



## ST JOHN THE EVANGELIST ANGLICAN CHURCH

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13 July 2019

My dear friends,

Last night the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada voted on the proposal to amend Marriage Canon XXI to allow for the marriage of same-gender couples in our church. To be approved, this motion required a two-thirds majority in all three Orders - Bishops, Clergy and Laity. That majority was achieved in the house of Laity and of Clergy, and was not achieved in the house of Bishops. The pain, anger and grief was overwhelming in the room when the results were published, and I am deeply aware of the depth of emotion that so many of you will be experiencing. I hold you in my prayers.

At St John's, we have been advocating for the full inclusion of all God's people for a very long time and we extend a wide welcome to LGBTQIA/2S people, their families, friends, and allies. We will continue working to ensure that all God's children are embraced and recognized as full members of the Body of Christ.

Please be reminded that the Diocese of Ottawa and our parish have been performing same-gender marriages since 2016, and this practice was affirmed by General Synod yesterday as the document "A Word to the Church" was adopted. Please do read this document. When it came to voting on changing the Marriage Canon itself, the majority of our church, the laity and the clergy, supported this change. The house of Bishops has much to account for, as they clearly are not listening to the rest of the church. Please hold our bishops, Michael who is here with us and John who is at home with you, in your hearts and prayers. They have and will continue to work tirelessly on this issue and need our support.

We have several more days here in Vancouver. There is still important work to be done. And it is clear that some of our structures need changing. Please keep all the members of General Synod in your prayers. Please care for one another. And do not give up hope. Our Church is in pain and struggling, some of our structures are broken, and yet the Holy Spirit still moves among us.

With love and blessings,

*Beth*

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