



1963 – 2024

COLIN HART

DIRECTOR,
THE CHRISTIAN INSTITUTE



A servant-hearted man who devoted his life to Christ

On 13 March our founder and Director Colin Hart passed into glory.

He devoted his life to encouraging Christians to grasp that following Jesus transforms all aspects of our lives. He wanted to equip believers to live out their faith publicly as well as privately.

It was this sense of calling that led to the founding of The Christian Institute, and over the last 35 years helped shape the UK's legal, political and cultural landscape.

The Supreme Court victories in the famous Ashers 'gay cake' case and over the Scottish Government's infamous 'Named Person' scheme have become

embedded in the public consciousness as well as the legal textbooks. But they are only two of many milestones.

These days it is taken for granted that a church can employ youth workers and other staff who actually adhere to the Christian faith. But this is only the case because of work Colin led from 2000-2003 to oppose the overreach of equality laws.

In 2006 he helped engineer a rare Blair Government defeat over plans for a religious hatred law which could have been used to clamp down on gospel preaching. The final win, by just one vote, was an important reminder of the sovereignty of God.

Colin's unflinching trust in that sovereignty was his source of comfort for those battles which were lost. He would say that, win or lose, it was important to stand up for the truth.

Seeing the future impact of legislation was one of his standout abilities. In 2004 he was one of the few to publicly oppose the Gender Recognition Act, a law that has led to the idea that men have a 'right' to use women's changing rooms. In the days up to his death, he was challenging Michael Gove's new definition of 'extremism'. In short, he was always mindful of the need for vigilance in protecting our hard-won Christian freedoms.

But Colin always placed greatest value on his role instructing other Christians to 'think Christianly'.

This priority was set out in the Institute's first 'mission statement':

"The Christian Institute exists to affirm the universal Lordship of Christ, to challenge humanism, pluralism, and other ideologies, to proclaim biblical truth as relevant to every area of life, and to equip Christians for action."

It is a priority to which, under God, the Institute remains committed today.

"I am the resurrection and the life"



Ciarán Kelly,
Acting
Director

This is not the introduction I expected to be writing for this newsletter. The sudden loss of Colin is still raw and painful.

The issues we are grappling with at The Christian Institute – a possible new 'conversion therapy' law, assisted suicide, abortion, transgender ideology and more – have not disappeared. The work of The Christian Institute will certainly continue unabated. But it is right and proper to take a moment to

reflect on the man who founded the Institute and served it so faithfully for 35 years.

Colin was not one to seek the limelight, but he never allowed this natural modesty to prevent him speaking out on issues of national significance. While others remained silent, Colin tackled these issues boldly and faithfully under the conviction that the Bible sets out God's good design not merely for the Church, but for all of society.

But his tireless work for the Institute was not for its own sake; his constant motivation was his love for the Lord Jesus Christ and gratitude for what He had done at Calvary.

He exemplified the declaration of the Psalmist: "Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long" (Psalm 119:97), championing the truth that God's moral law remains powerful, relevant and life-giving in our own day.

The loss to the Church and the nation, as well as the Institute, is enormous.

'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies' JOHN 11:25

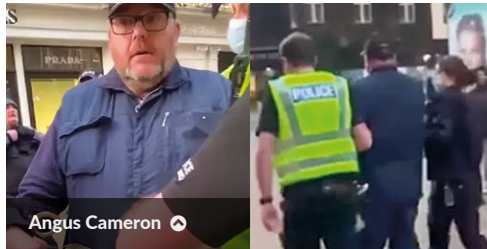


Glasgow street preacher wins £15,000 after wrongful arrest

A Glasgow street preacher has won substantial damages from the police after he was wrongfully arrested over a 'hate crime' accusation.

Angus Cameron had been preaching in the city centre when an officer told him there had been complaints of 'homophobic language'.

Bystanders refuted the allegation, but the former pastor was arrested and handcuffed for 'breach of the peace with homophobic aggravation' and put in the back of a police van for over an hour. He was eventually released



and later told he would not be prosecuted, but a 'non-crime hate incident report' was still logged.

