

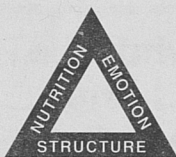
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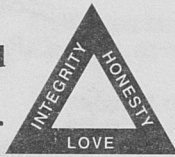


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Affirmation/ Gay and Lesbian Mormons Organizing in Northeast

A few scattered gay and lesbian members of Mormon churches in the northeastern states are seeking to share their insights about homosexuality and Mormonism with others who need to understand gay perspectives in a Mormon context. A free newsletter is available and they hope to begin a series of meetings for discussions and activities.

Affirmation/ Gay and Lesbian Mormons is an international educational fellowship serving gay Mormons and their families since 1977. It is centered in Los Angeles and has sixteen chapters in three nations, but there are a few members and interested persons in the northeast. They are cooperating with the Reorganized Mormon Gay and Lesbian Acceptance (GALA) fellowship to hold weekend retreats twice a year and accept each other in local activities.

The Mormons generally ignore the presence of gay church members and expect them to live celibate lives. More recently, several supportive groups similar to Affirmation have begun the task of talking about gay issues outside the church structure. They seek to accept and help the estimated one-half million gay Mormons to experience life and love without fear or guilt. Reorganized Mormons have recently adopted a policy of acceptance and officially recognize the GALA fellowship as a ministry of their church.

The Mormon Church is the largest of many sects that resulted from the ministry of Joseph Smith. Upon his death in 1844, several sects resulted from different interpretations of the faith. In 1860, Joseph Smith's son presided over the formation of the Reorganized Mormon church and sought to return to the original teachings of the faith. The reorganized church began to ordain women in the 1980's and recently moved to accept gays. Its outlook is more peace and reconciliation oriented than the conservative Mormons, who are led by an aging patriarchy in Utah.

For further information on Affirmation/GALA activities please contact any of the following:

PO Box 1102, Boston, MA 02123-1102 (617) 266-8253.
PO Box 2167, Albany, NY 12220-0167 (518) 438-5115.
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