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Defending biblical truth

The status of human beings as made male and female in the image of God is a vital biblical truth. It underpins the Institute's work on abortion, assisted suicide, marriage and transgenderism.

Tragically, it is a truth that is often neglected or rejected by politicians and wider society. The result may be seen in Liam McArthur's assisted suicide Bill and the recent SNP pledge to enshrine the 'right' to abortion in the constitution of any future independent Scotland. These proposals are directly opposed to

God's good design for his image bearers.

However, we give thanks for the strengthening opposition to the harm being done, especially to young people, in the name of transgender ideology.

The claim that someone's 'true gender' can be different to their biological sex has taken root in many areas of society. The Scottish Government's agreement to implement the landmark Cass Review is an important step in the battle against this dangerously misleading dogma.

Assisted suicide law would be 'hugely damaging' to Scotland, says Institute

The Christian Institute has told the Scottish Parliament's Health Committee that any change to the law on assisted suicide would be "hugely damaging" to society.

In its response to the Committee's call for evidence on Liam McArthur MSP's Assisted Dying Bill, the Institute said the legislation would devalue the lives of vulnerable people, irreparably damage the relationship between doctors and patients, and risk people being coerced into ending their lives.

It said the definition of 'terminally ill' is



"very broad" and could include conditions such as heart disease and dementia. The response noted that in other countries assisted suicide has been approved for conditions such as anorexia, hernias and arthritis on the grounds that they are 'terminal' illnesses.

The Law Society of Scotland also criticised

the Bill, suggesting it may be incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights.

It questioned whether provisions for conscientious objection were sufficient to protect a doctor against litigation if they refuse to participate.

In July, a poll of British adults revealed

that 42 per cent of those in favour of changing the law say there are "too many complicating factors to make it a practical and safe option".

Half of pro-assisted suicide respondents agreed that removing end-of-life protections would fundamentally change the doctor-patient relationship.

Scot Govt agrees to implement Cass Review recommendations

The Scottish Government is set to follow senior clinicians' advice by formally banning puberty blockers for gender-confused children.

In September, Public Health Minister Jenni Minto announced the Government has accepted a report by the Chief Medical Officer on the findings of a multidisciplinary clinical team. It concluded that many

of Dr Hilary Cass's recommendations for children's gender services in England should also be adopted in Scotland.

The clinicians recommended that gender-confused children should not be given puberty blockers without further clinical trials, and each patient should be assessed to ensure that other concerns such as mental conditions and trauma are not overlooked.

Minto indicated that there is "a breadth of work under way" to implement the recommendations, which will prioritise young people.



Children are no longer allowed to refer themselves to the Young People's Gender Service, which will be moved to regional paediatric clinical settings instead of Glasgow's Sandyford clinic. Under the new policy, patients must be referred by a clinician.

The Sandyford clinic previously stopped

prescribing puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones to newly referred children, while allowing existing patients to continue the drugs. Under emergency regulations in force until 26 November, under-18s across the UK cannot obtain puberty blockers via private prescriptions from the UK or Europe.



◉ Jenni Minto MSP

Guidance for gender-confused youth co-authored by convicted child abuser

LGBT Youth Scotland (LGBTYS) has been accused of serious safeguarding failures after a co-author of one of its guides for gender-confused children was convicted of child sex offences.

Andrew Easton, who was found guilty of grooming



and sharing indecent images, contributed to a "coming out" guide for pupils as young as 13.

It claimed: "Transgender people are people whose gender identity - who

they are internally or their 'innate' gender - is different to their physical body or the gender they were assigned at birth."

Following his conviction, Scottish

Conservative MSP Meghan Gallacher called the situation "deeply disturbing" and said assurances were needed from LGBTYS "over what safeguarding assessments are in place".

In 2022-23, the group received almost half a million pounds in grants from the Scottish

Government, and a further £500,000 from local authorities and NHS organisations.

In December 2022, LGBTYS referred itself to Police Scotland over grooming allegations made by two individuals who accessed its programmes as vulnerable young people.

Scot Govt looks to Labour for 'conversion therapy' Bill

The Scottish Government has announced that it will wait for Westminster to progress a draft Bill on banning so-called conversion therapy.

It indicated that its own plans risked being judicially reviewed, but stated in the 2024-25 Programme for Government that it will prepare legislation "should a UK-wide approach not be achievable".

