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Give thanks to the Lord

We have had good news from all over the UK recently.

Plans to fast-track 'sex changes' have been blocked in England and Wales. The Government has also taken steps to protect school children from radical transgender ideology in the classroom.

In Northern Ireland there have been important victories for marriage and religious freedom. And the Scottish Government has made a significant, albeit limited, concession to free speech in its dangerous hate crime Bill. We give thanks to God.

Through prayer and action, Christians have made a difference in all these areas. But we cannot be complacent. Pressure to continue 'DIY' abortions is growing. They will put thousands of women at risk, as well as their unborn babies.

We are particularly concerned at how the controversy surrounding 'conversion therapy' is being used in an attempt to constrain prayer, pastoral care and the preaching of God's Word.

Christians must remain vigilant and ready to defend gospel freedom.

Govt drops gender self-ID plans

The Government has dropped controversial plans to make it much easier for people to 'change sex'.

In 2018, it consulted on amending the Gender Recognition Act to allow people to change legal sex by 'self-identification'. Proposals included removing the requirements for a medical diagnosis of gender dysphoria and to have lived as though a member of the opposite sex for at least two years.

But in September, Equalities Minister Liz Truss announced only minor changes would be made. These include reducing the cost of



➤ Equalities Minister Liz Truss announced minor changes to the Gender Recognition Act

a gender recognition certificate and moving the process online. She also confirmed that the rights of service providers to offer single-sex spaces would remain.

The Christian Institute's Ciarán Kelly welcomed the news but said the Government had to

do more to protect under-18s.

"Some schools have fallen for the myth that gender is 'on a spectrum' or can be 'non-binary'. There are even youngsters who have been pushed into life-altering decisions such as taking cross-sex hormones. All in the name of

transgender ideology. This too has to stop."

Around the same time, NHS England announced a review of its gender identity services for children and young people. It will investigate the dramatic rise in the number of children, especially girls, seeking help in recent years.

New RSE guidance seeks to expel radical trans ideology from schools

Schools in England must not use gender stereotypes to confuse children into thinking they might be transgender, the Department for Education (DfE) has warned.

The new guidance on how schools plan their Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum will help check the spread of transgender ideology.

Pro-trans lobby groups often imply that girls who show an interest in engineering may really be male, while boys who dislike sport may be presented as female. But the new guidance says: "You should not reinforce harmful stereotypes, for instance by suggesting that children might be a



different gender based on their personality and interests or the clothes they prefer to wear". Materials which promote this view "should not be used" and schools "should not work with

external agencies or organisations that produce such material".

Schools are also instructed to take steps to ensure political balance on equality issues, including same-sex marriage.

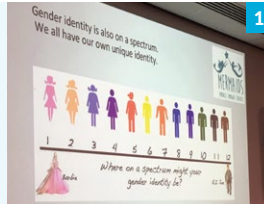
The Christian Institute's Ciarán Kelly welcomed the news.

"For too long, schools have been harangued by groups like Mermaids and Stonewall to adopt a mindset that pushes harmful gender stereotypes on unsuspecting children.

"It is clear that all such ties should now be cut, any associated material consigned to the recycling bin, and that parents have been given the green light to hold schools to account on this."

'Harmful stereotypes' >

1. Gender spectrum by Mermaids – from Barbie to G.I. Joe.
2. Jamie by Pop'n'Olly – a female engineer who 'becomes' a boy.



1



2

Government plans to make 'temporary' DIY abortion scheme permanent

The UK Government has said it will consult on turning an emergency scheme allowing 'DIY' abortions into a permanent arrangement.

The current rules in England and Wales allow women to take the two pills required for an abortion at home if they have had a remote consultation with a doctor. They can be taken while up to ten weeks pregnant.

The scheme was supposed to

last for two years, or until the end of the pandemic. This remains the case in Wales, but a Government minister has confirmed there will be a public consultation on making it permanent in England.

This is despite an ongoing police investigation after a baby was unlawfully aborted when its mother took the pills at 28 weeks. At least two women are also known to have died after taking the drugs.



