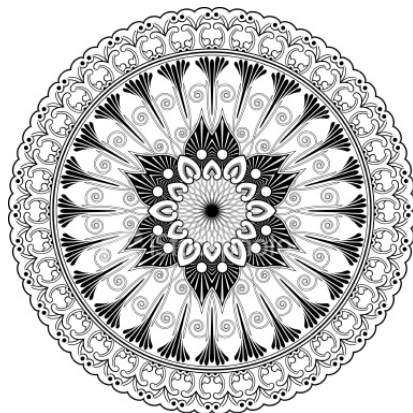


Radically Inclusive
Spiritual Institute
Program Guide



TRUE Colors

Sexual Minority Youth and Family Services

March 12th & 13th, 2010

Welcome



Date: 3/12/2010 - 3/13/2010

The Inclusive Spiritual Institute is a two-day series of enlightening programs celebrating our diversity as spiritual, gendered, and sexual beings. The goal is to inspire religious communities and spiritual groups across Connecticut to host welcoming activities during the weekend and throughout the year in their own places of worship.

Many, many thanks to the organizers of this event:

- Reverend Josh Pawelek (Unitarian Universalist Society, East, Manchester);
- Reverend Derrick Jackson (Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Storrs)
- Reverend James Olsen (United Church of Christ, Meriden);
- Reverends George Chien & Julio Flores (Metropolitan Community Church, Hartford);
- Reverend Barbara Jamestone (Unitarian Society of Hartford);
- Pastor Shirley Gadson (Open Door Ministries, Bridgeport);
- Reverend Alice O'Donovan (Westfield Congregational Church);
- Reverends Marilyn Bowens & Aaron Miller (Metropolitan Community Church New Haven);
- Reverend Charla Kouadio, (Recovering Promise Ministry, Springfield, MA);
- John Hinkston (Integrity, Trinity Church, Hartford);
- Reverend Laura Westby (United Church of Christ, Danbury)
- Joe Keach Longo (Universalist Church, West Hartford)
- Tom Poirier (University of CT, School of Social Work, Intern)

Spiritual Institute Program

SPIRITUAL INSTITUTE AT A GLANCE

Friday, March 12, 2010

Registration: 9:30 – 10:15 AM

Storrs Congregational Church
2 North Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT

Opening Session: 10:30 – 11:45;

Storrs Congregational Church
The path to inclusion: Panel Presentation

Lunch (on your own)

Afternoon Workshops (1 – 2:45 PM)

Storrs Congregational Church
St, Mark's Episcopal Church
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

Friday Closing Ceremony: Where do we go from here? Facilitated by Reverends, George Chien and Aaron Miller Storrs Congregational Church, Parish House

**Pastoral Counseling Available,
Memorial Room Storrs Congregational
Church, Parish House**

Saturday, March 13, 2010

Registration: 9:30 – 10:15 AM

Storrs Congregational Church
2 North Eagleville Road, Storrs, CT

Opening Session: 10:30 – 11:45;

Storrs Congregational Church
Reverend Irene Monroe

Lunch (on your own)

Afternoon Workshops (1 – 2:45 PM)

Storrs Congregational Church
St, Mark's Episcopal Church
St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church

Friday Closing Ceremony: Marsha Stevens-Pino Christian Musician, Singer, Songwriter, Minister and Lesbian, Storrs Congregational Church

**Pastoral Counseling Available,
Memorial Room Storrs Congregational
Church,
Parish House**

Spiritual Institute Program, Friday, March 12, 2010

Registration: 9:30—10:15 AM
Storrs Congregational Church, Parish House
2 North Eagleville Road
Storrs, CT

Opening Session: 10:30—11:45 AM
Parish House Auditorium

The path to inclusion is as diverse as the spiritual traditions that undertake the journey. Come join our panel as they explore their own winding trails along the way. Facilitated by **Reverend Darrick Jackson**, the panel includes:

Rabbi Donna Berman is the Executive Director of the Charter Oak Cultural Center. She holds a Ph.D. in Religion and Social Ethics from Drew University. In her dissertation entitled, *Nashiut Ethics: The Articulation of a Jewish Feminist Ethics of Safe-Keeping*, Rabbi Berman developed a method for doing Jewish feminist ethics. At the core of her theology is a commitment to the Jewish tradition of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world through acts of justice. This is a commitment that she brings to her work at Charter Oak.

