



# galanews

THE  LETTER

Serving members and friends of  
Community of Christ

June 2011  
Volume 22 Issue 2

## Comment *by David Howard*

ANOTHER EIGHT MONTHS??? How long do they expect us to wait to be treated like everyone else? How long will the church deny our offering of our gifts in ministry? What is behind this delay? Can they still not be trusted? Who is behind this delay? Why do I expend my time, energy and resources when it may all be for naught? Do they not understand the pain? I am through! I don't want to be second class any longer. I want to worship in peace!

These are the feelings that went through the minds of the Board members. I can imagine similar feelings and more went through yours too. What can I say that will allay your fears and still provide hope that we will make it to the finish line? I don't know. You have already been asked to bear the burden for a little longer. Where does the time line end?

So, how do we sort this out? Do I like the delay...NO. But I have been blessed with an overabundance of positivity, bordering on Pollyannaism. In conversations with several people and dealing with processes and event planning, this is what I believe to be reason-

able about the decision to move the U.S. Conference to 2013.

**Financial:** Like everyone else the church has been hit very hard by the near depression since 2007. The staff cuts that were implemented a couple years ago have left a skeleton of what used to be. This translates into people doing much more with less. Those of you who attended the last World Conference saw where staff shortages took its toll. There just isn't enough money and staff to put on 2 major events within 9 months and have them successful...and still get the everyday work done. There certainly are economies of scale to be realized by having the Conferences back to back.

Could they have found a sugar daddy to underwrite the conference? Maybe so. Is that the best use of additional resources? Maybe. Others say that the contributions have dramatically increased (+6%) so far this year. The Church has been blessed with increased revenue because of the dedication of its members. However, the revenue has fallen so dramatically during the recession, that this

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# GALA

## Executive Board

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**Visit us on the web  
at:**

**galaweb.org**

# President's Message

*by David Howard*

There is certainly a lot going on this time of year! And with all the rain and cold we have been getting in Northeast Ohio, I am ready for warm and sun.

We had a successful planting in Independence in early May. Look for a brief article in the August Herald that Cathy Loving of Temple staff (and Emma Smith) is submitting. I had scheduled a conversation with Becky Savage that went really well. We discussed the continuing journey and how we integrate LGBT people in to a more visible role in public worship. We also discussed the Standing Human Sexuality and the old Homosexuality Committee work. The Diversity Committee, formerly headed by Derrick Williams, is in limbo now with his reassignment to the southern states African American focus. There may be some opportunity there to refocus the committee on broader diversity issues.

I also had brief conversations with Steve and Dave, and David Brock. These people are truly partners on the journey. Resources are beginning to come out on the 2013 Conference. Pastors should have received a rough outline of what to expect and information about the process. Check with yours if you haven't seen it yet. This is an exciting time for our community. I would encourage you, if you are serious about it, to engage in daily prayer for the Spirit to witness to us and the church.

The Board had a marvelous weekend at my house to edit stories submitted for another book of Community of Christ LGBT and ally stories. It is so touching to hear the stories of grief and victory that so many of us have gone through. I trust that each of you who risked in sharing your story will be deeply blessed and that your effort will guide and instruct the church for 2013. To wrap-up the weekend, the Board freely shared

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If you make a purchase from Amazon, don't forget to go to the GALA website first, then click on the Amazon logo. GALA receives a percentage of all purchases this way. Here's a trick: Create a bookmark for Amazon and then go into the properties of the bookmark and change the address to the GALA website.



(President's Message Continued from page 2)

their gifts through worship at my congregation, Elyria.

GALA is again co-sponsoring a Pride booth in San Francisco. I will be in attendance to assist. I will also be staying an extra week to follow up on contacts that were made. We hope to have an event at the San Francisco congregation during this time. As a result of our efforts last year, changes in leadership have occurred in the congregation and hopefully it will become more welcoming. Young adults from the Berkeley area have also expressed interest in worshipping with the San Francisco congregation. If you are in the area, please visit us at the Pride booth on Saturday or Sunday.

As you have heard, Jim Slauter has resigned as President of the Council of 12 to tend to family medical issues. He will be replaced by Barbara Carter from my field and previously from the Western Field. Both Barbara and Jim have been very open in building relationships with our community. For this we are very appreciative.

