



crossbeams

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

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www.gladalliance.org

Things you can do with GLAD at the General Assembly in Portland

- Have dinner with John Thomas, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ
- Enjoy an evening of comedy
- The Coming Out Labyrinth
- Develop a decidedly Christian, justice-oriented view on same gender marriage

These are just a few of the things you can do with GLAD at the Portland General Assembly.

GLAD's theme for the Assembly is "Jesus Calls Us... Out!" Based on the General Church's theme "Jesus Calls Us..." our theme will guide our presence at the Assembly.

The **GLAD Alliance Pre-Assembly Event** will be Saturday, July 23, at First Christian Church, Portland. The Event is designed to equip GLAD members to be a faithful and effective presence at General Assembly.

GLAD is excited to welcome **Rev. Dr. John Thomas, UCC General Minister and President** as the Keynote Speaker at the **Alliance Banquet** on Sunday, July 24. Dr. Thomas will talk about his experience as the United Church of Christ "came out" with its controversial ad campaign "God is Still Speaking." The controversy? The ad proclaimed

Help GLAD Get the Word Out!

Several files are available at news.gladalliance.org for you to advertise GLAD's General Assembly activities to your congregation.

"Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we."

There will be several **resource groups** at the Assembly of interest to GLAD members, including **'Til Death Do Us Part: Beyond the Politics of Same-Gender Marriage** and two sessions on the denomination's process of discernment on the church's response to lesbian and gay Christians.

GLAD will be sponsoring **exhibit booths** for GLAD and for Open & Affirming. Also, the Office of General Minister and President is sponsoring a booth on the discernment process.

If you were at the GLAD Event last July in Des Moines, IA, you had the opportunity to experience the **Coming Out Labyrinth**. This opportunity returns as Pastor Nancy Brink and North Side Christian Church of Omaha, NE, bring this experience to the Assembly's VisionFest.

Plans are also underway for a screening of **"Call Me Malcolm"** a feature-length documentary on a transgender minister co-produced by the UCC.

And new this year is GLAD's **Comedy Night**. Don't miss it!

More information is available at www.gladalliance.org where you can buy Banquet tickets and register for the Pre-Assembly Event.

Sharon Hart Steps Aside as Open & Affirming Ministry Team Leader

Sharon Hart has decided to step aside as Open & Affirming Ministry Team Leader. Although Sharon's love for this ministry and her passion for the Open & Affirming mission continues as she remains a member of the team, team members were first saddened when they learned the news at their recent retreat.

Sharon has served nearly four years as GLAD's O&A Team Leader. During that time the team has grown in its vision and leadership. Sharon will continue as the team's contact person. Rachel Frey and Christy Newton have accepted responsibility to co-lead the team, and Casey Williams continues as Council liaison to the O&A Team.

Help Us Make This Your Crossbeams

What has your congregation done lately to renew or energize its Open & Affirming commitment?

What does your congregation plan for gay pride this summer?

How has your church worked for same gender marriage rights?

Let us know at crossbeams@gladalliance.org

Shower of Stoles at the General Assembly for the First Time: Include Your Story Too

Although stoles from the Shower of Stoles have been used in the GLAD Booth at the Assembly in the past, the Shower of Stoles will be displayed as part of the Assembly for the first time in Portland.

The Shower of Stoles Project is a collection of liturgical stoles and other sacred items from gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people of faith in 24

denominations. Each stole has a message attached to it telling the story of one person's service to the church. Many stoles from Disciples have been on display at GLAD Events and a number of Disciples Churches in recent years.

Martha Juillerat, Shower of Stoles National Program Director, invites GLAD members to help build the collection of Disciples stoles in the Shower of Stoles.

The stoles represent not only ordained leadership, but LGBT persons who are active in the life and leadership of their faith community in some way.

For more information on Martha's invitation to GLAD members, go to news.gladalliance.org.

For more information on the Shower of Stoles and how to create a stole go to www.showerofstoles.org.

More on the Web

- How Central Christian Church of Decatur, Illinois, is moving on discernment
- GLAD in the Pacific Southwest Organizes and Plans for the Coming Year

See news.gladalliance.org for the full story.

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



GLAD Leader Denounces Southern Baptists

On March 9, the Southern Baptist Convention declared its opposition to same-sex marriage based on what it called, "the biblical teaching that God designed marriage as a lifetime union of one man and one woman." Here are excerpts from the response written by Steven Baines, GLAD's Strategic Action Team Leader:

"I am saddened and disappointed that leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention continue to present their discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans in the guise of compassion....

These so-called Biblical literalists ignore the fact that marriage in the Bible has been used to justify ownership of concubines..., an excuse for extravagant polygamy... and as a desperate, but inferior, alternative to burning in lustful celibacy....

The only thing you'll learn about marriage from reading the Bible is just how much it has changed with shifting cultural morals....

They could have shown real compassion to the gay community by concentrating on the "love ethic" that is the foundation of both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures.

Read the entire statement at news.gladalliance.org.