and relational ethics found across the diverse cultures of the world and embrace them with the aim to foster unity in diversity through widely-applicable guidelines. Those who genuinely understand these principles recognize the inappropriateness of imposing ethical prescriptions upon cultures to which they do not belong.

In response to these foundational principles, several supplementary statements have been developed, including the present document. It is crucial to openly acknowledge that these statements do not hold the authoritative status of scripture. Rather, these statements function as commentaries and reflections on this sacred text. These commentaries must undergo continual scrutiny and regular revision when their limitations become apparent.

Let us now take a moment to briefly explore each of the Principles for Behavior and Relationships as they relate to polyamory:

1. **Upholds the Worth and Giftedness of All People:** In polyamorous relationships, it is vital to recognize and celebrate the unique worth and gifts of each person in the relationships. With multiple people navigating the complexities of emotional and intimate connections, polyamorous people place special importance on valuing and appreciating their distinct perspectives, desires, and contributions. Each person is regarded as a complete and self-actualized individual deserving of empowerment, equality, and genuine appreciation within their relationships.
2. **Protect the Most Vulnerable:** Acknowledging the potential for power imbalances and systemic inequalities, polyamorous relationships prioritize addressing and mitigating any disparities. By actively seeking to rectify these power imbalances, they ensure that

everyone's voice is heard and respected, especially people who are a part of historically marginalized and oppressed communities.

3. **Christ-like Love:** As mentioned in the last chapter, "polyamory" literally translates to "many loves". Polyamorous relationships embody a deep commitment to caring for all partners involved, fostering spiritual growth, and nurturing physical and emotional well-being. Through the acts of charity, grace, patience, and forgiveness, polyamorous relationships strive to create a loving life with their partners in a way that fulfills them all.
4. **Mutual Respect:** Polyamory places a strong emphasis on respecting the autonomy of each person while rejecting and condemning any form of unjust dominance or coercion. Communication and consent are vital elements that ensure respect is given and received in polyamorous relationships. By showing mutual respect, polyamorous relationships lay a foundation of equality and promote healthy and harmonious interactions among partners.
5. **Responsibility:** Mistakes and miscommunications are inevitable in any relationship. Rather than assigning blame, polyamorous people strive to acknowledge their part when such misunderstandings happen. Additionally, by making well-informed, consensual, and wise choices they accept accountability for the outcomes that arise from their unintentional actions. By taking ownership and learning from experiences, polyamorous people strive to grow and learn how to better maintain relationships.
6. **Justice:** Polyamorous relationships also highlight the need to actively achieve fairness and equality. This includes addressing violations or harm that may have occurred in relationships, whether intentional or not, and striving to make amends and restore balance and trust.
7. **Covenant:** Polyamorous relationships are essentially consensual covenants or commitments. Early in the formation of the relationship, polyamorous people engage in open dialogue about comfort levels, establishing boundaries, and set expectations, and they revisit these from time-to-time and make adjustments as needed. By actively creating and upholding these covenants, polyamorous people establish relationships founded on trust and cooperation.

All that being said, just because someone is polyamorous doesn't mean they will flawlessly embody these aspirations. Polyamorous people have all the human frailties that their monogamous counterparts have, and sometimes fail to meet the aspirations of these principles. Additionally, just like their monogamous friends and family, polyamorous people can even get into relationships for the wrong reasons and inflict harm.

Nevertheless, as Doctrine and Covenants 164 is the most recent revelation regarding relationships, it, and thus these principles, should be given precedence over older revelations. Polyamorous relationships have the ability to meet or even exceed these principles, and so they are worthy of being honored and celebrated just the same as monogamous relationships.

3.2. Enduring Principles

[In 2009](#) [7] a list called “The Enduring Principles” was developed which concisely expressed the core morals and values of the church. The Enduring Principles have been described as “the essence, heart, or soul of church identity, mission, and message”. When studying them, it should be remembered the Enduring Principles were designed to be neither limiting nor comprehensive in their definitions and applications. Therefore, today we will briefly examine each of the Enduring Principles through the lens of accepting polyamorous families within our church.

