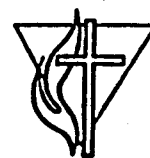


# Affirmation

Spring 1993  
Volume 18  
Number 1



## IS IT TIME FOR A NEW BEGINNING?

*Editor's note: The following is one of five resolutions adopted by the Affirmation Council at the January meeting. The others are on page four.*

As it continues to make decisions that exclude lesbians, gay men and bisexual people from the life and ministry of the church, The United Methodist Church is living with a false sense of unity and cohesion. We see many cracks forming in the institutional edifice as people circumvent rules they can neither support nor overturn. Pastors are conducting services that recognize our lesbian or gay committed relationships. Boards of Ministry are receiving and approving and cabinets and bishops are appointing people whom they believe or know to be lesbian, gay or bisexual. Local churches are inviting lesbians, gay men and bisexual persons into the full life and ministry of their congregations.

Affirmation encourages our allies to consider more clearly whether it is time to stop patching and start building, that is, whether it is time to come out of a moribund institution drained by its idolatry of heterosexual norms, and form, together, a new institution built on the firm ground of God's love for all of God's peoples. We remember that Methodism has split before over issues of social justice, such as the abolition of slavery. We recall that John Wesley took authority to ordain from the necessity to reach people who needed the services of the church. We need to get back to the audacious outreach to the outcasts and commitment to social justice that characterized Methodism from its beginnings. Is it time for a rebirth of United Methodism outside the framework of The United Methodist Church? Is it time for a new denomination?

## SPRING GATHERING WASHINGTON, D.C.

**April 23-25, 1993**

In Conjunction with the  
March on Washington

The Theme will be: **Sexuality: Images and Realities.** We will look at the realities and myths of sexuality, and in particular bisexuality, with two goals in mind:

1. we need to confront our own possible biphobia, and
2. we need to explore deeper and richer images of human sexuality.

We will explore myths and stereotypes, fears and hopes, that all of us have regardless of our sexual identity.

### Guest Speaker

**Lani Kaahumanu**--Nationally known bi-activist and co-editor along with Loraine Hutchins of Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out, which she'll be glad to sign for you after she speaks to us Friday evening. She is one of six co-coordinators nationally of BINET USA. In January she appeared on the Donahue Show. Lani represents the bisexual community on the Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual Advisory Committee to the Human Rights Commission for the city and county of San Francisco; is on the Bay Area Network Board; and co-chairs BiPol's People of Color Caucus. A self-defined "aging hippy" and member of Asian Pacifica Sisters, she also writes and performs with Mother-tongue Feminist Theatre Collective. She has two grown children and works for the Lyon-Martin Women's Health Services providing HIV education.

### Resource Team

**Mary Jo Osterman**, Ph.D.--Free-lance writer/educator; long-time Affirmation member; and Editor of Open Hands, the Journal of the Reconciling Congregation

Please turn to Page Two...

Spring Gathering from Page One...

Program; and is in ministry with lesbians and gay men. She offers workshops, training events, support groups and new resources on homophobia, heterosexism, and coming out issues through her own business, AlterVisions in Colorado. She was the co-founder (with her late partner Phyllis Athey) of Kinheart, a lesbian/feminist women's center in Evanston, Illinois. As director for almost ten years, her duties included developing resources and leading workshops on eradicating homophobia in the church.

**Peggy R. Gaylord, M.S.**--Member of Affirmation for five years, including three years on the National Affirmation Council as well as the Reconciling Congregation Program Advisory Board, representing Affirmation. She has led workshops on sexuality education, homophobia and heterosexism, and other social justice issues. She has written articles for Open Hands on sexuality and bisexuality and has developed other resources RCP. She is currently a consultant in alternative healing/health strategies; coordinates a bisexuality column (in a secular gay paper); leads a bi rap group; and is a bi-activist in Binghamton, N.Y.

**Ben Roe, D.Min.**--Member of Affirmation for over fifteen years and resides in Denver, Colorado. He has done advanced study and seminary work in Christian Education and sexuality education and ethics. He holds an Instructor in Human Sexuality Certificate from the Institute for the Advanced Study of Human Sexuality in San Francisco. He was the founder and Executive Director of Ministry in Human Sexuality in Lincoln, Nebraska. He has taught and led workshops and panels on sexual orientation and bisexuality in secular, community college, and church contexts; written on bisexuality, sexual orientation, relationships and spirituality; and participated in a bisexual peer support group.

**Randy Miller, M.Div.(abt)**--Member of Affirmation for eight years, past Council and Coordinating Committee member, and co-spokesperson at the time Affirmation changed its name to include "bisexual." For the past five years he has facilitated groups and led discussions on human sexuality, AIDS, grief, etc. He has also worked on and designed liturgies for special worship

occasions related to these areas. Currently he is the Program Director of the Early Advocacy and Care for HIV Program in San Francisco. He also co-chairs Lesbians and Gays of African Descent for Democratic Action in the Bay Area as well as serves on other coalitions of gay concerns.

The program will also include a panel of people sharing their stories.

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#### WHERE WE CAN SLEEP

**Wesley Seminary**, 4500 Massachusetts Ave., NW -- \$15/night/double occupancy room. Linens will be available for \$5, or bring your own.

