



Love thy  
neighbor

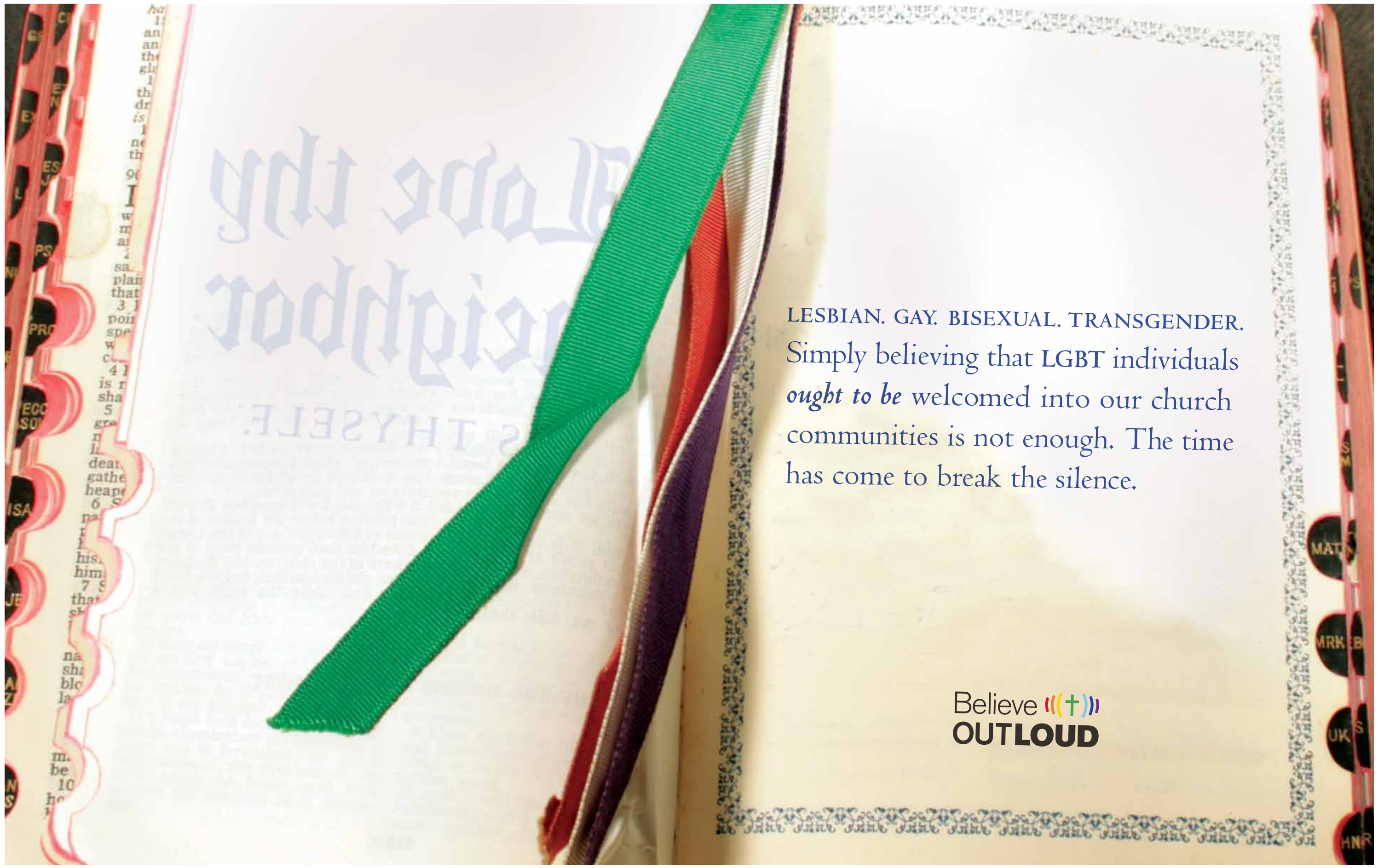
AS THYSELF.

