

Memorandum to the General Synod Commission on the Marriage Canon  
From Dean Peter Elliott on behalf of the Wardens, Trustees &  
Parish Council of Christ Church Cathedral Vancouver BC  
Regarding submission from CCC Vancouver  
September 25, 2014

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With the unanimous support of the Parish Council of Christ Church Cathedral we offer our submission to the Commission.

For over two decades the community of Christ Church Cathedral has advocated for the full inclusion of all of God's children. In making the case for the solemnization of same sex matrimony within the Anglican Church of Canada we continue in our commitment to sacramental equality within the Body of Christ.

This submission was presented at an open forum on Sunday September 7<sup>th</sup>: 60+ people attended, and in a 'straw vote' agreed unanimously that the submission should come from the Cathedral parish.

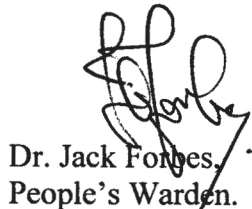
At the meeting of the Cathedral Parish Council on the following Saturday, September 13, the Council voted unanimously that this submission should come to the Commission with the consent of all of the members of the Parish Council.

We wish you well in your work and thank you and the Council of General Synod for the opportunity to participate.

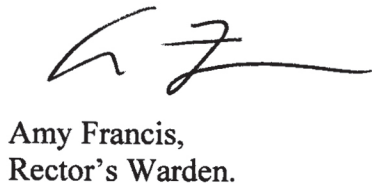
Yours in Christ,



The Very Reverend Peter G. Elliott  
Dean and Rector.



Dr. Jack Forbes,  
People's Warden.



Amy Francis,  
Rector's Warden.

# Submission to the Commission on the Marriage Canon

Anglican Church of Canada

80 Hayden Street Toronto, ON

M4Y 3G2

From



690 Burrard Street, Vancouver BC

V6G 1R8

A Statement in Favour of the Solemnization of Same Sex Matrimony  
in the Anglican Church of Canada,  
from the Clergy, Wardens and Parish Council of Christ Church Cathedral, Vancouver.

1. Marriage is a constantly evolving institution that has roots outside both the Jewish and Christian tradition. As the *Doctrine of the Church of England, 1922* states: “Marriage stands in a special position because, both as a rite and as a state of life, it is not something peculiarly Christian, but rather is an institution...which is taken into and sanctified by the Christian Church.” In the lifetime of the Jewish and Christian peoples marriage has been variously understood as polygamous, as a form of property transfer (not only of goods but of the woman herself), and as a necessary evil for the sake of procreation. It was only the Council of Trent in the 16<sup>th</sup> century that declared valid marriages must take place publicly in a church before a priest.
  
2. In other words, Christian understandings of marriage have changed over the centuries, and continue to do so. In more recent times we have seen the procreation of children be replaced as the primary reason for marriage by the emphasis on the relationship of love between husband and wife. Within the last 46 years, the remarriage of divorced persons has been allowed within Canadian Anglicanism. Theology about marriage is always reflection from the Christian community regarding how this social institution (marriage) is to be understood within the life of the Church.

As the *St Michael's Report* says:

*“...While in earlier ages the greatest evidence of God's blessing was deemed to be the gift of children, procreation is no longer portrayed as the primary end of marriage in our Anglican liturgies of holy matrimony. (BCP, p. 170; BAS p. 528.) Healthy heterosexual Anglican couples may, and some do, decide not to have children. Such relationships bear fruit in community service. Does the lack of gender complementarity in homosexual Anglican couples hinder them from making the same commitment to one another in the eye of God and in the view of the Christian community? Such same sex relationships, founded upon mutual dedication and love, seek God's blessing upon their life together, to*

*the exclusion of all others, until parted by death. Thus the Commission understands the blessing that they seek to be analogous to that received in Christian matrimony, rather than, for example, the blessing of a house or home...*” (Section 31).