Room reservations **MUST** be made through Affirmation on the Registration Form. Do NOT call the Seminary directly.

You must send payment for your room with your Registration Form.

**Private Homes**, the local Affirmation chapter has arranged for 30 spaces in private homes in the Washington area, on a first come, first served basis.

#### A WORD ABOUT COSTS

Registration for the National Affirmation Gathering includes:

- \* Dinner on Friday and Saturday
- \* Breakfast on Saturday and Sunday
- \* Lunch on Saturday
- \* Many Delicious Snacks
- \* An outstanding program

#### DEADLINES

SEMINARY: March 20, 1993

PRIVATE HOMES: March 20, 1993

REGISTRATION: March 25, 1993

**VERY IMPORTANT:** When you register, you must give arrival and departure dates.

**NATIONAL AFFIRMATION FALL GATHERING**  
October 8-10, 1993  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

**"WE SHALL OVERCOME"**  
Surmounting the Attack from the Right  
WE'LL WALK HAND IN HAND

## THE EFFECTS OF SCHISM

### An Historical Precedent

The ante-bellum Methodist Episcopal Church experienced decades of conflict over abolitionism, just as The United Methodist Church is now in a period of intense conflict over homosexuality. Although the Christmas Conference of 1784 had demanded that Methodists divest themselves of slaves, this rule was quickly set aside, both to prevent the defection of slaveholders and to allow Methodist circuit riders access to preach to the slaves. Throughout the early 19th century, successive General Conferences ignored or weakened rules about slaveholding, coming to the conclusion that the church should not pronounce on an issue left to the jurisdiction of the individual states.

This decision to avoid conflict went to the heart of Methodism. In 1832, Bishop William McKendree rephrased the mission of Methodism from the original "to reform the Continent and to spread scriptural holiness over these lands" to a version that dropped the commitment to social reform, "to reform the Continent by spreading scriptural holiness over these lands."

Although black Methodists had protested against slavery for decades, the white abolitionist movement grew after 1830. Southern members of the denomination became increasingly defensive and threatened schism. In the General Conferences of 1832, 1836 and 1840 church moderates committed to denominational unity voted with their Southern brothers. The 1836 General Conference asked the Bishops to censure abolitionists and their arguments. The Episcopal address exhorted Methodists "to abstain from all abolition movements and associations and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications." The 1836 General Conference also censured two ministers of the New Hampshire Conference for their abolitionist activities and refused to print an address from the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference because it condemned slavery. Delegate Orange Scott offered motion after motion in support of abolitionist points of view. All were defeated.

In 1840, the campaign to appease Southern interests continued. Delegates decided that black Methodists couldn't give evidence against white Methodists in church trials taking place in states where black

civil testimony against whites was forbidden. They censured the abolitionism of the New England Conference and sustained a supervising elder who had obstructed an antislavery resolution in the New England Conference and been convicted by that Conference of exceeding his powers. The delegates denied a petition by Orange Scott to correct what was widely acknowledged to be a misprint in the 1836 Discipline that changed the general rules to make it easier for members to hold slaves.

Delegates left the 1840 General Conference believing that they had maintained denominational unity by bringing an end to abolitionist agitation within the Methodist Episcopal Church. Indeed, the abolitionists themselves were deeply discouraged, and many individual Methodists withdrew to other denominations. In Michigan, however, a group of Methodists formed a connection in 1841, calling themselves Wesleyan Methodists. Within two years, they had more than a thousand members and 17 preachers. In the East, Orange Scott and LeRoy Sunderland corresponded, finally deciding to call a convention at Albany, N.Y., in November 1842. Those who attended the convention decided to withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church and form the Wesleyan Methodist Connection. A second convention held in May, 1843, formally organized the new Connection. It began with six thousand members organized into six Conferences. Within a year and a half, it increased to fifteen thousand members. Some Wesleyan Methodists rejoined the Methodist Episcopal Church after the Civil War, but the Connection, now known as the Wesleyan Church, continues to this day.

Moderate Methodists who had labored so long to prevent a North-South split suddenly found themselves faced with an abolitionist split that threatened the unity of Northern churches and conferences. A series of Methodist Episcopal anti-slavery conventions were held in New England in 1843, resulting in the election of abolitionist delegates to the 1844 General Conference. A convention held in New Hampshire determined that it would rather see the South separate than split the Methodist Episcopal Church in New England. This change in sentiment throughout the North meant that anti-slavery delegates held the majority position at the 1844 General Conference. Reversing the cumulative decisions of 54 years, they insisted that

*Please turn to Page Four...*

Schism from Page Three...

Methodist Episcopal clergy could not hold slaves, even in states where manumission was illegal. Although individual defections had not changed denominational policy, the decision to form a new denomination had a major impact. There may be a lesson for the present in this story.

Jeanne Knepper

**Resolution:**  
**TARGETED MARKETING  
OF ALCOHOL AND TOBACCO**

As United Methodists, we in Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Concerns, have a long-standing commitment to conjoined health of spirit and body. At a time when the lesbian, gay and bisexual community consumes alcohol and tobacco at a higher rate than the general public, we are concerned about the effects of this consumption on the health of our people. We, therefore, deplore the targeting of the lesbian, gay and bisexual community by tobacco, alcohol and other industries for the sole purposes of their financial gain.

