

General Assembly Update

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada met this past week, and one of their primary tasks was to determine whether to adopt two changes in doctrine and practice, which had been approved by a previous Assembly, by a majority of the Presbyteries, and was now undergoing final reading for approval or disapproval. The majority of Commissioners have voted in favour of adopting these changes. They are:

That the Presbyterian Church in Canada holds two parallel definitions of marriage

- As a covenant relationship between a man and a woman or
- as a covenant relationship between two adult persons.

Congregations, sessions, ruling and teaching elders are granted liberty of conscience and action on marriage.

Also, that congregations and presbyteries may call and ordain as ministers and elect and ordain as ruling elders LGBTQI persons (married or single) with the provision that liberty of conscience and action regarding participation in ordinations, inductions and installations be granted to ministers and ruling elders.

As a result of these changes, those ministers and congregations who wish to amend their practice of marriage and ordination are free to do so; those ministers and congregations who maintain a traditional understanding of marriage and ordination are not required to adopt this new understanding.

In summary, for traditional ministers and congregations (and I would number myself and Zion among them), nothing changes. However, for those ministers and congregations wishing to adopt this additional new understanding, agreement between minister and Session would have to be reached prior to such a wedding, call, or ordination taking place.

Following Sunday's service, I would be happy to meet in the Matheson Hall to address any questions you may have arising from this.

Blessings,

Reverend Douglas Rollwage