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# Open Hands

Vol. 14 No. 3  
Winter 1999

*Resources for Ministries Affirming  
the Diversity of Human Sexuality*

When Tolerance is Not Enough  
Coming Out Christian  
Invisibly Gay  
True Family Values

Why  
Be Specific  
in Our  
Welcome?



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*Open Hands* is a resource for congregations and individuals seeking to be in ministry with lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons. Each issue focuses on a specific area of concern within the church.

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## Why Be Specific in Our Welcome?

### Tolerance is Not Enough Inclusion and the Problem of "Elmwood" 5

CRAIG WASHINGTON

*Denouncing homophobia and supporting PWAs is not enough.*

### Fear of Church Association with Homosexuality in John Wesley's Era 7

ALICE G. KNOTTS

*Wesley's own reconciling program with a gay man in prison.*

### Something There Is... 10 After Robert Frost's "The Mending Wall"

MAREN C. TIRABASSI

*A poem questioning the rigidity of churches.*

### Why Be Specific In Our Welcome? 11 The President's Church Affirms Unity With Gays and Lesbians

RALPH WILLIAMS

*"God loves you and we love you, we affirm you,  
and accept you, we treasure you. We welcome you."*

—Foundry United Methodist Church, Washington, D.C.

### "Lord, I want to be in that number, When the saints go marching in..." 13

BETH BENTLEY

*Saints in a gay pride march.*

### Reconciling 15

LES NORMAN

*A poem celebrating the welcome decision of a congregation.*

### Coming Out Christian

**The Campus Minister's View** JAN GRIESINGER 16

**A Student's View** HEATHER MOYER 17

*Coming out of the "other" closet.*

*Throughout this issue, biblical images suggested by our theme are represented visually in a traditional style and verbally by selected words of scripture: the parable of the lost sheep (cover, and page 4), the woman at the well (page 8), the younger brother's return (page 14), and the parable of the lost coin (page 20).*

**Love in the Open** 19  
**Strengthening Families By Our Welcome**  
 SARA MOORES CAMPBELL  
*Commemorating a life and a love.*

**The Body of Christ Stretches to be Inclusive** 21  
 CRAIG A. BUXTON  
*"Love each other deeply, because love covers over many sins."  
 -Paul*

**MINISTRIES**

**Outreach**  
**Specific in Rejection—Why Not in Welcome?** 4

APRIL HERRON-SWEET

**Youth**  
**On Harassment and Invisibility: One Student's Story** 9

ANONYMOUS

**Campus**  
**Mysterious Ways** 18

ISAIAH JONES

**SUSTAINING THE SPIRIT**

**A Gift for the Altar** 22  
*A new hymn welcoming lesbian and gay gifts by  
 Amanda Udis Kessler.*

**Movement News & Gatherings** ..... 24

**Profiles of Welcoming Congregations** ..... 25

**Welcoming Resources** ..... 26

**Annual Welcoming List** ..... 27

**Next Issue:  
 Listening to Voices Around the World**

**Call for articles for Open Hands Fall 1999  
 HOLY/WHOLLY**

**Theme section:** The church became holier as it became more whole, evangelistically opening its doors wider and wider throughout its history to include the unjudged Gentiles of Acts, the "ordinary" people of the Reformation, the multicultural spectrum of the worldwide church today, and the increasing diversity of the church tomorrow. A rash of "isms" interfere with the integrity of the Body of Christ: racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, genderism, ageism, ableism, tribalism, and nationalism. Across the chasms of isms, how might the church cultivate an integrity that allows us to suffer and rejoice and worship together?

**Ministries section:** We seek columns describing practical experience and suggestions in the following areas: Welcoming Process, Connections (with other justice issues), Worship, Outreach, Leadership, Health, Youth, Campus, Children. These brief articles may or may not have to do with the theme.

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## The Good Shepherd

And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them." Jesus replied, "Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones; for I tell you, in heaven their angels continually see the face of God in heaven. What do you think? If a shepherd has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does the shepherd not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is missing until found? When found, the shepherd lays it on his shoulders and rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never left. And coming home the shepherd calls together friends and neighbors, saying to them, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was missing.' Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one who returns than over ninety-nine persons who remained. It is not the will of God in heaven that one of these little ones should be excluded."

Adapted, blending  
Matthew 18:10-14 and Luke 15:2-7

# Specific in Rejection - Why Not in Welcome?

April Herron-Sweet

## Outreach

This summer, a group of organizations including the "Christian Family Network" and the "Christian Coalition" ran a series of paid advertisements in major newspapers across the country. The advertisements described how gay men and lesbians could "leave behind" homosexuality and be "healed" if only they would turn to God for help. Homosexuality was described as a sinful condition which leads to "deception and emotional instability." The suggested solution was to ask God for a "change of heart" which would lead in turn to happiness and fulfillment.

The text of one of these ads was sent to me via e-mail by one of my church members, a gay man. It provided me with a clear and obvious answer as to why churches need to be specific in our welcome. We need to be specific in our welcome of gay men and lesbians because the voice of the church has been, and continues to be, specific in its rejection.

And lest we think, "but that's some other church, not my church, which has been unwelcoming" we have only to look as far as recent church pronouncements against the marriage and ministry of gay and lesbian members. Such negative church decisions have been widely publicized by the national news media, and the message is loud and clear to all: "We are not ready or willing to welcome gays and lesbians here."

Our local conference of United Methodist Churches has entered into an extended discussion about whether and how to take a welcoming stance toward gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons. As the discussion goes on, one perspective often voiced is that we can "welcome all people" without being specific. The fears seem to be that we will offend some of our membership or constituency, that we will be "labeling" ourselves or others, or that in naming one specific welcome we might exclude others who are not mentioned.

Our own congregation has learned that being specific in our welcome has helped people in search of an inclusive church to find us. People have been referred to us by our national welcoming program and web site, by the local denominational office, by other pastors, and by people who do not attend the church but know of our welcoming ministry. Our specific welcome has allowed gay and lesbian members to trust us enough to tell their stories, be themselves, and be open about their relationships. Our efforts to implement and incarnate our welcoming statement has given us, on many occasions, the opportunity to share our thoughts, fears, and hopes with one another. We are a stronger church for having decided to make inclusiveness a focal point of our ministry by adding to our Mission Statement: "We welcome all people into our congregation, regardless of age, race, gender, marital status, physical condition, sexual orientation, ethnic background, or economic situation." ▼

*April Herron-Sweet, pictured with her family, is co-pastor of Pacific Beach United Methodist Church, which, she writes, is "known for its warmth and friendliness, ministry to hungry and homeless people, inspiring music and fabulous sanctuary decorations." She shares the parsonage with the other pastor and their two children.*



# Tolerance Is Not Enough

## Inclusion and The Problem of "Elmwood"

Craig Washington

### Church Not Part of My Family "Culture"

When I look back over my childhood I can attest that religion was not an integral part of my family "culture." It really was not "our way of doing things." In fact, I never attended a regular service until I was 17 years old. I remember neighbors would playfully tease us on those rare occasions when we headed for hallowed ground. "Must be a wedding or a funeral!" "Lord, the Washingtons are going to church. I know it's gonna rain!" My parents often joked right along with them. They freely admitted the absence of that tradition in our home. I think they were somewhat proud of their non-conformist stance. My brother and I were forewarned about religious folk. My parents portrayed them as sometimes arrogant or spiteful but almost always hypocritical. My parents were quick to upbraid the saved ex-smoker who warned about the perilous nicotine "spirit." For them, hypocrisy was the universal chink in the armor of those hapless saints.

I soon understood that my identity as a same-gender-loving being had placed me as an outsider at the gates of any black church in America. My adult awareness of that identity and the re-

**"Toleration is not the *opposite* of intolerance, but is the *counterfeit* of it. Both are despotisms. The one assumes to itself the right of withholding liberty of conscience, and the other of granting it."**

Thomas Paine

sulting social "location" necessitated that I take some stance either in opposition or deference to the cultural status quo. It is the wretched choice of the oppressed either to deny your essence in order to be accepted for what you are not, which is to die; or to accept the godforsaken lot they have offered your kind, which is to live a non-life; or to redefine yourself demanding recognition from those who have not a name for what you call yourself, which is to live fully in the face of fear and ignorance. Perhaps my parent's non-compliance afforded me a critical eye, the wherewithal to interrogate the unquestioned arbiter of black propriety and, more to the point, normalcy. I often wonder if they had any inkling that they were raising not only a black homosexual (of this I'm sure there was ample evidence) but a homosexual activist, that is, one who asks "who are you to ask who am I?"

I didn't know much about Atlanta when I moved here in 1992, but I certainly did know something about the South. Black folk here went to church and expected that you did too even if you were from up North. By this time I'd fashioned a clear image of the church and what it represented. I saw "The Black Church" as a monolithic anachronism, once the vanguard of the most fabled progressive movement in American history, now a self-serving sanctuary of pompous zealots. While on temp assignments, I politely refused invitations from friendly co-workers to attend service or a choir concert. I was safe—for a short time anyway.

### Then Came "Elmwood," a Tolerant Church

I began meeting other gay men and lesbians from various artist and activist circles. Many of them did not attend any organized religious services. Most of those who did mentioned a particular church (I will use the pseudonym "Elmwood") located in a historically black neighborhood. "Elmwood" was acclaimed for its progressive philosophy and application of scripture—the pastor's directives were affirming and not guilt-based, and notably, there was no gay-bashing in the sermons. I was curious and reasonably assured by my new friends, so I attended a service. I loved it. A legion of warm-smilin' good-smellin' nice-lookin' members filled a huge church-in-the-round. Several

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*"It is the wretched choice of the oppressed either to deny your essence in order to be accepted for what you are not, which is to die; or to accept the godforsaken lot they have offered your kind, which is to live a non-life; or to redefine yourself demanding recognition from those who have not a name for what you call yourself, which is to live fully in the face of fear and ignorance."*

---

people greeted me with a disarming sincerity, including some handsome men (whom I did not assume were same-sex-attracted) who hugged me with full body hugs. I was unprepared but fully delighted! The pastor, an imperial woman, preached as if she were talking to a peer offering encouragement not judgment. She was very animated but unlike many preachers, her ardor highlighted her words without overshadowing her message.

During subsequent visits, I noticed that my initial enthusiasm began to wane. At first I didn't understand why, as there were no covert homophobic subtexts in the sermon, and the members were as affectionate as ever. After my third or fourth visit, I still declined to join and was attending less frequently. Perhaps, I thought, my original perceptions of the institutional church were too dominant for me to fully accept any church as my own. In many ways Elmwood was everything I thought "the Church" should be. However, I could not deny that my admiration for Elmwood had always been detached and academic. There was no personal connection for me, and once I recognized the nature of my relationship with Elmwood, it abruptly became clear why.

In all the morning hours I spent at Elmwood there was never any reference to my full identity as a self-identified same-gender-loving man. Oh, there were several cautions about the evils of homophobia and AIDS discrimination. And that was exceptionally admirable at a time when many black churches were framing AIDS as evidence of God's disdain for homosexuality. Admirable, but not enough. In order to feel at home, to feel truly embraced beyond the greeting hug, I needed more. Recalling sermons past I realized that none of the messages addressed the lives of gays and lesbians directly. While there were plenty of specific examples of the challenges and triumphs of heterosexual unions, as well as singles' ministries and workshops, there was no such intimate guidance for same-gender-loving folk. Given the numbers of gays and lesbians lining the pews and coffer at Elmwood, this was no mere oversight.

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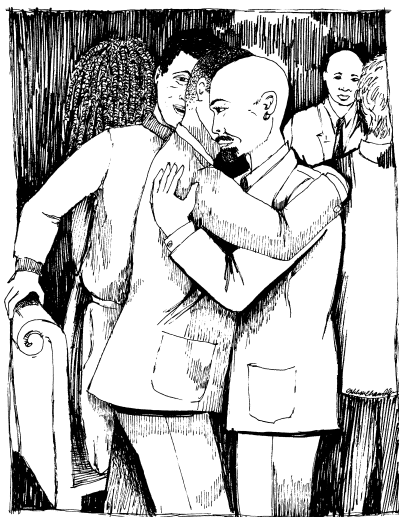
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I am inclined to believe that this pastor felt that she was doing the best she could for her gay members by denouncing the oppression they faced from the outside world. To go any further—that is, to provide a focused level of ministry to gay folk—would be, for any number of reasons, extremely risky. Perhaps the pastor herself was not comfortable

or knowledgeable enough about the lives and culture of gays and lesbians despite our common black identity. She may also have feared offending many of those warm-smilin' members whose love and tolerance had distinct limits. It is highly uncommon for any large black church to affirm gay and lesbian identity and experience to the extent that this pastor had done. I pondered whether to ask any more of Elmwood would be asking too much.

### *What More Could I Expect?*

I asked several gay-identified Elmwood members what they got from this church. Some of the common responses were: "I feel at ease here because I know I won't be called an abomination." "I don't need Pastor to focus on my gayness, there's more to me than that." "Everybody there is friendly. The straight people there are very progressive." There is some problematic

# Fear of Church Association with Homosexuality in John Wesley's Era

Alice G. Knotts



When John Wesley was an Oxford fellow and active leader in the Holy Club, whose members daily visited prisons after having prayer and Holy Communion, the Methodists showed an unconventional and unpopular sympathy for a homosexual. Wesley took up the cause of Mr. Blair, a young gay man who had been imprisoned for sodomy.<sup>1</sup> Nowhere in his journal did Wesley write judgmentally of Blair's behavior. Instead, 14 journal entries about Blair describe how Wesley

devoted much time during the autumn and winter of 1732 to visiting Blair and reading to him, contacting his attorney, Mr. Austin, and writing out his case.<sup>2</sup> Wesley met with the vice chancellor of Oxford University to discuss his proteges, including Blair. On November 14, 1732, a number of interested Methodists met at a local inn to discuss Blair's case. Townspeople heaped criticism on Wesley and the Methodists for their actions. Some thought that it would have been better for Blair to suffer the dreadful hardships of prison life than for the name of Methodists to be associated with homosexuality. But in spite of setbacks and hostile criticism, Wesley and the Holy Club maintained their ministry with Blair. The Blair situation provided "the occasion for terrible reflections," leading Methodist historian V. H. H. Green to wonder whether some Methodists, in considering homosexuality, were led to re-examine their own sexual feelings and behaviors.

*From Experiencing God's Love, A Methodist Federation for Social Action Presentation to the United Methodist Committee to Study Homosexuality, December 1, 1989, by Alice G. Knotts.*

<sup>1</sup> Vivian H.H. Green, *John Wesley* (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1964, 1987), 32.

<sup>2</sup> Vivian H. H. Green, *The Young Mr. Wesley* (London, 1961), 167, 178-9.

subtext underlying each of those three responses.

(a) Elmwood appeals to many gays and lesbians because of the lack of traditional homophobic vitriol—in fact homophobia is often denounced there. Generally, black gay folk expect a good trouncing from most black churches. It is difficult for many to demand more from a church that refutes this approach. If I am used to being thirsty every Sunday, I might not criticize the only

pastor who offers me tap water even though she's pouring Evian for my neighbor.

(b) There are those who claim that their sexual orientation is not an integral aspect of their identity. I believe that such claims are grounded in some form of denial and false conformity ("I'm not that gay—I'm not that different") in order to defend against social approbation. These folks may not want to be addressed in terms of their gayness and may prefer in-

direct, generic acknowledgment.

(c) Many of us are so happy to meet straight people who are not castigating us that we don't critically assess the power dynamic at play in our connections with them ("You are so good for just accepting me. Who am I to question our relationship?").

