



Prince Harry sits with his best man, Prince William, before the wedding begins in St George's Chapel at Windsor Castle on Saturday. DOMINIC LIPINSKI/GETTY IMAGES



Meghan Markle walks down the aisle on Saturday. Her veil featured a distinctive flora from each of the 53 Commonwealth countries. DANNY LAWSON/ASSOCIATED PRESS



Prince Harry and Ms. Markle leave the chapel after the wedding ceremony. Now, as the Duke and Duchess of Sussex, Harry and Ms. Markle are expected to take up a host of charitable causes aimed mainly at working with young people. JONATHAN BRADY/REUTERS



The sermon by Most Rev. Michael Curry, the head of the Episcopal Church in the United States, has been cited as a particular highlight. OWEN HUMPHREYS/GETTY IMAGES



Bridemaids and page boys congregate during the wedding ceremony in St George's Chapel on Saturday. OWEN HUMPHREYS/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Royal wedding: Bishop's sermon 'blew the place open,' drew 40,000 tweets a minute

FROM A1

Canada was represented by a bunchberry (*cornus canadensis*), a flowering plant found on forest floors that some consider to be Canada's unofficial national flower. Bishop Curry's passionate message drew 40,000 tweets a minute, making it by far the most talked-about moment of the service on social media. It also caused a stir among the tens of thousands of people who watched the wedding on giant television screens set up in a park outside Windsor Castle.

"To me it was just so not what you would expect a royal wedding service to be. It was just fantastic," said Gabrielle Furze, who, along with her 12-year-old daughter, Jorja, was among the 2,640 people invited inside the castle grounds for the service. "I loved [Bishop Curry], he was fantastic. I was really surprised by his sermon because I wasn't expecting it. I actually had a few chuckles to myself because I could see some of the older royals not being too impressed by it."

Victoria Dunn, who also watched from outside the castle, said she was taken aback by Bishop Curry's dynamic speaking style, adding: "It was lovely, really emotional." Bishop Curry's comments about the power of love "in any form or experience of it" appeared aimed at the Church of England's ban on gay marriage. The Episcopal Church is part of the global Anglican Communion and it falls under the titular leadership of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Rev. Justin Welby, who directs the Church of England. Bishop Curry has been a strong advocate of LGBT rights and the U.S. church has been sanctioned by the Communion for blessing same-sex marriages. As an African-American, Bishop Curry has often drawn comparisons between the mistreatment of black people and the bigotry experienced by much of the LGBT community. "What I believe about human equality and dignity is grounded in what I believe about the love of God," he told The New York Times in 2016.



Meghan Markle and Harry wave as they leave Britain's Windsor Castle after their wedding on Saturday. STEVE PARSONS/GETTY IMAGES

During Saturday's service, he also touched on poverty and inequality, quoting from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and telling the 600 guests inside the chapel: "When love is the way, we actually treat each other, well, like we are actual family." The sermon appeared to catch many members of the royal family off-guard and some could be seen visibly squirming as they listened. The Queen, who is the "Defender of the Faith and the Supreme Governor of the Church of England," had little reaction, but others inside the chapel looked surprised, while some smiled and laughed along with the bishop. Outside the church,

social media lit up with comments. "Rev. Michael Curry could almost make me a believer," former Labour Party leader Ed Miliband, a noted atheist, said on Twitter. Added BBC anchor Jeremy Vine in a tweet: "The preacher is doing 50 in a 30 zone and it's brilliant." Archbishop Welby, who has been trying to bridge the church's divide over gay marriage, is reported to have suggested Bishop Curry to Harry and Ms. Markle. After the service, he had high praise for the sermon. Bishop Curry "just blew the place open," said the archbishop, who presided over the vows during the service. "It was fantastic.

You could see people caught up in it and excited by it. ... It was unconventional by royal wedding standards in some ways, but it had passion and if you don't have passion at a wedding, when will you have passion?" Bishop Curry told the media afterward that the wedding was "a real joyful thing because there was a sense in which you had the fullness of the church represented in many respects." Bringing everybody together "happened today, in different ways, different songs, different perspectives, different worlds and all of it came together and gave God thanks," he added.



Guests at the wedding included, from left, Catherine, Duchess of Cambridge; Canadian fashion stylist Jessica Mulrone; Meghan Markle's mother, Doria Ragland; Prince Charles; Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall; the Queen; and Prince Philip. LEFT, MIDDLE: JANE BARLOW/AFP/GETTY IMAGES; ANDREW MILLIGAN/GETTY IMAGES



Harry and Ms. Markle chose a weekend for the ceremony instead of following royal protocol by marrying on a weekday. ANDREW MATTHEWS/REUTERS