



The Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists

# Associational

An Ongoing eNewsletter from the Executive Director

Issue 32 ~ June 2, 2007

## From the Executive Director:

Dear Sisters & Brothers in Christ,

AWAB's Biennial National Gathering of June 30 is rapidly approaching. "JOY" is the theme for the day. We will celebrate not only the JOY of being who we are, the JOY of being inclusive community, the JOY of living in God's presence, but also the JOY expressed through the arts and the JOY to experience some new things.

We hope that we will meet as many of you there as possible. This is a great opportunity to see old friends, make new ones, and support Welcoming and Affirming churches. As usual, we will hold our business meeting and elect new council members, but much, much more will be happening. The Rainbow Choir will be present, as always, but additional events include the Jeffrey Barnes one-man-show described below (two performances); an opportunity to fellowship in the Hospitality Suite; a JOYful, art-filled worship experience; and the AWAB luncheon (for only a \$15.00 donation – send check made out to "AWAB" to AWAB, PO Box 259257, Madison, WI 53725).

Please come and share in the JOY!

Lovingly,  
Ken Pennings  
608-255-2155  
[ken@wabaptists.org](mailto: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 Info Below).
- **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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608-255-2155, [mail@wabaptists.org](mailto:mail@wabaptists.org)  
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](http://www.wabaptists.org/gatherings/biennial_events.pdf)

Online Information:

[www.wabaptists.org/biennial.htm](http://www.wabaptists.org/biennial.htm)

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## Remember Who Made You

by Jeffery Barnes

*Remember Who Made You* is a one-man play exploring the myths, fears, and joys of being gay AND Christian. This provocative and moving play is sponsored by the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists. Two free performances, followed by discussion led by Jeffrey Barnes, will take place on Friday, June 29, 2:45 – 4:45 pm and Saturday, June 30, 2:30 – 4:30 pm at Woodward Hall, Calvary Baptist Church, 8<sup>th</sup> St. NW & H Street, Washington, DC.

"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

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## Sexual and Gender Diversity Pride Celebration

The Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing along with the faith programs of GLAAD,

the Human Rights Campaign, the National Black Justice Coalition, and the Institute for Welcoming Resources are pleased to issue a united call to congregations and clergy to conduct a worship service celebrating sexual and gender diversity as part of their community's **June Pride Month** celebration.

On June 4, 2007, the Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing will publish a new "Open Letter to Religious Leaders on Sexual and Gender Diversity." This "Open Letter" calls on faith communities to affirm sexual and gender diversity as a blessed part of life and for "full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in our faith traditions and communities."

Clergy and congregations that are planning a Pride Service are encouraged to let the Religious Institute know of the date, time, and place for their worship service and if media would be welcome. These clergy will be provided with an advance copy of the "Open Letter to Religious Leaders on Sexual and Gender Diversity" that can be used in sermon preparation or as a responsive reading. Clergy are also invited to submit sermons preached on the theme of "Celebrating Sexual and Gender Diversity" during Pride Month. There will be a \$400 first place **Pride Sermon Award**. The top sermons will also be posted on the web sites of the sponsoring national organizations.

For more information, contact the Religious Institute on Sexual, Morality, Justice, and Healing  
304 Main Avenue, #335  
Norwalk, Connecticut 06851

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## Career Opportunities

### Executive Director Leaven Center - Lyons, MI

The Leaven Center seeks an Executive Director. The Leaven Center ([www.leaven.org](http://www.leaven.org)) is a retreat and study center dedicated to nurturing the relationship between spirituality and social justice. Located on 25 beautiful acres of land near Lyons, Michigan, Leaven Center provides a context in which people committed to social change can find rest and nourishment for body and spirit, as well as bold and innovative programming. Leaven's programs are guided by a commitment to racial, sexual, and economic justice; the rights of people with disabilities; and respect for

the wisdom of varying religious and spiritual traditions.

