



## INSIDE

- ▶ Conversion therapy ban report targets parents and churches
- ▶ Charity Commission launches formal inquiry into Mermaids
- ▶ Psychologist at NHS Sandyford trans clinic admits its methods lack 'robust evidence'

## Let children be children

The law already endorses the blatant lie that it is possible to change sex by obtaining a Gender Recognition Certificate. The Scottish Government is now on the verge of extending this to children – and without any need for medical evidence. This will push more and more youngsters away from God's good design, leaving a trail of misery and confusion in its wake.

At the same time it is also pushing an extreme 'conversion therapy' ban. Parents, teachers and churches all face the threat of punitive fines and prison sentences. We must mourn for 'The



Land of the Book' and pray that God would have mercy upon it.

But we can give thanks that the long-awaited Online Safety Bill will help protect children from pornography and content promoting self-harm and suicide. This is great news, especially so as the UK Government has also backed down on censoring legal content deemed 'harmful' to adults.

## 'Choose your own sex' Bill on the brink of becoming law

Sixteen-year-olds in Scotland could soon be able to change legal sex in just six months without medical evidence after the Scottish Government's gender self-ID Bill was backed by Holyrood.

The Gender Recognition Reform (Scotland) Bill passed its second stage in November. The parliamentary process is expected to conclude just before Christmas.

The Institute's Ciarán Kelly told The Daily Telegraph the "terrible Bill further entrenches the false belief that it is possible



to change sex. It will cause even greater misery and confusion for children and their families".

The stage one debate in October prompted the biggest ever rebellion of SNP MSPs, with seven voting against the Bill

and two abstaining.

This was also the first time an SNP minister had resigned over Government policy, with the Minister for Community Safety Ash Regan stepping down.

She said her conscience "would not

allow me to vote for a Bill where I could not be 100 per cent certain that women and girls would not be in danger".

Westminster has said it will seek legal advice on whether the plans are within the Scottish Government's devolved powers.

# Conversion therapy ban report targets parents and churches

A report on ending supposed conversion therapy practices in Scotland puts parents and churches "in the firing line", a campaign spearheaded by The Christian Institute has warned.

Let Us Pray criticised the recommendations of a Scottish Government-appointed group because they criminalise the ordinary work of churches, promote LGBT theology, target parental rights, and undermine free speech.

A number of its recommendations are modelled on draconian legislation introduced earlier this year in the Australian state of Victoria. Engaging in alleged 'change or suppression practices' there can result in re-education sessions and penalties of up to ten years in prison and a maximum fine of over £100,000.

The Expert Advisory Group – which included Stonewall



– initially claimed ending the alleged 'conversion' activities would not compromise religious freedoms. However, it then went on to state that the ban's scope must include "all acts and practices that seek to change, suppress, or inhibit" someone's sexual orientation or 'gender identity'. This could include preaching that encourages celibacy outside heterosexual marriage.

And in an alarming statement, it said parents'

rights could be 'modified' or even 'withdrawn' if they uphold the reality of biological sex.

Let Us Pray said the report had failed to recognise the possibility that churches could "respectfully uphold their beliefs in the way they deal with gay and trans people".



# Psychologist at NHS Sandyford trans clinic admits its methods lack 'robust evidence'

A leaked recording has revealed a senior consultant at the NHS's Sandyford gender identity clinic in Glasgow admitting that its methods are not backed by "robust evidence".

The psychologist said that the clinic's mental assessments are almost

entirely based on self-diagnosis, and that clinicians are not expected to conduct detailed scrutiny of patients' mental health before

conducting life-altering medical interventions.

Dr David Bell, a former clinician at London's Tavistock gender clinic for kids, said: "Sandyford should be shut down.

"NHS England has agreed that the gender service at Tavistock be shut down for these reasons. It is not that English children have different bodies or genes or minds to

Scottish children."

Gender confused children as young as nine have been given puberty-blocking drugs at Sandyford, according to a recent report.

It also found that nearly two thirds (64 per cent) of children referred to the clinic had some form of autism or mental health condition such as anxiety or depression.



## MPs: 'Don't deprive young people of RE'

MPs have backed a push to ensure state schools in England uphold the legal requirement to teach Religious Education.

A recent debate highlighted that one in five schools did not teach RE at all in year 11, despite being required by law to do so.



## Court backs US Christian baker over gay wedding cake

Californian baker Catharine Miller has been vindicated after being taken to court for declining to create a cake for a same-sex wedding celebration because of her Christian beliefs.

