



Presbytery of Port Phillip East

46 Marriage of same-gender couples

That the Assembly resolve:

- (a) To acknowledge the changes made to the Marriage Act by the Federal Parliament of Australia in December 2017;
- (b) To acknowledge the diversity of theological views held in good faith among congregations, individuals and Ministers of the UCA;
- (c) To affirm the work of the Assembly Working Group on Doctrine the Assembly Standing Committee's *Report on Marriage and Same-Gender Relationships*;
- (d) To request the Assembly Standing Committee to amend the Marriage Rites of the Uniting Church in Australia to include same-gender couples;
- (e) To affirm that Ministers of the UCA may exercise the freedom of faithful conscience with regards to accepting requests to celebrate marriages of same-gender couples according to the Rites of the Uniting Church in Australia; and
- (f) To request the Standing Committee to amend and expand the Liturgy of the Marriage Service to include same-gender couples, noting the concern of some ministers and congregations who wish to continue to affirm that marriage is between a man and a woman.

Proposer: Jay Robinson

Seconder: Cameron McAdam

Rationale:

The purpose of this recommendation is for this Presbytery to give a clear message to the Assembly that we support the Assembly Standing Committee proposals on Marriage and Same-Gender Relationships.

We acknowledge in our Presbytery the diversity of biblical and theological perspectives held in good faith both communally and personally. Further periods of discussion will not bring a resolution closer, nor change strongly held views held in good faith.

Marriage in the Uniting Church is not a matter of the substance of the Faith. It is not a sacrament or recognised doctrinally in the statements of Faith of the Church. The Uniting Church encourages diversity of opinion on matters that are not the substance of the faith.

The mystery of the union between Christ and the Church includes members of all genders and sexuality. We do not exclude any from the sacraments of Baptism, the Eucharist, or church membership based on gender or sexuality. The UCA as a matter of integrity, honesty and justice must not delay any longer in resolving to allow for all Christian members to have their marriage recognised in the church under God, nor delay in allowing Ministers to have the freedom of faithful conscience to celebrate or not the marriage of same Gender couples.

The Presbytery raises the question if it is possible to have a variety of statements that might include the option of referring to marriage between a man and a woman, and marriage between two people.