



# the mission

THE NEWSLETTER OF LLGM

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## LLGM pledges mission support to seven ministries and mission development

In 2002 LLGM is launching a major mission development effort. An growing number of seminarians and pastors are coming out and refusing to agree to the ELCA's policy to remain celibate. These people recognize the blessing of relationships and feel called not to hide themselves or their partners. They are seeking to be rostered with the Extraordinary Candidacy Project (ECP).

To date thirteen ECP rostered pastors (pictured above on retreat) serve eleven different ELCA or independent congregations. As exciting as this is, many members of the ECP roster are awaiting calls. LLGM recognizes the urgent need for mission development so that the talents of these pastors will not be lost and that our communities will be served. As a result, the board of directors has approved funding three area mission developers who will serve as consultants throughout the U.S., to

identify congregations and other ministry sites where ECP pastors might serve on a full or part-time basis.

In addition to mission development, LLGM is committed to supporting the work of the ECP. This includes sponsoring the annual pastor's retreat, developing a congregational congress, supporting the work of the ECP Roster Council and regional candidacy panels.

Finally, LLGM's Mission Partners for 2002 include:

### Abiding Peace Lutheran Church, Kansas City, Missouri



After 18 months under the leadership of Pr. Donna Simon, Abiding Peace Lutheran Church has experienced dramatic growth and a renewed sense of purpose.

### PHOTO

Back row, l to r: Pr. Pieter Oberholzer, Pr. Jim Bishoff, Pr. Arlo Peterson, Pr. Lyle Beckman, Pr. David Peters; middle: Pr. Phyllis Zillhart, Pr. Donna Simon, Pr. Craig Minich, Pr. Michael Hiller, Markus Mueller, Greg Egertson; front: Pr. Ruth Frost, Pr. Robin Hartwig, Jen Nagel, Pr. Anita Hill, Sharon Stalkfleet, Pr. Jeff Johnson.

Our web site:  
<http://www.llgm.org>

## LUTHERAN LESBIAN & GAY ▼ MINISTRIES

Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries empowers openly identified sexual minority people called to God's mission of ministry and witness.

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Support continued from page 1.

According to Pr. Simon Abiding Peace serves two distinct communities—lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) individuals and families; and heterosexual people who seek a small, friendly and diverse church. “Most of the LGBT folk who come to our church,” says Pastor Simon, “indicate that without our church they would not worship regularly.” As a result of the congregation’s unique position in the Kansas City area, members are very committed and unlikely to “shop around”. To meet the needs of members and the community, Abiding Peace offers programs and hosts events such as an “Alternative Family Picnic” attended by about 100 people.

Abiding Peace has two primary goals for 2002—increased outreach and strengthen organizational infrastructure. Growth is key to the congregation’s intent to become financially self-supporting. Abiding Peace also feels called to bring its witness of welcoming LGBT people to the greater church including their ELCA synod.

*Pastor Donna Simon an Extraordinary Candidacy Project’s (ECP) rostered clergy. She was ordained extra ordinem in 2000. This is her first call. LLGM has pledged \$12,000 in mission support for Pr. Simon and Abiding Peace.*

### Inclusive & Affirming Ministries (I.A.M.), South Africa



The purpose of Inclusive & Affirming Ministries (I.A.M.) is to change the attitudes of South African churches toward gay and lesbian Christians and to assist them in including all people, regardless of race, gender, and sexual orientation. I.A.M. director, Pastor Pieter Oberholzer leads the groundbreaking work, partly in his capacity as a missionary from St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco. Pr. Oberholzer and I.A.M. first came to the attention of LLGM four years ago when he became associated with St. Francis. Because his witness and ministry was so compelling, LLGM began providing a small financial contribution. One member compared the situation of gay and lesbian Christians in mainline churches in South Africa akin to that in the U.S. in the 60’s. A few years later, when his clergy status in the Dutch Reformed Church was at risk because no South African church would recognize an openly gay pastor, St. Francis

called Pr. Oberholzer to be their “missionary” preserving his clergy status, allowing him to continue his work in South Africa as a pastor.