Judge Eric Bradshaw said Miller acted lawfully while upholding her beliefs about what the Bible teaches regarding marriage.



## Charity Commission launches formal inquiry into Mermaids



The Charity Commission for England and Wales has opened a statutory inquiry into controversial trans-activist group Mermaids following serious concerns about its operations.

It comes amid a barrage of shocking disclosures, including that the charity had been sending chest binders to girls as young as 13 without their parents' knowledge. A trustee also resigned in disgrace over revelations that he had promoted paedophilia, and it

was revealed an employee had been posting highly sexualised photos of himself online.

Children have also been able to share their personal details in online chat groups that were supposed to be supervised by Mermaids' employees.

Christian MP Miriam Cates has called for a police investigation into the charity, complaining that, "despite whistleblowers raising alarm, Mermaids have had unfettered access to vulnerable children" for years.

## CI backs parents at 'Education not indoctrination' conference

The Christian Institute was one of a number of groups invited to speak at the 'Education not indoctrination' conference in Glasgow in November.

Organised by campaign group Hands Up Scotland, the conference discussed the pressure to shut down debate in schools on issues including the promotion of LGBT ideology and the sexualisation of



children through sex education.

The Institute's Ciarán Kelly highlighted that both Scottish law and statutory guidance make clear that the views of parents need to be respected. But he added that a "climate of fear of being branded

'phobic' or a bigot" pushes some schools to adopt LGBT policies and resources that are unsuitable for children.

The conference went ahead despite a late attempt by LGBT activists to shut down the event claiming it 'made them feel unsafe'.

STREAM FOR FREE AT  
livingchristianity  
.org.uk/youth



living  
CHRISTIANITY | youth

## Full-time discipleship for 11 to 16-year-olds

The new animated  
series exploring God's  
calling for young people  
in the world.



## Uncertainty over Bill of Rights

The UK Government is  
reviewing plans to replace  
the Human Rights Act 1998  
with a Bill of Rights.

The Bill was shelved  
by Liz Truss but Justice  
Secretary Dominic Raab  
wants to bring a version of  
the problematic proposals  
back to Westminster.

The Christian Institute  
has warned it risks  
compromising religious  
liberty safeguards.



# Christian Lib Dem candidate faces axe

An award-winning  
former BBC  
journalist is  
considering legal  
action as he faces  
being removed as  
a Liberal Democrat  
candidate over his  
Christian values.

David  
Campanale was  
appointed as the  
candidate for  
Sutton and Cheam  
constituency by  
an "overwhelming"  
majority in  
January. He told  
the Institute he  
intended to vote  
according to his  
conscience on  
non-whipped votes  
such as pro-life  
issues, but was  
warned by local  
party members "we  
do not recognise  
your right to have a  
conscience".



Mr Campanale  
explained that  
claims he had  
'hidden' his  
Christian faith  
during the  
candidate selection  
process could  
have been tested  
by "a quick online  
search", and said  
the accusations,  
first raised earlier  
this year, were  
shown to be  
unfounded.

He highlighted  
the "direct  
harassment and  
hostility" he  
received from

activists, and  
warned that if the  
attempt to deselect  
him succeeds it "will  
be damaging for  
public institutions"  
and he will appeal.

WATCH

Ciarán Kelly  
speaks  
to David  
Campanale.  
 [the.ci/  
campanale](https://the.ci/campanale)



## PM keen to protect kids from inappropriate sex education

The Prime Minister wants  
to strengthen guidance  
on Relationships and Sex  
Education (RSE) to ensure that  
schoolchildren in England are  
not exposed to inappropriate  
materials. Using similar wording  
to Scotland, statutory guidance  
already says that schools  
should ensure parents  
know what will be taught.

It also confirms that  
they have the right  
to withdraw their

child "from some or all of sex  
education delivered as part of  
statutory RSE".

But Rishi Sunak reportedly  
plans to clarify that parents may  
view RSE content, including  
resources provided by outside  
organisations. Scottish

Relationships, Sexual Health  
and Parenthood guidance  
says parents should  
have "the opportunity in  
advance to view key  
teaching materials".



# MSP's 'dehumanising' assisted suicide Bill makes headway

Scotland is a step closer to removing safeguards which protect vulnerable people from assisted suicide after Liam McArthur MSP gained sufficient support to introduce his Bill to Holyrood.

McArthur's plan would allow anyone aged 16 or over who is deemed to be terminally ill and has been resident in Scotland for twelve months to receive help to kill themselves. Draft legislation is expected to be presented to the Scottish Parliament early next year.