Several mission centers are planning events during the reunion season. As I have mentioned before, this is an excellent opportunity to build relationships with your brothers and sisters in your mission center. Michigan MC is planning a series of meetings on LGBT issues around the State. The Eastern Great Lakes Mission Center reunion will feature a Tuesday afternoon storytelling and chat session. I know many of you will also be attending reunion. Make your presence known! Build relationships. This is what changes the hearts and minds of people.

On a personal health note. My cancer is in check. It is incurable, with the average life expectancy of 8 years; I thank you for your thoughts and prayers, and I continue to need them. I want to beat this thing! I feel good now and am getting my strength back gradually.

See you at the retreat!

# Labor Day Retreat

Plans for the labor Day retreat at Camp Doniphan are progressing rapidly with the completion of the schedule and commitments for the many responsibilities nearly finished. Apostle Ron Harmon Jr. will be the guest minister and will share with us the plans for this important conference. He will also lead sessions on current church events and building community. The rest of the US Apostle team has been invited to share with us in the closing worship service if they are in town and available.

As usual many fun and crazy events are planned. Be sure and bring items for the silent auction and plan on sharing your talents on Sunday evening. The color scheme this year is the yellows and oranges to fit the theme of Flaming Horizons, so begin to plan your outfits! We will be setting up a photo gallery which we will make available for your Facebook page and our website.

There has been heightened interest in the retreat this year. I would encourage you to send your registration to Chuck Hewitt, [mikechuckh@gmail.com](mailto:mikechuckh@gmail.com), as soon as possible so we can work with Doniphan on expenses. Fees will not be due until September 2, but you are always welcome to send in the registration fee early! The registration form may be found on page 7. The new website will also have the form for online registration.



Rainbow over Yellowstone River

photo by Andrew Greenhill, used by permission

# Who's Who? Who wants to be a Who?

## What's the Who all about?

by Clyde Frey

Does any of this make any sense? If you've read this far, perhaps so!

The building blocks of GALA are the central core members and we find that those are the people that give of themselves in whatever capacity they have to offer! Each unique individual member, whether of the GLBT community or our families or our straight allies, provide some type of support to the organization. Their gifts, also referred to by some as talents, enable GALA to develop programs and events that nourish those within the organization as well as the general public.

The GALA 2011 Nominations Committee has presented a slate of candidates for three (3) possible Board positions within our organization. **NOW IS YOUR TIME TO ACT!** The membership at large is encouraged to make us aware of any other persons that would stand for election to the open Board positions that we will be voting on in a few short months: President-elect, Under Secretary for Publications or Member-at-Large.

The very life of our organization flows strongly through the cycle that begins with the President-elect, a one year term. The year of learning that is provided during this tenure on the Board can fully equip a person to serve the two (2) year term that follows as President. There are many in our ranks that are fully qualified who can ably step into the position of President-elect and provide continued dynamic leadership to our organization. In addition to President-elect there are positions available for Under Secretary of Publications and as a Member-at-Large. We look forward to receiving nominations from our member-driven organization!

If you would like more information on any of the possible positions, you may check the GALA website, [www.galaweb.org](http://www.galaweb.org) and click on 'About Us', then click on 'Bylaws'. You may also send an e-mail to the GALA Secretary, Clyde Frey, at [cfrey@onairaudit.com](mailto:cfrey@onairaudit.com)

and request information such as time considerations, travel, or any other questions that you would like answered relative to the GALA Board of Directors.

Although the GALA 2011 Nominations Committee has presented a slate of candidates to the GALA Board, **the membership now has the opportunity to bring additional names to the candidate list!** Perhaps you've heard this before....perhaps you have not....but **NOW is the time to send in your name or to nominate another to stand for election to one of the three (3) possible Board positions listed above. It is easy and here are the steps to take:**

- Get the permission of the potential nominee;
- Identify the nominee by name and contact information;
- Provide name of position for which the nominee has agreed to stand for election; and,
- Send the above information to the GALA Secretary, Clyde Frey at [cfrey@onairaudit.com](mailto:cfrey@onairaudit.com), **nominations must be received no later than July 11.**

As we move forward, nominations will close on July 11 and a list of nominees along with their short biographical statement will be sent around August 1, along with a ballot to each of the members of record. The ballots will include a date by which they must be received in order to be counted. The ballots will be tabulated and the results will be provided at the GALA Annual Meeting held this year in beautiful Camp Doniphan over Labor Day Weekend.

