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Indian Presbyterians to 'discipline' homosexuals

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KOCHI, India (RNS/ENInews) The Presbyterian church in the northeast Indian state of Mizoram has said it will discipline homosexuals by preventing them from taking part in important church rituals because their lifestyle is incompatible with Christianity.

The executive committee of the synod of the Mizoram Presbyterian Church, the largest church in the Christian-majority state, said the church will not condone homosexuality in any way, and may excommunicate some homosexuals.

“Our church will discipline such people, and they will not be allowed to take part in sacraments,” the Rev. C. Rosiama, a leader of the Mizo church and former moderator of the Presbyterian Church of India, told Ecumenical News international from Aizwal, the capital of Mizoram.

The Presbyterian Church of India is made up of eight independent church synods all based in northeast India, a region sandwiched between Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Myanmar.

Rosiama said the Mizo synod had decided that homosexuals living together as couples will not be excommunicated from the church.

Still, he added, since such behavior is against the tenets of Christianity, the synod had decided such people should not be allowed to hold any posts or preach in the church, even if they are ordained.

“Homosexuality is a license for immorality, and we cannot approve it,” said Rosiama.

The synod discussed the issue in December 2009 because church delegates felt existing church policy was too lenient on homosexuals.

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