

CLOSER CONNECTIONS

Asheville, North Carolina

December, 1988

We were so fortunate to have Mrs. Amy Ashworth as our speaker at the Ninth Anniversary Dinner. Amy, who spoke at CLOSER's first anniversary dinner, is the dynamic mother of 2 gay sons, one of whom died of AIDS in 1987. While here, Amy was interviewed by Paul Johnson of the Asheville Citizen, Kim Ellis of the Greenline, and Lynette James of WCQS Public Radio. Theo S. made a video of the evening, which he is donating to CLOSER's library. Because of this, Amy's messages were able to get to a far wider audience than the current CLOSER family. In case you missed her, or in case you weren't taking notes, here are a few quotes:

"The Christ I know and the God I know never mentioned the 11th commandment, 'Thou shalt not be gay and lesbian.' ...This is just one of those things where the Church isn't educated ...Love is God's greatest gift. He created people so that man and woman could love, where parents and children could love, where man and man could love, and where woman and woman could love. Just as much as he likes diversity in people, he likes diversity in love. ...If parents don't stand behind their children, who will? ...People with AIDS teach us that it isn't how long we live, but it is how well we live ...You have one choice available to you: The choice to be open and honest or the choice to lie and hide."

THANKS

Thanks to everyone who helped make the Ninth Anniversary a wonderful success-- and that means every one of the over 110 people who attended! Special thanks to Dr. and Mrs. Ben Streets, Jr., who financed Amy's trip, the whole Streets family for hosting her visit, and David and Ben Streets for arranging it.

Special thanks also to those whose hard work resulted in a beautiful Parish Hall, to those who helped set up and those who helped clean up. It takes lots of people, but how rewarding to participate!: Richard and Tom (Rich-Tom Florists) for the elegant flower arrangements and candles, Bill A. and crew for setting up, Theo for videotaping, and everyone who helped clean up, including the dishwashing crew of Angela, Cindy, and Joan.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations, love, and appreciation to Ben Streets III for being awarded the 1988 CLOSER Humanitarian Award. Seldom does an