1. **Grace and Generosity:** The expansive grace of the Divine is freely and abundantly given to all, without exception. As recipients of this liberating grace, we are obligated to extend this same grace to others, including those in polyamorous relationships. Just as God's grace and generosity know no bounds, so too must ours.
2. **Sacredness of Creation:** God, the creator of all things, has woven sacredness into the fabric of all creation. As stewards of this sacred creation, we are obligated to embrace the sanctity of polyamorous relationships, for they are a beautiful facet of the Divine's cosmos.
3. **Continuing Revelation:** Divine wisdom is continuously revealed to guide us on our spiritual journey. To fully discern this wisdom, we must listen to the diverse voices within our community, especially those who are marginalized. Polyamorous people offer unique perspectives on ethical relationships, and their voices contribute to the ongoing revelation of Divine truth.
4. **Worth of All Persons:** Each person possesses immeasurable worth and is deserving of holistic fulfillment in all aspects of their being. Hence, we must actively challenge and dismantle systems and beliefs that devalue the inherent dignity of polyamorous people. Through unwavering affirmation, we honor the sacred worth of all human beings.
5. **All Are Called:** God bestows unique gifts upon every person, empowering them to serve Divine purposes. In recognition of this truth, we must affirm that polyamorous people are included in the call to co-create a more just and loving world.
6. **Responsible Choices:** The Divine grants us the autonomy to make ethical choices in our lives, including the construction of our families. Polyamorous people exercise this autonomy in making responsible choices when building their families. While it is not the path for everyone, we must affirm that polyamorous families can be ethically and responsibly formed.
7. **Pursuit of Peace (Shalom):** The Divine yearns for justice, reconciliation, well-being, wholeness, and peace for all creation, including polyamorous people and their relationships. As worshippers of the Divine, we are called to embody this pursuit of peace with bold courage, and therefore we must create nurturing spaces that foster acceptance, love, and understanding for polyamorous people, allowing them to experience the transformative power of Divine shalom.

8. **Unity in Diversity:** Human diversity serves as a profound testament to the Divine's vast and infinite creativity. By embracing this diversity, we worship the Divine and honor God's intention for love to manifest in many forms. Rejecting polyamorous diversity implies a limited and conditional understanding of the sacredness of Divine creation.
9. **Blessings of Community:** Community provides a space for compassion, solidarity, and growth. The blessings within these communities flourish when they embrace diversity. By extending understanding, care, and support to polyamorous families we demonstrate our commitment to fostering communities that embrace the interconnectedness of all creation. In doing so, we embody the Divine's desire for all beings to find belonging and love within an authentic and inclusive community.

If we were to truly understand the Enduring Principles and apply them in our current situation regarding polyamory within our church, we can illustrate a profound and moral authority that few other Christians have yet to achieve, and use it to better ourselves and our communities.

3.3. Mission Statement

In September 1988 the Joint Council went on a retreat to Estes Park in Colorado. While they were there several statements were created to help express the meaning of the gospel and the church's beliefs. These statements were announced in the [May 1989 Herald](#) [8] in anticipation of a conference that same year. Among these statements were two "Mission Statements", one being "brief" and the other "expanded". They read as:

World Church Mission Statement (Brief)

The purpose of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is to be a witness of Christ in the world: a community that *loves* all persons equally, *serves* God and neighbors faithfully, *speaks* and *lives* the truth prophetically. We invite everyone to join us in seeking a life reconciled to God, who brings assurance to today and hope for tomorrow.

World Church Mission Statement (Expanded)

We are the body of Christ. His Spirit leads us to proclaim the gospel.

The purpose of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is to help families and congregations develop the likeness of Christ in each person. Such congregations seek to continue Christ's ministries. We embrace an unconditional love for all and seek with them a faithful relationship with God. Our congregations thus become witnesses to God's redeeming presence in the world.

Led by continuing prophetic direction, we affirm truth, embrace all persons as being of inherent worth, and teach a life of stewardship.

We invite everyone to join us in seeking a life reconciled to God who brings assurance to today and hope for tomorrow.

In September 1994 the Joint Council had a similar retreat in the same place. At this retreat they developed another Mission Statement which was short and concise enough that it could be easily memorized. This statement was introduced in the [December 1994 Herald](#) [9], and remains the Mission Statement to this day, and reads as:

"We proclaim Jesus Christ and promote communities of joy, hope, love, and peace."

One important thing to note is that the common theme among all of the mission statements is an emphasis on unconditional love.

By embracing polyamorous families within the framework of ethical and consensual relationships, the church can demonstrate our commitment to loving all persons equally, supporting families, and congregations in their spiritual growth, and witnessing to God's redeeming presence in the world. By recognizing the inherent worth of polyamorous individuals and promoting their pursuit of faithful relationships with God, we can create a community that fosters and embodies joy, hope, love, and peace for all.

3.4. Guiding Question

In Steve Veazey's closing sermon at the 2019 World Conference, he gave a pivotal sermon entitled "[Discover Your Future](#)" [10]. In it he asks many questions, such as:

- What is the spiritual attitude, trajectory, and focus of our lives?
- Are we enthusiastically on our way to Jesus in the priorities, character, and vision of our discipleship?
- As Community of Christ, are we listening and moving together toward Jesus in our relationships and concerns?
- How might we think, speak, and interact differently as disciples of the peaceful One?

However, the chief, central question of this sermon was:

“Are we moving toward Jesus, the peaceful One, or are we retreating from Jesus by reverting to our old humanity and its destructive ways of interacting with others and creation?”

And is often shortened to

“Are we moving toward Jesus, the peaceful One?”

This question had such an impact that it became known as “The Guiding Question”. This is Community of Christ's own personal “What Would Jesus Do?” It is a question that we are to ask ourselves to check if we are embodying a Christ-like peace, love, and inclusion in every aspect of our lives to create a brighter future for ourselves and for others.