Because we are committed to providing safe, healthy and positive environments, we challenge our constituency to create smoke and alcohol free spaces for work and socializing. Doing this will benefit our health, create alternative settings for lesbians, gay men and bisexuals who are questioning their sexuality, and lessen the chances of multiple serious health risks, including behavior that may expose people to AIDS.

**Resolution:**  
**MILITARY CHAPLAINCY**

President Clinton has promised to reverse the ban on homosexuals in the military service. We encourage his administration to proceed quickly to meet this goal. We remind The United Methodist Church that chaplains must be prepared to work with these military forces. We call upon the Division of Chaplains and United Methodist seminaries to educate prospective and current chaplains about the effects of heterosexual discrimination, the ways to create environments that welcome lesbian, gay and bisexual people, the rituals to celebrate their committed relationships and the methods of non-judgmental counseling.

**Resolution:**  
**MOVING  
GENERAL CONFERENCE**

The State of Colorado has adopted a constitutional amendment which prohibits local jurisdictions from adopting or enforcing ordinances that protect homosexuals from discrimination in housing, employment and access to public accommodations. This action is not in accord with United Methodist policy, which states that "...all persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured." (United Methodist Discipline, paragraph 71G).

The United Methodist Church and its predecessors have a history of recognizing the linkage between economic impact and justice issues. For example, in 1944, the General Conference of The Methodist Church determined that it would not hold meetings in places where accommodations were not racially integrated. In 1987, the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church moved its meeting away from Phoenix and the Western Jurisdiction moved its 1992 meeting from Phoenix to Las Vegas because Arizona refused to honor Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

Many United Methodist bodies, from local churches to the College of Bishops of the Western Jurisdiction, have called upon The United Methodist Church to move the 1996 General Conference out of Denver, Colorado. We support these calls to witness, but we insist that, if the gesture is not to be hollow, the movement be to a city that has an anti-discrimination ordinance for sexual orientation in effect.

**Resolution:**  
**RECOGNIZING COMMITTED  
RELATIONSHIPS**

Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Concerns proclaims that recognition, celebration and sanctification of the committed relationships of lesbians, gay men and bisexual people are an essential part of any reconciling ministries with the lesbian, gay and bisexual community.



## REGIONAL COORDINATORS

The Affirmation National Council has decided to revamp the Regional Coordinator system. The purpose of the Regional Coordinator is to serve as an Affirmation resource and liaison person to local Affirmation groups, to assist individuals and groups who want to start a local group and assist people when they contact National to find a local group to become affiliated with.

In some regions this has worked very well, while in others the local groups have been left totally on their own. This has meant that some local groups have felt very isolated and have no ties with the National organization. The National Council feels it is very important that the local groups feel like they are a part of National Affirmation, that there is someone interested in their well being and that they have someone to call to get problems with National resolved.

Some of the regions cover a very large geographical area which makes it difficult for the coordinator to work with the local groups. In these regions we will be establishing coordinators in each of the Annual Conferences. These conference coordinators will work with their regional coordinator to provide closer interaction with the local groups. More details on how this will be structured will be presented at the Spring Gathering in Washington, D.C. In the meantime, if anyone or any local group has a problem, suggestion or questions that they have not gotten answered by their regional coordinator, please write or call Paul Thompson, P.O. Box 1214, Studio City, CA 91614, (818) 760-6633.

## WITNESS COMMITTEE REPORT

At the January National Council meeting the Witness Committee drafted five resolutions that were approved by the Council. Gloria Soliz reported on her presence at the National Council of Churches November, 1992, meeting in Cleveland where she represented Affirmation in support of the application of the Metropolitan Community Church for observer status in that body. Jeanne Knepper reported on the October meeting of a fledgling Caucus of Caucuses. The Committee recommended and the Council endorsed continued participation in the Caucus.

Jeanne Knepper  
Convenor, Witness Committee

Join Us As We

## MARCH ON WASHINGTON

Sunday -- April 25, 1993

9 a.m. Continental Breakfast

Christ United Methodist Church  
4th and I Streets, SW

10 a.m. Leave To March Together

## THE RECONCILING CONGREGATION PROGRAM *New Board Member Elected*

The resignation of Ben Roe, as one of Affirmation's three representatives to the Reconciling Congregation Program Board of Directors, was received by the National Affirmation Council with regret. Ben's contributions to both the RCP and Affirmation have been outstanding and are greatly appreciated by the Council and the members extend their thanks to him for his service.

Following news of Ben's resignation, the Affirmation Council conducted a mail ballot in November, 1992, to fill his unexpired term. Rev. Nancy Carter was elected.

Ms. Carter has been part of national Affirmation since 1981, and the Reconciling Congregation Program since 1984 when she chaired the Administrative Council at the Washington Square UMC during its decision to become a Reconciling Congregation. She also drafted the Reconciling Conference resolution adopted by the New York Annual Conference and founded what is now the HIV/AIDS Task Force in that annual conference. Currently residing in New York City, Nancy is a writer published frequently in United Methodist periodicals and study materials.

Rev. Nancy Carter joins with Ms. Peggy Gaylord and Rev. Morris Floyd in representing Affirmation on the RCP Board of Directors.

