

April 13, 2010

Dear LGBT Brothers & Sisters in Faith:

Welcome to Rainbow (LGBT) Camp – a retreat for lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgendered Christians to gather as a community of faith to explore the renewing and transforming power of God’s grace at Pilgrim Lodge, a Maine Conference, United Church of Christ summer camp. I am excited and eager to greet you for this sacred time together.

Our camp theme this year is “Be a Hero – Living like Jesus,” which will give us the opportunity to reflect upon our faith and to experience the renewing power of God’s grace in our lives. If this is your first time at Pilgrim Lodge – welcome! For those of you who have attended previous camps at Pilgrim Lodge, then you know the sacredness of this place.

I have enclosed the proposed schedule of activities and events for our time together over Memorial Day weekend. Please note that we will be sharing the Pilgrim Lodge facility with two other camps – “Couples Who Pray” and PL “Alumni Weekend.” While the bulk of our activities will be conducted separately from these other two camps, there will be occasions when we will intermingle. For example, we will eat our meals at the same time as the other campers, and we will worship together, with each camp serving in a leadership role as noted on the schedule.

Our official time together begins with supper on Friday, May 28th and ends following lunch on Monday, May 31st. You may arrive at camp anytime after 4:00 p.m. on Friday to get settled in your cabin. Please review Section Four of the Pilgrim Lodge Camper Guide www.pilgrimlodge.org/document/2010guide.pdf in advance of the weekend – paying close attention to items that you need to bring with you: bedding or a sleeping bag, towels, clothing that can be layered, swimwear, a flashlight (needed for the Sunday evening labyrinth walk), rain gear, bug repellent, and sunscreen. You might consider bringing a comfortable lawn chair to use for some of our outdoor gatherings. Don’t forget your Bible as we will have numerous roundtable discussions.

If you have any special dietary needs, please list this information on your health form – you do not need a doctor’s signature, but you do need to complete the form. You can do this when you arrive if you don’t get the chance to mail this in advance of the camp. You may bring your own special food items, which may be left in the kitchen refrigerator. Please let me know if you have any serious food allergies, or have Celiac disease, so I can alert the kitchen staff. Items not to bring include drugs, alcohol, or pets. Please consider leaving your cell phone, laptop,

and personal listening devices at home. A reminder that Pilgrim Lodge is a tobacco-free facility!

This year's mission focus is "Friends of Kakamega" – a Maine-based Quaker non-profit organization helping children whose parents have died primarily of AIDS in Kenya. Representatives from this organization will give all three camps a presentation on their worthy project. More information is available at www.friendsofkakamega.org.

We will be having a book discussion of Gay by God: How to be Lesbian or Gay and Christian by Rev. Michael S. Piazza, which is available at www.amazon.com. I hope you will be able to read this book in advance of our weekend together, but don't stress – I know how crazy life can be. If you are unable to read the book in advance, please bring it with you and come ready to enjoy the weekend.

For our Saturday evening program, we will be watching *OUT in the SILENCE*, which is a film and campaign for fairness and equality in rural & small town America. This newly released documentary will offer us a compelling model for dialogue and community engagement.

Our Sunday evening program is entitled, "Sharing Our Gifts and Talents," which will be the opportunity for all three camps to share the unique gifts God has given us. Bring your special gift of music, humor, story-telling, dance, poetry, or artwork. Why not bring that floppy hat and sunglasses and sing a show tune? Or bring your favorite musical instrument and play a song, read a poem or just be silly and tell a joke! The choice is yours! Let's share the gift of laughter and joy as we celebrate the many talents we bring to the community of faith.

Finally, please be sure to pay any balance owed for the camp prior to coming. I look forward to meeting everyone on Friday, May 28th at 4:00 p.m. Dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. Please let me know if you need to arrive at a later time. I anticipate our time together with joy and look forward to spending an exciting weekend of renewal with our LGBT brothers and sisters in faith.

Faithfully,

Rev. Darren L. Morgan
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Rainbow (LGBT) Camp Schedule
Theme: “Be a Hero – Living Like Jesus”

Dean: Rev. Darren Morgan

Friday, May 28, 2010:

4:00 pm – Arrival, cabin assignment, get settled

6:00 pm – Dinner

7:00 pm – Introductions, Community Building

9:15 pm – Vespers¹

Saturday, May 29, 2010:

7:30 am – Morning Watch²

8:00 am – Breakfast

9:00 am – Mission Project Presentation: “Friends of Kakamega”

10:00 am – Roundtable Discussion

Welcoming Others – John 6:1-15

11:30 am – Labyrinth Walk

12:30 pm – Lunch

1:00-4:00 pm – Free Time (Pilgrim Lodge work project option)

4:00 pm – Roundtable Discussion

A group discussion of the book Gay by God: How to be Lesbian or Gay and Christian

by Rev. Michael S. Piazza

The homo-hatred of the Religious Right has driven so many beautifully gifted women and men into the arms of suicide, alcoholism, promiscuity, and self-destruction. It is impossible to overstate the damage done in human lives when people are made to believe they cannot be children of the God who created them. Yes, you can be gay or lesbian and Christian! You can be the happy, healthy, and holy person God created you to be.

6:00 pm – Dinner

7:00 pm – Movie followed by group discussion

OUT in the SILENCE is a film and campaign for fairness and equality in rural & small town America. Following the story of a small American town confronting a firestorm of controversy ignited by a same-sex wedding announcement in the local newspaper, this documentary illustrates the challenges of being an outsider in a

¹ Friday evening Vespers will be led by the Deans of all three camps – Couples Who Pray Deans are to take the lead in preparing the service.

² Saturday Morning Watch led by LGBT camp.

conservative rural community and the change that is possible when courageous people break the silence and search for common ground.

9:15 pm – Vespers³

Sunday, May 30, 2010:

8:00 am – Breakfast

9:00 am – Roundtable Discussion

Accepting Others – Acts 10:24-35, 44-48

10:30 am – Sunday Worship⁴

11:30 am – Nature Walk

12:30 pm – Lunch

1:00-4:00 pm – Free Time

4:00 pm – Roundtable Discussion

Continued discussion of:

Gay by God: How to be Lesbian or Gay and Christian by Rev. Michael S. Piazza

6:00 pm – Dinner

7:00 pm – “Sharing Our Gifts & Talents” event (All campers are invited to participate)

9:15 pm – Labyrinth Walk with Vespers in the center⁵

Monday, May 31, 2010:

7:30 am – Morning Watch⁶

8:00 am – Breakfast

9:00 am – Roundtable Discussion

Sharing the Good News – 2 Timothy 1:3-7

10:30 am -12:30 pm – Free Time

12:30 pm – Lunch

1:00-2:00 pm – Final Reflections & Goodbyes

(You are welcome to depart at your leisure)

³ Saturday evening Vespers led by PL Alumni camp.

⁴ Sunday worship will be led by the Deans of all three camps – LGBT Dean is to take the lead in preparing the service.

⁵ Sunday evening Labyrinth walk with Vespers is for LGBT campers only. The other two camps will be holding their own Vespers led by the Couples Who Pray camp.

⁶ Monday Morning Watch led by the Deans of all three camps – PL Alumni Deans to take the lead in preparing the service.