

American Baptists do not accept

At the Biennial Meeting of American Baptists USA last month, a Statement of Concern was passed by a two-to-one majority rejecting homosexuality. The statement says in part, "We do not accept the homosexual lifestyle, homosexual marriage, ordination of homosexual clergy, or establishment of 'gay caucuses.' We do not accept the inclusion of any group or individual into American Baptist meetings that attempts to legitimize the homosexual lifestyle. Therefore, we affirm that the Church should love and minister to the homosexual, but condemn the sin of homosexuality."

RELIGION

The Rev. Rodney Romney, pastor of Seattle First Baptist Church condemned the statement as "contradictory (how can you love the homosexual and simultaneously hate homosexuality?), but worse it represents hatred, bigotry and ignorance." Already groundwork has been laid for a coalition of churches who do not agree with this resolution and who will work together for education and understanding of the issue involved.

Dignity convention

August 29-Sept. 1, the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C. will be the setting for Dignity/USA's 10th biennial convention. Themed, "Many Gifts, One Spirit," the convention will be organized into five areas of interest: AIDS Ministry, Removal of Barriers to Women, Support for Human Rights Laws, Anti-Gay and -Lesbian Violence, The Primacy of Conscience and the Right to Dissent. For more information

write: Convention 1991, Dignity/USA, Box 29661, Washington, D.C. 20017.

United Church reaffirms support

At the local, regional and national level the United Church of Christ (UCC) has reaffirmed its openness and affirmation of lesbians and gay men. At the local level the Ashland First Congregational Church, UCC has by an overwhelming vote, adopted a resolution to affirm and seek the inclusion of gay men and lesbians in their church life and ministry. The key point in the resolution is the inclusion of gay men and lesbians in church life, boards, committees, staff and pulpit. The church will sanction and perform marriage ceremonies for gay and lesbian couples. Other parts of the resolution call upon the congregation to confront homophobia and support civil protection for homosexuals.

At the regional level, the 10,000 member UCC in Oregon, Southwest Washington and Southern Idaho voted at their annual meeting to oppose the ballot initiative proposed by the Oregon Citizen's Alliance declaring homosexuality as a perversion. The UCC resolution urges local churches to defeat the petition drive. The resolution states that the initiative is an affront to and violation of the spirit of Jesus's inclusive and healing ministry. In a related action, the regional body voted to encourage its churches to study issues relating to homosexuality, develop faithful responses to gay and lesbian people, and determine what it would mean to be "open and affirming" individuals and churches. The UCC has study material entitled, "Moving Toward Openness" that helps churches discuss gay and lesbian issues in a positive, non-judgmental manner.

At the national level, the General Synod meeting last month reaffirmed their commitment to the right to privacy and to the gifts and ministries of lesbians and gay men.

Compiled by Matthew Nelson, an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ.



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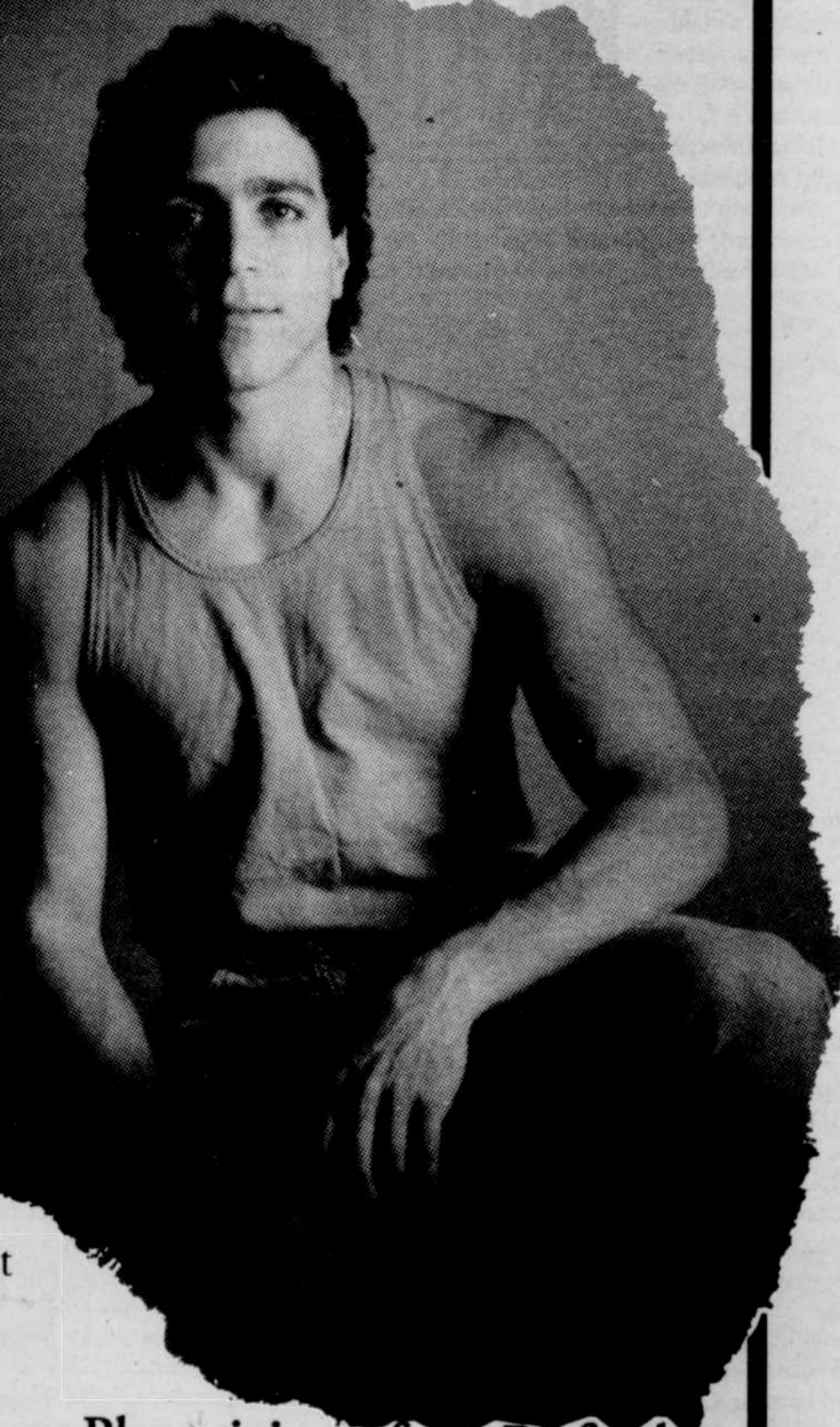
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