

National Black Church Initiative

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For Immediate Release

The National Black Church Initiative Reaches Out to the Gay Community in Light of the Forthcoming Supreme Court Decision Concerning Gay Marriage.

NBCI will continue to advocate for a strong religious liberty clause.

Washington, DC – The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI), a faith-based coalition of 34,000 churches comprised of 15 denominations and 15.7 million African American churchgoers is continuing efforts to generate civil discourse between the Black Church and the gay community. The surprisingly lack of dialogue between both communities has cultivated unnecessary suspicion and mistrust for which is neither beneficial nor warranted. We believe in the importance of civil discourse with the gay community or any community for which differences and/or similarities in principles might exist.

Our immediate motivation, however, is in response to what many constitutional experts and religious leaders anticipate the affirmation actions of the Supreme Court concerning gay marriage and the legal status of homosexuality in our culture. Rev. Anthony Evans, President to the National Black Church Initiative declares, “The Supreme Court is about to redefine the concept of marriage in America by declaring everyone has a right to marriage despite their sexual orientation. The church strongly believes the Supreme Court is about to abolish the

institution of biblical marriage....a marriage between a man and a woman.” This is such an extraordinary ruling bound to cause great anguish in bodies of religions all across the world. Demonstrated acts of unconditional love for our gay brothers and sisters must be exhibited to ensure a smooth transition within and among all communities through the midst of this sensitive legal and moral issue.

This is why the National Black Church Initiative is reaching out to our gay brothers and sisters in anticipation of preventing any verbal, physical or emotional acts against the gay community. We strongly believe in the effectualness of prayer and having a venue for open dialogue and communication as the appropriate solutions going forward. Therefore we are calling for and invite the leadership of the gay community to visit our houses of Christian worship as we seek to show ourselves friendly and engage in this great journey of unconditional love.

Notwithstanding, the Christian church (re)affirm commitment to biblical marriage as we can neither change nor apologize for this biblical principle. To consider us anti-gay and not pro-Christian for our religious beliefs completely undermines this historic gesture of goodwill. Paul teaches us through the epistles that we must respect civil law and, if gay marriage is the law of the land, we will respect and acknowledge the fact there is an emerging new marriage tradition created by the state. Just like there are different liturgies of marriage between different Christian traditions and other religions, we imagine the gay community will develop their marriage liturgy to reflect their own tradition and join the rainbow of a pluralistic religious American community. This does not mean the church will be forced nor should it be obligated to incorporate this definition and exemplification within the context of Christian church liturgy.

We earnestly appeal to our gay brothers and sisters not to try to forcefully dictate these religious protocols within traditional religious communities. We are afraid if the gay community assumes this approach once the Supreme Court has ruled there will be great negative push back toward acceptance of gay marriage. Hence, each Christian denomination or religious traditions within the context of the American religious culture is urged to develop protocols to appropriately and lovingly be able to address the state’s new definition of marriage. These protocols should not undermine or destroy the self-worth and dignity of our gay brothers and sisters nor should they redefine the biblical stance of the Christian Church on marriage as between one man and one woman. NBCI assumes this extraordinary step to seek effectual prayer and open dialogue before the Supreme Court rules on this decision concerning gay marriage.

About NBCI

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI) is a coalition of 34,000 African American and Latino churches working to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare, technology, education, housing, and the environment. NBCI’s mission is to provide critical wellness information to all of its members, congregants, churches and the public. The National Black Church Initiative’s methodology is utilizing faith and sound health science.

The National Black Church Initiative's purpose is to partner with major organizations and officials whose main mission is to reduce racial disparities in the variety of areas cited above. NBCI offers faith-based, out-of-the-box and cutting edge solutions to stubborn economic and social issues. NBCI's programs are governed by credible statistical analysis, science based strategies and techniques, and methods that work. Visit our website at www.naltblackchurch.com.