



# The Clarendon Connection

July 2008

[www.clarendonhillchurch.org](http://www.clarendonhillchurch.org)

## Good News from San Jose! Presbyterian General Assembly Votes 54% to 46% to End LGBT Discrimination!

Friday, June 27, 2008

by Michael J. Adee, More Light Presbyterians

This is an amazing moment in history. I give thanks to God for all of you who have been praying, believing and working for the Presbyterian Church (USA) to end discrimination against its own lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) daughters and sons, sisters and brothers in Christ.

Today, the 218th General Assembly of the PCUSA voted 54% to 46% to end discrimination against LGBT members of our Church; and to provide spiritual and ordination equality for LGBT Presbyterians.

The Assembly approved the Boston Ordination Equality Overture which called for a deletion of the "fidelity in marriage, chastity in singleness" requirement and lifted up our historic Constitutional questions for ordination and installation. This part of the overture requires ratification by the presbyteries in the next year.

The second part of the overture provides a new Authoritative Interpretation. It struck down the anti-gay policy statements beginning with the 1978 Definitive Guidance and the subsequent 1979 ruling that homosexuality is not compatible with service in the Church, sinful and not part of God's design. These profoundly uninformed and homophobic statements from the past of our Church have no further force or effect with the approval of this Boston Ordination Overture.

More Light Presbyterians gives thanks to God for all of the Commissioners, Youth Advisory Delegates and other delegates who are served faithfully this week. There is clearly a sea-change in our Church, society and world as more people are letting go of the old beliefs and prejudice about homosexuality, same-gender loving persons and embracing what it means to recognize Christ and the divine image within all of God's children, no exceptions.

Our work of witness, education, truth-telling, sharing our stories within our local churches, on our college and seminary campuses has just begun! We have one year to pray and work so that this Boston Ordination Equality Overture will be thoughtfully and prayerfully considered, heard and ratified by our presbyteries. The joyous work of being the Church and sharing our faith to achieve the ratification of the Boston Ordination Equality Overture will begin on June 28 at the close of this Assembly. For this moment, on this day, we rejoice in the fact that this Assembly has provided a way forward for our beloved Church.

Together we are building a Church for all God's people!



Sandra Winter of Chattanooga, Tenn., fits Maisha Johnson of Stockton, Calif., with a stole in the More Light Presbyterians booth at General Assembly. Read more on p. 2. Photo by D. Bolin

### Sunday Worship at Clarendon Hill SUMMER SCHEDULE

9:15 a.m.	Choir rehearsal
10:00 a.m.	<b>Worship*</b>
11:00 a.m.	Refreshments and fellowship

\*NOTE NEW TIMES! Worship will begin at 10 a.m. from July 6 to August 31. Children's Education and the regular worship schedule will resume in September.



### CLARENDON HILL & MORE LIGHT PRESBYTERIANS

During a focus on mission in June, Katherine Gustafson challenged Clarendon Hill Presbyterian Church, a participating congregation in More Light Presbyterians (MLP), to contribute at least \$150 to MLP in order to be listed in their next annual report. Katherine urged consideration of this special offering in honor of the many folks we know who cannot currently be ordained in the Presbyterian Church (USA). If you would like to contribute, please contact Katherine at [kath.gustafson@gmail.com](mailto:kath.gustafson@gmail.com).

## Thank You!

by Ellen Schemerhorn

In early June, we mailed off 25 multicolored rainbow scarves to be worn by commissioners at General Assembly (GA), which was held in mid-June in San Jose, California. The scarves were a visual reminder that our national church is still not inclusive of all of God's children. I'd like to thank those who knit or crocheted our cache of scarves: Val Donovan, Katherine Gustafson, Liz Cavano, Sarah Donovan, Karen Alison and most especially Shelley Rhodes . We also received a thank you card from Rev. Janet Edwards, who coordinated this effort for More Light Presbyterians. She wrote:

Dear Clarendon Hill Church Knitters and Crocheters,  
Deepest thanks for your contributions to the rainbow scarves witness at the PCUSA GA!  
Every loving stitch will shine with more light. And each scarf will be a shield and buckler for it's wearer. May this be the year justice and love prevail.  
You can watch for your work in pictures from GA on [mlp.org](http://mlp.org) starting 6/20.  
May you all knit and crochet in peace.  
Janet

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## Power of Positive Knitting: Rainbow Scarves at the General Assembly

by Heather Reichgott, <http://holy-vignettes.blogspot.com/>

The power of Presbyterian knitting is a force to be reckoned with.

