

LGB&T Anglican Coalition

www.lgbtac.org.uk

contact@lgbtac.org.uk



Press Release LGBT Act of Witness Talk with us - not about us!

An Act of Witness will take place at General Synod on Thursday to draw attention to the many hundreds of LGB&T clergy who minister faithfully across the Church of England despite the institutional prejudice and suspicion they often face, and on whom the Church of England relies.

The Revd Benny Hazlehurst (Chair of the LGBT Anglican Coalition) said, "If all the LGB&T Clergy were to leave the Church of England, parochial and sector ministry in the Church of England would suffer major trauma, and the parish system in some parts of the country would face utter collapse."

The LGB&T Anglican Coalition has calculated that there are at least 1,500 LGB&T licensed clergy currently ministering in parishes, hospitals, diocesan offices and other ministries - over 13% of the total.

London is home to a significant proportion with approximately 350 LGB&T licensed clergy - 25% of the diocesan workforce, but snapshots of deaneries in other dioceses up and down the country have revealed significant numbers (10-15%) are typical.

Research by the union Unite in 2008 also showed that over 20% of hospital chaplains have same-sex partners and have moved into chaplaincy in part because they could be sure of equal treatment and support from their employer.

Yet the culture of the Church of England remains a hostile place for many LGB&T clergy who often have to hide their sexuality, and their treatment by bishops is inconsistent with some acknowledging same-sex partners while others overlook them.

The event will take place in Dean's Yard from 08.45 am until 9.30 am on Thursday 9 February. Clergy members of the Coalition are available for interview beforehand.

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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. **Website** www.lgbtac.org.uk

2. **For more information or interviews contact:**

Revd Benny Hazlehurst 07788 426090

Revd Giles Goddard 07762 373674

Revd Colin Coward 07770 844302

Revd Clare Herbert 07504 577210

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