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Integrity^{USA} InfoLetter

2nd Quarter 2009

This issue focuses on Integrity's preparations for General Convention. In an effort to decrease our costs and minimize our carbon footprint, this newsletter is now only being distributed electronically to those members who have provided us with an email address. Those members who have not provided us with an email address will still receive a paper copy. If you are not receiving email messages from Integrity^{USA}, please contact Bruce Colburn at bruce@integrityusa.org.



Disbursing The Dark Cloud Of B033

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As we move toward General Convention 2009 and look beyond to the mission and ministry we have the capacity to accomplish in the Episcopal Church, it becomes increasingly clear that undoing the damage done by B033 is a primary objective.

This discriminatory resolution—passed in an emotional vortex under the shadow of the threats

Working for the full inclusion of all
the baptized in all the sacraments

to exclude American bishops from the 2008 Lambeth Conference—continues to have a chilling effect. Its influence is much wider than those dioceses seeking new episcopal leadership and those LGBT baptized who are called to the episcopate.

It is a dark cloud hanging over all aspects of our mission and ministry as it focuses our attention on excluding a percentage of the baptized from a percentage of the sacraments rather than calling ALL members of the Body of Christ fully into the work and witness of the Gospel.

It is time for it to go. There are many strong leaders working long and hard to make that happen and—in the end—I am confident that we will move beyond B033 in Anaheim. But it won't happen unless we make it happen.

Our challenge in 2009 is less about organized resistance and more about generalized anxiety. And the tipping point—I am convinced—will be persuading bishops who want to do the right thing but are afraid to do it now, to move out of what Henri Nouwen called “the house of fear” and into the house of love—and inclusion.

Here's a page out of the history books to make my point. It is the story of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's meeting with 1930's labor and civil rights leader A. Philip Randolph—a meeting where Randolph spoke eloquently about his thoughts and dreams for the end of discrimination and the full inclusion of ALL Americans into their rights and responsibilities as American citizens.

At the end of it Roosevelt said to him, "You know, Mr. Randolph, I've heard everything you've said tonight, and I couldn't agree with you more. And as President of the United States I do have the capacity to be able to right many of these wrongs and to use my power and the bully pulpit."

Roosevelt concluded, "But there is one thing I would ask of you, Mr. Randolph, and that is that you go out and make me do it."

Our job is to go to Anaheim and make our bishops do what they know they need to do—and that work starts NOW. Many of our bishops “couldn't agree with us more” —and what they are waiting for is for us to go out and make them do it.

They are waiting for the groundswell of advocacy they cannot ignore from their diocese telling them the cost of justice delayed is too high to pay—that the mission and ministry of this church is too important to continue to be held hostage by the bias and bigotry of those who would exclude the LGBT baptized from the full and equal claim the church has been promising them since 1976.

It starts by talking not just to your bishop but to your deputies. It starts by getting your friends and allies to do the same. It starts by building a broad ranging coalition of folks across this church who will make their voices heard and give their bishops what they need to do the right thing. Watch the “Marching to Anaheim” video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNYUu2feet4>. Give to the Anaheim Appeal at

www.integrityusa.org/donate. Talk to your bishops and deputies. And most of all, pray for the renewal and mission of the Episcopal Church.

Teach us in all things to seek first God's honor and glory. Guide us to perceive what is right, and grant us both the courage to pursue it and the grace to accomplish it; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Local Advocacy Efforts Will Determine Outcome Of General Convention

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The lesson of 40 years of witness—in the Episcopal Church and out—is that when people know LGBT people, we advance toward equality. As we gear up for General Convention in Anaheim, Integrity and Claiming the Blessing are pushing forward with a program to ensure that deputies and bishops know we're here and that we want the Episcopal Church to move beyond B033 and forward on marriage equality.

If you receive Episcopal Life, you'll notice we've been running ads to remind bishops and deputies that we're here and what we want in Anaheim.

We'll soon be sending all deputies and bishops a DVD containing two videos—the first explaining why B033 violates the baptismal covenant and the second connecting marriage equality with ubuntu. Watch <http://walkingwithintegrity.blogspot.com/> for online versions of these videos.