Qesar Veliu is an 8th-semester Undergraduate Student at the University of Connecticut pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in German and a minor in Italian. At UCONN he works as a staff member for the Rainbow Center and co-facilitates one of the LGBTQ discussion/support groups “Among Men”. Qesar wishes to pursue a career in International Relations and Law.

Pastor Shirley Gadson is the spiritual leader of Open Door Ministries in Bridgeport, a radically inclusive Pentecostal Church.

Reverend Laura Westby is the senior pastor of First Congregational Church of Danbury, an open and affirming UCC congregation and is the proud parent of a bisexual daughter.

Rev. Julio Flores is the Associate Pastor of MCC Hartford. Pastor Julio has served on the board of directors of Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective and Center City Churches (now Hands on Hartford).

Brenda LaPorte, witch and priestess, lives with her wife and lifelong unschooled daughters in Canterbury where they host all the pagan seasonal holidays at their home, known as Shanti Hills. Her coven, Lunar Grove, has been active since 1999.

Ordained in 2007, **Father Ron Kolanowski** is currently the Vicar at St. James Episcopal Church in Preston CT. He and his partner Art have been married for 29 years, have 3 children, and live on the other side of campus.

Lunch (on your own)

Spiritual Institute Program, Friday, March 12, 2010

Friday Afternoon Workshops (1:00 – 2:45)

1. Got Purpose?: Developing an LGBTQI Faith-based Life

Friday, March 12, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*St. Thomas Aquinas, Student Center, BACK LEFT*]

Got purpose? Can a LGBTQI person of faith discover and create a purposeful life? Come join us for an interactive, small group workshop in which life planning and New Testament perspectives are shared. **Sharon Cutts** has 23 years of experience in the field of clinical social work and received her MSW from Smith College School for Social Work. Sharon often incorporates the spiritual backgrounds and experiences of her clients in the assessment and ongoing phase of treatment. She has practiced in a variety of environments, including a child guidance clinic, hospital emergency department, child welfare office, a locked facility for adjudicated adolescent offenders and generalist social work practice in the southwest of England. Her private practice is in its seventh year of operation. This will be Sharon's second workshop presentation for True Colors. The first workshop focused on the experiences of sexual minority youth at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School. **Heath Hightower** maintains a psychotherapy practice in Windsor, CT that focuses on LGBTQI individuals, couples, and families who experience depression, anxiety, trauma, grief and loss, and /or existential concerns such as discovering and creating a meaningful way of experiencing life. He has presented at local, state, national, and international conferences on a range of topics including grief and loss, bipolar disorder, mental healthfulness, and LGBTQI couples therapy.

2. "Yes, I am Gay & Muslim"

Friday, March 12, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*St. Thomas Aquinas, Student Center, BACK RIGHT*]

People are often surprised that Queer Muslims exist. Whether or not Islam is against homosexuality is open for interpretation. The individual experiences of Muslims differ vastly from region to region. The various cultural, religious, and sexual identities all intertwine to create a unique experience. Islam within the context of these cultures will be analyzed and applied to today's society, with an emphasis on East-European Muslims experience and being LGBTQ. **Qesar Veliu** is an 8th-semester Undergraduate Student at the University of Connecticut, pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in German and a minor in Italian. At UConn he works as a staff member for the Rainbow Center and co-facilitates one of the LGBTQ discussion/support groups, "Among Men." Qesar wishes to pursue a career in International Relations and Law.

3. From Angst To Advocacy, Working Toward a More Just World

Friday, March 12, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*Parrish House, Room 201*]

Always Our Children, Sacred Heart Parish, Springfield, Massachusetts. Once comfortably out of the closet, many Catholic parents wonder what they can do to make the road smoother for their LGBT daughters and sons. With the U.S. Catholic Bishops' pastoral letter, Always Our Children (1997/1998) as the starting point, this workshop describes the ways the members of Always Our Children, Sacred Heart, Springfield, Massachusetts work for a more just and welcoming Church and society. As Catholic parents of LGBT children, we started this group to educate ourselves, our Church, and the wider community about issues related to LGBT people, to affirm LGBT people and their families and to provide support to one another. How to approach parishes and schools, how to identify and address the needs of LGBT youth, and the critical importance of parents and LGBT people in educating the adults who are figures of trust and authority for our children- are a few of the topics we will address. **Jeff Perrotti**, founding director of the Massachusetts Safe Schools Program for LGBT Students and co-author, with Kim Westheimer, of the book, When The Drama Club Is Not Enough, will be the facilitator of the discussion. Members of Always Our Children will describe the roles they have played in working to realize the group's mission of support, education and advocacy.

