



MEDIA RELEASE

Bishops veto statement affirming traditional view of marriage

11 May 2022

The Diocesan Bishops of the Anglican Church of Australia have voted against a statement that sought to affirm that marriage is only between a man and a woman and the blessing of same sex marriages was not in accordance with the teaching of Christ.

The vote in the 18th General Synod of the Church, effectively its “parliament”, highlights the divisions within the church over the issue of marriage as it meets for the first time since the Marriage Act was updated following the postal survey in 2017.

The General Synod is structured in three Houses – the House of Bishops, the House of Clergy, and the House of Laity. When voting “by the Houses”, a motion must pass in each House to be successful.

While the House of Laity supported the motion by 63 votes to 47, and the House of Clergy by 70-39, the House of Bishops vetoed the measure by 10 votes to 12.

The statement was moved by the Archbishop of Sydney, Kanishka Raffel, in a response to a written opinion by the Church’s judicial authority, the Appellate Tribunal, last year that found that the blessing of same sex marriages in the Anglican Church, was not inconsistent with the Church’s Constitution.

The rejected statement first sought to affirm that “the faith, ritual, ceremonial and discipline of this Church reflect and uphold marriage as it was ordained from the beginning, being the exclusive union of one man and one woman”.

It sought to clarify that same sex marriages remained unlawful in the Anglican Church, saying: “The solemnisation of a marriage between a same-sex couple is contrary to the teaching of Christ and the faith, ritual, ceremonial and/or discipline of this church.”

It further said: “Any rite or ceremony that purports to bless a same-sex marriage is not in accordance with the teaching of Christ and the faith, ritual, ceremonial and/or discipline of this Church.”

Archbishop Raffel said: “I deeply regret the outcome, although of course I accept it.”

“Failing to make these affirmations today has left us in a perilous position, and no one should be mistaken about that,” he said.

For further information contact Bill Condie at media@adelaideanglicans.com or on 0405 862 785.