3. Marriage is, in the Anglican tradition, a minor sacrament along with confirmation, ordination, reconciliation and unction, and distinct from the two major dominical sacraments of baptism and eucharist. These final two rites define membership and participation within the Christian community. The so-called ‘minor’ sacraments are ways that the church expresses its ministry to its members and, like all sacraments, are outward signs of the invisible grace of God.
4. In contemporary Canadian wedding services the officiating clergy wear two ‘hats’: they act on behalf of the civil authority in signing the marriage license, and they offer a priestly blessing on behalf of the church. The primary ministers of marriage are the couple themselves. A theology of marriage is, primarily, a theology of blessing a committed relationship.
5. Marriage, like ordination, is intended for the proper ordering of the Christian Community. Marriage specifically calls those who make these vows before God and the community into a holiness of life, characterized by a pledge of faithful love for the rest of life. In the article *Towards a Theology of Christians in Marriage*, Richard Leggett suggests that Christians in marriage have an opportunity to live out their baptismal covenant in the context of an intimate relationship: “This leads me to argue for a theology of Christians in marriage rather than a theology of Christian marriage, that is to say a preference for a baptismal theology of Christians in marriage.” As such, marriage between either same or other sex couples, is a call to holiness of life as a sign of God’s faithfulness to the world. It is a sign of the intimate relationship between Christ and the Church. For decades, same sex couples have committed themselves to life long intimacy in faithful relationships but have not received either the blessing of the church nor the legal license to marry. Now that same sex marriage is a legal reality in Canada it is time that the church extend sacramental marriage equality to same sex couples.

6. Canon 21 (the last of the church's canons), has, as its first clause:

*The Anglican Church of Canada affirms, according to our Lord's teaching as found in Holy Scriptures and expressed in the Form of Solemnization of Matrimony in the Book of Common Prayer, that marriage is a lifelong union in faithful love, and that marriage vows are a commitment to this union, for better or for worse, to the exclusion of all others on either side. This union is established by God's grace when two duly qualified persons enter into a covenant of marriage in which they declare their intention of fulfilling its purposes and exchange vows to be faithful to one another until they are separated by death. The purposes of marriage are mutual fellowship, support and comfort, and the procreation (if it may be) and nurture of children and the creation of a relationship in which sexuality may serve personal fulfillment in a community of faithful love.*

Now that same sex marriage is legal we would argue that same sex couples are 'duly qualified persons' in terms of canon law who can fulfill the purposes of marriage as defined by Canon 21. Therefore the General Synod should make the necessary changes to this Canon so that this "minor" sacrament can also be available, in dioceses that want to extend this privilege to same sex couples. (When the national Anglican structures allowed for the ordination of women, it was up to each diocese to choose to implement this in their own timetable; a similar pattern could happen here.) This kind of development of doctrine was anticipated in *The Solemn Declaration of the First General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada*, 1893 when it cites the principle of ongoing revelation, identifying how worship of "... One God and Father through the same Lord Jesus Christ, by the same *Holy and Divine Spirit who is given to them that believe to guide them into all truth.* (see - John 16:13). (see commentary...)

7. It is our belief that the blessing of a same sex marriage already implies that the Church believes a true marriage to have taken place. If civil same sex marriage can be blessed, what is the theological justification for the Church to continue to refuse to solemnize these unions?

8. It is key to our thinking that **there should be sacramental equality in the Body of Christ**. That to deny same sex couples the possibility of marriage within the Church is to deny us/them both of the equal recognition that our/their intentionally faithful and life-long unions deserve and of a source of sacramental blessing that can contribute to the achievement of that faithful life-long union. St. Paul believed each and every follower of Jesus was a *new creation* (2 Cor. 5:17). In the community of the newly created there is to be no distinction, “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28). A community of new creation will be continually discovering how God is at work breaking down barriers that divide us, “For Christ is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us.” (Ephesians 2:14)
  
9. We hope that the Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada will make the necessary canonical changes to allow our same-sex members to be full and equal participants in all the Church’s sacraments and to show the world that we are a welcoming home for all God’s beloved children.

*For further reference*

Coulton, Nicholas, (editor) *The Bible, The Church and Homosexuality* London: Darton + Longman + Todd, 2005. (see article by Jane Shaw *Marriage, sexuality and Christian tradition*, p. 49 and following)

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John, Jeffrey. *Permanent, Faithful, Stable: Christian Same-Sex Partnerships*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2000.