Friday Afternoon Workshops (Continued)

4. Homosexuality and the Bible

Friday, March 12, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*St. Mark's Church, lower level (use parking lot entrance)*]

This workshop will discuss biblical passages that are generally used to attack the queer community as well as passages that are affirming of all people. **Rev. George A. Chien** is the senior Pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford. He was ordained in the United States Methodist Church in 1983, and served parishes in rural and suburban settings in upstate New York and Connecticut before coming to MCC Hartford. He was born and raised in the Catskills of New York State, and earned his BA from Lambuth College in Jackson, Tennessee, and his MDiv from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. **Rev. Julio Flores** is the Associate Pastor of MCC Hartford. He was ordained in New York City in 1998 by Metropolitan Community Churches. He received his theological education at New York Theological Seminary and the Samaritan Institute for Religious Studies. Pastor Julio studied at the Mayagüez Campus of the University of Puerto Rico and the Bernard M. Baruch College of the City University of New York where he received a degree of Bachelor of Business Administration, Accounting. He received a degree of MBA, Banking and Finance, from Adelphi University in Garden City, New York. Pastor Julio has served on the board of directors of Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective and Center City Churches (now Hands on Hartford).

5. Reclaiming Our Spiritual Selves: Overcoming Fear of Religion and Spirituality

Friday, March 12, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*St. Thomas Aquinas, Student Center, FRONT LEFT*]

Over the last century, LGBT folk's fear of religious and spiritual institutions has been fueled by intolerance by some religious groups. Many LGBT folk have turned away from the religious institutions they were born into and have questioned their own spiritual self. This workshop will help the participant re-evaluate religion and spirituality's role in their everyday lives. The workshop will include discussion and participation. **Dr. Chris DiGiorgio** is the founder of SAFE: Spirit and Faith for Everyone, a 501-c-3 not for profit organization. SAFE's mission is to provide safe sacred space to the LGBT community and educate religious and spiritual institutions of its need. Chris has worked with various spiritual and religious leaders over the past decade to bring greater understanding between the religious, faith and LGBT communities.

6. Taking Your Faith Public for Civil Rights

Friday, March 12, 2010 from 2:00-2:45 p.m. [*St. Thomas Aquinas, Student Center, (FRONT RIGHT)*]

This workshop will reflect on the recent involvement of people of faith in Connecticut's political struggles for marriage equality and transgender civil rights. How do faith communities become effective allies in these struggles? How can you get involved? The **Rev. Josh Pawelek** is minister of the Unitarian Universalist Society: East in Manchester and serves as chair of CT Clergy for Marriage Equality.

Friday Closing Session:

"Where Do We Go From Here?" Facilitated by Reverends George Chien and Aaron Miller

Friday, March 12, 2010 3:00-3:30 [*Storrs Congregational Church, Parrish House Auditorium*]

Rev. George A. Chien is the senior Pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford. He was ordained in the United States Methodist Church in 1983, and served parishes in rural and suburban settings in upstate New York and Connecticut before coming to MCC Hartford. He was born and raised in the Catskills of New York State, and earned his BA from Lambuth College in Jackson, Tennessee, and his MDiv from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. **Reverend Aaron Miller** is the Associate Minister of Pastoral Care at MCC, New Haven.

