



The Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists

Associational

An Ongoing eNewsletter from the Executive Director

Issue 36 ~ October 2, 2007

From the Executive Director: Carolinas Conference

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

Don't forget the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists' **2007 Carolinas Conference: Acceptable to God**. The conference will take place at Myers Park Baptist Church on Friday and Saturday, October 5 and 6. **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.org. Please complete the registration form and return it to Myers Park Baptist Church. If you have questions, contact event organizer Fran Cook at (704) 301-3022 or fcook10@carolina.rr.com.

Lovingly,
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New York Court Upholds Recognition of Foreign Same-Sex Marriages

By Arthur S. Leonard, September 12, 2007

For the first time, a New York state court has ruled that the principal of "comity" used to determine whether out-of-state marriages should be recognized in New York would support recognizing same-sex marriages from other jurisdictions, even though the New York Court of Appeals has ruled that same-sex couples do not have the right to marry in this state.

Acting Supreme Court Justice Thomas J. McNamara's ruling in *Godfrey v. DiNapoli*, No. 5896-06, RJI No.: 01-06-086862 (Supreme Court, Albany County) was communicated to the parties on September 5 and publicly announced by State Comptroller Thomas P. DiNapoli on September 12. The litigation arose from a decision by DiNapoli's predecessor, Alan J. Hevesi, who had announced that the New York State and Local Retirement System, a pension system for public employees in the state, would recognize same-sex marriages contracted in Canada, where that became possible in some provinces as early as 2003. Hevesi acted in response to an inquiry from a state employee who was planning to marry his partner in Canada. Hevesi relied on an opinion that had been issued in the spring of 2004 by then-Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's office, suggesting that comity principles would support recognizing same-sex marriages from Massachusetts and Canada. According to Justice McNamara, this decision mainly affects the right of surviving spouses to receive various benefits if a pensioner dies.

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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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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 onto AWAB's website, www.wabaptists.org, every day in October to read some amazing stories about Leonard Bernstein, Annie Leibovitz, Angela Davis, Renee Richards, and 27 others.

National Coming Out Day, October 11

The theme for National Coming Out Day 2007 is *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. You can order Coming Out Day kits by going to the Human Rights Campaign's website, www.hrc.org.

Holy Relationships: 2007 Midwest Regional Conference

November 2-4, 2007 Indianapolis, Indiana

Featuring National Theologians, Authors, and LGBT Activists: Rev. Dr. Mel White Dr. Virginia Mollenkott Dr. Sharon Groves **Sponsored by:** The Pride of the University of Indianapolis The Church Within (Indianapolis, Indiana) The Holy Relationships National Steering Committee **Co-Sponsored by:** The Human Rights Campaign: Religion and Faith Program, The Pacific School of Religion Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, The UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns, The Iowa Pride Network; Global Peace Initiatives, Inc.

Friday, November 2, 2007 4:00 – 6:00 PM
Registration / Organizational Fair 6:00 – 6:50 PM
Gathering Service / Keynote Address Music by

Gospel Singer – Brenda Williams 7:00 – 9:00 PM
Performance and Discussion: *Remember Who Made You* by Jeffery Barnes

Saturday, November 3, 2007 8:30 - 9:00 AM
Gathering & Devotions, led by Rev. Darren Chittick
9:00 – 10:30 AM **General Session I: On Holy Relationships** *General Session I Speakers:* Jeffery Barnes, Moderating Qualities of Holy Relationships Rev. Rich McCarty, co-moderator, *Holy Relationships National Steering Committee* Relationships with Others – LGBT&A Dr. Virginia Mollenkott, Professor and Author Cultivating a Holy Relationship with Oneself Linda L. Proffitt, MSW, Executive Director of Global Peace Initiatives 10:45 – 12:00 PM