LGBT activists around the UK are pushing for a new law to restrict prayer, preaching and pastoral conversations which affirm biblical sexual ethics and defend the reality of biological sex.

The Christian Institute has threatened legal action if proposals for a ban restrict religious liberty.

Deputy Director Simon Calvert stated: "The Christian Institute has obtained legal advice from leading King's Counsel on every attempt to legislate for conversion therapy in the UK and every time those KCs have advised that there are multiple risks to the human rights of innocent parents, pastors and professionals."

PM told not to impose free speech restrictions

The Christian Institute has urged the Prime Minister not to respond to this summer's public disorder by imposing draconian restrictions on free speech.

While it said the Government must examine the root causes and prosecute the perpetrators of the "shocking scenes of violence", it also warned that ministers should not be drawn into a knee-jerk reaction.

The Prime Minister has said he does not wish to



pass new legislation "every time there is a challenge" but he is under pressure to take action.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan told the Government to re-examine the UK's Online Safety Act, claiming it was "not fit for purpose". However, online threats are already illegal and one woman was

recently convicted for sending online messages calling for a mosque to be blown up.

The Institute's Simon Calvert said the Government must not reintroduce restrictions on content deemed 'legal but harmful' to adults, saying it could lead to "damaging limitations on legitimate debate".

Drug deaths a 'tragedy of unimaginable proportions'

Drug-related deaths in Scotland have now topped 1,000 for the sixth year in a row.

National Records of Scotland reported 1,172 deaths in 2023, a rise of 121 on the previous year.

Deaths through drug poisoning have been increasing over the past two decades and are now almost five times higher than when figures were first recorded in 1996.

Scottish Health Secretary Neil Gray described the rising death toll as "hugely concerning", but vowed to continue with the SNP's controversial 'harm reduction' approach. This includes a so-called "safer drug consumption



facility" due to open in Glasgow before the end of the year.

Responding to the data, Annemarie Ward of drugs charity FAVOR UK said Scotland was in the "midst of a tragedy of unimaginable proportions".

She questioned why the Scottish Government "persists with a strategy that has repeatedly failed to save lives".

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Perks for police officers to be 'Pride' marchers

Police Scotland offered its officers incentives to take part in parades celebrating LGBT lifestyles, it has been revealed.

An internal memo from Assistant Chief Constable Tim Mairs promised officers "a shift change or a day back" for being 'Pride' marchers. He also stipulated that officers should "parade in full uniform".



Pro-lifer awarded £13,000 after silent prayer arrest

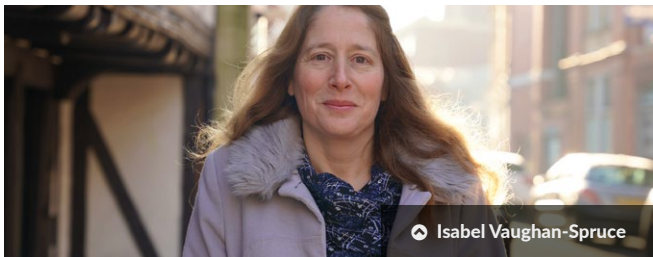
Pro-life campaigner Isabel Vaughan-Spruce has received £13,000 and an apology from the police after being wrongfully arrested for praying silently inside a 'censorship zone' near an abortion clinic in Birmingham.

In a statement, Miss Vaughan-Spruce said: "Silent

prayer is not a crime.

"Nobody should be arrested merely for the thoughts they have in their heads – yet this happened to me twice at the hands of the West Midlands Police, who explicitly told me that 'prayer is an offence!'"

Legislation banning pro-life witness outside abortion centres came into effect in Scotland on 24 September. It can impose unlimited fines for handing out pro-life literature, speaking to anyone about abortion, or holding a silent 'prayer vigil' within 200m of a clinic.



Isabel Vaughan-Spruce

SNP pledges to enshrine abortion in constitution

The SNP has pledged to make abortion a

SNP

constitutional right if Scotland becomes independent.

During the party's 90th Annual Conference, delegates voted to adopt the radical proposal as official party policy.

The resolution claimed that "women's rights are human rights, and access to safe, legal abortion is a fundamental aspect of healthcare and bodily autonomy".

Right to Life UK spokeswoman Catherine Robinson warned: "This is a

radical and inhumane proposal that would likely lead to the lives of many more babies being lost to abortion in Scotland".

