CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

The registration of civil partnerships

Question 1  (Paragraphs 2.12 and 2.13)

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

Yes [ ]
No [x]
Don’t know [ ]

Please give reasons for your answer.

Comments

BECAUSE WE FOLLOW THE TEACHING OF GOD'S WORD (THE HOLY BIBLE) WE COULD NOT ACCEPT SUCH ACTIVITY IN A CHRISTIAN CHURCH BUILDING TO BE ACCEPTABLE. WE HAVE NO INTEREST IN THE AFFAIRS OF OTHER RELIGIONS

Question 2  (Paragraphs 2.14 to 2.19)

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

Yes [ ]
No [x]
Don’t know [ ]

If you have answered no, please explain what elements of the proposals in England and Wales you consider inappropriate for Scotland.

Comments

SCOTLAND HAS A HISTORY OF MARTYRDOM FOR THE FREEDOM TO STAND BY THE WORD OF GOD.
Question 3  (Paragraphs 2.20 to 2.24)

Do you agree with allowing religious celebrants to register civil partnerships in religious premises?

Yes  
No  
Don't know  

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

WE BELIEVE THAT TO OPEN THE DOOR TO PERSONS WHOSE CONDUCT IS DIRECTLY IN VIOLATION OF GOD'S WORD WOULD BE A BREACH OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO HIM.

Question 4  (Paragraphs 2.20 to 2.24)

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

Yes  
No  
Don't know  

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

OUR DISAGREEMENT WITH THIS PROPOSAL WOULD BE APPLICABLE ONLY TO A CHRISTIAN CEREMONY. WE WOULD NOT HAVE ANY VIEW ON A CEREMONY APPLICABLE TO ANOTHER RELIGION.
Question 5  (Paragraph 2.25)

Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to register civil partnerships?

Yes  ✔
No  
Don't know  

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS HAVE NO RELEVANCE TO CHRISTIANITY. CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH ONLY RECOGNISE THE MARRIAGE PARTNERSHIP OF ONE MAN WITH ONE WOMAN

Question 6  (Paragraphs 2.26 and 2.27)

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  ✔
No  
Don't know  

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

WE WOULD ONLY HAVE A VIEW ON THIS IN SO FAR AS IT APPLIES TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.
Question 7 (Paragraphs 2.28 to 2.30)

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

Yes ☑️
No ☐
Don't know ☐

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

This question is not clear in its intention.

Question 8 (Paragraphs 2.31 to 2.35)

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

Do you favour:

Option 1 ☐
Option 2 ☑️
Neither ☐

If you have another option, please describe it.

Comments
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<tr>
<th>Question 9  (Paragraphs 2.36 to 2.40)</th>
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<td>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?</td>
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<td>Yes</td>
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<td>No</td>
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<td>Don't know</td>
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Please give reasons for your answer

Comments
Same sex marriage

Question 10 (Paragraphs 3.11 and 3.12)
Do you agree that the law in Scotland should be changed to allow same sex marriage?

Yes [ ]
No [✓]
Don't know [ ]

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments
WE BELIEVE THAT MARRIAGE IS BETWEEN ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN ONLY. TO RE-DEFINE MARRIAGE AND INCLUDE PARTNERSHIPS OF SAME-SEX COUPLES WOULD BE ABSOLUTELY UNACCEPTABLE.

Question 11 (Paragraph 3.13)
Do you agree that religious bodies and celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

Yes [✓]
No [ ]
Don't know [ ]

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments
WE BELIEVE THAT IF SUCH A REQUIREMENT WAS IMPOSED LEGALLY, A CHRISTIAN WOULD HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE TO DISOBEDING SUCH LEGISLATION.
Question 12  (Paragraphs 3.14 to 3.18)

Do you agree with the introduction of same-sex civil marriage only?

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<td>Yes</td>
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Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

*IF A GOVERNMENT IS FOOLISH ENOUGH TO INTRODUCE SUCH A CHARADE IT WILL HAVE TO LIVE WITH THE CONSEQUENCES*

Question 13  (Paragraph 3.19)

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

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Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

*REASONS ALREADY EXPRESSED*
Question 14  (Paragraphs 3.23 and 3.24)
Do you agree that religious bodies should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?
Yes ☑
No ☐
Don’t know ☐
Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

REASONS ALREADY EXPLAINED. THE REPEITION OF THESE QUESTIONS ARE REWORDED TO CONFUSE THE ONE REPLYING.

Question 15  (Paragraphs 3.25 and 3.26)
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 ☑
No ☐
Don’t know ☐

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

IF WE PROFESS TO BELONG TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH WE SHOULD BE BOUND BY THE HOLY RIBLE’S TEACHING.
Question 16 (Paragraphs 3.27 and 3.28)
Do you agree that individual religious celebrants should not be required to solemnise same sex marriage?

