

The struggle continues

On May 19, the National Council of Churches (NCC) Executive Coordinating Committee acted to dismiss the NCC-Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches' (UFMCC) Dialogue Committee. The committee's work was the most recent in a series of study processes on gay and lesbian concerns that the Council has undertaken with UFMCC since UFMCC applied for membership in 1981. "We are angry but not surprised at the dismissal of our committee, and I vow that we will not go away," said Rev. Elder Nancy Wilson, UFMCC Chief Ecumenical Officer. "UFMCC will continue to be present at every meeting of the NCC General Board."

The following week, the Rev. Troy Perry, founder and moderator of the 27,000 member Christian denomination, requested official observer status from the Council. NCC leaders now describe homosexuality as "the most divisive church issue since slavery."

In 1982, the NCC Constituent Membership Committee voted unanimously that UFMCC meets all the membership requirements, but the final vote on eligibility was tabled indefinitely and has never been taken.

Integrity convention

Integrity, the lesbian and gay justice ministry of the Episcopal Church, will hold its national convention in Houston, July 9-12, 1992. The Bishop of Texas, the Rt. Rev. Maurice M. Benitez, will be out of town and unable to greet the convention. Based on his long standing and outspoken opposition to the ordination of openly lesbian and gay candidates for the ministry and to the blessing of same-sex unions, Bishop Benitez was not expected to be welcoming.

The Integrity convention will draw about 300 persons from all over the United States, representing most of the 52 chapters in this country, and will be joined by Integrity members from Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom.

Compromise on abortion

The nation's largest Presbyterian organization approved a compromise policy statement that supports abortion rights but commits the denomination to reducing the "overwhelming number" of abortions. Delegates to the 204th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. paused in prayer before voting 434-121 to approve the statement, which seeks common ground in the "strong Christian presumption" to protect life. "The Presbyterian Church U.S.A. does not advocate abortion but instead acknowledges circumstances in a sinful world that may make abortion the least objectionable of difficult options," the church said. The stand is more equivocal in its support of abortion rights than a 1983 policy statement that divided the 2.8 million-member denomination with its strong abortion-rights stand. While affirming the ability of women to make moral choices regarding problem pregnancies, the assembly also declared "our denomination and its member congregations must commit themselves to reduce the overwhelming number of situations in which women choose to abort." The policy recommendations include asking churches to consider offering alternatives to abortion, such as adoptive services and financial and emotional support to pregnant women.

Delegates voted 395-165 to reject a minority committee report urging the church to declare that abortion is sinful except in cases of rape, incest, serious fetal deformity, or where the mother's life is threatened.

Associated Press

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

Women's Goddess retreat

Nancy Black and Oz will be bringing their Women's Goddess Retreat weekend workshop to the Northwest during July. The workshop will be a "Journey into imagery and art, ritual, movement and magick." Using guided imagery, Black, a clinical therapist, will help participants get in touch with their "natural child within", and Oz

will facilitate rituals to "find and celebrate the Goddess within."

The Women's Goddess Retreat will be in Portland July 17-19 at Marylhurst College. The registration fee is \$299 and includes room and board. Contact Connie Carmichael at 775-8295. The workshop moves to Seattle for the weekend of July 24-26. Contact Myra Gamburg at (206) 488-4786.

in my view

Christians are covering up their discomfort by changing the name of their Deity

I agree with Rev. Elder Troy D. Perry of the MCC when he says, "This church has nothing to do with Goddess worship as I understand it...I do not believe Goddess worship is consistent with the Christian Church," (published in the June '92 issue of *Just Out*). Thank you, Rev. Perry, for expressing your view. As a Witch and a Priestess of the Goddess and God, I feel just as strongly as you do that the Christian Church is not consistent with Goddess worship, and I deeply resent Christians trying to have *our* cake and eat it.

Take old Jehovah, that stern patriarch; take Jesus, the rebel and conservative; dress them in drag and call them *her!* That doesn't make them female. The whole concept of Christianity revolves around a male God and his male son, around the concepts of sin and salvation and redemption. To take Mary and insist that she is an ancient Goddess and parade her around and worship her ignores the fact that the Christian Mary, mother of God, is *not* a Goddess and wasn't given

a choice to bear or not. She is a woman and has been consistently stripped of any power whatsoever by Christians.

When a Christian uses the word Goddess while referring to God, I cringe. That word doesn't change Jehovah. Whether in his beard and robes or dressed up in drag he still shakes his finger and imposes impossible laws. I feel there is something fundamentally dishonest about a person, uncomfortable with the male God, sticking to Christianity and covering up their discomfort by using the word "Goddess."

Each religion has its own proportion of gays, probably quite consistent with the proportion of gays in that particular population. I notice that most religions are represented in the Spirituality section of *Just Out*. I know that gay people in the Wiccan religion are about 2 in 20; about the same as in the general population.

People have different spiritual needs. These differing needs are served by a variety of different churches, dogmas and faiths. Members of the MCC need Christianity, the Bible, sin and salvation, and God in the form of Jehovah and Christ. If this is their need, they should have the guts to accept the male God and his son. If they can't accept them, maybe they don't belong in a Christian religion.

Kier Salmon



Grant Park - \$124,500

Recently Listed

S.E. Clinton Area 2 Bdrm w/Den, Formal Living Room, Dining Room, Full Bsmt, Tuck Garage, mechanically updated. \$67,000.



Mt. Tabor - \$119,500



Mt. Tabor - Approx. 3500 sq. ft. 3 Bdrm+/3 Bath



Irvington 4 Bdrm/2Bath - \$99,500

Take Advantage of the Successful Eastside Expert



David Anderson
Sales Associate



3320 N.E. Sandy Blvd.
Portland, OR 97232

I am the Real Estate Specialist You Want, Call ... 239-4040.