

Accepting Evangelicals - Newsletter

March 2014

Dear Friends

AE's First Patrons...

We are delighted to announce our first two patrons at AE – Rev Steve Chalke and Bishop David Gillett. During our 10th Anniversary year, we will be announcing a number of Patrons who will help us raise the profile of Accepting Evangelicals.

[The Rt Rev David Gillett](#) was Bishop of Bolton until his retirement in 2008. He has huge experience in evangelical theological education having been Principal of Trinity Theological College in Bristol for 11 years, and the first Director of Extension Studies at St John's Nottingham. He trained for the ministry at Oak Hill, and has also been a travelling secretary for Pathfinders and CYFA. He is now honorary assistant Bishop and interfaith advisor in the Diocese of Norwich.

David writes,

“Over the years I have come to understand that the scriptures encourage us to support, affirm and celebrate all life-long committed relationships that follow the path in life gifted by God in his creation of each of us as different individuals. I believe that *Accepting Evangelicals* is one positive way of supporting same sex couples to receive the same love, blessing and support from the church which I and my wife knew so wonderfully throughout the whole of our married life.”



You can read more of David's reflections on the importance of supporting same-sex relationships in this [Blog post](#) from December last year – just after the publication of the Pilling Report.

[Rev Steve Chalke](#) will need little introduction. He is a Baptist minister, Founder of Oasis Global & Stop The Traffik, and a United Nations Special Advisor on Community Action Against Human Trafficking. He is Church Leader at Oasis Waterloo and was awarded the MBE in 2004 for services to social inclusion.



Steve writes,

“I am honoured to be a patron of *Accepting Evangelicals* which is an important movement within evangelicalism because it represents the growing shift away from old, excluding and subjective readings of isolated biblical texts towards a much needed more affirming, compassionate, rounded and thoughtful approach to the Bible, humanity and sexuality.”

We warmly welcome both Steve and David in their new role with AE.

Church of England in disarray over same-sex marriage

The Church of England's House of Bishops has issued '[Pastoral Guidance on Same-sex Marriage](#)' last month, just after St Valentine's Day. The first same-sex marriages are due to take place in England and Wales during March.

While they said that same-sex married couples can approach their local clergy to ask for 'informal prayers', the statement also banned clergy in same-sex relationships from getting married. The guidance also states that anyone in a same-sex marriage will not be ordained in the Church of England.

This has shocked and dismayed LGB&T clergy who had been hoping to 'upgrade' their Civil Partnerships to marriage later this year. Civil Partnerships are permitted among Clergy in the CofE. [Read more here.](#)

Uganda joins Nigeria in adopting new anti-gay laws...

After 2 years of uncertainty, Uganda's President signed into law the infamous anti-gay bill last week. Despite international pressure, he appears to have decided that he has more to gain than lose in signing the Bill.

While the death penalty has been dropped, the new law still contains life sentences for people who marry someone of the same-sex or even touch someone of the same gender with 'intent to engage in a sexual act'.

A petition opposing this new law has been signed by over 300,000 people in the last 4 days and can be found at <https://www.allout.org/en/actions/kill-the-bill>

Change Makers Conference

We are very pleased to advertise the Change Makers Conference in Enfield London next month.

The two-day conference is around the theme of Christ centred communities and innovative models of church. It's a really exciting programme and has wide range of fantastic speakers from around the world - particularly from the USA and Thailand. As part of the programme there will also be a stream which looks at theology, biblical interpretation and some of the themes outlined in Steve's recent article, Restoring Confidence in the Bible, and also the article on sexuality which he published in January 2013, A Matter of Integrity.

[More information and booking details can be found here.](#)

God Bless and Keep You

[Accepting Evangelicals](#)