

# Petitioners to seek gay-rights law reversal

By Gary E. Swan  
Staff Writer

Fundamentalist Christians will be knocking on doors throughout the county Saturday trying to collect more than 50,000 signatures that would start the process of overturning the county's new "gay rights" ordinance.

About two thousand members of at least 20 Christian churches convened at the Los Gatos Christian Church Thursday night to sing, pray and plan their effort to force a voter referendum

Santa Clara County supervisors Aug. 6

passed the ordinance that bans discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing, employment, business, real estate transactions and access to government services.

A similar ordinance has been voted, but not yet given final approval, by the San Jose City Council.

Ministers and other leaders of the opposition mixed pulpit preaching and politics Thursday night to begin a populist drive to turn back the ordinance and then remove from public office those who enacted it.

"We can't let those who represent us

pass laws that are against God's will," said the Rev. Marvin Rickard, pastor of the Los Gatos Christian Church.

"There is no question we are on the Lord's side," said the Rev. Harvey Timberlake, a Sacramento lobbyist for Christian causes.

The churches plan to put more than 2,500 precinct workers on the street Saturday to gather signatures to put the referendum on the ballot. At least 37,500 are needed, but referendum organizer Rick Harrington said a goal of 50,000 to 100,000 has been set.

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## Churches battle gay-rights law

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Harrington said that if the necessary signatures are collected, the ordinance would be suspended and sent back to the board of supervisors.

If the board reconfirms its support, the ordinance would go on the November ballot, provided enough signatures are collected by Sept. 5.

San Jose Councilman Larry Pegram — who has been the only council opponent of the San Jose ordinance — received a standing ovation when he was introduced.

Pegram, who will run for re-election in an ad-

joining Almaden district, said, "I'm convinced that government is not hearing us. But they will after Saturday.

"Once we overturn the ordinance at the county level, then we'll turn around — and if my colleagues don't listen . . . we'll do the same thing in San Jose."

He received the largest of several rousing ovations from the crowd that filled the 1,800-seat church beyond capacity and had parking backed up down Blossom Hill Road.

Harrington, who has led fights against public recognition of homosexuals and homosexual rights for the last two years, was introduced as "just an ordinary man but one who feels he is called by God in this matter."

Several speakers spoke of the dangers they see in the homosexual movement.

"To allow militant gay rights to go unanswered," said the Rev. Harry Twinning of San Diego, "would invite more of the gay rioting." He referred to that which occurred in San Francisco after the Dan White trial.

Others contended the ordinance as ambiguous, unenforceable and contrary to the moral order.