

From: Leigh Neighbour
Sent: Monday, 31 October 2011 11:59 AM
To: Legal Affairs Police Corrective Services and Emerg Svc Committee
Subject: Civil Union's

The Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) Brisbane is part of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan community Churches (UFMCC) which has more than 43,000 members in more than 250 churches in 22 countries. The denomination has a long history of supporting the rights of all couples to marry.

In its 43-years history the UFMCC has taken a strong and uncompromising stand in favour of equality and social justice for all people the statement reads:

MCC Brisbane stands with MCC Churches everywhere in its commitment to marriage/Civil Union equality and justice for all people everywhere.

MCC Brisbane is committed to supporting and working for marriage/Civil Union equality for all people around the world and especially here in Australia whether they are in opposite or same-sex relationships.

Freedom of religion is a vital concern when it comes to marriage equality as not all Christian churches hold the same view regarding who they will marry.

Some Christian churches only marry those who are members of their church. Some Christian churches will marry people who have been divorced while others will not. If legal, some Christian churches will marry same-sex couples while others will choose not to. MCC Brisbane supports the right of all churches to practise their faith according to their own conscience.

Not all churches are currently allowed to practise their faith freely according to their conscience. We at MCC Brisbane strongly believe in the holy rite of marriage for all couples yet we are forbidden by Australian law to practise this aspect of our faith for our members and friends who are in same-sex relationships.

MCC Brisbane believes that marriage/Civil Union equality is more than just a secular social justice issue. It is also a religious freedom issue. Practising the right of holy matrimony for same-sex couples is as much a part of our faith as is practising the right of holy matrimony for opposite-sex couples.

Every year that goes by, another generation of young lesbian and gay citizens come of age in a society that tells them "You're not equal; you cannot grow up to marry the person that you love. And you don't deserve the same respect and same treatment as everyone else".

We've seen the tragic consequences of this year-after-year, with the bullying, suicides, and homelessness that disproportionately plague your lesbian and gay citizens.

When it comes to marriage/Civil Union's the time has come for that more embracing understanding be extended to all couples when two people love each other it is to the interest to the community, it is the interest of Godliness that they find each other that their union is sanctified that the community embraces them and they the community.

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