



# Affirmation

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR:  
UNITED METHODISTS FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER CONCERNS  
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## Special points of interest:

- Affirmation's Thirtieth Anniversary Celebration
- Beth Stroud Appeal
- Another of Our Gifted Clergy Surrenders Credentials

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## Affirmation's Thirty Years in the Christian LGBT Movement

Clearly, there are over four decades of history reflecting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Christian movement. A critical part of our identity as any individual or organization is to know and understand our history. Beyond the obvious reasons that we hope not to make the same mistakes or have to reinvent what we already had invented, history is also a source of meaning, the interpretation of how we've come to be where and who we are.

We in "the movement" have often tended not to think too much about our history—sometimes I think it was because we were so immersed in the present that it was difficult to step back and get a sense of where we were, where we came from. Sometimes it's been like management by crisis—what immediate, unpredictable needs surface, demanding our attention when we might have been intending to direct our efforts and resources elsewhere.

Within the last few years, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Religious Archives Network (LGBTRAN) at Chicago Theological Seminary was founded as a grass roots, activist venture to promote and conserve the history of LGBT religious movements. LGBTRAN is a resource center and information clearinghouse for preserving records of LGBT religious movements while also encouraging historical study. More information may be found at [www.lgbtran.org](http://www.lgbtran.org).

We as Affirmation have initiated our own Oral History project, and established our official archives at Drew University. We continue to encourage people to donate their papers and any other relevant information to the archives. We are also a supporting member of LGBTRAN.

Across the Christian LGBT movement, there are a great deal of overlap and intersecting events. Many LGBT people think of Stonewall as being a critical precipitating event in furthering gay rights.

For those of us who are Christian, we may wish to cite an earlier event, one that occurred in San Francisco in 1964 through the Glide Urban Center, and resulted in the founding of the first national organization to address the concerns of lesbian and gay Christians and their friends—the Council on Religion and the Homosexual. Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon, two founders of the Daughters of Bilitis and internationally known, were integral participants in this evolution (activists since 1955, and in later years honored repeatedly, including last fall at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Creating Change Conference in St. Louis; and the first couple to be married in San Francisco last year). Yet we would acknowledge also that the voices and actions of those who "went before" this date were critical to the genesis of our movement.

The purpose of the Council on Religion

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Responsive Call to Faithfulness

We knocked...

**No one answered.**

We knocked louder...

**Someone shouted, "Go away!"**

We kept knocking...

**They threw garbage at us from the windows.**

We banged louder and louder...

**They cursed and mocked us.**

We shouted for them to open the door...

**They threatened us with violence.**

We turned away, fearful and discouraged...

**A voice said, "Keep knocking!"**

We asked, "Why? They don't want us in there!"...

**"I'll be with you! I'll knock with you!**

**Keep knocking!"**

"Who are you?" we demanded.

**"I'm the one you seek!**

**Keep knocking!"**

"Why should we knock if you're already with us?"

**"Keep knocking!" said the voice,**

**"I want to set them free too!"**

So we keep knocking...

**And we'll keep knocking for as long as we need to knock.**

Maybe they'll open the door...

**Maybe they'll come out and join us.**

We can hope.

**Yes, we can hope!**

**Luke 11: 5 - 10**

Happy Anniversary Affirmation!!!

Note: This litany that was a part of our 30th Anniversary Event this last April in Los Angeles. It is a wonderful testament of what Affirmation is all about.

## Affirmation Newsletter

This Affirmation newsletter is a quarterly publication.

Only Affirmation's elected spokespersons may represent the official positions of this organization. Opinions here, signed or unsigned, are those of the writers, and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Affirmation.

Co-Editors:

Jan DeLap

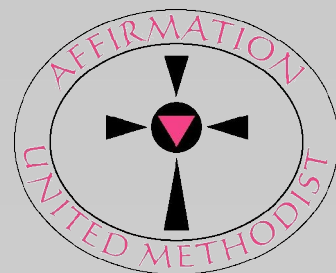
Diane DeLap

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### Mission Statement

As an independent voice of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer people, Affirmation radically reclaims the compassionate and transforming gospel of Jesus Christ by relentlessly pursuing full inclusion in the Church as we journey with the Spirit in creating God's beloved community.

Adopted January 2005



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## Affirmation 30th Anniversary Celebration

By Virginia Hilton

The “parlor” at Hollywood United Methodist Church was lovingly decorated with pots of pansies, a buffet of finger food, and candlelight for the 30th anniversary of Affirmation.

