



# crossbeams

*A publication of the Gay, Lesbian, and Affirming Disciples Alliance, Inc.  
Issue # 51 Summer-Fall 2003*

www.gladalliance.org glad@gladalliance.org

## **Arson at First Christian Church In Honolulu**

Letter from Vaughn Beckman, Pastor

Greetings and Blessings to each of you.

I am exhausted, it has already been quite a day. I awoke at 4:30 this am to find fire trucks in our church driveway. After meeting with the Fire Captain, Police team and people from the Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms group, I have been informed that this was arson. It was deliberately set at early this am. Most likely as a deliberate attack against me and my teachings.

The fire fighters were awesome and contained the fire quickly. However, due to a criminal investigation, we may not be able to use the church for at least a week. Over \$150,000 dollars of damage was done and it will take about 6 months to repair.

The investigation will continue. Because this crime was done to a church, there are stiffer guidelines and stricter penalties. That ruling was made when churches were burned in the South.

I am very concerned for the well being of my congregation. No one got hurt, but I feel this may take a big toll upon them. Do keep us in your prayers. I do feel stronger than ever that we must not turn our back on justice and compassion - even when we are so viciously attacked.

We must stand together in this hour!  
Thanks for your support, I am honored to be serving here among you in Hawaii.

Rev. Vaughn F. Beckman  
Pastor

See article at the website below.

<http://www.disciplesworld.com/NewsItems/2003-08/2003-08-29d>

See [www.gladalliance.org](http://www.gladalliance.org) for Pastor Beckman's sermon on the Sunday following the fire.

## **GLAD Alliance Annual Event •Breaking Silence•**

**Friday October 17, 2003**

**9 AM - 5 PM**

**First United Methodist Church  
501 N Tyron  
Charlotte NC**

**Walking distance from the Convention Center**

**See Registration form on page 5**

## **GLAD Alliance Banquet**

**Keynote Speaker Jimmy Creech**

**Music by One Voice**

**Sunday, October 19, 2003, 5:30 PM**

**Westin Charlotte**

**See Registration form on page 5  
Register Soon**

**Both events need registrations ASAP  
so meals can be planned.**

**RESOURCE GROUPS  
SATURDAY OCTOBER 18, 2003  
3:45 PM TO 5:15 PM**

**•LISTENING TO THE SPIRIT•  
A Process of Discernment**

**Leaders**

**MARK JOHNSTON AND DOUG SKINNER**

**Location**

**WESTIN—SHARON**

**•What is the gospel message to our church as we relate to gay and lesbian Christians?•**

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**•DRAWING THE CIRCLE TO TAKE THEM IN•**

**Workshop with exercises and dialogue**

**How to be inclusive and have  
worshipful, welcoming liturgies.**

**Leaders**

**JUDITH HOCH WRAY AND SHARON T HART**

**Location**

**WESTIN-HARRIS**

**GLAD ALLIANCE  
COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**Rev. Dr. Mark Johnston (2004)**  
*Moderator*  
MJohnston@gladalliance.org

**Rev. Vaughn F Beckman (2003)**  
*Vice Moderator*  
Development and Finance  
Human Resources and Nominating  
VBeckman@gladalliance.org

**Doris Steeg (2003)**  
Communications  
DSteeg@gladalliance.org

**Rev. Pamela June Webb (2004)**  
O & A Ministry Team  
PJWebb@gladalliance.org

**David Nickel (2005)**  
*Secretary*  
Strategic Action  
DNickel@gladalliance.org

**Victor Gomez (2005)**  
*Treasurer*  
Development and Finance (Secondary)  
VGomez@gladalliance.org

**Lisa Haley (2006)**  
Discernment  
LHaley@gladalliance.org

***Crossbeams Editor (Interim)***

Doris L. Steeg,

**OUR MINISTRY TEAMS**

**Discernment Ministry Team**  
Council Liaison: Lisa Haley

**Open & Affirming Ministry Team**  
Leader: Sharon Hart  
Council Liaison: Pam Webb

**Strategic Action Ministry Team**  
Leader: Victor Cruz  
Council Liaison: David Nickel

**Support and Advocacy Ministry Team**  
Leaders: Gerry Brague  
Council Liaison: Mark Johnson

**Communications Ministry Support Team**  
Council Liaison: Doris Steeg

**Development and Finance Ministry Support Team**  
Leader: Randy Palmer  
Council Liaison: Vaughn Beckman

**Human Resources and Nominating Ministry Support Team**  
Leader: David Downing  
Council Liaison: Vaughn Beckman

**AN OPEN LETTER**

**TO: ALL O & A CONGREGATIONS/MINISTRIES**  
**FROM: O & A MINISTRY TEAM**

*In May the following letter was e-mailed to all O & A congregations/ministries for which we had (or thought we had) e-mail addresses. To date, we have had no response so we offer another opportunity for your congregation/ministry to be heard in the wider church. We need to hear of your successes and challenges as you continue your witness of God's love and acceptance of all persons in your community.*

Dear Friends in Christ:

As you read in our most recent issue of GLAD's newsletter, **Crossbeams**, the theme for the pre-Assembly Event (October 17, First United Methodist Church, Charlotte, NC) and GLAD's presence throughout the General Assembly is:

**BREAKING SILENCE.**

Your Open & Affirming Ministry Team will be leading the program at the pre-Assembly Event and we need your help.

