



Statement in regard to the 'Referendum on Marriage Equality' in the Republic of Ireland, to be held on 22nd May 2015.

As a church which takes seriously our calling to engage thoroughly in our society, we call upon all Methodists to participate in the forthcoming referendum, by intelligently and prayerfully considering the issues involved. For those who are entitled to vote, we encourage all to exercise their right to do so.

We reiterate the understanding of marriage as received by the Methodist Church, and as found in the words of the Marriage service in the Methodist Worship Book. (See Appendix)

We encourage all to listen respectfully to each other in the church and society, and in doing so, to seek the will of God and the good of society.

Appendix

"It is the will of God that, in marriage, husband and wife should experience a life-long unity of heart, body and mind; comfort and companionship; enrichment and encouragement; tenderness and trust.

It is the will of God that marriage should be honoured as a way of life, in which we may know the security of love and care, and grow towards maturity. Through such marriage, children may be nurtured, family life strengthened, and human society enriched.

No one should enter into this lightly or selfishly, for marriage involves the giving of a man and a woman wholeheartedly to each other. Christ in his self-giving comes to our help, for he loves us and gave himself for us."

('Methodist Worship', p. 369)