Workshops: Exploring Sex, Sexuality, Wholeness and Holiness, Relationship with Self, Bible 101: What does Scripture really say about LGBT people?, Interfaith Dialogue on Human Sexuality and Relationships, Gender Identity, Young Adults and LGBT Culture, LGBT Identities: Straight Acting? Queer? Butch? Fem? Dom/Submissive? Exploring the different ways LGBT identify, Christian Theology and Holy Relationships: Drawing on Our Traditions, Living Healthy and Whole With or With One You Care About with AIDS: Individual, Community, and Church Response and Efforts, Unholy Relationships – Racism, Misogyny, Homophobia, Reimagining Forgiveness: When Holy Relationships Need Healing, *Exploring Holy Relationships*

General Session II: LGBT Storytelling *General Session II Speakers:* A Portrait of Faith Communities and LGBT Inclusion in America Dr. Sharon Groves, Manager, Human Rights Campaign: Religion and Faith Program On Families Accepting Their LGBT Relatives Ria Murray, Author (*To be Confirmed*) Issues Facing Youth and Young Adults in our Schools Ryan Romerman, Executive Director of the Iowa Pride Network 4:00 – 7:00 PM **Break** 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Workshops: Creating My Own Story/Monologue, Transgender Storytelling, Young Adult/Young Professional Storytelling, Parents, Family, and Friends of LGBT, Stories from the Church: Our Struggles, Our Hopes, Our Pain, Our Healing, Stories from Mixed Marriages: When Homosexual People are Married to Heterosexual People, Discussions on Monogamy and Polyamory, Sacred Pampering

Post a Group: Post a topic for discussion, gather for informal discussion. 8:45 – 10:30 PM
Film/Artistic/Musical Presentation: The 2007 Holy Relationships Midwest Regional Conference Planning Team looks forward to bringing you an

engaging performance piece by which we might draw together after a full day of conferencing.

Sunday, November 4, 2007 9:00 – 9:25 AM
Gathering and Devotion 9:30 – 10:30 AM Keynote
Speaker: Rev. Dr. Mel White 10:30 – 10:45 AM
Musical Presentation 11:00 – 11:30 AM Book-
signing with Mel White 11:45 – 1:00 PM

Workshops: Resources for People of Faith in the Effort of Full Inclusion, Strategies for Congregations, Legal Rights / Legal Strategies, Gay – Straight – Alliances on Campuses, Strategies for Creating Peace, Strategies for Parents, Family, and Friends of LGBT, Strategies for the Next Generation of Leaders

Closing Service - 1:15 – 2:00 PM

For additional information and to register:
www.holyrelationships2007.com.

Book Review: ***For the Bible Tells Me So***

by AWAB Chairperson Heather Rittenhouse

Are you curious about how faith and sexuality could possibly intersect? Do you wish you could talk meaningfully with those whose views are radically different from yours about this topic, but you don't know how? Do you love movies?

If your answer to these questions is yes, please check out the new documentary entitled FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO. Directed by Daniel Karslake, this film presents religion and sexuality in a way that encourages viewers to engage their beliefs in a spirit of serious examination rather than mindless acceptance and also to recognize how matters of faith can be easily co-opted by politics. Since its world premiere at the 2007 Sundance Film Festival, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO has won multiple human rights awards as well as "best documentary" audience awards at numerous festivals. In the words of Daniel Karslake, "The film is all about family and all about healing. There is no other film out there that is more respectful of people and their right to disagree."

Currently, FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO is scheduled to open in theaters around the country beginning in October. For a location of a screening near you and to view the trailer of the film, please visit www.forthetibletellmeso.org

Career Opportunities

Interim Pastor

Grace Baptist Church is seeking a part-time interim pastor. Grace Baptist Church is a small, diverse American Baptist congregation that meets on the north side of Chicago. The 20-year-old church rents worship space from another church and meets on Sunday evenings. It is a member of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (with a high percentage of GLBT members) and a member of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America.

Members come from both the suburbs and the city of Chicago.

As a congregation, Grace is justice-oriented, committed to prayer for one another, and engaged in dynamic and eclectic worship. The community places a high value on lay leadership, and is committed to using inclusive language in worship.

Please send resume and cover letter to:
 Interim Search Committee
 Grace Baptist Church
 1020 W. Bryn Mawr
 Chicago, IL 60660
 or to: pastor@gracebaptistchicago.com

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 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