Spiritual Institute Program, Saturday, March 13, 2010

Registration: 9:30—10:15 AM

Storrs Congregational Church, Parish House

2 North Eagleville Road

Storrs, CT

Opening Session: 10:30—11:45 AM

Parish House Auditorium

Reverend Irene Monroe lives in Cambridge and is the Coordinator of the African American Roundtable of the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry (CLGS) at the Pacific School of Religion, a Huffington Post blogger, and a syndicated religion columnist. As a syndicated queer religion columnist, Monroe's columns appear in 43 states across the country and in the U.K. Monroe's outreach ministries are the several religion columns she writes: "*The Religion Thing*" for In Newsweekly, the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender newspaper that circulates widely throughout New England; "*Faith Matters*" for [The Advocate Magazine](#), a national gay & lesbian magazine; and "*Queer Take*" for [The Witness](#), a progressive Episcopalian journal. Her writings have also appeared in Boston Herald and in the Boston Globe. Her award-winning essay, "*Louis Farrakhan's Ministry of Misogyny and Homophobia*", was greeted with critical acclaim.

Monroe was chosen in October 2009 by MSNBC as "10 Black Women You Should Know." Monroe has been profiled in O, Oprah Magazine, CNN's Paula Zahn Now, and "CNN Headline News." She was also profiled in the Gay Pride Episode of "In the Life," where the segment on her was nominated for an educational Emmy. She has received the Harvard University Certificate of Distinction in Teaching several times while being the head teaching fellow of the Reverend Peter Gomes, the Pusey Minister in the Memorial Church at Harvard and the author of the best seller, THE GOOD BOOK. She is in the film, "For the Bible Tells Me So," an exploration of the intersection between religion and homosexuality in the U.S. and how the religious right has used its interpretation of the Bible to stigmatize the gay community, and her coming out story is profiled in "CRISIS: 40 Stories Revealing the Personal, Social, and Religious Pain and Trauma of Growing up Gay in America" that was just released in September 2008. Monroe sits on the advisory boards of several national LGBTQ organizations. You can visit her website at www.irenemonroe.com

Lunch (on your own)

Friday Afternoon Workshops (1:00-2:45)

1. Reconciling Your Sexual Orientation With Your Childhood Religion: A Former Jehovah's Witness Viewpoint [Parish House, Room 201]

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m.

This workshop will discuss the fundamental (evangelical) religious mentality from a Jehovah's Witness (survivor) viewpoint while outlining basic beliefs. People who have come out of the religion will present real examples of their own struggles and stories of success, as well as offer examples of alternative therapies and support systems that helped them move on to live happy, productive, and content lives free from the suppressive emotional turmoil of a strict religious childhood upbringing. Please note: many fundamental Christian religions are similar in their beliefs pertaining to LGBT issues. **Bobby Aduna** is a former Jehovah's Witness who served at the Watchtower Society's World Headquarters for nearly a decade. He presently practices Traditional Chinese Medicine in NYC and travels abroad giving lectures, radio interviews, and workshops on alternative medical modalities. **Jesse Dean** is a 3rd generation former Jehovah's Witness.

Saturday Afternoon Workshops (Continued)

2. Body & Soul: Integrating Sexuality and Spirituality

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*Parish House, Room 102*]

Early in Christian history, the body became disconnected from the soul, and physicality began to carry the taint of sin and shame. Today, growing numbers of theologians, clergy, and people of faith recognize sexuality—in all its diversity—as a sacred part of creation. This workshop will explore the dimensions of sexuality, with attention to the current science on sexual orientation and gender. The workshop combines small group exercises, lecture, discussion, and meditative practice to encourage participants to contemplate how spirituality infuses every dimension of our sexuality. **Timothy Palmer** is director of communications and outreach for the Religious Institute, a multifaith organization dedicated to sexual health, education and justice. He is the author of *Acting Out Loud*, a full inclusion guide for religious communities, and *A Time to Speak*, a faith-based guide to sexual and gender diversity. He has a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York and is a candidate for ordination in the Episcopal Church.

3. Communicating with Your Angels

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*St. Thomas Aquinas, Student Center, FRONT RIGHT*]

Based on the best selling book, “Angelspeake: How to Talk with Your Angels” by Trudy Griswold and Barbara Mark. Come learn and use this easy method of accessing your angels whenever you’d like; for inspiration, support, or even problem solving. Learn your angels’ names and bring their love and clarity into your life! In this workshop you will receive numerous messages in writing through seven steps and four fundamentals. Literally thousands around the world have learned to communicate with their angels through this process. **Michele Leahy** is a Certified Angelspeake™ Facilitator, trained by authors Trudy and Barbara; and the workshop is identical to that seen on Good Morning America, The Leeza Show, and Good Day New York. Michele became a Certified Angelspeake Facilitator in 2003 and was personally trained in Connecticut by Angelspeake founders Trudy Griswold and Barbara Mark. She is also Level II Reiki Certified, has studied personality types and has taken a Writing for Children and Teenagers course. Most recently, in 2009, Michele became a True Colors Mentor.

