

Can Mike Huckabee Help Change Hearts About Traditional Marriage?

Facing a string of losses in the courts and in public opinion, supporters of traditional marriage between one man and one woman will rally in the nation's capital next week, with some activists conceding that they face an uphill fight.

Planners of the second annual March for Marriage on Thursday, led by the National Organization for Marriage, hope to bring thousands of supporters to march from the U.S. Capitol to the Supreme Court. Speakers include two former Republican presidential candidates, Mike Huckabee and Rick Santorum, as well as San Francisco Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, the Catholic bishops' point man against same-sex marriage.

Chris Plante, the Rhode Island director for the National Organization for Marriage, said that it's "become clear that marriage is under attack"—by "elites," the media and an "out-of-control judiciary."

Plante said the idea that **same-sex marriage** is inevitable is a "false narrative." He pointed to a Politico poll that found 52 percent of respondents oppose gay marriage, but the poll was not national and only surveyed "likely voters ... in places with highly competitive midterm contests."

A dozen other polls, including polls from Washington Post/ABC News, Public Religion Research Institute and Gallup found that a majority of Americans approve of same-sex marriage. The most recent Gallup figures show support for same-sex marriage at an all-time high, 55 percent.

The Archdiocese of Philadelphia is sending buses of marchers to Washington, and Steve Bozza, director of the archdiocese's

office for life and family, admitted his side faces “an uphill battle.”

Last month, a federal judge in Pennsylvania struck down the state’s ban on **gay marriage**; Republican Gov. Tom Corbett decided not to challenge the ruling. This year alone, courts in 16 states have struck down gay marriage bans or said same-sex marriages from other states must be recognized.

Bozza said the fight over gay marriage goes beyond legislation or court rulings, and supporters of **traditional marriage** “need to proclaim the theological reasons.”

“It’s not a matter of just legislation; you have to change hearts,” Bozza said, adding that supporters “need to show strength” and that they’re not just a “fringe group of people.”

The Rev. C. Welton Gaddy, president of the Washington-based Interfaith Alliance, said his group will defend the rights of houses of worship to not perform same-sex wedding ceremonies, but he said, “We don’t want that position on marriage to be the only one.”

Copyright 2014 Religion News Service. All rights reserved. No part of this transmission may be distributed or reproduced without written permission.