In September, the Leader of the House of Commons, Jacob Rees-Mogg, told MPs the previous safeguards ought to be restored "as soon as possible".

Church leaders to UK Government: 'don't close our churches again'

In September, almost 700 church leaders urged the UK's governing authorities not to close churches again as they strive to reduce cases of coronavirus.

An open letter, co-authored by Institute Trustee Revd William Philip and four other church leaders, has now reached almost 900 signatories.

The letter set out clear support for appropriate measures to combat COVID-19 including "rigorous hygiene, social distancing and appropriate risk assessment".

It argued: "As a result church worship presents a hugely lesser risk of transmission than pubs, restaurants, gyms, offices and schools; and it is more important than them all."

"As we live in the shadow of a virus we are unable to control, people urgently need



Christian Institute Trustee Revd William Philip co-authored the letter.

the opportunity to hear and experience the good news and hope of Jesus Christ, who holds our lives in his hands."

"We therefore wish to state categorically that we must not be asked to suspend Christian worship again."

Revd Philip told the Institute: "What our society needs always, but especially amid an epidemic

of fear, is to witness the worshipping church holding out the Gospel of eternal hope."

Officials at Number 10 have said the Government has "no intention to close churches again", but the Welsh Government recently announced church closures as part of a Wales-wide lockdown until 9 November.

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Psychotherapists fear 'conversion therapy' label as Govt plans ban

Psychotherapists have admitted they are afraid to challenge children who say they want to 'change sex', in case they are accused of 'conversion therapy'.

One, a former governor of the Tavistock and Portman NHS Trust's Gender Identity Development Service in London, said "politicisation" of the issue had "interfered with good clinical care".



It comes as the Government considers a ban on the practice.

LGBT activists Steve Chalke and Jayne Ozanne want the Government to take action against any prayer, private

conversation and preaching which does not affirm homosexual or transgender lifestyles. They claimed that, in the future, churches could be prosecuted.

Abortions set for record high

Abortions are set to reach a record high for England and Wales this year. Around 110,000 abortions were carried out between January and June – over 4,000 more than the same period in 2019.

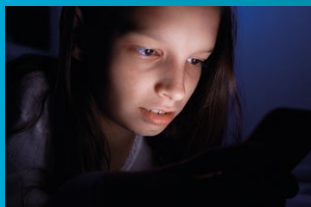
The number rose sharply in April after the Government introduced DIY home abortions.



High Court to rule on porn checks delay

Children could be protected from online pornography if the High Court tells the Government it must introduce strict age-verification checks.

Regulations approved by Parliament in 2018 required those visiting a pornographic website from a British IP address to prove that they were over 18. The plans were dropped last year.



Marriage 'best for society' says new think tank study

Influential think tank the Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) has published a report saying that marriage delivers significantly better outcomes than cohabitation.

Over the past decade, the number of cohabiting couples with dependent children has risen by over a quarter in the UK, and it is now the fastest growing family type.

But the CSJ said “marriage secures stability in a way cohabitation does not” and the Government should “stop pretending” they are equally beneficial.

The report highlights that



“children from stable families are less likely to be excluded and tend to do better at school, are less likely to be involved with the criminal justice system and have better employment outcomes”.

Meanwhile, the Law Commission has been accused of trivialising marriage for proposals that would allow couples

to marry in a hot air balloon or while sky diving. It also recommended scrapping the ‘prescribed’ words for wedding vows and instead allowing any words that express consent.

The Christian Institute warned that wedding ceremonies where ‘anything goes’ “trivialise the marriage bond”.

Paralympic legend backs abuse of trust reform

Paralympic legend Baroness Tanni Grey-Thompson says it is “massively important” to ban sports coaches from engaging in sexual activity with 16 and 17-year-olds in their care.

It is illegal for adults in certain positions of trust to have sexual contact with teenagers who are above the age of consent but not yet adults. However, the restriction does not apply to sports coaches.

The Christian Institute has campaigned for this change for 20 years.



The Peer's comments followed a BBC investigation which revealed there were more than 160 complaints of sexual misconduct made against sports coaches over the last four years.