Together with a colleague, Rev. Judy Kotze, Pr. Oberholzer educates and promotes dialogue regarding gay and lesbian Christians in congregations and church institutions. Pr. Oberholzer also provides counseling to individuals and/or their partners. This past year Pr. Oberholzer published a book—*Christian and Gay?* Heralded as “a book that every Christian should read with an open mind, because the way in which the church respond towards its gay and lesbian members will eventually be a test for the credibility of the church as ambassadors of Christ.” It’s the first book on the subject written in Afrikaans.

*Pr. Pieter Oberholzer is an ECP rostered clergy. LLGM has pledged \$5,000 in mission support for Pr. Oberholzer and I.A.M.*

### Oakland-Berkeley Lutheran Youth Program



The Oakland-Berkeley Lutheran Youth Program (OBLYP) is a joint urban youth ministry of five ELCA congregations in the East Bay area and is directed by Pr. Craig Minich. Since he was

ordained *extra ordinem* on February 18, 2001, Pr. Minich reports, “the program has found a new level of legitimacy and a continued level of enthusiasm and support.” Pr. Minich is working to expand the program to involve more congregations and thereby reach its goal of becoming a self-sustaining ministry.

OBLYP has grown steadily in the past year due to Pr. Minich’s visibility and outreach and increased promotional efforts. The program is well-recognized. Several families have indicated they joined participating congregations because of the program. Pr. Minich runs groups and activities for three different age groups and for families. In addition to word and sacrament ministry, Pr. Minich provides education and pastoral care. As he explains, “we seek to teach our youth in faith, walk with them in support and identity building, and assist them in exploring their world through service.”

*Pastor Craig Minich is an ECP rostered clergy. This is his first call. LLGM has pledged \$10,000 in mission support for Pr. Minich and OBLYP.*

Support continued on page 3.

# Joel R. Workin book released at gala event

By Greg Egertson

LLGM is proud to announce the publication of a new book of writings by Joel Raydon Workin, M.Div, entitled: *Dear God, I Am Gay. Thank You!* A famed member of the "Berkeley Three," Joel was one of the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary (PLTS) seminarians who was certified by his candidacy committee as an openly gay candidate for ordination just prior to the formation of the ELCA in 1988.

It was largely in response to this action that the ELCA's celibacy rule was instituted and, following that, justice organizations like LLGM, the ECP, and the Lutheran Network for Inclusive Vision were formed. Joel's legacy lives on through the mission and ministry of these organizations.

Edited by Michael Price Nelson, the book is a compilation of sermons, essays and newsletter articles that Joel wrote during his seminary days and later, as a member of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in North Hollywood, California. Michael and his partner, Dale von Seggern, became dear friends of Joel and the Workin family when they were caretakers for Joel in the last days of his battle with HIV/AIDS in 1995. On October 20, 2001, the book was released at an event sponsored by Lutherans Concerned/Los Angeles to honor Bishop Emeritus Paul W. Egertson on the occasion of his retirement from forty years of Word & Sacrament



Michael Nelson, Ray & Betty Workin, Pr. Mel White

Ministry. Bishop Egertson wrote the introduction to the book, having served as Joel's pastor during the two years preceding Joel's death. The gala LC/LA event was graciously hosted by The Rev. Ken Dahlstrom.

The cost of publication was underwritten by Joel's parents, Betty and Raydon Workin, who attended the release party as special guests. The Workins have generously donated 500 copies of *Dear God, I Am Gay. Thank You!* to benefit the Joel Raydon Workin Memorial Fund, set up by LLGM as an endowment that provides scholarships to openly identified sexual minority students attending Lutheran seminaries. The books are available from LLGM at a cost of \$12 each, including shipping.

The keynote speaker for the LC/LA event was LLGM Mission Partner, Jeff Johnson, pastor of University Lutheran Chapel in Berkeley. In his message, Jeff criticized

the ELCA's decision to conduct yet another 'study' of homosexuality. He thanked Bishop Egertson for his leadership and challenged the ELCA to live up to its reforming spirit and enact justice for sexual minority people NOW! Other speakers included: Bishop Emeritus, Stanley E. Olson; The Rev. Dr. Mel White, Soulforce; and The Rev. Dr. Malcom Boyd, author and former Episcopal priest. Musical entertainment was provided by Deborah Liv

Johnson, singer/ songwriter and LLGM supporter.

