

Parents-FLAG to Convene in Charlotte

The Federation of Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (Parents-FLAG) will hold its Tenth Annual Convention in Charlotte, NC, October 11-14, 1991.

Charlotte, known as the Queen City of the South, has a large statue of Queen Charlotte, wife of King George III, at the city's airport. The Queen welcomes travelers and new immigrants to the region by holding her crown aloft in her right hand, just as the Statue of Liberty beckons in New York Harbor with a torch.

The host of this year's convention, the Charlotte Chapter of Parents-FLAG, has chosen a different style of crown as the symbol of this convention: "Our CROWN represents tradition, values, family, heritage, love, strength, power, glory and pride. The well-known symbol of gays and lesbians, the inverted triangle, becomes the 'jewel' in our family crown!! We believe that this logo is a likely candidate to become a universally-recognized symbol, proudly displayed by families and friends who advocate for and are supportive of their gay and lesbian children."

"Many of our workshops, seminars and business meetings will deal with the problems and negatives in our lives and our children's lives, and properly so," the

Charlotte Chapter states. "But most of our activities will accentuate the positives. The focus of our convention is the celebration of ten years of PFLAG history. It will be festive and jubilant!"

The Asheville Gay Men's Chorus has been invited to perform at the Conference, according to Joan Marshall, who along with husband Dan, heads the Asheville area chapter of Parents-FLAG.

Dan and Joan Marshall are encouraging participation of area gay men and lesbians, as well. "Come to Charlotte and join us in 'Celebrating the Jewels in Our Crown.' Her Royal Majesty, Queen Charlotte, commands it!" ▼

Gay and Lesbian Co-dependents Anonymous Forms

A new group is being formed in Asheville to serve lesbians and gay men who are dealing with co-dependency issues. Co-dependents Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women whose common problem is an inability to maintain functional relationships. The only requirement for membership is a desire for healthy and fulfilling relationships with others and ourselves.

The group meets on Wednesdays from 6-7 PM at the Orange Street Recovery Center, located on Orange Street off Merrimon Avenue. For further information, call Orange Street Recovery Center, 251-9400. ▼

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isolated rules and texts to exclude others from the inclusive love of Jesus Christ. We must respond to the deep seated yearning in so many hearts and souls of so many gay and lesbian folks. My wife and I recently saw *As Is*, a play by William Hoffman. It is a play about a gay man who has AIDS, and his former lover. I was moved by the whole play and its message, but I was struck by the emergence of each of the men's faiths that had obviously been so dormant in their lives as gays....

The church is failing itself, failing Jesus Christ and all those Christ loves, in not being an open and affirming community of love rather than an exclusive community of laws. **The ecumenical church must speak out against the tragic abuse of scripture.** The church must lift up the story of God's unending love for the rejected and despised. We must lift up the story, extricating it from the jungle of laws and meaningless rules.

The Bible--the story puts the laws into perspective.

A teacher of the law came to Jesus with a question, "Which commandment is the greatest of all?" "This is the greatest commandment," said Jesus: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is the only Lord. You must love the Lord with all your heart and with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your

strength. And a second is like it."

Then Jesus went back to the codes of Leviticus and raised up one code among the many as divinely inspired:

"You must love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment more important than these two."

Let us love one ANOTHER.

Early in my ministry I was serving a small neighborhood church in north central Kansas. One afternoon the doorbell rang. It was Big Ed, a steamfitter and a member of our congregation. He began sobbing as soon as he set foot in the door and blubbered, "Reverend! My daughter's a queer!" We talked and I listened at length. I agreed to visit with his daughter if she would agree to make an appointment with me.

As I sat across from that beautiful young woman, I learned that she knew of her attraction for other girls when she was in junior high. She repressed all that to marry as was expected by her folks and friends. Her husband had been physically abusive from the outset of their relationship. When her two little daughters seemed threatened, she finally left her husband and began a relationship with another lesbian. When I asked her how she felt, she replied, "Rev. Halbe, I never before knew such gentleness and love."

That said enough for me.

I believe it says enough for the love of Jesus Christ.

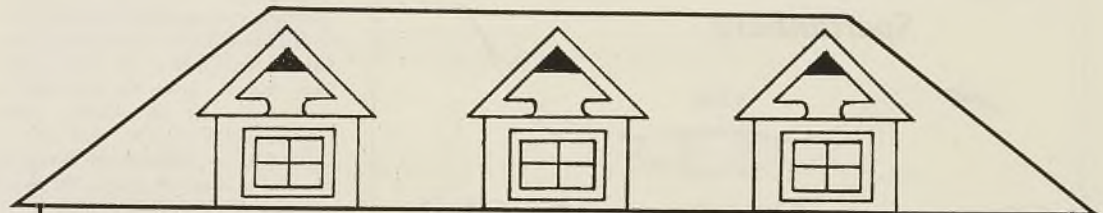
It should at last say enough for the church. Thank you. ▼



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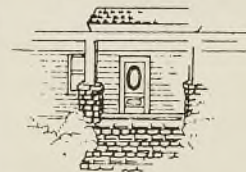


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