MAT

MRKEB

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HNR



LESBIAN. GAY. BISEXUAL. TRANSGENDER.  
Simply believing that LGBT individuals  
*ought to be* welcomed into our church  
communities is not enough. The time  
has come to break the silence.

Believe   
**OUTLOUD**



Believe Out Loud is more than a campaign name.  
It is a *rallying cry* for an ambitious social marketing effort  
that is fast becoming the focal point of a powerful movement.

**GROWING STRONGER, GETTING LOUDER**

On August 5th, the California Supreme Court overturned Proposition 8. Once our initial elation at this historic decision settled down, we reflected on the path it took to get here. What did it say about the cause of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) advancement that the proposition had passed in the first place? And that it was a judge, and not the people, who struck it down?

“Where are the real Christians who believe in equal rights and equal welcome?”

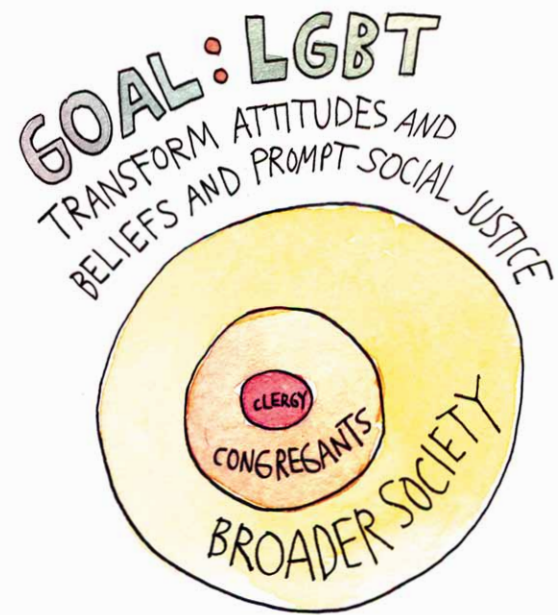
So said a progressive Christian pastor during California’s epic Prop 8 battle in 2008. Her question is a good one, her anger understandable. Prop 8’s unfortunate passage provided a dramatic demonstration of the power of bad religion to deliver a body blow to the cause of LGBT advancement. Many progressives looked for someone to blame for Prop 8’s passage. But turning the glance on religious progressives ourselves, three realities are clear:

- 1) *Had California’s mainstream Protestants been better organized in support of marriage equality, Prop 8 could have been defeated;*
- 2) *These same Protestant moderates are highly open to being better led and better organized, not just in California but nationally;*
- 3) *The Mainline Protestant church has tremendous influence on our government, power structure, and opinion leaders in the United States.*

These are the underlying premises of Believe Out Loud, a trans-denominational Christian movement for LGBT equality within the church and society.



INTEGRITY’S BELIEVE OUT LOUD PROVINCIAL WORKSHOP, SAN DIEGO



 **WHY BELIEVE OUT LOUD NOW?**

Mainline Protestants have actively spoken out in the past against racial discrimination, war and militarism, gender and class discrimination, South Africa apartheid, and issues related to housing, labor, immigration, and social welfare.

Now, in a new century, Mainline Protestant leaders need to continue to act on their beliefs and openly acknowledge that discrimination against LGBT individuals is not only a core civil rights issue, but a fundamental tenant of their faith.