The Rev. Ed Hanson served as gracious host for a “family reunion” of friends and supporters who laughed and cried as we remembered the struggle to make the United Methodist Church open and affirming for LGBT people.

The Rev. Jeanne Knepper helped us remember a history that started in 1975, with a few courageous gay men and lesbians who came together for support, and to fight the heterosexism of the denomination, evidenced in the infamous “seven last words,” of the Social Principles, inserted during General Conference, 1972, “...we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider it incompatible with Christian teaching.”

Michael Collins and Peggy Harman were the official spokespersons in those early years. Many people were not free to be open about who they were, but the Affirmation gatherings provided a loving supportive place to be.

This was so true for my family at the Affirmation witness at General Conference in 1980, in Indianapolis. Not long before, our son, Phil, had come out to us, and so we became part of that “gay and lesbian caucus.” Bruce and I had a hard time getting a cab to take us to the El Rancho Motel, where Affirmation was meeting. “You don’t want to go there!” he said, speaking of this motel that rented rooms by the hour! But what a rich, life-changing experience for us. Every night Affirmation would gather to hear what had happened that day at the conference, share stories of pain and rejection, and sing. At first I didn’t know the other straight couple who joined the circle every night, but quickly learned they were Bishop Mel and Lucille Wheatley. They also had a gay son. They sang with the rest, “We are a gentle loving people, and we are singing, singing for our lives.”

Some of us at the party were remembering the meeting of Affirmation at St. Paul’s UMC in Denver, in 1982, when a plan was presented for reaching into local churches to learn more about and accept gay and lesbian people. (In those days we hadn’t yet considered the scope of the injustice done to bisexual and transgender people.) Mark Bowman and Beth Richardson led us through a structure for becoming a reconciling congregation. I was part of the group commissioned to come up with some kind of a newsletter that would be supportive of this fledgling Reconciling Congregation Program. I can hear B.J. Styles yet, insisting that we have a quality magazine, not just a two-paged news sheet. That was the birth of “Manna For The Journey.” (Two years later the title changed to “Open Hands.”) We certainly got that quality magazine and a structure and movement that has radically influenced the denomination.

My definition of a saint is one who has been faithful to the gospel of love and justice, and at the 30th anniversary party we spent some time naming those saints of Affirmation. I am grateful for the witness of all Affirmation members who gave so much of themselves to the struggle, and who continue to do so. Without the vision Affirmation had in those early days, we wouldn’t have our Reconciling Ministries Network and the Reconciling Ministries Clergy, Parent’s Reconciling Network, People of Color for an Inclusive Church, Mosaic, and others who work for an open and inclusive church. We sang enthusiastically in those Affirmation meetings of the 80s, “Can we be like drops of water, falling on a stone?” I believe the stone IS wearing away. We need Affirmation and all the other groups to continue to be faithful to the work of justice for LGBT people.

Happy 30th Anniversary, Affirmation!

*Affirmation's Thirty Years (Continued from page 1)*

and the Homosexual was to promote a continuing dialogue between the church and the homosexual, and understanding of the broad variations and manifestations within the spectrum of human sexuality. It was the first organization to use the "H" word in its title. Today's organizations both within and without the church bear witness to the success of the Council's purpose.

Affirmation and United Methodism was not the first to deal with these issues in blatantly public ways, but soon they would be affected as well. Other denominations were forming organizations, committees, events, and educational resources. By 1971, Rev. Gene Leggett announced his homosexuality, and was suspended from the Southwest Texas Conference of the UMC (a year prior to the first changes in The Book of Discipline at the 1972 General Conference). In 1972, when conservative forces in the UMC prevailed to stop *motive* from continuing to be published—a denominational young adult magazine focused on the forefront of covering social justice in the church and society through the 1950s and 1960s—the magazine staff chose to devote the final two issues to lesbianism and feminist concerns and to gay men. In 1974, the UMC Council on Youth Ministry adopted a resolution declaring that homosexuality should not be a bar to ordained ministry.

Out of this context, General Conference legislation and many other situations, the Gay United Methodist Caucus was formed in 1975 in Evanston, Illinois, later becoming Affirmation. Affirmation, from the beginning, has had a diverse constituency in terms of those who would prefer to leave the church and those who want to change the church. Consequently, our history and our work reflect that mix. Often our work seems driven by the four-year cycle of General Conference.

In this newsletter, we would like to share with you some of our history related to our actions around General Conference over the past thirty years. At the same time, we ask you not to forget all of our other work reflecting our mission, and we hope to share more of that in our next newsletter.

