

Accepting Evangelicals - Newsletter

June/July 2013

Dear Friends

More Ex-Gay apologies...

After John Paulk's apology earlier this year (see [May Newsletter](#)) the President of Exodus International has now also apologised for the hurt and damage which his organisation has caused to LGBT people over the last 37 years, and announced that the ministry is shutting down.

Exodus International has been in for forefront of 'gay healing' and 'reparative therapy' for many years and has inspired many other groups in seeking to 're-orientate' gay Christians. In a public [apology on the Exodus website, Alan Chambers](#) has acknowledged his own continuing same-sex attractions,

"There were several years that I conveniently omitted my ongoing same-sex attractions. I was afraid to share them as readily and easily as I do today. They brought me tremendous shame and I hid them in the hopes they would go away. Looking back, it seems so odd that I thought I could do something to make them stop. Today, however, I accept these feelings as parts of my life that will likely always be there. The days of feeling shame over being human in that way are long over, and I feel free simply accepting myself as my wife and family does. As my friends do. As God does."

His apology continues, *"Please know that I am deeply sorry. I am sorry for the pain and hurt many of you have experienced. I am sorry that some of you spent years working through the shame and guilt you felt when your attractions didn't change. I am sorry we promoted sexual orientation change efforts and reparative theories about sexual orientation that stigmatized parents."*

Alongside the apology, the Board of Directors of Exodus announced [its immediate closure](#).

Reflections on a Night in the Valleys of South Wales...

When Accepting Evangelicals was invited to lead an evening on sexuality in a Baptist Chapel in the Welsh Valleys, we did not know what to expect. But from the moment that David (a gay member of Accepting Evangelicals) and Benny Hazlehurst arrived, they knew that a door was being opened and the welcome was warmer than we ever could have imagined.

[Read David's reflection of the evening here](#),

and if you would like to invite Accepting Evangelicals to visit your church, please email benny@acceptingevangelicals.org

Events around London Pride...

With London Pride just around the corner this weekend there are a number of events for Christians which we would warmly recommend:

Brenda Harrison 2nd Memorial lecture.

7.00pm, Friday 28th June 2013

St Andrew's Church Short Street, London, SE1 8LJ, UK

(near Waterloo Station)

Brenda was a tireless campaigner for LGB&T people in the church, working with Changing Attitude, Evangelical Fellowship, and as one of our very first members at AE. This annual lecture in her memory is a must if you are in London this weekend. Colin Coward from Changing Attitude is this year's speaker and all are welcome.

Christians at London Pride

...will be marching in the Parade this weekend in London – Saturday 29th June.

For information about when and where to meet up and join the parade, see [Christians at Pride](#)

2013 Pride Service

... will be the following **Saturday 6th July at 5pm in St Martin in the Fields, Trafalgar Square.** The preacher is Jeffrey John, Dean of St Albans and it promises to be a wonderful celebration.

Update: Unfortunately Benny Hazlehurst has had to withdraw from taking part in the service.

Greenbelt Festival 2013

Our application for an exhibition stall at Greenbelt has been successful and we are looking forward to the Festival. As last year, we will be doing this in partnership with Evangelical Fellowship, Two:23, and Affirm (The Baptist Network).

The stand will be in the G-source Tent and we will need a team of volunteers to staff it over the weekend (23rd – 26th August 2013). If you would like to help, please email Benny at the following address: benny@accpetingevangelicals.org

We can order weekend tickets for volunteers at a discount price so let us know if you are interested.

Church Wanted...

One of our members is looking for an Accepting or Inclusive Evangelical Church in the Hastings area of East Sussex, UK. If anyone has any suggestions, [please email us](#) and we will pass the information on.

New Support Group in Nottingham/Derby...

There is a new monthly group on the Derbyshire/Nottingham border called 'Free to Be' which aims to provide a safe place for all LGBT Christians to meet, share their faith and stories and support each other without fear, judgment, conflict or other church issues. The first meeting will be held on 2nd July at 7.30pm at The Eden Suite, The Boundary, Broadmeadows, just off the M1 Junction 28, continuing to meet on the first Tuesday of each month. <http://www.free-to-be.org.uk/Free-to-Be.html>

God Bless and Keep You...

[Accepting Evangelicals](#)