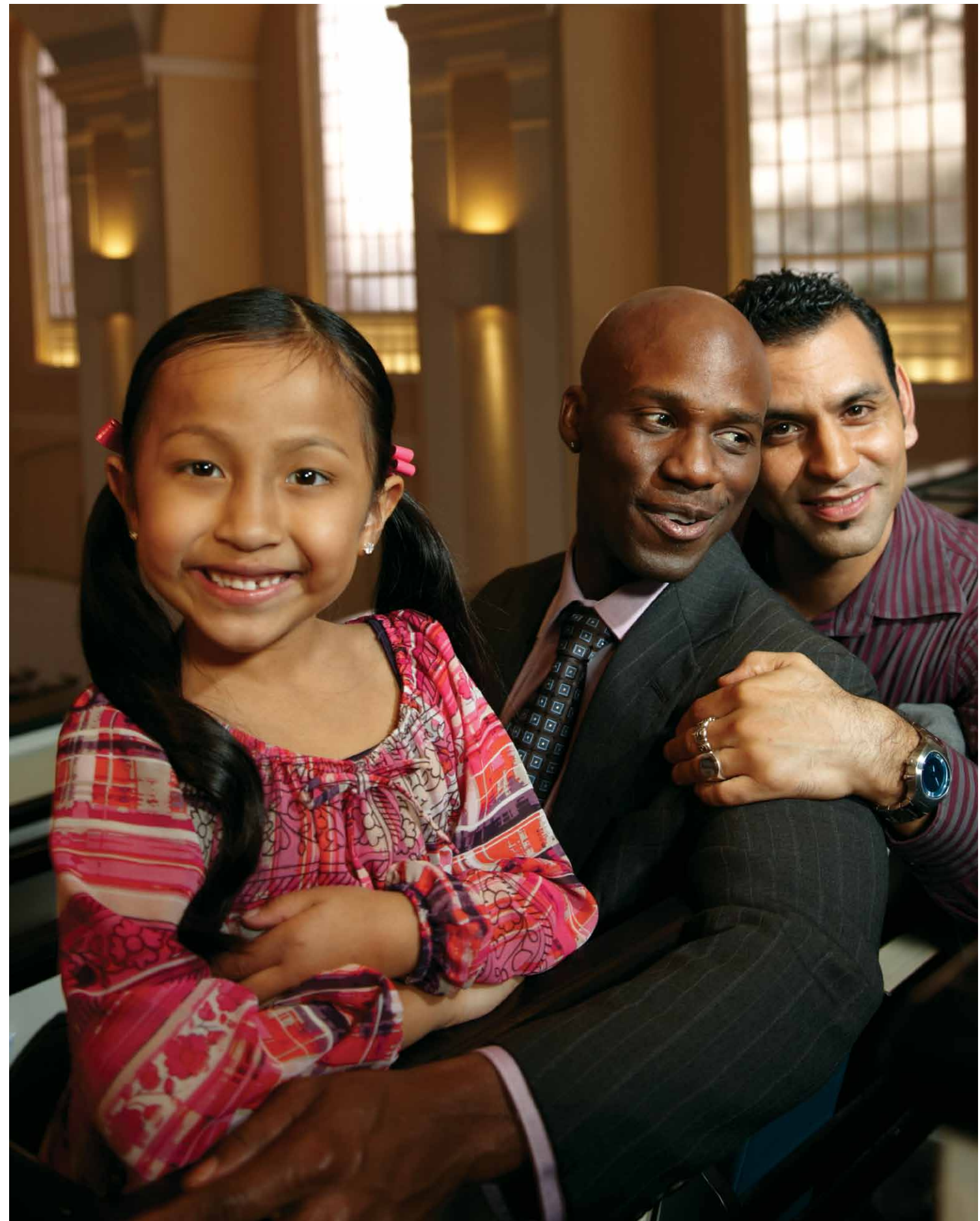
Quite simply, they must speak out against injustice and speak up for full equality and inclusion.

The reason for targeting Mainline Protestants is simple; with 41 million adults, 18 percent of the population and 25 percent of voters, they comprise a large and influential group. It is also a group whose leaders wield outsized social capital. Fully fifteen million adult Americans regularly listen to the sermons delivered by their Mainline Protestant

pastors; in smaller communities and in suburbs in particular, these clergy are often viewed as bellwether leaders on questions of public ethics and public policy.

