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1. COB General Secretary Issues Pastoral Letter

Stan Noffsinger, General Secretary of the Church of the Brethren, has issued a pastoral letter addressing the recent media attention upon lgbt teen suicide and a general culture of bullying and violence. He writes, "...when young people turn to suicide to escape from the emotional and psychological torture of bullying or harassment in their communities, we Christians must recognize our inadequate efforts to protect the image of God in each person." He calls upon congregations to be "safe, healing places for those caught in the cycle of bullying." Read the full [statement](#), and then write to Stan at snoffsinger@brethren.org, or call him at 847-742-5100 x201, and thank him for speaking out.

2. BMC Booth Application Rejected

The Program and Arrangements Committee of the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference has again rejected BMC's application for exhibit space at the 2011 Annual Conference. BMC has been applying for exhibit space for more than 20 years. To read the application and response, click [here](#). BMC plans on appealing the committee's decision to Standing Committee. If you would like to help, please consider talking or writing to either your Standing Committee member or to Annual Conference officers to express your view about why it is important that BMC has a booth. Chris Douglas, Conference Director (847-742-5100, cdouglas@brethren.org) can help you with contact information.

3. Pink Menno Releases Music CD



Pink Menno's One Voice music project CDs are now available for order and download! Mennonite-related artists and musicians contributed their work to this music project for the celebration, hope, and peace of LGBTQ people of faith. Visit [Pink Menno](#) to check out free clips of all the songs. CDs are \$15 or download for



pinkmenno@gmail.com.

\$10. All the proceeds go directly toward helping Pink Menno prepare for further ministry to the church at Pittsburgh next summer. If you'd like to organize a One Voice CD release party in your area over the next couple of months, write to

4. Open Letter Pastors Issue Thanksgiving Epistle

Mennonite pastors who authored the initial Open Letter to MCUSA have issued a new letter "[Testifying to the Spirit's movement in Mennonite Church USA](#)." The letter highlights efforts within various conferences to creatively work to open space for conversation and exchange.

5. Calgary LGBTQA Group

Calgary Inter-Mennonite Church, a member of BMC's Supportive Communities Network since 1997, is forming an LGBT and allies community network as part of their outreach ministries. In November they had a holiday "party with a purpose" that included filming videos for the [Trevor Project](#). The group plans to gather quarterly. If you're in the Calgary area and would like to connect, contact the church's pastor Brenda Dyck, at church@cimchurch.org.

6. Progressive Brethren Gathering

Over 200 people representing nearly 40 congregations gathered at the Manchester Church of the Brethren for the third annual Progressive Brethren Gathering last month. It was an experience of contemplative worship, engaging reflection, lively conversation, high sociability and fun. BMC is very appreciative of the Manchester congregation for flawlessly hosting the event. View pictures and read the keynote address *Becoming Incarnational People* by Bethany President Ruthann Johansen [here](#).



Please contact [Carol Wise](#) at BMC if you are interested in serving on the planning committee for next year's gathering.

7. Women's Caucus Models Leadership

The Church of the Brethren Women's Caucus Steering Committee has written a beautiful [letter](#) addressing criticism of their rainbow scarves project at Annual Conference. BMC is grateful to Women's Caucus for the model of leadership and courage that they offer to a stumbling denomination. Caucus rocks!

8. Welcoming Church Training - There's Still Time!

There's still time to participate in a welcoming church training before the end of the year! The two day training is being held at Broad Street Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, Virginia beginning on Friday evening December 10 and concluding on Saturday afternoon December 11. This is a great opportunity to develop skills and learn effective ways of helping your congregation to become more welcoming of LGBT people. Register for this event [here](#).

9. BMC Goes to Washington

BMC executive director, Carol Wise, was in DC recently at the invitation of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). She was there to meet with representatives from Affirmation, the group representing LGBT Mormons. Affirmation is seeking to become a more visible presence in their struggle for LGBT equality within their

denomination. Carol was there to share BMC's experience and expertise.

10. LGBT Youth Suffer Greater Punishment

A national longitudinal study published in the journal Pediatrics finds that LGB youth, especially girls, "suffer disproportionate educational and criminal-justice punishments that are not explained by greater engagement in illegal or transgressive behaviors." Read the [abstract](#) or [full study](#).

11. We Are Family(?)



New Outspoken Online article by Carrie Fry-Miller:

"In seemingly dismissing family relationships, Jesus is challenging us to build relationships of trust within the whole church...." [full text](#)

12. PFLAG Tips for a Happy Holiday

Take a look at one of these pages from PFLAG:

[Tips for a Happy Holiday for GLBT People](#)

[Tips for a Happy Holiday for Families and Allies](#)

13. Travel

December 2-4: Carol in Washington, DC for work with Human Rights Campaign

December 10-11: Carol at Welcoming Church Training in Harrisonburg, Virginia

January 16-17: Carol and Kirsten in Chicago at CPT orientation training

If we're going to be in your area, let us know! We'd love to meet with you.

BMC Staff

[Carol Wise](#) - Executive Director, SCN Coordinator

[Kirsten Freed](#) - Kaleidoscope Coordinator, BMC Volunteer

14. Your Support is Needed!

BMC depends upon the financial support of individuals and congregations in order to build community, develop resources, advocate for lgbt justice, and provide support for individuals, families and allies who are coming out. Click [here](#) to make a tax-exempt donation to BMC and ensure that the work will continue. You may also send checks to BMC, Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406. Thank you!!

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