4. Creating Safe Spaces for GLBT Youth in Catholic Schools - A Panel Discussion

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*St. Thomas Aquinas, Student Center, BACK LEFT*]

GLBT youth who attend religiously-affiliated schools sometimes have an added obstacle to navigate when creating a safe environment for themselves and their peers in school. With hundreds of Catholic schools in New England and few programs geared specifically to the challenges that face GLBT youth who attend them, scores of youth are looking to make their schools more welcoming for students, faculty, and families of all sexual orientations and gender identities. This panel discussion will explore real examples of how students, parents, and teachers made substantial progress in Massachusetts Catholic schools, while honoring the traditions and teachings of the Catholic Church. There will be ample time for questions and discussion so participants leave feeling empowered to help their school become more welcoming and accepting of GLBT members of their school community. **Edward Byrne** is a managing director at Project 10 East, Inc. a Boston-based organization that sends trained volunteers into New England schools to help students create and sustain gay-straight alliances. He also currently serves as the diversity programs coordinator for the Cambridge Public Schools where he oversees diversity initiatives and programming for all cultural groups and advises school, district, and city administration on how to make schools more welcoming.

Saturday Afternoon Workshops, Continued

5. Fortunate Families: Reaching Out to Catholic Families with LGBT Children

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*St. Thomas Aquinas, Student Center, BACK RIGHT*]

Fortunate Families is a national network of support and information for Catholic families with LGBT children. Catholic families often experience a more difficult time than those of other faiths . . . (continued on following page) in dealing with the challenges of reconciling their love for their LGBT child with some of the pronouncements from their Church. This workshop will offer an overview of Fortunate Families and its methods of outreach. Presenters will discuss the programs and resources offered by Fortunate Families including the Listening Parents Network, the series, "Let's Talk About Homosexuality," the monthly newsletter, the Fortunate Families website, the presentations on pertinent topics, and retreats and days of reflection offered in various parts of the country. Presenters will also describe their work in various ministries working to support Catholic families in their own communities. In the final portion of the workshop, the audience will be invited to share their own experiences as family members or as LGBT persons.

Linda Karle-Nelson lives in Farmington Hills, MI. A graduate of Marygrove College (BA) and Wayne State University (MA), she is a retired Speech Pathologist. She is currently a board member of Fortunate Families and Co-President of PFLAG Manistee (MI). Linda is also active in Call To Action, Dignity Detroit, and Elephants in the Living Room. She founded the educational forum "Always Our Children." Linda was widowed a number of years ago. She married Tom Nelson in 2006. Linda is the mother of three children. She has a gay son.

Tom Nelson is a resident of Farmington Hills, MI. A graduate of Notre Dame (BSME) and Michigan State (MBA), he is a retired Ford Motor Company engineer, currently active as a board member of Fortunate Families and as Co-President of PFLAG Manistee (MI). He is also a member of Call To Action, Dignity Detroit, and Elephants in the Living Room. He is a participant in "Always Our Children," an educational panel. He was widowed a few years ago and married Linda Karle-Nelson in 2006. Tom is the father of six children. He has a gay son.

Michael Harmuth lives in Pleasanton, CA. He has two sons and three daughters, one a lesbian. He spent 20+ years in the Air Force as a Communications/Electronics Officer, and 18 years with Lockheed Martin as a Senior Systems Engineer. He ran a PFLAG Chapter in Pleasanton for 5 years; has been on the Oakland Diocese LGBT Outreach Ministry for 18 years, (now the chair); a Board member of CALGM for 3 years and President for one.

