

THE *gala* NEWS *letter*

CALLED TO DISCIPLESHIP: Coming Home in Search of the Path

The following is an excerpt from President Grant McMurray's opening address at the 2002 Community of Christ's World Conference held April 6th-14th, 2002, in Independence, MO.

"We recognize that there continue to be significant issues that divide people within our fellowship, in the larger Christian body, and between persons of faith around the world. We are committed to being voices of reason and hope, to be listeners and reconcilers, not those who divide and exclude.

So now let me speak to one such issue that threatens to divide us. In the past few weeks I have been the recipient of scores of letters, e-mails, and phone calls generated by the resolutions before our Conference dealing with homosexuality. Some have been thoughtful and reasoned, but many have been desperate and angry, sometimes accompanied by symbolically crumpled paper or copies of offending text besmirched with bold, black lines. And this weekend we have been faced with pickets proclaiming a hateful God I do not recognize and describing good people in vile and contemptible terms.

To all of this, I say to you, 'No, no, no.' We must not succumb to our fears nor fail to respect those who disagree with us. We must instead be voices of reconciliation and ministers of healing. In the midst of our differences, there just has to be a better way. There is no issue that divides churches around the world in our time like the issue of homosexuality. It is for us to decide whether we will be rendered asunder by it, or whether we have the spiritual courage to face it together.

Tonight I am going to take a risk. What I am about to say is my personal statement to you on this issue, joined in by Ken and Peter, my colleagues in the First Presidency, after many hours of conversing together. I have not consulted with other Church officers or asked for their consent. What I say does not change Church policy. It does not require action or agreement. It simply describes the present situation openly and honestly, ex-

presses our own thoughts after prayerful and extensive reflection, and points to what we believe is possible for us to do as a diverse community of God's people.

Gay and lesbian brothers and sisters are walking with us on the path of the disciple. They have chosen to be there because they feel God's call to them. Some have struggled throughout their lives with questions and uncertainties about their identity, their acceptability, their status as children of God. Some have dared to tell their story, resulting at times in warm acceptance

and other times in cold rejection. Some have come to understand that God loves them unconditionally and embraces them as valued members of the human family; others are not so sure.

Our Church, like all churches, has struggled with how to be inclusive, agreeing that God's love comes to all persons, but differing on what behaviors and lifestyles are deemed acceptable. Because there is no social consensus, no moral agreement, no definitive psychological explanation, we have all cast about in search of answers. For some, that answer is provided in one of the seven bib-

lical passages that seem to condemn homosexuality as a sin. For others, the answer is in compassion upon seeing the face of a man or woman who simply says 'this is my story.' For our brothers and sisters in some cultures of the world, it is not something to be discussed nor is it thought by them to exist in that culture to any appreciable degree. For families and friends the answer comes only in the call to love a loved one, which has precedence over virtually every other call.

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President Grant McMurray addresses World Conference.

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From Our GALA President

What a difference a week makes. As I was packing, getting ready to go to the 2002 World Conference, I shivered, looking outside at 8 inches of freshly fallen snow. "It's so darned cold and miserable in this place," I mumbled. "I thought it was supposed to be spring now, with robins, tulips and green grass. Instead, I'm peering out the window at my poor Barb, out in the driveway trying to start our ailing snowblower. Why has Mother Nature forsaken us so?" I was not what one might call a happy star trooper on that early April day.

I also wondered what the climate would be like in Independence—the type of climate that has nothing to do with the weather. I had just heard that Fred Phelps and his *church* – the 'God Hates Fags' group – was planning a protest at our Conference, seemingly in response to two pro-gay pieces of legislation that were to come to the Conference floor during the week. I glumly wondered if anyone from our denomination would join in with old Fred.