At seven provincial synods this spring, all deputies are being invited to attend informal presentations to learn about LGBT issues at General Convention.

However, nothing that Integrity staff and officers can do matters as much as what Integrity members can do in their own dioceses. Do you know who your deputies are? Do they know about you, your family, and your faith? Have you met with them and talked about LGBT issues confronting General Convention? A few conversations at home mean much more than the opinions of some far away advocacy organization.

Winning equal access to all the sacraments for all the baptized ultimately depends on the good people in the pews who are willing to witness to the movement of the Spirit in their lives. Visit www.integrityusa.org/all to learn more. Feel free to contact me if I can be of assistance.

Integrity's General Convention Team Assembled And Already Hard At Work



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After reviewing over 70 applications from wonderful pool of talented and dedicated Integrity supporters, our team leaders have selected a core team of volunteers to help us full-time in Anaheim this summer. This core team is organized into six functional areas (Legislation, Communications, Liturgy & Chaplaincy, Booth, Audio-Visual, and Operations)—with an executive committee for coordination across teams. Our team consists of: Susan Russell, John Clinton Bradley, Louise Brooks, Michael Hopkins, Jan Adams, Jon Richardson, Matthew Haines, James Joiner, Deniray Mueller, Cameron Partridge, Tom McElligott, Rachel Swan, Pamela Reamer Williams, Cynthia Black, Barbara Curry, Tara McMurdy, Warren Huber, Nancy Mott, Tom Fehr, Otis Gaddis III, Jim Toy, Vivian Varela, Esteban Giron, Leigh Powers, Rebecca Gordon, Will Westerfield, Caro Hall, Randy Kimmler, and me. This team brings an incredible array of talents, experience, and diversity of perspective to our witness and work toward realizing the full inclusion of all the baptized in all of the sacraments.

This full-time core team will need the assistance of additional volunteers to realize success in this mission. We have started putting together rosters of part-time opportunities for everything from helping shuttle people to/from airports, to helping with hospitality and chaplaincy, through helping with more detailed/technical work. If you, or anyone you know, plans to be in the Anaheim area during the two weeks of General Convention and would like to be added to our roster of potential part-time volunteers and stay informed about these opportunities, please complete a volunteer application on-line at: <http://sites.google.com/site/allthesacraments/volunteerapp>.

If you're not able to join us in Anaheim, you can keep current on what's happening at www.integrityusa.org/gc2009 and <http://walkingwithintegrity.blogspot.com>.

Anaheim Appeal Making Good Progress But More Donations Needed To Reach Goal

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As Michael Bell reported above, Integrity volunteers are again preparing to attend the Episcopal Church's General Convention. For 33 years, the witness of Integrity at these triennial gatherings has been very influential in moving the church forward on issues relating to human sexuality and justice.

To provide what our hard-working volunteers need in order to be effective, Integrity launched its "Anaheim Appeal" in January with a goal of \$80,000. Currently we had received about 75% of that goal. Thanks to all those members, partners, and friends who have given early and generously toward this effort!

If you have not already given, please watch the video at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNYUu2feet4>, and then make your online contribution at www.integrityusa.org/donate. We are keenly aware of the current economic uncertainty and have planned very modestly with respect to expenses. Still, to be effective, our volunteer team needs to have certain supplies and equipment on hand. So, please respond. Every gift makes a real difference in what Integrity can accomplish on behalf of LGBT Episcopalians.

Is Your Congregation A P3?

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P3 stands for "Proud Parish Partner" and since Integrity launched this initiative during the summer of last year, 40 churches from all parts of

the country have accepted the invitation to become partners with Integrity in our ministry of inclusion. This brings the total of all partners to 80!

To learn more about how your congregation can join this growing cloud of witnesses, go to <http://www.integrityusa.org/partners> or contract me.

Midwestern Regional News

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It is good to know that Deniray Mueller has become the network coordinator for Integrity in the Diocese of Southern Ohio. Deniray, a deacon in Southern Ohio, and her partner, hosted me in Columbus during my partner's recent gastric bypass surgery.

Dave Flee in Chicago has set up a Facebook page for Integrity/Northern Illinois.

