

# Tammy Faye fights AIDS

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was at first, but he was such a sweet man and very kind — and spiritual too. He's also very educated which people probably don't know."

Messner's hectic life hasn't slowed down since production wrapped. In addition to publicity obligations for the show, she's kept busy with charitable work.

She was the special guest at a recent Gay Bingo fundraiser in Durham, N.C., to benefit Alliance of AIDS Services-Carolina and she's set to headline an AIDS fundraiser in Charlotte next month.

The Queen City benefit will be similar to one she participated in last year with a key change — she's bringing along a special guest this time.

On Feb. 7 the Unitarian Universalist Church will be the site for "Together Again: An Evening with Tammy Faye and Tammy Sue" that will unite mother and daughter for a rare public appearance since the collapse of the family's PTL (Praise The Lord) televangelism empire in the late '80s.

Tammy Sue Bakker, 33, was just six when she began singing with her mom and dad, Jim Bakker, on "The PTL Show." She has overcome the scandal that rocked the family and the crippling depression that followed to create a music ministry

that has taken her around the world.

"We've been wanting to do this for a long time," Bakker said. "AIDS is a cause that's close to both of our hearts so it's great to finally get to do something together."

The pair express a strong connection to the LGBT community in general. "[Tammy Sue and I] have gone through so many of the same things as the gay community," Messner explained. "We've been made fun of and misunderstood, put down and hurt by so many people. It has taught us a lot about love and caring and the way you show caring — by getting out there and doing. A lot of people talk about caring, but the gay community gets out there and does it. And that's why I'm so proud of the gay community."

Dale Pierce, Messner's close friend and the event's host, will lead the ladies in a "talk-show" format discussion about their lives, faith and professional projects. Bakker will also perform selections from her Christian music album "Peaceful Journey."

But the women don't want the evening to be limited by preconceived notions. "We'll do whatever the people want us to do ..." Bakker said, before Messner interjected, laughing, "Within reason of course."

Proceeds from the evening benefit the non-profit Regional AIDS Interfaith Network (RAIN). Since 1992 RAIN's coalition of care teams, culled from 100 local churches and synagogues, have assisted over 500 people living with HIV/AIDS and provided HIV-prevention education and training to

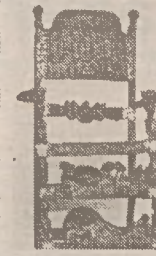
approximately 31,000 individuals.

According to Pierce, Metrolina AIDS Project received "several thousand dollars" as the beneficiary of last year's event. He expects the total to be even higher this year due to the increased publicity from Messner's participation in "The Surreal Life II" and the recent publication of her book, "I Survived, And You Can Too!"

"Together Again: An Evening with Tammy Faye and Tammy Sue" will be presented at 8 p.m. in the sanctuary of the Unitarian Universalist Church, 234 N. Sharon Amity Rd. Tickets are \$20 and available at White Rabbit Books, 1401 Central Ave., and Paper Skyscraper, 330 East Blvd. To purchase tickets by phone or for more information, call 704-309-6712. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. and seating is general admission.

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