6. Homosexuality and the Bible

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*Parish House Auditorium*]

This workshop will discuss biblical passages that are generally used to attack the queer community as well as passages that are affirming of all people. **Rev. George A. Chien** is the senior Pastor of the Metropolitan Community Church of Hartford. He was ordained in the United States Methodist Church in 1983, and served parishes in rural and suburban settings in upstate New York and Connecticut before coming to MCC Hartford. He was born and raised in the Catskills of New York State, and earned his BA from Lambuth College in Jackson, Tennessee, and his MDiv from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. **Rev. Julio Flores** is the Associate Pastor of MCC Hartford. He was ordained in New York City in 1998 by Metropolitan Community Churches. He received his theological education at New York Theological Seminary and the Samaritan Institute for Religious Studies. Pastor Julio studied at the Mayagüez Campus of the University of Puerto Rico and the Bernard M. Baruch College of the City University of New York where he received a degree of Bachelor of Business Administration, Accounting. He received a degree of MBA, Banking and Finance, from Adelphi University in Garden City, New York. Pastor Julio has served on the board of directors of Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective and Center City Churches (now Hands on Hartford).

Saturday Afternoon Workshops (Continued)

7. If It Was on Tyra, It Must Be True!

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00- 2:45 p.m. [*Parish House, First Floor Lounge*]

In September of 2009, Kamora represented True Colors on The Tyra Banks Show, Hell to Pay; Gay Teen Exorcism. The show featured a church group performing an actual “casting out of demons” on one of the youth involved with the True Colors mentoring program. This show did a wonderful job of opening the door to conversations around youth spirituality, the responsibility of adults of faith to all youth, the bible being used to hurt youth etc. This workshop will be a place to continue discussing those themes as well as any others that come up as we view clips from the show. This workshop isn’t intended to provide neat and tidy answers, but to give participants a clearer understanding of the faith messages that are being conveyed to our young people and allow them to explore any messages that they are sharing. **Kamora Herrington** has been working in the Human Service field for close to two decades, first as a preschool teacher for the City of Hartford, then as an advocate for homeless teen moms at Just A Start House in Somerville, MA. She has also worked as a dance instructor, performer, community organizer and cultural ambassador. For the last three years, she has been the Mentoring Program Coordinator for True Colors, Inc.

8. LGBTQ & the Power to Forgive

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 2:00 -2:45 p.m. [*St. Thomas Aquinas, Student Center, FRONT LEFT*]

Being LGBTQ we find discrimination from the outside world but as well as with our intimate friends and family. This hurt can run deep and make us feel vulnerable and weak. The Forgiveness workshop is learning the power of forgiving and the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual benefits of this liberation. **Dan Lupacchino** is an Undergraduate Student at the University of Connecticut pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology. At UConn he works as a staff member for the Rainbow Center office and co-facilitates one of the LGBTQ discussion/support groups “Shades of Grey.” Dan also runs a private holistic healing business where he focuses on self-mastery and empowerment.

9. Body Theology and TransSpirituality: How the Body Affects the Holistic/Holistic Spirituality of Transgender people

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00-2:45 p.m. [*Parish House, Room 202*]

Transgender Spirituality is as holy and sacred as is all faith. One’s Spirit is an integral part of what makes a person whole, in whatever way that is experienced, acknowledged, and expressed. This workshop provides a safe space for education and experiencing Transgender within the context of life and faith. We will explore various cultural and historical perspectives as well as the experience of TransSpirituality in/outside the faith traditions and communities today. **Reverend Aaron Miller** is the Associate Minister of Pastoral Care at MCC, New Haven. **Brianna Johnston** is a Divinity student at the Hartford School of Divinity.

10. The Spiral Dance - Raise a Cone of Power with your LGBTQA Pagan Tribe!

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 1:00-2:00 p.m. [*St. Marks’ Church, (lower level)*]

Come be a part of the ancient pagan tradition of the Spiral Dance as we gather a tribe together for purposes of raising energy! We’ll cast a circle by calling in the properties of earth, air, fire and water, and invite the Goddess to come join us. Then we start the dance! All are welcome to help us raise a cone of power for the LGBTQA community! The only experience you need is an open heart and mind, and a willingness to help create a powerful experience for everyone! Dance with us! **Brenda LaPorte**, witch and priestess, lives with her wife and lifelong unschooled daughters in Canterbury where they host all the pagan seasonal holidays at their home, known as Shanti Hills. Her coven, Lunar Grove, has been active since 1999. Brenda has been a tree-hugging dirt-worshiper her entire life and loves creating sacred space for the purpose of living and sharing Goddess-based spirituality with compassion and respect for all living things.