Jordan, Mark D. *Blessing Same-Sex Unions: The Perils of Queer Romance and the Confusions of Christian Marriage*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Temple, Gray. *Gay Unions: In the light of Scripture, Tradition and Reason*. New York: Church Publishing Incorporated, 2004.

*The St. Michael Report: Report of the Primate's Theological Commission of the Anglican Church of Canada on the Blessing of Same-Sex Unions*. Toronto: General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, 2005.

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**The Solemn Declaration of the  
First General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada, 1893**  
*As found in the Book of Common Prayer of the Anglican Church of Canada (1962)*  
*Commentary by Peter Elliott*

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.**

**WE, the Bishops, together with the Delegates from the Clergy and Laity of the Church of England in the Dominion of Canada, now assembled in the first General Synod, hereby make the following Solemn Declaration:**

*1. Comment: Context is important: This is a synodical declaration: bishops, clergy and lay people from across Canada were meeting to decide how best to coordinate their efforts for the common mission of the Anglican Church in Canada. What is valued here is the full participation of the whole people of God in decision-making. It should always be referred to as the Solemn Declaration of the First General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada 1893*

**WE declare this Church to be, and desire that it shall continue, in full communion with the Church of England throughout the world, as an integral portion of the One Body of Christ composed of the Churches which, united under the One Divine Head and in fellowship of the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church**

*2. Comment: This is indicating that the ACC is continuing in the tradition of the C of E, just as the C of E sees itself in continuation with the See of Rome. At the time of writing the Anglican Communion did not yet exist: what was being affirmed was the 'interdependence' of the Canadian church with the English Church. The term 'full communion' is used to describe not only the relationship of churches within the Anglican Communion, but also with certain ecumenical partners, for example the Porvoo agreement between the Church of England and some European Lutheran Churches; and the Waterloo Declaration between Canadian Anglicans and Lutherans. In both instances of the Porvoo agreement and the Waterloo Declaration, this means that Anglicans—Church of England and Anglican Church of Canada--are in full communion with churches that solemnize same sex matrimony (Lutherans in Denmark, Sweden and Canada allow same sex marriage in their churches)*

*The Declaration goes on to describe its theological foundations using the exact terms of*



*the 'Lambeth Quadrilateral'*<sup>1</sup>

**hold the One Faith revealed in Holy Writ,**

- A. and defined in the Creeds as maintained by the undivided primitive Church in the undisputed Ecumenical Councils;**
- B. receive the same Canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as containing all things necessary to salvation; teach the same Word of God;**
- C. partake of the same Divinely ordained Sacraments,**
- D. through the ministry of the same Apostolic Orders;**

3. *Comment: Then the Solemn Declaration goes on to quote John 16:13 to describe the Church's ongoing guidance by the Holy Spirit in the development of doctrine:*

**and worship One God and Father through the same Lord Jesus Christ, by the same Holy and Divine Spirit who is given to them that believe to guide them into all truth.**

4. *Comment: The Solemn declaration concludes with the decision to continue using the Book of Common Prayer:*

**And we are determined by the help of God to hold and maintain the Doctrine, Sacraments, and Discipline of Christ as the Lord hath commanded in his Holy Word, and as the Church of England hath received and set forth in *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church according to the use of the Church of England; together with the Psalter or Psalms of David, pointed as they are to be sung or said in Churches; and the Form and Manner of Making, Ordaining and Consecrating of Bishops, Priests and Deacons* and in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion; and to transmit the same unimpaired to our posterity.**

5. *So, in summary, the Solemn Declaration--*

- 1. *is a Synodical document—that inaugurates the Anglican Church in Canada—affirmed by bishops, clergy and laity.*
- 2. *is a document to enable the church's mission together; the first Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada described the purpose of the General Synod, 'not for harmony but strength' (in mission).*
- 3. *by using the Lambeth Quadrilateral, the General Synod was standing in the tradition of the comprehensive Anglican Church—not a confessional Church.*

4. *by using John 16:13 the General Synod is choosing to affirm the notion of the development or expansion of doctrine, rather than doctrine and pastoral practice remaining always the same. This is to enable the pastoral ministry of the church to serve the church's mission in context.*
  
