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northwest

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least bad policy and may very well violate the constitution and bylaws of this church."

The committee asked congregations to reconsider the policy for the national churchwide assembly from Aug. 6 to 11 in Chicago and delayed the effective date of Schmeling's dismissal to Aug. 15.

Lutherans Concerned of North America, the leading gay-rights advocacy group among Lutherans, is mobilizing support for Schmeling. Hundreds of congregations have co-sponsored resolutions asking the assembly to change the policy. These resolutions are working their way through regional synod assemblies. Both were approved May 18 in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

In Oregon, after vigorous debates, three related pro-equality resolutions were approved by strong majorities. The Oregon synod also elected a new bishop, Pastor David Brauer-Rieke of Atonement Lutheran in Newport. One of five pro-equality candidates among the top seven, he spoke vigorously in favor of a Lutheran approach to marriage rights from a position of full equality for gay and lesbian parishioners.

In Southwest Washington, the official agenda had been closed before resolutions could be proposed, but a synod management committee agreed to introduce the key resolution, and it was approved by a 120-90 vote. The debate was galvanized by the story of a young Lutheran woman from Cathlamet who felt forced to abandon her dream of becoming a pastor when she realized that her lesbian orientation would confront her with the pain of enforced celibacy and a constant struggle to justify her identity to the church. She is now studying to become an Episcopal priest.

Fifty-eight of the church's 65 synods met by June 10, and 21 approved resolutions to permit partnered clergy.

Independence Day Party Benefits BRO

Celebrate your independence June 30 with Kevin and Alex Bailey-Gilliam and benefit Basic Rights Oregon at the same time.

Live entertainers from Canada and New York include award-winning songwriter Kim Kuzma and Kitty Kiccup for what is promising to be the biggest fireworks display and Fourth of July bash in the state. Local dancers will also perform at the two-acre private riverfront beach. Food and three open bars are provided.

Visit www.basicrights.org to register for the fund-raising party from 3 p.m. to midnight at the Bailey-Gilliam estate in West Linn. Tickets are \$50, and kids are free. Bring sun and swimwear.

TriMet Driver Suspended for Ejecting Queer Youth

TriMet has opened an investigation on a bus driver who allegedly kicked off two teenage lesbians for kissing on the bus.

Ronnda Zezula, mother of one of the 14-year-olds, called TriMet to say her daughter and her daughter's girlfriend were told to exit the bus by the driver

after a rider complained that the girls were kissing.

"There's nothing wrong with this behavior; the girls' behavior was fine," said Mary Fetsch, spokeswoman for TriMet. She also said the driver violated TriMet safety policy by letting the underage girls off at the wrong stop.

The driver is on administrative leave.

TriMet would like any witnesses to the incident, which happened on the afternoon of June 8 on the No. 12 Barbur Boulevard bus, to make a statement by calling 503-238-RIDE or e-mailing customerservice@trimet.org.

Unitarian Universalists Raise Gay Issues

The 2007 General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association will be in Portland from June 20 to 24.

The general assembly sets policy for carrying out the purposes of the association. As an alternative, liberal religious voice, Unitarian Universalism offers a fresh and sometimes controversial faith perspective on today's compelling social issues.

Speakers for the event will include Sue Hyde, an activist organizing around sexual minority issues for more than 25 years. The former *Gay Community News* editor in Boston went on to lead the community-based campaign to defend queer families in Massachusetts and has served on the staff of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Her recent book *Come Out and Win: Organizing Yourself, Your Community and Your World* has received national praise.

The event is at the Oregon Convention Center, 777 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. For more information or to register, visit www.uua.org.

Dining Out Raises Money

Bites for Rights is back with dozens of participating restaurants, diners, venues and bakeries.

Have a meal June 21 at any participating location in all four quadrants in Portland, plus Beaverton, Salem, Eugene, Corvallis, Astoria and Bend, and the restaurant will donate 15 percent of proceeds to Basic Rights Oregon.

For a list of participating restaurants, visit www.basicrights.org. 10

By JAYMEE R. CUTI and MALKA GEFEN



Activist Sue Hyde will speak at the Unitarian Universalist Association general assembly in Portland.