In my six years here in Atlanta, I have found that many black gays and lesbians accept social rejection from black institutions without challenging their communities. Many such folks continue to attend and pay tithes to churches whose pastors condemn them from the pulpit. Unfortunately, then, these churches have no apparent inducement to stop stoning members who remain as loyal as abused children. Those who do confront homophobia or refuse to support oppressive organizations often make an exception with the church.

Elmwood is experienced by many as a haven of tolerance which I believe is misinterpreted as affirmation. Thus Elmwood has little incentive to work harder toward being inviting toward and inclusive of gay worshipers. Ironically, the only black church in Atlanta (Unity Fellowship) headed by an openly gay pastor has a relatively small congregation. Due to Unity's "profile" many black gays know of this space, and yet very few have ever visited.

I believe that churches such as Elmwood face an ethical challenge. Its leadership has already publicly displayed a level of understanding and compassion for its gay members. Yet for whatever reason(s), it will not fully extend its resources to launch a "culturally competent" spiritual intervention targeting this population.

## *The Broader Question(s) of Authentic Diversity*

This dilemma in many ways parallels the contemporary topic of diversity along lines of race, class, gender and other forms of identity. Inclusiveness has become one of the most influential standards (and red herrings) of hiring practices, advocacy, grass roots organizing, and boardroom ethics in America. Such efforts usually seek to redress white patriarchal thought and



## The Woman at the Well

The Samaritan woman said to Jesus, “How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?”...[Afterward Jesus said to his disciples:] “I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting.”

John 4:9, 35

application or derivatives thereof. It has touched every realm of cultural discourse. It has been the source of great struggle and debate and with good reason. For many of us the act of “including” those whom we perceive as different from us may pose a threat to our traditions and beliefs.

Does *everyone* need to be more inclusive? When is inclusion appropriate? When is it not? These questions must be addressed in specific contexts. There is certainly a need for group bonding and organizing along lines of common identity. There are certain levels of affirmation and healing that can happen only in these groupings. I don't think inclusion efforts should be applied to

universally heterogenize these spaces. I believe such standards are applicable to public institutions and services and even some private clubs and services where it is deemed appropriate and/or just (by the group itself or by the law). If however a group/institution identifies the need and/or imperative (ethical or otherwise) to include people who are somehow different from the majority of its members, then such a group must honestly assess its consciousness and the desires of those whom it seeks to include.

It must be said that white patriarchy isn't the only form of dominion and exclusion to be addressed. Unfortunately, oppression doesn't morally

inform all oppressed people to act better. It is often quite the opposite—and certainly, many black organizations, as an example, exclude gay-identified and other “different kinds” of black people from many goods and services, including affirmation of God's love. Many of these institutions act as if inclusion is a charge for white men only; that by dint of their blackness they are “down by law” and are exempt from this work. They are already oppressed and are in no position to oppress anyone else. Such fallacious justification hinders not only moral development; it blocks the social progress of black folks and people everywhere.

## What Next for "Tolerant" Churches?

What is the recommendation(s) then for black churches like Elmwood, that have demonstrated an appreciation of the struggles of its own same-gender-loving kin? There is rigorous work to be done along several fronts. The gay and lesbian members and/or visitors who desire ministry that is more reflective of their experience must voice their concerns to the leadership. The process of inclusion is not the sole responsibility of the "including" party. The leadership, of course, should evaluate its own desire and commitment to such efforts before taking any action. Too many groups seek to diversify for too many wrong reasons (i.e., "it would make people feel better," "it's just something we should do"). An action plan including goals and objectives should be developed and implemented with the participation of gays and lesbians from the onset. (This would also be true in terms of bisexual or transgendered outreach.) The leadership body would need to open its ranks to include gay-identified persons so that again the change is not merely cosmetic. The pastor should also speak to this activity within the context of sermons, announcements, and bulletins to send a message that the process is conscious and deliberate.

If Elmwood were serious about reaching out to its gay sisters and brothers, the commitment would manifest beyond the level of good intentions. Indeed, it may not be appropriate for Elmwood to take on a more inclusive approach. Then I would assume that gays and lesbians who are not satisfied with Elmwood would identify a space that more fully addresses their needs. It is my hope that black churches and their leaders begin to talk to, not at, their gay and lesbian members so that a greater understanding can be reached. In many instances such revolutionary discourse will be spearheaded by the body of the broader Church. Indeed the issue of the treatment of gays in the church may very well offer the pivotal focus whereby demagogues will be dislodged and the body will

## On Harassment and Invisibility: One Student's Story



Nobody tells Latino kids in the high school that nobody cares if they're Hispanic so long as they keep it to themselves. Jewish kids aren't told that they're sinners, and they could change into Christians if they wanted to. People don't tell black kids they should put up with racism because they've come so far from when they were slaves. They don't have to defend why there is a black history month, or why people want black studies included in the curriculum. People don't say, "That's so Korean!" when they mean something is stupid or weird. People don't tell disabled kids that the community isn't ready to defend their equal rights and inclusion yet. You never hear anyone argue that breast cancer is God's way of killing off women, or that it's a good thing. If a teacher hears anyone use a slang insult for a Chinese kid, they jump on it. When foreign exchange students ask teachers about dating in the school, they aren't sent to see a guidance counselor.

But every day in the high school, I hear it's okay if I'm gay so long as I stay in the closet, and that I'm an abomination against God, that I can change if I want to, and that people like me shouldn't be taught about in school. I'm told that I should be satisfied because our school is far better than it used to be, and that I shouldn't push for my equal rights and inclusion because the community isn't ready yet. I hear, "That's so gay!" all the time, and I hear that "AIDS is my punishment" for being who I am, and I hear the word "faggot" all the time. It's hard not to walk around angry all the time.

—Anonymous Massachusetts High School Student



authorize responsible leadership. Even the most influential black megachurches which are grounded in oppressive traditions cannot suppress the growth of progressive thought throughout black communities across the nation. Thus the concept of inclusion will soon be redefined as no longer the proverbial indictment of white male corporate America. Black churches have never been exempt from this responsibility. It is a charge mandated by a very high covenant they can no longer ignore. ▼

**Craig Washington** is the Program Coordinator for *The Deeper Love Project*, an HIV Prevention program of AID Atlanta specifically reaching gay African American males. He also serves as Co-Chair of the Metro Atlanta HIV Health Services Planning Council and Vice-Chair of 2nd Sunday, a support organization for same-gender-loving black men. Born and raised in New York, he loves to write and listen to Aretha Franklin.



# Something There Is...

after

## Robert Frost's The Mending Wall

Maren C. Tirabassi



*Maren C. Tirabassi is a poet, writer of liturgy, and "bi-vocational" pastor of Northwood Congregational Church, UCC, in Northwood, New Hampshire. She has coauthored a number of books, including Touch Holiness and An Improbable Gift of Blessing. She is adding her poetry to a forthcoming book from United Church Press entitled Seeing Is Believing: Faith, Art and Social Justice. A Harvard Divinity School graduate, she lives with her husband and children in Portsmouth.*

### Call For Prayers From Youth

Rev. Tirabassi is seeking prayers 75-150 words in length on a single concern written by writers between the ages of 12 and 21 for an anthology of prayers and worship resources for youth. Send submissions to her at 271 Lafayette Rd., Portsmouth, NH 03801-5433; questions, phone 603/436-9352.

**S**omething there is that doesn't love a church—  
that sends the ground swell and the subway roar  
to crack the plaster in the highest place  
and shatter stained glass on the street below.  
The work of burglars is another thing.  
What they must hope to find in this poor place  
I hardly know, perhaps a place to sleep.  
One hastened off—we set alarms again  
and mend the window's wooden frame.  
I smile—we would keep this one out  
and long to welcome others in.  
We meet as congregation once a year  
to rehearse the business and tell the tale  
of seasons past. Well, what report of sacred time?  
But, nonetheless, we prop the structure up again,  
line out concerns, note trends, mourn friends  
whose passing make the pews more bare.  
And one says, "Good churches..  
good churches make good neighbors."  
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder  
if I could put a notion in all their heads,  
"Why do they make good neighbors? Isn't it  
the very moral of the Samaritan story  
where priest and scribe walk by,  
that churches are more walls than doors?  
Before I'd build a church I'd like to know  
what I was churching in or churching out  
and to whom I might be neighboring.  
Something there is that doesn't love a church,  
that wants it open. I could say, "angels."  
But it's not angels exactly, and I'd rather  
we said it for ourselves. I look around  
and see us bringing stones to build the church,  
not loaves or flowers, but some  
age-old strong things, hard things.  
We move in sadness then it seems to me,  
not of world only, and the shades of death,  
but of not-trusting in the chance of life.  
We like our ancestors' certitude  
and hope to paraphrase some god we met once,  
any one will do. We say again,  
"Good churches make good neighbors."

# Why Be Specific In Our Welcome?

## The President's Church Affirms Unity with Gays and Lesbians

Ralph Williams

*Adapted from an October 17, 1998 presentation before 300 people of the Baltimore-Washington Conference of the United Methodist Church held at Towson UMC. The gathering included a spectrum of presenters and was sponsored by the conference task force on homosexuality.*

Ten years ago on "Laity Sunday," I was asked to give the sermon at my church, Foundry United Methodist, probably because I had asked our Council of Ministries the previous year to begin a dialogue about becoming a Reconciling Congregation. I had extreme anxiety over addressing the congregation that Sunday. While no one assigned me a topic, it was clear what I had to talk about: the need for our church to unambiguously embrace and welcome its gay and lesbian members. Seven years later, on October 3, 1995, Foundry UMC voted to become a Reconciling Congregation, and its administrative board adopted the following statement:

*We, the friends and members of Foundry United Methodist Church, hold deeply our commitment to help bring about a peaceful, loving, just and accepting world. We are proud of our active, diverse congregation and have seen how each person has graced our community with her/his talents. We believe that the Holy Spirit dwells within all.*

*We acknowledge our oneness with all of God's creation and invite gay and lesbian persons to share our faith, our community life, and our ministries. We also affirm the same for all persons without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, age, economic status, or physical or mental condition. We seek to be an inclusive congregation and we proclaim our commitment to seek the reconciliation of all persons to God and each other through Jesus Christ.*

*As we journey toward reconciliation with all, we proclaim this statement of welcome to all, including our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters: God loves you and we love you, we affirm you, and accept you, we treasure you. We welcome you.*

*At the same time, we recognize that there remain differences of opinion among us on issues relating to sexuality. We do not seek to erase our differences, but to journey together in faith toward greater understanding and mutual respect.*

*In becoming a Reconciling Congregation we believe that we are being reconciled to God and to one another.*

*"All this is from God, who reconciled us...through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation." (II Corinthians 5:18)*

I sometimes ask myself, how did a nice Pentecostal boy like me get to a place where I no longer feel estranged from God because I am gay and find my mind and heart transformed to tell a new story of God's grace? I have come a long way from seeing this as my deepest shame to proclaiming it as a blessing of God.

As I reflect on my life and spiritual journey and try to find the words to express where I am today, three themes of my journey come to mind:

1. Moving from serving a God of fear to serving a God of love;
2. Coming to understand that scripture does not condemn me for being a gay man;
3. Becoming aware that human love, including sexual love, is a good gift of God.

### *The God of Fear vs. the God of Love*

Central to my spiritual journey has been moving from serving a God of Fear to understanding the God of Love as revealed in Jesus the Christ. I don't know if you knew the God of Fear. For me this god is best represented in the Old Testament by Baal, the pagan god, who required the community to sacrifice their firstborn to appease him.

I grew up in a fundamentalist Christian home. My parents and all the members of my family are devout Pentecostals. My father and brother are Pentecostal ministers, as well as one brother-in-law. When I joined Foundry some 20 years ago, the minister from my home church would not transfer my church membership to a United Methodist Church. Instead, he wrote the church to explain what we believe as Pentecostal Christians and why Methodists were not true members of the Church of Jesus Christ!

Within that tradition, accepting Christ in my late teens was—at least partially—an attempt to have God change my same-gender love orientation. As I began to understand this orientation, I also understood that it was not accepted by my church. My church promised that if I accepted Christ, my same-gender love orientation would go away. It did not! For several years I struggled with that reality.

During a period of despair God allowed me to meet a gay man who was also struggling with his sexual orientation and his faith. It was through that encounter that I was led to Foundry United Methodist Church. It was within

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*As we journey toward reconciliation with all, we proclaim this statement of welcome to all, including our gay and lesbian brothers and sisters: God loves you and we love you, we affirm you, and accept you, we treasure you. We welcome you.*

*—Foundry United Methodist Church, Washington, D.C.*

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this new church that I came to a fresh understanding of God's grace and love. At Foundry I came in contact with Affirmation, United Methodists for Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Concerns. Affirmation formed a Bible Study Group which met at my home for over ten years. We studied the scriptures, shared our lives, and came to know with a certainty God's love.

When I stood to speak on that Laity Sunday morning ten years ago, I was undergirded by the love and support of the Bible Study group and our growing knowledge of God's love and presence which emboldened us to take on this task. We had no idea where the journey would lead. Over the seven years of study and dialogue in the congregation we had many difficult times.

Despite the difficult times, I came to know that it is different when you know the God of Love. With the God of Love you don't have to win the battle, just engage as God gives you grace. With the God of Love you only need strength and grace for the day. With the God of Love you don't even have to get it right all of the time. With the God of Love you can trust. I am glad I have come to know the God of Love and am grateful for a congregation where I could discover this God.

### *Scripture and the Hot Comb*

People sometimes ask how I can ignore the "clear" scriptural condemnation of homosexuality. That reminds me of an incident in my family which

gave me great insight on how scripture is used and misused in the Christian community. My early childhood was spent in Jamaica where the black Christian women did not cut their hair or use hot combs to straighten their hair. Straightening one's hair was considered to be worldly and not in line with God's requirements for Christian living. My mother did not use a hot comb in her hair.

After my family immigrated to the U.S., my mother and the rest of us had to come face to face with the fact that all the black Christian women in our Pentecostal Christian Church used hot combs to straighten their hair. It took my mother years to adjust to this change. About the time she started using the hot comb to straighten her hair the Black Pride movement began to take hold in the U.S. Out went hot combs as crinkly Afros became a sign of black pride. In my conservative Pentecostal church this demonstration of black pride was not warmly received, and the black crinkly hair was seen as being "worldly." My mother made the transition to the hot comb just in time because she certainly didn't want to be perceived as a member of a worldly movement!

When I first heard that homosexuals (not to mention biblical scholars)



were pointing out that the story of Sodom and Gomorrah was not about homosexuality but about inhospitality, I wondered how *they* could possibly have perverted scripture in that manner. But when I read the story now, I wonder how it could have been perverted to have been cited as a story about condemnation of homosexuality. The story has nothing to say about a loving, caring relationship between two

persons of the same gender. It would have been easier to conclude that the story was about sex between angels and human beings than about having sex between persons of the same gender, but the story was not about that either. It was about physical, sexual abuse of the stranger. It was about grossly inhospitable behavior, not about same-gender love.

What I see in both these examples is our tendency to bring our cultural views and interpretations to scripture. Homosexuality is not a major theme of the scriptures, it is not a minor theme of the scriptures—it did not make Moses' top 10. A tendency to single out this one issue as *the* defining aspect of our faith is a matter of culture and tradition, *not* Gospel. The first commandment is to love God, the second is to love our neighbor.