## Workins honored by Soulforce

Following the release party for Joel's book, Betty and Raydon Workin were presented with the "Courageous Couples" award by The Rev. Dr. Mel White. The Workins were honored for their many years of leadership with P-FLAG (Fargo, North Dakota) and their activism within the ELCA to bring an end to spiritual violence against sexual minority persons. Companion awards were given by Soulforce to Bishop Paul and Shirley Egertson, and to The Rev. Bob and Jeannie Graetz at a rally held in Indianapolis, Indiana, during the ELCA Churchwide Assembly in August 2001, celebrating the s/heroes who have made personal and professional sacrifices in order to reform the ELCA's policies of discrimination. ▼

Support continued from page 2.

## St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church, St. Paul, Minnesota



Since ordaining Pr. Anita Hill *extra ordinem* in 2001, St. Paul-Reformation has grown in strength and vitality. Although suspended by the St. Paul Area Synod (ELCA), the congregation and Pr. Hill continue to provide leadership in urban ministry. Pr. Hill and Wingspan,

the church's ministry to, with and on behalf of GLBT people, continue to advocate for change in the ELCA.

A major goal of Wingspan is to produce the video documentary, *This Obedience*, featuring Pr. Hill's ordination as a case study regarding ordination of GLBT persons in committed relationship. The video includes footage from the ordination and events at the 2001 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

As a result of both the church's growth and the documentary project, LLGM approved a grant of \$6000 in Mission Partner support for Pr. Hill's ministry and \$5000 designated support for *This Obedience*. For information on the video, see [www.aquariesmedia.com](http://www.aquariesmedia.com).

*Pr. Anita Hill is an ECP rostered clergy. This is her first call, however, since 1994 she has served as pastoral minister at St. Paul-Reformation.*

Support continued on page 6.

# THE COST OF ELCA POLICY

## Bishop publicly censures two congregations

*Synod Press Release, March 22, 2002*

Two congregations of the Florida-Bahamas Synod have been publicly censured by Bishop Edward R. Benoway, with the full support of the Synod Council, for calling spiritual leaders not rostered in the ELCA.

Defying the ELCA constitution and the counsel of synod advisors, Holy Trinity, Key West and Abiding Saviour, Ft. Lauderdale have both called openly gay men to serve them. The effective date of the censure was March 20.

"I feel that it is a serious matter when a congregation breaks the covenant of agreement that forms the basis for our unity as the ELCA," said the bishop in a letter to synod clergy and rostered leaders concerning the censure.

"At the same time, I realize that these congregations have acted according to their consciences and convictions," he added, "at a time when our church is engaged in conversation and study of issues related to gay and lesbian persons, including conversation about the ordination of non-celibate gay and lesbian persons."

The bishop has appointed a Task Force on Homosexuality and the Church, which began its work in December, in order to facilitate the synod's participation in that churchwide conversation.

The terms of the censure prevent members of Holy Trinity and Abiding Saviour from serving in any elective positions within the synod—committees, task forces, synod council,

churchwide assembly. However the congregations will retain the right of lay representation and vote at synod assemblies. And, "their involvement with other congregations in mission outreach and fellowship is encouraged," read the letter from the bishop.

The censure will remain in effect "until such time as that congregation is once again in conformance with the constitutional requirements of the ELCA, or until such time as further constitutional action is taken in regards to that congregation," he said.

In his letter to synod clergy, Bp. Benoway solicited prayers for the congregations and the synod and encouraged participation in conversations "in a manner indicative of the children of God."

