



## Official News of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion

**From Office of Presiding Bishop**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

#### **Ecumenical Catholics celebrate Supreme Court Decision LGBT couples invited to celebrate Catholic wedding**

June 26, 2015

(St. Louis, MO) -- Presiding Bishop Peter E Hickman and Presiding Bishop Elect Francis E. Krebs of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion released this statement today in response to the Supreme Court's ruling in favor of same gender marriage. Bishops Hickman and Krebs applaud the Supreme Court's action, and stand in solidarity with all LGBT individuals, couples, family members and allies in celebrating this great day.

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Today the Supreme Court released its decision on cases addressing the marriage rights and associated legal protections of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) couples. Briefly, the court ruled that the US Constitution requires that same-sex couples be allowed to marry no matter where they live, and that states may no longer withhold the right of legal marriage from same-sex couples. Same-sex marriage is legal in each and every state!

Since some have opposed the extension of legal rights and protections to same sexed couples on religious grounds, we offer our perspective on this matter as Ecumenical Catholics. We affirm the goodness of creation, and the human body, in the context of the incarnation of God in Christ. We regard the teaching of Jesus, and of the whole New Testament, as overpoweringly in favor of love of neighbor and concern for the welfare of others. Therefore, we have long maintained that LGBT persons should be accorded the same dignity and freedom that is the gift of our Creator.

The community of faith continues to develop our understanding that the love of God is present in all of creation, and therefore in every human being irrespective of race, gender or sexual orientation. The moral issue for Christians is not whether love is homosexual or heterosexual, or on a continuum between these two. The moral issue is the extent to which our love is characterized by the fruits of the Spirit (i.e., love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control). This applies to all people, whatever their sexual orientation. And it is the standard by which Christian behavior is evaluated.

Therefore, we have long welcomed gay and lesbian individuals and couples fully into our faith communities. And, we proudly count among our ordained clergy a number of gay and lesbian individuals. We embrace these sisters and brothers, welcome them into the household of faith, and provide a context in which to live out the ideals of love, fidelity and commitment to one another. In order to strengthen their shared life together in Christ we have long offered, to those who desire it, the graces of a holy union blessed by the Church. We will now also be able to offer legal marriage to LGBT couples in all of our communities.

We applaud the actions taken today by our highest Court. This decision resonates with our experience, individually and communally. We encourage others to embrace this decision. We particularly call upon religious leaders from every perspective to embrace this decision; to see in this decision the expansion of the boundaries of justice for our citizens, and an opportunity for our society to move in the direction of increased tolerance and respect for the natural diversity in all of God's creation.

Peter E. Hickman, Presiding Bishop

Francis E. Krebs, Presiding Bishop Elect  
Ecumenical Catholic Communion

Bishops Peter E. Hickman and Francis E. Krebs are available for interviews.

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