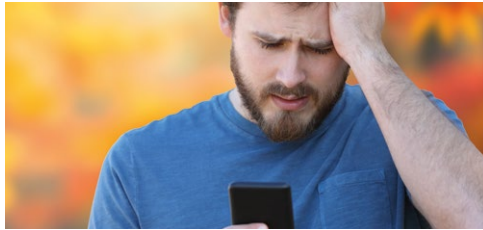
Abortion is already permitted in Britain for most reasons up to 24 weeks, and up to birth if the unborn child is deemed to have a disability.



Institute calls on Government to tackle gambling 'Wild West'

The Christian Institute has urged the Culture Secretary to introduce tighter restrictions on gambling, following the UK Government's manifesto pledge to tackle the issue.

In a letter to Lisa Nandy, Institute Director Ciarán Kelly warned that gambling has become an all-pervasive part of life in modern Britain, leaving a trail of personal and social chaos. He highlighted advertising, child protection, and online stake limits as three areas which could be swiftly addressed.



Mr Kelly wrote: "From gambling logos on football shirts to betting ads on social media, there is no escaping it. It exploits the most vulnerable and desperate in our society.

"We welcome the Government's manifesto pledge

to reform gambling regulation and call on the Culture Secretary to act quickly to hold gambling firms to account. There is too much of the 'Wild West' about the UK's current gambling laws. The time to act is now."

The Institute opposed the 2005

Gambling Act, warning of the damage that would come from deregulation.

Mr Kelly added: "Sadly, many of our predictions have come true. Two decades on, there is an urgent need to bring gambling law up to date and improve protections for the vulnerable."

In response, the Minister for Gambling told the Institute the Government "recognises the impact harmful gambling can have", and is committed to reform.

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NHS employee sues over man using women's changing room

An NHS Scotland employee is taking legal action against the health service after she was disciplined for objecting to a man using the ladies' changing room.

The anonymous woman complained to NHS Fife after she encountered a male worker in

the female-only changing room late at night. As a result, she was suspended for three months pending an investigation.

Her legal team successfully challenged her suspension, but NHS Fife did not drop its disciplinary

process against her. The woman intends to take her employer to an Employment Tribunal for contravening the Equality Act.

Currently, NHS guidance allows men to use single-sex spaces that reflect their 'gender identity'.

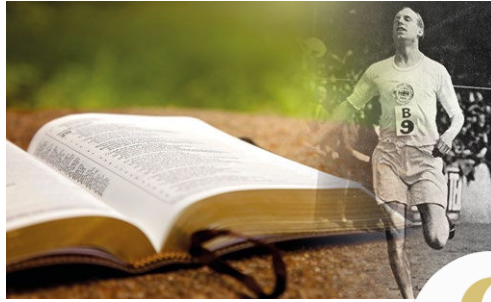


Liddell: Olympic legend celebrated

During the summer, the Scottish Parliament hosted an exhibition celebrating the life of athlete and missionary Eric Liddell.

'Eric Liddell: Legacy of an Olympic Legend' marked the centenary of Liddell's sprinting success at the 1924 Paris Olympics and explored the Christian convictions that inspired the man dubbed "the Flying Scotsman".

The devout Christian shunned his favoured 100-metre dash as the heat was due to be held on the Lord's Day. Opting to



compete in the 400 metres instead, he secured the gold medal in a new Olympic record.

In July, Liddell, who studied Pure Science at the University of Edinburgh in the 1920s, was honoured with a

posthumous honorary degree by its Chair of Sport for his "contribution to sport and humanity".

Born in China to Scottish parents in 1902, he returned to his country of birth after

his studies to serve as a missionary until his death in a Japanese internment camp in 1945.

This year's Olympics saw several current athletes giving glory to God on the world stage.

US gold medalist Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone said: "On the track, I glorified God by running with all my mind and

body", while diver Andrea Spendolini-Sirieix shared, "To God be the glory" after picking up bronze for Team GB.



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CI appoints new Director

The Christian Institute has appointed Ciarán Kelly as its new Director, following the sudden death of Colin Hart in March.

Mr Kelly, who joined the Institute in 2014, has been promoted to the position on a permanent basis, after stepping in as Acting Director during the four-month recruitment process.

The Institute's Chairman of Trustees, Revd Dr Richard Turnbull, said: "There is no one more suited to lead the Institute for the challenges that lie ahead."

The new Director asked for prayer, and invited all Bible-believing Christians to join with the Institute in "speaking up for what is good and right and true, and contending for the relevance of God's moral law to all people in our own day".



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