

May 1, 2012

Dear LGBT Sisters & Brothers in Faith:

Welcome to Rainbow Camp – a Maine Conference, United Church of Christ sponsored summer retreat for lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender Christians to gather as a community of faith. This year’s camp will be held at Living Water – a spiritual retreat facility in Winslow. I am excited and eager to greet you for this sacred time together.

Our camp theme this year is “*Sacred Stories*,” which will give us the opportunity to reflect on what it means to engage and sustain a meaningful life with God as LGBT persons of faith. If this is your first time to Rainbow Camp – welcome! For those of you who have attended previous camps, this year will be a bit different since we will not be holding our camp at the Pilgrim Lodge site, but rather at an outside retreat facility.

Enclosed is a proposed schedule of activities during our weekend together. Our camp begins at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, June 29th (please arrive having already eaten dinner) and ends following lunch on Sunday, July 1st. We will be governed by the rules of Pilgrim Lodge and Living Water. Please review Section Four of the Pilgrim Lodge Camper Guide, which can be found at: <http://www.pilgrimlodge.org/document/parentguide.pdf>. Information on Living Water and directions to the facility can be found on their website: <http://www.retreatinmaine.com/>. Living Water provides bedding, linens, and towels. Remember to bring 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. If you do not get the chance to mail it in advance, you can complete the form when you arrive. 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 to the retreat include drugs, alcohol, or pets. Please consider leaving your cell phone, laptop, and personal listening devices at home. Note: the Living Water building is a tobacco-free facility!

This year’s Pilgrim Lodge mission focus is “The Telling Room” – a nonprofit writing center in Portland, Maine, dedicated to the idea that children and young adults are natural storytellers. Representatives from this organization will give us a presentation on their ministry. For more information, go to: <http://www.tellingroom.org/>.

The retreat will be structured on Brian McLaren’s book, *Naked Spirituality: A Life with God in 12 Simple Words*, which presents a four-stage framework for understanding the spiritual life and highlights spiritual practices appropriate to each stage. Participants will be asked to bare themselves spiritually – stripping away the symbols and status of the Sunday-dress version people often call “organized religion” – and reflect on how to stay true to Jesus’s core message while engaging faithfully with our postmodern world. It is not necessary for you to have read the book in advance of the retreat weekend.

On Saturday evening, we will watch *God & Gays: Bridging the Gap*, a film that takes an intimate look into the struggle of reconciling sexuality and spirituality by getting into the head, heart, and lives of people who have found homosexuality and the Bible as their self-defining

identity. The film wrestles with the issues of being gay in a right wing Christian world through the eyes and experiences of people wanting a relationship with the very religion that rejects them. In every age there is a group of people misunderstood and mistreated simply because of who they are. God & Gays puts the face and heartbeat of humanity into this emotionally charged issue and answers the question of whether it is possible to be gay and religious. There will be time for discussion following the movie.

Our retreat is shorter than previous years, but I trust you will walk away with a spirit-filled and life-giving understanding of what it means to be an LGBT person of faith in these times.

Finally, please be sure to pay any balance owed for the camp prior to your arrival. I look forward to meeting everyone on Friday, June 29th at 7:00 p.m. and spending an exciting weekend of renewal with my LGBT sisters and brothers in faith. Please let me know if you need to arrive at a later time. If you have any questions about the retreat, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Faithfully,

Rev. Darren L. Morgan
Rainbow Camp Dean
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Rainbow Camp 2012 Schedule
Theme: “Sacred Stories”

Dean: Rev. Darren Morgan

Friday, June 29, 2012:

7:00 pm – Arrival, room assignment, get settled
7:45 pm – Introductions & Sharing our Spiritual Journeys
9:15 pm – Vespers

Saturday, June 30, 2012:

7:30 am – Morning Watch
8:00-8:45 am – Breakfast
9:00-10:15 am – Session 1: Simplicity – the Season of Spiritual Awakening
10:30-11:45 am – Session 2: Complexity – the Season of Spiritual Strengthening
Noon-12:45 pm – Lunch
1:00-2:15 pm – Session 3: Perplexity – the Season of Spiritual Surviving
2:30-3:45 pm – Session 4: Harmony – the Season of Spiritual Deepening
4:00-5:15 pm – Pilgrim Lodge Mission Project Presentation: “The Telling Room”
5:30-6:15 pm – Dinner
6:30-9:00 pm – Movie: God & Gays: Bridging the Gap, followed by group discussion
9:15 pm – Vespers

Sunday, July 1, 2012:

8:00-8:45 am – Breakfast
9:00-10:15 am – Closing Session: Twelve Simple Prayers
10:30-11:45 am – Sunday Worship with Communion
Noon-12:45 pm – Lunch
1:00 pm – Final Reflections & Goodbyes

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