



INDY PFLAG NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2009

PFLAG meets the 2nd Sunday of each month. The next meeting will be Sun., Sept. 13 from 2 to 4 pm at St. Luke's United Methodist Church in the Youth Wing (North door), just west of Meridian on 86th St.

September 13 Meeting

In September, we welcome Graham Brinklow, the Youth Outreach Coordinator for Indiana Youth Group (IYG), as our speaker. In his position, Graham works with Indiana high schools and community-based LGBTQ programs to start, strengthen, or resuscitate Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs) and LGBTQ youth programs. He is also working to build a state-wide network, Indiana GSA Voice Network, and educate them on the unscrupulous ways Big Tobacco companies target the LGBTQ community. In addition, Graham heads up Without Tobacco, a local coalition of health and social service organizations working to reduce tobacco in the LGBTQ community.

Graham has fifteen years experience working to educate, mentor and entertain youth of all ages. His past experience includes touring in an issue-based children's theatre troupe and mentoring at-risk inner-city youth. For over seven years, he worked at The Children's Museum of Indianapolis to help build its educational performer program with both adult employees and youth volunteers. Plus...let's just say he knows what their costumed mascot "Rex the Dinosaur" goes through in a day.

For the past ten years, Graham has been blessed to share his life with his husband, Matt Keller, who also volunteers at IYG. They share their east-side home with two cats, some fish, and a new black Labrador puppy. Graham's presentation will follow our confidential sharing time.

*Mark your calendar NOW for our 2009 Spirit & Place
"Inspiring Places" Festival event
People Make the Place*

**Sunday, November 8, 2009, 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM
at St. Luke's United Methodist Church
100 W. 86th St., Indianapolis, IN 46260**

Shared stories and experiences, as well as art by young people from Indiana Youth Group, transform a simple classroom into a wonderfully diverse community of unconditional support, security, and acceptance. Reverend Barbara Child, Unitarian Universalist Church of Indianapolis, will lead a discussion to explore how people, more than spaces, inspire place. Presented by Indianapolis PFLAG, Indiana Youth Group, and St. Luke's United Methodist Church. Free, light refreshments.

**A detailed description can be found on our website
www.indypflag.org or at www.spiritandplace.org**

Notes from Annette

The weather will be getting cool soon and Fall will be upon us. At PFLAG, business is always "as usual." As the leaves change color, it is a time for introspection and looking ahead. Our chapter is very proud of its members. We value you and the contributions you make. We welcome you to our meetings every second Sunday of the month.

In order to keep our chapter and membership thriving, we need the dues of all our members. A small portion of the dues goes to the National PFLAG office. But some of it also stays here in Indianapolis. Without the dues, we cannot keep our chapter functioning properly. So we ask you all to please send in your payments.

Indy PFLAG, along with many other organizations, is trying to cut costs. Therefore, we are encouraging our members to receive our monthly newsletters via e-mail. It's quick and easy, and you can have your newsletter at the touch of a finger. It takes a lot of time and energy to mail the newsletters, so this will be a big help. If you want to receive the newsletter via e-mail, please contact Indy PFLAG at info@indypflag.org.

Our meetings are informative and supportive. We hope we will see you at meetings and get to know you. Thank you!

IYG Needs

The Indiana Youth Group (IYG) serves youth aged 12 to 21 who self-identify as gay, lesbian, transgender or questioning - and their allied friends. It offers a safe place to build self-confidence, explore individualism and develop friendships within a community that values fairness, acceptance, respect for diversity and equality.

They exist on "soft" money - grants and fund raising events. They have many needs that you might be able to help meet; everything from art supplies to dish towels to a 15-passenger van. You can find an extensive Wish List of needed items at: <http://www.indypflag.org/IYGWishList.pdf>

These are IYG's priority needs:

***X-box:** we need one of the old kinds...maybe someone has one at home that they've replaced with the new X-box 360.

***The game "Apples to Apples"**

***Paper products** - plates, napkins, cups (9 - 12 oz), paper towels, TP, etc.

***Cans of soda** (any kind)

***A picnic table** for the back yard and we would love to have **more food night volunteers** (one night a month bring in dinner).

Bring your donations to our meeting and we'll make sure they're delivered!

Indy PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) is a group of people who share common experiences and provide support for each other. We listen and love. We help families have open, positive and loving relationships with GLBT children and we work for their civil and human rights.

Visit Indy PFLAG at Penrod, Sept. 12, 9 - 5

Our chapter is always striving to increase our visibility in the community because we want the people who need our support to know we're here. This year we are joining with Indiana Youth Group (IYG) to have a booth at the Penrod Arts Fair. Come visit us at our D-10 location on Saturday, Sept. 12. The fair is held on the grounds of the Indianapolis Museum of Art, 9:00 – 5:00. Tickets are \$12 advance purchase and \$15 on the day of the show. Kids 10 and under are free. Check out www.penrod.org for more information. Check out IYG's website at www.indianayouthgroup.org.