(Some information from this article is excerpted from *Open Hands*, Winter 1990.)

## **AFFIRMATION ACTS!**

The 1972 General Conference first declared, "we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this...to be incompatible with Christian teaching."

There was no voice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people in The United Methodist Church.

We worked together to form **AFFIRMATION, FOUNDED 1975.**

As General Conferences voted more restrictively, **LGBTQ United Methodists** were often isolated and without support in their local area.

**AFFIRMATION ACTED!**

Starting and resourcing local chapters across the nation.

The 1984 General Conference ruled that "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" cannot be **UM clergy.**

**AFFIRMATION ACTED!**

Inviting local churches to become **Reconciling Congregations**, explicitly welcoming of **LGBTQ** people.

The 1988 General Conference finally voted to study homosexuality.

**AFFIRMATION ACTED!**

Insisting that committee members include and talk with us.

The 1992 General Conference refused to listen to **LGBTQ** voices.

**AFFIRMATION ACTED!**

Demonstrating during the plenary that "The Stones Will Cry Out!"

The 1996 General Conference outlawed "ceremonies that celebrate homosexual unions."

**AFFIRMATION ACTED!**

Creating **Covenant Relations Network (CORNET)** on-line, arguing before the **Judicial Council**, and founding **Valentine's Day** services for couples.

The 2000 General Conference reaffirmed discriminatory legislation.

**AFFIRMATION ACTED!**

Participating in civil disobedience, and reaching out to comfort and heal **GC** wounds.

The 2004 General Conference heard voices of exclusion and division getting louder.

**AFFIRMATION ACTED!**

Joining the **Prayer Vigil** outside and the "River of Life" on the conference floor, and revitalizing our vision for the future.

**AFFIRMATION ACTS!  
YESTERDAY, TODAY,  
TOMORROW...**

## Beth Stroud's Appeal

Affirmation Co-Spokesperson's Initial Response to the Decision on Beth Stroud's Appeal  
April 29, 2005

“After waiting almost twenty-four hours for the Committee on Appeals to complete its deliberations and announce its decision, I started to feel hopeful that, maybe something positive would come of this decision; that discussion must be going on [in the committee review] and not just dead-ended. Still, it was with mixed surprise and relief that many of us heard their decision to reverse and set aside the former verdict and penalty.”

“Not that the struggle is over, or Beth's struggle is over,” she reflected, “but someone has heard that there are other spiritually-led perspectives. . . especially what it means to welcome full participation of everyone at all levels of the church. While we would love to be rejoicing at this ‘victory’ it still feels like crumbs from the Church, when we're hungry for the Bread of Life.”

- The Rev. Peggy Gaylord, Co-spokesperson of Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns

## A Letter from Beth Stroud to her Supporters

Tuesday, May 3, 2005

Dear friends and family,

I met with Bishop Marcus Matthews today. In light of last week's appeals committee ruling, he returned my ordination credentials to me, and offered me an appointment: as associate pastor at First United Methodist Church of Germantown, with full rights and responsibilities of an ordained minister. I declined to be appointed, which I will explain a bit more below.

Bishop Matthews also told me today that he will be appealing last week's ruling to the Judicial Council of the United Methodist Church.

I expected that my case would go to the Judicial Council. It is a case that could have implications for the entire church, and so it is only right for the church's highest judicial body to review it. I trust that Bishop Matthews will continue to see that the case is pursued in the most civil manner possible.

Here is why I declined Bishop Matthews' offer to appoint me to First United Methodist Church of Germantown: Accepting an appointment would mean taking up the ministry and authority of an active, ordained elder in the church while my case is still in process and the outcome is uncertain. I do not want my ordination to be a symbol of who is “winning” or “losing” in a controversy at any given moment. When I do put my robes back on, whether that is at the conclusion of my case or in a number of years when the General Conference changes its unjust legislation, I want that to be simply a symbol of the sacred trust among me, God, and the larger church.

I will continue serving in my role as a lay minister at First United Methodist Church of Germantown until my case is concluded. Officially, I will be on voluntary leave of absence, but it is a “leave of absence” from my duties as an ordained minister of the Annual Conference -- not a leave of absence from First United Methodist Church of Germantown.

We will keep you posted with more information as we go along. Thanks, as always, for all of your love and prayers.