The love of God has transformed my understanding of scripture. I now ask, how can scripture be perverted and used as a means of alienating gay and lesbian people from God? I now find it curious that gay and lesbian people are the only group knocking on the church doors asking to be let in and to whom the doors are closed. This, I am convinced, is *not* the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### *Sexual Love— A Foretaste of God's Love*

Much of the discussion of homosexuality seems to miss the fact that we are talking about an expression

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*"I am glad I have come to know the God of Love and am grateful for a congregation where I could discover this God."*

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of human love. God is love! And, as the church affirms, human sexual love is a good gift of God. It is a part of what makes us fully human. It provides healing and comfort and relationship. Believing that human sexual love is just for procreation is missing the broader purpose of human sexuality. Loving someone of the same gender is the same love with the same power to comfort and heal and provide temporary respite from loneliness, estrangement and despair as any other love. It is a foretaste of the love of God.

Therapist and theologian John J. McNeill, the former Jesuit priest, notes that good psychology is good theology and good theology is good psychology. What gives deep meaning and healing of the human soul and helps us to love and relate to the deepest parts of ourselves and others is a gift of God. On the other hand, what leads to the kind of hatred that causes the violence we saw in Wyoming last fall is not of God.

Much of what constitutes the current position and practice of the church leads to the kind of self hatred and hatred of others that gives license to those who think they are doing God's work by marginalizing and even killing gay and lesbian people. Instead of disassociating itself from gays and lesbians, the church should be disassociating itself from the Topeka, Kansas minister Fred Phelps and others who would condone the murder of Matthew Shepard and picket his funeral because he is gay. The church should disassociate itself from those who would deny our inheritance as sons and daughters of God.

The church wants us to live lives worthy of the Christ who died for us and so do we. Our message to the church is that we can only live such lives when we claim the authentic persons God created us to be. We do not want to live lives in closets of fear but to bring down the walls of fear which block us all.

### *From Church Family to Family*

**I**n the midst of the Reconciling Congregation discussion at Foundry Church, I decided to come out to members of my family. Yes, some already

**“Lord, I want to be in that number, when the saints go marching in...”**

**Beth Bentley**



Marching in New York City's Gay Pride Parade several years ago, a group from my church carried a banner with the message: PARK SLOPE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH: GAY AND STRAIGHT RECONCILED BY FAITH IN A LOVING GOD. In contrast, the presumably religious counter-demonstrators whom we passed carried signs which said things like, GOD SENT JESUS TO PUNISH SINNERS. While marching, we met a man who told us that he was an ordained United Methodist minister who had been forced to leave the ministry when he revealed his homosexuality. When he discovered that most people in our contingent were not gay, he said, "I can't believe you walked all this way when you didn't have to!"

But we did have to march. We had to march to demonstrate our faith in a loving God and because the homophobia which pervades our society also pervades our church, resulting in our church depriving itself of this person's gifts as well as the gifts of too many others.

Testimony to the United Methodist Committee to Study Homosexuality's Listening Post  
April 28, 1990.

knew. But we were playing one of those family games where those who knew didn't want others to know. I decided to end this family game, end the secrets. I wrote a letter and mailed it to all members of my immediate family.

The first person to respond was my dad, a Pentecostal minister. He called and, in a brief conversation, said,

"Ralph, I read your letter and noted its content. I would like to take you up on your offer to come visit you and your friend." I didn't know what kind of visit to expect. After discussing with my friend the possibility of my dad visiting, I called my father back to let him know that I had received a very negative letter from my mother and that if

his visit was intended to interfere with our relationship, it would be better if he didn't come. It would not be pleasant. He said he and my mother did not see eye to eye on this matter and he wanted to come visit.

During my father's one-week visit, he and I had some of the most meaningful and honest discussions of my life. He wanted to know if I loved God and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ. I said I did. He said, after a series of discussions on various issues, that we were not that far apart. Before he left, he asked if we could pray together. He held hands with me and my friend and prayed God's blessing on our home. This demonstrated to me how with God's help we can be transformed—gaining understanding and offering acceptance through love.

I have come to view the ministry of welcoming congregations as a ministry to the whole church. The message is that God's love and grace truly are amazing. It includes gays and lesbians, bisexuals,

and transgendered persons—and it reached me. I know that to be the good news of the gospel and it is that good news that our ministry proclaims. ▼

*Ralph Williams is a member of Foundry United Methodist Church in Washington D.C. He was a member of its Reconciling Congregation Task Force and is the founder of Foundry's Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Group.*



## The Younger Brother's Return

"Then the father said to the elder brother, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'"

—Jesus, Luke 14:31-32

WJK Ad

# Reconciling

Les Norman



**J** can't remember now the facts of how I came to get the word, or when it was, though I recall a night of snow and hard to travel out to that church gath'ring in the farther suburbs.

*It was a smallish group of twelve or so just starting on their journey into parts unknown. How could they know? Or I? But start they did, and I the one who helped them on their way.*

*I told my story, fresh and vivid then to me, and startling new to them, of our young son, and how his news, his sense of who he is, had rocked our world.*

*And how we'd come to terms with it, and then, with insight's flash, had turned the world around, and seen, with clarity, where God's truth lies, and where the falsehood and denial.*

*That meeting was a first; I had no standard of comparison, no feel of how this journey might proceed. They seemed to have been moved, this little group, and their young pastor thanked me as I left the door.*

*And then the other day we met, in some chance way. She sought me out and said that now her church had come to the resolve to reconcile, to be both open and affirming of each child of God.*

*I shared with all her joy, and memories of that time when we had started on the road; and offered up a silent prayer of thanks for grace that gives us strength to persevere.*

**Les Norman** is pastor and teacher of the Sanbornton Congregational Church, United Church of Christ, in Sanbornton, New Hampshire, one of six Open and Affirming congregations in that state. Les is the father of three sons, the youngest of whom is gay. He is also active in PFLAG, and is the current president of the New Hampshire State Council.

# Coming Out Christian

## The Campus Minister's View

Jan Griesinger

We wanted to put our long-standing affirmation for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered people into practice through ritual and worship. We wanted to be unambiguous that this event was open and welcoming of g/l/b/t and heterosexual people on campus and in the community. Being in a rural area with the closest welcoming congregation 75 miles away, both community residents as well as students were enthusiastic.

Our title for our annual worship services during Coming Out Week, "Coming Out Christian," was borrowed from the Rev. Steve Hammond of the First Baptist Church at Oberlin College, part of a similar week on their own campus. The event is listed on the Coming Out Week calendar and publicized through fliers and advertising. A variety of leaders served as musicians, readers, ushers, etc., thus providing outreach to their friends as well.

The most powerful elements of the services have been:

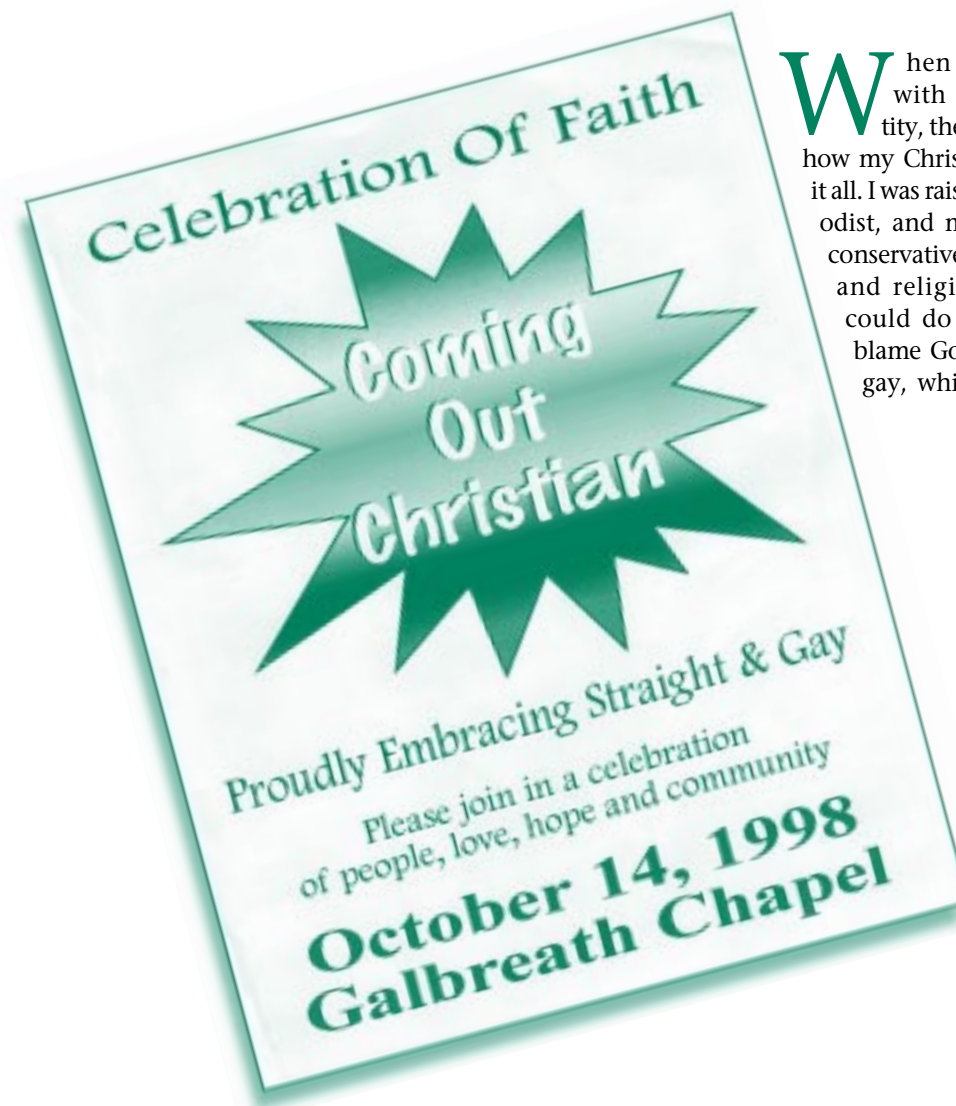
- a rainbow and other symbols around the chapel;
- calls to worship, hymns, litanies naming the names and experiences of g/l/b/t people, which was very empowering; (For example, Rev. Rick Yramategui's hymn "Hear Our Voices" includes these words: "Joined together on this day; straight and lesbian and gay.")
- using the poem "What if God Were a Big, Black Lesbian?" by Michael Edward Mitchell;
- brief sermons on themes such as "Love Casting Out Fear";
- sharing time when coming out

stories were told and current events celebrated or lamented;

- a time of prayer when all the pieces were gathered together and lifted up to the God of the Open Door who brings light into the fearsome closet;
- our closing hymn and benediction in a circle with hands joined.

Our best attended and most joyful event was entitled "Human Rights Celebration: A Worship Service of Thanksgiving to Honor Adoption of the Sexual Orientation Amendment." While students were away on winter break, the Athens City Council had added "sexual orientation" to the city human rights ordinance. Students and community members welcomed a chance to celebrate this big step forward in a public way. City Council members were invited and asked to give brief testimony on their experience of publicly supporting this ordinance. They were overwhelmed with the gratitude and applause they received. Most said it was the only thanks they ever received for serving in public office.

As we say in the welcoming congregations movement, you have to be bold with the g/l/b/t words in publicizing your welcome, otherwise we will assume that "open" does not really mean us. By creating worship opportunities on campus to put the "Christian" and "g/l/b/t" parts together, we open a clear channel for the love of God. To the Christians who would scorn us, we say: we are here, we are queer, we are pilgrims of the faith, and we are not hiding any more. A few negative letters and phone calls have come in, but they can't compare with the smiles of joy and shouts of *amen* from those who are finding a beloved community. ▼



Jan Griesinger (right) is director of the United Campus Ministry of Ohio University and national coordinator of CLOUT (Christian Lesbians OUT Together).



Heather Moyer (left) is a broadcast journalism major at Ohio University and a member of a United Methodist Church in the Dayton, Ohio area.

When I was wrestling with my sexual identity, the biggest issue was how my Christian faith fit into it all. I was raised a United Methodist, and my family is very conservative in their political and religious views. All I could do for a while was blame God for making me gay, which I had learned

## A Student's View

Heather Moyer

was a horrible thing that would send me to hell. I didn't understand what I had done to deserve it, and I was so angry.

Yet when I was going through the hardest times of my journey to acceptance, God got me through it all. I remember praying to God so many times when I thought the only thing left for me to do was to kill myself, and at the last second I'd get this overwhelming feeling of comfort and relaxation. I knew God was telling me everything was okay, and that killing myself would never be the right way out. And I am okay. In fact, I'm fabulous.

My faith fits into my life, and actually, it's the foundation of my life. I can't imagine living without it. I really think I'd be lost. Yet now that I've come to accept it myself, I often get challenged. "Homosexual Christian": it sounds quite the oxymoron by society's standards today. But many of us live with that title for our entire lives, facing alienation from both the Christian community and the queer community.

Many Christians say "your lifestyle is a sin, and you are not welcome in our community." Or they make us feel uncomfortable in other ways, like tossing around the phrase "love the sinner, hate the sin," therefore not accepting us as whole persons. And then the queer community, many of whom are turned off to religion in general because of the hypocrisy they see in the church, wonder how other queers can still be part of a religion that does not welcome us.

It's surprising how many "closeted" Christians there are in the queer community. Most of us are looking for a way to be involved with other open-minded Christians (which may also seem like an oxymoron), straight and gay.

So when I was a freshman in college and was dealing with coming out to friends and family, I was really trying to find some way to feel okay with being a Christian too. That's when I saw a sign advertising a "Coming Out Christian" worship service put on by United Campus Ministry during Ohio University's Coming Out Week. I was happy to see that a religious organization saw the need to address this issue.

The service uses its motto well: "Proudly Embracing Straight & Gay." For once everyone was welcome, especially the queer community! The service encouraged us to see our sexuality as what it is: a gift from God that should be celebrated and embraced. All the inclusive words, songs, and prayers in the service also served to move our faith into more open and progressive mindsets. I met so many other queer Christians and it was nice not to feel as alienated from either community.

We decided to keep the service going throughout the years (I'm a junior now). Many good feelings and happenings have come out of the service, like making lasting friendships, growing in our faiths, and realizing that no one can draw that line between God and us. Our Christian service even inspired some of my queer Jewish friends to have their first ever "Coming Out Jewish" event!

Our welcome has to be specific—we have to state exactly what the service is about and who it is for. Everyone needs to help stop this division between the queer community and the church, or the wedge that has already been partially driven between us will just separate us forever. God loves us and makes us who we are, and no one can say there is no room for us in God's kingdom. ▼

# Mysterious Ways

Isaiah Jones

Campus

As a young African American male growing up in the community, I often heard the phrase “God works in mysterious ways.” This proclamation was heard not only in worship settings but on the lips of people in the community on various occasions. There was a strength within this expression that made me know this was an important awareness to have.

As my understanding of spiritual matters developed I eventually realized that this adage “God works in mysterious ways” meant that God’s truth, purposes and love often happened in unusual ways and through unexpected experiences. The power of this truth hit me and our students with the force of a mighty wind one Wednesday evening.

Each Wednesday evening at United Campus Ministry at Oregon State University we have a student gathering. This time consists of a meal, music and a Bible study or some subject related to faith. We were just beginning our time of study for the evening when a young student walked in. As was our practice, we welcomed her into our midst. Lynn informed us that she had never seen our building before. Seeing lights on and the door open she decided to enter. After introductions from everyone we invited her to be a part of the study. She agreed.

Our focus was on God’s love being available to everyone. John 3:16-17 made it clear that Jesus’ coming was a demonstration of the universality of God’s love. We also looked at the Galatians 3:28 passage—“There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.” The interaction was very stimulating as students applied these truths to their particular life experiences.

At one point in the discussion a student raised the concern that the Chris-



tian community seemed so hostile to homosexual persons. He said if it was in fact true that God’s love was available to everyone and that there were no distinctions between ethnic groups, social status and genders, then it was in fact hypocritical not to accept homosexuals into the Christian community. To restrict them in their service to the church was placing them in a second-hand experience with the God who loved all with equality.

