

Dear Friends,

Several persons in the gay and lesbian community have asked us for a statement concerning the basic beliefs which underlie our practice of counseling. In response to those requests, we have prepared the following:

**WE BELIEVE** homosexuality is a natural phenomenon which has occurred across the centuries in at least 10% of the population of all societies. It is "a way of being" to be understood and accepted, not an illness to be cured.

**WE BELIEVE** sexual orientation arises out of a complex interplay between genetic and environmental factors. The bottom line? No one chooses to be gay, straight, nor in-between. We simply are what we are.

**WE BELIEVE** gay and lesbian individuals are persons of sacred worth before God and have every right to be proud of their particular sexual orientation.

**WE BELIEVE** same-sex relationships can be as enduring and fulfilling as heterosexual relationships, and that individuals should never give up in their pursuit of a quality one-to-one relationship.

**WE BELIEVE** the well-being of all persons is enhanced when the gay individual and his/her family and friends work together toward honest communication and mutual acceptance.

**WE BELIEVE** the degree to which one "comes out publicly" is a matter of individual choice.

**WE BELIEVE** that all persons, whether gay, straight, or in-between, must treat both themselves and others responsibly if they are to achieve authentic personal happiness.

**AND FINALLY, WE BELIEVE** the ultimate goal of therapy is to assist gay and lesbian individuals in their growth toward increased self-acceptance and self-love.

If you face issues which you would like to discuss with someone in our office, we encourage you to call for an appointment.

*Terry L. Norman*  
Terry L. Norman, D.Min., LPC

*Elmer C. Jackson, M.D.*  
Elmer C. Jackson, M.D.

## The Churches: Not Always The Enemy

by Scoop Phillips

Ironically, the social institution responsible for fueling the Lesbian and Gay community's most vicious foes—the nation's churches—also provides some of its staunchest allies.

Among the earliest supporters of the Gay and Lesbian community in Kansas City was the Methodist church. The Rev. L. Vonn Anderson, a director of the Methodist Regional Office, was the first chaplain of the Phoenix Society. When Anderson was transferred from the Kansas City office, the Rev. Russell Jones of Westport United Methodist Church became the second chaplain. The Revs. Paul Jones and Tex Sample of St. Paul's School of Theology (Methodist), have been outspoken advocates for Lesbian and Gay people and their rights.

The Unitarian Universalist Church was also supportive early on. In the fledgling days of MCC/KC (Metropolitan Community Church), All Souls Unitarian Church provided space for MCC church services. This Unitarian church continues to provide meeting space for a variety of Gay and Lesbian related organizations and activities. There is currently a chapter of Unitarian Universalists for Lesbian and Gay Concerns (UULGC), and the church has just recently become a "welcoming congregation", which means it seeks to be inclusive of Gays and Lesbians in all aspects of church life.

Unity, especially Unity on the Plaza, has been supportive of Gays for well over twenty years. They, too, have provided meeting space for Gay groups.

Even within traditionally antagonistic denominations the Gay community has found friends and allies. The late Father Lakas of St. Francis Xavier's Church was friendly toward Gays and Gay issues. A Baptist minister provided the initial crisis line training for both Gay Community Services Center and GayTalk.

Within the Jewish community, Rabbis Michael Zedek and Sharon Henry and others have been supportive of Gay and Lesbian Jews. Zedek helped to form the Gay Jewish group L' Cha Dodi, while Henry served on the board of the Gay and Lesbian youth organization Passages.

David Goldstein, director of the Jewish Community Relations Bureau is also supportive, and served on the Mayor's Commission on Lesbian and Gay Concerns.

Other, less traditional religious groups have also been supportive. The Buddhist religion has no real prohibition against homosexuality and they have always been, at the least, non-antagonistic. The various pagan groups have generally been open to Gay and Lesbian members in the Midwest, a condition not always the case in other parts of the country.

Over the years there have been a variety of Gay groups within mainstream churches. The United Methodist, Christian Church (Disciples), Episcopal, Unity, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Quakers, Catholic, Unitarian Universalists, and RLDS have all had Gay and Lesbian support groups. Groups also exist for Lesbian and Gay Christian Scientists and Mormoms, though they are not officially recognized.

Vineyard was a short-lived Eastern Orthodox Church for Gay people. The Martin Luther King Church, Kansas City's Vineyard church, existed for about one year.

The Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, with international headquarters in Los Angeles, spawned two local churches in the Kansas City area: MCC/KC and MCC/Johnson County (Kansas). Both have been a vital part of the Gay and Lesbian community and have sponsored and/or supported a host of organizations over the years, including GayTalk and the Good Samaritan Project.

Never before have so many religious institutions wrestled with the issue of equality and dignity for their Gay and Lesbian members. This increased concern by reputable and mainstream religions and denomination has unfortunately been countered by a veritable storm of opposition, even venom, from fundamentalists. No less than two radio stations and a television station in the metropolitan area are operated by religious groups with a decidedly anti-Lesbian and Gay bent.

*Because of your support—we're growing!  
We are adding a second Sunday morning  
worship service effective March 15.  
The new tentative schedule is as follows:*

- Sunday AM - 8:45 Singpiration
- Sunday AM - 9:00 1st Worship Service
- Sunday AM - 11:45 Singpiration
- Sunday AM - 11:30 2nd Worship Service

*Everyone Is Welcome!*

Successfully Single's  
group meets each  
Monday night at 7 pm.



Mid-Week Worship Service  
every Wednesday evening.  
Begins at 7:15 pm.

The Living Room,  
an HIV and AIDS drop-in  
center, is open Tues-Fri  
from noon until 9:00 pm.

Potter's House is a  
coffeehouse and enter-  
tainment open to all every  
Sunday evening at 6:30 pm.

### METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCH OF GREATER KANSAS CITY

3801 Wyandotte  
Kansas City, MO 64111

Call: (816) 931-0750  
For More Information



Fundamentalist Christian singer Anita Bryant took her "Save Our Children" campaign on the road after successfully leading the battle against a Gay rights ordinance in Dade County, Florida in 1977. That summer, she appeared in Joplin and Columbia, as well as in Kansas City at the Municipal Auditorium. Protestors picketed her appearances in all three cities. Many credit her with bringing a whole new set of Lesbians and Gays into activism to respond to her campaign. (photo courtesy of Frank Hill)