



June 26, 2015

A Statement From Bishop Julian Dobbs regarding the decision on Marriage from the Supreme Court of the United States.

Greetings in the name of our Lord,

The College of Bishops of the Anglican Church in North America have released a statement on marriage following the decision from the Supreme Court of the United States which is copied below.

The position of our diocese on marriage is clearly and publicly stated in our canons, "The Diocese affirms our Lord's teaching that Holy Matrimony is in its nature a covenantal union, permanent and lifelong, of one man and one woman. No marriage or other conjugal union of persons shall take place in any of the Congregations or Missions of the Diocese, or with the participation of the clergy of this Diocese except in accordance with these Canons." Title III, canon 4, Section 1.

In faithful witness to Christ our Lord,

Your brother and bishop,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julian M. Dobbs". The signature is written in a cursive style and includes a small cross symbol above the first letter of the first name.

The Rt. Rev. Julian M. Dobbs
Bishop.

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"From the Beginning": God's Design for Marriage

A Statement from the Anglican Church in North America

The Archbishop and Bishops of the Anglican Church in North America have received the recent ruling by the Supreme Court of the United States of America and are deeply grieved by the stark departure from God's revealed order. We are concerned for the inevitable results from this action to change the legal understanding of marriage and family life.

While this decision grieves us, God's truth and the goodness of the order established in creation have not been changed. The kingdom of God cannot be shaken. We pray with confidence that God will reveal his glory, love, goodness, and hope to the world through his Church as we seek to follow him in faith and obedience.

Jesus Christ teaches that God is the author of marriage from the beginning of time (Matthew 19:4-6). God's design for marriage has always involved a man and a woman: "a man shall leave his father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). These truths have ordered civilization for thousands of years. Where God's designs are followed in any society, including his designs for marriage and families, the result is the greatest possible blessing and abundance of life.

The Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is often summarized as, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Because of his love, we love and care for all those who experience same-sex attraction. The Anglican Church in North America continues to welcome everyone to experience the transforming love of Jesus Christ.

Marriage is established by God for the procreation and

raising of children and for the good of society. For this reason, governments have an interest in marriage and have delegated authority from God to protect and regulate it. But no court, no legislature and no local magistrate has the authority to redefine marriage and to impose this definition on their citizens.

The United States of America, so its founders believed and taught, is a nation under God whose citizens' fundamental rights are derived from the Creator. There is no right to a relationship which is contrary to the Creator's express design. We cannot accept the Supreme Court's decision purporting to find a fundamental right to same-sex "marriage" any more than we can accept its claim to have found a right to destroy human life in the womb. We will work with others to overturn this decision, and we pray that others will join with us in this effort.

Meeting this week in Vancouver, British Columbia, we are reminded that our Canadian members have been living under a similar legal standard for the last ten years. Their situation includes minimal legal protections for those who in good conscience cannot recognize this redefinition, and it is our prayer that stronger protections will be put into place and honored in the United States.

In the meantime, we shall continue to exercise our religious freedom to perform marriages for those who come for holy matrimony as defined by our Church. The Anglican Church in North America only authorizes and only performs marriages between one man and one woman. We respect the consciences of those clergy who may decline to perform marriages as agents of the state. We ask our churches to respect such decisions and help make arrangements to minister to those seeking to be married. We are also well

aware that this ruling may create difficulties for our lay members and Christian institutions as they seek to be faithful in upholding God's design for marriage, and we will make every effort to find ways to support and stand with them.

The Church bears witness to the truth of God's Word and God's design of marriage (see attached statement on "Bearing Witness"). When government oversteps its rightful authority, "we must obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29).

Today there is no place for either triumphalism or despair, so we prayerfully and sincerely urge a spirit of charity by all. We speak out of a concern for the consequences that our people and our neighbors will suffer from an unjust and unwise decision by five justices of the Supreme Court. We call those justices to repentance, even as we echo Jesus' words, praying for God the Father to forgive them, for they know not what they have done.

We call our people to a season of prayer for marriage and offer the accompanying Litany and Prayer to guide us.

Unanimously adopted by the College of Bishops of the Anglican Church in North America.

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