

APRIL 2018

AFFIRM: BAPTISTS TOGETHER FOR LGBT+ INCLUSION is concerned by the nature of the current discourse on human sexuality and gender identity within the Baptist Union of Great Britain.

The trustees of Affirm delight in the freedom for Baptists to discern the mind of Christ, as represented in our Declaration of Principle, in their local context through the dynamic relationship between minister and membership. However, recent actions taken at an Association level in reaction to ministers and congregations who affirm same-sex marriage have been in conflict with this freedom.

We are not naïve to the tensions caused by the BUGB Declaration of Principle: many female Ministers experience such tensions and remain a part of the Baptist family and do not call for the removal of those who do not affirm their call to ministry. They continue to exist in relationship with those that hold a theology that is in disagreement with their own. It is our prayerful hope that same-sex marriage can be viewed in such a way, with the maturity of a people of God who are all journeying to bring the Kingdom in the now and the not yet.

We remain concerned that same-sex marriage continues to be incorrectly, and without Scriptural authority, used as a litmus test for Evangelical orthodoxy and as a barrier for those who are divinely called to Baptist ministry.

We call for leaders within our Union to reaffirm our Baptist identity, reinforce the rules concerning Ministerial Recognition, and to safeguard our Ministers, as well as LGBT+ people in our Baptist communities.

*Luke Dowding and Revd. Dawn Cole-Savidge,
Co-Directors,
For and on behalf of the trustees of Affirm.*