One last time, now is the time for you to step up to the plate; get on the computer, make a phone call, encourage someone....yes, I am speaking to YOU, do it....today!

# Heritage Plaza; Temple Planting

On Saturday, May 7, five members of GALA worked several hours planting annuals and perennials to compliment the flower beds at Heritage Plaza. In addition to the work donated, GALA also augmented the Heritage Plaza budget for purchasing the plants. The members met Friday evening to pick out the plants at a local nursery for Heritage Plaza and the Temple.

In addition to working at Heritage Plaza, we



joined with other Kansas City-Independence area GALA members at the Temple for the Daily Prayer for Peace. Following the service, we planted flowers in the large concrete planters around the Temple. The GALA members who joined Heritage Plaza Site Coordinator Charlie Robison included David Howard (GALA President), Chuck Hewitt, Mike Hewitt and Skip Frizzell.



# Book Retreat Thank you for your continuing support!

Six members of the GALA Board met in Cleveland over the weekend of May 21-22 to begin the process of publishing a second book of Community of Christ LGBT stories. The book will include over 40 stories from members who have chosen to remain engaged in the church to make change from within. These stories have been submitted by gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and allies, which should give the book a rich perspective from the spectrum of our community. The book will be used as a witnessing tool leading up to the 2013 U.S. Conference, and should be available by January 2012.



From here the process will continue with June through August dedicated to a first read edit by Bill Russell, and copy editing during the last two months. It will then go to the printer for publication. John Whitmer Books again will be the publisher. If you wish to still submit a story, the absolute deadline is July 1 final copy to me at [howard092248@yahoo.com](mailto:howard092248@yahoo.com).

I have had conversations with the US Apostle Team and the First Presidency about the publication of the book. Their response has been universally supportive, looking forward to the book's value in relation to the Church and the 2013 Conference.

2011. Did you catch yourself wondering who ever thought that we would be celebrating the year 2011? From the youngest to the oldest, sometimes we feel that the years drag on-and-on, and sometimes we feel that they fly by so fast, that even jet-setting around the globe cannot keep us abreast of what all is going on and who all are getting married.

We have *finally* moved beyond the cold, snow and darkness that dressed our bleak landscape for way too many months, and have begun the ascent into the glorious new life; the advent of Spring so excitedly adorns our yards, gardens and daily lives as the day-light hours stretch toward the dog days of summer. Along this journey we would like to take a moment to thank you for your support of GALA; expressed in the time and effort you have expended in attending or participating in activities that bring us closer together as God's children!

In the excitement of this season, as we run head-long into summer, if you have not already done so, please take a few moments to renew your GALA membership. There is a membership form in this newsletter that can be used for new or renewing members. It is easy to use, you may complete it online or you may send it in with your dues and/or donations. The graciousness of our members in continuing their memberships and making monetary donations to GALA allow us to pursue the programs that many find so valuable.

Who do you know? Surely there is a person or two that you know that would like to become members or supporters of GALA; sometimes all it takes is simply asking them. Word of mouth is a powerful means to build support.

We love sending our newsletters by e-mail and posting them on our website for easy access and convenience. Ask someone you know to 'pay it forward' by becoming dues supporting, voting members of GALA! Thanks for your support!

(Comment Continued from page 1)

increase will go towards preventing additional cuts in staff...cuts that will render some functions inoperable, and prevent the church from responding to opportunities as they arise. Even with this increase its sustainability is in question and not lengthy enough to increase spending.

There also is the consideration of the cost to individuals. Some of us can afford the vacation time and expense of going to Independence twice in a year...some cannot. I understand there was pushback from a growing number of people about affordability and questions were being asked about which conference is more important. Some were choosing simply on the basis of tradition and affection for World Conference. Would this have hurt attendance...probably so. Would this have undercut the representation at the National Conference and perhaps prohibited key people and constituent groups from attending...probably so.

