Sandra Jack
2W St Andrews house
Edinburgh
EH13DG
5th December 2011

Dear Madam

Please find the enclosed petition about same sex marriage. As the signatories' were not asked whether or not they wanted their names made public we feel that names should not be made public.

We are happy for our response to be made public as a group (members of the Methodist Church in Shetland) and for the printed part of the petition to be made public, with the number of signatories' (82)

Yours faithfully
We the undersigned, who attend the Methodist Church in Shetland, understand that as an institution, marriage is supported by the Bible and long predates the existence of any state or government. It was not created by government and should not be changed by them. Instead, recognising the innumerable benefits which marriage brings to society the Scottish Government should act to protect and uphold it not attack or dismantle it. Under UK law, the legal definition of marriage is the "union of a man and a woman". Since all the legal rights of marriage are already available to homosexual couples through civil partnership it is clear that this proposal by the Scottish Government is not about rights, but is an attempt to redefine marriage for the whole of society at the behest of a small minority of activists.

We are concerned that the current proposal would undermine the sanctity of 'marriage'. The Government’s intention to permit religious bodies to register same-sex unions and celebrate same sex 'marriages', however framed, constitutes pressure to initiate these practices, and, as such, is already beginning to infringe the legitimate religious freedom it claims to be trying to protect. Therefore, for these reasons, we would object to this proposal aimed at the redefining of marriage.