**Mainline Protestantism is susceptible to a major shift in the center of gravity. Effecting that shift in a systematic and sophisticated way will inevitably lead to major changes in public policy.**

*Believe Out Loud partner Public Religion Research has put this theory to the test, carrying out an unprecedented quantitative research effort led by specialists Robert Jones and John Green. Jones and Green surveyed 7,000 Mainline Protestant Senior Clergy in seven denominations; they achieved a high degree of accuracy by means of a very high survey return rate.*



**READY TO BELIEVE OUT LOUD.**

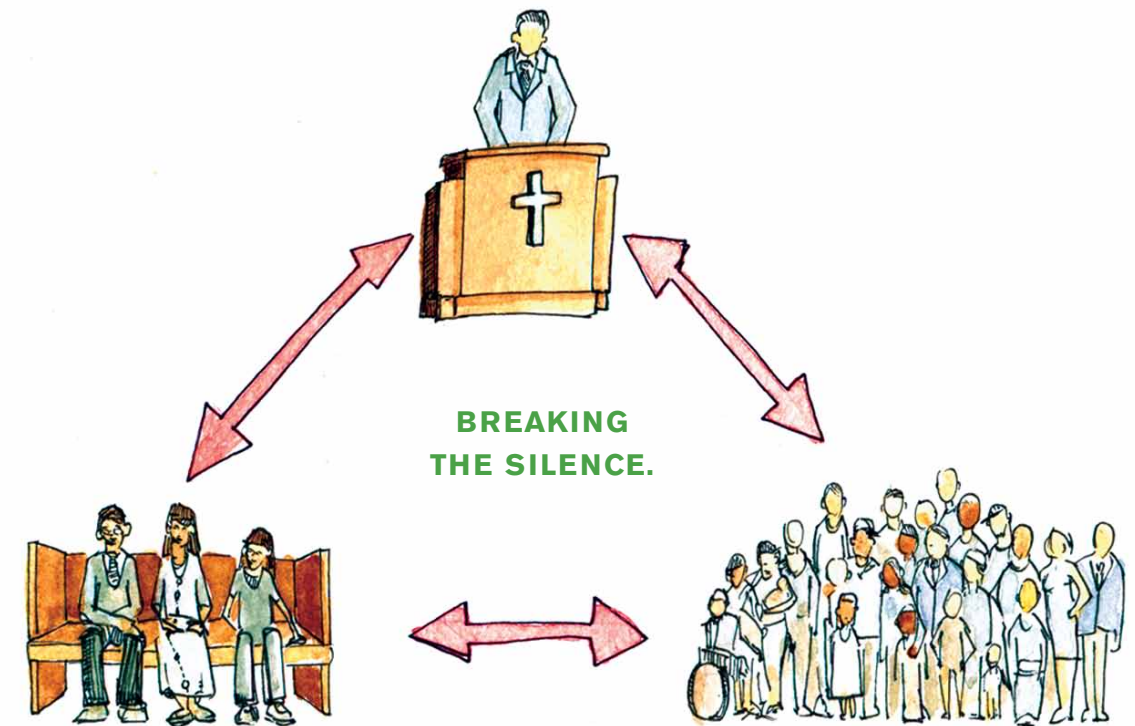
Mainline clergy believe that discrimination is wrong, of course. But our research also shows that **95 percent of Mainline clergy are not currently speaking out** against the marginalization of LGBT persons and families.

*Clergy say* that if the congregation expressed interest, they would talk about it.

*Congregants say* that if the clergy brought it up, they would talk about it.

This disconnect is an opportunity to create dialogue and promote action within the church. And in order for clergy to speak out loud, somebody has to trigger the conversation. This leads us to our positioning statement, our core message for this campaign:

**Believing privately that LGBT persons *should be welcomed and affirmed* isn't enough. *We need to Believe Out Loud!***

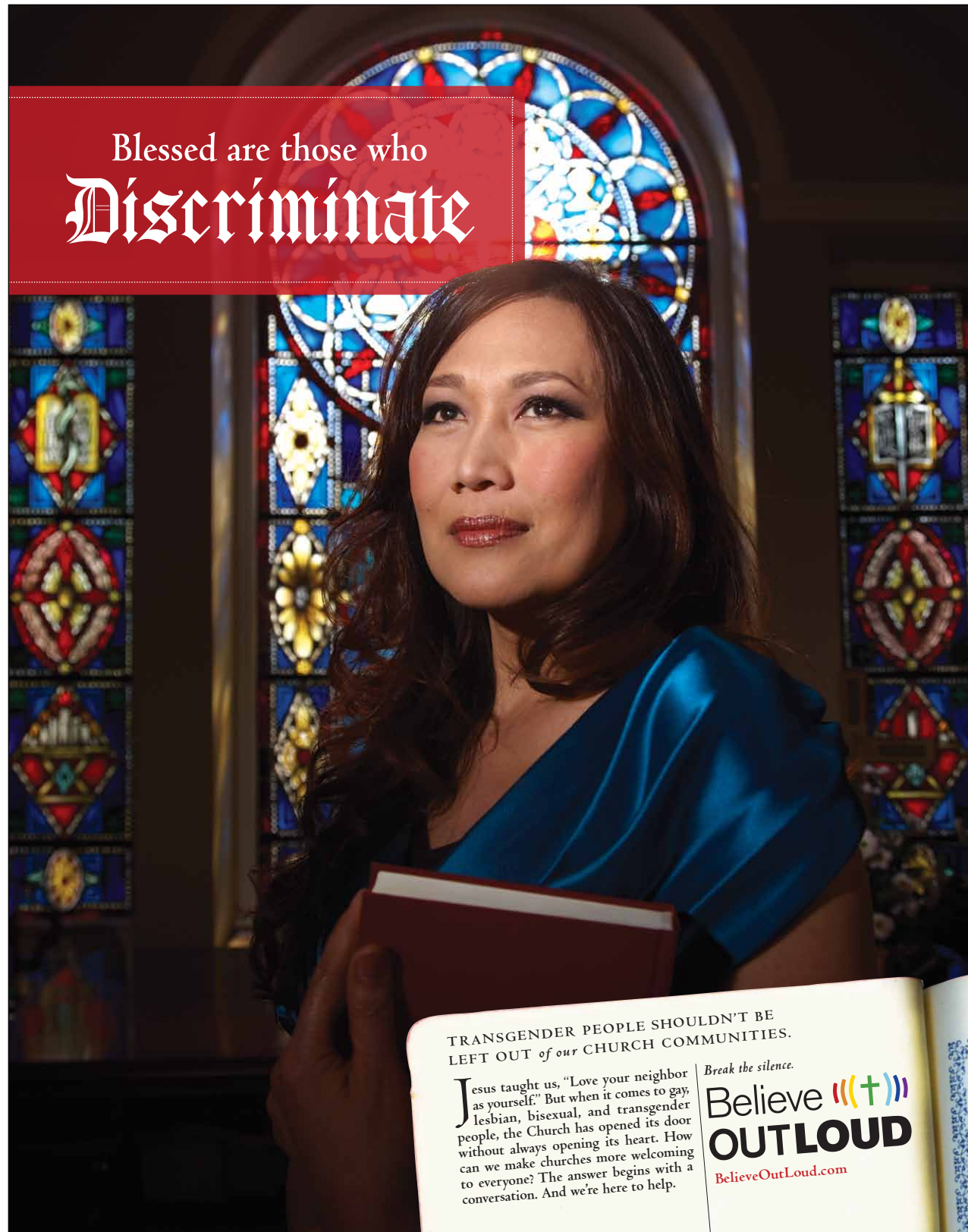


What's more, taking forward leadership in this arena will enhance our ministries and help attract a new generation to our churches.

The campaign is designed to aggregate, energize and mobilize lay leaders and clergy already active on LGBT issues within their congregations. They will, in turn, encourage the "moveable middle" to begin the conversation within their congregations, creating a more welcoming, more inclusive church community.



INTEGRITY'S BELIEVE OUT LOUD PROVINCIAL WORKSHOP, PORTLAND OREGON



**LOUD AND GETTING LOUDER**

Clergy and lay leaders already active in the movement have embraced the Believe Out Loud campaign, understanding how a unified voice helps to amplify and strengthen their message. Mainline Protestant organizations have adopted the Believe Out Loud name, forming specific committees and conferences to plan and implement the movement's strategies and tactics.