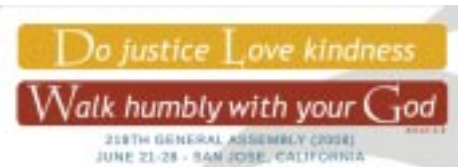
After this call for people to knit rainbow scarves, which mark LGBT supporters at the assembly and help remind everyone how many of us there are. . . verily, there is a flood of scarves.

Presbyterians: You are CRAZY knitters. Old lady knitters and 6-year-old beginning knitters. Knitters who tucked passionate notes of prayer for LGBT Presbyterians into the folds of their creations. Some 600 scarves were in by the so-called deadline but they just kept coming.

The scarves aren't just swag, like the freebie buttons or stress toys you can pick up at most booths in the convention center. Someone must put a scarf on your neck for you, with a blessing, and you're asked to promise to explain to anyone who asks about the scarf why you're wearing it. This action, plus the semi-liturgical look of a scarf, gives the whole thing a surprising kind of gravity and spirit.

At least on the surface, the scarves just say "I have this position on LGBT equality." But each scarf was knit for the wearer by someone else. Each one represents hours of work and prayer. The fact that you're wearing it represents a promise you made, and the hope and prayer of the person who gave it to you and prayed over you. The gentle ghosts of all the knitters of a thousand scarves float through this assembly, accompanying everyone with those colors on their neck.

And of course, every hour, there's more and more color out there. You can see the growth, and the way people begin to recognize one another, to stand taller, to remember once again the communion of saints who surround this holy struggle.



The Blessing (one version)

This scarf was knit by someone who believes in the full inclusion of LGBT people in our church, including ordination. They blessed it as it was made and I bless it now as I give it to you. May you join us in working for justice.

## Giving Rainbow Scarves

by Peg True

Sunday evening I was in the More Light booth giving out a new supply of scarves. Using the blessing Janet Edwards created, I put the scarf on a woman who had told me her daughter was lesbian. On impulse, I asked if she would like a scarf for her daughter and she was thrilled. Her daughter has not spoken to her in four years and the mother saw the scarf as a possible entre.

The blessing and the scarves, knit by so many around the country, open doors!

# Clarendon Connection Happenings



## Parish News

Augustus Kwaa has had a death in his family and needs to travel to Ghana for the funeral, which will be in late July. If you would like to make a contribution toward the cost of his ticket, make checks out to him.

## Dates to Remember

July 6	Coffee Orders
July 18	“Secret Knowledge of Water” Opening Reception
July 20	Yoga with Liz
TBA	Presby 101 Potlucks

## Equal Exchange Coffee

Katherine will take the Equal Exchange coffee order on Sunday, July 6. Equal Exchange sent a notice which indicates that due to higher organic coffee expenses and other rising costs, the average price of coffee will go up 45 cents per pound as of August 1. Katherine will provide more information in time for the August order.

## Introduction to Yoga

Come join our small, half-hour class during coffee hour (12:15 p.m. on Sunday, July 20) to practice mindful breathing and gentle yoga postures. Great for stress release, improved flexibility and strength. If interested, please email Liz at [cavatorta1@hotmail.com](mailto:cavatorta1@hotmail.com) for more info.

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● **Clarendon Hill's Facebook Account** ●  
● Missing Clarendon Hillers halfway through the ●  
● week? Want to make church friends digital friends? ●  
● Clarendon Hill has a new facebook account at ●  
● <http://groups.to/clarendonhill/> For more ●  
● information about how to set up a Facebook ●  
● account, contact Rachel at [reichiru@gmail.com](mailto:reichiru@gmail.com). ●  
● Come join us! ●  
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## Rental Space Available!

Teen Empowerment recently left their rental space at the church, so there is room available! If you know of a group or organization that is in need of office space, please have them get in touch with the church as soon as possible.

## Presby 101

There will be two or three evenings in late July and/or early August with a potluck supper and discussion about “What Presbyterians Believe.” Dates to be announced. See more information on page 4.