The Affirmation Council invites and requests any persons who have an interest in being considered for future Affirmation

*Please turn to Page Six...*

R.C.P. from Page Five

vacancies on the RCP Board to notify the Chair of our Planning and Evaluation Committee, Ms. Jeanne Barnett, 1040 Bush St., San Francisco, CA 94109. We desire to establish a pool of potential nominees so as to maximize this important part of our work.

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## THEME FOR SPRING GATHERING: "BISEXUALITY"

*Editor's note: Since it is the Theme for the Spring Gathering, perhaps a good way to arouse interest in, and expand knowledge about, bisexuality is to reprint the following two articles from the Spring '91 Newsletter:*

Excerpted from Myths/Realities of Bisexuality by Sharon Forman Sumpter, a part of the book Bi Any Other Name: Bisexual People Speak Out, edited by Lani Kaahumanu and Loraine Hutchins:

Sexuality runs along a continuum. It is not a static "thing" but rather a process that can flow, changing throughout our lifetime. Bisexuality falls along this continuum. As Boston bisexual activist Robyn Ochs says, bisexuality is the "potential for being sexually and/or romantically involved with members of either gender."

It is important to remember that bisexual, gay, lesbian, and heterosexual are labels created by a homophobic, biphobic, heterosexist society to separate and alienate us from each other. We are all unique; we don't fit into neat little categories. We sometimes need to use these labels for political reasons and to increase our visibilities. Our sexual esteem is facilitated by acknowledging and accepting the differences and seeing the beauty of our diversity.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals are in "transition" or "going through a stage."

**TRUTH:** Some people go through a transitional period of bisexuality on their way to adopting a lesbian/gay or heterosexual identity. For many others, bisexuality remains a long-term orientation. Indeed, we are finding that homosexuality may be a transitional phase in the coming-out process for bisexual people.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals are confused about their sexuality.

**TRUTH:** It is natural for both bisexuals and gays to go through a period of confusion in the coming-out process. When you are an oppressed people and are constantly told that you don't exist, confusion is an appropriate reaction until you come out to yourself and find a supportive environment.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals are denying their lesbianism or gayness.

**TRUTH:** Bisexuality is a legitimate sexual orientation which incorporates gayness. [Many] bisexuals consider themselves part of the generic term "gay." Many are quite active in the gay community, both socially and politically. Some of us use terms such as "bisexual lesbian" to increase our visibility on both issues.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals are equally attracted to both sexes.

**TRUTH:** [Some are; but many] tend to favor either the same or the opposite sex, while recognizing their attraction to both genders.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals are promiscuous/swingers.

**TRUTH:** Bisexual people have a range of sexual behaviors. Some have multiple partners; some have one partner; some go through partnerless periods. Promiscuity is no more prevalent in the bisexual population than in other groups of people.

**MYTH:** Bisexual means having concurrent lovers of both genders.

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## 1993 NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

Summer Publication: May 15  
Deadline: May 1

Fall Publication: Aug. 10  
Deadline: July 15

Winter Publication: Nov. 15  
Deadline: Oct. 22

All submissions should be sent to:  
National Affirmation  
P.O. Box 1021  
Evanston, IL 60204

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# "Sometimes HIV/AIDS ministry is like living in a desert...."

*Discover a resource of renewal for your HIV/AIDS ministry.*

In the midst of the heart-breaking reality you face in HIV/AIDS ministry, you are trusted to provide words of faith, hope and encouragement. What kinds of questions are people with HIV/AIDS wrestling with in their faith? Where do you turn for support in an area of ministry that is often isolating?

*alive now!*, a magazine for spiritual nurture published by The Upper Room, offers you a special issue titled "The Spirituality of AIDS Ministries." By giving this magazine to those involved with HIV/AIDS ministries, you help them feel supported, loved, and encouraged. From cover to cover you will find meaningful reflections, poems, personal stories, prayers, litanies, and scripture passages.

Those who would appreciate the thoughtfulness of this issue are:

- families affected directly or indirectly by HIV/AIDS
- church leaders in your community
- laypersons working in HIV/AIDS ministries

You will also find the issue useful in preparing a worship service or for leading Sunday school classes and groups involved in HIV/AIDS ministries.

You can provide copies for just 95¢ each ... a 50% savings off the single copy price. Twenty copies are just \$19. We will pay all shipping costs. But please order soon — quantities are limited!

YES! I want to help support others around me who work in HIV/AIDS ministry and who will appreciate this effective resource of renewal. Reserve me the *alive now!* January/February 1993 issue "Spirituality for AIDS Ministries." Please send me the number of copies I've marked below. Shipping is free.

