

## Queen's former chaplain leads vicar rebellion over gay marriage

The Queen's former chaplain is leading a vicar rebellion over gay marriage, as he threatens to break away from the Church of England.

The Rev Dr Gavin Ashenden, who until earlier this year was one of the special chaplains to the Queen, has warned of the prospect of a "declaration of independence" from vicars who feel that those with traditional views are being "marginalised" by the Church establishment.



In a letter published in today's Daily Telegraph, a group of 23 conservative Anglicans raise the prospect of a split in the Church.

They claim that the most recent meeting of the General Synod - the Church of England's lawmaking body which earlier this month appeared to signal support for gay marriage - has caused "great concern" to Anglicans, and has deepened tensions between the traditionalist and progressive camps.

"There are times, particularly in the face of social disintegration, when it is the duty of the Church to be counter-cultural," the letter said.

It added that the "booing of traditionalists" and the "personal abuse" they suffered at the General Synod has "deepened mistrust" between the two camps.

The letter concludes by raising the prospect of a split in the Church of England, similar to that which

took place in the North American Anglican church.

Dr Ashenden told The Daily Telegraph that the letter is a warning that unless there is a change of direction, the archbishop risks a “revolt in the form of an independence movement”.

“This is a warning that the Archbishop is under notice that unless he leads the Church in a way that remains consistent with the values and authority of the bible as opposed to progressive secularism, he will risk some kind of revolt in the form of an independence movement,” he said.

Camilla Turner - The Telegraph