

Personal Submission
General Synod Canon 21 (The Marriage Canon)

Background.

I began to write this after watching the marriage of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle on May 19, 2018. The service reminded me once again of my view that marriage is between two people in love with each other. Prior to their marriage, I had been pondering sending the Diocese my thoughts on marriage, and same-sex marriage in particular, but the wedding told me that I must do that.

I was brought up in St Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Kingston. My father's family always attended that church.

My Mother was a "cradle Anglican." My parents were married in St George's Cathedral in 1937, and began worshipping together at St Andrew's. My Mother never really shed her Anglican upbringing. As children, my sister and I were taken to the Cathedral on Good Friday with my Mother (father didn't come) and spent one of the three hours in the Cathedral. In those days, around 1950, the Cathedral held the three hour Good Friday service beginning at noon. The three of us, my Mother, my sister and I, continued to go to the Good Friday service together till we were into our late teens.

I was an active Girl Guide for over 10 years and attended local, National and International (1957) Guide Camps. The Guide Promise and Laws fit well into my religious up-bringing.

When I graduated from Queen's in 1963 I moved to Saskatoon to assume a position at the University of Saskatchewan in the School of Physical Education. I was the Synchronized Swimming coach. The pool was always available on Sunday mornings, so I usually had a few athletes come in for parts of the morning to train. Occasionally I attended the Presbyterian Church. This continued until I left teaching at the University, attended the College of Education, and then began teaching in a local high school. My church attendance lapsed!

By this time, I had met my future husband who was (and is) an Anglican. We married in St Andrew's (Kingston) in 1969. We lived in Saskatoon and occasionally went to St John's Cathedral. In 1978 our daughter was born, and we began to attend regularly.

We were delighted to celebrate when the first female was ordained a priest in November, 1976. It was an event that we celebrated enthusiastically at St John's Cathedral. We have attended the Anglican Church virtually every Sunday since the late 1970s.

We moved to Kingston in 2002, and after some church-shopping, settled, happily, at St George's Cathedral.

My life is based upon what I learned in my formative years in the Presbyterian Church, the Guide Movement, and the Anglican Church.

My views.

My beliefs are simplistic, uncomplicated by long theological dissertations. The Bible is my guide in the broadest sense, recognizing that while some of it can be traced to original writing, I believe that much of the New Testament is written by people (mostly men) who may have lived during Jesus' life time, but who wrote years after his death. They recount what they were told, what they heard, seldom what they personally experienced. I am not a literalist.

I am guided by principles that are written in the BAS, p.230 and in the Ten Commandments.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said: hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Lord, have mercy upon us, and write both these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee.

Love is most important. As humans, we have the capacity to love other humans, irrespective of their colour, their race, their religion, their warts and attributes, their background, their sex.

The ultimate act is to marry the person that we love before God, family and friends. The Anglican Church must perform marriages between couples of the same sex. It is time.

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