

Gay-Affirming Episcopal Pastor to Replace Giglio at Inauguration

The pastor of the Episcopal parish closest to the White House will give the benediction at President Obama's inauguration Monday.

Rev. Luis Leon of Saint John's Church replaces Atlanta evangelical Pastor Louie Giglio, who withdrew last week over a controversial sermon he gave in the 1990s criticizing gay relationships.

A spokeswoman for the Presidential Inaugural Committee said the person chosen to give the benediction would reflect the administration's position.

The Episcopal parish blesses gay and lesbian unions and elects bishops who live openly with same-sex partners.

"I think when we're asking a blessing for this country, I think we're asking God to lift us up, to lift up what's good in us, to remind us to do what's proper, what's the good, the right thing for the country," Leon said.