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Homosexuality a forgivable sin

Methodist church okays gay membership

By Lisa Gillespie
STAFF WRITER

The United Methodist Church in Western North Carolina held a meeting protested by the Ku Klux Klan on the inclusion of homosexuals in all aspects of their church September 4.

"I don't think that the Methodist Church should allow gays into their church because the Bible says that homosexuality is a sin," said Jason Ridenhour, freshman student. "If you are a homosexual, you just should not be allowed to go there. The KKK makes sense sometimes. I guess they were right quoting the Bible about homosexuality."

Protestors from the KKK came from the southeastern states, but did not cause any trouble.

"As far as the KKK goes, I can't stand them," said Matt Dufon, junior student. "They have no right to use the Bible. They are such a one-sided, hate-all-but-themselves group."

In 1980, a motion was passed by the committee to prevent practicing homosexuals to become ordained in the United Methodist Church.

"I don't really have a problem with gays attending church, and I don't see why that should be an issue," said Fleming Talton, freshman student. "But, I wouldn't feel comfortable having a gay preacher."

Church law states that, "homosexual persons are individuals of sacred worth...God's grace is available to all."

"As Christians in general, we should not be judgmental," said Nicole Carroll, senior psychology student and president of the Baptist Student Union. "We

would never discriminate against anyone that was gay or lesbian. They would have to know that we do not believe that is right. They would not be allowed to hold a position. As long as they wanted to come and they knew how we felt about it, it would be fine if they joined."

In 1992 the UMC Commission on Christian Unity and Inter-religious Concerns said that the opinions stated in the Bible represent ancient culture and not the will of God.

"We love the people, but maybe not the things they do," said Farrah Duncan, sophomore psychology student and president of United Methodist Campus Ministries. "We all sin, and that is just their sin. No sin is greater than any other. We are open and we have programs on how to include homosexuals in our church."

In 2004, the commission said that the practice of homosexuality was incompatible with Christian teachings.

"We mostly do not believe in gays and lesbians as a Baptist denomination," Carroll said. "Most people in BSU do not agree with it. A man shall not lie on a man. Marriage is a sacred union between a man and a woman. We haven't had an issue with it actually; it has not been brought up. I think most people know how Baptists are."

Every four years, a General Conference of Methodist churches from around the world is held.

"Most of us are pretty open-minded," Duncan said. "They should be included, but not ordained."

The Methodist Church modified the Book of Discipline, a book of laws, to say that regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, or marital status, every person is entitled to the same human and civil rights.

"I feel that it is a step in the right direction as far as civil liberties," said Drew DeVore, junior student. "It seems to me that taking the



ALANA RADE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

St. Paul's Methodist Church, above, is one of many Methodist churches now allowing homosexuals to join. Farrah Duncan, sophomore psychology student and president of United Methodist Campus Ministries, below, said the church believes "no sin is greater than any other."

step towards accepting gay culture into religion is important in bringing it into society. I would hope that other religious factions, whether it is Christian, Muslim, or Hindu, take this as an example, and consider it as a possibility, and not an outcry."

The Methodist Church charged Rev. Karen Dammann with violating church law in March following her coming out as a lesbian.

"It would be nice to see them allow it (gays as clergymen), but these sorts of things take time," DeVore said. "It would be detrimental if they were to take the full step and accept them into the church all at once."

"There would be a lot larger protest within the Methodist



ALANA RADE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

church. I'm glad to here that they are taking it slower and bringing it about in a fashion that will be more acceptable in the long run."

Students weigh job options

By Paige Reinhard
STAFF WRITER

Whether at an on or off-campus job, the main consideration for many UNCA students seeking employment is money.

"Money is a really big issue for me, so I thought (working off-campus) would be better," said Caitlin Swick, a sophomore literature student.

Swick just started working at The Hop, an ice cream shop on Merrimon Avenue, last week.

"I work about 20 hours a week, so I am going to see how that works out with school," Swick said.

According to Swick, she did not look for an on-campus job.

"I just assumed that I would get more hours off campus and it's a busier job so I figured I would meet more people," Swick said. "And also, we get tips, and I doubt we would get tips at on-campus jobs."

According to the UNCA factbook, 1,277 undergraduate students, less than 40 percent, lived on campus last year. The Career Center Web site boasts more than 500 jobs available to students, with salaries ranging from \$5.15 to \$10 per hour. Swick said she was not overly pleased with her starting salary, but she has high hopes for the future.

"I make six dollars an hour. I was hoping for more, but maybe I will get a raise. And we do get tips, so that puts me at about 10 dollars an hour, so that is good," Swick said.

Kendra Eaves is a sophomore history student who has jobs both on and off campus.

"I work at the Distance Learning Center at UNCA and at D.J.'s diner in Fairview," Eaves said.

According to Eaves, on-campus jobs are a positive option for students seeking employment.

"It is good for me particularly because I cannot work weekends," Eaves said. "And it is on campus so it's not as much traveling."

According to the Career Center, the IRS has an explicit definition of what makes a "student employee."