## The Secret Knowledge of Pastor Karl

Karl is curating an exhibit at the Nave Gallery titled “The Secret Knowledge of Water.” It runs from July 18-August 17. The opening reception is on Friday, July 18 from 6-8 p.m. See page 5 for more details.

## Peace, Justice and Mission Committee Report

The committee met recently and began to plan events for the coming fall. In addition, we discussed holding a summer series of evening meetings (with a light potluck supper) that will focus on Presbyterians, and more specifically, what we believe. Our hope is that a chance to talk about our tradition and what Presbyterians believe will inspire us to use our faith and beliefs as a way to undergird our mission focus.

In September, we hope to make a day trip to Gaining Ground farm in Concord. This is a trip for adults and children over 5 years old. Here is more information from the farm's website ([www.gainingground.org](http://www.gainingground.org)):

Gaining Ground grows organic vegetables and fruit with the help of hundreds of community volunteers and donates all of this fresh food to area meal programs and food pantries. Based in historic Concord, Massachusetts, Gaining Ground raises and distributes approximately 20,000 pounds of produce each growing season. Find out more about how Gaining Ground is helping those in need . . . and how you can help us!

We offer hands-on educational and community service opportunities for individuals and groups (ideal group size is 8-10). Volunteering at Gaining Ground offers

- \* a chance to engage in meaningful work,
- \* knowledge of where food comes from and how it grows,
- \* a chance to see a variety of plant and animal life, and
- \* a change of scene from your usual environment.

Volunteers give whatever time they can: some help once a season, others more often. All work under the guidance of our professional garden coordinator and her crew.

Depending upon when we visit, we may be able to follow our time with a picnic lunch at Walden Pond in Concord, or an ice cream treat at an ice cream stand, or pick apples at an area orchard. Watch for more information in the August newsletter, and make plans now to join us!

Leading up to Sunday, October 5 (which is World Communion Sunday, and the day that we collect the Peacemaking Offering), we will have a Sunday series entitled "Shalom: A Study of the Biblical Concept of Peace," which is an elective course of The Kerygma Program. On September 7, 14, 21 and 28, we will use bible study and a guide to look at peace from a theological and spiritual perspective. Pastor Karl will lead us in this study, which will follow our worship and fellowship time.

To continue in our interfaith efforts, we hope to hold a four week (or so) series on Judaism, led by a member of Temple B'nai Brith; this will be in late October and early November and is still in the planning stages.

We also hope to provide opportunities for hands-on mission work that will engage our spirits, minds and bodies as we move throughout the rest of the fall and on into 2009.

*-Ellen Schemerhorn for the PJM committee*

**The Secret Knowledge of Water**

July 18-August 17, 2008

Curated by Karl Gustafson

Artists: Moira Barrett, Ellie Brenner, Matt Carrano, Heather Classen, Stan Czesniuk, Christine Destrempe, Angela Devenney, Gary Duehr, Ruth Hamill, Liz Johnson, Shelley Loheed, Denyse Murphy, Greg O'Brien, Dan Osterman, Kathleen Rugh, Cathy Schaefer, Jane Sherrill, Laura Torres, Emile Tubenfeld

Opening reception, Friday, July 18 from 6-8 p.m.  
 After the reception from 8-10 p.m., Dr. T & Friends: Water Music and other improvisation. \$5 suggested donation.



**Peter Walker**

13 July 2008, 7:30 p.m. \$10

[www.myspace.com/peterwalkerguitarist](http://www.myspace.com/peterwalkerguitarist)

Guitarist Peter Walker came up in the Cambridge MA and Greenwich Village folk scenes of the Sixties. He recorded two albums for the Vanguard label in the late Sixties in a style best described as American folk-raga. He studied with Ravi Shankar and Ali Akbar Khan, and was Dr. Timothy Leary's musical director, organizing music for the LSD advocate's "celebrations."

Peter Walker's 1967 debut album, *Rainy Day Raga*, features one of the first studio appearances by jazz flautist Jeremy Steig, as well as guitarist Bruce Langhorne, who recorded with Bob Dylan and many others. *Rainy*

*Day Raga* is a gentle and beautiful fusion of Eastern and Western musical traditions, and one of the earliest examples of a style explored by Sandy Bull several years earlier. A second album, *Second Poem to Karmela or, Gypsies Are Important* (1969) found Walker going even deeper into Indian instrumentation, playing sarod and sitar. During this time, Peter played or was associated with such musicians as Lowell George, Fred Neil, Tim Hardin, and Joan Baez, among many others.