Of course I was encouraged to hear young people interpret biblical truth as I had seen it done and had done myself growing up in the African American community. A loving acceptance and a sense of equality and oneness was very powerful in my community, when it was so blatantly denied us by the dominant culture. Lynn, our guest student, realized in our settings that she was fully accepted and included as one of us, even though she had just come that evening.

As we were preparing to end the evening with our closing prayer, Lynn asked if she could say something. Yes, everyone chimed. She told us she had rejected Christianity because she had never been treated as she was that evening. Her impression of Christianity was that it was not a loving, accepting and equality-oriented religion. She

thanked us for permitting her to share with us. Lynn said, “I’m lesbian and the church never demonstrated that God loves me or that I was equal with other Christians.” We closed with fervent prayer.

“God works in mysterious ways.” This experience cemented my understanding that God’s truth, love and purposes go beyond our limited understanding. How great is God’s love for one individual to lead her to our study that particular evening. Is there any doubt that God’s ways are not our ways? Is there any doubt that God cares about us as individuals? Is there any doubt that God will go to whatever length it takes to help us experience divine love? What a great God is our God! Truly God works in mysterious ways. ▼

*Isaiah Jones is a campus minister/director of United Campus Ministry at Oregon State University and teaches in the music department as well. Many of his hymns and songs are in various denominational hymnbooks. He has served as worship leader at the Presbyterian General Assembly, Youth Triennium, and the Montreat Conference Center.*



# Love in the Open

## Strengthening Families by Our Welcome

Sara Moores Campbell

B oxes were still stacked in the living room of the parsonage when I heard about Jane.<sup>1</sup> “She has brain cancer,” I was told. By the time I started unpacking the kitchen, I knew that Jane was very ill and not likely to live more than a few months. She and Beth, members of this church which had just called me fresh out of divinity school, were a couple—a lesbian couple.

Their two story Victorian home commanded a corner on a quiet Long Island village street lined with maple trees. Beth greeted me warmly. Smiling from large brown eyes full of pain, she invited me in. Before I met Jane, Beth wanted me to see their home. “Come upstairs,” she said. “I want to show you something.” She led me into Jane’s study, where the walls announced Jane’s accomplishments as a playwright and novelist. “Before you see her as she is now,” she said, gesturing toward a close-up of Jane, “I want you to see what she was.” My eyes surveyed the proud gallery of awards and triumphs before focusing on a photograph of Jane and Beth arm in arm on the beach, pausing to let the camera in on their mutual enjoyment of a summer day.

“How long have you been together?” I asked.

Her voice cracked and tears rimmed her eyes. “Fourteen years.”

I visited with Beth and Jane almost every week for five months before Jane died.

Since Jane was a significant playwright, her obituary was written up in *The New York Times*. It included a long list of literary honors and awards. Then at the end it said, “She leaves her mother, Clarice, of Florida and two brothers, Henry and Ben.” Period. It mentioned earlier that she had shared a house with her long-time companion and manager, Beth.

*From the Introduction to Last Summer at Bluefish Cove, in which the character Lil faces a terminal illness with the help of her family of lesbian friends, a situation playwright Jane Chambers faced herself five years after writing the play:*

Perhaps the most interesting thing in this strange situation where life seems to be imitating art is that I discovered Lil’s responses were not fiction...that without the support of...my gay family—the real women of Bluefish Cove—I could not have dealt with this or borne it. It is being surrounded by the recognition of who you are, what you’ve done and the absolute acceptance of the goodness of those things that feed one’s own strength to fight for one’s life, and that reassures one that life, whatever its length, has meaning and effect. Life is not a crap shoot; it is what we who love each other do together, and that is, in itself, sufficient meaning.

—Jane Chambers, December 1981



<sup>1</sup> Jane Chambers, best known for the play, *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove*.

How long? Fourteen years. And if Jane had not died at the age of 45, it would have been many more. Long-time companions. House-mates. Survived by her mother, with whom she was only reconciled toward the end, and by her brothers, who did not show up for her last year of living or honor her with attendance at her funeral.

A journalist interviewed Beth after Jane's death. Beth mentioned that she had received support from two women ministers in their small town; she was speaking of me and a Methodist minister who was Jane's therapist. "Both of them went to the funeral home with me," said Beth. "The director, who knew we were lovers, had to ask a series of questions, including 'Was she ever married?' I said no, and both ministers, together, insisted, 'Oh yes, she was.'"

The journalist who interviewed Beth quoted her: "At Jane's funeral there were an awful lot of straight people. There were the people who owned the hardware store and the Laundromat, all the small town folks whom Jane and I had educated. We both believed in gently being ourselves and thereby teaching people."

I was one of their students. In my five months of weekly visits in their home, I witnessed Beth's incredible devotion to Jane, whose tumor progressively ravaged her brilliant mind and broke her dynamic spirit. I met their extended family of gay and lesbian friends who visited or relieved Beth when she needed some time away. I met Jane's mother, who reconciled with Jane after years of alienation.

After I conducted Jane's memorial service the mail started coming in. I have never received so many letters of gratitude from strangers. Letters came from members of the gay and lesbian community who said that they had *never* before experienced in a church the sense of dignity that they felt at that service. Most of them enclosed generous contributions to the church—because they wanted to say thank you for the open recognition of love and commitment between two women.

One of Jane's friends, Jere, joined the church immediately, and became active. She was an actor, and she enjoyed



## The Lost Coin

"What woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.'"

—Jesus, Luke 15:8-9

working with the children on special projects. She remarked on one occasion that it was nice to be in a church where parents didn't snatch their children away when she walked into a room. Quite the contrary, Jere was and is one of the most loved and respected leaders in that congregation. So when she and Anne came to me and said they

would like to plan a union ceremony in the church, I rejoiced with them and we started planning. Our denomination had passed a resolution in support of ministers who performed union ceremonies for gay couples.

After my move to a congregation in Santa Barbara, I was reminded of Beth and Jane—and of so many other gay or

lesbian couples I have known in congregations I've served—as I read the slogan for the conservative group promoting the passage of a bill to outlaw gay marriages in the state: “What strengthens families strengthens California.”

I could not agree more.

What strengthens families? Love, for one thing. And acceptance. I have seen many families weakened by rejection of gay sons or lesbian daughters. I have seen families strengthened by acceptance of them.

What strengthens families? Openness, honesty. But how many gay and lesbian couples do you know who can bring their beloved life companions home for Thanksgiving dinner?

What strengthens families? Devotion to children. In the congregation I serve, there are at least four families of children with same-gender parents. Their children are loved and nurtured by parents who have given themselves to one another and to their children with every bit as much commitment as any heterosexual couple.

More families have been destroyed by rejection of gay members than by exposure to gay love. More families have been rendered dysfunctional by secrecy than by openness. More children have been taught to hate by the example of rejection than by the example of acceptance. There is a cultural conspiracy against the truth and it corrupts families. “Don't ask, don't tell.” Live a lie, they are advised. And all of this is true of congregational families as well as biological families.

I would not ask everyone to be comfortable with same-sex marriages and families. In fact, I would encourage some open conversation about the discomfort which everyone has at some level.

But I would ask this: How would you feel if you had to pretend you were single when you weren't? How would you feel if, after fourteen years of marriage and a year of caring for a dying spouse, you were left out of the obituary? How does someone else's vow to love another in sickness or in health hurt you or anyone else? In a world where children are neglected and abused, why would you want to deprive

## The Body of Christ Stretches to be Inclusive

Craig A. Buxton

What does it mean to be part of a [church] community? What does that kind of fellowship look like? Peter says, “Above everything else, love each other deeply, because love covers over many sins.” How do we love each other—deeply, earnestly? The Greek word translated *deeply* means “to stretch out, to extend.” It was used to describe a horse made to go at full gallop. Think of an athlete straining to meet the goal. Christian love is something we have to work at—it's not a matter of emotional feeling but of dedicated will. To love deeply suggests intensity, exerting one's powers to their full extent. Practicing that kind of love for one another matters more than anything else among Christians. Remember the words of our Lord Jesus? “As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By *this* everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.” Evangelism committees and council on ministries committees can try to come up with all kinds of strategies and programs; but the most effective ones will be those that empower us to begin to practice loving each other—deeply, earnestly.



From a sermon entitled *Church Alive: Belonging, Caring, Serving* reflecting on 1 Peter 4:8-11.

a child of parents who will offer love and nurture?

Since that day in February of 1983 when I buried Jane, I have been invited into the lives of gay couples facing the horror of AIDS, and gay and lesbian couples going through the trauma of separation after years of committed relationships. Their experience is no different from that of anyone else who suffers the pain of grief or loss, except for one thing: they are deprived of the larger community's acknowledgment and support. Likewise, I have performed union ceremonies for same-sex couples, always aware that these rites, while receiving the sanction of the Unitarian Universalist tradition, are not acknowledged by the state.

In our congregations we are in a position to be part of the educating process. First, by recognizing our prejudices, our discomforts, our fears. And then by asking ourselves: Is this a place where we recognize that at least some of our members are gay? Is this a place where visiting lesbians and gay men feel

welcome? Do we assume that a couples group will be all heterosexual couples, or a singles group all heterosexual singles? Would two men or two women feel comfortable dancing together at a congregational dance, or holding one another's hands during a prayer in worship?

May our welcoming voices be heard—in our state capitals, in Washington, D.C., in our own communities, and in our congregational life—in support of family values: family values not just for men and women who choose to love each other, but for women who love women, and for men who love men. ▼

**Sara Moores Campbell** is senior minister of The Unitarian Society of Santa Barbara, California.



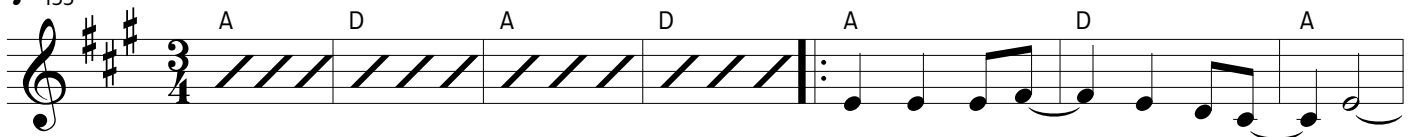
# Sustaining the Spirit

# A Gift for the Altar

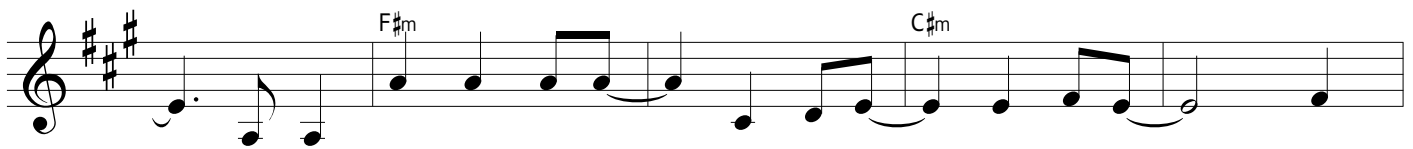
words and music by Amanda Udis-Kessler

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P.O. Box 1814, Cambridge MA 02238

♩ = 155



1. Jane has a gift \_\_\_\_\_ for the al - tar: \_\_\_\_\_  
2. Bob has a gift \_\_\_\_\_ for the al - tar: \_\_\_\_\_  
3. We have a gift \_\_\_\_\_ for the al - tar: \_\_\_\_\_



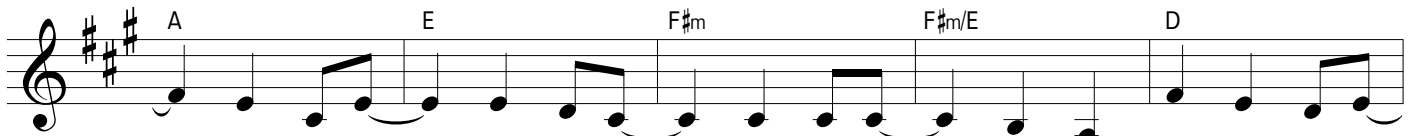
— She brings peace she has found, \_\_\_\_\_ peace to pass \_\_\_\_\_ all a- round, \_\_\_\_\_ sweet  
— He brings cour - age and trust \_\_\_\_\_ that the world \_\_\_\_\_ can be just \_\_\_\_\_ good  
— We bring all we can give \_\_\_\_\_ all the days \_\_\_\_\_ that we live \_\_\_\_\_ These



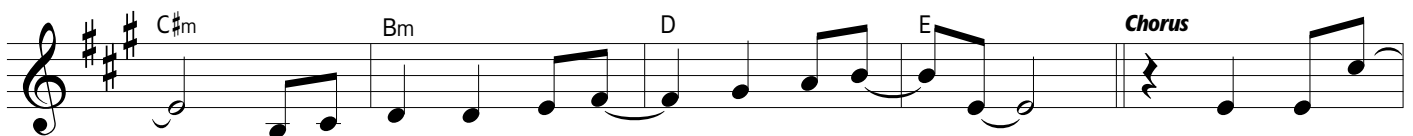
peace; God's peace for the al - tar \_\_\_\_\_ but she comes \_\_\_\_\_ with her  
faith, God's faith for the al - tar \_\_\_\_\_ but he's nev - er been  
lives, our lives for the al - tar. \_\_\_\_\_ Will the al - tar stand



lov - er \_\_\_\_\_ to hon - or the day. \_\_\_\_\_ The church in its fear \_\_\_\_\_ turns the wo -  
shy a - bout who \_\_\_\_\_ shares his life \_\_\_\_\_ The ring on his fin - ger is not -  
emp - ty? \_\_\_\_\_ The church \_\_\_\_\_ must de - cide. \_\_\_\_\_ With our heads bowed in prayer \_\_\_\_\_ and lift -



men a - way, \_\_\_\_\_ Late at night \_\_\_\_\_ they join hands \_\_\_\_\_ and in sad - ness they pray -  
— from his wife. \_\_\_\_\_ The cold - ness they show \_\_\_\_\_ him cuts deep as a knife -  
ed in pride \_\_\_\_\_ we have light \_\_\_\_\_ for the world \_\_\_\_\_ that can - not be de - nied -



— that the doors of the church \_\_\_\_\_ will be o - pened \_\_\_\_\_ AND THE ONE  
— and he leaves through the doors \_\_\_\_\_ still un - o - pened \_\_\_\_\_ BUT THE ONE  
— Yes the doors of the church \_\_\_\_\_ will be o - pened \_\_\_\_\_ FOR THE ONE

WHO IS O - PEN-ING\_\_\_\_ DOORS ALL THE TIME\_\_\_\_ IN OUR HEARTS\_\_\_\_ AND OUR MINDS\_\_\_\_

— AND OUR SOULS\_\_\_\_ CAN BE HEARD\_\_\_\_ TO SAY LOVE ONE A- NOTH - ER\_\_\_\_ AS

I HAVE LOVED YOU\_\_\_\_ FOR MY LOVE IS\_\_\_\_ THE GRACE\_\_\_\_ AT THE HEART\_\_\_\_ OF THE WORD\_\_\_\_

— IN YOUR WORD WE A- BIDE,\_\_\_\_ IN YOUR LOVE WE RE-MAIN\_\_\_\_ BUT THE DOORS\_\_\_\_

— CLOSED A- ROUND\_\_\_\_ US CAUSE AN - GUSH AND PAIN\_\_\_\_ SO BE - FORE\_\_\_\_

— THEM WE STAND,\_\_\_\_ HUM - BLE HEARTS AND STRONG HANDS\_\_\_\_ WITH THE HO -

LY DE- MAND\_\_\_\_ THAT THEY OP - EN, OP - EN,\_\_\_\_ TILL ALL OF GOD'S\_\_\_\_

CHILD - REN ARE WEL - COME, (for) AND THE ONE\_\_\_\_

ALL OF GOD'S\_\_\_\_ CHILD - REN ARE WEL - COME.\_\_\_\_

—A Gift for the Altar—



# Movement News

## 95 Methodist Clergy Bless Same-Sex Union

Ninety-five clergy from the California-Nevada Conference of the United Methodist Church co-officiated in the blessing of the relationship of two female conference leaders on January 16, challenging the denominational policy banning same-sex unions. More than 1,200 persons gathered at the Sacramento Convention Center to celebrate the committed relationship of Jeanne Barnett and Ellie Charlton.