- ☐ 20 copies for only \$19      ☐ 100 copies for only \$95  
☐ 50 copies for only \$47.50      ☐ \_\_\_ copies for \_\_\_ (only 95¢ per copy)  
(\* minimum order of 20 copies, must be in multiples of 10)

Please ship to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

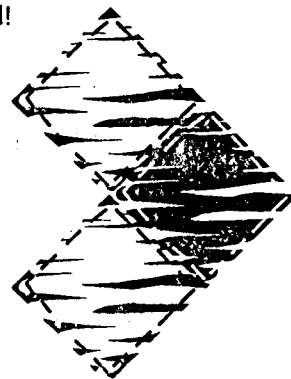
City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Bill me.  
☐ Payment enclosed.  
(All payment in U.S. funds please)

Mail to:  
**The Upper Room**  
1908 Grand Avenue  
P.O. Box 851  
Nashville, TN 37202-9890

#AAJA3-AIDS



*"Sometimes HIV/AIDS ministry is like living in a desert. *alive now!*'s AIDS issue gave me a powerful sense of community and solidarity. I was profoundly touched. I know it will touch other caregivers and those living with the disease. I shared the issue with a person with AIDS and he said, 'The church really does understand.'"*

— Rev. Leslie Penrose, Oklahoma AIDS Task Force, Tulsa, OK

## ATTENTION LOCAL AFFIRMATION GROUPS

FOR INCLUSION OF NEWS about your group, please send information or copies of your newsletter to Fritz Schultz, 801 Cole Street, Apt. 2, San Francisco, CA 94117. Include the name of a contact person with address and/or phone number.

*It's a Simple Matter of Justice*



*Diversity ▼ Unity ▼ Solidarity*

**1993 MARCH ON WASHINGTON  
FOR LESBIAN, GAY, & BI  
EQUAL RIGHTS AND LIBERATION**

P.O. Box 34607  
Washington, DC 20043

Voice: 202-628-0493  
TDD: 202-628-0471  
FAX: 202-628-0472



**1993**

In 1987, over 650,000 Lesbians, Gays and their friends and relatives, converged on Washington, DC for four days of celebrations, protests, remembrance, and civil disobedience. It was the largest civil rights demonstration in the history of this country, irrevocably changing the lives of every single person involved.

Because of the epidemic of hate violence, because of the discrimination we endure at the work place, using services, or finding a place to live, because of the expulsion of lesbian and gay service personnel, and because the response to the AIDS crisis continues to be a plague of bigotry. . .

**On April 25, 1993 we will march again!**

**1993**

**March on Washington  
for Lesbian, Gay & Bi  
Equal Rights and Liberation**

**ACTION STATEMENT**

The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender movement recognizes that our quest for social justice fundamentally links us to the struggles against racism and sexism, class bias, economic injustice and religious intolerance. We must realize if one of us is oppressed we all are oppressed. The diversity of our movement requires and compels us to stand in opposition to all forms of oppression that diminish the quality of life for all people. We will be vigilant in our determination to rid our movement and our society of all forms of oppression and exploitation, so that all of us can develop to our full human potential without regard to race, religion, sexual orientation/identification, identity, gender and gender expression, ability, age or class.





**TRUTH:** Bisexual simply means the potential for involvement with either gender. This may mean sexually, emotionally, in reality, or in fantasy. Some bisexual people may have concurrent lovers [(just as some gay and straight people do)]; others may relate to different genders at various time periods. Most bisexuals do not need to see both genders in order to feel fulfilled.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals cannot be monogamous.

**TRUTH:** Bisexuality is a sexual orientation. It is independent of a lifestyle of monogamy or non-monogamy. Bisexuals are as capable as anyone of making a long-term monogamous commitment to a partner they love. Bisexuals live a variety of lifestyles, as do gays and heterosexuals.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals can hide in the heterosexual community when the going gets tough.

**TRUTH:** To "pass" for straight [or gay] and deny your bisexuality is just as painful and damaging for a bisexual as it is for a gay. Bisexuals are not heterosexual and we do not identify as heterosexual.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals are not gay.

**TRUTH:** We are part of the generic definition of gay (see Don Clark's Loving Someone Gay). Nongays lump us all together. Bisexuals have lost their jobs and suffer the same legal discrimination as other gays.

**MYTH:** Bisexual women will dump you for a man; [bisexual men will dump you for a woman].

**TRUTH:** Women who are uncomfortable or confused about their same-sex attraction may use the bisexual label [just as men may]. True bisexuals acknowledge both their same-sex and opposite-sex attraction. Both bisexuals and gays are capable of going back into the closet. People who are unable to make commitments may use a per-

son of either gender to leave a relationship.

**MYTH:** Bisexuals spread AIDS to the lesbian and heterosexual communities.

**TRUTH:** This myth legitimizes discrimination against bisexuals. The label "bisexual" simply refers to sexual orientation. It says nothing about sexual behavior. AIDS occurs in people of all sexual orientations. AIDS is contracted through unsafe sexual practices, shared needles, and contaminated blood transfusions. Sexual orientation does not "cause" AIDS.

## ***SPEAKING OUT: BI ANY OTHER NAME...***

A funny thing happened to me the other day on my way to work. A friend of mine decided to "come out." Now, in this city (San Francisco) where coming out stories are more plentiful than rain, bursting forth from the closet in itself is not exactly an unusual occurrence. It happens almost as often as changes in the weather.

What made this incident unusual was that the friend who came out to me was already an openly gay man. As a matter of fact, we had come out the first time together. We had marched in the same Gay Pride Parades and boogied at the same clubs. And now it seemed I didn't know him as well as I thought. At last he confessed it all--he was a bisexual!

