

Personal Submission regarding General Synod Canon 21

I find it difficult to articulate the depth and breadth of my feelings, prayers, and study of the issues around General Synod Canon 21, specifically the inclusion of Same Sex Marriage in the Canon. This personal submission is not a theological reflection; there are others who are more gifted and learned with respect to the topic and I have included some links to articles and essays which have helped to inform my views on the topic of same-sex marriage. However, I believe my views are shaped by my theological understanding of sacraments, pastoral care, incarnation, creation, and discipleship to name but a few.

I support the change in the Marriage Canon (Canon 21) to adopt the inclusion of same-sex marriage. When I look at the whole canon of Scripture, I see, believe and trust in God who has created and redeemed us to be in relationship with one another, to build communities of faith, to offer ourselves in sacrificial love to God and to one another, and to be obedient in putting love first. God created us in God's image to be in relationship, in communion, with each other modeled after the relationship between God the Creator/Father/Mother, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. If a committed, faithful same-sex couple wish to enter into the covenant of marriage, in the presence of God, witnessed by the community of faith in which they have served Christ, how is this not consistent with the canon of Scripture which calls us to love one another and serve God? I have had the privilege of knowing same-sex couples who sacrificially give of themselves to each other, to their church families, and to their communities in response to God's call to be sent out into the world. Their faithfulness, perseverance, and obedience to God's call is an inspiration, especially in the face of open criticism and sometimes veiled hate they receive. Contrary to the view of some that same-sex marriage will erode the "traditional" institution of marriage, the sanctity of their marriages encouraged and inspired my own (differing-sex) marriage.

I am troubled that the discussion (discernment) around the amendment to the marriage canon 21 is diluted to "two-sides": e.g. for or against, liberal or traditionalist. There is a spectrum of views on this issue shaped by our diversity of experiences, education, and theological understandings. I pray that I am never dismissive of a brother or sister in Christ whose view differs from mine and that we can both learn from each other as we grow as disciples. In this respect, I would defend the rights of my fellow clergy who are compelled to exercise the not withstanding clause should the amendment to Canon 21 pass the second vote at General Synod 2019. Further to this, I will respect the direction of our Diocesan Bishop as the Anglican Church in Canada and the Diocese of Ontario discern how to respond to the movement of the Spirit with respect to this issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Trish Miller, Priest Associate, Leeds Anglican Ministries

[Report to the 78th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, Task Force on The Study of Marriage Appendix 1: Essays on Marriage \(Summary pp 9-12\)](#)

[Same-Sex Relationships and The Nature of Marriage: A Theological Colloquy, Anglican Theological Review 93:1 \(Winter 2011\)](#)

["A Theology of Marriage including Same-Sex Couples: A View from the Liberals," Anglican Theological Review 93:1, Deirdre J. Good, Willis J. Jenkins, Cynthia B. Kittredge, Eugene F. Rogers, Jr](#)

[“Same-Sex Marriage and Anglican Theology: A View from the Traditionalists,” Anglica Theological Review 93:1, John E. Goldingay, Grant R. LeMarquand, George R. Sumner, Daniel A. Westberg](#)