Therefore, in light of everything that we have covered today, we must ask ourselves:

Is including polyamorous people into our church life moving us toward Jesus, the Peaceful One? By excluding them, are we retreating from Jesus by reverting to our old humanity and its destructive ways of interacting with others and creation?

4. Polyamory and the Law

The legal status of polyamorous relationships varies across governments. While some nations, including those in the Western world, have laws that technically render polyamorous relationships illegal, it is important to note that prosecutions are exceedingly rare, and any attempts to enforce these laws would almost certainly be dismissed by the courts.

In practice, many long-term polyamorous relationships often resemble marriages, with the exception of the legal paperwork. Criminalizing these families with multiple spouse-like relationships is challenging, as very few families seek group or additional marriage licenses. From a legal standpoint, these families could be erroneously categorized as fornication or adultery. However, it is worth noting that prosecutions for adultery have nearly become illegal in light of SCOTUS's 2003 ruling of *Lawrence v. Texas*. This landmark decision protected the rights of adult, consenting, non-commercial activity, effectively decriminalizing polyamory in the United States.

A few governments have formally and legally recognized polyamorous families. For instance, three cities in Massachusetts - [Somerville](#) [11], [Cambridge](#) [3], and [Arlington](#) [12] - all passed city ordinances which permitted polyamorous domestic partnerships. These laws were then upheld by Massachusetts's Attorney General. Similarly, in California, [a "throuple" of three men](#) [13] successfully had all of their names listed on their child's birth certificate. Additionally, in Canada [multiple polyamorous families](#) [14] have achieved legal recognition, ensuring them equal custody and parenting rights.

While celebrating these encouraging advancements, it is crucial to acknowledge the challenges that polyamorous families still face. In Canada, for example, they are not permitted to hold ceremonies to celebrate their unions, and engaging in such ceremonies could potentially lead to legal repercussions for both the polyamorous family and their officiant. The British Columbia Supreme Court has aptly recognized that polyamorous families being legal if they do not have a ceremony is "[absurd](#)" [15], which perfectly encapsulates the sentiment that many polyamorous families hold regarding their challenges.

5. Recommendations for the Church

In light of all of this, we recommend the following:

1. Priesthood, church members, and staff affirm and nurture polyamorous people and their families within their congregations, mission centers, and in the World Church so that they feel supported by their faith leaders in times of both sorrow and joy.
2. View the acts of affirming and welcoming polyamorous people and their families as both a justice issue and a religious duty. Due to our commitment to justice and equality, we must speak out on this issue, including in future legal cases when they arise, and support those who find themselves being attacked for being polyamorous or affirming the validity of polyamory.
3. Recognize the validity of commitment ceremonies for polyamorous families within the church. At the time of writing, most governments do not recognize polyamorous marriages. However, we should not punish our ministers or church leaders who are willing to conduct commitment ceremonies for polyamorous families, which are already accepted as a non-sacramental and non-legally binding alternative to marriage in the church.
4. Make all other sacraments accessible to polyamorous people who abide by the Principles for Behavior and Relationships.
5. Commission a formal task force through International Headquarters, which is partially composed of polyamorous members of the church, to engage in dialogue regarding polyamory. After a period of fellowship and understanding, this taskforce should develop church-approved educational and training materials, both introductory and in-depth, for staff, priesthood, and church members to help better understand, affirm, and include of polyamorous families in regular church life.

Community of Christ is a wonderful, Divinely-created church. We earnestly believe that if it will open its heart to all human diversity, polyamorous families will be a welcomed addition into all aspects of church life.

6. Citations and Resources

1. Polyamory in the News:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer1
2. Queer Theology:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer2
3. Cambridge, Massachusetts City Ordinance #2020-14:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer3
4. Kelciree tweet:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer4
5. Dr. Elisabeth Sheff's website:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer5
6. The Polyamorists Next Door: Inside Multiple-Partner Relationships and Families:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer6
7. We Share Identity, Mission, Message, and Beliefs:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer7
8. Herald 136-5:180 (May 1989, pg 4):
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer8
9. Herald 141-12:527 (Dec 1994, pg 27):
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer9
10. "Discover Your Future" by Steve Veazey:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer10
11. Somerville, Massachusetts City Ordinance Part II, Chapter 2, Article IX, sec. 2-502:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer11
12. Arlington, Massachusetts Laws and Regulations, Town Bylaws, Title I, Article 23, Sections 1 and 2:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer12
13. Three Dads and a Baby: Adventures in Modern Parenting:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer13
14. Canadian Polyamory Advocacy Association: Polyamory & The Law:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer14
15. Section 293 of the Criminal Code of Canada, 2011 BCSC 1588, Docket S097767, Line 1039:
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer15
16. PolyamProud: The History of Polyamory Flags
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer16
17. PolyamProud: 30,827 polyamorous people voted for a new flag. This is the design they chose.
tinyurl.com/PolyamoryPrimer17

Also Read:

Transcript of the Sunstone panel discussion
“Faithful Disagreement: Polyamory in Community of Christ”

heartofdiscernment.com/polyamory-panel/