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Week of prayer

AUTUMN 2020

JOIN US: 29 NOV TO 5 DEC

"Give thanks the LORD, for he is good. His love endures for ever."

FOURTEEN

PRAY FOR	OUR COMMUNION	OUR MARRIAGES & FAMILIES	OUR FREEDOM
OUR BROTHERS & SISTERS	OUR NEIGHBOURS	OUR GOVERNMENT	OUR COUNTRY
OUR WORLD	OUR SOCIETY	OUR JUSTICE	OUR PEACE

Week of prayer

29 NOV to 5 DEC

Scottish hate crime Bill has UK-wide implications



Following mounting pressure, the Scottish Government has amended its controversial hate crime Bill, but serious implications remain for the whole of the UK.

The legislation originally stated that an offence would be committed if anyone used words or behaviour 'likely to stir up hatred', regardless of intent. This will now be amended to acknowledge that a person must have 'intended to stir up hatred'.

However, many other aspects of the Bill, including the

threshold of 'abusive' words and absence of robust free speech clauses, remain unchanged.

The law would cover all publications distributed in Scotland - including those from the rest of the UK. If the police decided a newspaper, magazine or book on sale was 'intended to stir up hatred', they could obtain a warrant and arrest the editor or author.

The Bill has attracted strong criticism from the police, lawyers, academics, authors, actors and comedians as well as The Christian Institute.

Threat to NI church weddings withdrawn after CI pressure

The General Register Office for Northern Ireland (GRO) has withdrawn a threat to churches after The Christian Institute intervened.

The GRO had written to places of worship threatening to ban them from performing all weddings if they did not indicate whether or not they would conduct same-sex wedding ceremonies.

The Institute contacted the GRO pointing out that places of worship are 'opted out' of

same-sex weddings by default, and told it to withdraw the ultimatum.

As a result, the GRO wrote to all churches to highlight the mistake and "apologise unreservedly".

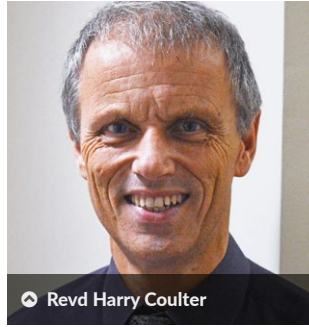


Hotel that halted pastor's pro-marriage event settles claim after CI intervenes

A Belfast hotel has apologised unreservedly to a church minister after it forced him to abandon a public meeting in support of traditional marriage.

Revd Harry Coulter had been holding the meeting for around 50 people in October 2019 when staff at the Balmoral Hotel told them to leave because someone had complained.

The Christian Institute issued legal proceedings against the hotel on Revd Coulter's behalf for unlawful discrimination and breach of contract. A year after the incident, hotel management gave the minister a full written apology and settled his claim.



Revd Harry Coulter

The manager admitted that staff had discriminated against Revd Coulter on the basis of his beliefs, and expressed his "sincere regret".

In the letter he accepted that the hotel's action had infringed upon the pastor's freedom of speech and assured him it would "never happen again". He also promised to retrain staff to ensure they uphold free speech in the future.

Revd Coulter said he was "very satisfied" with the outcome. Thanking The Christian Institute for its support, he added: "I encourage Christians who face similar challenges to their religious liberty to contact them for help."



Hear from the CI



James McIntosh, Josh Coghill and Gareth Edwards

If you would like your church to hear more about our work [online](#) or [in-person](#)* contact: england@christian.org.uk wales@christian.org.uk

*Subject to COVID restrictions



The UK Government is set to release new guidance on 'Do Not Resuscitate' (DNR) forms, following concerns that blanket orders were put in place during the COVID-19 outbreak.

A report by The Queen's Nursing Institute found that during the national lockdown ten per cent of care home staff changed DNR orders without consulting family members or

the residents themselves.

A Government spokesman called it "completely unacceptable" for the orders to be placed in "a blanket fashion". The Care Quality Commission has begun an investigation.

In 2014, the Court of Appeal established a legal duty on hospitals to consult with and inform patients before adding 'DNR' to their records.

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