



Same-Sex Marriages to Receive Blessings in the Church of England

Description

Same-sex marriages will receive “prayers for God’s blessing” for the first time in the Church of England following a vote at the General Synod, the legislative body of the established church of England.

On Thursday, the three houses of the Synod voted in favour of officially recognising gay marriages for the first time, with priests now being empowered to give their blessings to such unions.

The vote was overwhelmingly approved by the House of Bishops, which supported the measure by a margin of 36 to four, with two members of the house abstaining from the vote. However, the issue was far more contested amongst the lower houses of the Synod, with the House of Clergy backing the measure by a vote of 111 to 85, with three abstentions, and by the House of Laity which supported the move by a margin of 103 to 92, with five abstaining members.

In a joint statement, the two most senior bishops in the Church, Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Stephen Cottrell, the Archbishop of York said: “It has been a long road to get us to this point.

“For the first time, the Church of England will publicly, unreservedly and joyfully welcome same-sex couples in church.”

The two archbishops acknowledged that “deep differences” still remain within the Church, and said: “As Archbishops, we are committed to respecting the conscience of those for whom this goes too far and to ensure that they have all the reassurances they need in order to maintain the unity of the Church as this conversation continues.”

“We hope that today’s thoughtful, prayerful debate marks a new beginning for the Church as we seek a way forward, listening to each other and most of all to God. Above all we continue to pray, as Jesus himself prayed, for the unity of his church and that we would love one another.”

“This is a fiasco.”

Barrister and lay General Synod member Daniel Matovu criticises the bishops’ proposals to offer prayers of blessing to those in same-sex relationships. pic.twitter.com/0Wx9i6rzQ3

— Christian Concern (@CConcern) [February 9, 2023](#)

The move drew considerable rebukes from some within the Church’s legislative body, including barrister and lay General Synod member Daniel Matovu, who characterised it as a “fiasco”, claiming that blessing same-sex marriages ignores the teachings of scripture.

“The Bishops say that this is about people, it is about much more than that, it’s about the word of God and about Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of our faith,” he said before citing verses from the Bible which he said demonstrated that marriage is only intended to be between a man and a woman.

“Where does the Church get its doctrine on marriage from? It comes directly from God,” Matovu continued, adding: “The Bishops cannot see, apparently, that the draft prayers are out of sync with, inconsistent with, and undermine the doctrine of marriage as in [Canon B:30](#). They should have gone to Specsavers, bless them.”

The controversial decision came just days after the Church [announced](#) that it would be launching a project on gender-neutral language in which phrases referring to God, such as “Our Father”, may be scrapped or replaced by either feminine alternatives or gender-neutral variants.

Gender Neutral God? Church of England to Launch Liturgical Pronoun Project
<https://t.co/lxnG5CpxTV>

— Breitbart London (@BreitbartLondon) [February 9, 2023](#)

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