

WE WON!

A statement by Rev. Troy D. Perry and Phillip Ray De Blicek Plaintiffs In The California Supreme Court Marriage Case

STATEMENT:

Today the California Supreme Court ruled to legally recognize our marriage, which took place under Canadian law in Toronto, Canada, on July 16, 2003.

The Court's ruling says that our marriage is not less than or different from other marriages in this country; the court ruled that our marriage is equal in the eyes of the law to all other marriages.

We thank God that our prayers have been answered! This is a battle that our church, the Metropolitan Community Churches, has fought since I performed the first public same-sex wedding ceremony in the United States -- in Huntington Park, California, in 1969.

Today we both give honor to God for this victory.

On this momentous day, we want to acknowledge that we stand on the shoulders of others before us who fought for justice and blazed trails for equality, and who made this day possible.

One of our heroes died this month. Mildred Loving, an African-American who, along with her husband Richard, a white man, won the battle to legalize interracial marriage in the United States. Mildred Loving paid a steep price, solely for marrying the only man she ever loved. She was arrested, convicted, and banished from her home state of Virginia. Mildred, a soft-spoken, gentle woman, avoided the spotlight, but for the issue was always simple. In a 1967 interview on CBS News, she said, "I think marrying who you want is a right and no man should have anything to do with it. It's a God-given right."

Mildred Loving also said, "I am not a political person, but I am proud that Richard's and my name is on a court case that can help reinforce the love, the commitment, the fairness, and the family that so many people, black or white, young or old, gay or straight, seek in life. I support the freedom to marry for all. That's what Loving, and loving, are all about."

We also want to thank Robin Tyler and her partner Diane Olson. We are honored to have partnered with Robin and Diane to become the first two couples to initiate this lawsuit seeking marriage equality for all people in California and California's recognition of same-sex marriages performed in Canada.

We are deeply thankful for our attorney, Gloria Allred, and her law partners, Michael Masoko and John Goldberg, for taking this marriage equality case pro bono and arguing it all the way to the California Supreme Court. We could not have won this landmark case had it not been for Gloria Allred's deeply-held conviction that all people deserve equality -- including marriage equality -- under the law. And we are thankful to our denomination of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) for underwriting the court filing fees in this case.

We give honor to God for the Metropolitan Community Church of Toronto, under the direction of The Reverend Dr. Brent Hawkes, and their attorney, Mr. Doug Elliott. These leaders argued before the Supreme Court of Canada and won the right for all persons, including same-sex couples, to be legally married there. Had it not been for their groundbreaking and historic work, Phillip and I would not be married today. Everywhere we go, we proudly show our wedding bands to others and say, "Thank God for Canada!"

Tonight, we will go to the Metropolitan Community Church of Los Angeles (4953 Franklin Avenue, Los Angeles 90027, in the Los Feliz area) to give thanks for this victory for which we have worked and prayed for the past 39 years.

A press conference will take place after a short service of thanksgiving, beginning at 6 PM.

For Additional Information and Interviews, Contact:
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