

Special points of interest:

- PFLAG will meet Sunday, January 8, 3pm
- Two Parents Speak Openly about Loss, Grief, and Faith
- President's message

January 2011

Loss of Two Sons Leads Methodist Bishop and Spouse into HIV/AIDS Work and Advocacy

At the next program, this **Sunday, January 8th**, the speakers will be Fritz and Etta Mae Mutti. After the loss of two of their three sons to AIDS, they will be talking about their family and work with HIV/AIDS awareness and funding. Hear their journey and learn more by attending at **3pm, Village Presbyterian Church, 6641 Mission Rd, Prairie Village, KS.**

Below are excerpts taken from the December *Camp Magazine* interview of the Mutti's. For the complete article see: <http://bit.ly/v0umP>.

In December 1988, Fred Mutti, the middle son of Fritz and Etta Mae Mutti, told his parents that he was HIV-positive. Four months later, the couple learned that their oldest son, Tim, was also infected with the virus that causes AIDS. Both young men died within a few months.

"AIDS was up close and personal for us. A huge hole was left in our lives. It can never be filled with total healing. Yet we live by faith...Our task is to help the church break the silence, overcome the denial and end the stigma," Fritz said in a statement on a United Methodist Comm. on Relief website.

Fritz is a retired bishop of the United Methodist Church, and Etta Mae is his wife of 52 years. Together they had three sons, Tim, Fred and Marty, two of whom were gay. As a minister, Fritz served in the KC region.



At the 1996 United Methodist General Conf, Bishop Mutti signed a statement, along with 14 other bishops, calling on the church to open its doors

with gracious hospitality to persons of all sexual orientations.

"Judgment was all around us," they said in a jointly written email, "but we tried to show how persons with HIV/AIDS needed the love and care of family, community and church, regardless of sexual orientation."

Asked what advice they would offer LGBT people and their loved ones: "We work to overcome the hostility toward gay persons simply by putting a face on it. When we speak, we take with us pictures of Tim and Fred so people can see for themselves that these were real people who were loved and cared for. We listen to people who are facing this issue with their children. We encourage them and walk with them on that journey."

A Place to Find Support & Acceptance

PFLAG-KC general meetings are held on the **second Sunday** of each month at **3:00pm** at The Village Presbyterian Church, **6641 Mission Road, Room 307 (enter SE door)**, Prairie Village KS 66208, 913.262.4200.

The meeting rooms are wheelchair accessible. PFLAG-KC board meetings are held at 1:30pm before the general meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend and add their ideas.

Meetings are all inclusive & non-denominational.

For more information call our help line: 816.765.9818.

Write us at:
 PFLAG-KC
 PO Box 414101
 Kansas City MO 64141

www.pflagkc.org

pflagkc@pflagkc.org



'PEOPLE CAN STILL BE FIRED, DENIED HOUSING OR REFUSED SERVICE IN A PUBLIC PLACE BECAUSE THEY ARE GAY IN 29 STATES, INCLUDING BOTH KANSAS AND MISSOURI'

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Thank you to [Village Presbyterian Church](#) for allowing us a meeting space. Note to the PFLAG community: we are an all inclusive group and are not affiliated with any religious organization.

President's Message

Dear PFLAG Family,

As I reflect on the past year, there are many things that have been encouraging. I am grateful for all the parents who have attended and been supportive of their child who has come out as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. And I am also heartened by all the parents who came for information, help and support ... "I don't understand, but I love my child and that's not going to change." I am hopeful that more and more of the parents who haven't made it to a meeting will find the motivation, and that parents who haven't been able to be supportive will learn and understand and change their views.



We've had the addition of many wonderful new members this year, devoting their time and making a commitment to help PFLAG in its mission of support, advocacy and education, some who reach out to others after receiving support themselves, some who walked in the door, not seeking help, but seeking to help someone else. Thank you all!

We've had multiple requests from agencies working with young people, some who deal with young people who have gotten into some kind of trouble legally, and wanted to know what things these young people might be dealing with, and how best to be of help to them. We've addressed several groups working with foster and adoptive care, who wanted to have educational materials and knowledge to help find the best care for the young people they would be placing. They also wanted to better evaluate and prepare the families who would be charged with their care. The caring professionals, counselors, attorneys, social workers, and potential foster parents,

eager for information was wonderful. The down side of these trainings, of course, was that the reason many of these young people were in trouble or in need of foster care, was a family who rejected their child when they came out. So there is much work yet to be done.

Which brings me to a request. If any of you reading this is a supportive parent whether or not you have been to a meeting, if you are a member of the LGBT community who has a supportive parent, whether or not they have been to a meeting, please spread the word. PFLAG is not just for parents when their child comes out, or for lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender people when they themselves come out. PFLAG also has the mission of advocacy for and education about our loved ones, and we need all hands on deck. If we heard one thing loud and clear at the PFLAG National Convention, it was the importance of all our voices. So whether you are a family member of someone who is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender, a caring ally, or a member of the LGBT community who can safely do so (people can still be fired, denied housing or refused service in a public place because they are gay in 29 states, including both Kansas and Missouri, and that number is 38 states if you are transgender), we need you to talk to whoever you can, whenever you can. There are still too many voices condemning LGBT people and continuing to perpetuate the hurtful myths that breed fear in the ignorant. It is hard to hear those things as a parent, but even worse is knowing that my daughter hears them, too. We can do this, we can change the world, one person at a time. Let's get started.