Although I knew that some good things were going to happen during Conference week, I was allowing a negative attitude to take hold of me. The week seemed like it was going to be so full, so incredibly busy, and I felt incredibly tired even before anything had actually begun. Fortunately, things were about to change. When I walked into the Auditorium and saw the GALA booth for the first time, I knew that Mark Dixon, and a faithful group of helpers, had been very busy. Thank you, Mark, for the excellent and thoughtful job you did in putting our GALA booth together. Our booth was toward the back of the room, and yet very visible and recognizable, thanks to the brightly colored decorations that were festooned all over our booth area. There were many people who visited our booth and learned about GALA, PFLAG and the Shower of Stoles Project. I thank everyone who made a donation to GALA, renewed a membership, or started a new one. We couldn't do what we do without you.

GALA co-hosted two services during Conference week. The first service was co-sponsored by GALA and the Shower of Stoles Project. Martha Juillerat, the curator of the Stoles Project, and the stoles themselves, ministered to us in a way that deeply touched many of our hearts. The second service was co-sponsored by PFLAG and GALA. Forrest Swall planned the service, which was highlighted by the circles of sharing, in which we all shared our stories. This is always a powerful and emotional event. Included in this edition of the GALA Newsletter are more detailed articles related to the booth, and these two worship services.

Our Conference week was topped off by a lovely GALA event at the home of Curt Filer. He held a fun GALA reception at his new/old home in Independence. A few of us even jumped in Curt's indoor backyard swimming pool. (I certainly hope that no one took photos.) It was great fun to get together with so many of our GALA family all in one place. I extend a heartfelt *thank you* to Curt Filer, for his kind hospitality.

The most unforgettable part of the Conference was when Grant McMurray made his courageous and pastoral speech dur-

ing the evening service on the first Sunday of Conference. The text of the segment of Grant's speech that deals with homosexuality is printed in this edition of the GALA Newsletter. If you have not already heard or read this speech, please do so. After hearing Grant's words that evening, I was filled with emotion. For the first time, I felt in a very real way that the GLBT members of the Community of Christ have value in the eyes of the First Presidency and in the eyes of the Church, even though I have always felt that we have value in the eyes of our Creator. Tears welled up in my eyes and I left the Auditorium feeling warm and loved. At the same time, I also felt the burden of a great responsibility being handed to us. Grant let us know that there is still a long way to go, and that we are now standing in a place where nothing is certain and where the rules are not clear. I feel that it is incumbent on each of us, as GLBT individuals and supporters, to be teachers, to be friends, to be listeners, to be advisors, to be peacemakers, and to be ministers. We need to be present and we need to be visible, as the people God created us to be. Our road may not be easy, but there is light up ahead. Let's pray for each other, and for our leaders, as we move forward.

Speaking of moving forward, GALA elections are coming up soon. Within a few weeks, ballots will be mailed out to all active members of GALA, and we'll have the opportunity to elect a new Treasurer, a new Secretary, and a new at-large member of the GALA Board of Directors. The Church is moving down a new and exciting path. GALA is currently working on tools that will heighten our visibility and help the Church in its growth and understanding. It is an exciting and challenging time for all of us. Do you want this type of excitement in your life now? Do you want to take an active part in helping to make things happen in our church, in GALA? If so, I strongly urge you to put your name in the hat. GALA has thrived for many years now through its strong and committed leadership and membership. Please consider taking that big step and having your name stand as one of our candidates for a GALA office or Board position. More information about the GALA election is contained in this newsletter.

Of course, the biggest blip on the GALA "gaydar" screen, in terms of upcoming events, is the 2002 GALA International Retreat at Camp Bountiful in Jackson, Ohio. The retreat will be held over Labor Day weekend, and will be directed by Dan Henry. Grant McMurray will be in attendance at the GALA retreat this year, so this is indeed an exciting development. A little birdie told me that the Variety Show will make its grand re-appearance this year, so please prepare accordingly. I hope to see as many of you at the retreat as possible. I think this promises to be a huge event.