The mood was exuberant. A choir of over 100 voices sang before the service. Jim and Jean Strathdee led the gathering in singing, and Bethany UMC member Randy Miller preached a brief, stirring sermon about these "radical" grandmothers from Sacramento. The backdrop featured the logo of the Reconciling Congregations Program and banners representing the Reconciling Congregations in the conference.

With the co-officiating clergy and lay representatives from each Reconciling Congregation gathered behind the couple, presiding pastor Don Fado remarked that, if charges were to be filed against these clergy, it would be for these words of blessing: "O God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, we bow before you to ask your blessing upon Ellie and Jeanne, whom we now bless in your name. Their commitment to one another grows out of their commitment to you, whose love is revealed through Jesus Christ. We pray for you to guide and strengthen them, that they remain open to your spirit and continue to grow in love. We thank you for Jeanne and Ellie's love and faith which they so readily share with us. We recognize in this service the place of family, friends, church, and the entire human family; we are able to love because you first loved us. O God, our maker, we gladly proclaim to the world that Jeanne and Ellie are loving partners together for life. Amen."

Charges are pending against some of the clergy who participated. In a related development in the Northern Illinois conference, a March church trial is anticipated for Broadway UMC pastor Greg Dell for conducting a service of blessing for two men last September. —Mark Bowman

### Ecumenical Conference Staff Position

Applications are now being accepted for a Conference Coordinator for the ecumenical gathering of Welcoming Churches which will be August 3-6, 2000, at the University of Northern Illinois outside Chicago. This full-time, temporary position will begin in late summer 1999 and continue through the conference. The staff person will work directly with the conference coordinating committee and will support volunteer task groups in carrying out fund raising, promotion, program planning and other tasks for this event. The staff person is expected to provide own office space. If interested, send resume and letter to Mark Bowman at RCP, 3801 N. Keeler Avenue, Chicago, IL 60641; fax: 773/736-5475. Equal Opportunity Employer.

## Welcoming Movement Spreads to the UK

The Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement (LGCM) of the United Kingdom has sought to develop a Welcoming Congregations Project. A congregational resource packet was prepared, drawing heavily on RCP, ONA, and "Claiming the Promise" material, as well as a World Council of Churches resource. Four introductory meetings were held in London in 1998, with a total attendance of 80 people and the purchase of 32 packets. In August a small group met to consider nomenclature, criteria, and future plans. Decisions on criteria for becoming welcoming were quite tricky because LGCM is working ecumenically and needs to provide and allow for many differing authority structures, etc. It was agreed to use the title INCLUSIVE Congregations with a rainbow logo. It was felt that *INCLUSIVE* represents a theological understanding of the nature of God, as compared with the words *Welcoming* or *Affirming* which tend to suggest human activity.

Five regional half-day conferences are booked for 1999 in Newcastle, Manchester, Birmingham, Bristol and Cambridge, a wide English coverage, and information on INCLUSIVE Congregations and the offer of a speaker has been circulated nationwide to County Ecumenical Officers. The first congregation (Anglican) has just applied for listing as INCLUSIVE! —Janet Webber, *INCLUSIVE Congregations Project* voluntary worker

## UCC's Sherry Challenges the WCC

On December 14, despite an impassioned plea from United Church of Christ USA President Paul Sherry that met with sustained applause, the World Council of Churches meeting in Harare, Zimbabwe, approved a Human Rights document which fails to specify l/g/b people as in need of protection. Sherry, who in November wrote a pastoral letter to all UCC churches urging them to welcome g/l/b people, said in part, "A year ago, Amnesty International documented scores of instances in countries all over the globe in which individuals are being targeted for imprisonment, torture and murder simply on the grounds of their sexual orientation. In my own country, but a few weeks ago, a young college student was brutally beaten and hung on a fence to die, simply because he was gay.

"The silence, in the midst of this ugliness, is deafening. I urge us all to break the silence....I urge us all to speak and act on behalf of God's children in pain so that justice may be pursued, wholeness restored, and the integrity of the Gospel preserved."

The WCC did pass a proposed program for the next seven years which includes a study on human sexuality, declaring, "...the issue of human sexuality has emerged as an important issue which faces the churches. It is clear that issues surrounding the understanding of human sexuality have divided and continue to divide some churches. An ecumenical approach to issues of human sexuality would need...to explore the issues while creating and deepening mutual trust." L/G/B people were well represented at WCC's *Padare*, or *marketplace of ideas*, by representatives of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches and many denominational groups from around the world. —Robert C. Lodwick

## UPCOMING GATHERINGS

### March 19-21

**Eighth Annual National Conference for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Seminarians and Their Allies: "Common Pain, Common Hope"** at Chicago Theological Seminary and Meadville-Lombard Theological School in Chicago. Contact Michael Cooper (m-cooper@mindspring.com), Tanya Denley (TDenley@juno.com), Marilyn Nash (mnash100@aol.com), or Ken Stone (kstone@chgosem.edu).

### April 15-18

**Affirm United Annual Conference and AGM.** An exciting conference of worship, inspiration, organizing and strategizing in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Theme speakers will include Darryl MacDonald, the Presbyterian minister from Montreal who has been barred from ordination and Alyson Huntley, the author of *Daring to be United*. For information contact Ken Delisle at 204-772-4322; or acpucc@aol.com

### May 21-23

**More Light Presbyterians Annual Conference: "Before Us an Open Door"** (interpreting Revelation 3:8) at Oklahoma City University in Oklahoma City. Keynotes are Scott Anderson and Tony de la Rosa. Workshops ranging from spirituality to organizing. Contact John McNeese: 405/848-2819 or john33@ix.netcom.com

### June 25-27

**Supportive Congregations Network (Brethren-Mennonite): "Leading the Dance: Living the Church Re-Imagined"** at Plymouth UCC in Milwaukee. Contact Ralph McFadden at 303/936-7734; Hikermac@aol.com

### June 28-July 1

**UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns National Gathering: "A Love Worth Risking For/The Challenge and Opportunity of Our Time"** (based on the biblical narrative of Esther) at Brown University, Providence, RI. 4 p.m., June 28-Noon, July 1. Worship, movement, conversation, music, fun! (Pre-Gathering events: People of Color Institute and White People Working Against Racism, June 28, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) For more information/registration contact: John Lardin 734/753-4808 or email: JWLARDIN@aol.com

### MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW!

#### WELCOME 2000

### Mass Ecumenical Gathering of Welcoming Congregations

Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Illinois

August 3-6, 2000

Sponsored by:

- Affirming Congregations (United Church of Canada)
- Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists
- More Light Presbyterians
- Open & Affirming Ministries (Disciples of Christ)
- Open and Affirming Program (UCC)
- Reconciling Congregations (United Methodist)
- Reconciling in Christ Churches (Lutheran)
- Supportive Congregations (Brethren/Mennonite)

**DON'T MISS THIS HISTORIC EVENT!**



# Welcoming Communities



## RECONCILING IN CHRIST

**Lutheran Church of Christ the Redeemer**  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

In the Twin Cities there is an active support group of Lutheran parents and friends of gay and lesbian people. One of the leaders of this group presented the idea of becoming a Reconciling in Christ congregation to her church council meeting in October 1997. Over the next several months, Pastor Donald Luther held a series of five Bible studies for the Church Council. There were four educational forums open to the entire congregation as well. A group of five people were appointed by the church council to draft an affirmation to be presented at a congregational meeting. After eight months of discussion and information, the congregation voted on a statement of welcome. It passed by a margin of 63 to 3. Christ the Redeemer is the tenth Lutheran congregation in the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area to become Reconciling in Christ.



## OPEN & AFFIRMING MINISTRIES

**First Christian Church**  
Boulder, Colorado

Established in 1878, First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has always valued independent thinking and encouraged its members to participate in those activities that bring justice to the larger community. Once its present building was erected, one of the first ministries undertaken was the creation of a low income senior adult facility near the church. On November 8, 1998 the congregation continued that tradition and voted to identify itself as an Open & Affirming congregation. Pastor Terry Zimmerman affirms, "Our decision to become 'officially' O&A brings new opportunities and challenges to our members, but if our future is anything like our past, we have many wonderful, creative, fulfilling and purposeful days ahead of us!" As leaders of the Open & Affirming Task Force, the Rev. Glenn Johnson, a retired pastor, and his wife, Louise, were a strong impetus behind this achievement.

**First Christian Church**  
San Mateo, California

First Christian Church voted to become Open & Affirming in January of 1991, during the pastorate of Rev. Herb Leslie. Organized in June of 1957, the congregation was deeply committed to building bridges of understanding and acceptance between people who represented a wide variety of beliefs and positions on controversial social issues during the 1960s and 1970s. Today the congregation is involved in a ministry in San Mateo County which provides food for persons with AIDS. The present pastor is Rev. Ron Frazier.



# Welcoming Resources

## ECUMENICAL

*Claiming the Promise: An Ecumenical Welcoming Bible Study Resource on Homosexuality.* Mary Jo Osterman. Chicago: Reconciling Congregations Program, 1997. Study book (\$5.95) and Leader's Guide (\$9.95) plus 15% shipping. Available from RCP, 3801 N. Keeler Ave., Chicago, IL 60641. 773/726-5526.

*With Love*, monthly newsletter of an ecumenical ministry assisting individuals and congregations create welcoming communities, edited by Alice G. Knotts. No subscription fee, donations gratefully accepted. Send name, address, phone, and e-mail to With Love, 710 N. Mountain Avenue, Ashland, OR 97520. 541/488-2770.

TV spots for outreach to the g/l community now available: Two 30-second commercials for use by Christian congregations and groups with a specific outreach to the g/l community, prepared by Word of Life Ministries of New Orleans. Former *Second Stone* editor Jim Bailey is administrator. For information packet, e-mail Word of Life at tv4gayxian@aol.com

## MORE LIGHT PRESBYTERIANS

Order from: Dick Lundy, 5525 Timber Lane, Excelsior MN 55331; 612/470-0093; e-mail: dick\_lundy.parti@ecunet.org Checks payable to MLP. Price includes postage.

*More Light Resource Packet.* Includes More Light brochure (with history, list of welcoming churches, and how to become More Light), Mission Statement, Annual Report, "How to" ideas for developing More Light ministry in the congregation, sample More Light statements, where to find excellent video and print materials, and much more. \$18.00. Brochure available separately for free.

*Keeping the Flame Alive*, 20 suggestions for your welcoming congregation. Free; copy or internet.

## OPEN AND AFFIRMING

Order from: ONA Resources, P.O. Box 403, Holden, MA 01520-0403. Checks payable to "The Coalition." Price includes postage.

*And So We Speak.* ONA's newest resource is a collection of 30 openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual UCC clergy and four seminarians describing experiences and offering reflections about being closeted and "out" in ministry, seeking a pastoral call, spirituality, and much more. Lay persons offer perspectives on having openly gay or lesbian pastors serving their congregations. \$16.

*OK! We're ONA. Now What? An ONA Idea Book.* Ideas from congregations across the country about living out an ONA commitment. \$8.00

*Blessing Ceremonies: Resources for Same-Gender Services of Commitment.* Materials include theological background, sample services, liturgical resources, and personal accounts of those who have been part of such services. \$12.50

## RECONCILING CONGREGATION PROGRAM

Order from: RCP, 3801 N. Keeler Avenue, Chicago, IL 60641; 773/726-5526. Add 15% postage.

*Enfold: A Reconciling Congregation Explores What it Means to Welcome all People.* Forty members of Bethany United Methodist Church in San Francisco explain why it's important to be part of a Reconciling Congregation. \$10.

*Still on the Journey: A Handbook for Reconciling Congregations in Ministry with Lesbians, Bisexuals, and Gay Men.* Practical ideas and plans for ministries with lesbian, gay and bisexual persons and for witnessing about the welcoming church movement. 54pp. \$15.

## RECONCILING IN CHRIST PROGRAM

Prices include shipping.

*Reconciling in Christ Information Packet.* Background information and advice, brochures for RIC Program, Lutherans Concerned, and Open Hands; relevant material and resource list. Free. Order from: Bob Gibeling, 2466 Sharondale Dr., Atlanta, GA 30305; 404/266-9615. Multiple brochures only @ 10¢ from *Lutherans Concerned InfoX*, address below.

*This Is My Story.* Video produced by Lutherans Concerned featuring personal stories of gay and lesbian Christians and their journeys of reconciliation. Two versions, one for an individual who needs to hear hopeful words and the other for a congregation which needs more understanding. 22 minutes. \$15. Specify which version and order from: *Lutherans Concerned InfoX*, 409 Roland Hills Dr. Mogadore, OH 44260; or by e-mail: InfoX@lcna.org

*Inclusive Faith.* Video for congregations considering the Reconciling in Christ program. Features former ELCA Presiding Bishop Herbert Chilstrom and Rev. Mel White, former ghostwriter for conservative Christian leaders. \$15. Order from: (see directly above).

## WELCOME & AFFIRMING BAPTISTS

Order from Brenda J. Moulton, P.O. Box 2596, Attleboro Falls, MA 02763; 508/226-1945.

*Does It Matter? A Study Discussion Guide on Homosexuality and Faith for American Baptists*, by Rev. Timothy Phillips. \$10.

*Pastor, I Am Gay* by Howard Bess. The story of an American Baptist pastor who grapples with homosexuality after a church member tells him he's gay. \$15.

## SUPPORTIVE CONGREGATIONS NETWORK

*Body of Dissent: Lesbian and Gay Mennonites and Brethren Continue the Journey.* Video stories of l/g/b Mennonites and Brethren. Provides a basis for dialogue on how the church weaves its Anabaptist history of nonconformity and its call to justice with the divisiveness surrounding homosexuality. 39 minutes. \$30, includes study guide and shipping. Order from: *Brethren/Mennonite Council for Lesbian and Gay Concerns*, Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406-0300; 612/722-6906; e-mail: BMCouncil@aol.com

# OUR WELCOMING MOVEMENT GROWS

Since 1978, 867 local churches, 45 campus ministries, 31 judicatories, and four national ministries have publicly declared themselves welcoming of all people, including lesbian women and gay men. These 943\* welcoming communities are found in ten denominations in 46 states and the District of Columbia of the United States and in five provinces of Canada. The complete list (as of January 15, 1999) follows. The affiliation of each is designated by the following codes:

	TOTAL
AC	Affirming Congregation Programme (United Church of Canada) .... 11
ML	More Light Presbyterians ..... 93
OAS	Oasis (Episcopal) ..... 52
ONA	Open and Affirming (United Church of Christ) ..... 260
O&A	Open & Affirming (Disciples) ..... 37
RIC	Reconciling in Christ (Lutheran) ..... 164
RC	Reconciling Congregation Program (United Methodist) ..... 178
SCN	Supportive (Brethren/Mennonite) ..... 21
W&A	Welcoming & Affirming (American Baptist) ..... 33
WEL	Welcoming (Unitarian Universalist) ..... 107

\*This total is lower than the sum of the numbers listed on the right because some welcoming communities are multiply designated and affiliated with more than one denomination.

