



Moderator  
**Rev David Baker**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The President of the Assembly, Dr Deidre Palmer, has communicated with the church regarding the decisions of the 15th Assembly.

The Assembly was a comprehensive time of open, honest, listening and discerning. I saw the theological, geographic, demographic, and cultural diversity of the church in deep dialogue. I believe it was a place where the members could discern; we were wonderfully led in worship and bible study. We experienced the prayerful support of the church, including from our ecumenical partners from Asia, Africa and the Pacific.

I commend the decisions to you.

I refer to the decision to celebrate marriage for both opposite gender and same gender couples. I believe it is the prayerful and faithful discernment of the Assembly, which decided with a strong majority – significantly more than two thirds – to accept both definitions of marriage. The resolution is available [here](#).

I realise that it will be difficult for some to accept, while for others it will be something for which they have deeply desired. I encourage you to hear that the Assembly seeks to be respectful to the faith of the faithful, to scripture, and to reason and experience.

In the weeks ahead, I am making myself available to congregations and presbyteries so that we can explore what this discernment means for us.

It is clear that different understandings on marriage in the church are sincerely and faithfully held. The resolution is a way we can find a place to be together; to be open to faithful disciples who hold different views from our own.

Our unity is founded on our being baptised into Christ. We are called to honour that, by receiving others in Christ, by being Christ-like to others, and to seek to build a community where the image of God in all of us is valued and celebrated.

This is our hope.

With you in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Baker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke.

(Rev) David Baker

Moderator