Believe Out Loud is being rolled out in four phases and in three channels: online, offline, and community organizing.

PHASE ONE (completed) consisted of partnership development and sowing seeds for stronger grass roots organizing. Development of alliances, raising funds for creative development and media, and laying the foundation for a powerful and integrated campaign. Outreach to opinion leaders at the community and regional levels throughout the country and engagement with our base of supporters at various events and trainings.

PHASE TWO of the campaign is where conversation grows, and the chorus of supporters expands. As we

continue to develop our alliances, we train leaders to utilize this campaign in their organizing efforts. The website—centerpiece of the campaign is under development, as is a viral video. Each will be designed to solidify and energize our base of support, create media interest, and spur conversations in congregations.

PHASE THREE constitutes the full-scale national launch of the Believe Out Loud campaign. Our trainers will begin implementing the campaign at the local level. Simultaneously, highly visible print, television, radio, viral and guerilla advertising will begin to run in targeted regions. The media will drive people to the web hub where they can learn more about the campaign and continue to take meaningful personal actions. Community organizing, advertising and online efforts will all complement one another so as to compound their impact and lead to sustainable behavior change.

PHASE FOUR looks to the future and establishes means for this project to become a self-sustaining, self-feeding campaign, thus reducing the need for future grant funding and increasing the likelihood of securing all of Believe Out Loud's objectives.



## BELIEVE OUT LOUD COMES OUT

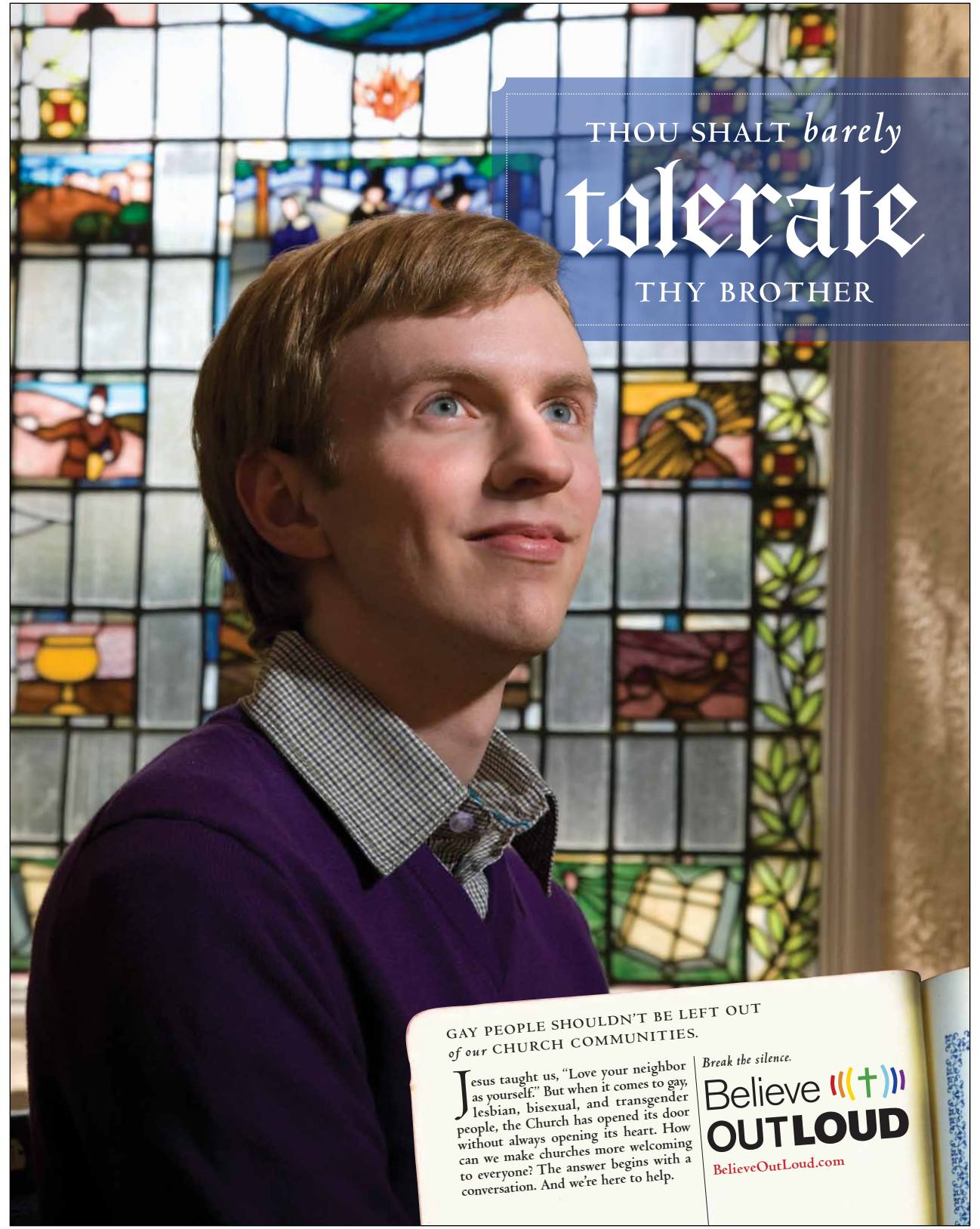
As part of the launch of the campaign, we have developed an informational website, advertising materials, t-shirts and other promotional materials. Each is designed to create a buzz among our supporters, expand our reach, and spark the all-important conversations amongst clergy. The ads were tested in nine cities across the U.S. where we found our messages piqued interest and spurred conversations.



