

Beyond Inclusion News

Denver, Colorado

Tuesday, July 11, 2000

Visit us in Booth 137!

WIN-WIN EVANGELISM **BY THE REV. ED BACON**

With their resolution on married couples and other couples living in life-long committed relationships, Special Committee 25 has opened wide the windows of the Church. Today the House of Deputies has a powerful opportunity to receive the Holy Spirit's breath of fresh air bringing breezes of renewal, community and care for all people. This resolution touches in a deeply pastoral way the needs of same-sex couples to receive the blessing of their faith communities. But we have heard resistance to this extension of pastoral care for all in the name of mission.

The central Christian imperative to go into the world with the Gospel's liberating good news has, unfortunately, been presented as antithetical to justice concerns. Those who want to wait once again to take a stand with our brothers and sisters who have life-long committed relationships with persons of the same sex say that such a stand should not be submitted to an up/down vote, for it will result in winners and losers.

That simply is not the case! Extending pastoral care to all couples in the Church is win-win. The arrangement we have now is lose-lose.

When pastoral care is not extended to all, same-sex couples are deprived of the Church's blessing and pastoral care. Moreover, everyone else is deprived of the gifts that come to faith communities when same-sex couples are recognized as mediating grace to one another, to the Church and the world. But when the pastoral care of blessings is in place, everyone wins!

By definition, God's Reign of justice has no losers. Everyone is a winner when God's love and grace are extended to all. Let us pray that today the Breath of God breathes through the hearts and minds of all members of General Convention so that we can make tangible God's

mission of spreading the Good News in a win-win way.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT **SPECIAL COMMITTEE 25**

As of the printing deadline for this newsletter, this resolution will be discussed in the House of Deputies at 2:30 p.m. today.

The Special Committee has completed work on the major human sexuality resolution and sent it to the House of Deputies. The first seven clauses of the resolution, substitute resolution D039, set forth standards for life-long committed relationships, both inside and outside of marriage, acknowledge that the issues of human sexuality are not resolved, call for conversation between persons of differing perspectives, and acknowledge the sanctity of marriage. The last resolution clause directs the Standing Commission on Liturgy and Music to prepare for consideration by the 74th General Convention rites for the Book of Occasional Services by means of which the Church may express support or relationships of mutuality and fidelity other than marriage. The consideration of this resolution will be this morning in the House of Deputies after the consent calendar. The Special Committee unanimously supported the first seven clauses. On the last clause, the Bishops were evenly divided (3-3) and the deputies supported the clause 5 to 1.

FOLKS YOU MIGHT **MEET AT THE BOOTH**

Terry Takeda and his partner, **Lou Slimp** have been members of All Saints since 1995. Terry works for Goodwill Industries and Lou is a supervisor for United Airlines. Terry and Lou are new members of the Inclusion Task Force and also contact parishioners to serve as oblation bearers each week. They came to All Saints because of the Rev. George Regas and have stayed because of our present Rector, Ed Bacon!

Ken Chow has been an extremely busy member of All Saints Church after having been confirmed an Episcopalian in 1995: he is a member of the Leadership Council of GALAS, serves on the Usher Committee, the Asian-Pacific American Council, as well as Parish Council. Ken is also a new member of the Inclusion Task Force. He is here in Denver to voice his opinion that gays and lesbians should be invited to participate fully in the life of the Church, including the ability to have their same-sex covenants officially blessed. Ken and his partner, Richard Meiklejohn, who is also here at Convention, will be celebrating their 20th anniversary this year.

Richard Meiklejohn, along with his partner Ken Chow, has been a member of All Saints Church since 1995. He characterizes the life of his parish as one of “full participation” and respect for all those who are members: “Obviously, gays and lesbians benefit from the mutual respect and friendships that are nurtured in this environment but it is important to realize that straight singles, couples and families benefit from this close association also. Indeed the close relationships that have been formed by working together in the parish has put a human face on hurtful words and names which only a few decades ago would have conjured up feelings of shame, distrust and even hatred. Those negative emotions have been replaced by the knowledge and courage to treat each other fairly knowing that God loves all of us.”

Art Mattox is a new member of the All Saints Church community, having been confirmed in 1999. He has had wide experience with the Los Angeles Police Department, first as a reserve officer and later as the first openly gay Police Commissioner of the City of Los Angeles. Art’s involvement with Beyond Inclusion has entailed coordination of Beyond Inclusion’s response to Proposition 22, as well as coming to General Convention to be one of our Booth Managers.

Hannah Kully is the Co-Chair of the Inclusion Task Force of All Saints Church. She and her husband have been members of All Saints since the 1970’s. Hannah describes herself as

someone who “has come a long way” and as someone whom her gay friends would not have wanted to know twenty years ago! Through meeting many gay and lesbian people and her work with Beyond Inclusion, Hannah has come “full circle,” realizing that it is the power of God’s love in the world which we are to share with each other.

Lisa Baker is a member of the Inclusion Task Force of All Saints Church, and is a past co-chair of GALAS, the church’s gay and lesbian ministry. She has always been amazed at the welcome she received at All Saints, even when she was “testing the waters” of her new church in 1991-1992. It still amazes her that gays and lesbians are mentioned in sermons, serve communion, and serve at every level of the life and ministries of All Saints. “But what really blows me away are the straight people who encourage this and who are ready, willing and able to help in combating injustice. It is great to have a community of faith and love that accepts me ‘just as I am!’”

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
- ▽ Tee Shirts on special for only \$15!
- ▽ Brochures, buttons and stickers
- ▽ Popcorn!

After Convention, here’s how to contact us:

- ▽ www.beyondinclusion.org
- ▽ 626/583-2740
- ▽ 132 N. Euclid Avenue
Pasadena, California 91001

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.