



The Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists

Associational

An Ongoing eNewsletter from the Executive Director

Issue 31 ~ May 19, 2007

From the Executive Director:

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ,

AWAB is very grateful to individuals and groups in AWAB churches and AWAB mission supporters in Pennsylvania for underwriting the costs of the special drama to be performed at the AWAB National Biennial Gathering on June 29 and June 30 at Calvary Baptist Church in Washington, DC.

Remember Who Made You was written and is performed by Jeffrey Barnes, who will also lead the audience discussion immediately following the performance.

Members and friends in Central Baptist Church in Wayne, Drexel Hill Baptist Church, University Baptist, Brethren Church in State College, and AWAB mission supporters in central PA have all responded positively to the opportunity to provide this performing art form that uses humor and drama to give the perspectives of a variety of characters all struggling to get a grip on the issues surrounding homosexuality in today's church.

Thank you AWAB Pennsylvanians and supporters!

Lovingly,
Ken Pennings
608-255-2155
ken@wabaptists.org

AWAB Gathering in Washington DC

June 29-July 2, 2007 - ABC/USA Biennial Meeting

Friday, June 29

- **2:45-4:45 PM** – Jeffrey Barnes performance and audience talkback: Woodward Hall (Calvary Baptist Church).
- **6:30-7:00 PM** – Rainbow Choir sings outside plenary event space.

Saturday, June 30

- **9:00-11:00 AM** – AWAB business meeting: Calvary Baptist Church sanctuary.
- **11:00-11:15 AM** – informal fellowship, browsing AWAB exhibit table in and around sanctuary.
- **11:15AM-12:30 PM** – AWAB worship service: Calvary Baptist Church sanctuary.
- **12:45-2:15 PM** – AWAB luncheon event.:Schallenburger Hall at Calvary Baptist Church. **Registration is required.** The price is \$15 before June 15. Limited registrations are available after June 15 and at the door for \$20. ([Registration Form](#)).
- **2:30-4:30 PM** – Jeffrey Barnes performance and audience talkback: Woodward Hall (Calvary Baptist Church).

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About Associational

Associational is published monthly by the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists, an organization of churches, groups and individuals that advocate for the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons with Baptist churches.

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PO Box 259257, Madison, WI 53725

- **5:00-6:45 PM** – AWAB exhibit table at Roger Williams Fellowship dinner event.

Sunday, July 1

- **6:30-7:0 PM** – Rainbow Choir sings outside plenary event space.

Monday, July 2

- **6:30-7:00 PM** – Rainbow Choir sings outside plenary event space.

Schedule and Registration Form:

www.wabaptists.org/gatherings/biennial_events.pdf

Online Information:

www.wabaptists.org/biennial.htm

Remember Who Made You

by Jeffrey Barnes

A one-man play exploring the myths, fears, and joys of being gay AND Christian.

"I believe it is important for us to explore our beliefs and challenge ourselves. Many people in our society claim that being gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender and being Christian are not compatible." There are many others who feel differently. When you leave this play—whether you like or dislike it, whether you are enlightened or confused—my challenge to you is to talk about it." Many Blessings!
– Jeffrey

Two Free Performances followed by discussion led by Jeffrey Barnes

Friday, June 29, 2:45 – 4:45 pm; Saturday, June 30, 2:30 – 4:30 pm

Woodward Hall, Calvary Baptist Church

8th St. NW & H Street, Washington DC

This provocative and moving play is sponsored by Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists.

A Few Creative People Wanted

In preparation for the AWAB National Gathering worship service to be held on Saturday, June 30, in Washington D.C., the AWAB worship team is looking for a few creative and artistic folks to share their skills in this fabulous celebration. Specifically, we are hoping to hear from people with gifts in these areas:

- Liturgical dancers, especially those who might have experience with African music
- Drummers and /or bjembe players
- Artists or potters (paint, pencil, chalk, or clay)
- Scripture readers with a flair for the dramatic, for contemporary and/or dialogic readings

If any one of these items describes you and you have a heart for what God is doing in the GLBT movement, please contact AWAB at ken@wabaptists.org. We would love to hear from you!

New Hampshire Approves Civil Unions

For details, go to

<http://www.wmur.com/news/13192864/detail.html>

Nigerian Critic to Rally Episcopalians

Davis Mac-Iyalla, a gay Nigerian leader and Director of Changing Attitude-Nigeria, is coming to Holy Apostles on June 19, 6:15 pm, where he will speak at a Mass with Gene Robinson, Bishop of New Hampshire. On the following evening, June 20, Davis will be featured in the Pride Forum at St. Luke's in the Fields at 7 pm. Davis is on a speaking tour in the United States to encourage loyal Episcopalians to resist the "church-poaching" efforts of Peter Akinola, his own archbishop of Abuja, Nigeria, who is promoting the intimidation and imprisonment of LGBTs—and funding the effort with right-wing American money. A handful of wealthy American churches has withdrawn from The Episcopal Church and aligned with Akinola's rump group, which seeks to overthrow the Archbishop of Canterbury and "realign" the worldwide Anglican Communion under Akinola's control. The Anglican Communion is the third-largest denomination in the world, a loose

federation of national churches that trace their roots to the Church of England.

