



crossbeams

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

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www.gladalliance.org

Breathing Life Event a Success

The first Open & Affirming training event for Disciples congregations and ministries took place at First Christian Church Las Vegas February 9th -11th. Eighty individuals representing congregations from 16 states took part in the three day event that encouraged uniting, empowering and creating as we share our ministry together.

Attendees participated in three days of training that encouraged them to return to their congregations and regions with valuable tools that will help them support and lead the Open & Affirming ministry.

*"The Q&A with Mary was my favorite. She offered solid academics and solid faith. I would love to bring her to our region. She spoke my language and was so articulate. Her theological and biblical insights. She provided a vocabulary. She's wonderful."
[From an attendee's evaluation]*

Highlights of the event include the three inspiring speakers. The event presenters confronted and inspired those present. Emily Eastwood challenged us by sharing the story of her grandmother who cleared the way for her to reach her dream (to an 8 year old girl, touching Roy Roger's hand was vitally important) just as God's Spirit goes before us to enable us to reach our dream of welcome among Disciples. Mary Ann

Tolbert urged us to move from being victims to being preachers of the Gospel. Ron Parker helped us focus on the practicalities of moving from exclusion to welcome.

Sermon Available for Download

Download Mary A. Tolbert's sermon preached at Breathing Life: *Keeping the Faith: Preaching the Good News*.

Go to www.gladalliance.org and click on Downloads.

Attendees also participated in the "Sounds of Silence" workshop and now have the necessary tools to share this workshop with others. Worship was lead by Phoebe Spier and Stephen Austin.

According to the evaluations from the participants, the event strengthened ties between Open & Affirming ministries, increased their theological understand of what it means to be Open &

*"[At Breathing Life] I enjoyed the fellowship, the speakers, the discussions, and the interconnectedness that we all seemed to have together, whether gay or straight... God touched my heart with an overwhelming sense of how He gave His life for me even as a gay man... I have a better understanding of my life in Christ as I am and it's moved me closer to my own acceptance of who I am. I continually search my heart for how I can help others in the same way."
Tom Winger, Renton, WA*

Affirming, and gave participants a chance to assess their ministries' Open & Affirming commitment and move to live that commitment out more fully.

*"Each [keynote speaker] provided different information and all were helpful. I really appreciated the variety represented. All three presentations were excellent. "
[From an attendee's evaluation]*

The Open & Affirming Ministry Team wishes especially to thank worship leaders Phoebe Spier and Stephen Austin; and speakers Emily Eastwood, Mary Ann Tolbert, and Ron Parker for their participation and leadership. The team is grateful to the congregations, individuals and GLAD members that supported this event with their finances and prayers. Finally, special words of appreciation from the team go to the congregation and pastors of First Christian Church Las Vegas. Reverends Ginger and David Jarman were hospitable, helpful and encouraging throughout the planning and hosting stages.

This event would not have been possible without everyone's support.

[ed. note: and of course, special thanks from all of GLAD to the Open & Affirming Ministry Team for providing this valuable event to our Open & Affirming ministries.]

Send us your e-mail address and we'll let you know when the next Crossbeams is on-line crossbeams@gladalliance.org.

Downloads Now Available from GLAD Website

The Communications Ministry Team has created a new page on the GLAD website for resources that can be downloaded. Currently available for download are GLAD brochures with information about GLAD, membership, discernment, and Open & Affirming. Also available are logos that Open & Affirming ministries can use on websites.

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



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The download page is available from the "downloads" link on the GLAD website. Check it out at www.gladalliance.org.

GLAD Invests Funds with Church Extension

GLAD has invested its funds with Church Extension, as one of a number of efforts of the organization to support the mission and ministry of the Disciples of Christ.

"We kept our funds in local banks for years, simply out of convenience," said Randy Palmer, Development and Finance Team Leader of GLAD Alliance.

"Once we realized that we could place our funds with Church Extension, we saw the value in investing where our funds could be used to support the growth and vitality of Disciples congregations," he said. "We challenge all justice, advocacy and constituency groups in the church to consider a similar investment."

Seminarian Gathering Disciples LGBTQ Ordination Stories

Last month we published Casey Williams' request for ordination stories from Disciples clergy and seminarians for her final project in seminary. She is hoping to hear from you by March 31. You can read Casey's letter requesting participation in this project in the February Crossbeams at news.gladalliance.org and you can contact Casey at sameloverights@yahoo.com.

Plans Shaping Up for Tapestry 2006

This year's GLAD Event, "Tapestry 2006: Live, Love, Laugh and Lead," will be a joint gathering of the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (AWAB), GLAD, and the United Church Coalition for LGBT Concerns.

The event is scheduled for June 26-29, 2006 at the University of Indianapolis.

Check the website for more details and tentative registration costs: www.tapestry2006.org.

Annual Financial Report

GLAD's Design and Covenant requires the Treasurer to advise members regarding GLAD's budgetary and financial condition annually. Accordingly, the 2005 financial statement and the 2006 budget, as approved by the Council, may be found at news.gladalliance.org. If you are unable to access this information or have questions about GLAD's financial matters, please contact Randy Palmer, Development and Finance Team Leader, at RPalmer@gladalliance.org or 724-850-8918.