## CONGREGATIONS

### UNITED STATES

#### ALABAMA

##### Huntsville

UU Church (WEL)

#### ALASKA

##### Anchorage

Immanuel Presbyterian (ML)

UU Fellowship (WEL)

##### Palmer

Church of the Covenant (W&A)

##### Sitka

UMC of Sitka (RC)

#### ARIZONA

##### Mesa

Celebration of Life Presbyterian (ML)

##### Phoenix

Asbury UMC (RC)

Augustana Lutheran (RIC)

Faith Lutheran (RIC)

##### Tucson

Church of the Painted Hills (ONA)

First Christian (O&A)

Rincon Congregational UCC (ONA)

St. Francis in the Foothills UMC (RC)

#### ARKANSAS

##### Little Rock

Pulaski Heights Christian (O&A)

#### CALIFORNIA

##### Alameda

First Christian (O&A)

First Congregational (ONA)

##### Albany

Albany UMC (RC)

##### Altadena

Altadena Congregational (ONA)

Christ the Shepherd Lutheran (RIC)

##### Baldwin Park

First Presbyterian (ML)

##### Belmont

Congregational Church UCC (ONA)

##### Benicia

Community Congregational (ONA)

##### Berkeley

Berkeley/Richmond Intercity Min. (O&A)

Epworth UMC (RC)

First Baptist (W&A)

First Congregational (ONA)

St. John's Presbyterian (ML)

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran (RIC)

Trinity UMC (RC)

University Lutheran Chapel (RIC)

University Church (O&A)

##### Campbell

First UMC (RC)

##### Carlsbad

Pilgrim Congregational UCC (ONA)

##### Carmel

UU of Monterey Peninsula (WEL)

##### Chatsworth

West Valley UMC (RC)

##### Chico

Congregational Church (ONA)

##### Claremont

Claremont UMC (RC)

Claremont UCC, Congregational (ONA)

##### Concord

First Christian (O&A)

##### Danville

Peace Lutheran (RIC)

##### Davis

Davis UMC (RC)

##### El Cerrito

Christ Lutheran (RIC)

El Cerrito UMC (RC)

Mira Vista UCC (ONA)

Northminster Presbyterian (ML)

##### Eureka

First Congregational (ONA)

##### Fair Oaks

Fair Oaks UMC (RC)

##### Fairfax

Fairfax Community (ONA)

##### Fremont

Fremont Congregational (ONA)

Niles Congregational UCC (ONA)

##### Fresno

First Congregational (ONA)

Wesley UMC (RC)

##### Fullerton

Fullerton Congregational (ONA)

##### Gardena

First UMC (RC)

##### Guerneville

Community Church, UCC (ONA)

##### Hayward

Eden UCC (ONA)

New Fellowship UCC (ONA)

United Church (ONA)

Westminster Hills Presbyterian (ML)

##### Hollywood

Hollywood UMC (RC)

##### Invine

Invine UCC (ONA)

##### Kensington

Arlington Community UCC (ONA)

##### Lafayette

Lafayette Christian (O&A)

##### Larkspur

Redwoods Presbyterian (ML)

##### La Verne

Church of the Brethren (SCN)

##### Long Beach

First Congregational UCC (ONA)

First UMC (RC)

Trinity Lutheran (RIC)

##### Los Alamitos

Community Congregational UCC (ONA)

##### Los Angeles

Bethel Lutheran (RIC)

Mt. Hollywood Congregational UCC (ONA)

United University (ML, RC)

Westwood Hills Congregational (ONA)

Wilshire UMC (RC)

##### Los Gatos

First UMC (RC)

##### Malibu

Malibu UMC (RC)

##### Marin City

St. Andrews Presbyterian (ML)

##### Milpitas

Sunnyhills UMC (RC)

##### Modesto

College Avenue Congregational (ONA)

##### Napa

Emmanuel Lutheran (RIC)

##### Newark

Holy Redeemer Lutheran (RIC)

##### North Hollywood

St. Matthew's Lutheran (RIC)

Toluca Lake UMC (RC)

##### Oakland

Beacon Presbyterian Fellowship (ML)

Faith American Lutheran (RIC)

First Congregational (ONA)

First Lutheran (RIC)

Lake Merritt UMC (RC)

Lakeshore Avenue Baptist (W&A)

Lutheran Peace Fellowship (RIC)

Montclair Presbyterian (ML)

Plymouth UCC (ONA)

St. Paul Lutheran (RIC)

##### Palo Alto

Covenant Presbyterian (ML)

First Evangelical Lutheran (RIC)

First Presbyterian (ML)

St. Andrew's UMC (RC)

University Lutheran (RIC)

##### Pasadena

First Congregational UCC (ONA)

##### Portola Valley

Ladera Community Church (ONA)

##### Richmond

Grace Lutheran (RIC)

##### Riverside

First Congregational (ONA)

##### Sacramento

Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer (RIC)

Unitarian Universalist Society (WEL)

##### San Bernardino

First Congregational Church, UCC (ONA)

##### San Bruno

Peace Lutheran (RIC)

##### San Diego

First Lutheran (RIC)

First Unitarian (WEL)

Pacific Beach UMC (RC)

##### San Francisco

Bethany UMC (RC)

Calvary UMC (RC)

Christ Church Lutheran (RIC)

Church of the Advent (OAS)

Church of St. John the Evangelist (OAS)

City of Refuge (ONA)

Dolores Street Baptist (W&A)

First Congregational UCC (ONA)

First Mennonite Church (SCN)

First St. John's UMC (RC)

First Unitarian Society (WEL)

First United Lutheran (RIC)

Glide Memorial UMC (RC)

Hamilton UMC (RC)

Noe Valley Ministry (ML)

Pine UMC (RC)

Seventh Avenue Presbyterian (ML)

St. Aidan's Church (OAS)

St. Francis Lutheran (RIC)

St. John the Evangelist Episcopal (OAS)

St. John's UCC (ONA)

St. Mark's Lutheran (RIC)

St. Paulus Lutheran (RIC)

Temple UMC (RC)

Trinity Church (OAS)

##### San Jose

Christ the Good Shepherd Lutheran (RIC)

First Christian Church (O&A)

New Community of Faith (ONA, W&A)

St. Paul's UMC (RC)

*San Leandro*  
San Leandro Community (W&A)

*San Mateo*  
Chalice Christian Church (O&A)  
College Heights UCC (ONA)

*San Rafael*  
Christ in Terra Linda Presb. (ML)  
Faith Lutheran (RIC)  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)  
First UMC (RC)

*Santa Barbara*  
La Mesa Community (ONA)

*Santa Cruz*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)  
First UMC (RC)  
Grace UMC (RC)

*Santa Monica*  
The Church in Ocean Park (RC)

*Santa Rosa*  
Christ UMC (RC)  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)  
UU Fellowship of Sonoma Co. (WEL)

*Saratoga*  
Grace UMC (RC)

*Sausalito*  
First Presbyterian (ML)

*Sebastopol*  
Community Church (ONA)

*Simi Valley*  
United Church of Christ (ONA)

*Stockton*  
First Christian (O&A)  
St. Mark's UMC (RC)

*Sunnyvale*  
Congregational Community (ONA)  
Raynor Park Christian (O&A)  
St. John's Lutheran (RIC)

*Sunol*  
Little Brown Church (ONA)

*Tiburon*  
Community Congregational (ONA)  
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran (RIC)  
Westminster Presbyterian (ML)

*Vacaville*  
St. Paul's UMC (RC)

*Vallejo*  
Fellowship UMC (RC)  
First Christian (O&A)

*Walnut Creek*  
Mt. Diablo UU (WEL)  
Walnut Creek UMC (RC)

*West Covina*  
Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran (RIC)

*West Hollywood*  
Crescent Heights UMC (RC)  
West Hollywood Presbyterian (ML)

*Yucaipa*  
Faith Lutheran (RIC)

**COLORADO**

*Arvada*  
Arvada Mennonite (SCN)

*Aurora*  
Parkview Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Boulder*  
Boulder Mennonite (SCN)  
Community UCC (ONA)  
First Congregational (ONA)  
First UMC (RC)  
Mount Calvary Lutheran (RIC)

*Colorado Springs*  
All Souls Unitarian (WEL)

*Denver*  
Capitol Heights Presbyterian (ML)  
Fireside Christian (O&A)  
First Universalist (WEL)  
Our Savior's Lutheran (RIC)  
Park Hill Congregational UCC (ONA)  
Sixth Avenue United (ONA)  
Spirit of Joy Fellowship (SCN)  
St. Paul's UMC (RC)  
Washington Park UCC (ONA)

*Evergreen*  
Wild Rose UCC (ONA)

*Fort Collins*  
St. Thomas Lutheran Chapel (RIC)

*Greeley*  
Family of Christ Presbyterian (ML)

*Pueblo*  
Christ Congregational, UCC (ONA)

*Telluride*  
Christ Presbyterian (ML)

**CONNECTICUT**

*Coventry*  
Second Congregational (ONA)

*Ellington*  
First Lutheran (RIC)

*Fairfield*  
First Church Cong. (ONA)

*Glastonbury*  
First Church of Christ Cong. (ONA)

*Guilford*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Hamden*  
Spring Glen Church, UCC (ONA)  
U Society of New Haven (WEL)

*Hartford*  
Central Baptist (W&A)  
First Church of Christ, UCC (ONA)

*Madison*  
Shoreline UU Society (WEL)

*Mansfield Center*  
First Church of Christ Cong. (ONA)

*Middletown*  
First Church of Christ Cong. (ONA)

*New Haven*  
Church of Christ in Yale Univ. (ONA)  
First & Summerfield UMC (RC)  
United Church on the Green (ONA)

*Noank*  
Noank Baptist (W&A)

*South Glastonbury*  
Congregational Church (ONA)

*Stamford*  
St. John Lutheran (RIC)

*Storrs*  
Storrs Congregational (ONA)

*Uncasville*  
Uncasville UMC (RC)

*Waterbury*  
South Congregational (ONA)

*Westport*  
Unitarian Church (WEL)

*Windsor*  
First Church UCC (ONA)

**DELAWARE**

*Newark*  
New Ark UCC (ONA)

*Wilmington*  
West Presbyterian (ML)

**DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA**

*Washington, D.C.*  
All Souls Unitarian (WEL)  
Augustana Lutheran (RIC)  
Christ Lutheran (RIC)  
Christ UMC (RC)  
Community of Christ Lutheran (RIC)  
Dumbarton UMC (RC)  
First Congregational (ONA)  
First Trinity Lutheran (RIC)  
Foundry UMC (RC)  
Georgetown Lutheran (RIC)  
Grace Lutheran (RIC)  
Lutheran Church of the Reformation (RIC)  
Riverside Baptist (W&A)  
Sojourner Truth Cong. UU (WEL)  
St. Paul's Lutheran (RIC)  
Westminster Presbyterian (ML)

**FLORIDA**

*Clearwater*  
UU Church of Clearwater (WEL)

*Gainesville*  
United Church (ONA)  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (WEL)

*Key West*  
Holy Trinity Lutheran (RIC)

*Lake Mary*  
Grace UMC (RC)

*Miami Beach*  
Miami Beach Community (ONA)  
Riviera Presbyterian (ML)  
St. John's UMC (RC)

*North Palm Beach*  
First Unitarian (WEL)

*Orlando*  
First Unitarian (WEL)

*Pinellas Park*  
Good Samaritan Presbyterian (ML, ONA)

*St. Petersburg*  
Lakewood UCC (ONA)

*Tallahassee*  
United Church (ONA)

*Tampa*  
First United Church (ONA)  
John Calvin Presbyterian (ML)  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

**GEORGIA**

*Athens*  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship (WEL)

*Atlanta*  
Clifton Presbyterian (ML)  
Grant Park-Aldersgate UMC (RC)  
Ormeewood Park Presbyterian (ML)  
Trinity UMC (RC)

*Marietta*  
Pilgrimage UCC (ONA)

**HAWAII**

*Honolulu*  
Calvary By the Sea Lutheran (RIC)  
Church of the Crossroads (ONA)  
Honolulu Lutheran (RIC)

*Kalaupapa*  
Kanaana Hou-Siloama, UCC (ONA)

**ILLINOIS**

*Carbondale*  
Church of the Good Shepherd (ONA)

*Champaign*  
Community UCC (ONA)  
McKinley Memorial Presbyterian (ML)

St. Andrew's Lutheran (RIC)

*Chicago*  
Albany Park UMC (RC)  
Augustana Lutheran (RIC)  
Berry Memorial UMC (RC)  
Broadway UMC (RC)  
Christ the King Lutheran (RIC)  
Christ the Mediator Lutheran (RIC)  
Ebenezer Lutheran (RIC)  
Epworth UMC (RC)  
First UMC (RC)  
Gladstone Park Lutheran (RIC)  
Grace Baptist (W&A)  
Grace UMC (RC)  
Holy Covenant UMC (RC)  
Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran (RIC)  
Immanuel Lutheran (RIC)  
Irving Park Christian (O&A)  
Irving Park UMC (RC)  
Lake View Lutheran (RIC)  
Lincoln Park Presbyterian (ML)  
Mayfair UMC (RC)  
Nazareth UCC (ONA)  
Norwood Park UMC (RC)  
Park View Lutheran (RIC)  
Peoples Church (ONA)  
Resurrection Lutheran (RIC)  
St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran (RIC)  
St. Mark Lutheran (RIC)  
St. Paul's UCC (ONA)  
Trinity Lutheran (RIC)  
United Church of Rogers Park (RC)  
University Church (ONA, O&A)  
Wellington Avenue UCC (ONA)

*Elmhurst*  
Maywood House Church (RIC)

*Evanston*  
Lake Street Church of Evanston (W&A)  
Hemenway UMC (RC)  
Wheaton UMC (RC)

*Hazel Crest*  
Hazel Crest Community UMC (RC)

*Jacksonville*  
Congregational Church, UCC (ONA)

*Naperville*  
First Congregational Church (ONA)

*Normal*  
New Covenant Community (ML, ONA, O&A)

*Oak Park*  
Euclid Avenue UMC (RC)  
First United Church (ML, ONA)  
Good Shepherd Lutheran (RIC)  
Oak Park Mennonite (SCN)  
Pilgrim Church (ONA)

*Park Forest*  
UU Community (WEL)

*Rockford*  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

*Streamwood*  
Immanuel UCC (ONA)

*Waukegan*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Wheaton*  
St. Paul Lutheran (RIC)

*Wilmette*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Winfield*  
Winfield Community UMC (RC)

## INDIANA

*Bloomington*  
St. Thomas Lutheran (RIC)  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

*Goshen*  
Circle of Hope Mennonite Fellowship (SCN)

*Indianapolis*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)  
Northeast UCC (ONA)

*North Manchester*  
Manchester Church of the Brethren (SCN)

*South Bend*  
Central UMC (RC)  
First Unitarian (WEL)  
Southside Christian (O&A)

*West Lafayette*  
Shalom UCC (ONA)

## IOWA

*Ames*  
Ames Mennonite (SCN)  
Lord of Life Lutheran (RIC)  
University Lutheran (RIC)

*Cedar Rapids*  
Faith UMC (RC)  
Peoples Church UU (WEL)

*Clinton*  
Clinton-Camanche, Iowa MFSA (RC)

*Davenport*  
Davenport Unitarian (WEL)

*Des Moines*  
Cottage Grove Avenue Presbyterian (ML)  
First Unitarian (WEL)  
Plymouth Congregational UCC (ONA)  
Trinity UMC (RC)  
Urbandale UCC (ONA)