My reaction was instantaneous. I went into denial. "No," I cried, "tell me it ain't so!" In response to his stubborn persistence, I turned to bargaining: "OK, so you think you're a bisexual, huh? Let's just wait and see. I mean, you're not going to act on this, are you?"

It was no use. He was unrepentant. I wept. I raged. When all else failed I tried manipulation. "Listen," I said with a tear in my eye and a quivering lip, "I

*Please turn to Page Eight...*

## **Calling All Bisexuals!**

For the spring gathering we are trying to find bisexuals/ambisexuals willing to share their story on a panel on Sat. April 24.

If interested please call:

Peggy Gaylord at 717-833-4434 (PA)  
or Mary Jo Osterman 303-666-8322 (CO)

once was betrayed by a bisexual." It didn't work. I was dealing with a self-avowed, practicing bisexual!....

OK, I admit it. The story you have just read is pure fiction. It is no more than the ravings of an overactive imagination. What is true is that on a fairly regular basis I am beginning to hear of more and more bisexual men and women coming out of the closet to which they have been consigned by gays and non-gays alike. They are talking about their experiences and insisting on recognition as part of the continuum of sexual orientation and expression. It is time that Affirmation as well as the larger Church began to listen to these voices.

Several months ago after painful and lengthy discussion, the Affirmation National Council decided to change the official name of the national organization to Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Concerns, Inc.

This was not an easy decision, but a necessary one, the Council ultimately decided.

The Affirmation Council was aware of the fact that National Affirmation was originally engendered as a response to the need for a "safe place" where lesbians and gay men could gather to affirm their identities in the midst of communities and churches that afforded no such space. The changing of the official name of the organization is a recognition in part of how far we have come as a community in creating this safe space.

The Affirmation Council also discussed the anecdotal "evidence" often presented in lesbian and gay communities wherein a man or woman will claim that they are "bisexual" as a tentative step towards coming out of the closet as an openly gay or lesbian person. Such stories were juxtaposed by the clear witness of persons within Affirmation who have offered their gifts and talents over the years as openly bisexual people.

And so we have changed our name to embrace the experiences of our brothers and sisters who are alienated from the Church because of sexual or affectional orientation. It is the type of decision "that separates the run-of-the mill queens from the snap-dragon divas" as a non-fictional friend of mine once said. To put it another way, perhaps this decision to expand our circle is yet another sign of the

Spirit of the Holy One at work in our midst.

In any case our work has just begun. Prejudice is only slowly replaced by shared experiences and common realities. We are fortunate in that we have already been blessed by the presence of courageous witnesses among us. Who knows how far our circle will eventually expand? I thought I heard Jesus say it would be alright if we changed our name...

Randy Miller

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## **COMING SOON-- TO YOUR HOME STATE? The struggle for lesbian/gay/bisexual Civil Rights**

In November, the voters of Colorado adopted a constitutional amendment with two provisions:

a) to prohibit the state, its branches or departments, or any of its agencies, political subdivisions, municipalities and school districts from adopting or enforcing any law or policy that entitles any person to claim discrimination, protected status, or quota preference based on homosexual, lesbian or bisexual orientation, practices or relationships; and

b) to make all existing anti-discrimination ordinances, laws, regulations and policies prohibiting discrimination based on an individuals homosexual, lesbian or bisexual orientation unenforceable and unconstitutional.

Designers and supporters of that amendment are now in the process of introducing the same or a similar amendment in at least twelve states, including California, Georgia, Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, Ohio, Oregon and Washington.

This is an issue that won't go away soon. Gary Bauer, head of the conservative Family Research Council and former president Ronald Reagan's domestic policy advisor, has called the battle over lesbian, gay and bisexual civil rights "the defining issue of the '90s." That being the case, it is wise for all of us to learn what we can from the recent struggles in Colorado, where Amendment 2 was adopted, and Oregon, where a more condemnatory Ballot Measure 9 was defeated.

*Please turn to Page Nine...*

## Coming Soon from Page Eight

Opponents of gay, lesbian and bisexual civil rights used four significant strategies. They argued that their measures didn't violate provisions of the U.S. Constitution and that homosexuals wanted "special rights." They enlisted ethnic minority people, especially African Americans, to claim that homosexuals cannot draw parallels to the civil rights movements because homosexuality is about behavior that can be abstained from or hidden, unlike the permanent visibility of skin color and because homosexuals, as a group, are more affluent and better educated than many racial or ethnic minorities. They distributed literature intended to incite homophobia through charges of child molestation, unsafe health practices and promiscuity. Finally, they presented a monolithic understanding of Christian condemnation of homosexuality, distributing literature and enlisting recruits through conservative Christian worship services.

We should keep these methods in mind as we develop strategies to counteract this conservative campaign. After talking with people active in the campaigns in Oregon and Colorado, and drawing upon my own training in social change, I offer the following suggestions to those who will undertake leadership.