Things are very different this week. I drove home from Conference to find a somewhat green yard, crocuses poking their heads out of the soil by my front steps, and songbirds flying overhead. People are now wearing shorts and t-shirts, and they are out walking, biking, and riding their motorcycles. The local DQ opened its doors. My heart is soaring. The climate has indeed changed in the great outdoors, and in our hearts. Thank goodness it has changed for the better.

Blessings, Stephanie

(Called to Discipleship: Continued from page 1)

Because of these many differences, our Church stands in the midst of much ambiguity and inconsistency. We have a twenty-year-old statement from the Standing High Council that serves as official guidance, but has not been universally adhered to throughout the church. I will be totally honest and acknowledge that I have myself participated in situations where its provisions were not honored. I have been present in conferences where persons I knew to be in long-term, committed homosexual relationships were approved for priesthood in jurisdictions where their lifestyle was known and their ministry was accepted. The conflict within me was between lawgiver and pastor. To enforce the policy would have required me to intervene and prevent the ordination of someone whose call to ministry I could not deny. This I could not do. This I will not do.

In fairness, you should know the hearts of those of us who uphold in leadership. I read scripture contextually. I believe that scripture carries a powerful witness of the love of God but that it has to be read in its totality and not in phrases and fragments here and there. When it comes to people and our many differences, I will always choose to love rather than to judge. My instincts are toward inclusion and not exclusion.

At the same time, I am fully supportive of our historic polity of theocratic democracy, which balances the priestly witness with the consent of the people. Ministry is not just about calling. It is also about acceptance of that calling by those who will receive the ministry. Therefore, it is not just my views but all of our views that must be weighed as we make decisions together.”

“I am not in the habit of telling our delegates how they should vote, but I am about to make an exception. I request the delegates to this World Conference to table or refer all pending legislation on homosexuality so that we can avoid actions that will be divisive and shape a process by which a broader understanding and consensus can be built. I will ask the Standing High Council to participate with others in looking anew at this matter, seeking issues on which we can surely agree (God’s love of all people, fidelity, the value of family, the sacredness of sexuality as part of creation) and shaping dialogue in areas where we do not agree (the blessing of same-sex relationships, standards for ordination, the interpretation and authority of scripture).

In the meantime, I ask the Community of Christ to be willing to live with us on the boundary for a while. To do this means that we may not have a policy that guides every decision, but we will have to trust the Holy Spirit to accompany us in our choices. It means that some parts of the church may function differently from other parts of the church and there will be distinctions that are occasionally unsettling but representative of the diversity of our body, both in terms of viewpoints and cultures. We recognize that certain national governments have requirements that our local church leaders in those nations will need to respect and interpret in accordance with their own cultural understandings.

And finally, I ask that we be prayerful and respectful and sober in our consideration of this issue so important to the well-being of our community of faith. I believe that these words from Henri Nouwen speak meaningfully to us in this time:

We are not the healers, we are not the reconcilers, we are not the givers of life. We are sinful, broken, vulnerable people who need as much care as anyone we care for. The mystery of ministry is that we have been chosen to make our own limited and very conditional love the gateway for the unlimited and unconditional love of God.”

SHOWER OF STOLES PROJECT

By Martha Juillerat, National Program Director

Over the years we have received close to 900 stoles from members of 18 different denominations, yet I can say without hesitation that those sent to us from COC folk are now among some of the most significant in the collection. As a denomination that does not have stoles as a part of its tradition, I challenged you all to be creative. You were! We have received works of art including a remarkable gathered cloth piece covered with origami flowers and note cards, and an anonymous “stole” crafted from a length of rough hemp rope braided with steel chain with a brief but disturbing message from one who has struggled fiercely with both their gender and their faith.

While many of you have written telling your heartening stories of having been loved and embraced by your families and congregations, it is clear from virtually all of your notes that there is still much work to be done to create a Church that is a place of welcome for all of its children. These two stole stories are on my desk today:

“I live with my life partner and am a pastor of the Community of Christ. I feel ‘hunted’ as I know my Regional Administrator is trying to take away my active status of priesthood. However, I am still who I am and I still feel the call to serve God in all ways. It breaks my heart that my church does not yet feel fully inclusive. I find each opportunity to try to lead the people to this point and will rejoice when that day comes. I am appreciative of the loving support of my District President and congregation.” - Anonymous.