Responding to the news, the Institute, which has more than 7,000 supporters in Scotland, said a change in the law would inevitably lead to vulnerable people feeling pressured into committing suicide for fear of being a burden.



A spokesman warned that the experience in countries like Canada and Belgium show a "frightening future" in store for Scotland.

"First the 'terminally ill'. Then the disabled. Then the mentally ill. Then the old and infirm and sad and lonely. It risks becoming a place where more and more people are

deceived into believing it is better to die than to live and where the vulnerable are pressured to end their lives."

Two assisted suicide Bills have been defeated in the Scottish Parliament since 2010, most recently in 2015, when MSPs rejected Patrick Harvie's Assisted Suicide (Scotland) Bill by 82 votes to 36.

WOULD YOU LIKE US TO VISIT YOUR CHURCH?



We have over 60,000 supporters and visit over 300 churches a year to talk about our work.

If you would like your church to be one of them, email us at: [scotland@christian.org.uk](mailto:scotland@christian.org.uk)

## SNP rebukes its own MSP for questioning 'censorship zones'

The SNP has given one of its MSPs a formal written warning for expressing pro-life views.

John Mason had tweeted that signs in Glasgow saying "women do regret abortion" were "very gentle and offering help". He previously said censorship zones around abortion clinics were "seldom essential or vital".

SNP whips Stuart McMillan



and Gordon MacDonald reported that his comments "caused great distress and trauma to many women", yet offered no evidence to substantiate this.

The whips claimed to "absolutely respect" his right to hold views on abortion

and his "right to freedom of speech and expression". But astonishingly, they went on to add they do not believe he has "the right to impose these views on others".

In response, Mr Mason said: "I am struggling to see how these two fit together."

# Billy Graham group awarded almost £100k over axed event

The Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA) has been awarded £97,325.32 in damages after a Glasgow venue shut down its evangelistic rally. Further cases are still to be resolved.

The BGEA took legal action against Scottish Event Campus Ltd (SEC), the firm which operates the OVO Hydro. It had cancelled the Association's gospel event in 2020 because of Franklin Graham's mainstream Christian beliefs on marriage and sexual ethics.

A Glasgow Sheriff Court found the SEC directly discriminated against the BGEA by treating it "less favourably than it would

have treated others because of a protected characteristic, namely, the religious or philosophical beliefs of the [BGEA] and Franklin Graham".

Sheriff John McCormick did not accept that BGEA's contract was principally terminated because of safety concerns over possible protests, and said the SEC "acted under pressure" from Glasgow City Council to cancel the event.

He ruled: "The law cannot endorse an outcome whereby a mainstream Christian religious gathering cannot be held

because some members of the community, however vehemently, disagree with religiously based beliefs to which they take objection."



The Institute's Simon Calvert commented: "Any venue which cancels bookings

by Christian groups over their beliefs can expect to lose in court. This is bad news for cancel culture but good news for the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Last year, the BGEA settled legal claims with three other venues that had also attempted to block its evangelistic rallies.

## How to give to the work of the CI

None of our work would be possible without the generosity of our supporters.

### Give regularly

 [christian.org.uk/donate](https://christian.org.uk/donate)

### Leave a legacy

 [christian.org.uk/legacy](https://christian.org.uk/legacy)

### Or call

 0191 281 5664



## Online censorship climb down

The Government has dropped provisions censoring content deemed 'legal but harmful' from its UK-wide Online Safety Bill following pressure from Christian Institute supporters and others.

Culture Secretary Michelle Donelan announced the climb down at the end of November, noting that free speech and child protection concerns had been raised by "stakeholders and members of the public".

It means 'Big Tech' companies

will not be required to decide which opinions adults are allowed to hear and read online. The amended Bill also ditches the subjective 'harmful communications' offence – as called for by the CI – and expands and strengthens some protections for children.

The Institute's Simon Calvert welcomed the bulk of the changes, describing them as a "good faith attempt" to respond to supporters' concerns.



THE LATEST NEWS AND RESOURCES: **CHRISTIAN.ORG.UK**



CHRISTIANINSTITUTE



CHRISTIANORGUK

Registered office: The Christian Institute, Wilberforce House, 4 Park Road, Gosforth Business Park, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE12 8DG

Tel: 0191 281 5664 | Email: [info@christian.org.uk](mailto:info@christian.org.uk) | Web: [christian.org.uk](https://christian.org.uk) | Published in December 2022

Registered in England as a charity Charity No. 100 4774 Company No. 263 4440. A charity registered in Scotland Charity No. SC039220