Walker settled in upstate New York in the early Seventies. In more recent years, he has developed an intense interest in flamenco guitar and, through regular trips to Spain, been accepted into the flamenco's exclusive musical elite.



**Emily Smith and Synergy**

**with Anne's Cordial**

27 July 2008, 7 p.m. \$8

[www.myspace.com/emilysmithsynergy](http://www.myspace.com/emilysmithsynergy)

[www.annescordial.com](http://www.annescordial.com)

Two Providence-based, female-fronted bands are coming to the Nave to bring you a double-bill of beautiful vocals, passionate songs and distinctive rhythm. The Emily Smith Band and Synergy—vocals, guitar and drums—blends pop and rock with world, electronic and jazz elements, and Annes Cordial—guitar, keyboard and three-part vocal harmonies—combine original folk and jazz songs with reinterpretations of blues, bossa nova and 80s New Wave hits!



## Making the wrong move

By Kevin Cullen, Globe Columnist | cullen@globe.com | June 30, 2008

Their baby, their Debbie, turned 24 so Ed and Margaret Braga had a little party yesterday at their house in Arlington. It was hot and there are 25 steps up to the front door.

Debbie Braga's 31-year-old brother David couldn't make it. He has all sorts of health problems and rarely leaves Seven Hills Pediatric Center in Groton, where he has lived since he was 11 years old.

"We had him home for Father's Day, and it was a good day," Ed Braga said. He was sitting at the kitchen table and Margaret sat next to him and she nodded and agreed it was a good day.

They don't know how many more good days their David will have. They just found out the state wants to move David and 30 other people out of Seven Hills to a smaller facility.

This is the result of a lawsuit that has nothing to do with the Bragas and other families who know only that their children have survived and thrived at Seven Hills, long after some experts said their kids would die in childhood.

Nobody from the state, nobody with a medical degree, has bothered to sit down with the Bragas or any of the other families and ask them if they thought moving the people out of Seven Hills is a good idea.

Last week, at the annual Seven Hills family picnic, Ed Braga pulled aside some doctors from Children's Hospital, the hospital that got Seven Hills up and running in the first place, and asked them whether they thought it was a good idea.

"They think the same thing we think," Braga said. "They think this is a really bad idea. They think this will really threaten David's health and the health of the others."

Margaret Braga remembers bringing David home for the first time, seven months after he was born, thinking she could love her little boy back to health. But the oxygen didn't reach his brain soon enough, so he was mentally retarded. He had cystic fibrosis. He was a quadriplegic. His digestive system was a mess. His respiratory system was a mess.

Margaret would lie awake at night, listening to her son gasp for air, unable to sleep because she thought she had just heard David take his last breath. As David got older and heavier, they would struggle, carrying him up those steep front stairs.

"I was like every mother with a seriously disabled child," Margaret said. "I thought just my being a good mother would heal him, but it didn't."

Seven Hills saved more than David's life. It saved his parents and his five siblings, all of whom had been devoted to caring for him and keeping him in the family home.

And now, just like that, someone who has never met the Bragas, never spoken to them, never sat at the kitchen table, listening to the stories, the love, the pain of putting David there in the first place, the doubt, the reluctant realization that it was the right thing to do, has all the power. Somebody who knows none of this, who has never seen the photograph of David in a tuxedo at his sister's wedding six years ago that sits on the bureau just inside the front door, this somebody says they know what's best for David Braga.

"Don't we have the right to say no?" Margaret asked. "Don't we have the right to say, 'If you move David and these other people out of Seven Hills you're going to hurt them, maybe kill them?'"

Debbie Braga scoffed.

"The state says they're going to move my brother into a community setting," she said. "He's already in a community. They don't know or care about that community."

Ed Braga looked out the window. The guests would be arriving soon and he had to get the food out and had to be a good host even as he harbored a bad feeling.

"They're gonna kill him," Ed Braga said, standing up. "If they push him out, they're gonna kill my son."