“Life in the RLDS Church was my center point, affecting all I did and who I was. I was ordained an Elder in 1987. I chose to live an open and honest life in a committed lesbian partnership. That resulted in my silencing in 1996. I appealed the silencing hoping to make more visible the dialogue. That too was silenced. I have found other individuals and churches who accept and validate who I am. My world has broadened and continues to be filled with love.” - Rogene McKiernan

We invite you to display these stoles in your own congregation, as a way of furthering the conversation and putting faces and stories on the issue of inclusion in our Church. If you think your congregation or other church group might be interested in viewing the Shower of Stoles collection, please visit our website for more information (www.showerofstoles.org), or email us directly at stoleproj@aol.com.

The GALA Booth Experience

By Kevin Currie

“Gay and lesbian brothers and sisters are walking with us on the path of the disciple. They have chosen to be there because they feel God’s call to them.” – Grant McMurray

This has truly been a remarkable week. We, as disciples, have been empowered. Though some held hope that we would see a change in policy, something far more significant has been realized. We have been presented to the world as brothers and sisters walking on the path of the disciple, good people choosing to respond to God’s call.

As disciples, Grant has asked that we have dialogue with other believers and share in the exploration of our differences. During our week at Conference, the GALA booth provided the forum for that dialogue to begin. There may have been a few thoughtless comments tossed our way, but intellect and reason prevailed in the spirit of the One who finds each of our souls precious in His sight.

Whenever good people gather you can find evidence of the love of God at work, and we were blessed with our fair share of good people. As they passed through the GALA booth we heard the false impressions about gay and lesbian behavior and how it lead some to despise the gay and lesbian community, others have spent a lifetime reading scripture literally and now struggle with the challenge to love rather than to judge. Many expressed their support for GALA and PFLAG, and shared personal stories of family or friends that have been marginalized by their faith communities.

A few people have asked how we, at the GALA booth, felt about Grant’s address to the Conference. For the most part, the response I have heard here has been hopeful. To be honest, bitterness is working on members belonging to both sides of this issue. There are a few members of the Church that believe the First Presidency should not have given gay and lesbian men and women a place at the table. Meanwhile, there are gay and lesbian men and women who are excluded, living marginalized lives, who are pleading for justice, and they want it now.

Remember, we have been empowered to walk the path of the disciple, there is no doubt we are called to be there. As disciples, we have a responsibility to represent Christ in the communities in which we live. The ministry of Christ represents reconciliation, healing, love, presence in community. The challenge before us is to participate in learning disciple skills. Learn to read scripture in its totality. Learn to be voices of reconciliation and ministers of healing. Make a commitment to learning; spiritual practices, worship, scriptural literacy, and mission.

Accept the challenge to live on the boundary and to trust the Holy Spirit to accompany us in making our choices.



Welcoming faces at the GALA Booth: Michelle Dunlap, Allan Fiscus, Barb Rocheford, Kelly Propst, Stephanie Shaw

“We have been on a long journey, this sometimes frail and occasionally despairing church of ours. We have traveled so far and seen so much. But now the journey brings us home to see what we need to do, who we need to be. Here, in the comfort and security of our spiritual home, we can look to the horizon and imagine where it is God would have us go.”

Grant McMurray



Arthur Butler, Kevin Currie, Stephanie Shaw, and Martha Juillerat



Shower of Stoles service at World Conference

“Then we see it. The path of the disciple begins at the doorstep of our home and winds off into the far distance. Its ending place is beyond our view and it is hard to know just where it will take us.

But then there is a voice. A steady, unchanging, compelling voice. ‘Come,’ it says. ‘Come, follow me.’ And we go.”

