

Denmark Forces Lutheran Church to Allow Same-Sex Marriages

In a move that could foreshadow what's ahead for America, Denmark's Parliament on Thursday voted to approve a bill that makes same-sex marriage legal in Lutheran church ceremonies, essentially forcing the church to perform gay marriages.

Until now, same-sex couples could only get short blessing ceremonies in the state's Lutheran Church, according to the Associated Press. The law passed by an 85-24 vote and is effective June 15.

The only saving grace, if you can even call it that, is that individual pastors in the state will not be forced to perform the actual ceremonies.

"Some 444,000 members of the church were considering renouncing their membership because of all this," Per Oerum Joergensen, a former member of parliament for the Christian Democrats, told the *Politiken*. "They will be able to join the suit against the state."

In 1989, Denmark became the first country in the world to allow gays to forge civil unions. In 2009, gays were afforded the right to adopt children.