



PFLAG Brisbane

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

Newsletter October/November 2011

Keeping Families Together

Welcome

Our last meeting was enriched by the practical and enlightening Rev. Matt Glover. Matt's down to earth chat with us resonated with many people. For many families reconciling faith and homosexuality is a challenging one and Matt's idea of a pastoral response by the church is included in this newsletter.

As we go to print we are unsure of the Labor Party's final conference agenda but same sex marriage will hopefully be a hot topic of discussion and we watch with anticipation at what could be the beginning of an exciting time in Australian human rights policy, and the opportunity of equality for our gay sons and daughters who wish to legally marry. I hope you enjoy this edition of our newsletter and please remember our AGM on the 26th November.

Cheers Pip :-)

Report From Shelley

Queen Elizabeth's Visit

I was very surprised to receive an invitation to attend the official reception for the Queen and Prince Phillip in the mail a few weeks ago. My son James was also invited as my partner and so I decided this had to be a must do.

I am not particularly a 'royalist' but saw it as a form of recognition of the work I do. I am guessing that I got the invite because I am until November 20th, Queensland's Senior Australian.

It was also a great opportunity to talk with MP's and Senators that I would have to formally request a meeting and receive a possible knock back. I chatted with among others, Malcolm Turnbull, Julie Bishop and Senator Gary Gray from WA, Craig Kelly from Gladstone electorate and many of the Greens Senators.

The night was very well done and it was great to see that the majority of people in the room were from community organisations. So I was very pleased I went, furthermore it was nice to be there and not be racing from one office to the other for meetings.

Civil partnerships

I was in Parliament on 24th October when Andrew Fraser's Private Members Bill was introduced into Queensland. This Bill aims to introduce a civil partnership or union for same sex couples. I felt our State and this country have come a long way since James first came out in 1995. I feel as if marriage will become a reality for our sons and daughters within the next few years.

I felt quite overwhelmed as I sat in the gallery, thinking of just how far we have come on rights for our sons and daughters in a relatively short time. It won't be long and our sons and daughters will be seen as equal in this country.

Shelley Argent



Senator Sarah Hansen - Young, Paul Thomas, Shelley and Senator Bob Brown photographed in the Great Hall at Parliament House recently at the occasion of the Queen's visit.

Celebrating
a life takes
planning.

We give you
time.



When you lose someone, we understand the first thing you need is time. Time to plan, to reflect, to remember the special moments. Time to celebrate a life well-lived.

ALBANY CREEK	3325 5055	KELVIN GROVE	3356 4430
CLEVELAND	3286 5069	REDCLIFFE	3284 5268
DARRA	3375 6788	SANDGATE	3869 3077
HOLLAND PARK	3849 8411	WYNNUM	3396 4219



To embrace a lifetime, we give you time.

www.georgehartnettfunerals.com.au

Australian Owned | 24 Hours | All Areas | Prearranged Funerals

CH 10146

Advocate

Prime Minister Julia Gillard is reportedly set to allow a conscience

vote on the issue of same sex marriage in Parliament. Disappointingly, (for us) this will now probably occur *after* the Labor Party National Conference later this year. We would prefer that this vote be held *before* the conference, in order that healthy and transparent debate be undertaken at the conference, potentially leading the way for debate and legislation change in the Federal Parliament. The issue of same sex marriage may now not make it to the main agenda of the conference.

PFLAG's Shelley Argent has paid to be an observer at the conference.

In recent years the National Conference has been held concurrently with a progressive Fringe program.

Labor affiliated networks, progressive organisations and charities are able to run a series of events aimed at promoting an exchange of ideas about some of the nation's most challenging policy debates.

In addition to attending the conference Shelley will hold an official PFLAG fringe event.

She will be accompanied by a father from Tasmania who has a gay son and has been a Labor Party member for forty years, and a mother from Newcastle who has been in the Labor Party for 10 years.

Joining them will be Jeff Thomas who is a Vietnam veteran and 'tradie' and has spoken publicly about gay rights on ABC programmes Q&A and Compass.



Talking to Someone Who Really Understands Makes it So Much Easier

Working through some of the deeper emotional issues with having a gay or lesbian son or daughter can be one of the most painful and stressful experiences of your life. Counselling is a highly effective way of feeling better and also can assist in keeping your family together. *Centre for Human Potential* have been working with parents of gays, lesbians and transgender for over 15 years. Contact one of our friendly psychologists to explore whether counselling can be of real benefit to you and your family, or simply call and book a time with one of us.