Grant McMurray

World Conference PFLAG Meeting

By Gail Biller

Many warm hearts had a chance to listen to other people’s stories during a PFLAG meeting held on Thursday of Conference. Melba Jean Dixon told of her acceptance of her gay son, Mark, and how that process had changed her life. Dave Wilson shared how he had lost his family in Tennessee when he came out, but he now has this group (PFLAG and GALA) as his family. Sue Cochran talked about her wonderful Christmas trip with her gay cousin, Alan, and how they had created many precious memories with Alan’s daughter, Melia, and her two mothers.

Forrest Swall did a wonderful job in planning and facilitating the meeting, attended by nearly 100 people. Sharon Troyer offered the meeting introduction and did an incredible job as she extended an open heart and mind in allowing newcomers to feel welcome and comfortable. Shortly after the introduction, the large group broke into smaller discussion groups and shared their personal stories of pain, hope, understanding, and acceptance with each other. In closing, Peter Judd offered a sending forth statement and the meeting adjourned with people taking away with them yet another valuable PFLAG experience.

GALA/Shower of Stoles Worship Service

On Wednesday of Conference week, GALA was pleased to worship again with Martha Juillerat and the Shower of Stoles Project, in a joint worship service that was held at the old Englewood congregation in Independence.

There were approximately 100 stoles displayed throughout the church, each carrying the message of an individual “story.” Some of the stoles tell the story of how individuals have their ministry removed as a result of their sexual orientation, while others tell of the pain and uncertainty they experience as they serve in “silence.” Each made a strong impression on anyone entering the church, especially after Martha told us the stories of several of these stoles.

During the service, we were also ministered to by the testimonies of Noe Noe Nelson and Barb Riley. Special music was provided by Curt Filer, Larry Pickering, Sharon Troyer and Mark Dixon. One of the strongest statements of support and beauty came from several members of the Tahitian delegation. The Tahitians treated us to some lovely traditional music and dance. We were warmed by their performance, and were so happy to share our service with them, and to have them share their gift with us. Curt Filer offered a lovely, pastoral prayer toward the end of the service. The contributions of these people and others made for a very meaningful worship experience that won’t soon be forgotten by those in attendance.



Marge Damitz and Sharon Troyer share a smile at the GALA reception hosted by Curt Filer.

GALA HONOR ROLL

The following names were displayed in GALA's booth at World Conference, and they represent many of our hundreds of Members and Advocates who support our mission to bring spiritual wholeness and seek social justice for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons and allies:

