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ONLINE
Q.POLL
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If the U.S. puts a
constitutional amendment in
place permanently barring
same-sex marriage would
you consider moving to
another country?

. Yes . No

Q.POLL RESULTS: 24

Episcopalians elect first openly gay bishop

Robinson cleared of 11th-hour accusations

by David Stout
Q-Notes staff

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — Rev. Gene Robinson, 56, became the first openly gay man to attain the position of bishop within the Episcopal Church USA on August 5 when he was approved in the House of Bishops by a vote of 62 to 43. Two days before at the week-long 74th General Convention, Robinson was affirmed by a two-to-one margin in the 831-member House of Deputies.

The House of Bishops was scheduled to vote on August 4, but a delay was called when last minute allegations of misconduct were leveled against Robinson. One charge was that he inappropriately touched a male church member at a meeting a few years ago while a second allegation contended that Robinson was connected to a website for gay and lesbian youth that contained a link to a pornographic site.

The convention's presiding bishop, Rev. Frank Griswold, postponed the final vote to allow for an investigation of the allegations. As part of that effort Robinson met privately with

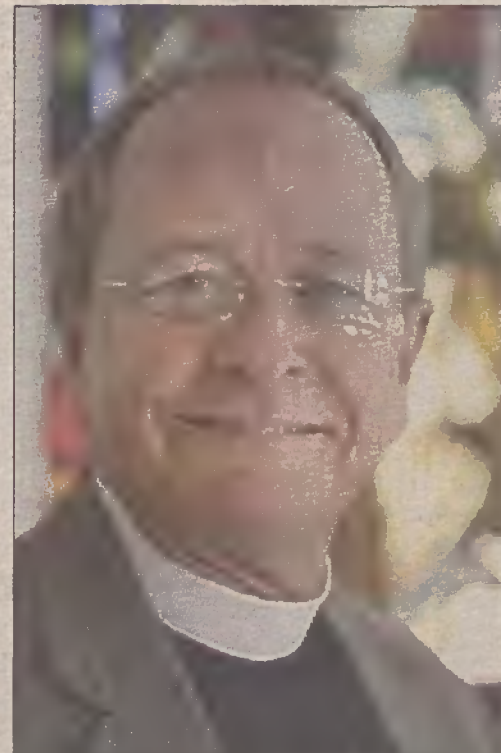
church leaders but made no public statements afterward.

The "homosexual harassment" claim was made in an email message received August 3 from David Lewis of Manchester, Vt., a self-identified heterosexual who said Robinson "made him feel uncomfortable" by touching his arm and back during two conversations in 1999.

Bishop Gordon Scruton, who was charged with investigating the allegations, spoke to Lewis by phone and discovered that his brief discussions with Robinson occurred in public and others could have interpreted them as "natural and normal." Scruton said Lewis expressed regret for using the word "harassment" in his email and declined to bring formal charges against Robinson.

The second allegation stemmed from Robinson's association with Outright, a New Hampshire LGBT youth group he helped found in 1995. According to Scruton, the organization's website had contained an indirect link to a porn site, but Robinson had not been involved with Outright since 1998 and there was no evidence connecting him to the site.

On Scruton's recommendation both matters were closed.



Rev. Gene Robinson: 'We worship a living God, and that living God leads us into truth.'

Later the same day Robinson was affirmed — despite the objections of conservative bishops

see BISHOP on 4

'Ex-gay' poster boy caught with pants down

Conservatives attempt to cover up Michael Johnston's 'moral fall'

by Mark Smith and Wayne Besen

Michael Johnston, an "ex-gay" who founded the Christian organization Kerusso Ministries and appeared in a 1998 conservative ad campaign touting a "gays can change" message, has apparently reverted to his "former" sexual orientation.



HIV-positive 'ex-gay' spokesman Michael Johnston reportedly resumed gay sexual activity with multiple partners and failed to inform them of his status.

Johnston contacted AFA and other right wing groups he was affiliated with and made them aware he was involved in gay sexual activity.

The American Family Association (AFA) — a conservative Christian group Johnston worked with directly — confirmed that Johnston has indeed had a "moral fall" and said he is currently seeking professional help. AFA spokesperson Buddy Smith told writer Wayne Besen that in late 2002

"The extreme right wing touted the ex-gay ministries as a knockout punch to the gay community, but it has instead become a punch line in less than three years," said Besen. "It is disgraceful how right-wing groups loudly roared from the rooftops Michael Johnston's supposed 'cure,' but built a silent wall around his fall. The Rev. Jerry Falwell and others who exploited Johnston's lie should denounce the ex-gay myth and apologize for concealing the truth about Johnston's failure."

According to Besen, an inside source informed him that Johnston is now at Pure Life Ministries, a residential program that treats sex addiction in Dry Ridge, Ky. (www.purelifeministries.org/index.htm). Besen called the facility and they confirmed that a Michael Johnston was on the premises.

In various speeches Johnston has made as an "ex-gay" in the past, he admitted having sex with men without disclosing his HIV-positive status.

"I continued to live as a homosexual for two years after I knew I was HIV-positive," Johnston said in a story that was reported in POZ magazine. "And I am ashamed to say that in those two years not once did I ever tell any of my partners that I was carrying this deadly disease."

Johnston reportedly continued that behav-

see POSTER on 12

Bush denounces same-sex marriage rights

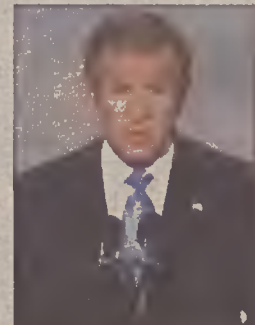
President may support constitutional prohibition

by David Stout
Q-Notes staff

WASHINGTON, D.C. — After remaining mostly silent on gay issues during the previous years of his term, on July 30 President George W. Bush publicly denounced same-sex marriage at a White House Rose Garden news conference unleashing an avalanche of criticism from gay and progressive activists.

Among a wide-ranging series of remarks, Bush told journalists, "I believe marriage is between a man and a woman and I believe we ought to codify that one way or the other and we have lawyers looking at the best way to do that."

In his apparent "compassionate conservative" style, President Bush tried to temper his exclusionary position with the following statement: "I am in



Activists were angered when President Bush referred to gays as "sinners."

see BUSH on 6