### BelieveOutLoud.com

The Believe Out Loud informational site contains a plethora of information for clergy and supporters. Here, they're finding answers and real-life examples of the challenges facing them on LGBT issues, including sample sermons information on theological underpinnings of LGBT issues and how to convey those messages to their congregants.

But this is only the beginning. We are in the process of usability studies to create an online hub that will serve as the nexus of the entire campaign. BelieveOutLoud.com will be the gathering place and portal to this movement. It will feature web 2.0 technology including podcasts, blogs by opinion leaders, webcasts, training kits, mobile applications, tokens, and other features. We will be creating engaging micro-sites for each of our target audiences including clergy, youth, parents, and others as needed.



THOU SHALT *barely*  
**tolerate**  
THY BROTHER

GAY PEOPLE SHOULDN'T BE LEFT OUT  
of our CHURCH COMMUNITIES.

Jesus taught us, "Love your neighbor as yourself." But when it comes to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people, the Church has opened its door without always opening its heart. How can we make churches more welcoming to everyone? The answer begins with a conversation. And we're here to help.

Break the silence.  
**Believe OUTLOUD**  
BelieveOutLoud.com



We must sing  
their welcoming as loudly  
as we sing the hymns.

— Bob Chase, *Intersections International*

## HELP US MAKE THE BELIEF REAL

With an appeal battle looming over Proposition 8, it is clearer than ever before that we need far more religious weight on our side of the equality debate. That is why the Evelyn and Walter Haas Jr. Fund has agreed to commit \$500,000 to the development of this campaign, contingent upon Believe Out Loud leveraging it for additional major funder support. In order for campaign development to stay on track, we need to raise a total of \$1.5 million over the next 12 months.

It is vitally important that we prepare, test and launch this campaign with on-the-ground organizing, paid advertising and viral, online media. Activating the “moveable middle” among clergy leaders and spreading the message of inclusion from the pulpit to the pew will require least \$5 million over three years.