Michael Alberts & Chuck Hewitt *Independence, MO*
Roy & Mary Lou Ash *Somis, CA*
George Barber *Moline, IL*
Tom Beck ✦ *Denver, CO*
Ted & Gail Biller ✦ *Santa Ana, CA*
John & Sherry Billings *Ferguson, MO*
Susanna Birks *Glen St Mary, FL*
Meredith Bischoff *Chino Hills, CA*
Jack Bowsky ✦ *Portland, OR*
Mike Brush *Independence, MO*
Arthur Butler ✦ *Independence, MO*
Kristin Cantrell & Pam Mayfield *Kansas City, MO*
Alan Cochran ✦ *Pasadena, CA*
Elaine Cochran ✦ *Kansas City, MO*
Susan Cochran *Naperville, IL*
Dorothy N. Colley *Reno, NV*
Glenn R. Coven ✦ *Cincinnati, OH*
Kevin Currie & Ray Mosser *Buffalo, NY*
Mabel Curry ✦ *Apple Valley, MN*
Ed Davis ✦ *Waukegan, IL*
Steve & Julie Dimmitt ✦ *S. Barrington, IL*
Vern & Melba Jean Dixon ✦ *Farwell, MI*
Mark Dixon & Guillermo Salazar ✦ *Odessa, FL*
Larry Dunn ✦ *Fremont, CA*
Jeanne Earnest *Lee's Summit, MO*
Ron & Mary Fennell *Midwest City, OK*
Curt Filer ✦ *Independence, MO*
Allan Fiscus *Lansing, MI*
Randy Fitzgerald *Denver, CO*
Dick Fortman ✦ *Independence, MO*
Anthony R. Fox & Robert Darden *Holland, MI*
Ron Freeman ✦ *Sterling, MI*
Willa & Al Frey ✦ *Fairbanks, AK*
Merleen & Warren Hall ✦ *Las Vegas, NV*
Lauren Hall & Kelly Propst ✦ *La Grange, IL*
David & Dustee Heinze *Winter Springs, FL*
Jerry & Glenna Henry *Columbia, MO*
Mark Henson *St Joseph, MO*
Olen & Emma Henson ✦ *Xenia, IL*
Vern & Jan Hill *New Brighton, MN*
Allen Hose *Anaheim, CA*
Derrick L. James *Chicago, IL*
John & Carol Kostura *Orange, CA*
Carl & Colleen Leonard *Midland, TX*
Michael Lewis *Los Angeles, CA*
Bob & Myrna Logan *Bow, WA*
Roy & Roberta Marley *Aledo, TX*
Patricia Marmoy *Independence, MO*
Billie and Robert D. McCreery *Portland, OR*
Larry & Kim McGuire *Marion, IA*
Hal McKain ✦ *Lamoni, IA*
Rogene McKiernan *Gunnison, CO*
Sue McLaughlin ✦ *Independence, MO*
Robert & Barbara Mesle ✦ *Lamoni, IA*
Della Mowrey *Alamogordo, NM*
Jean Nelson *Bow, WA*
Andy Newcom ✦ *Kansas City, MO*
Julie Newton *Missouri Valley, IA*
Denise O'Neil-Leichter *West Van Nuys, CA*
Gene & Barbara Painter *Evergreen, CO*
Nancy Peters *Gresham, OR*
Dave & Bonny Peterson ✦ *Lynnwood, WA*
Larry Pickering *Wichita, KS*
Aubrey & Karen Price *Dumas, TX*
Larry & Helen Propst ✦ *Council Bluffs, IA*
Dennis E. Quiney *Kings Norton, Birmingham*
Merlyn Risser ✦ *Las Cruces, NM*
Barbara Rocheford & Stephanie Shaw ✦ *Hudson, WI*
Nilda Rodriguez *Oakland, CA*
Larry Rollstin *Albuquerque, NM*
Lois & Bill Russell *Lamoni, IA*
Brian Sadler *Laguna Beach, CA*
Myron & Peggy Schall ✦ *Bow, WA*
Roy Shaeffer *Independence, MO*
Dorothy & Jeremy Shaffer *San Francisco, CA*
Lois E. Shaffer *Mesa, AZ*
Edmere Shaw *Independence, MO*
James & Martha Shaw ✦ *Lamoni, IA*
Andy Shelton ✦ *Fort Worth, TX*
Terry & Ruth Shelton ✦ *Bedford, TX*
Leah Sheppard & Cynthia Slough *Oakland, CA*
Noel & Alison Sherer ✦ *Woodbine, IA*
Aaron Sherer & Paul Smith ✦ *Boston, MA*
Jane & Rick Shipley ✦ *Mason, OH*
Shower of Stoles Project *Minneapolis, MN*
Joanie Smith & Family *Flagstaff, AZ*
Carolyn & Eldred Spain *Higley, AZ*
Duane & Nancy Stone *Wichita, KS*
Don Streeter *Dallas, OR*
Forrest L & Donna Swall *Lawrence, KS*
David Swart *Houston, TX*
Tim Tattersall & Errol Buntuyan *New Haven, CT*
Wayne Thompson ✦ *Palm Springs, CA*
Sharon Troyer *Eugene, OR*
David & Kathy Tucker ✦ *Boone, IA*
Ron Turner & Richard R. Rathman *Vassalboro, ME*
Nick Van Atter & Vinny Penoro ✦ *Elmont, NY*
Janis Webb ✦ *Tempe, AZ*
Francine Wight *Marysville, WA*
Janice R Wright ✦ *Des Moines, IA*
Fran Zimmerman *Lee's Summit, MO*
Alan Zimmerman & Richard Kent-Jordan ✦ *Independence, MO*

✦ These individuals gave a generous donation to GALA in addition to their 2002 membership gift.

