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Ministers Warn of Split as Kirk's Liberalism is Challenged

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'Forward Together' is a newly formed evangelical group of Church of Scotland ministers who want to change the Church's stance on theological, moral and social issues, which will be launched officially next week in Edinburgh.

The Rev Bill Wallace, a former convener of the Church of Scotland's Board of Social Responsibility and a member of the n group, has warned that the Kirk could split if its views on sex education, sexuality and marriage are not re-considered.

"If the evangelical position continues to be sidelined there is real trouble ahead for the Church," he said. "The Church would be weakened and could be in danger of splitting". Forward Together claims to have the support of most of the churchgoers.

"Some of the younger ministers are very impatient. They are keen to get the Church back to where it was. I think there is a danger that the Church has been drifting from its basic roots and, as evangelicals, we want to affirm them."

The group's intention is to give conservatives a greater voice in the community. "The Church has always had theological diversity," said Dr Marjory MacLean, the deputy clerk of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. "Forward Together has been an informal group for some years, and clearly they are wanting to get themselves more formally organised so they can engage the structures of the Church in a more effective and managed way."

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