## The Reverend James Bischoff dropped from ELCA roster

In 1998 when Pastor Jim Bischoff was outed and confirmed to Bishop Murray Finck that he was a gay man living in a committed relationship, the bishop demanded he resign from his congregation, San Marcos Lutheran Church. As he tendered his resignation, Pr. Bischoff told his bishop, he "just wanted to be a parish pastor." Within months, to the dismay of the synod, The Church of All Saints, an independent Lutheran congregation

made up of many of the members of San Marcos Lutheran, called him. On June 27th, 2001, Pr. Bischoff marked his 25th anniversary of ordained ministry. Ironically, Bishop Finck presented Pr. Bischoff with a certificate recognizing his achievement during a Sunday worship service at All Saints.

ELCA rules allow a pastor to remain on its roster for only three years without a call, although bishops have authority to allow a pastor to

remain on the roster "for the good of the church." Pr. Bischoff is not eligible for call in the ELCA because he is living in a committed relationship with another man. Following the actions of the ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Bishop Finck requested that the Conference of Bishops grant Pr. Bischoff's appeal to be allowed to remain on the roster.

In March 2002, Bishop Finck informed Pr. Bischoff that he was being dropped from the ELCA roster.

## Outed ELCA pastor forced to resign

In March, Pastor Jenny Mason wrote The Lutheran Network for Inclusive Vision that it was time to tell her story. With her permission that story is reprinted here.

"Dear friends, I want to begin by thanking you for your wonderful work over the years to lead the struggle in the Lutheran church so all persons who are called to the ministry, regardless of their sexual orientation and practice, may serve; and for [your] news

letter which keeps those of us who loosely support the struggle informed.

That having been said, I would like to inform The Network that as of October 8, 2001, I was asked to resign from the ELCA roster because of my sexual orientation as a lesbian in a loving, healthy relationship with another consenting adult female. Up to that point, I had been "one of the best" of the long-term missionary personnel in Latin America.

I've been in the ordained ministry

since January of 1991, commissioned for service as a Division for Global Mission (DGM) missionary to serve the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Chile (ELCC). I had previously done my internship here, so I've been in Chile for a long time. Here in Chile, I had lived by the famous "don't ask, don't tell" methodology of pragmatic cowardice, but since I was content to be serving in a ministry that I felt very called to do and I was comfortable under the wings of institutional

*Continued on page 7*

## Profiles in faith & courage: ECP candidates awaiting call

The ECP has almost 30 members on its roster. Only 13 are currently serving in called positions. That means many of these highly qualified pastors and candidates currently await call. They are leaders in their communities and many have extensive ministry experience. Throughout the year we will be profiling these individuals.

### Jen Nagel

Jen Nagel is an approved ECP candidate awaiting call and ordination. She grew up in southern Minnesota, received her bachelor of arts from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minnesota and her master of divinity from the University of Chicago Divinity School and additional courses at Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. Jen's experience is varied including a chaplaincy residency at a large metropolitan trauma center; a decade of work with ELCA outdoor ministries; studies in Scotland; two years in a Chicago city parish; a campus ministry internship; and volunteer work with ELCA Global Missions in Zimbabwe and Zambia and with the World Council of Churches.

Jen currently serves as a lay staff member at Central Lutheran Church in downtown Minneapolis. She works with the church's ministry to people of the city and the varied spiritual, physical and financial resources that homeless and low-income people seek daily at the church. She also does chaplaincy work at Hennepin County Medical Center. Jen and her partner Jane McBride live in Minneapolis.

Jen has felt called to ministry since she was in junior high. She roots her calling and her present working in a relational style of ministry—hearing our prophetic call as God's faithful people and together enacting this in the world and our communities. At this point in the history of the ELCA, Jen understands the need to be truth-tellers and truth-livers, opting to be part of the church's transformation and renewal. ECP and LLGM offer Jen both an avenue for serving the call of God and the community, and



Jen Nagel



Pastor Cynthia Crane

the support and accountability of colleagues who have been part of walking these new paths of justice.

### Pastor Cynthia Crane

Whether to stay in the ministry or leave, was a question that increasingly agitated Pr. Cindy Crane during the 10 years she served as an ELCA pastor. "No easy answers emerged to solve the paradox of feeling called as a pastor and being a sexual minority person," she recalls. "So much of my adult life has been geared toward the ministry. I felt called to each church I served, as a solo and associate pastor in western Wisconsin and as an interim in Minneapolis. Even the

years I spent living in Asia before graduating from seminary was marked by significant Christian encounters affirming my journey into ordained ministry."