Phone: 3211 1117

Email: info@centreforhumanpotential.com.au



Big Budda Boom connecting your senses

Video to DVD
Corporate Events and
Staging
Artwork and Design
Web Design and Hosting
Audio Engineering

www.bigbuddaboom.com.au

From Our Meeting

Our last meeting was very well attended and we were grateful for the contribution of Rev. Matt Glover who joined us via teleconference from Lilydale in Victoria.

Matt is Senior Pastor of Lilydale Baptist Church and has been involved with the Gay community for the last fifteen years.

Matt is convinced that in every church there is somebody who has questioned their sexuality. It's his guess that even now, most churches contain people that are questioning their sexuality, but struggle in private.

It is an issue that touches many of us at one level or another through family, friends and work colleagues, and Matt believes it is important that an appropriate pastoral response be articulated for the church.

A pastoral response to the LGBT community, in some ways, will be no different to any other group of people.

However, there are unique needs and challenges that are quite foreign to heterosexual people, but which gay people must face all the time. The process of self-awareness leading to coming out, and then exploring and accepting one's orientation can be a very lonely, traumatic and confusing time for a LGBT person and a time where "traveling companions" are desperately needed.

Family members of LGBT people also face their own "coming out" and must wrestle with their feelings and responses to the news that the orientation of someone they love is different.

LGBT people from ethnic and religious minorities, as well as the disabled, face enormous obstacles.



The love of God,
communicated by those
from the faith community
that care for LGBT people,
needs to be told and
displayed
without fear.

The elderly are barred from moving into aged care with their life-long, same-sex partners because their status as a couple is legally unrecognized.

Of course, those living with HIV/AIDS are treated as the "unclean" of our time.

People in all of these situations, both inside and outside the Church, need to be loved and cared for by more than just the LGBT community.

All of them need to be free from the oppression and anxiety that has been unfairly placed on them.

This is a pastoral response to homosexuality.

Taken from A Pastoral Response to the Homosexuality in the Church

Rev. Matt Glover Lilydale Baptist Church

October 2010

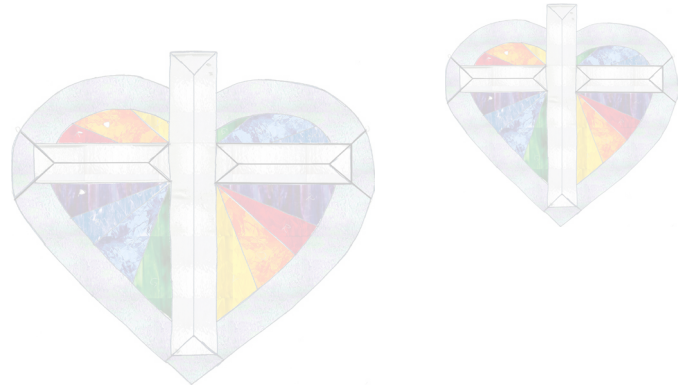
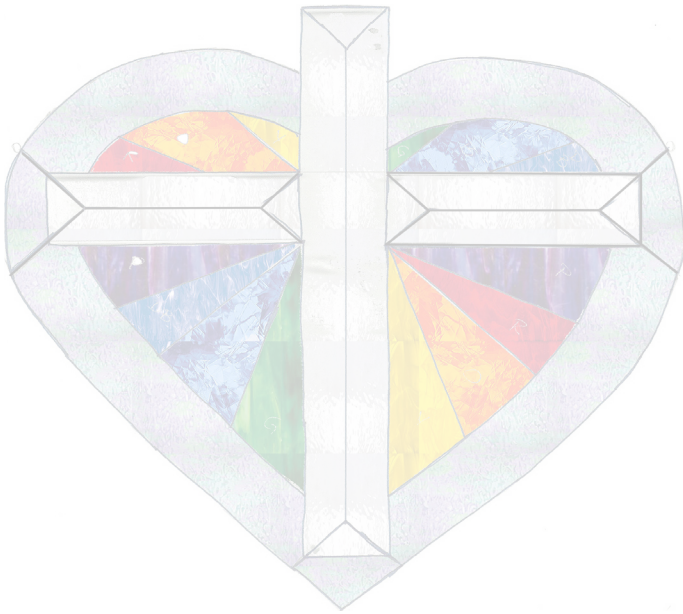
It was written as part of his theological studies and in response to the pain and suffering he has seen in his journey with the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Transgender) community. The full article can be downloaded at www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

FYI: QAHC's faith site

<http://www.qahc.org.au/faith> links to www.gaychurch.org which recommends the following 2 Brisbane churches and other communities all of which can be found on Facebook.