In Christ,

Beth Stroud

## Coming Out of the Shadows: Beth Stroud's Appeal

by Vivian Waltz

*“Christianity does not ask us to live in the shadow of the cross, but in the fire of its creative action.”* (Teilhard de Chardin)

Something ignited during the morning of Beth Stroud's appeal on April 28. Teilhard de Chardin's words on the front of the bulletin for the noontime communion service seemed to fan a spark of hope I felt flickering within me. Maybe I also detected it in the eyes of the members of Beth's congregation who gathered round the table: a kindling of optimism, a glimmer of expectation.

Then, on April 29th, the Northeastern Jurisdictional Committee on Appeals overturned the December 2, 2004 decision of an Eastern Pennsylvania Conference trial court to withdraw the Reverend Irene Elizabeth “Beth” Stroud's clergy credentials. In an 8 to 1 ruling, the panel reinstated Beth as a fully-credentialed pastor. It did not question the lower court's findings of fact, but said the earlier decision had violated Stroud's right to due process because the denomination has never clearly defined the terms “practicing homosexual” or “status.”

The word “status” appears in The Constitution of The United Methodist Church under “Inclusiveness of the Church.” This section includes a broad pledge not to discriminate on the basis of “race, color, national origin, status, or economic condition.” Stroud's defense team had tried to argue in the original trial that “status” includes sexual orientation, but the argument was disallowed by the presiding bishop, Bishop Joseph H. Yeakel.

The appeals panel also said the lower court erred by convicting Stroud on the basis of Paragraph 304.3, which contains the prohibition of “self-avowed, practicing homosexuals” as United Methodist ministers, because that provision constitutes a new standard or rule of doctrine. For a new rule to be elevated to the status of doctrine, the General Conference must vote that it is not contrary to any existing standards.

Although the successful appeal is reason to celebrate, many people working for inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons in The United Methodist Church are reluctant to call it a victory. At the request of Bishop Marcus Matthews of Eastern Pennsylvania, the Judicial Council will review the decision of the Committee on Appeals.

The shadow of exclusion may be cast over us yet again, and perhaps it will feel even more oppressive after this temporary respite from the injustice of Beth's case. But we must step out of the shadow of the cross into the “fire of creative action.” The work of justice is not about succumbing to the shadows, but instead being energized with all-consuming passion, a burning fire within us that cannot be extinguished.

Perhaps we can survive in the shadows, but we will never thrive there. We need to come out! The prophet Malachi proclaimed that God is like a “refiner's fire” that burns away all impurities within us. We cannot be afraid to live in the blaze of God's creative action and be a flaming force of transformation in our United Methodist Church and in our world!

For more information, including a link to the full text of the decision of the Committee on Appeals, and excerpts from the press conference with Beth Stroud immediately following the committee's announcement of its decision, please visit Affirmation's website at [www.umaffirm.org](http://www.umaffirm.org).

The Rev. Vivian R. Waltz is chair of the Communications Committee of the National Council of Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns, Inc.

## Becoming Immortal

“What we have done for ourselves dies with us; what we have done for others and the world remains and is immortal” according to Albert Pike. Most people avoid thinking about what happens after they have passed on, but Affirmation’s work continues into the foreseeable future.

Many of us are deeply engaged in this work. For some of us, now would be a good time to think about making a bequest to further Affirmation’s work into the future after we are gone. The process is simple. If you have a current will, ask your attorney to add an amendment (a codicil) specifying a dollar gift or a percentage of your estate as a gift to Affirmation. If you don’t have a current will, now might be a good time to get an attorney and write one. Include a provision to help underwrite Affirmation’s work into the future. Your attorney can help you create a will that executes your wishes. And let Affirmation know you are making a bequest, so that we can thank you properly.

If you have questions about this, contact Jim Palmquist at [bluemountain@entermail.net](mailto:bluemountain@entermail.net).

If you would like to help us support an Affirmation Planned Giving Program with legal or financial expertise, also get in touch with us.

## Special Board of Directors Meeting

The Board of Directors of Affirmation: United Methodists for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Concerns, Inc., will hold a special meeting on Saturday, October 8, 2005, at 2:00 p.m. at the Clarendon Hotel and Suites, 401 W. Clarendon Ave., Phoenix AZ 85013. All Affirmation members are invited to participate and/or submit comments. The business will include consideration of proposed changes to the By-Laws. These changes are being sent to all current paid members, and will be available on the website. The Directors constitute the Affirmation Council.