Following legal action supported by The Christian Institute, the police removed all reference to the incident from its records. It agreed to pay Mr

Cameron £5,500 in damages for unlawful detention, and £9,400 in legal costs. He donated all of his compensation to the Institute.

The Institute's Simon Calvert said:

"Police Scotland is reviewing its policy and looking at the College of Policing's guidance on non-crime hate incidents.

"From our experience in this and many other similar cases, we believe we can contribute constructively to this review. We can act as a bridge between the police and street preachers in this vexed area."

WATCH
the.ci/AngusCameron



More than 1,000 babies born with drug addiction

At least 1,363 children in Scotland have been born with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome since 2017.

The syndrome, which can cause uncontrollable trembling and hyperactivity, is caused by exposure to drugs while in the womb.

According to figures compiled by the Scottish Liberal Democrats, cases reached a high of 243 in 2017-18.

Its leader, Alex Cole-Hamilton, said: "Drug deaths make the headlines but, in a host of other ways, drug misuse can make lives a misery.

"There is perhaps no more awful start for a newborn baby than to be born dependent on drugs."



'Silent prayer is an essential freedom'

Kate Forbes has defended the right to pray peacefully outside abortion centres.

Holyrood is currently considering the Abortion Services (Safe Access Zones) (Scotland) Bill. If passed, it will make it illegal to 'influence' "the decision of another person to access, provide or facilitate the provision of abortion services" within 200 metres of abortion centres.

Its author, Gillian Mackay MSP, has



cited prayer as evidence that a ban is needed and people praying silently have fallen foul of similar zones in England and Northern Ireland.

Speaking to Roman Catholic media outlet Sancta Familia Media, Christian MSP Forbes stated: "I do not think that you can ban prayer so

I think that silent prayer is essential and that is an important freedom to uphold."

"I think this Bill is going to have to work really, really hard, listening to a broad number of views in order to ensure that it is a product of a liberal society, not an illiberal society."

Stonewall-linked sex ed guidance under review

The Scottish Government has admitted that its Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) guidance needs "more clarity", after reviewing more than 4,000 consultation responses.

The proposed guidance directs teachers to resources from controversial groups LGBT Youth Scotland and Stonewall, despite stating that RSHP "should be

presented in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner".

The Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, Jenny Gilruth, said the Government will update its guidance in light of the consultation.

When asked whether Scotland would follow the UK Government's guidance on how schools should deal with gender-questioning

children, Gilruth would only acknowledge that some aspects of the document were 'helpful'.

The UK Government's guidance has just completed its public consultation. It has been largely welcomed as a key step towards ending the trans-affirming agenda pushed on schools in recent years by lobby groups such as Stonewall.

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'Broad extremism definition must not silence Christians'

The UK Government wants to block 'extremist' groups from accessing public funding and engaging with the Government under a new definition of extremism.

The controversial new wording purports to tackle promoting an 'intolerant' ideology that aims to "negate or destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of others".

The Government claims the definition sets a "high bar that only captures the most concerning of activities" and will not "affect free speech, which will always be protected".

But the Institute's Ciarán Kelly warned: "Rather than creating a new definition, the authorities should make better



use of the vast arsenal of laws that already exist to deal with terrorism and extremism.

"In the past, new measures have ended up endangering rather than protecting religious freedom. Ordinary people, Christian or otherwise, should not be put at risk of being caught by vague terminology which threatens our historic liberties."

Gender-confused kids still at risk from trans drugs

Children in Scotland will still be allowed to take experimental puberty-blocking drugs under proposed country-wide standards.

In a consultation on 'Gender identity healthcare', Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) proposes to allow young people to take experimental cross-sex hormones or puberty blockers. The youngsters would have to be informed of "the potential benefits and risks" and regularly monitored.

Although HIS claims the draft standards are based on "best practice and consensus", NHS England has stopped routinely commissioning puberty blockers for children after expert paediatrician Dr Hilary Cass highlighted significant "uncertainties" surrounding such usage.

Among known risks are the threat to future fertility, possible brain development issues, and an increased risk of bone fractures.



