

# Beyond Inclusion News

Denver, Colorado

Thursday, July 6, 2000

Visit us in Booth 137!

## AT THE BOOTH

If your parish is seeking resources for exploring inclusion, we have

- ▽ Liturgies, parish discernment process documents, guidelines, sermons, and resource lists, in both paper and on diskette.
- ▽ Copies of *Heterosexism, an Ethical Challenge*, by Patricia Beattie Jung and Ralph F. Smith for sale at \$20 apiece. Patty will be the speaker at Integrity's Luncheon next Monday, July 11.
- ▽ Brochures, buttons and stickers
- ▽ Popcorn!

After Convention, here's how to contact us:

- ▽ [www.beyondinclusion.org](http://www.beyondinclusion.org)
- ▽ 626/583-2740
- ▽ 132 N. Euclid Avenue  
Pasadena, California 91001

## TESTIMONY

On Tuesday, Committee 25 held hearings on several Resolutions of interest to Beyond Inclusion. See Peggy Adams' report on page 2. Mary Genis testified in the evening. Here is an excerpt from Mary's moving testimony:

When two people are lucky enough to find each other, pledge a life-long commitment, and seek out the blessing and support of the Church, it's very painful and destructive when the Church turns away from them. When couples seek to build a life *centered* in religious faith, the Church should be called to lift up, support, and affirm that relationship as a sacred and blessed union.

I want this Church, *my* Church, to make it possible for *all* couples to live out their relationships within a faith community.

Committed, monogamous love is not a sin; casting out those who seek God *is*.

## REPORT ON LEGISLATION, FROM PEGGY ADAMS

Legislation on sexuality issues is moving forward more than many of us expected after attending the first meeting of the Special Committee. Most of the committee members at that meeting appeared uncomfortable and even unwilling to engage in conversations which were just preliminary, general discussions. Their second meeting, which was held on the

morning of Independence Day, was considerably better. The committee members seemed relaxed and they got to work on resolutions.

In contradiction to the rumors that all Committee 25 resolutions actions would go to the House of Bishops, Co-Chair Rebecca Snow announced that, except for the resolution on heterosexism, each of the resolutions currently before the Committee would go to the House of Deputies if and when the Committee determined to recommend action on the resolution (or a revised form of it).

The Committee first considered the three resolutions which do not pertain to same-sex blessings: C031 (the Boy Scouts), A009 (identification of safe spaces); and B008 (heterosexism). They moved through them in an efficient, cooperative manner, with polite give-and-take. With a consensus, they made preliminary revisions to all three, and then set a hearing on them for that afternoon.

The Committee then moved on to a general discussion of same-sex blessings. When Snow asked what kind of witness will we (the Church) be about, Bishop Catherine Waynick of Indianapolis said her vision is, that given that the Church's members are in relationships between human beings, those relationships should be "not exploitation, not manipulation, not abusive;" they should be "monogamous, faithful, filled with mutual regard and respect, and with longing for the best for each other." Apparently, the Committee was impressed by Bishop Waynick's vision: at the Wednesday meeting she was reminded she'd agreed to provide her vision in writing to the Committee.

The Committee then chose to hold a preliminary hearing on Tuesday evening on the same-sex

### DON'T FORGET --NATIONAL INTEGRITY EUCHARIST

TODAY, 6 July, 7pm

St. John's Cathedral  
14<sup>th</sup> Ave and Washington Street

Preacher: The Rt. Rev'd Steve Charleston  
Celebrant: The Rev'd Michael Hopkins

All lesbian and gay clergy at convention are invited to vest and join the celebration.

Bring your friends!

blessing resolutions. Not surprisingly, this hearing attracted a much larger crowd than the afternoon hearing. The report on the hearings at Wednesday morning's Committee meeting indicated that those involved felt heard and respected.

Wednesday the Committee proved it can work together for positive action. It took the heterosexism resolution, with a few revisions, and made it a second "resolved" paragraph in Resolution C008 (Human Sexuality: Continued Dialogue on Gay and Lesbian Relationships). With a unanimous vote, this revised C008 was sent to the House of Deputies for consideration.

The challenge now is to keep the momentum. Continued dialogue on human sexuality and study of heterosexism is good and needed. But it's not enough. It's time to take real action on the issue which has been before the Church for over two decades – same-sex blessing. The next Committee meeting is Friday at 7:30 am; the major hearing is Friday at 8 pm.

## FOLKS YOU MIGHT MEET AT THE BOOTH

**Al Halverstadt** is the recently-retired Rector of St. Barnabas Church, Denver, where he served for nearly 10 years. Al got involved with Beyond Inclusion because it echoed interests he discovered when he was in Seminary, namely human sexuality and women's ordination. He got involved in networking around these issues, and he and Barney Farnham eventually started a ministry to gays and lesbians in the Diocese of Maryland.

St. Barnabas was already an open and inclusive parish when they called Al to be their Rector, and with his help the parish did a study, published reports, and worked with the Bishop of Colorado to plan and implement holy unions, a process which was concluded in 1994, with the first of what has since become 11 blessings at St. Barnabas.

**Susan Weeks** has an MS in Applied Behavioral Science, and is a consultant in organizational development, working with governmental and church groups. She plans and implements workshops and programs on dealing with change. She's an EFM trainer, and has done work with many spiritual organizations. She and her husband, Al Halverstadt, led a workshop at Beyond Inclusion in New York last year, on "Surviving in a Conservative Diocese."

Susan's most recent triumph has been with a Special Convention this Spring, when the Diocese of Colorado met in special session to discuss its reaction to three of the Lambeth resolutions. Susan had the Delegates work together in a process called "sa-

cred conversation" to reach consensus on two of the issues, and to reach the conclusion that they were unable to reach a conclusion about the third.

**Ed Bacon** has been Rector of All Saints Church in Pasadena, California since 1995. Before that, he was Dean of the Cathedral in Jackson, Mississippi. His interest in the topic of full inclusion was triggered by the Bishop Righter Presentment, which led him to establish an Inclusion Task Force within the Vestry of All Saints. That Task Force went on to organize the first Beyond Inclusion Conference, and then to form Beyond Inclusion as a national organization.

Ed grew up in Georgia, and at one time was Campus Minister and Dean of Students at Mercer University. He has been married to Hope Hendricks Bacon for 29 years, and they have two adult children.

## ED BACON ON LISTENING

We have heard much about listening in the opening days of General Convention. As we embrace this value, it is crucial that we understand it from the perspectives of Christ's life and ministry. Presiding Bishop Griswold has invited us to listen to one another. The Holy Spirit wishes to give us an experience of conversion available in graceful and hospitable conversation. That kind of conversation opens us to be stretched and transformed by listening to one another's stories and concerns.

We enrich this mutual and respectful listening within the church and within the General Convention halls when we listen to those to whom Jesus listened. No doubt Jesus listened to those who followed him. In addition, Jesus listened with particular attention to those who were marginalized and oppressed by society and religion. We do not follow Christ if our minds are not stretched and our lives transformed by listening to gay and lesbian children of God who are daily wounded and too frequently the victims of hate crimes and suicidal despair by religious bigotry and spiritual violence.

As we listen to the voices inside these halls this week, let us find ways to listen to the cries of those who God hears – the wounded, marginalized and oppressed outside these halls.

## WHAT IS HETEROSEXISM?

There is much talk at this Convention about heterosexism, a term unfamiliar to many. Beyond Inclusion has studied this phenomenon, and has published a statement about it. Copies are available at the booth.