

## Wonderfully Made A Weekend Retreat

For high school students who are currently in 9th to 12th grades

who are lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender/ or questioning and their allies and

who are interested in discussing and understanding sexuality alongside their own spirituality.

and are excited to spend time with other teenagers and staff in fellowship, worship, games, Bible Study, crafts, and guest speakers.



"Something powerful happens when a group of teenagers and adults enter into a space together and claim it as safe and affirming. A spirit of acceptance, celebration, and affirmation encompasses their time together and hearts are open and uplifted. Some might even call this spirit Holy." David, 2009 participant



**Early Registration:**  
**\$ 60.00** (\$75.00 after 3-31-12)



Registration is limited to the first 24 applicants.

Checks should be made payable to: SEPA Synod with "Wonderfully Made" written in the memo line.

Scholarship funds are available for up to \$50. The cut-off for scholarship applications is 3-31-12.

*"At home I have my gay friends, and I have my Christian friends— but I don't have any friends who are both...and both groups of friends put down the other...this is the only place where I can really be myself— a gay teen who loves Jesus"*

### SEPA Synod Lutheran Bryson Gay & Lesbian Task Force

**MISSION STATEMENT:** To support and affirm the full inclusion of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning persons within the community of God through education, outreach, and consultation.

Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA  
7241 Germantown Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19119

E-mail: [mbeck@sepa.org](mailto:mbeck@sepa.org)

SEPA Synod  
Lutheran Bryson  
Gay & Lesbian  
Task Force

LGBTQ High  
School  
Student  
Weekend  
Retreat

*I praise you, ...for I am*  
**WONDERFULLY  
MADE**  
*Psalm 139*



April 13-15,  
2012

Bear Creek Camp  
Wilkes Barre, PA

"I spent this weekend with the neatest group of people I may have ever encountered, people with different backgrounds and stories but all with a story to share. I met sisters, brothers, artists, poets, students, advocates, friends. But perhaps the most defining characteristic of this group is that each and every member is on a journey to find acceptance and love and has a passion for sharing that acceptance and love with others.

Together we tackled tough issues of sexuality and spirituality, and how the two never have to be mutually exclusive. For some of us, our sexuality is a trivial thing. For others, it permeates our entire life. But for all of us, it is something to be celebrated and appreciated. We understand that everyday brings the potential for resistance, because all too often people act out of fear instead of love and compassion.

In my own life, I've never been able to sit down with a group of people who share the same perspective on sexuality as me in such real ways. Being free to be completely myself, without pretense or expectation, was completely refreshing. In the same way, I was inspired by the strength and courage of my new found brothers and sisters. The way each one lives their life with such authenticity opened my eyes. These people are not just inspirational "young, gay leaders." They are leaders, who happen to bring rich experiences into the way they relate to people. The sensitivity with which they approach conversations, the respect they show one another, the genuine interest they take in the stories of near strangers-- all of these things are quite possibly the direct result of being put down by their society.

We grow from the struggle. And we come together to share our stories of hardships with others who may have had similar experiences. Then we turn it around and we talk about ways in which we've been celebrated by our friends, parents, siblings, (hopefully) pastors and other faithful individuals who have most definitely been placed on our journey for a Reason. And we celebrate ourselves. We rejoice in the promise that we are not mistaken or bad. We remind each other through the seemingly simple words, "Peace of the Lord, be with you always" that God's love is not just for the majority. We remember that we can revel in the promise that Jesus died for all, so that ALL might know peace."

David Hawkins, 2009 Participant

**April 13, 14, & 15, 2012**



*This is an opportunity for young people who identify as LGBTQ and their allies and who are Christian to come together and safely share worship; faith journeys and struggles; and enjoy fellowship with other Christian teens*

If you have questions about the camp or would like more information, please contact Fred Wolfe at 215-387-2885.

**Departure time and place to be determined based on home congregation location of attendees.**

Name\_\_\_\_\_

School Grade\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address\_\_\_\_\_

Email Address\_\_\_\_\_@

Parent(s) Name \_\_\_\_\_

and day Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Congregation Name \_\_\_\_\_

Location\_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed\_\_\_\_\_

Applying for Scholarship Y\_\_\_\_ N\_\_\_\_

Dietary Restrictions\_\_\_\_\_

**Registration forms and payment should be sent to:**

Molly Beck Dean, SEPA Synod  
7241 Germantown Avenue  
Philadelphia, PA 19119

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