## PRAYER PLEASE

In the midst of many concerns on our hearts these days...from the violence of worldwide conflict to the continued oppression experienced by the LGBTQ community...we ask prayer for Affirmation's National Council members, over half of whom are dealing with very significant life challenges/changes in their lives right now. As part of your commitment, please pray that our leadership be sustained during such times of personal crises. In ways comfortable to you please consider using the Council membership list elsewhere in this newsletter to pray individually for their life journeys. Feel free to add the Affirmation Council names to prayer lists, etc.

Thank you...from the Nominations/Leader Development Committee

**YOU ARE INVITED  
TO JOIN  
AFFIRMATION  
THIS LABOR DAY WEEKEND**

Where:

Reconciling Convocation

At

Lake Junaluska, NC

FOR:

A workshop on:

“Thriving in a Hostile World”

AND

An evening of dance and fellowship

When:

See Reconciling Schedule

**SEE YOU THERE!**

## ANOTHER OF OUR GIFTED CLERGY SURRENDERS CREDENTIALS

By Herb Snyder and Jim Palmquist

It was just about fifty-two years ago that Randy Jones was ordained an Elder in the New York Annual Conference of the Methodist Church as a courtesy to the Virginia Annual Conference, where he had been ordained a Deacon several years prior. It was on February 24, 2005, that Randy Jones surrendered his credentials to Bishop Jeremiah Park of the New York Annual Conference, after ten years of service as a missionary in Japan, and then continuing his ministry as a chaplain at Overlook Hospital in Summit, New Jersey, at Bergen Pines County Hospital in Paramus, New Jersey, and Presbyterian Hospital in the City of New York. There has been no response from Bishop Park as of this writing.

Randy, who retired from active service in 1991, resides with this wife within the bounds of Eastern Pennsylvania Conference in Macungie, Pennsylvania. Deeply steeped in Methodism, Randy was raised in the then-largest Methodist Protestant Episcopal Church South in the Virginia Conference, the Epworth Church. Coming out of the military as a Second Lieutenant in World War II, he continued his education at Methodist-related Randolph-Macon College and Emory-Candler Seminary, where he received his Bachelor of Divinity and Master in Education Degrees. Aspiring to missionary service, Randy then went on to Yale to study Japanese culture. After serving in Japan, he returned to the United States, and attended Methodist-related Boston University School of Theology to do graduate work. It was here that he felt a strong call to hospital chaplaincy.

Why then is the Rev. Jones leaving the denomination that has meant so much to him over his eighty years? He is "offended by the hypocrisy of a Church that says if you lie, you can be a pastor; but if you tell the truth, you cannot." In his letter to Bishop Park, Randy explained that he has "noted with concern the movement of our Church to the right. The recent decision of the General Conference not to ordain those who openly profess a gay/lesbian relationship went against my beliefs. The decision of the recent court in Philadelphia to defrock Rev. Beth Stroud was shocking and very upsetting to me. It demonstrated that our Church has ceased to be an inclusive one, and has begun a process of eliminating those who do not fit its chosen group. I can no longer continue in good conscience in such a Church."

We have lost another gifted clergy person of high Christian caliber and integrity! How long will the people of God let the persecution and exodus continue?

**Affirmation 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Dance party**  
**Saturday, September 3, 2005 at 9:30 pm**  
 during the  
**RMN Convocation**  
**Lake Junaluska, NC**

Dance the night away at the Affirmation 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Dance party. Hosted by Cambridge Welcoming Ministries, the New England AC ministry to the GLBT community, this will be an opportunity to leave behind stresses and disappointments and celebrate the first 30 years of Affirmation.

**Live DJ**  
**Refreshments**  
**Fun - Fun - Fun**

## welcome to hearts on fire!

*Commune with reconciling United Methodists  
by the lake and mountains of North Carolina.*

**REFRESH OLD FRIENDSHIPS AND CULTIVATE NEW ONES**

**REST, RELAX, AND RECHARGE**

**PRAY USING THE LABYRINTH**

**PARTICIPATE IN BODY AND SOUL MOVEMENT**

*Together, We will be . . .*

### CELEBRATING

Singing out "God of Rainbow, Fiery Pillar leading where the eagles soar" as a rainbow community of faithful lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and heterosexual disciples committed to justice!

**OURS IS THE JOURNEY!** Engage exciting leaders: *Erin Swenson, Jorge Lockwood, Bishop Richard Wilke, Bishop Minerva Carcano, Beth Stroud, Anne Thompson Cook, Bishop Susan Morrison*

### IGNITING

Setting sparks in motion with joyful worship, workshops, songs, stories, prayers, play, miracle moments, Friday forums and covenant groups for a hopeful people embracing the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

**IT ONLY TAKES A SPARK!** Expect inspiration with: *Youtha Hardman Cromwell, Randy Miller, Martha Juillerat, Joretta Marshall, Bonnie Beckonchrist, David Meredith*

### EMPOWERING

Spreading like a wildfire, the Holy Spirit prompts us to speak, act and organize. Learn from the scripture stories of the Pentecost people of Acts, and the prophets Elijah and Elisha, ways we can be prophetic and passionate.

