



The Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists

# Associational

An Ongoing eNewsletter from the Executive Director

Issue 35 ~ September 12, 2007

## From the Executive Director: Carolinas Conference

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Please get the word out about AWAB's **2007 Carolinas Conference: Acceptable to God**. The conference will take place at Myers Park Baptist Church, Charlotte, NC, on Friday and Saturday, October 5 and 6. The organizers of this conference say, "The 2007 Carolinas Conference: Acceptable to God" will be a wonderful opportunity to gather with other persons of faith to:

- Hear stories of Christians striving to reconcile faith with sexual orientation
- Examine Scripture and Baptist theology
- Explore congregational struggles and responses to persons who are gay and lesbian
- Build community and connection among Carolina AWAB and non-AWAB congregations

**Acceptable to God** will include small and large group conversation, panel discussion, video, worship, personal reflection, congregational action planning, and other shared resources."

For a complete agenda and registration form, go to [www.wabaptists.com](http://www.wabaptists.com). Please complete the registration form and return it to Myers Park Baptist Church. Questions? Contact Event Organizer Fran Cook at 704.301.3022, [fcook10@carolina.rr.com](mailto:fcook10@carolina.rr.com).

We hope to see you there.

Lovingly,  
Ken Pennings  
608-255-2155  
[ken@wabaptists.org](mailto:ken@wabaptists.org)

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## Iowa Court Ruling

An Iowa court has ruled that it is unconstitutional to deny six same-sex couples the right to marry. This decision brings to life the promise of equality in Iowa's constitution for same-sex couples and their families. All people deserve to be treated fairly by their government and the decision makes that principle clear. Lambda Legal filed the marriage lawsuit in December 2005. This decision comes after a hearing in May where both sides made arguments before the court. Lambda Legal is preparing the next step as the case moves forward — ultimately the Iowa Supreme Court will have the final word.

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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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## Support Hate Crimes Legislation

Earlier this year, the House passed the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007, which is now before the Senate. This bill is not directed at preventing free speech, and in fact carries with it a provision protecting free speech. This legislation amends existing hate crimes law by providing new authority for federal officials to investigate and prosecute cases in which the violence occurs because of the victim's real or perceived sexual orientation, gender or disability.

Urge your Representative and Senators to end discrimination at the workplace and support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). The support of this legislation has been strong from the faith communities. Please consider signing the petition, Clergy Against Hate and forwarding it to friends. Also, strongly urge your Senator to support S. 1105.

## October is National LGBT Month: Read A Story A Day Online

October is GLBT History Month, and Equality Forum has announced 31 icons to be featured throughout the month. The 31 icons, selected by leaders of national and international GLBT organizations, achieved success within their respective fields of endeavor, were national heroes or advanced GLBT civil rights. Log on to AWAB's website, [www.wabaptists.org](http://www.wabaptists.org), every day in October to link to these amazing stories.

### GLBT History Month 2007 Icons:

October 1	Leonard Bernstein	Composer
October 2	Annie Leibovitz	Photographer
October 3	Angela Davis	Civil Rights Activist
October 4	Alexander the Great	Military Commander
October 5	Billie Jean King	Athlete
October 6	Pedro Almodovar	Writer/Director
October 7	Bessie Smith	Singer
October 8	Klaus Wowereit	Politician
October 9	Susan Sontag	Author/Commentator
October 10	Gore Vidal	Author
October 11	Lily Tomlin	Actor
October 12	Peter Gomes	Theologian
October 13	Mary Edwards Walker	Surgeon
October 14	Frederick II	Monarch
October 15	Virginia Uribe	Educator
October 16	Frank Kameny	Gay Pioneer
October 17	Nancy Mahon	Philanthropy Advocate
October 18	David Hockney	Painter
October 19	Audre Lorde	Author
October 20	Cary Grant	Actor
October 21	Renee Richards	Transgender Pioneer
October 22	Sherry Harris	Politician
October 23	John Maynard Keynes	Economist
October 24	Gertrude Stein	Author

October 25	Zhou Dan	Chinese Gay Pioneer
October 26	Carolyn Bertozzi	Scientist
October 27	Cole Porter	Songwriter
October 28	John McNeill	Theologian
October 29	Florence Nightingale	Health Care Advocate
October 30	Billy Sipple	Hero
October 31	Leonardo da Vinci	Artist/Inventor/Scientist

