

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

orientation. I was even naive to think that most, if not all, local Christian churches in the Eugene area would be progressive as well. I have recently found out otherwise.

I overheard what I believed to be demeaning conversations about homosexual and transgender relationships from pastors or elders of a local conservative Presbyterian church, and I later began to research these types of groups. I researched local churches in the Eugene area to better understand the conservative voice locally regarding definitions of marriage. It did not take long to find a statement which is related to a local church here in Eugene called Cascade Presbyterian PCA. This church denomination has stated in 2000 the following on its national website:

"The PCA is committed to the sanctity of human sexual relationships. We believe God's intent in creation was that male and female would be complementary, that the privilege of sexual expression would be between male and female only, and this expression would be only in the context of marriage. Both heterosexual and homosexual sexual behavior outside of marriage violates the human spirit and distorts God's intent for men and women" (see <http://wkly.ws/11o>).

Does anyone else find it interesting or appalling that the appeal here is that homosexual behavior violates the human spirit? Does this view perpetuate degrading and demeaning views of homosexual in the conservative groups here in Eugene? Does it also perpetuate the view the heterosexual couples are also privileged? Well, in actuality you are right, they are privileged, sadly, and the PCA just admitted it clearly.

But perhaps this group has progressed since 2000 since in reality this was a statement from over 10 years ago. What do they say now?

Brad Hershel  
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: We asked Cascade Presbyterian about this and the Rev. J. Kyle Parker tells us he's unaware of any gay-bashing talk in his congregation.

### TORTURE

Bradley Manning, the soldier accused of providing classified U.S. government documents to Wikileaks, has now been held in solitary confinement for 8 months in the Marine Corps brig at Quantico, Va. Some call him a traitor and some laud him as a hero for releasing documents revealing widespread state corruption and global corporate criminality.

Manning is forced to spend 23 hours per day in an empty cell with no human contact. He is forbidden any exercise including pushups during that 23 hours. He has also been stripped of his reading glasses. In other words, Private Manning is being tortured with isolation to set an example to whistle-blowers. This is an outrageous disgrace.

A Supreme Court decision in 1940 characterized prolonged solitary confinement as "torture." A contemporary opinion from prison psychiatrist Dr. Terry Kupers states: "If you put people in isolation, they will go insane. Symptoms include perceptual distortions and hallucinations, increased anxiety, revenge fantasies, rage, irrational anger, fears of persecution, lack of impulse control, claustrophobia, severe and chronic depression, talking to oneself, headaches, nightmares, dizziness, self-mutilation and a decline in EEG activity. Some of these symptoms occur after only seven days of extreme isolation."

It is incredible that Marine Commandant James Amos, Attorney General Eric Holder and Secretary Gates continue to ignore the pleas of Amnesty International, the United Nations' Human Rights Council and a myriad of individuals such as Daniel Ellsberg to desist from the unconstitutional and criminal abuse of Bradley Manning.

Gerry Rempel  
Eugene

### WATER ISSUES

We all need water to live, but we usually take it for granted, especially here in the Northwest where we are blessed with plenty of rain and rivers. Yet global supplies of fresh water are dwindling, and privatization of water is increasing. How do these trends affect us? The Lane Peace Symposium on April 15 will address many crucial water issues, including: Nestle's move to put a water bottling plant at Cascade Locks on the Columbia River; ongoing efforts to keep our rivers clean and healthy; the mission of the Winnemem Wintu tribe of Northern California to return the sacred salmon to the McCloud River; and the bottled water controversy and what we can do about it. To learn more about this FREE event, go to: [www.lanec.edu/peacecenter](http://www.lanec.edu/peacecenter). Everyone is welcome.

Ruth Wren  
Eugene



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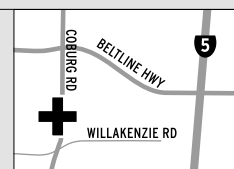

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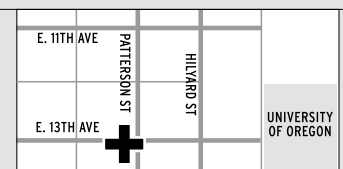
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