First, we encourage all of our Open & Affirming congregations to send representatives to this event so that we can encourage and up-lift one another in our ministry of **BREAKING SILENCE** so that gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual Christians are included in the full ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Second, in preparation for our time together, we would ask that you answer the following three questions:

- 1) How is your congregation **BREAKING SILENCE** around the issue of the inclusion of gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual persons? Please be specific (i.e., name specific ministries, outreach programs, worship experiences within your congregation). If you have litanies, hymns, poems, etc., you would be willing to share with others, please include them in your response.
- 2) What does your congregation struggle with as you continue your ministry of **BREAKING SILENCE** and the inclusion of gay, lesbian, transgender, and bisexual persons in the ministry of your congregation?
- 3) How is your congregation **BREAKING SILENCE** within your Region? How are you reaching out to other congregations in your area to encourage them to break the silence and welcome all persons to the life and ministry of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)?

Please send your responses via e-mail to Rev. Sharon T. Hart, chair, O & A Ministry Team, GLAD Alliance, Inc., shart@gladalliance.org or, if you prefer, via fax (936/294-9691) or mail to 43 Pool Road, Richards, TX 77873.

On behalf of your O & A Ministry Team, we look forward to hearing from you so that we may be mutually encouraged and built up into Christ, who is our head, to the glory of God.

Blessings and peace on the journey of **BREAKING SILENCE!**  
Sharon Hart, chair  
O & A Ministry Team  
GLAD Alliance, Inc.

The following persons are members of the O & A Ministry Team of the GLAD Alliance: Joan Bell-Haynes, Washington, D.C.; Ben Bohren, Long Beach, CA; Ann Canady, Denver, CO; Job Cobos, Albuquerque, NM; Rachel Frey, Avon, IN; Sharon Hart, Richards, TX; Oscar Haynes, Washington, D.C.; Christy Newton, Orange, CA; Pamela Webb (GLAD Council Liaison), Euclid, OH; Victor Cruz (Strategic Action Ministry Team chair), Ft. Worth, TX

## GLAD Alliance Council Nominees

### Steven Kindle

Reverend Steven F. Kindle conducts seminars in Bible and homosexuality issues and is convinced a proper reading of scripture only enhances the position of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people (GLBT) in the sight of God.

Steve is currently the executive director of Clergy United for the Equality of Homosexuals, a consulting group to assist clergy and congregations in understanding homosexual issues in light of the gospel.

Reverend Kindle has standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the United Church of Christ. He is married and lives with his wife in Santa Barbara, California. An active member of the PSWR chapter, he believes GLAD is a hugely important ministry in the life of the church and is eager to be a part of its broader mission.

### Dennis Sanders

Dennis is an ordained minister in the Disciples of Christ and currently resides in Minneapolis, MN. Dennis has attended several GLAD events beginning in 1999 when he went to his first General Assembly in Cincinnati. He is currently the Secretary for the Minnesota chapter of Log Cabin Republicans. hopes and dreams for GLAD are threefold; to increase dialogue with constituencies of color, to establish of network of GLBT pastors and seminarians including a job bank of openings in GLBT-friendly churches and finally to find an editor for Crossbeams and make a strong voice for GLBT news and views from a Disciple perspective.

### Resignation

Virginia Greeley, Council member, resigned from the GLAD Alliance Council in July, citing her need to devote her time and energy to maintaining her health. Virginia enjoyed being on the Council and will keep us in prayer. She states •I pray many blessings to you and to the (GLAD Alliance Council) National Council in the exciting times which lay ahead. • Virginia enjoyed her time with us and treasures the friendships she developed during that period. She is grateful for the time and support we shared with her.

