



# BRIAR STREET NEWS



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October 2016

## IMPORTANT EVENTS:

### OCTOBER

- |    |                          |
|----|--------------------------|
| 10 | Columbus Day             |
| 30 | Missionary David Sitton  |
| 30 | All Church Chili cookoff |

### A word from Pastor BJ:

How Does Gay 'Marriage' Hurt Us? Here's How.  
By Eric Metaxas

Christians are often asked by gay activists why they oppose same-sex "marriage." "How does our marriage hurt you?" they ask. Well, I can think of one significant way it will hurt us: It will destroy religious freedom and free speech rights.

The handwriting is on the wall in Canada, which legalized same-sex "marriage" in 2005, in effect completely changing its true meaning. Since then, as Michael Coren notes in National Review Online, "there have been between 200 and 300 proceedings ... against critics and opponents of same-sex marriage." Of course he means legal proceedings.

For instance, in Saskatchewan, a homosexual man called a state marriage commissioner, wanting to "marry" his partner. The commissioner, an evangelical Christian, declined to conduct the ceremony for religious reasons. He simply referred the man to another commissioner.

But that was not enough for the gay couple. Even though they got their ceremony, they wanted to punish the Christian who had declined to conduct it. The case ended up in the courts. And the result? Those with religious objections to conducting such ceremonies now face the loss of their jobs.

Canadian churches are also under attack. Coren writes that when Fred Henry, the Roman Catholic bishop of Calgary, Alberta, sent a letter to churches explaining traditional Catholic teaching on marriage, he was "charged with a human-rights violation" and "threatened with litigation."

Churches with theological objections to performing same-sex "wedding" ceremonies are being threatened with the loss of their tax-free status. In British Columbia, the Knights of Columbus agreed to rent its building for a wedding reception before finding out that the couple was lesbian. When they did find out, they apologized to the women and agreed to both find an alternative venue and pay the costs for printing new invitations. But that wasn't good enough. The women prosecuted, and the Human Rights Commission ordered the Knights of Columbus to pay a fine.

Of course, the lesbians knew perfectly well what the Catholic Church teaches about marriage, but they sought out a Catholic-owned building, anyway. As Michael Coren puts it, "it's becoming obvious that Christian people, leaders, and organizations are being targeted, almost certainly to create legal precedents"—precedents intended to silence and punish anyone who dares to disagree with so-called gay "marriage."

If you think this couldn't happen here, think again. This year [2012] we've seen ObamaCare attack the autonomy of Catholic churches by attempting to force them, in violation of Catholic teaching, to pay for contraceptives and abortifacients for church employees. And just last week, a lesbian employee of a Catholic hospital in New York sued the hospital for denying her partner spousal health benefits.

This is what we need to tell our neighbors when they ask us, "How does gay 'marriage' hurt us?" It means that those hostile to our beliefs will attempt to bend us to their will to force us to not only accept gay "marriage," but to condone it as well.

This is why I urge you to join the half-million Christians who have signed the Manhattan Declaration. Please sign it yourself by going to [manhattanddeclaration.org](http://manhattanddeclaration.org).

You and I must demonstrate love to our gay neighbors, of course, remembering that we are ultimately engaged in spiritual warfare. But we should boldly stand up when our rights as citizens and the demands of our conscience are threatened.

**Eric Metaxas is the host of the "Eric Metaxas Show," a co-host of "BreakPoint" radio and a New York Times #1 best-selling author of Amazing Grace: William Wilberforce and the Heroic Campaign to End Slavery about William Wilberforce and Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Martyr, Prophet, Spy about Dietrich Bonhoeffer. His works have been translated into more than twenty languages.**