

Presbyterian Church of Eastern Australia

Church and Nation Committee

Statement on the Marriage Referendum 2017

If you are on the Australian electoral roll you should receive in the mail a marriage ballot paper asking the question: should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry? Advocates for the 'Yes' campaign want to limit the debate strictly to the question. They don't want to talk about the impact that change will bring. But the reality is that redefining marriage will have far reaching social, moral, religious and legal consequences that will be damaging to our society. Change threatens freedom of conscience, freedom of speech, freedom of religion and will change what children will be taught in school. We are not scaremongering. One of the advocates for the 'Yes' campaign has said, 'It might be stating the obvious but same sex marriage is far from the final frontier in the battle against homophobia.' (Benjamin Law, Quarterly Essay: Moral Panic 101).

We therefore encourage you to vote 'No'.

We ask you to pray that people might be aware of the consequences of change to the Marriage Act and vote 'No'.

We want you to keep informed on this issue. For up to date information visit the website of **The Australian Christian Lobby** (www.acl.org.au), or **Family Voice Australia** (www.fava.org.au).

For a fuller statement on same sex marriage see the report presented by this committee and published in the Synod Reports May 2017.

We also need to understand that preserving a law will not save a nation. Hearts and lives need to be changed. The Gospel is the power of God that can alone change lives (Romans 1: 16). All need to be saved – the moral and the immoral – the religious and the irreligious – the heterosexual and the homosexual - for there is no one righteous – not even one. But God has shown us a way to be made right with him by placing our faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 3: 21-26).

Thus, we ask you to beg the Lord to have mercy upon our land and be gracious toward us. Pray that He might revive the church, restore our vision, and refresh our souls, to the glory of His name on earth.

'Godliness makes a nation great, but sin is a disgrace to any people' (Proverbs 14: 34).

George Ball (Convener)