

Assemblies of God in Australia Relaxes Divorce Policy

The AG in Australia recently met to relax its divorce policy and to overturn its strict alcohol consumption guidelines.



At its 36th Bi-Annual National Conference held April 23-24, the Assemblies of God (AG) in Australia amended its Divorce, Marriage and Remarriage Policy to allow divorce on the grounds of proven domestic violence. An estimated 850 pastors and leaders representing some of the 1,130 AG churches across Australia voted on the new policy. Previously the AG in Australia allowed for divorce only on the grounds of adultery.

“This is an important and serious issue which affects many Australians,” said pastor Alun Davies, national vice president of the AG. “As a movement we need to bring biblical perspectives on contemporary issues, and ensure we are continually providing help and support in difficult situations. We value and are committed to upholding the marriage covenant, and we consider divorce a last resort.”

At the conference, the AG in Australia also introduced a Minister's Code of Conduct, which provides guidelines to churches and leaders on a range of moral and ethical issues. The new code allows AG pastors to consume alcohol. However it also urges extreme caution when drinking, and states that drunkenness and the use of illegal drugs is prohibited.

The amended Divorce, Marriage and Remarriage Policy and the new Minister's Code of Conduct were the culmination of a comprehensive two-year consultation process, which received input from AG pastors around Australia. The conference marked the 70th year of the AG in Australia, the largest Pentecostal group in the nation.