In 2000, in spite of opportunities to interview at churches in the Twin Cities, Pr. Crane chose to leave the ELCA roster. She joined the ECP, believing that at some point she would feel moved to seek a church position again but without the exclusive rules for GLBT pastors. At the same time she pursued secular work but was open to a career change. "However, the call paradox has continued to surface." Pr. Crane explained.

In March, a friend and former coworker, asked me to lead a memorial service for her son-in-law. On the day of the service I was nervous but quickly felt natural in my role leading the ritual and engaging with the people. After the service former coworkers, told me that they thought I was supposed to be in the ministry."

The president of the company commented, "You should be a pastor."

*Profiles continued on page 7.*



## Check your church's constitution

*By Lois Voss, Edina Community Lutheran Church  
Member of Extraordinary Candidacy Project - Twin Cities Panel*

Do you think that your congregation may be willing to consider a candidate from the Extraordinary Candidacy Project (ECP)? If so, you may find your process delayed by restrictions in your own congregational constitution.

This has been our experience at Edina Community Lutheran Church in Minnesota. Despite the intent of the council and the call committee to consider both ECP and ELCA candidates, our constitution states that only ELCA candidates may be selected. Even more delay is caused by our prescribed method of adopting a constitutional change; it must be approved at two consecutive annual congregational meetings.

As we consider amending our constitution to allow ECP candidates, and perhaps also to shorten the process for future amendments, we know we losing out on the opportunity to consider all candidates. We are passing up a chance to live out our commitment as a Reconciling in Christ church.

If your congregation addresses the question of calling an ECP candidate even if you have no vacancy, you have the advantage of allowing your members to more fully explore all the attendant questions. You will not be limited by the specifics of one candidate and you won't restricted by the time requirements of a call process. ▼

# Resting to renew, building anew

By Jen Nagel

The Extraordinary Candidacy Project Roster Retreat was held January 21-24, 2002 at St. Dorothy's Rest, a retreat center in the hilly redwood forests north of San Francisco. The retreat theme, *Resting to Renew, Building Anew*, offered a realistic and needed focus to shape our time together and to impact our varied ministries around the country and indeed the world!

The fourth annual retreat included 21 people—a group primarily made up of pastors and candidates on the ECP roster, those in the process of becoming part of the roster, spouses, and two dynamic facilitators. Prs. Donna Duensing and Bob Smith offered their leadership and guidance to the group through discussions, Bible study, and by serving as chaplains. While many on the ECP roster live in the local area, participants gathered from Florida,



Prs Duensing and Smith leading a discussion.

Minnesota, Missouri, and South Africa.

Early in the planning stages it was acknowledged that calling this event a retreat would be descriptive of only a part of its intent and activities. On the one hand there were retreat-like activities such as daily worship with Holden Evening Prayer, *Lectio Divina*, and a closing Eucharist; there were opportunities to relax, take walks, make music, and enjoy an evening of our very own coffee house entertainment; and there were powerful discussions surrounding our study of Matthew's Sermon on the Mount with its blessings and demands.

Yet this gathering time was also the single best opportunity for the roster to come together for both education and development. Much time was given to further defining and understanding the relationship of the ECP to LLGM. As the roster has grown, we increasingly seek ways to organize, nurture, and provide support to one another and to the many GLBT pastors and seminarians who struggle to heed their calling and find their place within the church. Over the years, the roster has formed a council with representatives who carry our voice to the ECP and LLGM Boards; elections for these roles and others occurred during our time together. Additionally, there were

workshops on finding balance and wholeness through spiritual practice, pastoral care, development of new ministry opportunities, snapshots of specific LLGM ministries where ECP pastors are serving, and a resource sharing time.



Participants listen intently during discussion.