"The IRS definition of an eligible student employee is an individual who is currently enrolled at least half time and whose primary purpose is to receive an education."

The Career Center Web site also gives a list of different categories of student employees.

Work-Study Student employees must be enrolled in at least six hours and are awarded on-campus jobs through the Federal Financial Aid program.

Student Institutional Employees must be enrolled at least six hours and do not have work-study awards.

Part-Time Student Institutional Employees are students enrolled for four to five hours who do not have work-study awards.

Students can make up to \$10 an hour at any of the jobs.

According to Eaves, how much money she makes changes week to week.

"On a good day I make a lot of money at D.J.'s, but I make the same constant amount at Distance Learning," Eaves said.

Some students find other perks in having jobs located off campus.

"I get paid commission for special events and catering. I have a business card and a company e-mail address and I'm on the website," said Allison Gains, a sophomore economics student.

Gains works as a server with Eaves at D.J.'s diner.

Eaves, however, said she prefers working at the Distance Learning Center because of the relaxed environment.

"I can do my homework and I have to have the weekends off," Eaves said.

Transfer Students Arrive From Gulf Coast

By Allie Haake

The Office of Admissions is allowing late entrance for students affected by Hurricane Katrina so they can continue their education.

There may be more than 100,000 college students displaced by the hurricane, according to Associate Director of Admissions Leigh McBride. Four students from New Orleans and two students from Mississippi have already enrolled in classes at UNCA.

"I've been in admissions here for about 15 years, and I don't know of a natural disaster that has been this critical," McBride said.

McBride said they are expecting more transfer students to enroll during the upcoming week.

"We're trying to do all we can so they don't have to interrupt their education," McBride said. "So far we have been able to work with everyone that wants to come."

One student said everyone should do what they can to help these students adjust. "I think it's great that we are showing compassion to these students by allowing them to go on with their lives here in Asheville," said Emily Pomeranz, sophomore political science student.

McBride said she wants to get the students into their classes as quickly as possible.

"We're trying to get them in and settled, and have other things like paperwork come later," McBride said.

Amanda Scully, senior psychology student from Loyola

University New Orleans, said that everyone at UNCA has been very helpful.

"I walked in and was in the computer fifteen minutes later," Scully said. "It was a really easy process. It was easier than going to college for the first time."

There has been tremendous amounts of support from the students, as well as the community, according to McBride.

"A lot of offers have poured into the housing office here," said McBride. "Everyone is pulling together to help these students. I was helping one (transfer) student in the advising office the other day, and a student offered a temporary room for the student."

Scully said although she had options all over the country, she wanted to be with her family.

"Loyola is a judgment university, which means that it's Catholic," Scully said. "Judgment schools across the nation have offered us to come for free this semester. I could have gone anywhere, including Chicago or Georgetown, but I didn't want to start over somewhere on my own."

Most of the students who have transferred so far know at least one person in the area, according to McBride.

"Sometimes they have family in this area, and they have just been attending school in the New Orleans or Mississippi areas," McBride said. "They're really just coming home to stay with their family because their school is closed down."

The transfer students are all handling these changes in different ways, according to McBride.

"I think all of these students are grateful to have a place to go, but they're still dealing with a lot of things like loss of homes and cars," McBride said. "Some of them have driven all this way, so they're tired and worrying about finances in the future. Each person is different."

After living in New Orleans for three years, Scully said that dealing with the disaster has been extremely difficult.

"I don't watch the news anymore," Scully said. "It's so upsetting because that is my second home. Seeing my friends' homes and lives destroyed was the hardest thing to watch."

One of the hardest parts for these transfer students has been getting in touch with their friends from home, according to Scully.

"It's hard enough transferring to a new school and meeting new people," Scully said. "It's a really hard thing to do when all of your friends are all over the country. The big problem with my friends is they all have 504 area codes, so I can't route through the New Orleans telephone towers to reach them."

UNCA is very different from Loyola University New Orleans, according to Scully.

"Everyone's really nice, and that helps a lot," Scully said. "To be honest, living in Asheville is totally different than living in New Orleans."

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Gas theft on the rise at local service stations

By Rebecca Taylor
STAFF WRITER

Due to high gas prices in Asheville, some people are beginning to fill up their tanks and drive off without paying store clerks.

John Vail, 53, owns the Exxon at 873 Merrimon Ave. According to Vail, customers are committing more drive-offs than average since the rise in gas prices after Hurricane Katrina.

"Most people are honest, but there are plenty out there that will take your money," Vail said. "They will steal that gas in a heartbeat."

Gas prices would really have to be high for some people to even think about stealing fuel according to Wesley Digh, a senior mathematics student.

"I'd like to say that I would never steal gas," Digh said. "It would probably have to be pretty high. Most people are going to go and get gas because they need it get to work or school. I think that prices would have to get really high before you could actually see a change in people's behavior."

If someone is trying hard not to be seen, this is a good indication someone is going to steal gas according to Vail.

"Somebody stealing doesn't want to be seen," Vail said.

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