Consultation Questions
Registration of civil partnership | Same sex marriage: a consultation

**Question 1: Do you agree that legislation should be changed so that civil partnerships could be registered through religious ceremonies?**

No, After discussion, this is the response of the Elders who make up the Kirk Session and who lead Benbecula Church of Scotland. As a church, in obedience to God's Word, the Bible, we view homosexual sex as sinful; to be repented of and forgiven by the grace of Christ. All are welcome to join in worship of God in Christ, whatever their orientation or practice; but in trusting Christ, by His grace, there is a turning from sin and a turning to God - to live in purity, in obedience to God's Word and will. What is more, civil partnership were introduced specifically to be 'non-religious'. We cannot
understand why anyone who is not a Christian, who is living in a way antithetical to Christian truth, should have any desire to make godless vows before a holy God. We fear this is another anti-Christian intrusion.

**Question 2: Do you think that the proposals in England and Wales on registration of civil partnerships in religious premises would be appropriate for Scotland?**

No, See our response to Q1.

**Question 3: Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in religious premises?**

No, See our response to Q1.

**Question 4: Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in other places agreed between the celebrant and the couple?**

No, See our response to Q1

**Question 5: Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to register civil partnerships?**

Yes, To require our church to register civil partnerships would be a serious infringement of our religious liberty; imposing homosexual 'rights' to the serious detriment of Christian liberty. As a church we believe the Bible to be our prime directive for faith and life. It would be inimical to obedience to God's word and will to act in a way that condones or blesses what God condemns as sin.

**Question 6: Do you consider that religious celebrants should not be allowed to register civil partnerships if their religious body has decided against registering civil partnerships?**

Yes, This question appears disingenuous - seemingly encouraging division within the church.

**Question 7: Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to register civil partnerships?**

Yes, It would be iniquitous to require a Christian minister to officiate at a ceremony he believes to be godless and sinful.

**Question 8: Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants do not have to register civil partnerships against their will?**

Option 2, If the Scottish Government insists on re-defining marriage and forcing this legislation we would most certainly opt-out. However we hope and pray that the Government will see sense and withdraw from any proposed change in the law.

**Question 9: Religious bodies may not wish their premises to be used to register civil partnerships. Do you agree that no legislative provision is required to ensure religious premises cannot be used against the wishes of the relevant religious body?**

No, If the Scottish Government presses ahead with this legislation then it will be critical that our church is afforded statutory protection to guard our being forced to allow our premises to be used against our wishes. We fear that if the law is changed it will not be long before homosexual couples/groups are pursuing through the courts Christian churches who refuse to solemnise same-sex marriage.
**Question 10: Do you agree that the law in Scotland should be changed to allow same sex marriage?**

No, To redefine marriage to include same-sex denies our Christian understanding of marriage as only and ever between one man and one woman. Such a change would be blatant disobedience to God's word and will. The Bible is crystal clear that God invented marriage, ordaining marriage as between a man and woman. No Government has the authority to alter God's creation ordinance. We are also concerned that any change in legislation to broaden the understanding of 'marriage' would have a detrimental effect on the institution of marriage, accelerating family breakdown with hugely detrimental effects for children and sorry consequences for society as a whole. We believe that God instituted marriage for the mutual benefit of husband and wife, for the nurture of children and for the stability of society. It seems clear that children are nurtured best when they are cared for by father and mother.

**Question 11: Do you agree that religious bodies and celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?**

Yes, See our response to Q1 & Q10

**Question 12: Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex civil marriage only?**

No, See our response to Q10 The questions posed seem to be intended to confuse, as if the Government is determined to catch us out; asking the same question in multiple different ways, looking for the slightest excuse as ammunition for pressing ahead with same-sex marriage legislation.

**Question 13: Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex marriage, both religious and civil?**

No, See our response to Q10 & Q12

**Question 14: Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?**

Yes, 'Same-sex marriage' is a contradiction in terms! Not only should churches not be required to solemnise same-sex marriage - it should not be countenanced as a possibility.

**Question 15: Do you consider that religious celebrants should not be allowed to solemnise same sex marriages if their religious body has decided against solemnising same sex marriage?**

Yes, Once again the Scottish Government seems to be meddling in church affairs, looking to cause division; looking for any excuse to proceede with same-sex marriage legislation.

**Question 16: Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?**

Yes, How many times must we say it? Same-sex marriage is sinful.

**Question 17: Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants are not forced to allow same sex marriage?**

Option 2, If the Scottish Government insists on same-sex marriage legislation (which we hope
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<tr>
<th>Question 18: Religious bodies may not wish their premises to be used to solemnise same sex marriage. Do you agree that no legislative provision is required to ensure religious premises cannot be used against the wishes of the relevant religious body?</th>
<th>No, If the Scottish Government insists on same-sex marriage legislation we urge statutory protection that guarantees that no one will be able to use our church buildings against our wishes.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 19: If Scotland should introduce same-sex marriage, do you consider that civil partnerships should remain available?</td>
<td>No, We do not want same-sex marriage or civil partnerships - both are sinful disobedience to God's revealed word and will.</td>
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<td>Question 20: Do you have any other comments?</td>
<td>No,</td>
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