Mac-Iyalla, 35, says, "The same man who is stealing American churches is persecuting Nigerian Gays, threatening them with the world's worst Gay law taking away all human rights. This bill has been condemned by the U.S. State Department, the European Union, and the United Nations."

Mac-Iyalla made headlines in 2005, including The New York Times and The Times of London, for organizing the first support group for Nigerian Gays. He has been a target of Akinola's wrath ever since, leading to a draconian bill in Parliament, which would make it illegal for any two Gay people to be in the same place anywhere in Nigeria. Violators would be subject to torture and imprisonment. Mac-Iyalla says, "Akinola and his American collaborators seek to use LGBT rights as a wedge issue to split The Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion so that he can take over. This only seems to be about Gay rights. What it's about is money and power, at the expense of his chosen scapegoats. He wants to lead a new, anti-Gay apartheid."

Mac-Iyalla himself has been repeatedly denounced by the archbishop's staff, which claims "There are no Gay Anglicans in Nigeria," and he has been the target of continuing death threats orchestrated by the church. He was forced to flee his home and now lives in exile elsewhere in Africa. Nevertheless, Mac-Iyalla traveled to a meeting of Anglican archbishops in Tanzania in February, walked up to Akinola and offered his hand. Akinola was forced to admit knowing him.

While in the U.S., Mac-Iyalla will address The Episcopal Church's highest governing body, the Executive Council, June 11-14, at Parsippany, N.J. He is also traveling the U.S. visiting local LGBT community leaders, students, and churches; attending LGBT Pride events in San Francisco; and meeting Gene Robinson, the first openly-Gay bishop in Anglican history, the elected Bishop of New Hampshire.

Mac-Iyalla's local visit is sponsored by an Episcopal prayer website called dailyoffice.org, as well as local organizations. Contact person: Josh Thomas, cell 219-863-8690.

Career Opportunities

Open & Affirming Coordinator

Complete listing on AWAB's Job Connection at: www.wabaptists.org/jobconnection.htm

Upcoming Events

OutFront Conference Coming to Phoenix

June 1-2, 2007, First Congregational United Church of Christ, 1407 N. Second Street, Phoenix

No Longer Silent Clergy for Justice (NLS) and First Congregational UCC will host "OutFront Arizona," a conference focusing on growing LGBT affirming congregations. Presented by the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry at Pacific School of Religion (CLGS), the first center for LGBT studies by a school of religion, the conference is designed to give religious leaders, lay people, and LGBT activists and their allies the knowledge and tools to articulate a broad and inclusive religious voice.

Nationally known speaker Rev. Dr. Yvette Flunder will be the keynote speaker. Other speakers include Rev. Dr. Marvin Ellison, Rev. Dr. Jay Emerson, and Dr. Michael Mendiola. Workshops include "Liberating Scripture," "Civil Unions versus Marriage," "Transgender Families," and media training by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance against Defamation. Friday evening, a drumming group from Arizona Women in Tune will perform, and Saturday evening, the Phoenix Metropolitan Men's Chorus will sing. A "Blessing of All Our Families" worship will be Saturday at 6:00 p.m.

Early registration for the two-day event is \$24. Late registration is \$35. For more information go to CLGS.org or call 602-258-6891

Crossing Borders, Confronting Racism, Claiming Grace: Generations, Geographies and Genders

A national conference being held by Christian Lesbians OUT (CLOUT), an ecumenical, national organization founded in 1990.

July 12-15 in Atlanta.

Keynote speakers include: Bishop Yvette Flunder, Rev. Dr. Irene Monroe, Dr. Virginia Ramey Mollenkott, Olga Perez Stable Cox, Dr. Beverly Wildung Harrison, Rev. Delores Berry, Lavon Stalling, Rev. Eily Marlow, Rev. Dr. Judith Hoch Wray, Rev. Jessica Vazquez Torres, Rev. Dr. Nadean Bishop, Chris Paige, Rev. Donna Prince, Rev. Ruth Garwood, Roberta Robles, Dawn Sorenson, Rev. Jan Griesinger.

Dialogue groups, fishbowls, workshops, and storytelling will accompany panels and worship services. The Sunday morning worship will be sponsored with and held at All Saints Christ's Church United.

For more information contact: www.cloutsisters.org or 740-448-6424

New Name for AWAB Church

God's Harbor Community Church of St. Louis, MO, is now Ambassadors of Christ.

Associational is a periodic e-newsletter of the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists, a network of 66 churches and hundreds of individuals who have joined together to advocate for the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons within Baptist communities of faith. Please forward this e-newsletter to interested friends. Copy relevant information into your organization's bulletin and newsletter. To subscribe, send an e-mail to subscribe@wabaptists.org with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line. To be removed from this list, send an e-mail to unsubscribe@wabaptists.org with REMOVE in the subject line. To read back issues of Associational, go to: www.wabaptists.org/associational.htm.

To learn more about the Association, go to: www.wabaptists.org