



crossbeams

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GLAD Moderator Maria Perez Attends Asamblea Nacional Hispana y Bilingüe

[ed note: the following is a report from GLAD Moderator Maria Perez]

La Obra Hispana celebrated their 14th Asamblea Nacional Hispana y Bilingüe in Hackensack, New Jersey from July 10-13, 2008 and GLAD was there. I attended the event as moderator of GLAD. To be honest with you, I was a little scared. I did not know what to expect.

I was lovingly greeted by old friends with a genuine, *¿cómo estás? ¡No te pones vieja!* (you don't get old!) It was good to say hola to new and old friends and also to get the scoop of what is happening around United States in the Hispanic churches. I was able to give an honest answer to the question; what are you doing in Omaha? I live in Omaha with my partner Nancy. And, no one ran away from me as if I had the plague. I don't want to paint you a rosy picture; there were some that did not say *hola* to me, but I said *hola* to them.

I went to La Asamblea with one objective in mind, open lines of dialog with Hispanic leaders. I asked our Hispanic brothers and sisters, what can GLAD and La Obra Hispana do for the wholeness of the Church? Can we in spite of our differences find enough common ground to work together for a common goal? The answer to these questions was a pleasant surprise, it is time to talk. Wow!

The door is open. The conversation was started. How will it continue? I don't know yet.

La Obra Hispana faces its own divisions and differences which make any dialog difficult and threatening to some. I hope that the loving spirit that I felt in La Asamblea will continue to shape future formal and informal conversations between all of God's children.

I'm glad to report to you that it was a great event for me and GLAD and for the Church.

New Ideas Developed to Assist O&A Congregations

- by Casey Williams, O&A Ministry Team Leader

The Open and Affirming Ministry Team met July 10-13 in a cozy cabin in Oklahoma and, after battling thunderstorms, spent time in fellowship and organized a two year plan with our National Field Organizer, Anita Bradshaw. Sharing goals for the next two years, Anita led a brainstorming session about the role of the O&A Team in the achievement of those goals. Breaking down personal as well as team goals, the team explored what could be accomplished as a volunteer organization.

One exciting day was spent re-evaluating and re-envisioning the O&A packets. The wealth of information provided to congregations entering into the conversation of becoming Open & Affirming was divided into three separate packets.

The first packet, the introduction packet, will be sent to those just beginning the conversation. Congregations deciding to continue the conversation will be sent additional information in a second packet designed to help this process forward. This packet will also be available to those congregations who have already begun the process on their own and are looking for additional information.

When a congregation completes the O&A process and therefore choosing to become an O&A congregation, the third "welcoming" packet will be sent.

These are the congregations that have supplied the O&A Team with the appropriate information to be included on our O&A Ministry List. These ministries are at the GLAD banquet and listed on our website

This packet provides further information and resources to move the conversation to: "Where do we go from here?" to live out their status as O&A in the life of the Church. These packets will be completed and ready for viewing at the next General Assembly and O&A Aftersession.

Crossbeams on the Web

Send your e-mail address to crossbeams@gladalliance.org and we'll let you know when Crossbeams is available on the web.

Chalice Christian takes a public stand on Marriage Equality

[ed note - this open letter from the board of Chalice Christian, which they have sent to the local papers, was sent to us by Pastor Gerry Brague. Chalice Christian is in San Carlos, CA]

Dear Editor:

At our congregation's Board of Directors meeting on Sunday, May 18, we took the following action in response to the recent Supreme Court Decision:

Since Chalice Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) declared itself an Open & Affirming Congregation over a decade ago and have sought to live that out, we, the Chalice Board of Directors, affirm the California Supreme Court decision of May 15, 2008 which strikes down the ban on same-gender marriages in our state. We call for equal rights of all citizens. We have all been created in God's image and recognize that God is Love. We affirm loving relationships and are happy to join with people of all sexual orientations in celebrating those relationships.

We realize that there will be many leaders claiming to be the voice of the Christian faith who will decry and denounce the decision of the Supreme Court. Plenty of media attention will be paid to them, as they will be loud and insistent. We strongly feel that the voices of the progressive Christian community need to be heard and recognized in this debate also. We are glad to offer that viewpoint with this resolution.

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FORWARDING SERVICE REQUESTED



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Upcoming Events

Toward a More Welcoming and Inclusive Church

A Training Program to Increase the Number of Open and Affirming Disciples Congregations
October 24-26, Goshen, IN

GLAD Pacific-Southwest Region Biennial Meeting

October 18 (Following the PSWR Regional Meeting), San Bernadino, CA

Many Stories One Voice

Equipping the Saints for the Ministry of God's Extravagant Welcome
September 4-7, New Orleans, LA

For Such a Time as This

A Transgender Pre-Event of Many Stories One Voice
September 3, New Orleans, LA

For more information on any of these events, see news.gladalliance.org or e-mail glad@gladalliance.org.

New Resources for Open & Affirming Churches and Supporters

The Open & Affirming Ministry Team has set up an e-mail list server and a Facebook group to help O&A churches, their members, and supporters to network, share ideas, and support each other. For more information, go to www.gladalliance.org.