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Home > Statement on Pemberton v Inwood

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Press Release from Canon Jeremy Pemberton

The Court of Appeal has examined the issues in my claim against Bishop Richard Inwood and has dismissed them. I am grateful for the expertise of the Court, though naturally disappointed in the judgment.

I have reached a settlement agreement with the Church of England that I will not pursue this claim any further. They, on their part, will not apply for costs against me.

I am more grateful than I can say to Sean Jones QC, Helen Trotter, Justin Gau, and Susanna Reynhart of Thompson Snell & Passmore. Since the end of the original tribunal hearing they have all represented me pro bono with great skill and commitment. We have worked together for three and a half years on this case, and I count myself very blessed to have had them alongside me every step of the way. I am also very grateful to Bishop Alan Wilson, my expert witness; to my family for their support; and to the countless people who have written, messaged, telephoned and spoken to me expressing their solidarity.

The Church of England has established through this process that it can continue to discriminate legally against some LGBT people in relation to their employment, even where that employment is not within the boundaries of the church's jurisdiction. This will seem to most people in the UK today an extraordinary result, and not one that will help commend the claims of Christ to the nation. An official position that regards the loves and commitments of LGBT people, including clergy, as sinful by definition is years overdue for thorough-going revision. The need for a revolution in attitudes and practices in the Church towards this minority is still acute ? we continue to wait for real change.

I hope that I shall be permitted to return to active ministry at some point. Had I committed an infraction that was dealt with under the Clergy Discipline Measure, then I might have been told I was being suspended for a definite period, with the hope and expectation of restoration after that. Because I was never dealt with under any process, I have no permission to officiate at all, and no indication of when I might hope to have that restored. Everything is in the hands of, and at the will of individual bishops.

Finally, I owe most to Laurence Cunnington. He has been rock-like and constant in his support and love in this, as in all things. We look forward to celebrating our fourth wedding anniversary soon. I cannot thank him enough for the honour he does me in being my husband.

For further comment please contact me on 07894 906230 or follow on Twitter @canonjpemberton

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