6. *In light of this understanding of the Solemn Declaration of the First General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada 1893 we believe that it points the way towards the acceptance of the change to the Marriage Canon because:*
  1. *It recognizes the authority of a Canadian Synod of bishops, clergy and laity to make decisions for the Anglican Church of Canada.*
  2. *It is focused on enabling mission, which is currently disadvantaged by the Church's perceived inequality and homophobia in the eyes of the general Canadian public.*
  3. *It recognizes that the Church is a diverse body that can include people who disagree on matters of both doctrine and practice which are not core to its identity.*
  4. *It affirms that the Church grows and changes as God's Spirit brings new truths to light – such as the scientific understanding of homosexual identity as innate rather than chosen - and as the contexts in which we minister also change.*

*Christ Church Cathedral Vancouver BC September 2014*

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<sup>1</sup> *These are the slightly revised version of the four Articles agreed upon at the General Convention of the (Anglican) Protestant Episcopal Church held at Chicago in 1886. In this revised form the Articles were approved by the Lambeth Conference of 1888 as stating from the Anglican standpoint the essentials for a reunited Christian Church. The text of the Articles is as follows:*

- A. **The Holy Scriptures** of the Old and New Testaments, as "containing all things necessary for salvation", and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.
  - B. **The Apostles' Creed**, as the Baptismal Symbol; and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statements of the Christian Faith.
  - C. The two **Sacraments** ordained by Christ Himself - Baptism and the Supper of the Lord - ministered with un failing use of Christ's Words of Institution, and of the elements ordained by Him.
  - D. **The Historic Episcopate**, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the Unity of His Church."
- (Source: *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, **F. L. Cross, Editor**)

# A. Towards a Theology of Christians in Marriage

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## **Introductory observations**

When Graham Cotter turned his hand to provide a guide to Anglican clergy and laity regarding marriage, it is telling that he chose to entitle the book, *Marrying in the Church: A Pastoral Guide*, rather than calling it a guide to *Christian* marriage.<sup>1</sup> A rationale for the title is implicit in the four meanings he gives to the word “marriage”: (a) a union or status in which two persons are bound together by legal ties which may include religious ones; (b) a contract; (c) an institution of human society and (d) a ceremony.<sup>2</sup> None of the four meanings he gives describes a distinctly Christian or, for that matter, religious institution.

A review of Christian history will show that for a significant period in the early Church marriage was understood as an institution of society into which Christians entered just as their non-Christians peers did.

Attempts to study the history of Christian marriage in the earliest periods of the Church’s life are immediately stymied by the lack of evidence for anything that could be called specifically Christian. This lack, however, indicates rather clearly that apart from the fact that the two persons involved were Christian, there was nothing noticeably different about Christian marriages, about the way they originated, the way they were lived, or (in some instances) in the way they were terminated.<sup>3</sup>

In this period Christians followed the patterns of the culture in which they lived, although, as Christians, their marriages might be touched by “what it meant for them to be related to one another ‘in the Lord.’”<sup>4</sup>

As our Lutheran partners in full communion undertake a revision of their liturgical rites, including those for the pastoral office, they have re-affirmed this reality of marriage as a social institution into which some Christian are called.

Classic Lutheran theology has long understood the union of a man and a woman in marriage as an order of creation and a gift from God. In such a view, one does not speak of a Christian marriage. Rather, one speaks of a marriage between Christians.<sup>5</sup>

Given our Anglican commitment to being guided by the witness of the early church, it is perhaps appropriate then that we talk about a theology of Christians in marriage rather than a theology of Christian marriage. This approach will lead us to consider how Christians should conduct themselves not only in marriage but also in the many cultural and social institutions in which we are called to live and to serve.

Let me illustrate this point by turning to one author’s discussion of spiritual health. L. William Countryman describes spiritual health as being characterized by centredness; faith; generosity of spirit; a sense of oneself; discipline; integrity and honesty; hospitality; compassion; vulnerability and openness; and continued growth in faith, hope and love. If one were to replace “spiritual health” with “marriage”, one would be likely to concur that these qualities are those we expect in marriages that reflect the Christian gospel. This leads me to argue for a theology of Christians in marriage rather than a theology of Christian marriage, that is to say, a preference for a baptismal theology of Christians in marriage.

