



Kirk faces gay 'weddings' split

The Church of Scotland is facing a split over whether ministers should be allowed to conduct services to bless same sex civil partnerships.

The Kirk's General Assembly is expected to be told it should be a matter of conscience for individual ministers.

However, an evangelical group has warned that the proposal will cause widespread dismay throughout the Church of Scotland.

The assembly's meeting, being held in Edinburgh, will run all week.

On Tuesday, it will be told that it is not surprising that some same sex couples will want some form of religious ceremony to mark their civil partnership.

It has been proposed that no minister should be disciplined for conducting such a blessing, but neither should they be forced to do so against their conscience.

The stance has been backed by Affirmation Scotland, a group of gay and straight church members which has argued that there remains a very real problem of discrimination against gay people in the Church of Scotland.

However, the Forward Together evangelical group has condemned the proposal.

It denies being homophobic, but has claimed that such a departure from clear biblical teaching is a grave step, which "endangers the unity of the Kirk".

It said it wanted ministers to be banned from conducting civil partnership services.

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