Northeastern Regional News

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The nexus of secular marriage equality has shifted to the Northeast for a season. Massachusetts was first—followed by Connecticut, Vermont, and Maine. In New Hampshire, a marriage equality bill has been passed by the legislature and is on the desk of Governor John Lynch. In New York, the legislation proposed by Governor David Patterson has been approved by the Assembly and awaits approval by the Senate, which is, by most accounts, hangs on a few votes.

Prop 8 postmortems indicated that two factors under our control could have made the difference.

The first is the increased involvement of people of faith. The California Episcopal bishops took this bull by the horns. Following them we have seen Bishop Ely, Lane, and Robinson advocate for marriage equality in their states. In response to a request passed through me, Bishop Singh spoke with members of the NY Senate and to a rally at equality and Justice Day on April 28th. This rally was in Albany, the state capital. Ironically, the Diocese of Albany is the least progressive in the Northeast, forbidding its clergy from celebrating same-sex commitments and its property from being used for these ceremonies.

The second thing that we can do to promote marriage equality is to tell people that we support it. The follow-up on Prop 8 was clear: It's not enough just to be there. We need to speak up and say, "Everyone deserves the right to marry!" Even if it's not something you want, you need to say that everyone should have access.

Winning civil marriage equality can only strengthen our chances for ecclesiastical marriage equality.

South Central Regional News

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The South Central Region now has 11 Proud Parish Partners! Does your parish want to be one too? Check out <http://www.integrityusa.org/partners> for more information on how to join this great group. Or you can contact me.

Integrity/Houston hosted an Anaheim Appeal event on Thursday May 7, 2009, that was very successful. Congratulations to the Diocese of Texas on the election of their new bishop, the Rt. Rev. Andy Doyle!

BIG congratulations to the Integrity/Fort Worth for their new Provisional Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Ted Gulick! Check <http://www.integrityfortworth.org> for more news.

Integrity/Liberty is gearing up for a busy spring. Having been instrumental in helping write a resolution calling for a Listening Process to begin in the Diocese of West Missouri, their first event is scheduled in April. They participated in the AIDS Walk on April 25. Soon, the "Love Makes a Family" exhibit will be at Grace Episcopal Church. Keep watch at <http://graceepiscopalliberty.org/Homepage.asp> for more information. Also from Integrity/Liberty, the Rev. Susan McCann is running for Provincial Coordinator for Province VII.

Did you know that Integrity/New Orleans is alive and growing? It is! Contact stannagraceintegrity@yahoo.com for more info.

Integrity/Four Corners is a new chapter in Colorado! Contact scott@stmarksdurango.com for more information!

If any chapter, network, or P3 in the South Central Region would like to host an Anaheim Appeal event, please contact me. Help Integrity work for you!

Western Regional News

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Integrity/Utah and Integrity/Alaska are teaming up with diocesan justice groups for events. The Utah group has especially become active—planning in conjunction with the diocese a LIFE (Legal Integrity For Everyone) event for couples estate planning, as well as Pride participation, a retreat in August, and (best of all) reaching out to the churches in the diocese outside of Salt Lake City. They will also be participating in walks to support AIDS and breast cancer research, wearing "Walking with Integrity" T-shirts throughout.

Meanwhile, Integrity groups in Boise, Spokane, and Puget Sound (Seattle) continue regular meetings (the Idaho group even had dinner/dance events). The Seattle group also continues the work with the Olympia diocese at Lambert House for runaway teens, and as they had in prior years. The Idaho group is participating in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure (for breast cancer).

Integrity/Northern California is working on the campaign to take bishop/deputies to lunch, spearheaded nationally by Integrity field organizer Jan Adams. The GALAS group at All Saints, Pasadena, just had their annual retreat. Integrity/El Camino Real's Spring Retreat comes up in May.

The Integrity group in San Diego celebrated the ordination of the first openly gay person to be priested in that diocese. They are also preparing for an Anaheim Appeal event in late May. They all the groups in California are following closely the California Supreme Court deliberations on marriage equality and the legality of Proposition 8 in that state.

Finally, Integrity networks in Oregon and Wyoming have also been quite active—working with parishes across the diocese and networking with LGBT rights groups across their dioceses.

Be sure to visit these and all Integrity groups when you travel!