

# **Finnish politician under ‘hate crime investigation’ for sharing Bible verse on Facebook**

Police are investigating a Christian politician in Finland for an alleged “hate crime” because she shared a Bible verse on Facebook to criticize a national church that participated in LGBT Pride festivities.

In the post, congresswoman Päivi Räsänen, a Christian Democrat, criticized the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland for participating in the Helsinki LGBT Pride events in June. Her criticism was alongside a picture of Romans 1:24-27 that describes same-sex relationships as “shameful.”

## **FOUNDER OF CONVERSION THERAPY ORGANIZATION COMES OUT AGAINST IT: ‘I WAS WRONG!’**

Her post made Räsänen the subject of a pretrial investigation by the Finnish Police for a suspected incitement against sexual and gender minorities.

“The pre-trial investigations have not yet been completed. Police will provide more details once the investigations have been completed or presented to a prosecutor for consideration of charges,” the Helsinki Police Department officer in charge of the investigation told the Helsinki Times.



Finnish Christian Democratic member of parliament and former Minister of the Interior, Päivi Räsänen. (Facebook: Päivi Räsänen)

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Räsänen, who is a member of and is married to a pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF), came under fire for her June Facebook post: “How can the church’s doctrinal foundation, the Bible, be compatible with the lifting up of shame and sin as a subject of pride? #LGBT #HelsinkiPride2019.”

### **Romans 1:24-27**

**24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:**

**25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.**

**26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:**

**27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.**

The vast majority, 69 percent, of Finns are members of the ELCF, which has had a steady decline over the last few years, according to Evangelical Focus.

### **AN UNLIKELY JOURNEY FROM AGNOSTIC GAY MAN IN PRISON TO EVANGELICAL BIBLE PROFESSOR**

In mid-August, the Finnish politician tweeted: “I am not concerned on my part, as I trust this will not move on to the prosecutor. However, I am concerned if quoting the Bible is considered even ‘slightly’ illegal. I hope this won’t lead to self-censorship among Christians. Rom. 1:24-27.”

Räsänen’s minority party holds five seats in the 200-seat Finnish Parliament. She is known for her defense of traditional Christian views on abortion and

marriage, but after being called “homophobic,” the politician tweeted: “It is not right to label Christian conviction as phobia.”

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She is one of three politicians in the nation under pretrial investigation right now, joining Social Democrat Hussein Al-Tae and Finns Party Juha Mäenpää, who are suspected of incitement due to racist comments.

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