

## **INQUIRY INTO SAME SEX MARRIAGE LAW IN NSW**

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## **Statement on Marriage Equality in Australia by**

### **Metropolitan Community Church Sydney**

**Metropolitan Community Church Sydney is part of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, which has over 43,000 members in over 250 churches in 22 countries.**

**In its 40 year history the UFMCC has taken a strong and uncompromising stand in favour of equality and social justice for all people, especially for members of the GLBT communities. Metropolitan Community Church Sydney stands with MCC Churches everywhere in its commitment to marriage equality and justice for all people everywhere.**

**Marriage equality is a social justice issue. MCC Sydney is committed to supporting and working for marriage equality for all people around the world and especially here in Australia whether they are in opposite or same sex relationships.**

**MCC Sydney supports the freedom of religion for all faiths. Freedom of religion is vital concern when it comes to marriage equality as not all Christians hold the same view regarding who they will marry. Rather there is great divergence of beliefs amongst Christians when it comes to marriage. 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 Sydney supports the rights of all churches to practice their faith according to their own conscious.**

**Not all churches are currently allowed to practice their faith freely according to their conscious. We at MCC Sydney strongly believe in the holy rite of marriage for all couples yet we are forbidden by Australia law to practice this aspect of our faith for our members and friends who are in same-sex relationships. The fight for Marriage equality is not solely a secular social justice issue. For MCC Sydney it is also a religious freedom issue. Practicing the rite of holy matrimony for same sex couples is as much a part of our faith as is practicing the rite of holy matrimony for opposite sex couples. As long as Australia does not allow civil marriage equality we do not have the freedom of religion to practice our faith fully.**

**MCC Sydney also supports freedom from religion. No citizen should have second class rights in Australia due to the religious bigotry of others. As such we call on the Australian Federal Government to change such laws as would be required to be changed to bring about a fair go and full civil marriage equality for all residents of this great country of ours.**

**MCC Sydney will use our resources to work in partnership with other community organisations, both secular and religious, in speaking out against those who would seek to demonize homosexuality and who oppose equal rights for same-gender couples and full marriage equality.**