

HopeNET



Response to Marriage Consultation: Waikerie UCA

Posted on October 10, 2014 by hopenet

Response to marriage Consultation

Waikerie Uniting Church

1. Identify any Challenges or New Insights raised for members of the group by the Commentary on the Theological dimensions of Marriage Service.

As a Uniting Church congregation the biggest challenge the UCA discussion paper on marriage presents to us is the fact that we are even discussing homosexual marriage. The Waikerie congregation believes that this is not a matter up for debate. The Bible is very clear that homosexual acts are sin and therefore any form of service that condones, allows for, or celebrates sin is unacceptable. We as a church must never say that sin is not sin as this places us in danger of the wrath of God.

As a congregation we know the splendor of marriage as God has designed it. The fact that our secular culture has many different views means little, as marriage is glorious as it reflects the marriage of God and His people and Christ and the church. Thus we find it disturbing that the discussion paper on marriage does not present the fact that marriage between a man and a woman is for the most part extremely positive, edifying and joyful – even glorious – within the church. Within the Waikerie Uniting Church marriage as God designed it is of great importance to our members and we have many Spirit-filled, satisfying and joyful marriages where children are raised in the safety and love that comes from marriage. This paper seems to be negative about most aspects of marriage by focusing on the way it works out in society rather than in the family of God. Whilst it may be of interest to discuss marriage in the community, in the end, our definition for marriage within the church comes from God Himself and not human opinion or culture. We cannot impose our view on those who are not believers and in the same way we cannot judge those outside of the church.

2 If the government were to legislate to enable same-gender couples to marry, what issues or questions would this raise for you?

The Church and its leaders have the responsibility to be a prophetic voice declaring the revealed will of God and encouraging the actions and behavior of members to conform to Biblical principles.

If the government were to legislate for homosexual marriage, this would raise the obvious issue of our ministers being marriage celebrants. This will eventually mean that there is a potential for them being forced to conduct homosexual marriages on the basis of vilification.

Ministers could not in good conscious carry out these services.

3 What would you see as appropriate responses by the Uniting Church?

Pastorally for it's members and the wider community?

The Uniting Church should pastorally respond to the issue of homosexual marriage by again drawing people back to the bibles teaching on marriage (eg Mark 10:6-9 Eph 5:22-33 , Gen 2;24.

We should teach and encourage our people in the truth of Christian marriage- between a man and woman – as modeled by Christ and the Church. In a time where the world is teaching that sin is acceptable we must encourage our members to seek the Scriptures under the leading of the Holy Spirit. We must encourage members to support those ministers who refuse to conform to un-Biblical practice, including conducting same – sex marriages.

-In the Church's Practices and Christian Marriage ?

In relation to the government's and the Church's role in conducting marriages the Uniting Church should reinforce that the Church is under the authority of Christ and His Word, not under the authority of the State.

In any celebration of blessing of same gender-relationships ?

The Church must not take part in any form of service that celebrates, honors, blesses or encourages sin and this includes homosexual marriages or blessing services for homosexual couples. We know that there is sin in the world and we are called to love sinners, but we cannot celebrate sin .

We have responsibility to proclaim to this world the positive nature of Christian marriage as God has made it, and the full forgiveness that comes from God for sexual sin, and not just to speak the thou shalt not's.

4 Should the Uniting Church reconsider it's understanding of marriage at this time ? Why or Why not.

It is good to study marriage as God has made it and to boldly proclaim this message.

Under no circumstances should the Uniting Church alter its understanding of marriage. It is God who defines marriage and we clearly see this through the teachings of Jesus. By departing from the teaching of the marriage between Christ and the Church, we also depart from the true nature of God which is not for us to do as He has never changed. .

At the last assembly the Aboriginal Congress stated that they are not going to change their view on homosexuality, so stop asking them if they have, we too think that in the unchanging nature and actions of God that this is not up for debate.

5 What other matters are important to you in relation to these matters?

The nature and heart of the Gospel is central to the issue of homosexual sin..God speaks that sin is universal and all fall short of his glory. God as the righteous and Holy One is rightly angry with all sin. Therefore the churches response must be to proclaim the salvation and forgiveness that comes from Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. We cannot condemn anyone since we are all sinners, but must never as a Church condone sin. Jesus had to die for sin, so every sin is a serious act. We always continue to proclaim the hope that we have through Christ Jesus our Lord.

6 Are there particular question or insights into these issues that you want to share from your from ethno – cultural community ?

It is not the right of cultural communities, or even the Church, to define marriage . The culture of the Kingdom of God should have the only influence.

This Response is from the Elders of the Waikerie Uniting Church

Posted in Articles and Teaching

permalink [<http://hopenet.unitingchurchsa.org.au/response-to-marriage-consultation-waikerie-uca/>]