**BLAZE, SPIRIT, BLAZE, SET OUR HEARTS ON FIRE!**  
Be lifted and challenged by: *Karen Oliveto, Jeffrey Kuan, Margaret Mallory, James Preston, The Shower of Stoles Project*

*\*Julian Rush. In the Midst of New Dimensions*



LAKE JUNALUSKA  
LABOR DAY 2005



*The grounds around the  
conference center play  
host to perfect afternoon  
strolls.*

## **Thirtieth Anniversary Stories and Gifts In Honor of Affirmation's Heroes and Heroines**

Affirmation has had a proud history over its thirty years of existence. Our organization has given voice to the oppressed, trained our members and allies, strategized and executed many events, programs and tactics to open the UMC to welcome all. And while we did this, we broadened safe space, supported those in need, and made a Christian family among us. Our successes have been due to the creative power among us as led by the Holy Spirit.

As we worked, our most talented people rose to positions of leadership, sometimes with an Affirmation title but other times, just taking the initiative and leading us forward.

As we look back on our thirty years, we find that few of us know all the people that took leadership roles and moved our cause forward. We want to remember those people in this anniversary period. Tell us about these Affirmation leaders you remember, and give us a paragraph about what they did. If it is within your means, send Affirmation a check in honor of them. We suggest a \$30 or \$300 or \$3,000 check in honor of our heroes and heroines of Affirmation.

We intend to list the names of the people remembered and honored and a story about a couple of them in our next newsletter.

Send your stories and contributions to Affirmation, PO Box 1021, Evanston, IL 60204. Or you can send your stories to [bluemountain@entermail.net](mailto:bluemountain@entermail.net) and make a gift at our web site: <http://www.umaffirm.org/>

We are tremendously thankful for these visionaries who got us to where we are today.

**"Talk Amongst Yourselves!"  
A Conversation Among LGBTQ Folk  
Hosted by Affirmation  
at the Reconciling Ministries Convocation  
at Lake Junaluska  
on Sunday Afternoon, September 4th**

It's important that members of the LGBTQ community know each other more fully, speak with our own particular voices and shared perspectives, thank our allies and friends, and offer constructive and prophetic feedback. Please plan now to participate in this important conversation.

### **Notice:**

If you are coming to any of the Thirtieth Anniversary Celebration activities, we urge you to bring photographs, visual records (photocopies), and other memorabilia to share your experiences and our rich history with other Affirmation members. Thank you!

# Affirmation

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE FOR:  
UNITED METHODISTS FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER CONCERNS

## **IT'S OUR THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY!!!**

Affirmation has celebrated previous anniversaries in Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas and Tacoma. This, our 30th year, was celebrated in Los Angeles in conjunction with Voices of Faith and at the upcoming Reconciling Ministries Network Convocation .

Please join in the celebrations!

Labor Day Weekend September 1-5, 2005

During the Reconciling Ministries Network Convocation  
at Lake Junaluska, NC

To honor our anniversary, Affirmation's 'gifts' to convocation participants will include

- Workshop "Thriving in a Hostile World"
- Dance Saturday evening 9:30 pm



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[www.umaffirm.org](http://www.umaffirm.org)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/UMCalledOut>

**NOTICE: BYLAWS CHANGES TO BE CONSIDERED**

THE AFFIRMATION COUNCIL WILL CONSIDER BYLAWS CHANGES AT ITS MEETING ON OCTOBER 8, 2005 (see page 7 in June 05 newsletter above).

THE MAJOR CHANGE PROPOSED IS TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF DIRECTORS, ALL OF WHOM WILL BE ELECTED AT-LARGE. THE DIRECTORS CONSTITUTE THE COUNCIL.

ANY CURRENT MEMBER MAY HAVE A COPY OF THE DETAILED PROPOSED CHANGES IF REQUESTED BY MAIL (PO Box 1021, Evanston, IL 60204-1021) OR E-MAIL (umaffirmation@yahoo.com) BY SEPTEMBER 1, 2005.

*(This announcement was included as a separate sheet in Affirmation's June 2005 newsletter.)*