Believe Out Loud’s proactive agenda lays important groundwork for significant legislative and social gains for the LGBT community. The campaign has the potential to propel the momentum of recent gains within mainline denominations—gains won by the narrowest of margins. These mainline gains—ranging from the Episcopal Church’s recent lifting of its ban on gay bishops, the Evangelical Lutheran Church’s vote to ordain non-celibate gays and lesbians, and the Presbyterian Church’s recent decision to lift its ban on openly LGBT clergy—are both signs of progress and reasons for concern. Each vote highlights increasing schisms within denominations, which when writ large on society, could spell defeat for pro-gay initiatives at the ballot box. A well-organized, visible pro-LGBT Christian voice like Believe Out Loud will support denominations in their growth toward inclusivity, reducing anti-gay sentiment within the church as a means of reducing anti-gay sentiment in society.

*For more information and follow up:*

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

[info@BelieveOutLoud.com](mailto:info@BelieveOutLoud.com)



**WHAT THE RESEARCH SAYS** among Mainline Protestant (MP) Clergy\*

- 41% of all MP clergy, evenly distributed among small towns and large cities and from all areas of the country, constitute the “moveable middle” or “uncertain middle” group.
- MP clergy in general are significantly more progressive than their congregants on most public issues and in their personal political affiliations and behavior; moreover, these leaders have moved along a discernible progressive trajectory over the past ten years.
- MP clergy today are highly interested in politics; 6 in 10 want to become more active.
- MP clergy in the moveable middle express very strong support for “welcome” and “full inclusion” of LGBT persons within the church—but their strong support is not currently matched by concrete expressions of support in congregational life or in public forums.

\* Believe Out Loud partner, Public Religion Research carried out an unprecedented quantitative research effort led by specialists Robert Jones and John Green. Jones and Green surveyed 7,000 Mainline Protestant Senior Clergy in seven denominations; they achieved a high degree of accuracy by means of a very high survey return rate.

- MP clergy would take much stronger leadership on LGBT inclusion if prompted by their congregants to do so. In addition, they tend to overestimate the degree of congregational resistance they would be likely to encounter were they to exercise stronger leadership.
- Willingness among MP clergy to advocate for gay marriage gets a big boost when clergy understand that religious liberty is in no way jeopardized by gay marriage.



(ABOVE AND PREVIOUS PAGE) MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH, PRIDE PARADE, NYC 2010



## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING (read the full excerpts on BelieveOutLoud.com)

“The ‘God vs. gays’ dichotomy is false” and “reflective of only part of Christendom...The religious right’s divisive paradigm is paralleled by more progressive stances that have resulted in inclusive institutional transformation.”

Feb. 25 2010, *Christian Post Reporter*  
*Campaign Gives Christians Megaphone to Support Gays*  
By Lillian Kwon

“Believe Out Loud is a sophisticated social marketing effort, anchored by a rich new web portal and with powerful messaging lines...organizing support to existing advocacy groups both inside and outside of denominational lines.”

July 19, 2010, *Religion Dispatches*  
*An Extravagant Welcome For All*  
By Peter Laarman

“Such movements’, says Reconciling Ministries executive director Troy Plummer, are ‘one of the best-kept word-of-mouth secrets in the faith.’ He adds, ‘There are many, many people in the United Methodist Church who have been intimidated by our conservative friends for way too long.’”

February 12, 2010, *Advocate.com*  
*Loving Out Loud for Valentine’s Day*  
By Trudy Ring

## WHO’S BEHIND BELIEVE OUT LOUD?

Initially founded in 2008 as the Religious Voices Project through a grant from the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund to Progressive Christians United, today Believe Out Loud is a collaborative project led by Intersections International in partnership with:

- HRC (Human Rights Campaign)
- GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation)
- The National Gay & Lesbian Task Force Institute for Welcoming Resources
- Progressive Christians Uniting
- Public Religion Research
- Christian Community Inc.
- The Religious Institute
- Many Voices
- The Association for Welcoming and Affirming Baptists (American Baptist Church USA)
- Gay, Lesbian and Affirming Disciples Alliance (Christian Church/Disciples of Christ)
- Integrity USA (Episcopal Church)
- Lutherans Concerned (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)
- More Light Presbyterians (Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.))
- The Coalition for LGBT Concerns (United Church of Christ)
- The Reconciling Ministries Network (United Methodist Church)



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**OUTLOUD**

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