**Paradigm Shift:** It is important for us to realize how big of a paradigm shift this could be for our Community and well as the faith community in general. If the issues on the agenda are approved, our Community will be in the forefront of those organizations that support peace and justice in this country...WOW. Section 150 finally applies to us!

Because of this shift and its importance the process needs to ensure that all possible measures be taken to include as much of the Body as possible, especially those that are in the middle (80%) of the spectrum. These are the people the Spirit needs to minister to and the process needs to address. This is why it is so important for you to stay engaged in your

congregation, engage in the Mission Center and go to reunion. Put a face on it, be present be available.

**Community Building:** The U.S. Apostles represent ALL the members of the church in the U.S. They are working to create safe and open space for everyone to learn, discern, ask questions, and share perspectives. This is the nature of learning how to become a conferring and prophetic people. Already there are some who are withholding their world church offerings...some who threaten to leave the church...some congregations who are disassociating. This is the reality of change. Community building is hard work! This is the reality of a U.S. Church that is willing to engage in difficult conversations and pursue God's will for the church regardless of the consequences. Think of the power of that statement. Think of the possibilities.

I continue to support the process that has been outlined. I trust the U.S. Apostles in their journey. I feel the reasons for delay are valid. Certainly there will be stumbles. That always happens when navigating through a strategic process. Cut them some slack! Trust in what has been given. New resources will be coming...the first one – scripture perspectives - is in the hands of the Mission Center Presidents now. Plans are being developed on how to use it in each mission center. Engage. Pray. Be present.

## GALA Treasurer's Report

October 1, 2010 through May 25, 2011:

**Total Income—\$6,775.23**

**Total Expenses—\$5,143.65**

**Cash Flow—\$1,631.58**

Cash on hand:

**Checking Account—\$1,653.94**

**Savings Account—\$8,325.25**

**Total Cash Available—\$9,979.19**

# Welcoming Community Network Update

## WCN Project Going Well

The Welcoming Community Network is made up of persons working toward helping Community of Christ congregations become welcoming to absolutely everyone. More information can be found at:

[WelcomingCommunityNetwork.org](http://WelcomingCommunityNetwork.org).

A project of large proportions has been taken on to help members prepare and be informed for the USA 2013 conference. A copy of Bill Russell's book, *Homosexual Saints, The Community of Christ Experience*, is being offered, free of charge, along with a study guide, to any pastor who desires to receive it. The book contains the only



known history of the church's approach to homosexual issues, beginning in the 1950's, as well as a collection of personal stories. A number of requests have already been received.

If you are interested in studying this book in your congregation, ask your pastor if it has been requested. Requests should be sent to:

**WCN**

**Sam Marmoy, Treasurer**

**PO Box 1601**

**Independence, MO 64055**

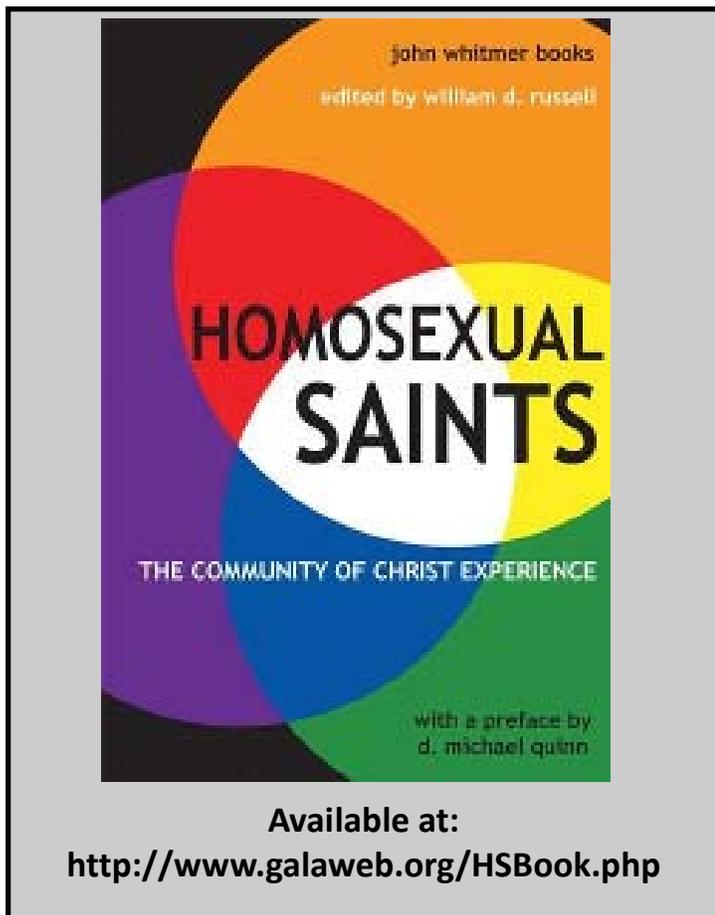
**(816) 679-9647**

[sammarmoy4WCN@aol.com](mailto:sammarmoy4WCN@aol.com)

If you would like to support this project, contributions can be sent to the same address.

## Albums Available For Display

A collection of stories and statements regarding homosexuality was created for display at the last World Conference. They have been helpful with increasing understanding of personal experience and feelings. These albums are available on loan for smaller church gatherings such as mission center meetings, reunions, congregational gatherings, and other events where their display is permitted. To request an album, contact Pat Marmoy at 816-679-9637, [patmarmoy4WCN@aol.com](mailto:patmarmoy4WCN@aol.com).





**Beyond the Horizon**  
GALA RETREAT  
REGISTRATION FORM  
September, 2-5, 2011  
Camp Doniphan 12856  
Doniphan Lake Rd.  
Excelsior Springs, MO  
64024



**Please fill out this form and send it in By: August 15, 2011**

**You do not have to send payment we need an accurate count. Payment is due no later than registration  
September 2, 2011**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Special Dietary Needs: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical/Special needs: \_\_\_\_\_

Need to be Picked up? Please contact Chuck Hewitt for arrangements;  
(816) 616-5883 or mikechuckh@gmail.com

Payment Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Retreat Cost:**

**Adults: \$175.00, kids 5-12 \$116.00 (5 and under free)**

(Limited sponsorships available contact howard092248@yahoo.com )

**2 people per room (Private room costs \$10.00 per night)**

**Preference on roommate \_\_\_\_\_**

(Pillows, bedding and towels provided)

Mail Registration to:

**GALA RETREAT**

**P.O. Box 2173**

**Independence, MO 64055**

**Information: Call or e-mail Chuck Hewitt, (816) 616-5883,  
mikechuckh@gmail.com**



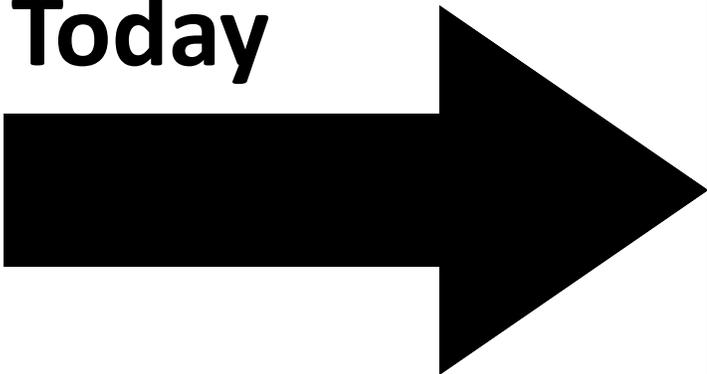
June 2011

P.O. Box 2173  
Independence, MO 64055

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# Join, Or Renew Your Membership Today



## 2011 GALA Membership

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

YES; send me the newsletter by e-mail

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City,State,Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Level (U.S. dollars):

Individual(\$25)       Family(\$40)

Limited Income(\$10)

I would like to make an additional contribution to advance GALA's outreach and educational goals:

\$50     \$100     \$200 or \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Contributions to GALA are tax deductible.*

Please return to: **P.O. Box 2173  
Independence, MO 64055**