*Iowa City*  
Faith UCC (ONA)

## KANSAS

*Kansas City*  
Rainbow Mennonite (SCN)

*Olathe*  
St. Andrews Christian (O&A)

*Topeka*  
Central Congregational UCC (ONA)

## KENTUCKY

*Henderson*  
Zion UCC (ONA)

*Louisville*  
Central Presbyterian (ML)  
First Unitarian (WEL)  
Third Lutheran (RIC)

*Mount Prospect*  
Grace and Glory Lutheran (RIC)

## LOUISIANA

*New Orleans*  
St. Mark's UMC (RC)

## MAINE

*Bath*  
UCC, Congregational (ONA)

*Camden*  
John Street UMC (RC)

*Ellsworth*  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

*Mt. Desert*  
Somesville Union Meeting House (ONA)

*Rockland*  
The First Universalist (WEL)

*Waterville*  
Universalist Unitarian (WEL)

## MARYLAND

*Adelphi*  
Paint Branch UU (WEL)

*Baltimore*  
Brown Memorial Park Ave. Pres. (ML)  
Dundalk Church of the Brethren (SCN)  
First & Franklin Presbyterian (ML)  
Govans Presbyterian (ML)  
St. John's UMC (RC)  
St. Mark's Lutheran (RIC)

*Bethesda*  
Cedar Lane Unitarian (WEL)  
River Road Unitarian (WEL)

*Columbia*  
Christ UMC (RC)  
Columbia United Christian (O&A)  
St. John UM-Presbyterian (ML, RC)  
UU Congregation (WEL)

*Gaithersburg*  
Christ the Servant Lutheran (RIC)

*Lanham*  
Good Samaritan Lutheran (RIC)

*Rockville*  
Rockville Presbyterian (ML)

*Silver Spring*  
Christ Congregational UCC (ONA)  
Silver Spring Presbyterian (ML)

*Takoma Park*  
Takoma Park Presbyterian (ML)

## MASSACHUSETTS

*Acton*  
St. Matthew's UMC (RC)

*Amherst*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)  
South Congregational (ONA)

*Andover*  
Ballardvale United (ONA, RC)  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

*Auburn*  
Pakachoag (ONA)

*Boston*  
Arlington Street (WEL)  
Church of the Covenant (ML, ONA)  
Mennonite Congregation (SCN)  
Old South Church (ONA)

*Braintree*  
All Souls Church (WEL)

*Brewster*  
First Parish (WEL)

*Cambridge*  
First Church, Congregational (ONA)  
Old Cambridge Baptist (W&A)  
University Lutheran (RIC)

*Danvers*  
Holy Trinity UMC (RC)

*Framingham*  
Grace UCC (ONA)  
Park Street Baptist (W&A)

*Greenfield*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Hingham*  
First Parish Old Ship (WEL)  
Hingham Congregational (ONA)

*Holliston*  
First Congregational (ONA)

*Jamaica Plain*  
Central Congregational (ONA)

*Lincoln*  
The First Parish in Lincoln (ONA)

*Marblehead*  
St. Stephen's UMC (RC)

*Middleboro*  
First Unitarian Society (WEL)

*Needham*  
First Parish UU (WEL)

*Newburyport*  
Belleville Congregational UCC (ONA)  
First Parish Society (WEL)  
People's UMC (RC)

*Newton Highlands*  
Congregational (ONA)

*Northampton*  
First Church of Christ (ONA)  
Unitarian Society (WEL)

*Osterville*  
United Methodist (RC)

*Penbrooke*  
First Church in Penbrooke (ONA)

*Provincetown*  
Universalist Meeting House (WEL)

*Reading*  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

*Roxbury*  
United Community Church (O&A, ONA)

*Salem*  
Crombie Street UCC (ONA)

*Shrewsbury*  
Mt. Olivet Lutheran (RIC)

*Somerville*  
Clarendon Hill Presbyterian (ML)

*South Hadley*  
UMC of Holyoke, S. Hadley, & Granby

*Springfield*  
First Ch. of Christ Congregational (ONA)

*Stowe*  
First Parish Ch. of Stowe & Acton (WEL)

*Sudbury*  
The First Parish (WEL)  
Memorial Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Waltham*  
First Presbyterian (ML)

*Wayland*  
First Parish of Wayland (WEL)

*Wellesley*  
Wellesley Congregational (ONA)

*Wendell*  
Wendell Congregational (ONA)

*West Newton*  
First Unitarian Society (WEL)  
Second Church in Newton UCC (ONA)

*West Somerville*  
College Avenue UMC (RC)

*Williamstown*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)  
First UMC (RC)

*Worcester*  
Bethany Christian United Parish (W&A, ONA, O&A)  
United Congregational (ONA)

## MICHIGAN

*Ann Arbor*  
Amistad Community Church, UCC (ONA)  
Church of the Good Shepherd (ONA)  
First UU (WEL)  
Lord of Light Lutheran (RIC)  
Memorial Christian (O&A)  
Northside Presbyterian (ML)

*Bloomfield Hills*  
Birmingham Unitarian (WEL)

*Detroit*  
Truth Evangelical Lutheran (RIC)

*Douglas*  
Douglas Congregational UCC (ONA)

*East Lansing*  
Edgewood United Church (ONA)  
UU of Greater Lansing (WEL)

*Ferdale*  
Zion Lutheran (RIC)

*Grand Rapids*  
Plymouth Congregational, UCC (ONA)

*Kalamazoo*  
Phoenix Community UCC (ONA)  
Skyridge Church of the Brethren (SCN)

*Lansing*  
Ecclesia (O&A)  
Lansing Church of the Brethren (SCN)

*Southfield*  
Calvary Lutheran (RIC)

*Williamston*  
Williamston UMC (RC)

*Ypsilanti*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)

## MINNESOTA

*Becker*  
Becker UMC (RC)

*Burnsville*  
Presbyterian Church of the Apostles (ML)

*Edina*  
Edina Community Lutheran (RIC)  
Good Samaritan UMC (RC)

*Mahtomedi*  
White Bear UU (WEL)

*Mankato*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Maple Grove*  
Pilgrims United (ONA)

*Minneapolis*  
Christ the Redeemer Lutheran (RIC)  
First Congregational (ONA)  
First Unitarian Society (WEL)  
First Universalist (WEL)  
Grace University Lutheran (RIC)  
Hennepin Avenue UMC (RC)  
Hobart UMC (RC)  
Holy Trinity Lutheran (RIC)  
Judson Memorial Baptist (W&A)  
Lyndale UCC (ONA)  
Lynnhurst Congregational (ONA)  
Mayflower Community Cong. UCC (ONA)  
Minnehaha UCC (ONA)  
Our Savior's Lutheran (RIC)  
Parkway UCC (ONA)  
Praxis (RC)  
Prospect Park UMC (RC)  
Spirit of the Lakes (ONA)  
St. Andrew's Lutheran (RIC)  
Temple Baptist (W&A)  
University Baptist (W&A)  
Walker Community (RC)  
Wesley UMC (RC)

*New Brighton*  
United Church of Christ (ONA)

*Northfield*  
First UCC (ONA)

*Robbinsdale*  
Robbinsdale UCC (ONA)

*St. Cloud*  
St. Cloud UU Fellowship (WEL)  
Univ. Lutheran of the Epiphany (RIC)

*St. Paul*  
 Cherokee Park United (ML, ONA)  
 Dayton Avenue Presbyterian (ML)  
 Macalester-Plymouth United (ML, ONA)  
 St. Anthony Park UCC  
 St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship (SCN)  
 St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran (RIC)

*Wayzata*  
 St. Luke Presbyterian (ML)

**MISSOURI**

*Kansas City*  
 Abiding Peace Lutheran (RIC)  
 All Souls Unitarian (WEL)  
 Country Club Congregational (ONA)  
 Fountain of Hope Lutheran (RIC)  
 Kairos UMC (RC)  
 St. James Lutheran (RIC)  
 St. Mark's Lutheran (RIC)  
 Trinity UMC (RC)  
 Van Brunt Blvd. Presbyterian (ML)

*St. Louis*  
 Centenary UMC (RC)  
 Epiphany (ONA)  
 Gibson Heights United (ML)  
 St. Marcus Evangelical UCC (ONA)  
 Tyler Place Presbyterian (ML)

*University City*  
 Bethel Lutheran (RIC)

**MONTANA**

*Billings*  
 First Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Butte*  
 United Congregational Church (ONA)

*Missoula*  
 University Congregational UCC (ONA)

**NEBRASKA**

*Lincoln*  
 Unitarian Church (WEL)

*Omaha*  
 First Lutheran (RIC)  
 Reconciling Worship Community (RC)

**NEW HAMPSHIRE**

*Concord*  
 South Congregational, UCC (ONA)

*Exeter*  
 Congregational (ONA)

*Hanover*  
 Our Savior Lutheran (RIC)

*Jaffrey*  
 United Church (ONA)

*Milford*  
 Unitarian Universalist Congregation (WEL)

*Pelham*  
 First Congregational (ONA)

*Plymouth*  
 Plymouth Congregational (ONA)

*Sanbornton*  
 Sanbornton Congregational UCC (ONA)

**NEW JERSEY**

*Belvedere*  
 St. Mary's Episcopal (OAS)

*Bloomfield*  
 Christ Episcopal (OAS)

*Boonton*  
 St. John's Episcopal (OAS)

*Chatham*  
 St. Paul's Episcopal (OAS)

*Cherry Hill*  
 UU Church (WEL)

*Chester*  
 Church of the Messiah Episcopal (OAS)

*Clifton*  
 St. Peter's Episcopal (OAS)

*Denville*  
 Church of Our Saviour Episcopal (OAS)

*East Brunswick*  
 East Brunswick Cong. UCC (ONA)

*Englewood*  
 St. Paul's Episcopal (OAS)

*Exeter*  
 Congregational Church (ONA)

*Fort Lee*  
 Church of the Good Shepherd (OAS)

*Hackensack*  
 Christ Episcopal (OAS)

*Hackettstown*  
 St. James' Episcopal (OAS)

*Harrington Park*  
 St. Andrew's Episcopal (OAS)

*Hasbrouck Heights*  
 Church of St. John the Divine (OAS)

*Haworth*  
 St. Luke's Episcopal (OAS)

*Hawthorne*  
 St. Clement's Episcopal (OAS)

*Hoboken*  
 All Saints Parish (OAS)

*Jersey City*  
 Grace Van Vorst Episcopal (OAS)  
 St. Paul's Episcopal (OAS)

*Kearny*  
 Trinity Episcopal (OAS)

*Leonia*  
 All Saints Episcopal (OAS)

*Madison*  
 Grace Episcopal (OAS)

*Maplewood*  
 St. George's Episcopal (OAS)

*Mendham*  
 St. Mark's Episcopal (OAS)

*Milburn*  
 St. Stephen's Episcopal (OAS)

*Montclair*  
 St. John's Episcopal (OAS)  
 St. Luke's Episcopal (OAS)  
 Unitarian (WEL)

*Montvale*  
 St. Paul's Episcopal (OAS)

*Morristown*  
 Church of the Redeemer (OAS)  
 St. Peter's Episcopal (OAS)  
 Unitarian Fellowship (WEL)

*Mt. Arlington*  
 St. Peter's Episcopal (OAS)

*New Brunswick*  
 Emanuel Lutheran (RIC)

*Newark*  
 Cathedral of Trinity and St. Philip (OAS)  
 Grace Episcopal (OAS)

*Norwood*  
 Church of the Holy Communion (OAS)

*Oakland*  
 St. Alban's Episcopal (OAS)

*Parsippany*  
 St. Gregory's Episcopal (OAS)

*Passaic*  
 St. John's Episcopal (OAS)

*Paterson*  
 St. Paul's Episcopal (OAS)

*Plainfield*  
 First Unitarian Society (WEL)

*Pompton Lakes*  
 Christ Church (OAS)

*Princeton*  
 Christ Congregation (ONA, W&A)

*Ridgewood*  
 Christ Episcopal (OAS)

*South Orange*  
 First Presbyterian & Trinity (ML)

*Sparta*  
 St. Mary's Episcopal (OAS)

*Summit*  
 Calvary Episcopal (OAS)

*Teaneck*  
 St. Mark's Episcopal (OAS)

*Tenafly*  
 Church of the Atonement (OAS)

*Towaco*  
 Church of the Transfiguration (OAS)

*Titusville*  
 UU of Washington Crossing (WEL)

*Upper Montclair*  
 St. James' Episcopal (OAS)

*Verona*  
 Holy Spirit Episcopal (OAS)

*Wantage*  
 Good Shepherd Episcopal (OAS)

**NEW MEXICO**

*Albuquerque*  
 First Unitarian (WEL)

*Santa Fe*  
 Christ Lutheran (RIC)  
 First Christian Church (O&A)  
 Unitarian Church (WEL)  
 United Church (ONA)

**NEW YORK**

*Albany*  
 Emmanuel Baptist (W&A)  
 First Presbyterian (ML)

*Binghamton*  
 Centenary-Chenango Street UMC (RC)  
 UU Congregation (WEL)

*Blooming Grove*  
 Blooming Grove UCC (ONA)

*Brookhaven*  
 Old South Haven Presbyterian (ML)

*Brooklyn*  
 Church of Gethsemane (ML)  
 First Unitarian Cong. Society (WEL)  
 King's Highway UMC (RC)  
 Lafayette Avenue Presbyterian (ML)  
 Park Slope UMC (RC)  
 St. John-St. Matthew-Emmanuel Lutheran (RIC)

*Buffalo*  
 Westminster Presbyterian (ML)

*Churchville*  
 Union Congregational (ONA)

*Copake*  
 Craryville UMC (RC)

*Cortland*  
 United Community Church (W&A, ONA)

*Dobbs Ferry*  
 South Presbyterian (ML)

*Fairport*  
 Mountain Rise UCC (ONA)

*Gloversville*  
 First Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Grand Island*  
 Riverside Salem (ONA)

*Henrietta*  
 John Calvin Presbyterian (ML)

*Huntington*  
 UU Fellowship (WEL)

*Ithaca*  
 First Baptist (W&A)  
 First Baptist Church (W&A)  
 St. Paul's UMC (RC)

*Marcellus*  
 First Presbyterian (ML)

*Merrick*  
 Community Presbyterian (ML)

*Mt. Kisco*  
 Mt. Kisco Presbyterian (ML)

*Mt. Sinai*  
 Mt. Sinai Congregational UCC (ONA)

*New York City*  
 Broadway UCC (ONA)  
 Central Presbyterian (ML)  
 Good Shepherd-Faith Presbyterian (ML)  
 Grace & St. Paul's Lutheran (RIC)  
 Jan Hus Presbyterian (ML)  
 Judson Memorial (ONA, W&A)  
 Madison Avenue Baptist (W&A)  
 Metropolitan-Duane UMC (RC)  
 Our Savior's Atonement Lutheran (RIC)  
 Park Avenue Christian (O&A)  
 Riverside (ONA, W&A)  
 Rutgers Presbyterian (ML)  
 St. Paul & St. Andrew UMC (RC)  
 St. Peter's Lutheran (RIC)  
 Trinity Lutheran (RIC)  
 Trinity Presbyterian (ML)  
 Unitarian Ch. of All Souls (WEL)  
 Washington Square UMC (RC)  
 West-Park Presbyterian (ML)

*Oneonta*  
 First UMC (RC)  
 UU Society (WEL)

*Palisades*  
 Palisades Presbyterian (ML)

*Plattsburgh*  
 Plattsburgh UMC (RC)

*Poughkeepsie*  
 Unitarian Fellowship (WEL)