Yes [ ]
No [ ]
Don't know [ ]

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

THEY WOULD BE JUSTIFIED IN
DISOBEDIENT SUCH A REQUIREMENT

Question 17 (Paragraphs 3.29 to 3.33)

Which of the options do you favour to ensure that religious bodies and celebrants do not have to solemnise same sex marriage against their will?

Do you favour:
Option 1 [ ]
Option 2 [ ]
Neither [ ]
Don't know [ ]

Please give reasons for your answer and if you have another option, please describe it.

Comments
Question 18 (Paragraphs 3.34 to 3.39)

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?

Yes ☐
No ☑
Don't know ☐

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

Question 19 (Paragraph 3.41)

If Scotland should introduce same-sex marriage, do you consider that civil partnerships should remain available?

Yes ☐
No ☐
Don't know ☐

NO ANSWER.

Please give reasons for your answer

Comments

CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS ARE A MATTER FOR THE GOVERNMENT. THERE IS NO PLACE FOR SUCH ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN THE TRUE CHURCH OF GOD, Whose HEAD IS JESUS CHRIST.
Question 20  (Paragraph 4.19)

Do you have any other comments?

Yes ☑
No ☐

We are particularly interested in your views on:

- potential implications of the proposals for transgender people (paragraph 3.42)
- possible transitional arrangements (paragraphs 3.43 and 3.44);
- recognition of Scottish same sex marriages elsewhere (paragraphs 3.45 to 3.49);
- any comments on forced marriage (paragraphs 3.51 and 3.52)
- any comments on sham marriage (paragraph 3.53)
- potential financial implications (paragraphs 4.01 to 4.08);
- potential equality implications (paragraphs 4.09 to 4.14).

Comments

WE ENCLOSE A COPY OF A LETTER ALREADY SENT TO TRICIA MARWICK MSP, PRESIDING OFFICER OF THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT. IT SETS OUT OUR VIEWS ON THIS MATTER.
The Mustard Seed Fellowship
The Mustard Seed Hall
64 Well Road
Glenrothes
Fife
KY7 5DS

And the Lord said, “If you had faith like a mustard seed, you would say to this mulberry tree, be uprooted and be planted in the sea; and it would obey you.”

(Luke 7:6)

Date: 05 November 2011

Tricia Marwick MSP
Presiding Officer
The Scottish Parliament
Edinburgh
EH99 1SP

Dear Mrs Marwick

We write to you on behalf our fellow Christians in the Mustard Seed Fellowship who meet at the Mustard Seed Hall, Well Road, Glenrothes. Although less well known and much more inconspicuous than most other buildings used for Christian worship, the Mustard Seed Hall is by far the oldest and longest established meeting place used by Christians in the town of Glenrothes. Its origin as such can be traced back by documentary evidence to 1875 and it has been used continuously since.

We are an independent, evangelical church fellowship seeking to follow the teachings of the Bible, which we believe to be the authoritative, infallible, divinely inspired Word of God. We are not homophobic, which seems to be the politically convenient buzzword currently used to describe those who, on the basis of Christian faith, cannot reconcile the practise of homosexuality with the teaching of God’s Word. The word “homophobia” describes a fear or hatred of homosexuals. We neither fear those who choose this lifestyle, nor do we hate them. Our response to such would be to invite them to share with us the teaching of God’s Word and avail themselves of the salvation that it offers through the
atoning death and resurrection of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Every one of our services is freely open to all. The only restriction, a voluntary one, is participation in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, which remembers Christ in His death, more commonly known as Communion. According to Biblical teaching only those who have been born again by the Spirit of God and whose manner of life is in keeping with the teaching of God’s Word qualify for such sacramental privilege.

These opening remarks are to establish our beliefs as being free from prejudice based on any cultural, dogmatic or human basis, but only as those founded on an unshakeable belief in the supremacy of God’s Word and a personal faith in Jesus Christ.

The purpose of this letter is to protest at the Scottish Government’s intention to re-define the institution of marriage and its presumption to have the right to impose legislation affecting the Christian church contrary to the Word of God, which alone must be its charter and authority. Whether we approve or disapprove, civil partnerships make legal provision for those who choose a homosexual lifestyle to enjoy the state’s acknowledgment and approval. If a particular church and its constitution permit it, there is presently no legal impediment to such persons to making some sort of formal commitment within a building normally reserved for Christian worship. We must make it clear that The Mustard Seed Hall would not be available for this purpose.