Saturday Afternoon Workshops (Continued)

11. LGBT and the Real Jesus Christ in the New Millennium (LBGT and the Real JC)

Saturday, March 13, 2010 from 2:00 – 2:45 p.m. [*St. Marks' Church, (lower level)*]

Brick by brick, LGBT and the Real JC delivers the goods about what Jesus would do and say about health, sexuality, relationships, family, and the ability of LGBT to live happy and successful lives, today. The workshop reveals the very foundations of the scriptural road Jesus Christ laid two thousand years ago to assure today's LGBT of the unquestionable love God holds for us all. **Reverend Cocomo Rock** is the founder and lead minister for 191914 Ministries, Inc., a non-denominational, faith-driven outreach that creates and supports initiatives that link faith and the arts together to enhance the socioeconomic recovery efforts of people overcoming crisis.

12. "COMING HOME: Journeying To The Celebration Of Faith And Identity As A Catholic Who Is Gay"

Friday, March 12, 2010 from 2:00 – 2:45 PM [*Parrish House, Room 201*]

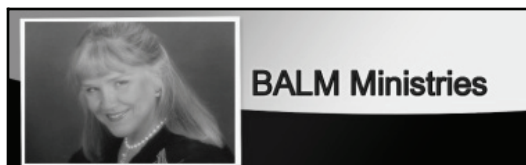
This workshop will offer a blend of personal experiences in the presenter's faith journey, especially after "coming into" his true and authentic self, and how being both Catholic and gay are not in opposition, but can be unified and live in harmony to help us live our best life. Hewill also explore the evolution and changes within the Catholic church over time, and look at how the core principles of the Catholic faith support full inclusion celebration of all people. The workshop will also include some description of the active Open Hearts GLBT ministry at St. Patrick/St. Anthony church in Hartford, CT, and other important work taking place to advocate for justice for and welcoming/affirming of GLBT people in today's Catholic church. **Michael Reynolds** is a 1999 graduate of Trinity College in Hartford, CT, and a 2007 graduate of the Uconn School of Social Work. He currently work as a school social worker. He notes, "I was born and raised Catholic. When I entered high school, I began a new journey that took me through different faith denominations and experiences, searching for the Christian community where I belonged. This has brought me full circle back to the Catholic faith, but in a new and more informed way, and with a passion to bring forth the Catholic church that is truly built upon the life and work of Jesus."

Saturday Closing Session

Marsha Stevens Pino

3:00-3:30PM [*Storrs Congregational Church, Parish House Auditorium*]

The talented performer **Marsha Stevens-Pino** wrote what would become Children of the Day's classic hit, "For Those Tears I Died (Come to the Water)" when she was just sixteen. In 2002, Stevens became the first major singer in the contemporary Christian music subculture to identify herself publicly as a lesbian. Christian Century Magazine has said that Stevens became "conservative Christianity's worst nightmare—a Jesus-loving, Bible-believing, God-fearing lesbian Christian." For her part, Marsha does not betray a shred of bitterness toward any of those who have opposed her and she does not seem to resent her exclusion from the contemporary music culture. She speaks tenderly of her former colleagues and respectfully of the leaders at churches that have dismissed or denounced her. And she has found her calling, stating "Does the church really need another middle-aged female Christian singer? Check out the CD racks! I write and sing contemporary Christian music for the GLBT community. It may be a narrow field, but hey, it's wide open!" Today, Marsha and her spouse, Cindy, are working between tours to continue their music ministry training school for those in Christian outreach to the GLBT community. An outreach of Balm Ministries (Born Again Lesbian Music), the program is called upBeat! They have produced a Praise and Worship album with 14 singers and 10 songwriters and each year they accept 6 to 10 students into their training seminars.



The 2010 Radically Inclusive Spiritual Institute was made possible by the generous donations and support of outside contributors. We would like to take the time to recognize and thank the following:

- Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Society
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 - Ritchard and Mary Cable
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 - Rosella Fanelli
 - Bernie Kettle
 - Barbara Nangle
 - Sara Warfield



TRUE Colors
Sexual Minority Youth and Family Services