



# LGBT Newsletter



*Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi Committee on Ministry with LGBT Persons*

*Special Edition - June, 2015*



## **Spiritual Renewal Retreat**

August 21-23, 2015

Gray Center - Canton, MS

Led By

**THE REVEREND CANON SUSAN RUSSELL**

The Reverend Canon Susan Russell is an Episcopal priest currently serving as a Senior Associate at All Saints Church in Pasadena, CA.

## **TENTH ANNUAL SPIRITUAL RENEWAL RETREAT**

A little over ten years ago, the members of the Diocesan Committee on Ministry with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Persons took counsel together for where God might be leading us in ministry. This year as the Diocese marks the Tenth Annual Spiritual Renewal Retreat, we celebrate the blessing of that ministry.

We knew that the word 'retreat' has been hijacked by our busy culture to mean as often as not a corporate-getaway work session where unquiet souls can plan how to be more busy. We did not want this. We wanted a time of authentic retreat and renewal. We wanted it to promote nurture, healing, and growth for the people of God. We wanted a place where the Spirit could move and be heard. While we meant to make a place where LGBT persons could experience blessing, we always saw this ministry it as even more: open to family members, 'allies', indeed all the people of God. As part of our discussion we took seriously our name: we were not a group of people ministering 'to' the LGBT community; we took seriously that the LGBT community has a call to ministry in the body of Christ and the world he died to save.

Our first presenter, back in 2006, was the Rt. Rev. Steven Charleston, former Bishop of Alaska, citizen of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma, and then President and Dean of Episcopal Divinity School. (You can find Bishop Charleston's daily meditations on FaceBook and his books at Red Moon Publications.) Bishop Charleston shared his vision that a movement of the Holy Spirit was underway by which God was using the community and ministry of LGBT persons as a sign of grace for all people.

Within two or three years we knew—because our presenters and others came and told us—that the ministry of this retreat was proving a blessing throughout the church. We have gone from being told that there was no other offering quite like this in the rest of the church to hearing of others.

The rest of the retreat series has been similarly distinguished for the quality of our presenters and their offerings.

2007: The Rev. Thomas Brown, Rector of St. Michael's Episcopal Church, Brattleboro, VT –“What would the body of Christ look like if all God's children were invited to the sacred fire?”

2008: The Rev. Brad Hinton, Rector of St. David's Parish and Day School, Brandywine Hundred, Delaware –“Journey Toward Authenticity.”

2009: The Rev. Dr. Ruthann Hooke, Professor of Homiletics at Virginia Theological Seminary “Journey Toward Authenticity”

2010: The Rev. Dr. Sam Portaro, Retired Chaplain to the University of Chicago and Director of Brent House – “A Conversation on Partnering with God.”

2011: The Rev. Deacon Joanna Seibert, M.D., Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Little Rock, Arkansas and Professor of Radiology and Pediatrics at the University of Arkansas Medical Center, “A Spiritual Journey through the Psalms with Harp and Song”

2012: The Rt. Rev. Mary Douglass Glasspool, Bishop Suffragan of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles. “Spiritual Renewal and Healing,” presented in four meditations: “Treasure in Clay Jars; Pouring Ourselves Out; Power; and the Redemption of Hell.”

2013: The Rev. Ed Bacon, Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church, Pasadena, CA and former Dean of St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson, MS –“Moving from a Spirit of Fear to a Spirit of Love.”

2014: Mr. Dent Davidson, Missioner for Liturgy and the Arts in the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago (and a past Director of the Conference on Liturgy and Music for the Episcopal Diocese of Mississippi) –“God Makes a Way.”

The retreat for 2015 will be led by the Rev. Canon Susan Russell, Senior Associate at All Saints' Episcopal Church, Pasadena, CA, whose theme will be: "Are We Running With You, Jesus? Claiming the Legacy of Malcolm Boyd." The Diocese of Mississippi has spent the past several years marking the fiftieth-year anniversaries of major milestones in the Civil Rights Movement. Canon Russell invites us to reflect on the same fifty years that have passed since the 1965 publication of *Are You Running with Me, Jesus?* which put the Rev. Malcolm Boyd on the bestseller list. Fr. Boyd died this past February, at 91, having written nearly thirty books and edited another half dozen. A former Hollywood television producer Boyd was ordained to the priesthood in 1955 and served as Episcopal Chaplain at Colorado State and Wayne State Universities. A poet, he got the nickname of 'espresso priest' for the time he spent in coffee houses, meeting students and presenting his prayer-poems. He took part in the Civil Rights Movement, supporting the Freedom Rides and voter registration. In 1977, after twenty-two years of serving the church as an ordained person, Fr. Boyd came out as gay. It was a costly move, but two of his later works tell the story of his journey to wholeness: *Take off the Masks* (Doubleday, 1978; rev. ed. HarperCollins, 1993; White Crane Books, 2008) and *Gay Priest: An Inner Journey* (St. Martin's, 1986).

You are encouraged to register for the 2015 Retreat and take advantage of this very special and rewarding opportunity for spiritual renewal. You can print a registration form or register online at: [www.dioms.org/ministeries/gay](http://www.dioms.org/ministeries/gay) or call the Diocesan Office at 601-948-5954.

Written by: The Rev. Dr. Lynn Barker, LGBT Committee Member



## Happy Anniversary

### June

1 - Michelle Rushing & Kay Little  
5 - Deb Ainsworth & Brenda Teague  
8 - Blessing of Marriage:  
Martin Jellinek & Bill Branch  
26 - Christopher Alexander &  
Brandon Downing

### July

16 - John & Tait Kellogg

## Happy Birthday

### June

10 - Christopher Alexander  
14 - Ed Oliver  
19 - Michael Arase-Barham  
28 - Lynn Barker

### July

29 - Beth Gilbert

### August

2 - Ron Hudgens  
15 - Ronnie Kemp  
23 - Billy Wright  
23 - Regina Matthews  
27 - John Lever  
30 - Brandon Downing

Send your anniversary and birth dates to [diomslgbt@gmail.com](mailto:diomslgbt@gmail.com) so we can acknowledge your special

# Committee on Ministry with LGBT Persons

## Mission:

Our mission is to continue Christ's work of reconciliation and unity among all people by attaining full inclusion of LGBT persons in the life of the church.

## Inclusion Statement:

We are...One church in mission, inviting, transforming, and reconciling. We seek to serve Christ in all persons and to respect the dignity of every human being..

## Members:

Mr. Tim Adams - St. Columb's, Ridgeland  
Mr. Jody Bailey - St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson  
The Rev. Dr. Lynn Barker - St. Francis' , Philadelphia  
The Rev. Dr. Susan Hrostowski - St. Elizabeth's, Collins  
Mr. John Lever - St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson - **Chairman**  
Ms. Betty Melton - St. Paul's, Meridian  
Ms. Lori Mitchell - St. Paul's, Columbus  
The Rev. Janet Ott - St. Mark's, Raymond  
Mr. AZ (Butch) Rains - St. Andrew's Cathedral, Jackson  
Mr. Ben Roach - St. Alexis', Jackson  
Dr. Robert Stewart - St. Peter's, Oxford  
Dr. Robin Webb - Calvary, Cleveland  
The Rev. Deacon Scott Williams - St. Peter's by-the-Sea, Gulfport