1. **Terminology is important.** The battle is about lesbian, gay and bisexual civil rights. Civil rights are not constitutional rights. The Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution protects the political rights--assembly, speech, religion, press of individuals. The Fourteenth Amendment comes the closest to protecting gay men, lesbians and bisexuals from discrimination when it claims that no state shall "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws," but, to this date, the U.S. Supreme Court has consistently claimed that such protection does not apply to homosexuals. Beyond that, the various ordinances under attack do not address those political rights. Instead, they address a second class of rights, civil rights, that have been established through legislation, not Constitutional amendment. These include rights to freedom from discrimination in the workplace, in housing and in access to public accommodations. Our nation now has a nearly fifty year long tradition of protecting groups of people from violations of these civil rights. The question is

whether gay men, lesbians and bisexual persons should be extended similar protection. One important part of our work should be to educate ourselves and others about the types of rights involved. These are not "special rights," they are "civil rights."

2. **It is useful to remember that the electorate is not divided into two pieces, for and against.** While perhaps 10-15 percent of the population is strongly supportive of lesbian, gay or bisexual issues and another 10-15 percent strongly opposes them, most people are part of a great middle. They are not committed to gay rights and they are often not comfortable with thoughts or conversation about homosexuality, but they believe in "the American way" and want to be fair. Because we need them to win elections, we must speak to their issues. Once again, education about civil rights and non-inflammatory discussions are helpful, as are invitations to consider the effects on people they recognize as neighbors and family members. Accusations of hatred and bigotry polarize people. They may silence people, but they don't win them over.

3. **It is important to build diversity into leadership of the campaign, especially to avoid being "too white."** Actively listen to and take leadership from racial and ethnic homosexual and civil rights communities. Build coalitions to support each other's issues. Be there when asked to support other human rights issues. Actively work against the Right's strategy to divide and conquer, to play groups against each other. A big part of this means recognizing, owning and working against our own biases about race, class and status.

4. **In a similar vein, avoid "writing off" rural areas.** In Oregon, supporters of Ballot Measure 9 have gone through precinct vote counts and are now introducing legislation against lesbian, gay and bisexual civil rights in 23 (as of the end of January) counties and towns, almost all in areas where supporters of civil rights have less leadership developed.

5. **Be aware of your own state constitution.** The Oregon Constitution contains a provision that no rights can be extended to one group of people that are not extended to all. This can be used to combat the supposed necessity for a prohibition of

*Please turn to Page Ten...*

"special rights" for homosexuals. Is there a similar provision in your state constitution?

6. Don't let the Right succeed in their claim that they alone represent the "Christian" position. Solicit leadership from the religious community. Circulate statements made by mainline denominations, including our United Methodist Discipline, and by governing bodies of other faiths. It is a good discussion device to point out to those United Methodists in that great middle that, even as the denomination claims that the practice of homosexuality is "incompatible with Christian teachings," it still insists that "all persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured." Make the argument that protecting people's civil rights, even if you don't like the people, is indeed a Christian position.

7. Finally, be aware of current judicial developments. Unlike the Supreme Court, some district court judges, including Judge Bayless of Denver, Colorado, and James Hatter of California, are developing the argument that homosexuals constitute a class of people and therefore are protected by the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Bayless, who issued an injunction against the enforcement of Amendment 2, has argued that states may appropriately outlaw a behavior, but they cannot deny a class of people access to protection against discrimination. He also claimed that "Private biases may be outside the reach of the law, but the law cannot directly or indirectly give them effect." The decisions of Bayless, Hatter and others are adding to the body of precedent that will effect future legal decisions. A transcription of Judge Bayless' decision is available for \$15.00 from:

Karen Ann Shain, RPR  
Denver District Court, Ctrm 19  
1437 Bannock Street  
Denver, CO 80203

Jeanne Knepper

## FINANCIAL REPORT

'92/93 FISCAL YEAR TO DATE  
6/1/92 Through 1/31/93

Category Description	6/ 1/92- 1/31/93
-----	
INCOME/EXPENSE	
INCOME	
A-MEMBERSHIP	1,680.00
B-PLEDGE	1,070.00
C-FUND RAISING	465.00
D-NATIONAL MEET	1,579.00
E-INTEREST	47.02
O-OPEN HANDS	16.00
X-DONATION	875.05
X-FLOW THRU	0.00
X-GENERAL CONF.	50.00
X-HOTEL	530.00
-----	
TOTAL INCOME	6,312.07
EXPENSES	
A-COUNCIL	1,495.38
B-NEWSLETTER	347.48
D-MEMBERSHIP	93.00
E-FUNDRAISING	30.00
G-RCP TRAVEL	889.04
H-EMERGING	155.48
I-NAT. MEETINGS	1,455.80
J-POSTAGE	49.88
L-SERVICE CHARG	58.95
X-INTERFAI	440.00
X-MISC	-105.00
Expenses - Other	0.00
-----	
TOTAL EXPENSES	4,910.01
-----	
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE	1,402.06
TRANSFERS	
TO CHECKING	-6,390.00
FROM SAVINGS	6,390.00
-----	
TOTAL TRANSFERS	0.00
-----	
OVERALL TOTAL	1,402.06
=====	

### NOTICE OF INTENT TO AMEND THE BYLAWS

In accord with the provisions for amending the National Affirmation Bylaws, notice is hereby given to the membership of the Council's intent to discuss and act on a proposed amendment to the Bylaws at its April 1993 meeting.

The proposed amendment will establish staggered terms for members of the Council.

