



Press Release

95 Churches want to register Civil Partnerships

16th January 2012 - for immediate use

A limited survey by the LGB&T Anglican Coalition has already revealed that almost 100 Church of England churches would want to explore registering their buildings to offer Civil Partnerships if the Church of England would allow it.

This comes as registration forms for religious buildings become available for the first time this month following the end of the Government ban in December.

The news that so many Anglican Churches would want to explore registration shows the disparity between the official stance of the Church of England and that of ordinary parishes.

Canon Giles Goddard, a member of the Coalition and Chair of Inclusive Church said, "The 95 churches we have identified are the tip of the iceberg. Patience with the Church of England is wearing thin among lesbian and gay Anglicans and their friends and families. The church needs to learn to become inclusive and welcoming to all. We hope that measures will soon be taken so that individual parishes can opt into offering blessings and legal ceremonies."

At present any such application would be rejected by Registrars because applications require the consent of the Church's governing body, the General Synod, and there are no plans to ask General Synod whether it would give consent or not.

The House of Bishops has begun a review of Church policy on Civil Partnerships however, under the leadership of The Bishop of Sodor and Man, The Rt Rev Robert Paterson. Alongside considering whether clergy in Civil Partnerships can be appointed as Bishops, it is also expected to update church policy in the light of recent changes in legislation.

The Revd Colin Coward, Director of Changing Attitude England and member of the Coalition, said: "Congregations which are welcoming and open to LGB&T people, are impatient in their desire to model the infinite love of God for all creation and provide spiritual and pastoral care for lesbian and gay people who wish to celebrate their love and fidelity with their partner in church."

Since Civil Partnerships began in 2005, over 47,000 have been registered, and there is growing evidence that many couples want to register their partnerships in a church or other religious context.

ENDS

Notes for Editors:

1. **The Anglican Coalition** brings together all the UK-based groups that work on behalf of the LGB&T members of the Church of England. It exists to provide UK-based Christian LGB&T organisations with opportunities to create resources for the Anglican community and to develop a shared voice for the full acceptance of LGB&T people in the Anglican Communion.

2. **For more information contact:
Rev Benny Hazlehurst 07788 426090**

3. **The Coalition members are:**

Accepting Evangelicals www.acceptingevangelicals.org

Changing Attitude www.changingattitude.org.uk

The Clergy Consultation www.clergyconsultation.org

Courage www.courage.org.uk

The Evangelical Fellowship for Lesbian and Gay Christians www.eflgc.org.uk

Inclusive Church www.inclusive-church.org.uk

The Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement www.lgcm.org.uk

The Sibyls www.sibyls.co.uk

General Synod Human Sexuality Group

Website www.lgbtac.org.uk