



The Diocese of Rupert's Land

The Right Reverend Geoffrey Woodcroft
Bishop of Rupert's Land

July 12, 2019
To be read to parishes

To the members of the Diocese of Rupert's Land

Dear disciples,

I am writing to you from the floor of General Synod 2019.

I wish to thank our delegation for their examples of kindness, generosity, and courage through the conversations and debates around the proposed amendment to the Marriage Canon of the Anglican Church of Canada.

The Amendment to the Marriage Canon did not pass the second reading.

The Chancellor of the Anglican Church of Canada, Mr David Jones, has stated that the marriage canon does not preclude that marriage is between a woman and a man:

The Anglican Church of Canada affirms, according to our Lord's teaching as found in Holy Scripture and expressed in the Form of Solemnization of Matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer, that marriage is a lifelong union in faithful love, and that marriage vows are a commitment to this union, for better or for worse, to the exclusion of all others on either side. This union is established by God's grace when two duly qualified persons enter into a covenant of marriage in which they declare their intention of fulfilling its purposes and exchange vows to be faithful to one another until they are separated by death. The purposes of marriage are mutual fellowship, support, and comfort, and the procreation (if it may be) and nurture of children, and the creation of a relationship in which sexuality may serve personal fulfilment in a community of faithful love. This covenant is made in the sight of God and in the presence of witnesses and of an authorized minister.

At the 116th Session of the Synod of the Diocese of Rupert's Land, held in October 2018, the group facilitating our discussions concerning the proposed change to the Marriage Canon reported that of all things discussed, our #1 priority was to nurture respectful relationships. Given that outcome, I am exercising my authority to continue the Rupert's Land conversation that will lead to an Opt-In practice of Local Option in the matter of same-sex couples seeking marriage in the Anglican Church of Canada through the Diocese of Rupert's Land, by January 1, 2020.

Also, given that priority stated above, we will need to move with great care to respect the broad theological spectrum, committed traditions, and liturgical practices across the diocese. We are each

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needed in this part of the Body of Christ; and in the great scheme of things, our diversity is one of our richest blessings, especially as we support the world around us. We are all needed on the voyage, and our standard is to develop respectful relationships.

It is my intention to fully support, protect and uphold the traditional practices of those parishes and their clergy who understand marriage as being between a woman and a man only.

May your heart, mind, soul and strength be rejuvenated in the power and love of Jesus Christ.

Yours in ministry and mission,

+ Geoffrey

A handwritten signature in blue ink, starting with a cross and the name 'Geoffrey' in a cursive script.

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