Certainly this was an opportunity to retreat—to rest, but perhaps, more accurately, our time together provided the renewal and building so vitally necessary for everyday ministry and for transforming the church. In our worship, play, and work together, the Spirit's movement was evident. From this gathering we took renewed energy for ministry and the tremendous support of colleagues who know well the gifts and burdens of serving God's people. It is your spiritual and financial support of LLGM that makes possible opportunities such as this annual retreat—thank you! ▼

Support continued from page 3.

## The Church of All Saints, San Marcos, California



The Church of All Saints celebrated its third anniversary as a congregation in 2001. That year also marked Pr. Jim Bischoff's 25th anniversary of ordained ministry. Pr. Bischoff was ordained in the American Lutheran Church on June 27, 1976.

Under Pr. Bischoff's leadership The Church of All Saints continues to grow. According to members Pr. Cindy Witt and Kay Teeters,

Sunday worship is packed even on ordinary Sundays. All Saints continues to be active in its community by hosting local support groups, participating in the AIDS Walk San Diego and other events, and actively inviting people into their fellowship. The Church of All Saints is a thriving congregation with an active ministry for all ages from youth to seniors.

*Pr. Jim Bischoff is an ECP rostered clergy. LLGM has pledged \$12,000 in mission support for Pr. Bischoff and The Church of All Saints.*

## University Lutheran Chapel, Berkeley, California



Under the leadership of Pr. Jeff, University Lutheran Chapel (ULC) campus ministry is a recognized leader in its community. ULC has been an ELCA campus ministry site for more than than 50 years. It serves several colleges and universities in the Berkeley area.

*Pr. Jeff Johnson is an ECP rostered clergy. LLGM has pledged \$12,000 in mission support for Pr. Johnson and ULC Campus Ministry.* ▼

mother church, it worked for me. This is to say that while I did not advertise my sexuality, I never hid it either. My partner and I lived together, were seen together, and participated in church activities together. So, when an intern from Luther Seminary was assigned to work with me, life continued as normal. My partner and I chose to come out to her to facilitate our working together. She seemed to be quite all right with this, but soon showed the poor judgment of telling her homophobic mother in the States, who then told her homophobic pastor, who then called DGM to "report" me, which in turn, "reported" these allegations to my bishop, Ron Warren of the Southeastern Synod. My bishop, together with DGM, took a totally vertical approach, ambushing me over a long-distance conference call, pressuring me for my resignation, threatening me with an investigation, and terminating my contract the very same day. I was advised to sign, seal, and send my letter of resignation dated the very same day. I was also ordered not to present myself in the pulpit the following Sunday, not to talk about this in public, and a small laundry list of other "thou shalt nots."

I, then informed the president of the ELCC, who was shocked that the ELCA had such a backward policy on this matter. The Chilean Lutheran church does not have a set policy on this matter, and the president informed me that she isn't interested in knowing with whom I share my bed. The following day I informed the president of the congregation I served, who was shocked not that I was a lesbian, which he already knew, but that the ELCA would act in such a way, ripping their pastor out from

their midst and not even giving them time to deal with it. The rest of that week held many intense meetings for these church leaders as they struggled with how to react to the imperialistic actions of the ELCA. The short version of the story is that the ELCC decided that they must accept the ELCA policy to respect my termina-

.....  
*"The air and the light outside the closet do feel great!  
However, I am angry at the injustice of the church, for the lack of compassion, for the vertical manipulation, for their heavy-handed use of power, for the sin of condemning and prohibiting loving relationships, [and] for their arrogance at determining who God may call and not call to God's service."*  
.....

tion, that they did not condemn my "alternative marital relationship" but that a congregation could not be "subjected" to having such a pastor without going through their own process previously, and that they will commit this topic to study.

I made the choice to remain in Chile and DGM did agree to give me my six-month reintegration salary as a lump-sum severance pay, although all benefits were terminated immediately.

I've taken these last five months to deal with what has happened, although I know that this process will continue for some time to come. The air and the light outside the closet do feel great! However, I am angry at the injustice of the church, for the lack of compassion, for the vertical manipulation, for their heavy-handed use of power, for the sin of condemning and prohibiting loving relationships, for their arrogance at determining who God may call and not call to God's service. I can't believe I stayed in the closet as long as I did, complying with their cowardice and injustice. And I can't believe how bad the church looks to me from the outside.