To go beyond this and re-define the status of marriage is entirely beyond the moral and, we contend, the legal authority of any government. Marriage is the union of a man and a woman. This is enshrined in God’s Holy Word and actually also in both The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and The European Convention of Human rights. While Bible believing Christians would find their authority and guide in the former, those who choose to disregard Divine guidance are faced with the fact that the following two man-made charters do not give those of the same sex who desire to be “married” to one another that privilege or right under law. For thousands of years marriage has been recognised as the main building block in civilised society and is essential to the orderly continuance of the human race. Mr Gordon Wilson, a former SNP leader, and the Rev. David Robertson of St Peter’s Free Church, Dundee succinctly put it in their response to the Scottish Government’s consultation on this matter when they wrote, “Marriage is essential to the human condition; same-sex unions are a biological cul-de-sac”.

The Bible believing Christian community is accused of "phobia" in their opposition to a law that is clearly superfluous, irrelevant and contrary to the benefit of society. Actually the gay anti-Christian lobby is guilty of manifesting its own phobia. Whenever any reservations or opposition to these proposals by the Scottish Government are expressed, there is an immediate and vitriolic response from the homosexual lobby. MSP John Mason's attempt to modify the SNP Government's proposals was quickly condemned as an "ill informed homophobic rant" by one prominent Internet political blogger. Patrick Harvey MSP and a number of Mr Mason's fellow nationalist MSP's used the media to attack him in a most intemperate fashion. Mr Harvey is not in a position to claim a disinterest in the issue, being openly bi-sexual and therefore publicly disdainful of the Christian faith. We could cite many more examples of anti-Christian phobia approved and endorsed by the authorities, such as the last administration's funding of the public desecration of the Holy Scriptures in Glasgow. How ironic that Glasgow's original motto was "Let Glasgow Flourish By The Preaching Of Thy Word And The Praising Of Thy Name."

Those who espouse the homosexual lifestyle are in fact a tiny minority. They enjoy massive publicity and influence out of all proportion to their incidence in society. The Scottish Government's bias in their favour is underlined by the fact that its Equality Unit has funded Lesbian and Gay organisations to the tune of £5.94 million since the 2001/2002 fiscal year, while it has given £3.82 million to religious groups. Of this sum only £595,223 was given to Christian churches. If any unbiased and independent observer cared to study these figures and consider the tremendous work that many Christian churches do in fighting poverty and providing social support in deprived areas, an eyebrow might well be raised! Why should organisations that represent less than two percent (Government figures) of the population be granted ten times as much as Christian churches, which represent more than fifty percent? Equally, why should the Scottish Government prioritise and push through legislation that is an affront to the teaching and deeply held beliefs of such a substantial part of the Scottish population? If this legislation were required to protect a persecuted minority it would have credence. No such requirement exists. Full protection is already legally guaranteed to all ethnic and cultural minorities under British and Scots Law.
You are now the Presiding Officer in the Scottish Parliament and are thus freed from the shackles of party politics. We understand that you may not be able to vote on this issue, but nevertheless as the constituency MSP for Glenrothes we call on you to take the views of our church fellowship into consideration and represent them to the Scottish Government.

To sum up our opposition to the Scottish Government's proposed legislation we state the following:

1. Marriage is the union of one man and one woman. It is ordained by God and has been a manifest blessing to individuals, nations and races for thousands of years.

2. No Government has the right to redefine this, the most basic and foundational building block of civilised society.

3. To legislate for the purpose of granting the right of same-sex couples to legally formalise their union in places hitherto reserved for the worship of God would undoubtedly open the door for further legislation compelling such places to make that availability compulsory. It would lead to a morass of litigation and counter litigation that could prove enormously costly to all concerned, including the Scottish Government. The practise of homosexuality is clearly contrary to the Holy Bible, which all true Christians hold to be the Word of God. To make the offer or impose the right of its practitioners to marry in a place of Christian worship would constitute a direct challenge to that Word.

4. This legislation is perceived by a very large proportion of the Christian community to be a direct attack on their Christian Faith. It is also apparent that in this matter the Government is allowing itself, whether consciously or not, to be manipulated by a tiny but vociferous minority that does not represent the views or lifestyle of the great majority of Scottish people.

5. The ancient Christian culture of the indigenous people of the Scottish nation is being undermined and brought into disrepute by a government which chooses to disregard the Eternal God and His infallible Word. This they do to their own peril. The story of the Scottish Covenanters is a mighty history lesson for any transient government to refrain from appearing to persecute its God fearing, Bible believing citizens.
In closing, because we write this letter on the basis of our Christian beliefs and none other, we quote from God’s Word whose authority must supersede all others.

“He that rules over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God” (2 Samuel ch.23, v.3)

We write to you as our representative in the Scottish Parliament whose devolved powers give it responsibility in this area of legislation and therefore charge it with framing that legislation in a manner that is not contrary to the common good. We thank you for your consideration of our letter.

Yours sincerely