

"For you were once strangers yourselves..."



Special Events

Special events are listed in schedule order.

Workshop: Building an Inclusive Church Training

Alex McNeill and Rev. Debra Peevey

Friday, September 27 @ 9:00 am to 5:00 pm (Sanctuary & breakouts in Chapel and Calvin Hall)

Are you passionate about creating welcoming congregations for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) persons? Bring your dedication for LGBTQ inclusion to the Building an Inclusive Church day-long workshop to hone critical skills to help your congregation through those tough conversations toward a more fully inclusive church. In the day-long session you will learn: techniques for faith-based community organizing, building relationships through story-telling, and ways to discuss sexuality and gender identity that make all feel welcome. We promise a day filled with fun, spiritual growth, and new-found friendships.

Plenary: How to Win Marriage Equality in Church and State

Rev. Debra Peevey

Saturday, September 28 @ 10:45 am to 12:00 pm (Sanctuary)

Come and learn the tricks of the trade from the Rev. Debra Peevey. Rev. Peevey shepherded More Lights' organizing involvement on Amendments 08B and 10A, which ultimately removed the barriers to ordination for LGBTQ Presbyterians. She also served as Faith Director of Washington United for Marriage in 2012, the successful campaign for marriage equality in Washington State. The workshop will cover organizing strategies from the congregation level to General Assembly. As well as, strategies to positively impact secular issue campaigns that you care about. Let's have a lively conversation about changing the church and the state! The plenary will also include a conversation with Rev. Heidi Peterson and Rev. Brian Ellison on MLP and CovNet partnership and preparation for Detroit 2014

Workshop: New Wine in Old Skins - Faith in the Lives of Older LGBTQ Persons

Barbara Satin

Saturday, September 28 @ 1:30 to 2:45 pm (Knox Room)

This session will explore the needs and concerns of LGBTQ people as they age and the role that faith plays for them as they live out their aging journeys. It will also discuss how communities of faith can understand these issues and respond in ways that are sensitive and affirming to these individuals.

Significant research and writing has been done in recent years about the needs and concerns of LGBTQ people as they age, however, the faith component of that aging process has been generically mentioned but unexplored in any analytical way.

Meanwhile, there has been research done around the impact of faith on old non-LGBTQ people but the correlation of those findings to the LGBTQ community has not been explored. As a result, faith communities, e.g. churches, synagogues, mosques, assemblies and other related spaces, that see themselves as welcoming to LGBTQ persons have little idea as to what kinds of care and services they can and should offer to LGBTQ old people in their midst.

This workshop will provide basic information about LGBTQ aging issues in general; explore what LGBTQ old people in faith settings might be looking for from these communities; and help envision educational resources that may be of value to faith communities wanted to pursue this important mission.

Special events continue on the other side.

Workshop: Gender Begins at Home

Nicole Garcia

Saturday, September 28 @ 1:30 to 2:45 pm (Calvin Hall)

“Is it a boy or a girl?” Our society begins crafting a child’s gender well before birth. In this workshop, we will begin with the theoretical aspects of gender to include contemporary concepts surrounding the fluidity of gender. We will take a personal view of how we determine who we are as a “gendered” person. From this perspective, we will explore why individuals do not fit neatly into a binary gender system. This is an interactive workshop and you will be given the opportunity to look at yourself through the lens of gender formation and identity.

Workshop: Ending HIV/AIDS Criminality

George S. Kerr III and Gayle Tyree

Saturday, September 28 @ 1:30 to 2:45 pm (Chapel)

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1, KJV). Faith is not HOPE. Faith is the means by which we receive those things we hope for. Neither is faith sight. Faith is the evidence of things not seen. Faith can only operate in the realm of the invisible concerning those things we hope for and do not yet see. Faith cannot exist in the visible realm. When the things we hope for are manifested to our sight, then faith, the invisible “substance,” having done its work, is supplanted by the visible substance, that is, the things we hope for. When the actuality comes into view, then the image (faith) vanishes. (Hobart E. Freeman, *Faith*, p. 4).

Biblical faith is an absolute requirement for answered prayer. The writer of Hebrews states, We have faith that that the work we are doing will result in ending the criminalization of HIV/AIDS, we just hope it happens SOON!

Plenary: Border Culture/Immigration in Arizona and PCUSA Work

Alison Wood (moderator), Raúl Alcaraz Ochoa, Margi Ault-Duell, Rev. Alison Harrington

Saturday, September 28 @ 3:00 pm to 4:15 pm (Sanctuary)

We will hear about the work Presbyterians and others in Tucson are doing with communities impacted by the broken immigration system. Leaders from Corazón de Tucson, The Southside Worker Center, Borderlinks, and Southside Presbyterian Church will help conferees understand the particular challenges and blessings of this work.

Concert: Desert Voices and Reveille Men’s Chorus

Saturday, September 28 @ 7:00 pm (Sanctuary)

Founded in 1988, Desert Voices is Arizona’s premier LGBTQ chorus. We are a not-for-profit corporation committed to promoting the ongoing and positive gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender presence in our community. We advocate understanding, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence. Our chorus is a unique and diverse mix of LGBTQ people and straight allies all singing together with one voice. We perform at a wide variety of venues, including GALA events, and we hold regular rehearsals which anyone may attend.

Reveille Men’s Chorus, Tucson’s internationally recognized men’s chorus, is in its 17th year of changing lives through music. What began in 1995 as a gay men’s community chorus with an array of singers has grown, transitioned and taken flight into a community institution of seasoned performers with an added public health focus on HIV/AIDS awareness, education and prevention.

Sunday Jazz Worship

Sunday, September 29 @ 11:00 am to 12:30 pm (Sanctuary)

Concluding the More Light conference, St. Mark’s Presbyterian Church will celebrate its 10th annual Jazz Sunday. The service is organized by former St. Mark’s pastor, Mike Smith, who believes that jazz is a wonderful vehicle for allowing people to connect with joyful emotion in worship. This is not a jazz concert but a worship service, in which the liturgy is put to jazz music. Local musicians include Lisa Otey, piano and vocals; Diane Van Deurzen, vocals; Rob Boone, trombone; “Hurricane Carla,” tenor sax and vocals; Mike Levy, bass; Manny Aldaz, trumpet; and John Snavely, clarinet; and Mike Smith, drums. Guest preacher for the morning will be Alex McNeill, Executive Director of More Light Presbyterians.