



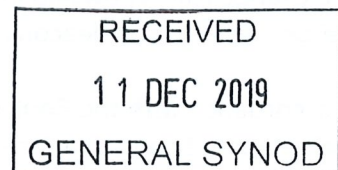
Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion

"Growing Gospel Ministry Amongst Anglicans in Australia" (WA)

SUBMISSION TO THE APPELLATE TRIBUNAL

Blessing of Persons Married According to the Marriage Act 1961 Regulations 2019 (Wangaratta)

The Registrar
Appellate Tribunal
General Synod Office Anglican Church of Australia
189 Kent St
Sydney NSW 2000



appellatetribunal@anglican.org.au

Dear Registrar,

The Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion Western Australia is grateful for the opportunity to respond to the submission of the Synod of the Diocese of Wangaratta. Our submission reads.

Primate's Reference to the Appellate Tribunal – Blessing of Persons Married According to the Marriage Act 1961 Regulations 2019 (Diocese of Wangaratta)

In answer to the questions referred to the Appellate Tribunal we submit

The Blessing of Persons Married According to the Marriage Act 1961 Regulations 2019 made by the Synod of the Diocese of Wangaratta is **inconsistent** with the Fundamental Declarations and Ruling Principles in the Constitution of the Anglican Church of Australia.

The regulation is **not validly made** pursuant to the Canon Concerning Services 1992.

To both questions we answer that the regulation, insofar as it is applied to the blessing of "marriages" of persons of the same sex and/or gender, proposes to bless what is forbidden in Holy Scripture (Fundamental Declarations [1.2, 3]), and is a departure from and inconsistent with the teaching of the Book of Common Prayer (Ruling Principles [1.4]).

We desire also that the Appellate Tribunal should consider the following matters.

Introduction

It is not our intention to mount a biblical argument against same-sex marriage. We are sure that others will do this better than we. The members of EFAC WA are conversant with the teaching of Holy Scripture pertinent to sexual relations between members of the same sex, and that anal intercourse between men is forbidden by the moral law of the Old Testament (not just civil or ceremonial or purity), and nations were condemned for practicing it; it is therefore to be considered as the law of Christ, and is forbidden many times over in the New Testament. Its practice is said to bar entry to the kingdom of God (along with other sins). It is a gospel matter, therefore, "required for salvation". Those who practice such things are, therefore, called on to repent. Though it is often claimed that Jesus said nothing on the matter, he ministered to a people who had long regarded it as a sin, and it is included in his words on fornication. We are aware that attempts have been made to "re-interpret" this teaching, but can only view this as "mis-interpretation", and an attempt to overthrow the plain meaning of Scripture. We are also aware that this plain understanding has been held by the whole Church from its beginning.



Our Role as Ministers of Christ

The Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion WA is composed for the most part of Anglican bishops, priests and deacons. The solemnizing of marriages is one of our official functions.

In accordance with the Book of Common Prayer (and authorized revisions) we declare to marrying couples and attendant congregations that

“... we are gathered in the sight of God, and in the face of this Congregation, to join together **this man and this woman** in holy Matrimony ...”

We explain further that this is

“an honourable estate, **instituted of God** in the time of man’s innocency, signifying unto us the mystical union that is betwixt Christ and his Church ...”

That it is

“... commended of St Paul to be honourable among all men ...”

And that it is to be entered upon

“... duly considering the causes for which matrimony was ordained.”

One of which is

“... **the procreation of children**, to be brought up in the fear and nurture of the Lord, and to the praise of his holy Name.”

From this forthright declaration of the Solemnization of Matrimony we infer

That marriage is between a man and a woman

That marriage is of divine origin

That it declares a Christian (gospel) reality

That one of its primary purposes is the procreation and nurture of children in the fear of God.

Furthermore, we regularly warn those about to be married,

“I require and charge you both, as ye will answer at the dreadful day of judgement, when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed, that if either of you know any impediment, why ye may not lawfully be joined together in Matrimony, ye do now confess it. For be ye well assured, that so many as are coupled together otherwise than God’s Word doth allow are not joined together by God; neither is their matrimony lawful.”

From this we infer that it is the teaching of our Church (as of Holy Scripture)

That it is possible to be "coupled", but not married.

That there is divine law (laws) pertinent to marriage, which if they are ignored render the marriage not-marriage.

That such couplings are not joined by God, and not lawful (according to God's law).

We wish it to be understood that when we declare a man and a woman "man and wife" we do it "in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", and when we bless them we do it in the same Name and under the same authority.

We do not have authority to bless in this formal way (declaring God's blessing) what God has not blessed, and which indeed, in this case, he has declared to be sin.

Were such a blessing to be authorized by our Church

It would override God's Word with a human novelty.

It would make of marriage a purely human estate.

It would remove from the Church's ministers their present authority to declare God's Word and bless in his Name.

Were a synod of our Church to adopt such a resolution,

We would regard such resolution as contrary to the law of God and the gospel of salvation and therefore not lawful or binding.

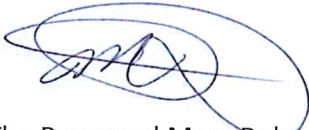
In the case of a synod of a diocese in which we ministered, we would be obliged to declare that we did not recognize the authority of our synod to adopt such a regulation contrary to God's law.

And were a bishop, priest or deacon to bless and teach according to such regulation, we would be bound under God to regard such a minister as a heretic and a false shepherd.

We believe such a course of action would be forced on many faithful ministers of our Church, and that many church members would flee from pastoral oversight which is so evidently contrary to Scripture and tradition.

Therefore, we humbly entreat the members of the Appellate Tribunal to consider this matter with the greatest care and not to allow this resolution of the Synod of Wangaratta to stand, which, if it were allowed, would bring great harm upon our Church.

Yours in Christ

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'M Dale', enclosed within a blue oval scribble.

The Reverend Marc Dale, Chair

The Evangelical Fellowship in the Anglican Communion, Western Australia