



crossbeams

A publication of the Gay, Lesbian, and Affirming Disciples Alliance, Inc.
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www.gladalliance.org

UCC General Minister and President to Speak at GLAD Banquet

GLAD Banquet attendees will hear first-hand the journey of the United Church of Christ in its recent, and controversial, "radical welcome" ad campaign "God is Still Speaking."

Scheduled to speak at the Sunday, July 24 event, Rev. Dr. John Thomas, United Church of Christ General Minister and President, will share stories of what happens when "Jesus Calls Us . . . Out." The Banquet theme picks up on the Disciples event theme: "Jesus Calls Us!"

GLAD planners are hoping organizations and congregations will show their support for our ecumenical partner by reserving whole tables and encouraging strong turnout for the banquet.

The GLAD Banquet will be held during the evening of Sunday, July 24. More information will be available in April.

... and more

More information on all the stories in this month's Crossbeams is available on the web at news.gladalliance.org.

Other Headlines on the web:

GLAD Members Talk About Inclusive Family Values on NPR
Working for Equality: Steven Baines, People for the American Way

Moving Towards an Ecumenical Vision: O&A Ministry Team Leader Hosts Welcoming Congregations Program Leaders

GLAD Plans for Portland General Assembly

The Planning Team for GLAD Alliance's involvement in the 2005 General Assembly is working steadily to assure a visible and audible presence for GLBT and affirming Disciples at the biennial Disciples gathering in Portland, Oregon this summer. Here are some preliminary details for GLAD members and friends.

The **GLAD Event** will be Saturday, July 23 at a location convenient to the convention center. In keeping with the Assembly theme, "Jesus Calls Us . . .", planners have selected "Jesus Calls Us . . . Out" as the theme for GLAD's presence at the Assembly. The tentative Event schedule is 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and will include a continental breakfast and lunch.

The **GLAD Banquet** will be held during the evening of Sunday, July 24. Our speaker will be John Thomas, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.

Volunteers needed to assist with local arrangements, setting up and staffing the GLAD Booth and other GLAD activities at the Assembly. If you are available to assist with these activities, please contact Randy Palmer (rpalmer@gladalliance.org or 724-850-8918).

Further details, including registration information, will be available in April. Keep an eye on www.gladalliance.org/events.html.

Moving Discernment Forward in the Central Rocky Mountain Region

The Regional Board in the Central Rocky Mountain Region has made Discernment a priority. A few years ago, the Board voted to create a group that would help the region enter into a period of discernment and "listen to the Holy Spirit for guidance" when considering how to relate to gay & lesbian Christians. This past year that group completed the discernment process using the Listening to the Spirit materials developed by the General Church.

Since finishing, the group has committed itself to helping churches in the region begin the process of discernment. They plan to visit churches in order to promote discernment and let churches know that they are available as a resource.

If your church or region would like more information about Discernment, contact Karen Barr, the Co-Chair of the Discernment Ministry Team of GLAD, kbarr@gladalliance.org.

You can download this Crossbeams from news.gladalliance.org.
Print copies for your congregation, friends, and family.

Do you have something to contribute to Crossbeams? Comments? Questions? E-mail crossbeams@gladalliance.org.

Does Your Church Need to Come Out of the Closet?

During the past year, the O&A Ministry Team received an email from Rev. Ron Frazier of Cherokee Christian Church, Prairie Village, Kansas, asking why their congregation was not listed on the GLAD website. He informed the Team that the following paragraph is in the congregation's Constitution and By-Laws:

The membership of this Church shall consist of those persons who are now identified as

members of the Congregation and those who shall unite with it by confession of faith and baptism or transfer of membership, without regard to gender, race, color, ethnicity or sexual orientation.

Our response was this: do you believe the congregation is already and desires, in the future, to live according to this membership statement? He reported that in recent meetings attended by 90 percent of the congregation members specifically affirmed this membership article. After Ron informed us of this and sent a

copy of the Constitution and By-Laws to the Team, the Team was delighted to welcome this congregation as the 63rd O & A congregation/ministry among Disciples.

Is your church Open & Affirming but not registered with GLAD's O&A program? Has it forgotten its commitment to inclusion? Does it celebrate its diversity?

Read more in this month's Crossbeams on the Web at news.gladalliance.org. For more information about GLAD's O&A program, contact Casey Williams, O&A Ministry Team Liaison, at cwilliams@gladalliance.org.

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«Expiration»

Ecumenical Involvement Expands O&A Ministry Team's Vision and Resources

The vision of our O&A Team has been expanded by our ecumenical relationship with other Welcoming Ministries in sister denominations. The new vision began in the Reconciling in Christ ministry of the Lutherans Concerned/North America. It was their goal to create a North

American network of at least 67 Reconciling in Christ Leadership Teams. These teams work to ensure the continued expansion of the Reconciling in Christ program within the denomination, impact the Church's study processes, and end the ban on ordination of LGBT persons within the denomination.

The Spirit of God, however, has expanded that vision into the wider body of Christ.

The Welcoming Congregations Program Leaders will form ecumenical teams across the

country to ensure that there is a team in every major city in the country.

The purpose of the teams includes faith based community organizing, introduce leaders to available resources and processes, and equip leaders to build Core Teams in their areas.

The O & A Ministry Team will consider how this training will be helpful as we seek to expand the vision of welcome among Disciples congregations.