



## *St John in the Wilderness*

St. John in the Wilderness Anglican Church  
2896 Old Lakeshore Road  
Bright's Grove, Ontario  
[StJohnintheWildernessChurch@gmail.com](mailto:StJohnintheWildernessChurch@gmail.com)

January 23, 2021

St. John in the Wilderness Folk,

RE: *Bill C-6 An Act to amend the Criminal Code (conversion therapy) – Position of St. John in the Wilderness Bright's Grove*

Some of you may be aware of the conversation in Sarnia – Lambton and elsewhere in Canada regarding Bill C-6, an Act to amend the Criminal Code to ban Conversion Therapy. We became aware of the controversy and our role in it just a few days ago. The St. John in the Wilderness Executive team met this week to discuss this issue and are aligned in our path forward, outlined here to you the parish.

The article on the front page of the January 22, 2021 edition of The Sarnia Journal (linked to below) provides perspective on the issues involved as well as some of the controversy it has brought to churches in Sarnia – Lambton, including ours. The day prior to this article being published, we sent the letter attached to our Member of Parliament Marilyn Gladu. The letter asks her to represent St. John in the Wilderness Bright's Grove in parliament by supporting Bill C-6 in its current form. We intend post this letter on our [website](#) tomorrow. Ms. Gladu wrote back and also telephoned Deb and indicated she would not support the amendment to Bill C-6 in its current form. We respectfully asked her again and she respectfully declined.

- [MP Marilyn Gladu supports church freedom on 'conversion therapy' bill - The Sarnia Journal](#)

The purpose of this communication to the congregation is to keep you aware of what is going on, everyone on the parish list received a copy via email or hardcopy. The letter and outreach to Ms. Gladu speak to a core value of our church and the Anglican Church of Canada as reflected by the letter we attached from The Most Venerable Linda Nicholls, Primate of The Anglican Church of Canada. She sent her letter to the Canadian Minister of Justice on November 17, 2020.

Social media has changed how quickly issues can move and it is important we respond to this issue rapidly or we will be perceived as not caring and perhaps even supporting our Member of Parliament in this issue, which we do not. In addition, the House of Commons resumes sitting Monday, January 25 and providing input prior to that is important. The Venerable Kristen Aikman, Archdeacon of Lambton-Kent, also sent Marilyn Gladu a note this week asking her to support the bill as written and received a similar response.

We urge you to read the Journal Article as well as our note and Linda Nicholl's note. If you have additions or concerns, as always, please just email or call either of us (Wardens Peter and Deb). We are

additionally grateful to Grace United Church folk for bringing this to our attention earlier this week, enabling us to provide thoughtful and timely input this week. Thanks also to some of the younger members of our parish, particularly Jesse and MacKenzie Macht, Haley Walker and Ingrid Schmid for patiently explaining to us how social media works today and the importance of a response (which we rapidly learned was correct).

As mentioned above, our Primate Linda Nicholls articulated our position eloquently and meaningfully in her letter of November 17 to the Canadian Minister of Justice and we are including part of it here, in addition to attaching the whole letter (a link to it on the ACC website is in our letter to Marilyn attached):

“...Our faith tradition affirms the dignity of all persons, including those persons across the LGBTQ2SIA+ spectrum. We recognize that members of the LGBTQ2SIA+ communities continue to disproportionately experience marginalization, family estrangement, and exclusion in a predominantly heterosexual and gender-binary culture, negating this dignity which we know God to have given to all. Conversion therapy seeks to change core elements of individuals by attempting to change their sexual orientation or gender identity. The ACC does not support this dangerous and abusive practice.

In 2010 the General Synod of the Anglican Church of Canada passed a resolution calling on the church at all levels to “embrace the outcast and stand against the abuse and torment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons.” It is in the spirit of this resolution that today we stand against the harmful practice of conversion therapy for LGBTQ2SIA+ persons in Canada. Such practices are hostile to a person’s identity and an affront to their dignity.

I recognize the proposed Bill C-6 as an important step in protecting Canadians from the damaging effects of conversion therapy and strongly encourage the passing of this important legislation.

Yours in Christ,

The Most Rev. Linda Nicholls Primate, The Anglican Church of Canada”

It makes us both proud and humbled to be part of the Anglican church and this parish. We hope Bill C-6 passes soon.

Yours in Faith,

Deb Walker and Peter Langille  
Wardens, St. John in the Wilderness Church Bright’s Grove

Attachment: January 2021 Letter to Member of Parliament Marilyn Gladu from Wardens Deb Walker and Peter Langille, St. John in the Wilderness Church, Bright’s Grove.

cc: St. John in the Wilderness Church Executive Team – Ingrid Schmid, Dave Hains, Brian Fogg, Brent Anderson, Shirley MacKenzie, Peter Langille and Deb Walker

bcc: St. John in the Wilderness Parish List