## IN MEMORIUM

(from the Dallas Affirmation News)

Mike Merrifield died on Saturday, January 9, after a valiant battle with AIDS. Mike's church, Northaven UMC will be coordinating memorial observances. We all benefitted from Mike's special brand of gay Christian activism, and his spirit, intelligence, wry wit, dedication and passion will be sorely missed.

## BUDGET DEVELOPMENT UNDERWAY

The National Council is presently building the budget for 1993-94 which becomes effective May 1, 1993.

Preliminary proposals from each of the committees have been presented to the Stewardship Committee. Now, the Stewardship Committee will review the requests and begin blending them into a single proposal.

In the meantime, local groups or individuals who have proposals for the National Affirmation budget should send them to the Stewardship Committee prior to March 15, 1993.

Proposals should be sent to: Stewardship Committee, P.O. Box 1021, Evanston, IL 60204.

### Affirmation Pledge Commitment

I want to be part of Affirmation's expanding ministry to and among gay men and lesbians. You can count on me for the following support:

☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(please specify)

You can expect my contribution:

☐ annually ☐ quarterly ☐ monthly

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: National Affirmation  
P.O. Box 1021, Evanston, IL 60204

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Local Groups and Regional Organizers PLEASE be sure to send in any change of address immediately to the Evanston Post Office Box!

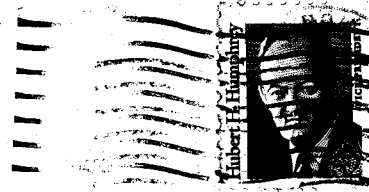
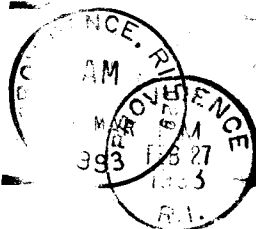
## AFFIRMATION COUNCIL ACTIONS

The National Council met January 16-18, 1993, in Nashville and took the following actions:

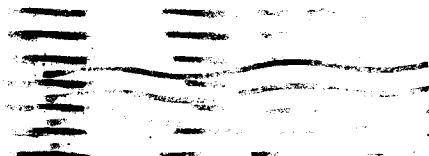
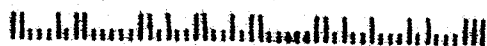
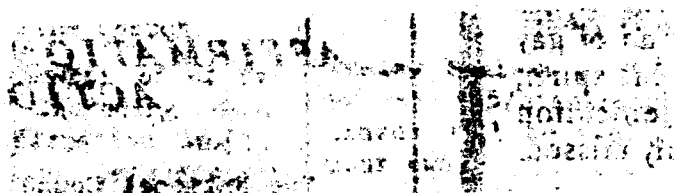
- \* Reviewed the summary report of the evaluation conducted among members
- \* Rejected a proposed amendment to the requirements for chartering local groups
- \* Adopted the financial report and the minutes of the previous meeting
- \* Approved a sliding scale registration fee for national gatherings based on an individual's income
- \* Arranged for an audit
- \* Initiated the budget process for the 1993-94 budget
- \* Agreed to participate in fund-raising training at the next meeting
- \* Discussed an advertising strategy
- \* Adopted a policy on the use of the Affirmation name
- \* Adopted five resolutions which are printed elsewhere in this issue
- \* Outlined strategies for combating clones of Colorado's Amendment 2
- \* Elected a member to the Council to replace the late Mike Merrifield
- \* Appointed an ad hoc committee to plan Affirmation's presence at the 1993 March on Washington
- \* Authorized filing an amicus curie brief before the Judicial Council on the use of the United Methodist logo
- \* Adopted a meeting schedule for future national gatherings and established the Fall 1993 meeting in Indianapolis, the spring 1994 meeting in Austin, and the Fall 1994 meeting in Los Angeles.



P.O. Box 1021  
Evanston, IL 60204



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# NATIONAL AFFIRMATION

## 1993 SPRING GATHERING

April 23 - 25, 1993 -- Washington, D.C.

### REGISTRATION FORM

To register, complete the information below and mail with your check payable to "National Affirmation" to:

ELLIE CHARLTON  
Affirmation Treasurer  
1040 Bush Street  
San Francisco, CA 94109

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

#### DEADLINES

ROOM RESERVATIONS March 20, 1993

GATHERING REGISTRATION March 25, 1993

#### HOUSING AT WESLEY SEMINARY

There are a limited number of rooms available at Wesley Seminary dorms @ \$15/night double occupancy. If you will need linen there will be an additional \$5.00 charge.

#### PRIVATE HOMES

There will be 30 spaces in private homes in the Washington area, these will be assigned on a first come first served basis.

NON-SMOKING? \_\_\_\_\_ Roommate Preference \_\_\_\_\_

Wesley Seminary / Private Home / Making my own housing arrangements \_\_\_\_\_

ARRIVAL DATE \_\_\_\_\_ DEPARTURE DATE \_\_\_\_\_

#### REGISTRATION FEE

Students / Subsistence ----- \$25.00  
Under \$20,000 / year ----- \$45.00  
\$20,000 - \$30,000 / year ----- \$65.00  
\$30,001 - \$40,000 / year ----- \$90.00  
Over \$40,000 / year ----- \$100.00

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

WESLEY HOUSING (\$15.00 / night)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

WESLEY LINEN FEE (\$5.00)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Check # \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_