



## **Statement on the House of Bishops Press LLF Press Release and General Synod Motion**

*'In God we have a new dignity and God calls us to fullness of life'*

[Introduction to the Common Worship Baptism Service]

The motion being brought to the debate on LLF at November's General Synod further fans the flames of the mistrust and division within the Church of England. Our relationships are now so tribal, our discourse so binary, our theological engagement so defended and our conduct so cruel, that the church's culture is now so toxic that it is a barrier to the free flowing of God's immeasurable grace.

For centuries, our society failed to relate to faithful marginalised people because, through being marginalised, their voices were unacknowledged, ignored and silenced and the church colluded in this sin.

As a result of seismic shifts in our contemporary culture, these faithful marginalised voices, including people who are LGBTQIA+, have risked all to be heard and, as each voice has gained agency, so others have become bolder, fed by the Gospel imperative of liberation and justice.

And through this greater relatedness, our society has finally recognised that these vital and faithful voices are not to be feared, for not only do they offer gifts, insights and relationships that society has missed, but that over the centuries, society, the Church, and our theologies have been profoundly impoverished through their absence.

Contemporary theologies of race, gender, disability and human sexuality are inviting the Church to finally address its profound impoverishment and break down the self-imposed barriers of discrimination so that it may finally welcome all into receiving the blessing of God's immeasurable grace. This is an invitation to be embraced, not resisted.

This motion, and with it, the House of Bishops' utter failure to celebrate the committed loving relationships of people who are LGBTQIA+, turns its back on this invitation through denying them the baptismal promise of their God given dignity and failing to respond to God's baptismal call for their fullness of life.

The House of Bishops' motion is a betrayal of the apology they offered last February to the LGBTQIA+ community and sentences them to a perpetual Holy Saturday. It is a barrier to the free flowing of God's immeasurable grace and to be a barrier to God's immeasurable grace is sin, and as we hear all too often, God does not bless a sin.

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