

"Brendan taught me what the locker room can be like for young LGBT athletes, then showed me the difference one person can make by standing up for what is right," Patrick Burke says on the organization's website.

To view the videos, visit goqnotes.com/23050/.

— M.D.

National/Global

Minnesota legalizes marriage equality

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Minnesota became the 12th state to legalize marriage rights for same-sex couples when Gov. Mark Dayton (pictured) signed the legislature's bill on May 14. This victory comes just six months after voters in the state defeated a proposed

constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the nation's largest LGBT civil rights organization, was credited for helping the state achieve the legislative victory.

"From staff

on-the-ground, research, advice, to financial resources, HRC has been a valued and trusted team member working alongside our state and other national groups," State Sen. Scott Dibble said in a release from the organization. "Thank you, HRC."

Other national groups also offered resources to Minnesotans United for All Families. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force has offices in Minneapolis. Freedom to Marry provided staff support.

"The transformative nature of people talking about their love and their lives is clear, as we see in reaching this milestone in Minnesota, and in the fact that a clear and growing majority of Americans supports the freedom to marry," said Task Force Executive Director Rea Carey in a statement.

"Coming on the heels of victories in Rhode Island and Delaware, this win for marriage shows that the freedom to marry is a value that Americans across the country stand behind," Thalia Zepatos, director of public engagement for Freedom to Marry and strategic adviser for Minnesotans United, said in a statement.

Minnesota is the third state in May to pass marriage equality legislation. Advocates said pressure is rising on other states to pass similar measures. Equality Illinois CEO Bernard Cherkasov wants his state to take the plunge. The Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act has already been introduced to the state House of Representatives.

"Everyone has done the hard work to draft a fair bill that provides for marriage equality while guaranteeing religious freedom. Now, it is imperative that Illinois House members do their job at their next opportunity," Cherkasov said in a press release.

These steps towards equality for LGBT people are being made at a time when the whole nation awaits with bated breath the U.S. Supreme Court decisions on two cases integral to the cause: *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, challenging California's Proposition 8, and *United States v. Windsor*, which challenges the federal *Defense of Marriage Act* passed

by Congress and signed by President Bill Clinton in 1996.

— M.D.

Bakker breaks rainbow bread

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Rev. Jay Bakker, the son of the former Fort Mill, S.C., PTL Club leaders Jim Bakker and Tammy Faye Bakker Messner, was in the city two days prior to Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton's signing of a new gay marriage law. Bakker was opening another branch of his Revolution Church on May 12.

Bakker and his wife recently relocated to the state from New York, *The Huffington Post* reported. The Brooklyn congregation continues to meet in a bar.

A pro-LGBT supporter, Bakker also performs same-sex marriages.

During the opening of the church, blogger Tony Jones and his photographer wife Courtney Perry and their daughter Lilly shared a rainbow-colored communion bread that

they had made with the congregation. It was done to show support for the then pending pro-LGBT legislation.

"It was special to honor Christ as well as to honor those LGBT people who didn't make it this far and hope for a better future. It became a real source of redemption," *The Huffington Post* reported Bakker saying as a response to hearing about a gay man's former partner who had committed suicide. He also said that the bread became a "really beautiful thing." (For detailed instructions on how to make rainbow bread, visit taste-for-adventure.com/2013/04/13/rainbow-bread/.)

The following day, he visited the state's legislature at the time the Senate was taking the vote on the marriage equality bill, *The Huffington Post* added.

Revolution Church is progressive, welcoming and affirming. It was created in Phoenix, Ariz., in 1994. It was followed up by churches in Atlanta, Ga., New York,

N.Y., Charlotte, N.C., and now the one in Minnesota. Podcasts are available online.

Bakker has authored three books about his life-long experiences within the Christian community. "Faith, Doubt, and Other Lines I've Crossed," explores questions that are not asked and suggests that people welcome other interpretations of the Bible as they read it, leading to finding God with limitless grace. "Fall to Grace" chronicles Bakker's life when his parents were beset by scandal when PTL was under fire. It asks readers to challenge their understanding of salvation and encourages non-believers to see Jesus with fresh eyes. In "Son of a Preacher Man," he searches for a way to find grace amidst the turmoil of his life when it seemed remote.

— L.M.

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