Rising backlash to Scots death Bill

Liam McArthur's assisted suicide Bill is coming under increasing fire for endangering the vulnerable.

The Lib Dem MSP published his Private Member's Bill on 28 March.

He wants to remove end-of-life protections and allow people deemed to be terminally ill to seek help from a doctor to kill themselves. Equalities Minister Emma Roddick has branded his plans 'unsafe' for disabled people.

In early March it was revealed that almost 2,500 UK doctors, including nearly 400 from Scotland, are backing a campaign to halt the Bill.

A spokesperson for the Our Duty of Care campaign said:



"Vulnerable people must be protected from pressure to take their own lives and trust in doctor/patient relationships be preserved."

Conservative MSP Sue Webber, who previously supported assisted suicide, said she now accepted it would inevitably expand. Murdo Fraser MSP also cautioned Holyrood not to bow to activist-led pressure to change the law.

Last year, Humza Yousaf publicly restated

his opposition to removing legal protections for the terminally ill, following a meeting with disability campaigners.

In 2015, MSPs rejected Patrick Harvie's Assisted Suicide Bill by 82 votes to 36.

A majority of MSPs in both the Scottish Conservatives and Scottish Labour voted against the Bill, with MSPs from the Scottish Liberal Democrats and the SNP also rejecting the legislation.

Male prisoners still encouraged to try and gain access to women's jails



Male prisoners who claim to be female are still being encouraged to live in women's jails in order to 'prepare them for their release'.

Last year, the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) ordered an assessment of its 2014 trans policy which stated that a prisoner's accommodation "should reflect the gender in which the person in custody is currently living".

SNP will wait to resurrect sex-swap Bill

The Scottish Government will not appeal a court ruling backing Westminster's decision to veto its gender self-ID Bill. But it still wants to introduce the hugely controversial law.

Social Justice Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville said it would wait for an "incoming UK Government" to progress the Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill.

The review followed a public outcry over convicted rapist Adam Graham being placed in a segregated unit in a women's prison because he claimed to

be female.

Following an update, men who claim to be women continue to be eligible for admission or transfer to a women's prison

unless they have a record of "violence against a female".

An equality assessment report claimed such men should be "supported" to live in women's prisons. The SPS argued that even men who are not allowed to access female jails should be encouraged through activities and programmes with others of their 'gender identity'.

It was later revealed the SPS had hidden female prisoners' views on the issue by refusing to publish survey results.

Searing criticism levelled at 'conversion practices' law

The Scottish Government's plans for a new law on so-called conversion practices have come in for scathing criticism.

In a legal opinion for The Christian Institute, leading human rights lawyer Aidan O'Neill KC branded the proposals "ill-thought out", "fundamentally illiberal" and arguably "beyond the legislative competence of the Scottish Parliament".

Mr O'Neill previously represented the Institute in its successful Supreme Court challenge to the infamous 'Named Person' scheme. If



necessary, it will challenge the Scottish Government over this latest threat to family life and religious freedom.

The KC advised the Institute that the new law would criminalise parents seeking to steer their gender-confused children away from taking sex-swap drugs. He also warned it would have a "chilling effect" on the ability of churches to teach and preach on "matters relating to sexuality and/or gender".

His advice was echoed by Roddy Dunlop KC, who

highlighted the absence of a "legally coherent" definition of 'conversion practices'. Mr Dunlop, the Dean of The Faculty of Advocates, noted that activists had failed to offer any data to indicate that 'conversion therapy' is happening in Scotland.

Malcolm Clark, a former trustee of LGB Alliance, argued that Scottish Government policy on the issue is being driven by an "obsession with trans rights" and displayed "a cavalier attitude" to evidence.

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 **let us pray**
SCOTLAND CONFERENCE

In February, more than 400 people attended an event in Glasgow organised by the CI's Let Us Pray campaign.

The capacity crowd heard the implications of a 'conversion therapy' ban in Scotland for parenting and the ordinary work of churches.

THE LATEST NEWS AND RESOURCES: CHRISTIAN.ORG.UK



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