Complete information on AWAB's Job Connection:  
[www.wabaptists.org/jobconnection.htm#5](http://www.wabaptists.org/jobconnection.htm#5)

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### UCC Open and Affirming Coordinator

A called position to the ONA ministry of The UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns that prioritizes capacity building, administration, education and pastoral care with UCC congregations, ONA settings and ONA Consultants. A three-quarter time position, reporting to the National Coordinator of The Coalition. Prefer Cleveland area resident, with extensive travel availability.

Complete information on AWAB's Job Connection:  
[www.wabaptists.org/jobconnection.htm#3](http://www.wabaptists.org/jobconnection.htm#3)

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### Contemporary Music Leader

St. Mark's United Methodist Church in Sacramento, CA, is seeking a multi-talented musician to lead singers, instrumentalists, and congregation in various styles of contemporary music expression in a lively worship experience.

Complete information on AWAB's Job Connection:  
[www.wabaptists.org/jobconnection.htm#4](http://www.wabaptists.org/jobconnection.htm#4)

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## Upcoming Events

**June 1-2**

### OutFront Conference

Phoenix, AZ

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](http://CLGS.org) or call 602-258-6891.

**June 2**

### Witness Our Welcome (WOW)

Danville, CA

Witness Our Welcome is an annual interfaith event in the San Francisco Bay Area, this year sponsored by more than 30 congregations, PFLAG groups and other organizations. The worship service will take place on June 2 at 7:00 pm at Danville Congregational Church and will feature Rabbi Jhos Singer of the Coastsides Jewish Community in Half Moon Bay. For more information contact Alan Kelchner ([alan@danvillechurch.com](mailto:alan@danvillechurch.com)).  
 Email: [wowservice07@aol.com](mailto:wowservice07@aol.com)  
 Phone: Barbara or Scott Reed 925-552-6390 or Bill Armstrong 925-361-5035  
 Links: [www.witnessourwelcome.net](http://www.witnessourwelcome.net)  
[www.myspace.com/witnessourwelcome](http://www.myspace.com/witnessourwelcome)  
<https://post.craigslist.org/manage/328444538/xj43c>

**June 2**

### Reclaimed Faith

A special on the journey of GLBT Christians returning to their religious identity, was featured on LOGO TV (see [www.logoonline.com](http://www.logoonline.com) for more details). It will be replayed on Saturday, June 2nd at 7:30 pm and Monday, June 4th at 7:30 pm. The documentary features a trip to the GCN conference in Seattle, Washington, in January 2007 as well as worship at the Dignity service in St. Louis, MO. Additional footage was shot at several locales in Chicago.

**June 19**

### Nigerian Critic to Rally Episcopalians

Davis Mac-Iyalla, 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.

Mac-Iyalla, 35, says, "The same man who is stealing American churches is persecuting Nigerian Gays, is 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."

The Anglican Communion is the third-largest denomination in the world, a loose federation of national churches that traces its roots to the Church of England. 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](http://dailyoffice.org) as well as local organizations.

## June 24 The Religious Coalition for Equality

Washington State is inviting religious leaders, faith communities, and faith-based organizations to march together in the Seattle Pride Parade on June 24. For more information, contact Kathy Sakahara ([kathysakahara@hotmail.com](mailto:kathysakahara@hotmail.com)).

## July 12-15 Crossing Borders, Confronting Racism, Claiming Grace: Generations, Geographies, Genders

A national conference is being held by Christian Lesbians OUT (CLOUT), an ecumenical, national organization founded in 1990 on 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](http://www.cloutsisters.org) or 740-448-6424

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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](mailto:subscribe@wabaptists.org) with SUBSCRIBE in the subject line. To be removed from this list, send an e-mail to [unsubscribe@wabaptists.org](mailto:unsubscribe@wabaptists.org) with REMOVE in the subject line. To read back issues of Associational, go to: [www.wabaptists.org/associational.htm](http://www.wabaptists.org/associational.htm).

To learn more about the Association, go to: [www.wabaptists.org](http://www.wabaptists.org)