

HopeNET



Response by a member of Glenunga UCA

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Submission to the UCA Assembly Marriage Discussion
by a member of Glenunga UC

We write in response to the request for feedback on the marriage issue before the 2015 Assembly. At the outset we want to affirm our support of the traditional view of marriage being between a man and a woman. We believe this to be the clear teaching of Scripture – Old Testament, gospels and letters – and cannot see how it can be logically construed any other way. To allow same gender marriage would mean the abandonment of the marriage service as currently written, or at least the introduction of a re-written service that would stand outside God's perspective on marriage as stated in Scripture.

If the government were to legislate for same gender couples to marry it would be departing from the Christian tradition and meaning of marriage which has underpinned Australian society throughout its history. It would compromise ministers of religion who did not wish to marry same gender couples, as well as those congregations that did not wish to see that happen in their churches. It is foolish and short sighted to think that refusal to marry same gender couples would not soon be seen as discriminatory, and then illegal. To have the Uniting Church complicit in this development would be a travesty. In short, the Uniting Church would be party to making the Biblical adherence of most of its members effectively illegal.

It is clear from many groups lobbying for change to the marriage laws that their goal is to destroy the traditional God-given concept of marriage, and from there to normalise a range of sexual behaviour and relationships to the detriment of traditional marriage, families, children and hence society. There is a mountain of verifiable research to say that traditional marriage is best for children and their future, for national and personal economics, for national and personal health, and for happiness. Again, for the Uniting Church to be complicit in the government taking this first step is to hold in contempt all that the Church has done in areas of social justice over its lifetime.

A further difficulty in even the discussion on same gender marriage for us is the high number of international people in our worshipping congregation. Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, Iranian, Mexican and South American members find the idea culturally and spiritually offensive and it is a significant barrier to our outreach and fellowship, and puts their continued affiliation at risk.

The Uniting Church has struggled with the marriage issue for many years, and it has been our hope that it will ultimately make a stand for Biblical integrity, make a stand for traditional marriage, make a stand for the family that God has designed to be best for the well-being of children. That is still our hope. We also hope that the Uniting Church will articulate a stance on the gracious acceptance of all people into the church community where members of the congregation do not see themselves as judges of others, nor other areas of sinfulness, but treat others in truth and love.

If, however, the Assembly were to make a decision in support of same gender marriage, it would cease to become the church described in Scripture, the bride of Christ, the body of Christ with Jesus as its head. This decision would mean that we could no longer belong to such an apostate group. Certainly the leadership of our congregation, and most likely the congregation itself would concur.

We strongly urge Assembly to adhere to the Basis of Union and affirm the traditional view of marriage.

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