## Promote & Attend Beyond the Bible and Homosexuality: An Affirmation of Gay Christians

### September 15 in Chicago

Saturday, September 15th from 9:00AM to 1:00PM, Rev. Steven F. Kindle will present a seminar titled *Beyond the Bible and Homosexuality: An Affirmation of Gay Christians* at the Center on Halsted's Hoover-Leppen Theater. Following Rev. Kindle from 2:00PM to 4:00PM, Dr. Melissa McBain will present her new play, **Altar Call** as a staged reading. *Beyond the Bible and Homosexuality: An Affirmation of Gay Christians* will examine passages of the Bible that are frequently used to condemn lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender persons and offer a case that scripture enhances the position of LGBT people in the sight of God. Rev. Kindle makes a case that, "It is not enough to say that God loves homosexuals. What is demanded from scripture is to say that God's love of homosexuals is affirming, nurturing, and that God's heart breaks when God's LGBT children are the victims of evil perpetrated in the name of God." Rev. Kindle is the Executive Director of Clergy United, Inc. and holds Master's Degrees in both Systematic Theology and Divinity. He was ordained in 1967 and has standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. **Altar Call** depicts a Baptist minister's daughter trapped between the demands of her fundamentalist father, the needs of her gay son and the crushing demands of her unfaithful husband. **Altar Call** is a volatile mix of sexuality and religion that erupts with laughter and explosive anger. When a gay musician joins her father's staff, Maggie Stone and her teenage son are forced to choose between love and obedience, between community and integrity, and between Biblical imprisonment or spiritual freedom. Dr. McBain is the Director of Clinical Experiences at Augustana College where she administers the student teaching program and produces the Quad City Playwrights Festival for young writers. Other recent works include *Yard Sale*, a solo show that premiered to rave reviews at the Living Here Festival of new plays at New Ground Theatre in Davenport, IA. She is also a professional actor, theater scholar, member of the Moline area PFLAG and is proud of

both her sons – straight and gay. The Center on Halsted's Hoover-Leppen Theater is located at 3656 N. Halsted St., Chicago, IL, and is three blocks from the CTA's Red Line station at Addison Street (two blocks East to Halsted then one block North). Tickets are \$15 in advance or \$20 at the door and include the seminar, all seminar materials, the play, refreshments and complimentary lunch from 1:00PM to 1:45PM. There will be no charge to only attend the Altar Call performance at 2:00PM. Advanced payment can be made with credit card by logging on to [www.paypal.com](http://www.paypal.com) and identifying payment and information for each individual attending to [LEFillinois@hotmail.com](mailto:LEFillinois@hotmail.com) or send a check to LEF, 3712 N. Broadway, Box 136, Chicago, IL 60613 with attendee information. For more information, contact David Valkema at [LEFillinois@hotmail.com](mailto:LEFillinois@hotmail.com) or 312-497-1110. Liberty Education Forum is a national organization that educates people about the importance of achieving freedom and fairness for gay and lesbian Americans. LEF is a non-partisan foundation that conducts educational programs, grassroots training, and research on gay and lesbian issues. LEF has a national full time office in Washington DC and chapters throughout the United States. [www.libertyeducationforum.org](http://www.libertyeducationforum.org).

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## Book Review: *A Time to Embrace* by William Stacy Johnson

William Stacy Johnson's *A Time to Embrace: Same-Gender Relationships in Religion, Law and Politics* offers a comprehensive overview of the seven major religious responses to same-gender relationships (from outright prohibition to institutional blessing), including a helpful biblical and theological analysis of each of these positions. While much of this will be familiar to many LGBT people, Johnson's organization of these positions (including charts!) makes this a "one-stop" resource for the full range of Christian arguments regarding sexuality. It's also an important reminder about the differences among the kind of arguments made by various denominations and schools of thought. For those resources alone, this book is well worth the price. But Johnson also includes a compelling argument for why embracing same-gender unions and full marriage equality is essential for a well-functioning and thriving democracy, from both a legal and political perspective. Here again Johnson outlines and organizes the various types of committed unions and arrangements that same-gender couples might choose to participate in and what's at stake for civil society in each of these in terms of both liberty and equality. Johnson is well equipped to take on this daunting task as he is Arthur M. Adams Associate

Professor of Systematic Theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, an ordained Presbyterian minister, and an attorney-at-law.

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## National Coming Out Day is October 11 – Kits Available

The theme for National Coming Out Day 2007 will be *Talk About It*, continuing the slogan and branding that the national program has been building since 2005. National Coming Out Day is a time to celebrate openness and honesty—whether you came out 20 minutes ago or 20 years ago, this is a time for all Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Straight supportive people to *Talk About It* with friends, family and coworkers.

Coming Out Day Kits include:

- Resource Guides to Coming Out/Straight Guides to GLBT Americans
- Transgender Coming Out Guides
- Poster, Balloons and HRC (Human Resource Center) Stickers
- And everything else you'll need to celebrate living openly!

You can order your kits by going to the HRC website, [www.hrc.org](http://www.hrc.org).

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## Career Opportunities

### Pastor Position

New Hope Fellowship Church (NHFC) in Dallas, Texas, heartily invites applicants for the position of Pastor. We are an open and inclusive, small, non-denominational, evangelical church located in the heart of the Oak Lawn and Uptown communities.

New Hope is a diverse community that connects people to Jesus Christ through expository Bible teaching, personal study, heartfelt worship, earnest prayer, honest relationships, and care for those in need. **We are a congregation consisting primarily of homosexual men and women who long to spread the gospel to all who seek Him in the Dallas area.** We seek a pastor committed to preaching and teaching, skilled in counseling, passionate for outreach, and eager to seek God's vision with us.

We hope the character of NHFC, as exhibited at <http://www.nhfcDallas.org/>, conveys a community of

sincere believers actively seeking the heart of God that matches your ministerial calling. Our passion lies in building up the diverse and integrated Body of Christ.

Interested parties may contact us at [pastorsearch@nhfcdallas.org](mailto:pastorsearch@nhfcdallas.org)

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**Associational is a periodic e-newsletter of the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists, a network of 68 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)**