# Archbishop Stephen Cottrell steps in as temporary leader of the Church of England... and seems to promise gay services



Archbishop Stephen Cottrell of York has stepped in as temporary leader of the Church of England following the resignation of his predecessor, Archbishop Justin Welby of Canterbury, which took effect on January 6, 2025. The resignation came amidst widespread criticism regarding Archbishop Welby’s handling of a sexual abuse scandal that has resulted in serious allegations of cover-ups and institutional failure.

In a letter addressed to members of the Church of England, Archbishop Cottrell expressed his sorrow over the pervasive darkness surrounding the reports of abuse, stating, “To those who have been hurt, I offer my deepest apologies.” He acknowledged the significant pain endured by victims and survivors, emphasising that they require “more than words of lament.” Archbishop Cottrell reassured Anglicans that progress is being made in safeguarding measures, noting, “Every week, thousands of parish safeguarding officers faithfully attend to their duties in churches across England.”

In an important aspect of his address, Archbishop Cottrell also acknowledged the presence of “many same-sex couples in faithful, stable relationships” within the Church. While recognising the “profound disagreement” surrounding the topic of homosexual relations within Anglicanism, he highlighted a potential shift in church policy, stating, “Later this year, we will consider introducing bespoke services” for same-sex couples. However, he also cautioned that such developments must come with provisions for those who may not support these changes.

This period of transition and potential policy evolution within the Church of England is significant not only for the denomination but also for the broader LGBT community, particularly for gay men seeking recognition and support within religious contexts. The discussions around same-sex services point to a growing consideration of inclusivity amidst ongoing debates within traditional religious frameworks.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://international.la-croix.com/religion/archbishop-of-york-calls-on-church-of-england-to-repent-for-sexual-abuse-scandals> - Corroborates the resignation of Archbishop Justin Welby and the temporary leadership of Archbishop Stephen Cottrell, as well as Cottrell's call for the Church of England to repent for sexual abuse scandals.
* <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/anglican-church-welby-archbishop-canterbury-1.7380888> - Details the reasons behind Archbishop Justin Welby's resignation, including his failure to inform police about serial abuse by a volunteer at Christian summer camps.
* <https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/anglican-church-welby-archbishop-canterbury-1.7380888> - Provides context on the widespread criticism and allegations of cover-ups and institutional failure in the Church of England related to sexual abuse scandals.
* <https://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=64414> - Confirms Archbishop Stephen Cottrell's assumption of temporary leadership of the Church of England following Justin Welby's resignation.
* <https://www.catholicculture.org/news/headlines/index.cfm?storyid=64414> - Mentions Archbishop Cottrell's discussion on sexual abuse and potential policy changes within the Church of England.
* <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/press-releases/independent-review-churchs-handling-smyth-case-published> - Details the independent review into the Church of England's handling of allegations of serious abuse by John Smyth, highlighting the cover-up and institutional failures.
* <https://www.churchofengland.org/media/press-releases/independent-review-churchs-handling-smyth-case-published> - Provides statements from Church officials, including apologies and commitments to improve safeguarding measures.