

 Christ Church  Welcomes You 

Anglican Church of Canada

Diocese of Ontario

Rector; The Reverend Michael Rice
christchurch@ontario.anglican.ca

39 Everett Street, Belleville, ON K8P 3K1
613-968-3478

June 11, 2018

Archdeacon Wayne Varley
Ministry and Programs
Diocese of Ontario

Dear Wayne:

In response to the Diocesan invitation to contribute personal submissions regarding General Synod Canon 21 (The Marriage Canon), the Belleville, Ontario Christ Church delegates to Synod 2018 wish to provide you with our collective thoughts about this very important issue.

First, some background history.

After Resolution A051-R2 passed first reading at General Synod 2016, as a first step towards making marriage between a same sex couple possible, our Christ Church Parish Council was the recipient of a letter from two long standing members of our parish. This same sex couple requested their Parish Council to seek permission from the Bishop of our diocese to allow them to be married in their Christ Church parish church. Our Parish Council supported this request.

Subsequent to this, our Parish Council prepared a motion to come before our Diocesan 2016 Synod in November 2016.

The motion proposed, in essence, that the Diocese endorse Canon 21 and implement it immediately.

The motion was submitted by the Christ Church Belleville Parish Council but was rejected by the Motions Committee as its wording went beyond the scope of what was possible for the Diocese to consider. At the Diocesan Synod 2016 meetings, our Christ Church Belleville Synod delegates sought the permission of the members of Synod to bring a revised motion forward from the floor for Synod to consider the Marriage Canon issue. The motion to bring this revision to the floor for discussion, which required a two-thirds majority, was narrowly defeated.

In April 2018, Christ Church Belleville hosted a Diocesan presentation on Canon 21. Our Synod delegates were present to hear Bishop Michael Oulton present the history of the Marriage Canon to date, to listen to Dr William Morrow review biblical interpretations in *"This Holy Estate"*, and to participate in group discussions regarding key sections of that report.

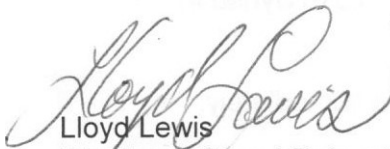
At our Christ Church Parish Council, held shortly after that April diocesan consultation, Council once again reinforced their support for the resolution to change the Marriage Canon 21 to permit marriage between same sex couples within the Anglican Church of Canada.

Further, as requested by Bishop Michael Oulton, our Parish Council organized an information session on the Marriage Canon 21 for our full Christ Church congregation. Following a three-part presentation - history of the Marriage Canon, background to the development of the "This Holy Estate" Report, and presentation on the Biblical scriptures applying to marriage - the members present verbally and fully endorsed support for changes to the Marriage Canon to permit same sex marriage within the Anglican Church of Canada and at Christ

Church Belleville. It is important to note and to communicate that some members present believe that same sex marriage is a human rights issue and should be dealt with posthaste.

As we, the delegates to the November 2018 Diocesan Synod, prepare our hearts and minds to deal with this upcoming issue, we think that it is important to make the executive of the Diocese aware of our commitment to the implementation of Marriage Canon 21. Further, we will endeavor to ensure that the Diocese of Ontario will have a fulsome discussion at our Diocesan Synod 2018 regarding how the Diocese of Ontario will respond to the anticipated outcome of General Synod 2019. Such clear planning will avoid waiting another year after General Synod 2019 for the Ontario Diocese to determine a specific approach to the implementation of same sex marriage within the Churches of our Diocese.

Sincerely and thoughtfully submitted,


Lloyd Lewis
Warden & Synod Delegate

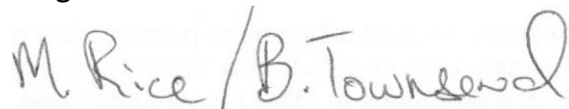

Beverley Townsend
Parish Council Member

Warden Synod Delegate
Christ Church Belleville

Parish Council Member
Christ Church Belleville
and
Synod Delegate



Beverley Town
Margaret Werkhoven
Parish Council Member
Christ Church Belleville
and
Synod Delegate


Reverend Michael Rice
Rector
Christ Church Belleville