*Rochester*  
 Calvary-St. Andrews (ML)  
 Downtown United Presbyterian (ML)  
 First Unitarian (WEL)  
 Lake Avenue Baptist (W&A)  
 Third Presbyterian (ML)  
 Westminster Presbyterian (ML)

*Saratoga Springs*  
 Presb.-New Eng. Cong. (ML, ONA)  
 Saratoga Springs UMC (RC)

*Sayville*  
 Sayville Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Schenectady*  
 First UMC (RC)  
 First Unitarian (WEL)

*Slatehill*  
 Grace UMC of Ridgebury (RC)

*Slingerlands*  
 Community UMC (RC)

*Snyder*  
 Amherst Community (ONA, O&A)

*Syracuse*  
 Plymouth Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Troy*  
First United Presbyterian (ML)

*Utica*  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

*Williamsville*  
UU of Amherst (WEL)

*Yorktown Heights*  
First Presbyterian (ML)

**NORTH CAROLINA**

*Chapel Hill*  
Church of the Reconciliation (ML)  
Olin T. Binkley Memorial Baptist (W&A)  
United Church (ONA)

*Durham*  
Eno River UU Fellowship (WEL)

*Raleigh*  
Community UCC (ONA)  
Pullen Memorial Baptist (W&A)

*Wilmington*  
UU Fellowship (WEL)

*Winston-Salem*  
First Christian (O&A)  
UU Fellowship (WEL)

**NORTH DAKOTA**

*Fargo*  
St. Mark's Lutheran (RIC)

**OHIO**

*Brecksville*  
United Church of Christ (ONA)

*Chesterland*  
Community Church (ONA)

*Cincinnati*  
Clifton UMC (RC)  
Mt. Auburn Presbyterian (ML)

*Cleveland*  
Archwood UCC (ONA)  
Euclid Ave. Congregational UCC (ONA)  
Liberation UCC (ONA)  
Pilgrim Congregational UCC (ONA)  
Simpson UMC (RC)  
West Shore UU (WEL)  
Zion UCC (ONA)

*Cleveland Heights*  
Church of the Redeemer (RC)  
Noble Road Presbyterian (ML)

*Columbus*  
Calvary Lutheran (RIC)  
First English Lutheran (RIC)  
First Unitarian Universalist (WEL)  
North Congregational UCC (ONA)  
Redeemer Lutheran (RIC)  
St. Mark Lutheran (RIC)

*Dayton*  
Congregation for Reconciliation (ONA)  
Cross Creek Community (ONA)  
Faith UCC (ONA)  
Miami Valley Unitarian Fellowship (WEL)

*Granville*  
First Baptist (W&A)

*Lakewood*  
Cove UMC (RC)  
Parkwood Congregational, UCC (ONA)

*Norton*  
Grace UCC (ONA)

*Oberlin*  
First Church in Oberlin (ONA)

*Shaker Heights*  
First Unitarian of Cleveland (WEL)

*Toledo*  
Central UMC (RC)

**OKLAHOMA**

*Oklahoma City*  
Church of the Open Arms, UCC (ONA)  
Epworth UMC (RC)

*Tulsa*  
Fellowship Congregational, UCC (ONA)  
UM Community of Hope (RC)

**OREGON**

*Ashland*  
United Church of Christ, Cong. (ONA)

*Beaverton*  
Southminster Presbyterian (ML)

*Corvallis*  
First Congregational Church (ONA)  
First UMC (RC)

*Estacada*  
Estacada UMC (RC)

*Eugene*  
First Congregational, UCC (ONA)  
Unitarian of Eugene & Lane Co. (WEL)

*Forest Grove*  
Forest Grove UCC (ONA)

*Gresham*  
Zion UCC (ONA)

*Klamath Falls*  
Klamath Falls Cong. UCC (ONA)

*Lake Oswego*  
Lake Oswego UCC (ONA)

*Milwaukie*  
Clackamas UCC (ONA)  
Milwaukie UCC (ONA)

*Portland*  
Ainsworth UCC (ONA)  
First Congregational (ONA)  
First UMC (RC)  
Metanoia Peace Community (RC)  
Peace Church of the Brethren (SCN)  
Southwest United (ONA)  
St. James Lutheran (RIC)  
St. Mark Presbyterian (ML)  
University Park UMC (RC)

*Salem*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)  
First Unitarian Society (WEL)  
Morningside UMC (RC)

*Springfield*  
Church of the Brethren (SCN)

**PENNSYLVANIA**

*Allentown*  
Muhlenberg College Chapel (RIC)  
St. John Lutheran (RIC)

*Devon*  
Main Line Unitarian (WEL)

*Harrisburg*  
Unitarian Church (WEL)

*Lansdale*  
Trinity Lutheran (RIC)

*Levittown*  
United Christian Church (O&A, ONA)

*Lewisburg*  
Beaver Memorial UMC (RC)

*Philadelphia*  
Calvary UMC (RC)  
First Germantown Mennonite (SCN)  
First UMC of Germantown (RC)  
Holy Communion Lutheran (RIC)  
Old First Reformed (ONA)  
St. Michael's Lutheran (RIC)  
Tabernacle United (ML, ONA)  
Univ. Lutheran of the Incarnation (RIC)

*Pittsburgh*  
First Unitarian (WEL)  
Sixth Presbyterian (ML)  
St. Andrew Lutheran (RIC)

*Upper Darby*  
Christ Lutheran (RIC)

*Wayne*  
Central Baptist (W&A)

**RHODE ISLAND**

*East Greenwich*  
Westminster Unitarian (WEL)

*Newport*  
Newport Congregational (ONA)

*Providence*  
Mathewson Street UMC (RC)

**SOUTH CAROLINA**

*Columbia*  
Gethsemane Lutheran (RIC)

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

*Erwin*  
Erwin UCC (ONA)

**TENNESSEE**

*Chattanooga*  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

*Knoxville*  
Tennessee Valley UU (WEL)

*Memphis*  
First Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Nashville*  
Brookmeade Congregational UCC (ONA)  
Edgehill UMC (RC)  
First UU Church (WEL)  
Hobson UMC (RC)

**TEXAS**

*Austin*  
First English Lutheran (RIC)  
First UU Church (WEL)  
St. Andrews Presbyterian (ML)  
Trinity UMC (RC)

*College Station*  
Friends Congregational (ONA)

*Corpus Christi*  
St. Paul UCC (ONA)

*Dallas*  
Bethany Presbyterian (ML)  
First Unitarian (WEL)  
Midway Hills Christian (O&A)  
Northaven UMC (RC)

*El Paso*  
St. Timothy Lutheran (RIC)

*Fort Worth*  
St. Matthew's Lutheran (RIC)

*Houston*  
Bering Memorial UMC (RC)  
Comm. of the Reconciling Servant (ML)  
Faith Covenant (ML, ONA)  
First Congregational (ONA)  
Grace Evangelical Lutheran (RIC)

*Lubbock*  
St. John's UMC (RC)

*Mesquite*  
St. Stephen UMC (RC)

*Plano*  
Dallas North Unitarian (WEL)

*San Antonio*  
Spirit of Life (RIC)

**UTAH**

*Salt Lake City*  
Mount Tabor Lutheran (RIC)  
South Valley UU Society (WEL)

**VERMONT**

*Bennington*  
Second Congregational (ONA)

*Burlington*  
Christ Presbyterian (ML)  
College Street Congregational (ONA)

*Middlebury*  
Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Putney*  
United Church (ONA)

*Rutland*  
Rutland UMC (RC)

*Thetford*  
First Congregational Church (ONA)

**VIRGINIA**

*Alexandria*  
Mount Vernon Unitarian (WEL)  
Peace Lutheran (RIC)

*Arlington*  
Clarendon Presbyterian (ML)  
Unitarian Church (WEL)

*Charlottesville*  
Sojourners UCC (ONA)

*Harrisonburg*  
Sanctuary UCC (ONA)

*Oakton*  
Fairfax Unitarian (WEL)

*Roanoke*  
Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

**WASHINGTON**

*Bellevue*  
Eastgate Congregational UCC (ONA)  
First Congregational, UCC (ONA)  
First UMC (RC)

*Carnation*  
Tolt Congregational, UCC (ONA)

*Chelan*  
Fullness of God Lutheran (RIC)

*Edmonds*  
Edmonds UU (WEL)

*Ellensburg*  
First UMC (RC)

*Federal Way*  
Wayside UCC (ONA)

*Leavenworth*  
Faith Lutheran (RIC)

*Marysville*  
Evergreen UU Fellowship (WEL)

*Medical Lake*  
Shalom UCC (ONA)

*Mountlake Terrace*  
Terrace View Presbyterian (ML)

*Olympia*  
Comm. for Interfaith Celebration (ONA)

*Pullman*  
Community Congregational UCC (ONA)

*Richland*  
Shalom UCC (ONA)

*Seattle*  
Broadview Community UCC (ONA)  
Central Lutheran (RIC)  
Fauntleroy UCC (ONA)  
Findlay Street Christian (O&A)  
First Baptist (W&A)  
Gethsemane Lutheran (RIC)  
Magnolia UCC (ONA)  
Pilgrim Congregational (ONA)  
Plymouth Congregational (ONA)  
Prospect UCC Cong. (ONA)  
Ravenna UMC (RC)

Richmond Beach Cong. UCC (ONA)  
Trinity UMC (RC)  
St. Paul's UCC (ONA)  
University Baptist (W&A)  
University Christian (O&A)  
University Congregational (ONA)  
University Temple UMC (RC)  
Wallingford UMC (RC)

#### Spokane

Unitarian Church (WEL)

#### Suquamish

Community Congregational (ONA)

#### Vancouver

East Vancouver UMC (RC)

First Congregational UCC (ONA)

#### White Salmon

Bethel Cong., UCC (ONA)

### WEST VIRGINIA

#### Wheeling

UU Congregation (WEL)

### WISCONSIN

#### Brown Deer

Brown Deer UCC (ONA)

#### Delavan

Delavan UMC (RC)

#### Eau Claire

University Lutheran (RIC)

#### Madison

Advent Lutheran (RIC)

Community of Hope UCC (ONA)

First Baptist (W&A)

First Congregational UCC (ONA)

James Reeb UU Congregation (WEL)

Lake Edge Lutheran (RIC)

Orchard Ridge UCC (ONA)

Plymouth Congregational UCC (ONA)

University UMC (RC)

#### Milwaukee

Cross Lutheran (RIC)

Pentecost Lutheran (RIC)

Plymouth UCC (ONA)

Reformation Lutheran (RIC)

Village Church, Lutheran (RIC)

#### Racine

Our Savior's Lutheran (RIC)

#### Sheboygan

Wesley UMC (RC)

#### Waukesha

Maple Avenue Mennonite (SCN)

### CANADA

#### ALBERTA

#### Calgary

South Calgary Inter-Mennonite (SCN)

#### Edmonton

Unitarian Church (WEL)

### BRITISH COLUMBIA

#### Vancouver

First United Church (AC)

Trinity United (AC)

Unitarian Church (WEL)

### MANITOBA

#### Winnipeg

Augustine United (AC)

First Unitarian Universalist (WEL)

Young United (AC)

### ONTARIO

#### Thunder Bay

Lakehead U. Fellowship (WEL)

#### Toronto

Bathurst United (AC)

Bloor Street United (AC)

Glen Rhodes United (AC)  
Trinity-St. Paul's United (AC)

#### Waterloo

Olive Branch Mennonite (SCN)

Westminster United (AC)

### SASKATCHEWAN

#### Regina

St. James United (AC)

#### Saskatoon

King of Glory Lutheran (RIC)

St. Thomas-Wesley United (AC)

## CAMPUS MINISTRIES

#### Key:

LCM=Lutheran Campus Ministry

LSC=Lutheran Student Center

LSM=Lutheran Student Movement

UCM=United Campus Ministry

UMSF=United Methodist Student Fellowship

### UNITED STATES

#### CALIFORNIA

Cal-Aggie Christian House, UC-Davis (RC)

UCM, UC, Riverside (RC)

UCM, USC, Los Angeles (RC)

Wesley Fdn., UC-Berkeley (RC)

Wesley Fdn., UC-Santa Barbara (RC)

Wesley Fdn., UCLA, Los Angeles (RC)

#### COLORADO

LCM, CU-Boulder (RIC)

Wesley Foundation, U. of Denver (RC)

#### DELAWARE

Wesley Fdn., UD, Newark (RC)

#### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

UMSF, American U. (RC)

#### ILLINOIS

Agape House, U. of Illinois, Chicago (RC)

Ill. Disciples Fdn., UI, Champaign (O&A)

UMSF, Ill. Wesleyan, Bloomington (RC)

UCM, No. Illinois, DeKalb (RC)

University Christian Ministry, Northwestern,  
Evanston (RC)

#### INDIANA

LCM, IU, Bloomington (RIC)

#### IOWA

LCM, UI, Iowa City (RIC)

Stud. Cong., Luther Coll., Decorah (RIC)

#### KANSAS

LCM, KSU, Manhattan (RIC)

United Methodist CM, UK, Lawrence (RC)

#### KENTUCKY

Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary (ML Chapter)

#### MICHIGAN

Guild House, UM, Ann Arbor (O&A)

Wesley Fdn., Central Mich. Univ., Mt. Pleasant (RC)

Wesley Fdn., U. of Michigan, Ann Arbor (RC)

#### MINNESOTA

LCM in Minneapolis (RIC)

Stud. Cong., St. Olaf, Northfield (RIC)

#### NORTH DAKOTA

Univ. Lutheran Center, NDSU, Fargo (RIC)

#### OHIO

UCM, OU, Athens (O&A, RC, W&A)

#### OREGON

LCM in Portland (RIC)

Wesley Fdn., UO, Eugene (RC)

#### PENNSYLVANIA

Christ Chapel, Gettysburg College,  
Gettysburg (RIC)

LSC-LCM, Kutztown U, Kutztown (RIC)

### TENNESSEE

Wesley Fdn., Vanderbilt, Nashville (RC)

### TEXAS

LCM, UT, Austin (RIC)

### VIRGINIA

Campus Christian Community, MWC,  
Fredericksburg (RC, RIC)

### WASHINGTON

The Common Ministry, Washington State  
U., Pullman (RC)

LCM, WWU, Bellingham (RIC)

Wesley Club, UW, Seattle (RC)

UM Fellowship, UPS, Puget Sound (RC)

### WISCONSIN

LCM, UW, LaCrosse (RIC)

LCM, Metro Milwaukee (RIC)

LCM, UW-Stout, Menomonie (RIC)

Wesley Fdn., U. of Wisconsin, Madison (RC)

### CANADA

#### SASKATCHEWAN

LSC, LSM, Saskatoon (RIC)

## JUDICATORIES

which have passed welcoming resolutions  
Conferences (ONA)

California/Nevada N.

Central Pacific

Connecticut

Massachusetts

Michigan

Minnesota

New Hampshire

New York

Ohio

Rocky Mountain  
Southern California

Conferences (RC)

California-Nevada

New York

Northern Illinois

Oregon-Idaho

Troy

Wisconsin

Regions (O&A)

Northern California/Nevada

Synods (ML)

Synod of the Northeast

Synods, ELCA (RIC)

Eastern North Dakota

Eastern Washington-Idaho

Greater Milwaukee

Metro Chicago

Metro New York

Metro Washington, D.C.

Pacifica

Rocky Mountain

Sierra-Pacific

Southeast Michigan

Southeast Pennsylvania

Southern California—West

## NATIONAL MINISTRIES

which have passed welcoming resolutions

Disciples Peace Fellowship (O&A)

Gen'l Commission on Christian Unity &  
Interreligious Concerns (RC)

Lutheran Student Movement—USA (RIC)

Methodist Fed. for Social Action (RC)

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