

north & south CAROLINA Q Notes

noted . notable . noteworthy GLBT issues

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editor's note

It's nice to be back in the Carolinas. After 16 years of making my home in various cities up and down the East Coast — mostly Atlanta — I decided it was time to come home.

There were mitigating circumstances, of course. Elderly parents that needed my help, an economic downturn that resulted in job layoffs for both my partner and myself (talk about lightning striking twice) and the desire for a slower pace of life were all factors that made me consider a return to my roots.

It was a year ago this month — I sold everything I didn't want and packed everything I did into a Ford Explorer with a U-Haul trailer attached. Partner, dog and cat in tow, we set out for a return to my hometown: Charlotte.

What I found upon my return didn't look much like what I left behind in the late '80s.

The gay clubs that dotted the landscape back then had names like Power Company, Odyssey, Capital Corral and Oleen's. There was nothing even remotely resembling a community center in either state.

As far as gay publications go — all I can remember was a little photocopied handzine about local drag performers that you could pick up at one of the three nightspots in

Charlotte, along with a handful of other fledgling publications from different regions.

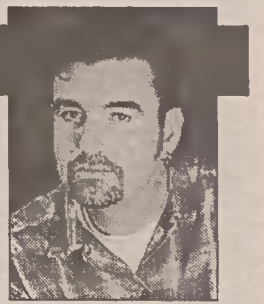
These days things look better than ever for North and South Carolina's LGBT community. The number of gay-owned businesses across both states have increased dramatically and Charlotte, Wilmington and Columbia all boast LGBT community centers.

I have to admit — I'm pleasantly surprised. Both states are organized and active politically and the out and proud gay and lesbian population has grown in leaps and bounds.

I'm looking forward to reacquainting myself with home.

A note in closing — after two years with Q-Notes, former Editor Leah Sepsenwol resigned in order to pursue other interests. I followed her work closely during that time and both myself and the entire staff of Q-Notes enjoyed working with Leah during her tenure. She brought a new voice to the paper — one that will be sorely missed.

— David Moore
Editor, Q-Notes



letters to the editor

Dear Editor:

I am the Elder for Region 7 of Metropolitan Community Churches, which includes North Carolina. I would like to respond to the recent article in Q-Notes titled "Former Hickory MCC Affiliates with New Denomination."

First, MCC recognizes the right of the former MCC in Hickory, NC to disaffiliate with MCC and the leadership of the MCC movement wishes them well as they continue to serve their constituencies with the Christian good news.

Secondly, I would like to comment on the implication that a church would leave MCC because of an "adoption of the 'Progressive Christianity' school of thought and turning away from mainstream Christianity." The Center for Progressive Christianity only lists 14 Metropolitan Community Churches as having affiliated with them, while MCC has around 300 churches worldwide. We certainly allow for people to define themselves in a variety of ways and in MCC we have evangelical Christians, charismatic Christians (our founder is a former Pentecostal minister and I was once a member of the Assemblies of God), liberals and progressives, as well as centrists.

Being an inclusive and ecumenical Christian denomination, we believe there is room for all kinds of expressions of Christianity and that we can be united in love even while experiencing great diversity of theological opinion. We are very proud of

our members who identify as Progressive Christians, but no more so than we are of all our other members who experience and express religion in ways that are true for them.

Incidentally MCC does not have any new policy on ethics. What we continue to have is a stringent internal judicial process that includes the right of appeal by any individual. Each of our leaders are subject to this process which reflects the justice and integrity we believe must be offered to all people.

Finally, let me applaud the leadership of the ICCS for affirming that their first church to affiliate, is made up of "people who see Jesus Christ as essential to their lives, and we want to remain that way." All Christians hold Jesus as the central figure in their faith experience. And MCC has long held that in Jesus we find the revelation of divine love for all people. MCC may allow for many views and understandings about the nature of Jesus, but all of those understandings keep Jesus as the model for Christian living.

Let me again say that we affirm the right of the former MCC in Hickory to now celebrate an affiliation with the ICCS and we at MCC wish them and the ICCS well as they celebrate and share what is true for them. In a world that is so divided by hatred and suspicion, we are glad to affirm and support any group or individual that is committed to sharing a message of hope and love.

— Reverend Elder Gillian J. Storey,
MCC Region 7

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