

Yet Another Major Denomination Moves Towards Ordaining Openly Gay Pastors

The Church of Scotland has taken a significant step towards ordaining practicing homosexual ministers, after a majority vote by local bodies.

Out of a total of 45 regional presbyteries, over 30 are thought to have voted in favor of allowing congregations to appoint gay ministers who are in civil partnerships.

The issue has already caused 18 ministers and hundreds of members to leave the denomination.

A final decision will be made after draft legislation is passed to the Church of Scotland's General Assembly in May.

The proposal affirms the church's traditional stance on marriage but allows congregations to "opt out" and ordain practicing gay ministers if they want to.

There has already been extensive opposition to the move.

Today, a protest group called Covenant Fellowship is being launched to campaign for a traditionalist stance within the Church of Scotland.

Rev. Professor Andrew McGowan, a member of the group, said that the church is in the "midst of a severe crisis."

He hopes that the protest will "grow to become an effective campaign group within the Church on behalf of those who believe in Christian orthodoxy."

Last month Conservative MSP Alex Johnstone, who is a member of the church, said that the move would "ultimately weaken" the

church.

Rev. Richard Buckley, of evangelical group Forward Together, echoed this sentiment saying it was as if “an ax had been set at the root of the Church of Scotland.”

In October this year, every Church of Scotland congregation on the Isle of Lewis, the largest island in Scotland’s Outer Hebrides, opposed the move.

A spokesman for the Lewis Presbytery warned that the proposal risked causing “further disunity” within the denomination.

The issue has already caused division within the church.

Last year, Rev. Dominic Smart of Gilcomston South church in Aberdeen resigned from the church and began holding separate services in a hotel.

He described ordaining gay ministers as a “clear and deliberate move away from the authority of Scripture as the Word of God and our supreme rule of faith and life.”