



crossbeams

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REPORT FROM THE MODERATOR GLAD Leadership Retreat

- María Pérez

What an awesome retreat! When can we get started? You had to be there in order to understand these outbursts of excitement. On November 16 and 17, 2007 the GLAD Council met in Payson, Arizona for its fall retreat. We celebrated our successes, and also took a hard look at GLAD as an institution, its gifts and flaws.

As part of the retreat, Jessica Vázquez led us in anti-racism training on Saturday. During this time Jessica took us through the history of this country and its racist and biased decisions that have shaped the history of United States, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and of course GLAD. It was an eye opener to see how well intended people, like us, can perpetuate a system that continues to oppress and marginalize the same people that we trying to reach.

GLAD wants to be an organization that offers a safe place-sanctuary to queers, transgender, bisexual, lesbians and gays from all ethnic and socioeconomic groups. But GLAD has predominantly being a middle class lesbian and gay organization for white people which has left many people out. GLAD has to look seriously at the way it does its business, how it views people, and the way it wants others to think and act as we do. GLAD has to work diligently to be a catalyst of unity and wholeness in the church.

The time is right in our organization's history to dismantle those structures, attitudes and biases that keeps GLAD from being the welcoming, inclusive and nurturing institution we can be. It will be hard work but it will be rewarding, not only for GLAD but for every person that immerses itself in the process and for the entire Church. Will you join us, GLAD, in this scary but sacred mission of transformation?

COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION TRAINING

Towards a Welcoming and Inclusive Church FEBRUARY 15 - 18, 2008, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

Perhaps you are a leader in a congregation which is considering becoming welcoming to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered persons. Perhaps you are committed deeply to helping other congregations in your denomination become more welcoming of lgbt folks. Either scenario means that this training will be very helpful to you in honing your skills and gaining more knowledge about how to help congregations through those tough conversations toward a more fully inclusive church.

The training has been designed specifically with congregations and their leaders in mind. The training will explore topics which will help you to become a more effective leader in working with congregations on issues related to human sexuality and gender identity for the purpose of helping

a congregation discern God's call to become more welcoming and inclusive of lgbt persons.

Topics include faith-based community organizing techniques, congregational conflict and resolution, strategies for helping congregations discern the call to be welcoming, and dealing with difficult conversations around biblical material.

This training is for anyone who is interested in seeing the church become more welcoming, supportive and inclusive of lgbt persons.

Towards a Welcoming and Inclusive Church is supported by a grant from the Arcus Foundation to a coalition of welcoming church programs that includes the GLAD Alliance.

More on the Web

You'll always find more at news.gladalliance.org. Ask us at crossbeams@gladalliance.org and we'll notify you when the new Crossbeams is on-line.

Also on the web this month:

- *A Time to Seek: Study Guide on Sexual and Gender Diversity*
- Job posting from the Association of Welcoming and Affirming Baptists: Capacity-Building Project Coordinator
- Movie Listings: *For The Bible Tells Me So*

... and more!

Remembering Robert Lemon of Berkeley, CA

Robert Lemon of Berkeley, CA, who along with his wife Adelle has been a long-time supporter of GLAD, passed away in late October.

Robert, a supporter of civil rights and justice causes for many years, received the First Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Award from the Northern California-Nevada Region of the Christian Church in January 2007. He

marched with Cesar Chavez in the 1960s, founded Richmond Inner-city Ministries, a group with the mission to empower local African Americans in the community of Richmond, and created a program for religious professionals who were displaced for speaking out for peace, justice and equal rights.

Robert and his wife Adelle received the Disciples Peace Fellowship's Wittkamper award in 2003 in recognition of their lifelong commitment to peace and justice, and Adelle is also a

member of the Northern California-Nevada Disciples Hall of Fame. Robert and Adelle enjoyed more than 56 years of marriage.

If you would like to send a card, GLAD would be happy to forward it to Adelle.

GLAD Alliance Inc PO Box 44400 Indianapolis IN 46244-0400

FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



crossbeams@gladalliance.org

LGBTQ CHRISTIAN YOUTH RETREAT Wonderfully Made

Christian teens in 9th through 12th grades who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or are questioning their affectional orientation are invited to attend a weekend of spiritual reflection, affirmation, and fellowship. The theme of the retreat is "Wonderfully Made," taken from Psalm 139. This retreat is designed for youth who are interested in discussing and understanding sexuality

alongside their own spirituality. Participants will be able to share their stories and struggles to remain people of faith despite the negative message they frequently receive from much of Christianity. The retreat will include Bible study, worship, and community building.

Wonderfully Made will be held in the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania, March 28-30, 2008. The cost will be \$45.00 before March 1 and \$60.00 after that date. Scholarship assistance is available.

The retreat is being planned by the Lutheran/Bryson LGBT Task Force of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Questions about the camp may be directed to Fred Wolfe, unilu@uniluphila.org, or 215-387-2885.

More information can be found at <http://youth.sepa.org/events.htm>