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## Churches Unite

**All Pilgrims Christian Church** in Seattle, Washington is a vital, energetic and progressive new church affiliated with both the Disciples of Christ & the United Church of Christ. New? Yes, new, but with a history of over one hundred years•

All Pilgrims is the new church start that has grown out of the merger and transformation of two historic churches in the urban core of Seattle: First Christian Church & Pilgrim Congregational Church. As two churches that were already Open & Affirming, this new, growing congregation is a wonderful illustration of several important things: urban church revitalization; open & affirming ministry; ecumenism and the UCC/DOC ecumenical partnership; mission-driven church•

Co-Pastors Peter Drury & Mark Travis are the spiritual leaders of this church which boasts strong lay leadership, excellence in musical ministry, and a visible presence in Seattle and beyond. If you would like to learn more about All Pilgrims, please visit their excellent website at [www.allpilgrims.org](http://www.allpilgrims.org) Situated on the street (Broadway) that is the symbolic center of GLBT life in Seattle, All Pilgrims is a church in which we may take great *pride!!!* •

### More Good News

Pilgrim Christian Church, Brookfield WI will purchase the Center Court Sports Complex in Waukesha, WI. The church plans to move to the new location on January 1, 2004. The new complex will be known as the Pilgrim Christian Church and Community Center. Nelia Beth Scovill, Joel Heim and Pastor Carole Elizabeth will be attending the General Assembly in Charlotte NC in October. They want to tell their story to all at the General Assembly. They want people in the denomination to know about their project and to partner with them in ministry as God calls them to do. They expect this project to become a model for ministry for churches all across the nation.

The church plans to develop more fully their programs of Sports Ministry, Wellness Center, Co-Creation Project (woodworking and finding connection and spirit through working with hands), sprouting seeds from the Seminary, and networking in the community. The church will begin a Capital Campaign in the community to raise the money to fund this building and these programs.

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**SHARE THE STORIES  
JOIN THE SHOWER OF STOLES AT  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

We invite you to join the Shower of Stoles Project in telling your story at General Assembly. The Shower of Stoles is a collection of hundreds of liturgical stoles from gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons from twenty denominations in five countries. Each stole contains the story of a GLBT person who is active in the life and leadership of their faith community in some way: minister, elder, deacon, teacher, missionary, musician, administrator or active lay person. This extraordinary collection celebrates the gifts of GLBT person who serve God in countless ways, while also lifting up those who have been excluded from service because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

We encourage you to take advantage of this unique opportunity to celebrate the gifts of your congregation's GLBT members with a stole, or demonstrate your church's support by making a "signature stole." Instructions for making stoles can be found on our website: [www.showerofstoles.org](http://www.showerofstoles.org). We would be happy to answer any of your questions about the Project or how to make stoles. Please feel free to e-mail Martha Juillerat, National Program Director of the SOSP, [stoleproj@aol.com](mailto:stoleproj@aol.com).

However, we know that many GLBT persons have been barred from sharing their gifts and calls with their church. If you are (or have been) active in your faith community, regardless of your •status• in the church, your story is important to us! You or your congregation may honor a GLBT friend, partner, family member, or person in your faith community with a stole.

**So ANYONE out there who is a LGBT person of faith who would like to include a stole in the display PLEASE do so. Let's have a really amazing display at General Assembly !**

**THE DEADLINE FOR RECEIVING STOLES FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY IS SEPTEMBER 30, 2003**

Nancy Fisher, Admin. Asst.  
The Shower of Stoles Project  
57 Upton Ave. S.  
Minneapolis, MN 55405  
(612) 377-8792  
[nfisher@mn.rr.com](mailto:nfisher@mn.rr.com) or [stoleproj@aol.com](mailto:stoleproj@aol.com)  
[www.showerofstoles.org](http://www.showerofstoles.org)

**GLAD Alliance Council Joins in Historic Brief**

In January, GLAD Alliance Council voted to join in the amicus brief participation in Lawrence v Texas.

July 7, 2003

Dear Lawrence amici,

Today, the U.S. Supreme Court protected the private lives of gay Americans. This is a smashing victory!

The CNN article reporting this historic moment is: <http://www.cnn.com/2003/LAW/06/26/scotus.sodomy/index.html>.

This ruling, and your role in bringing it about, are cause for celebration for multitudes of people. Finally, we have the promise of fair and equal treatment for all Americans for generations to come.

This victory would not have been possible but for the countless hours your group and others like it have devoted every day over years of time in helping the American people understand the humanity of the persons involved. We know that many will be grateful for all you have done. Please accept our prayer of thanks and blessing.

Max Hess

Celeste McCollough (Members of the legal team)

**Covenant Union Held at National City Christian Church**

The first ever covenant union at National City Christian Church was held on Saturday, June 28. The couple, Ken and James, have been attending NCCC for some time -- starting about the time that our discernment committee began its work on how to celebrate GLBTs in the life and ministry of the church. The 10-member committee recommended an amended mission statement to the board and congregation that would make NCCC "open and affirming." Both were approved in July 2001. However, on the issue of same-sex covenant unions, the decision was to allow further discernment by the board of elders. (Some viewed this as the kiss of death.) With Rev. Alvin Jackson's leadership, this issue was kept alive, and the first ceremony of it's kind was held in the church (actually, Howland Center where early worship is held) and officiated by an NCCC minister for NCCC members.