Metropolitan Community Church,
New Way Community Chapel,
LGBT's: Praying out loud and proud
. QAHC also lists Muslim, Buddhist
and other support groups.





Christians 4 Equality - Religious

Leaders Speak Out

“When a couple want to be part of the institution of marriage, when they fully accept the same rights and responsibilities of marriage and treat marriage with the respect it deserves, why should they NOT get married? As a Christian minister, I believe that marriage is under threat from many angles, but also believe that recognizing same-sex unions will help return marriage to its rightful place in society.”
Rev Matt Glover (Baptist Minister, Melbourne)

“From a Christian point of view, marriage is an institution designed to serve two social needs:

1. contribute broadly to social stability
2. provide a stable environment for the nurturing of children.

If this is the case then the only questions Christians need to concern themselves with when it comes to the issue of gay marriage are these two:

1. Would gay marriage lead to greater social stability?
2. Would a married gay partnership be likely to provide a more secure environment for the nurturing of the children of a gay couple than an unmarried one?

I think the answer to both these questions has to be ‘yes’.”

Fr Dave Smith, (Anglican parish priest, Sydney)

“Today in Australia we all live in a secular non discriminatory society. Churches and other spiritual institutions exist within this society. It seems to me that in a secular and non discriminatory society gay couples should be as free to marry as any other human couple. If people wish to be married within a religious or spiritual institution’s framework then they should accept the rites and rules of that institution. However it is the state that legitimises all marriages.”

Rev Bill Crews (Uniting Church Minister, Sydney)

“How can I, a heterosexual who’s been very happily married for 50 years, tell anyone else they don’t have the right to form a loving, committed, lifelong union and enjoy the fruits of marriage as I have done? Marriage is not a club to be restricted to some. Like the Gospel, it is a blessing to be shared.”

Rev Rowland Croucher (Baptist Minister, Sydney)

Access to marriage, a public expression of commitment and love, is an essential part of being human and an inalienable right. As Christians we need to support those who are excluded and challenge those who through exclusion dehumanise and discriminate. I urge you to join the campaign to welcome our GLBT friends to express their love and commitment to each other through this special rite.”

Rev Roger Munson (Uniting Church Minister, Canberra)

www.christians4equality.com.au

What's On?

November

26th

PFLAG Brisbane AGM 1.30 pm 30 Helen

St Newstead

December

1st

World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day Information Stall

Wednesday 1 December

King George Square

From 9am to 7.30pm

Live Entertainment, information Stall with display of vintage posters, red ribbons, leaflets and people to talk to.

1st

Get RED Gala Cocktail Party

Wednesday 1 December

Hotel Urban Brisbane

345 Wickham Terrace, Brisbane

From 7pm

Join hosts Camilla Severi from B105 and David Graham in Getting RED this World AIDS Day.

Bid on one-off pieces designed by a number of Australia's leading designers and fabulous auction items .

Tickets : \$90 per ticket or buy 4 or more for \$70 per ticket Info: www.getred.com.au

Participate

The **PFLAG Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 26th November** at

QAHC, 30 Helen St, Teneriffe at 1.30.p.m.

If you are interested in being on the committee or would like to hold an official position e.g. President, Secretary or Treasurer etc., or would like to know more about how PFLAG operates, please come along.

You also may have some goals or projects you would like PFLAG to undertake and be part of.

If so, please come along and contribute to our group.

Everyone is welcome at the AGM and the meeting to follow.



Pride Ceremonies®
Jennifer Cram
GLBTI-Positive Marriage Celebrant
Finalist ABIA awards 2010 with 99.62% rating
Commitment, Naming and other ceremonies for GLBTI families
Legal Marriage Ceremonies respectful and inclusive of GLBTI family members and friends
07 3378 3005
www.prideceremonies.com.au



The Slap, was the 2009 winner of the Commonwealth Writers' Prize, and is a plot-driven, unpretentious novel written by Australian author Christos Tsiolkas.

The idea for the book came from a real life incident in which Tsiolkas' mother gave a child a small smack at a family gathering. Although the incident was not a contentious one for those involved, it stayed with Tsiolkas and became, many years later, the catalyst to pen the Aussie book he had always wanted to write, and to highlight issues he had grown up with as a Greek Australian.

The book comprises a set of eight vignettes told from the perspectives of eight different adults who were present at a suburban Melbourne barbeque when a man slapped someone else's out of control four-year-old son. It's a quietly epic work that raises compelling and at times unsettling questions about family, personal identity, class, race and sexuality without resembling a sociology text book in the slightest.