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## Lectionary for Sundays

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### July 2008

#### July 6

Genesis 24:34-38, 42-49, 58-67  
 Psalm 45:10-17 or Song of Solomon 2:8-13  
 Romans 7:15-25a  
 Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

#### July 13

Genesis 25:19-34  
 Psalm 119:105-112  
 Romans 8:1-11  
 Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

#### July 20

Genesis 28:10-19a  
 Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24  
 Romans 8:12-25  
 Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

#### July 27

Genesis 29:15-28  
 Psalm 105:1-11, 45b or Psalm 128:1-6  
 Romans 8:26-39  
 Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

### August 2008

#### August 3

Genesis 32:22-31  
 Psalm 17:1-7, 15  
 Romans 9:1-5  
 Matthew 14:13-21

#### August 10

Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28  
 Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22, 45b  
 Romans 10:5-15  
 Matthew 14:22-33

#### August 17

Genesis 45:1-15  
 Psalm 133:1-3  
 Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32  
 Matthew 15:(10-20) 21-28

#### August 24

Exodus 1:8-2:10  
 Psalm 124:1-8  
 Romans 12:1-8  
 Matthew 16:13-20

#### August 31

Exodus 3:1-15  
 Psalm 105:1-6, 23-26, 45c  
 Romans 12:9-21  
 Matthew 16:21-28

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## Church Assignments

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	scripture	focus on mission	coffee hour	nursery
July 6	J. Auger	C. Milanesi	Siggers	N. Jirmanus
July 13	J. Bray	E. Schemerhorn	Jirmanus	A. Chapman-Adisho
July 20	R. Liberace	S. Otami	Augers	K. Gustafson
July 27	M. Reynolds	R. Winchester	Milanesi/Kumpa	E. Schemerhorn
August 3	C. Milanesi	H. Rantisi	Gustafson/Cavano	N. Jirmanus
August 10	E. Sweeney	R. Liberace	Donovan	A. Chapman-Adisho
August 17	R. Winchester	S. Donovan	Schemerhorn	K. Gustafson
August 24	M. Jirmanus	M. Reynolds	Siggers	E. Schemerhorn
August 31	P. Beran	J. Auger	Jirmanus	V. Donovan

If you would like to be added to the rotation for any of these opportunities, please contact Ann Crews Melton, [anncrews@gmail.com](mailto:anncrews@gmail.com) or 617.646.9690.

*The Clarendon Connection* is edited by Ann Crews Melton. Articles for the August issue are requested by July 24th. Email Ann at [anncrews@gmail.com](mailto:anncrews@gmail.com) with news, photos, tidbits, corrections or suggestions.



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Rev. Karl Gustafson, Minister   Augustus Kwaa, Parish Associate/Evangelist   John Adams, Music Director   Arnie James, Sexton

## Clean Your Desk Campaign

Recycle, Reuse, and Renew Hope for Nicaraguan Kids!

Each year, with your help, Quest for Peace sends 60 tons of school supplies to Nicaragua for use in the rural schools. With an average annual income of \$250, families cannot afford supplies for their several children - nor does the government provide them. In addition to school supplies, "parents must come up with additional salary, desks, materials, school repairs, water and electric bills, and cleaning materials," says Nan McCurdy in *Education: A Privilege in Nicaragua*. Your educational supplies will build friendship between peoples, help educate Nicaraguan children and open a new world for you.

**Donate school supplies such as:**

- pencils and erasers**
- paper and notebooks**
- art supplies**
- crayons and markers**
- scissors and rulers**
- musical instruments**
- basketballs, baseballs, etc.**

Please--NO books, 3-ring binders or anything battery operated.

The supplies are put in large cargo containers and shipped to Nicaragua. They travel to the 300-plus schools which Quest for Peace serves in Nicaragua. ([www.quixote.org](http://www.quixote.org))

Last year, Clarendon Hill shipped many pounds of supplies. There will be a box in the foyer of the church for you to deposit your supplies along with a more extensive list of the supplies that are needed. Remember to ask friends and neighbors to participate too! And if you or your colleagues haven't cleaned your work desk (or desk at home), take a look to see what you can contribute.

If you don't have school supplies to send, we would also be grateful for monetary donations to help defray the cost of shipping the items. Please see Ellen Schemerhorn ([ellends@verizon.net](mailto:ellends@verizon.net)) for more details.