## ***Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and the prayers?***

Marriage, as one of creation’s dependable sign-acts, participates in the *mysterion*, “the revelation of God’s saving self-giving that finds expression in Jesus’ death and resurrection.”<sup>7</sup> But just as all Christians grow into their baptismal faith and identity, so, too, do Christians grow into marriage. Marriage, whether between Christians or non-Christians, has the potential to reveal the saving love of God. If Christians enter into such a relationship, then they must be committed to a life-time of growing into “‘the new creation’ which they are as individuals and as a couple”.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, as Bonnie Schullenberger writes, “We are not faithful in our lifetime pairings because we’re prudes or because we’re scared: we are faithful because God is like that.”<sup>9</sup>

The consequences of baptismal faith for Chris-

tians are several. First, Christians understand their relationships to be public rather than private. In today's climate of romanticism it is easy to forget that our covenantal relationships are more than agreements between two individuals. These relationships have communal and societal dimensions beyond any legal or conventional considerations. By wearing a ring on one's left ring finger, one is declaring to all that he or she has made a life-long commitment. How we conduct our lives comes under closer scrutiny, especially if we further claim that our relationship represents, in some spiritual way, the relationship between God and the world.

Second, Christians seek *companionship*, a person with whom to break bread. One of the more poignant passages in the New Testament is found in the Gospel according to John.

This is my commandment that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants any longer, because the servant does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father.<sup>10</sup>

At the heart of all genuinely Christian relationships is friendship that is self-giving and self-revealing. When Christians enter into a marriage, they become companions whose physical nakedness before one another is a sacramental sign of the emotional, psychological and spiritual nakedness that true friends offer one another.

Third, Christians understand the need for a community of support that shares both values and hopes. When red-hot charcoal briquettes are separated from one another, they quickly lose their heat and burn out. If they are kept close together, their heat increases and, in a counter-intuitive fashion, lasts longer. In many ways human relationships function similarly. When couples find themselves in the midst of a supportive community, their own relationship is both reinforced and deepened, enabling them to live out more faithfully their baptismal commitments to each other.

***Will you persevere in resisting evil and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?***

A popular movie from the 1970's contained the line, "Love means never having to say you're sorry."

No falsier statement has ever been made. Love means forever being willing to acknowledge one's faults and to seek reconciliation and renewal.

An adequate theology of marriage must take account of sin. Married, covenanted love is not exempt from hurt and injustice. Thus the religious dimension of marriage involves redemption and reconciliation. Without grace, without the gift of healing and renewal and forgiveness, no potential encounter of transformation will reach its fulfillment. Indeed, it would become a stifling idolatry.<sup>11</sup>

Christians who enter the covenant of marriage come from a religious tradition that understands the necessity of forgiveness if old hurts and new wrongs are ever to be laid aside in order for the new creation to be revealed in and through us and our relationships. Even the first of the blessing prayers of *The Book of Alternative Services* gives thanks to God for making "the way of the cross to be the way of life," before turning to give thanks for the institution of marriage.<sup>12</sup>

But furthermore, our conduct within marriage should give rise to a greater commitment to a world in which reconciliation takes place between peoples and nations. It is not empty rhetoric when, in the marriage rite of *The Book of Alternative Services*, the first of the two prayers for blessing the couple prays that they will be led "into all peace" and the second prayer "that their home may be a haven of blessing and peace."

As a microcosm of human society, the family should work towards peace within itself; the larger society can scarcely become more peaceful than the units within it.<sup>14</sup>

***Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?***

Every Christian is called to embody the good news of God in Christ in whatever vocation or social setting he or she is found. For those called to the married state, the family, whether there are children or not, is a domestic cell within the body of Christ. As such the homes of married Christians become leaven within their neighbourhoods, giving rise to the saving presence of the gospel in places that the formal structures of the Christian church may never reach.

