

SPIRITUALITY

Alabama MCC targeted

Once again, it seems, gay men and lesbians are allowed to exist as long as they keep a low profile. Try to move to a better neighborhood, however, and trouble starts. That, according to an Associated Press story, is what happened to the Metropolitan Community Church of Huntsville, Ala., when the congregation moved to its new \$140,000 worship center. The MCC congregation had been virtually ignored in Huntsville during the seven years it met in a rustic mountain lodge and a downtown office building.

The trouble started about five months ago, when the congregation made the move to its new quarters, located behind the public library. A sign stating "Homosexuality is a sin" was erected by the minister of a neighboring church. Other degrading comments were scrawled on signs by several neighbors.

On the up side, a local company donated a flag depicting a cross and a colorful rainbow.

Gay pastor allowed to stay

An Oakland, Calif., Lutheran church that defied an order to fire its gay pastor has been rewarded for its loyalty and Christian actions.

On Jan. 15, the Sierra Pacific Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America reversed its position on the firing of pastor Ross D. Merkel. Previously, the synod had defrocked Merkel as the result of a disciplinary body ruling that he was involved in a relationship with another man. Although the defrocking stands, Merkel will remain in charge of the St. Paul Lutheran Church congregation.

Lesbian and gay clergy are allowed by the church only if they are not sexually active.

Church representatives removed from state commission

A complaint filed by a fundamentalist Catholic and an Assembly of God minister has resulted in the court-ordered removal of two Catholic and two Mormon representatives from a state commission studying the civil rights of gay men and lesbians in Hawaii. In ordering their removal,

federal court Judge Harold Fong said their appointment as designated representatives of organized religions violated the separation of church and state.

Rhode Island gets first openly gay minister

Choosing its 300-year tradition of progressive politics over fear of the unknown, the Newport Congregational Church hired its first openly gay minister. On Jan. 22, the Rev. Lark d'Helen became not only the leader of Newport Congregational, but also the first openly gay minister in Rhode Island. D'Helen was trained at Harvard University and ordained in the United Church of Christ.

According to Carl Beckman, a member of the search committee, after a bit of soul-searching the congregation chose to live up to its policy "to be open and affirming to all people regardless of their sexual orientation."

Newport Congregational Church history includes both a parishioner who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence and a former pastor, the Rev. Dr. Samuel Hopkins, who was one of the first American ministers to denounce slavery.

Episcopals support rights based on sexual orientation

The Episcopal Diocese of Washington, D.C., passed a resolution declaring sexual orientation "morally neutral," according to *The Washington Blade*. The resolution, called the Koinonia Statement, also calls for church recognition of same-sex relationships. A second resolution, stating the diocese's support for Maryland legislation that would add sexual orientation to the state civil rights bill was also passed.

The Rev. John S. Spong of Newark, N.J., first introduced the Koinonia Statement at last summer's General Convention of the Episcopal Church. Although more than 70 bishops have signed the statement, the district diocese, which comprises about 100 Washington, D.C., and Maryland churches, appears to be the first to endorse the statement at its convention.

Compiled by Kristine Chatwood



It's My Pleasure

Resources supporting and empowering women
A Lesbian Owned business

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK!

Monday thru Saturday 10am to 7pm
Sunday 11am to 5pm

(503) 236-0505

4526 SE Hawthorne Portland, OR 97215
(Right after 45th, on Hawthorne next to the 7-11)



BEAUTY for the BEAST
PET LAUNDERETTE

A DO-IT-YOURSELF DOG & CAT WASH

3832 NE SANDY ♦ 288-5280 WED-FRI 11-7 SAT-SUN 9-5

Guys are Talking!

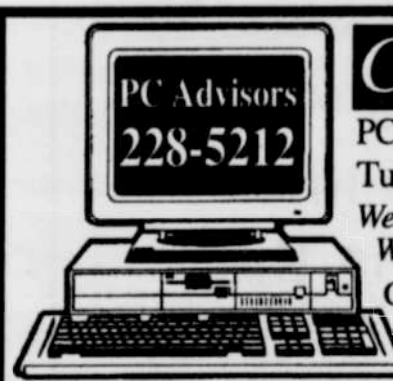


MenTalk

Join a friendly group of gay and bi men for an evening of talk, laughs, and information on the subjects of HIV, dating, sex, community and more. Call and we will schedule you into a one-time MenTalk group.

Call 223-6339 ext.160

Speak To Your Brothers is a project of the Men's HIV Prevention Program at Cascade AIDS Project.



Calculate Your Tax Savings

PC Advisors has the software package for your TAXING needs
Turbo Tax • Quicken • Quick Books • Sylvia Porters

We have these software packages at incredible prices!!
We offer product training, installation, and support!

Our Just Out tax season special: 486/66 mhz Computer with
850mg Hard disk \$1198.00

Your Representative: Brian Rhone

We bring first class service and
expertise to your computing needs

YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ORIENTAL RUGS UNTIL YOU KNOW MR. OPIE.

Before you consider buying an Oriental Rug, call James Opie, an internationally recognized authority on authentic Middle Eastern rugs who knows what looks real and what is real.



JAMES OPIE
ORIENTAL RUGS INCORPORATED

214 S.W. Stark Portland, OR 97204
For an Appointment, Call 226-0116