



Office of Public Affairs

Message from Presiding Bishop Michael Curry on Lambeth Call on human dignity

I'm in Canterbury, England, at the Lambeth Conference of bishops. It's August the second. I don't have a script in front of me, but I did want to talk with you—just briefly, especially for our LGBTQ family. I know that there is legitimately some anxiety and concern about the conversations and the direction that might emerge from this Lambeth Conference, specifically regarding same-sex marriage.

I want you to know, though, that at the end of this day, when we did discuss same-sex marriage and marriage in general, in the context of talking about human dignity, and the ministry of reconciliation in Christ, I left that conversation hopeful. I left it hopeful, not because we all came to agreement across all of our differences. No, no, we didn't even try to do that. I left hopeful not because I convinced anybody of where I stand, or that they convinced me of where they stand. I left hopeful because this group of bishops today seem to be able to recognize and affirm our love and respect for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ in the body of Jesus Christ. And that we could find a way to honor and respect our differences. If we love each other, and love our Lord. That, my friends, is a sign of hope. That is a sign of hope. That makes room and space for all of us to be in the course of our conversations.

There was a document that we reflected on—we didn't take any votes; we didn't try to do that—it was called a call on human dignity. And in this call on human dignity, the premise that was behind the document was that we have all been created in the image and likeness of God. And that that image of God confers a dignity and a worth on every human being. My daddy used to say nobody got any more of that image than anybody else. We all got it equally which means we are equal before God, and we should be equal before the law.

We began our discussions around human sexuality and around marriage. With that in mind, and in the document that we were reflecting on, that document said that we in the Anglican Communion live with a plurality of views on marriage. That there is what might be called a traditional view of marriage between a man and a woman, and that view is held probably by the majority, certainly, of Anglican churches around the world and probably Anglicans—but that there is another view equally to be respected: a view

that includes and embraces same-sex couples who seek the blessing of God on their loving relationships, their commitments and their families.

My friends, I've been a bishop 22 years. I've been a priest over 40 years. And I have to tell you that as far as I know that is the first time a document in the Anglican Communion has recognized that there is a plurality of view on marriage. And that these are perspectives that reflect deep theological and biblical work and reflection. That they reflect and respect the context in which we live and seek to address the pastoral needs of our people, of all the children of God—that's why I say today is a hopeful day.

There is work to do, but hope can help us run the race that is set before us. As the prophet Isaiah said, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up on wings like eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint."

This group of bishops today are finding a way to walk together as a church. And the words that have echoed in our ears over and over again have been the words of Jesus: "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples." Not that you agree. But that you love one another. And so we are still walking together. And in our church, we are making "plenty good room" for all of God's children.

God love you. God bless you. And may God hold us all in those almighty hands of love.

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