To speak of the family as a community of faith is to stress the active sense of community; it is a sharing of commitment to, hope in, and love of Je-

sus Christ. It involves a shared endeavour to shape life according to the vision of the Gospel. The members of the family are meant to guide, inspire, and support each other in this pursuit. The choice of priorities in their life together are the decisions about shared activities or about the way in which individual activity is to fit into their common life are meant to be grounded in their shared Christian faith.<sup>15</sup>

***Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbour as yourself?***

Ephesians 5.21-33 has been frequently misused as a scriptural injunction to subject women to a subordinate role in marriage. Such a use fails to take into account the context in which the text appears and the ‘bookends’ the writer uses to frame his admonitions to husbands and wives. First, he introduces his comments with the powerful statement, “Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ.”<sup>16</sup> Here there is no distinction between male or female, married or single. All Christians are to consider themselves slaves to all in order to be free for Christ. Furthermore, throughout the text, the author is at pains to stress the necessity of husbands to love their wives, a concept that would have been thought quaint by men raised in a society and culture where marriage dealt with property and familial succession rather than emotional attachments.

Whether one is married or single, the call of the gospel to love one’s neighbour as oneself is the corollary to the love of God. When one partner in a marriage fails to treat the other as one in whom the image and likeness of God is present, then the offending partner has failed in her or his baptismal vocation. It is still the case that gender roles are used to restrict the freedom and growth of marriage partners and, to the degree that such roles are used coercively, to the same degree has the relationship fallen short of the gospel.

4. *The gospel can discern no inequality between men and women as they stand before God’s grace.* The New Testament writers came to accept a good deal of inequality between the sexes in day-to-day life; but this represented an accommodation to existing patterns, not the working out of the gospel principle.<sup>17</sup>

***Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?***

In Galatians 3.27-28 Paul writes the charter of the baptismal vocation of all Christians: “As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.” In this statement Paul is not necessarily dispensing with the ethnic, social and gender realities of his society, but he is dispensing with any privilege that any of those realities might claim to the grace and knowledge of God. He positing a new reality in Christ which has the power to overcome all the arbitrary restrictions and obstacles that human beings have erected to inhibit the freedom of God’s grace.

Justice-making and peace-making are, for Christians, dependent upon the removal of such arbitrary restrictions and obstacles in order to free all God’s children to experience the fullness of God’s grace made known to us in creation, redemption and sanctification. For Christians, this baptismal commitment is made known by the domestic justice and peace of our relationships whether they are life-long covenanted ones or not. Our domestic justice and peace will inevitably lead us into work towards justice and peace in our communities and, to the degree that we are able, our world, breaking down the ethnic barriers that perpetrate sectarian violence and political discrimination, the economic structures that perpetuate the bondage of workers at home and abroad, and the continued disparity of opportunities and power available to women throughout the world.

***Concluding remarks***

So, what is distinctive about a theology of Christians in marriage? First and foremost, it is that we are talking about *Christians* in marriage. What is distinctive about our marriages is that we enter into them understanding these relationships to be *an embodiment of our baptismal vocations*. As embodiments of our baptismal vocation they are distinguishable from the marriages of our non-Christian neighbours only to the degree that our relationships become windows into the new creation that God in Christ has revealed to the world. If these windows are opaque or shuttered, then it matters not whether the marriage was performed according to the rite of a Christian community or not. If these windows do not cast light on the quality of life that God calls all

human beings to live, whether married or not, then it does not matter whether the participants in the marriage are church-going or not. As Saint Francis is supposed to have said, “Proclaim the Gospel. When necessary, use words!”

Second, Christians will understand their marriages to be vehicles for personal and communal transformation. All true friendships grow and develop, and the partners in the life-long covenanted relationship of marriage will commit themselves to a life-long process of spiritual maturation that will be a sign of God’s on-going work of sanctification. But because our marriages are a social and public institution, Christians will understand that our marriages are means of transforming the communities

in which we live. Our marriages will resist evil in all its forms and will seek to reconcile those who are estranged. Our marriages will proclaim the good news of God in Christ. Our marriages will reach to our neighbours, regardless of who those neighbours are, because all neighbours come to us as Christ. Our marriages will work for justice and peace among all persons, so that all human beings can become fully alive and show forth the glory of God.

*The Rev’d Dr Richard Geoffrey Leggett  
Vancouver School of Theology  
October 2005*