Book Deadline Draws Closer

Bill Russell is still gathering stories from GLBT people, as well as family and friends, for a book which is to be published on the issue of homosexuality and how it relates to the RLDS and LDS Churches. He is planning to co-edit the book with Jay Bell, a gay LDS member of Affirmation, the LDS organization similar to GALA. The plan is for Bill and Jay to each write a chapter on the history of the RLDS and LDS churches' handling of homosexuality. The rest of the book will be a collection of stories from RLDS and LDS people.

The preference will be for stories which are signed by the authors, but the possibility of publishing anonymous stories has not been ruled out, provided the editors know the identity of the author.

Please submit your stories to Bill by May 20th, 2002. For more information, contact him at: Russell@graceland.edu

2002 GALA Elections

By Aaron Sherer

GALA is a volunteer organization with over one hundred members and many more hundreds of supporters spread out across the country and globe. The organization is blessed with dedicated people who take on leadership roles to help GALA provide ministry. This summer three elected leadership positions are coming open. The positions of Treasurer and Secretary will be elected for two-year terms beginning October 1, 2002, and a position on the Board of Directors will be filled for a three-year term beginning at the same time. Are you interested in serving GALA in one of these important roles?

The positions will be elected this summer and announced during the annual business meeting at our retreat in September. If you're interested in serving in one of these leadership roles, please send a brief statement of purpose as well as a brief candidate bio to Aaron Sherer, GALA Secretary (mailing and e-mail addresses are on the back page). Each candidate's information will be collected and distributed in the summer edition of the GALA Newsletter and in the ballot mailing. Deadline for receipt of candidacy information is June 14th, 2002. If you would like more information about the responsibilities of these leadership opportunities, please contact any member of the Executive Council. Only paid members can consider candidacy and vote, so this would be an excellent time to join GALA if you haven't already. Volunteer leadership is what keeps the organization going!

GALA info

GALA brings spiritual wholeness and seeks social justice for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender person's and allies. We claim the sacredness of each life story as a community united in hope.

GALA is an association of GLBT persons, their friends and families who have a connection to the Community of Christ (formerly Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints) faith community.

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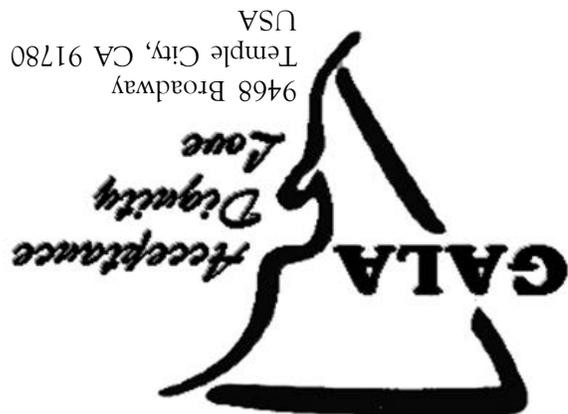
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Changing Spiritual Perspectives

2002 GALA International Retreat

Aug. 30th-Sept. 2nd, 2002
Camp Bountiful in Jackson, OH

Make your plans now to join us in the hills of Southern Ohio as we gather together for our 2002 Annual GALA Retreat. This year's retreat will be held over Labor Day Weekend (Friday, Aug. 30th - Monday, Sept. 2nd) in Jackson, Ohio. Our weekend will include fellowship, fun, laughter, celebration, acceptance, dignity, love....and more fellowship! Look inside this newsletter for your registration form and more information.