We will be selling art from the IYG youth and note cards of their art. We will have PFLAG brochures and handouts and will be selling buttons and bumper stickers. In our booth application we stated that, "Our purpose in applying for a booth at Penrod is to let the Indianapolis community know about two organizations that provide support for youth and families and to showcase the art of youth who are dealing with self acceptance and acceptance from a society that does not always honor diversity."

Stop by and check us out!

It's Indy PFLAG Membership Time!

We hope you find PFLAG and the newsletter valuable and choose to renew or become new members. *Where does your money go?* We send part to National PFLAG so they can continue education and advocacy at the national level. A large part goes for postage for the newsletter and you can help reduce that by choosing to receive it by email. We also pay for booth space at teacher and counselor conferences, Indy PRIDE, Black PRIDE, and local festivals. We try to use the money wisely to promote education and advocacy about LGBT issues.

This is also a good time to give thanks to all who make the newsletter happen: Marcia composes, Bernie prints, Sue keeps the mail and email lists up to date and prints the labels, Charlie folds and mails.

Please use the enclosed membership form or find it online at www.indypflag.org and mail it today. Thanks!

Brad Pitt on Marriage Equality, Love and Children

Brad Pitt explores many topics in his new interview with Parade, but it's his stance on marriage equality that has our attention.

"I have love in my life, a soul mate—absolutely. When someone asked me why Angie and I don't get married, I replied, 'Maybe we'll get married when it's legal for everyone else.' I stand by that, although I took a lot of flak for saying it—hate mail from religious groups. I believe everyone should have the same rights. They say gay marriage ruins families and hurts kids. Well, I've had the privilege of seeing my gay friends being parents and watching their kids grow up in a loving environment."

On the right to love: "It's ridiculous that Prop 8 took away gay people's right to marry! I have no understanding of that kind of hatred. Maybe it's fear of difference or of the unknown. If you feel belittled, maybe you need someone else to belittle to feel powerful. It's the only way I know how to explain it. You've got religion telling you what to think about homosexuality, about marriage. They say homosexuality is a choice, a lifestyle,

something you can be cured of, and that isn't true. But if you're tucked away and have no friends who are gay, you'll believe what the preachers say. Just think of it in terms of being in love—how would you feel if someone told you that you couldn't be with the person you loved?"

On wanting the best for his children: "Would it bother me if a child of mine turns out to be gay? No, not one bit. Listen, I want my kids to live the lives they want to live. I want them to be fulfilled. I hope I teach my kids to be who they really are." (*ProudParenting.com*)

US Evangelical Lutherans accept 'committed' gay clergy

Sat Aug 22, 2:35 pm ET, WASHINGTON (AFP) – A US Evangelical Lutheran church has opted to allow gays and lesbians in "committed" relationships to serve in its clergy, in a controversial decision that could divide its 4.6 million US members.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), which has 10,000 congregations throughout the United States, voted Friday evening on a contentious text authorizing homosexuals in committed relationships to join the clergy.

After passionate debate, church delegates voted 559 to 451 "to open the ministry of the church to gay and lesbian pastors and other professional workers living in committed relationships," said church information director John Brook. "The actions here change the church's policy, which previously allowed gays and lesbians into the ordained ministry only if they remained celibate," he told AFP.

The church is not the first in the United States to admit homosexuals to the clergy -- the US Episcopal Church had already done so -- but the measure provoked heated debate among some 2,000 ELCA delegates who met in Minneapolis for three days. "There are different understandings of scripture on this issue," Brook told AFP. "People made their decision on how they understand the scriptures. It was a passionate but very civil debate." Among those opposing the decision was Pastor Richard Mahan of the West Virginia-Western Maryland Synod. "I cannot see how the church that I have known for 40 years can condone what God has condemned," he said. "Nowhere does it say in scripture that homosexuality and same-sex marriage is acceptable for God."

The text approved by the church does not make specific mention of same-sex marriage, but it provides that congregations who choose to may "recognize, support and hold publicly accountable life-long, monogamous, same-gender relationships." Some congregations opposed to the decision have threatened to leave the church altogether. "This remains to be seen," said Brook. "We are concerned because there have been such statements, but we are hopeful that the church will remain unified."

For supporters of the decision, including Bishop Gary Wollersheim of the ELCA Northern Illinois Synod, it is simply a case of doing the right thing. "It's a matter of justice, a matter of hospitality. It's what Jesus would have us do."

"The work goes on, the cause endures, the hope still lives and the dreams shall never die."

-Senator Edward Kennedy

To talk with a parent who also has a gay son or lesbian daughter & to learn more about Indy PFLAG, please contact:

***Sarah (317) 545-7034**

***Charlene/Oran (317) 897-0126**

***info@indypflag.org**

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