Each of Tsiolkas' characters – from Harry, the man who is utterly convinced that he was right to slap the boy threatening his own older son, to Rosie, the mother of the child who so keenly feels a need for her son's attacker to be punished – is voiced with stunning authenticity. The novel doesn't fall into a trap of moral relativism, rather Tsiolkas deftly navigates the complexity of his characters' choices and the constraints that limit them.

Even more surprising is this novel's power to spur self-reflection. The reader is unwittingly drawn into thinking and rethinking their own reactions to the events that unfold and to the resulting actions and feelings of the protagonists. It is deeply moving, both because of the sadness of the compromised existences it charts and because of the strange sense of belonging it evokes. This is Australia, it seems to whisper, and it's full of people who are everything and nothing like you.

Tsiolkas was born and grew up in Melbourne. He was educated at Blackburn High School and the



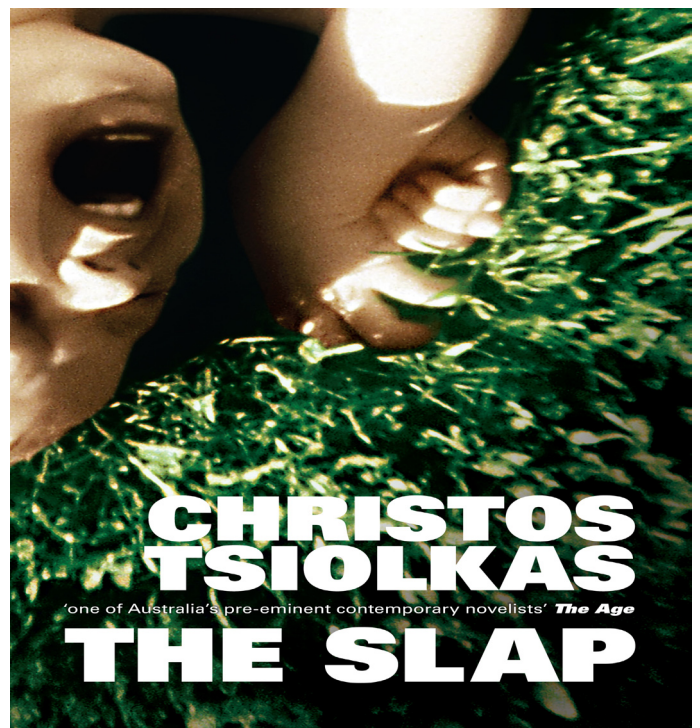
University of Melbourne where he completed an Arts Degree in 1987. His first novel, *Loaded* (1995), was filmed as *Head On* (1998) by director Ana Kokkinos, starring Alex Dimitriades. In 2006, his novel, *Dead Europe*, won The Age Book of the Year fiction award and is currently being made into a feature film, produced by the team behind the Oscar winning *The King's Speech*.

He is openly gay and has been with his partner Wayne for 26 years. A self confessed 'bad activist' Tsiolkas believes that on a fundamental human rights level, same sex marriage should be allowed. He has no desire to marry his long term partner however, citing the struggle and continued love necessary to maintain their long term relationship as all the proof they need.

With reference to:

www.samesame.com.au

www.abc.net.au/tv/firsttuesday



The Slap has aired recently on ABC TV and past episodes can be viewed on www.abc.net.au/iview

Jennifer Byrne's interview with Tsiolkas can be seen on www.abc.net.au/tv/firsttuesday



Keeping Families Together

PFLAG is very proactive in promoting acceptance and understanding of people who disclose their sexual diversity to family and loved ones. Parents often feel isolated, confused or angry when their loved one 'comes out' and this is an important area where PFLAG can offer assistance.

**Join us at our meetings, held every 2 months or contact us by
phone: 0400 767 832 or email: info@pflagbrisbane.org.au**

PFLAG Brisbane Annual Membership Form

Please complete the form below and return to PFLAG.

You can also pay online - www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

Larger donations are always welcome. Thanks for your support.

Name: _____

Ph: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email: _____

Membership Type:

Family - \$25.00 annually - I have included a cheque or Australia Post Money Order made out to PFLAG Brisbane Inc.

Corporate - \$100.00 annually - (includes website and newsletter advertising) I have included a cheque or Australia Post Money Order made out to PFLAG Brisbane Inc.

Mail to: PO Box 1372, Eagle Farm BC Qld. 4009

Bring to: 30 Helen St, Teneriffe 4006

Pay Online: www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

Pay direct deposit: Account Name - PFLAG Brisbane

BSB - 124-001

Account No - 2023-8607

Bank of Queensland

Please make sure you provide us with your contact details (name, email and /or postal address so we can receipt your payment and ensure you receive our newsletters.