Be kind to each other,

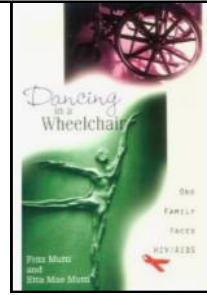
Carolyn

Dancing in a Wheelchair

Dancing in a Wheelchair is a first person account of the Mutti family as they experience life as a family through the journey of two sons, Tim and Fred, with HIV/AIDS. The Muttis tell the story of the transition from life before diagnosis, through the first signs of the disease and finally to the loss of their two sons. Mixed throughout the book is factual information

about the disease. They experience grief, hope, sadness, anger and a wide range of emotions. At the time the book was written, Fritz was the bishop of the Kansas Area of the United Methodist Church.

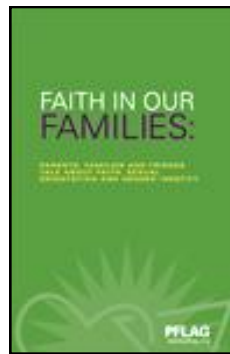
Available in the PFLAG Library
Check it out.



‘THEY EXPERIENCE GRIEF, HOPE, SADNESS, ANGER’

Questions About Faith

Discovering that a family member or friend is lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT) can pose new questions about your faith and may prompt you to re-evaluate beliefs that you previously took for granted. While this can seem scary it can also be the beginning of a new period of learning and exploration. At PFLAG we encourage you to ask questions about sexual orientation and about your faith community.



PFLAG hopes to provide resources to help you on your journey. In addition to our frequently asked questions section and information about what pro-LGBT faith organizations are doing, we also share success stories from our chapters and information on caution when approaching radical right groups.

Links regarding faith through PFLAG National are available at <http://bit.ly/rIMDkm> or pick up free literature at the next PFLAG meeting.

Teaching That Supports Gender-Variant Children

Excerpts from: “It’s Okay to Be Neither”, by Melissa Bollow Tempel

Supporting Gender Variance Every Day ... as teachers, we often use gender to divide students into groups or teams. It seems easy and obvious. Many of us do this when we line students up to go to the bathroom. By dividing the children into two lines by assigned gender, I had unintentionally made those children whose labels aren't so clear feel uncomfortable in more ways than one.

When we lined up to go to the bathroom, I kept my students in one line until we reached the bathroom, and then I let them separate to enter their bathrooms. When the kids came out of the bathroom, they wanted to line up as most

classrooms do, in boys' and girls' lines. Instead, I thought up a new way for them to line up each day. For example: "If you like popsicles, line up here. If you like ice cream, line up here." They loved this, and it kept them entertained while they waited for their classmates.

I also became very aware of using the phrase "boys and girls" to address my students. Instead, I used gender-neutral terms like "students" or "children." At first, the more I thought about it, the more frequently I'd say "boys and girls." I tried not to be too hard on myself when I slipped, and eventually I got out of the habit and used "students" regularly.

Full article available at:
<http://bit.ly/nKuHRV>

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Treasurer's Report:

Monthly finance reports are available and are presented at the 1:30pm board meeting. Everyone is welcome to attend the board meeting.



Who Are We?

Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays of Kansas City ([PFLAG-KC](http://www.pflagkc.org)) is a group of parents, siblings, friends, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who:

- Provide a support system for families and friends of lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgender people to enable them to understand, accept and support their children with love and pride.
- Provide education for individuals and the community at large on the nature of homosexuality, and
- Support the full human and civil rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

PFLAG-KC in the News

Thank you to Bradley Osborn for featuring two news articles about PFLAG-KC in the December *Camp Magazine*.

One article begins with: There may be no place more welcoming than a monthly PFLAG meeting. From the apprehensive first-time visitor to the relaxed veteran, friends and family of LGBT people come to this affirming, safe, relaxing space to share their stories in confidence.

To read the entire article: <http://bit.ly/vFni3I>



In Memory of Dee Dee Pearson

Kansas City, MO – In the late hours of December 24th, 2011, Dee Dee Pearson, a 31 year old transgender woman, was murdered in Kansas City, MO. The murder took place in the 1000 block of East 43rd Street. The Kansas City Police Department arrested ‘26 year old” Kenyan L. Jones shortly after law enforcement arrived at the scene.

We must stress the absolute necessity for the police and media to respect Dee Dee’s gender identity. The least we can do to honor her memory is to respect her chosen, lived identity. PFLAG-KC extends our sorrow to this woman’s family and friends.

KCAVP and The Justice Project are also concerned by the use of transphobic language in media coverage of this murder. Transphobic language contributes to a culture which sanctions anti-transgender violence. Together, we must challenge institutional racism, poverty, transphobic attitudes, lack of social services, criminalization of sex work, and other policies that jeopardize our security.

KCAVP and The Justice Project are currently working with the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation ([GLAAD](http://www.glaad.org)) and reaching out to the media outlets to follow up on this incident. We encourage you to report any anti-LGBT bias, including hate speech, bullying, harassment, and physical violence to KCAVP at 816-561-0550. Dee Dee Pearson’s loved ones, along with KCAVP and The Justice Project hosted a memorial gathering for Dee Dee Pearson on December 28th at St. James Catholic Church at 39th and Harrison in KC MO.



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