Again, thank you for being there. I would like to tell my story to others and be more actively involved in working for justice.

P.S. Although the congregation I served and the ELCC reacted very gracefully initially, shortly after my removal that support changed. It took on different forms from accusations of my meddling in church affairs and the threat to put a court order against my presence on church property, to a complete lack of collegial pastoral care and concern for my well-being. I feel this has a direct relation to the example set by the ELCA in how they treated me. Finally, the most painful consequence of my removal was the complete dismantling of a center and refuge for women who suffer from domestic violence, a social ministry effort that I had led. With the staff members who were fired from this ministry and the women whose treatment was brutally interrupted, we intend to begin this ministry anew, outside of the church. ▼

I replied, "I agree but don't you remember in my interview when you asked me why I left the church?" He had a quick solution. "You should go back into the closet for the greater good." I shook my head and laughed. I appreciated the affirmation, but he failed to acknowledge the paradoxes. His solution presents two approaches

—both avoid facing painful contradictions. One, it's easier to ignore the barriers to well being that a closeted person faces. Two, there's an assumption that a sexual minority pastor who leaves the ministry is no longer called."

"We are in the Easter season celebrating resurrection after engaging with the paradoxes of Holy Week lessons. I am reminded especially in this

season that the work of our churches and justice movements such as LLGM and ECP involves naming paradoxes and being conduits of transformation. We are Easter people."

Pr. Cynthia Crane works in the insurance industry. She is rostered by the ECP and is chair of the ECP - Twin Cities Panel. ▼

## LLGM honors Bishop Egertson

On Reformation Sunday last fall, LLGM was proud to honor Bishop Emeritus Paul W. Egertson during worship services at St. Francis Lutheran Church in San Francisco. Bishop Egertson was cited for his “courageous discipleship in participating in the ordination of Anita Carol Hill” one year ago this month. As a consequence of his action, Bishop Egertson was forced to resign his office. LLGM co-chair,

Greg Egertson, made the presentation on behalf of the board members, mission partners, donors of LLGM and members of the ECP. The award was a museum-matted (an archival-framed) reproduction of the photo that appeared in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* on Sunday, April 29, 2001, the day of Anita Hill’s installation as pastor at St. Paul Reformation Lutheran Church-ELCA, St. Paul, Minnesota.



Pr. James DeLange, Mari Irvin, Bishop Egertson, Greg Egertson, Pr. John Staab

## Why you should support LLGM now!

Some argue that now is the time to wait. The ELCA has embarked in a study that may result in elimination of its discriminatory policy. The stories in this newsletter demonstrate that each day that this policy exists, it discounts loving relationships, disregards vocations and drives people away from Christ. This policy causes the suffering of hundreds if not thousands of sexual minority pastors, associates in ministry, deacons, and deaconesses who are trapped in the closet for fear of reprisal. We cannot wait for an outcome may not happen.

Moreover, LLGM Mission Partners and congregations with ECP

pastors demonstrate power God’s love and are “making Christ known” in their communities. By taking a stand for justice and translating words of welcome to action, these congregations are enlivening their communities. Isn’t this what we want for our world? Strong, loving communities inviting people to God’s table? Can we really afford to wait?

LLGM believes the time for action is now — not only for those called to serve, but also for their communities. ***Help us support and encourage these courageous men and women of faith with your prayers and financial contributions.***

LLGM is the only organization in any of our nation’s denominations that is providing financial as well as pastoral and legal support in this fight for truth and justice.

LLGM has a budget of \$140,000 for 2002. The majority of this money goes to support congregations who have had the courage to call one of our eminently qualified gay or lesbian pastors, and to support the work of the Extraordinary Candidacy Project. That is why we need your help again and we need it today. Join us in this cause for bringing about the just world our resurrected Lord envisioned for all of God’s people!

LUTHERAN  
LESBIAN  
& GAY ▼  
MINISTRIES

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