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**1. *Fierce and Fabulous: 35 Faithful Years* - BMC Gathering - REGISTRATION OPEN**

Register online at [www.bmclgbt.org](http://www.bmclgbt.org), or get the *Fierce and Fabulous: 35 Faithful Years* <[http://www.bmclgbt.org/documents/BMCGatheringbrochure\\_000.pdf](http://www.bmclgbt.org/documents/BMCGatheringbrochure_000.pdf)> brochure and mail in the form. The BMC Community Gathering is a time to celebrate our strengths and persistence as an lgbt and queer community in a fun and relaxed environment. There will be ample free time to enjoy each other's company, as well as opportunities to take in an evening of storytelling, workshops, and a worship service. We're looking forward to seeing you at Ronora Lodge <[www.ronoralodge.com](http://www.ronoralodge.com)> October 7-9! Details about the Gathering can be found at [www.bmclgbt.org](http://www.bmclgbt.org), or by emailing [gathering@bmclgbt.org](mailto:gathering@bmclgbt.org).

**2. Story Telling Events at the BMC Gathering this Fall**

Our collective power resides in our stories.

Saturday night's festivities include six fierce and fabulous BMCers sharing their true, personal stories on our theme without notes on the theme *The Fierce & the Fabulous: Ten Minute Stories of LGBTQF Life Experiences*. *Figuring out how to be what you were told was bad. Shaking up the status quo. Pushing past limits, labels and definitions. The slip-ups, break-ups, u-turns and pits stops. Fiercely coming out (or not)! Fabulously finding love (or not)! Being part of the legendary tales of fixing wrongs (What do you mean I can't be a pastor?), leaving the past (We're not in Kansas anymore...), creating a wonderful, astonishing future!* Adam Hostetter, former BMC Board member and current Assistant Producer at Odyssey Storytelling in Tucson, Arizona, will be the evening's host. Confirmed storytellers include Frank Trnka, Nicki Morgan, Josih Hostetler, Luke Miller, Wilma Harder and more. Amy Short, former BMC Executive Director and current curator of BMC's Oral History Project is producing the event. Don't miss it.

As part of BMC's oral history project, Amy and Adam will be hosting the *Story Cottage*. This is an opportunity to share our stories, in our words, and trust to them in the keeping of our own

community. We believe the heart of BMC lies in your stories and experiences and the oral history projects hopes to collect, preserve, and bring together a great variety of those stories and experiences to further build our community. Bring a friend or loved one to interview on camera, or bring prompts for Adam or Amy to interview you. Following the Gathering you will receive a free DVD to share with family and friends, and a second copy will be kept in the BMC Archives. There will be opportunities to drop by the *Story Cottage* throughout the weekend. You can reserve your place at the *Story Cottage* now by contacting Amy through the BMC office.

### **3. Madison Mennonite Joins SCN**

BMC welcomes Madison Mennonite Church as the newest member of the Supportive Communities Network (SCN) as a congregation that is publicly affirming of LGBT people. MMC is a congregation that draws upon its Anabaptist-Mennonite faith heritage in its values of community, non-violence and the promotion of peace and justice. Instead of defining its community with doctrinal boundaries, they “welcome all who feel drawn to Christ,” affirming that “membership and full participation in the life of the church is available to all without regard to sexual orientation, gender, socio-economic background, ethnicity or race.” It is great to welcome this vibrant and growing congregation into SCN!

### **4. SCN Congregations Celebrate Milestones**

Congratulations to the following SCN congregations who are celebrating important milestones as faith communities:

Faith Mennonite Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota ([www.faithmennonite.org](http://www.faithmennonite.org)) – 50 years

Skyridge Church of the Brethren ([www.skyridge.org](http://www.skyridge.org)) – 50 years

First Mennonite Church of San Francisco ([www.menno.org](http://www.menno.org)) – 35 years

### **5. Reuben’s Introduction - Journey to the BMC Community**

Reuben Sancken introduces why he is volunteering at BMC and what he is excited about the upcoming year! Click here to read. (<http://www.bmcgbt.org/blog/index.php>)

### **6. Progressive Brethren Gathering – Registration Open!**

On-line registration is now available for the Progressive Brethren Gathering, November 11-13 at the Highland Avenue Church of the Brethren in Elgin, IL. Because of the events at the most recent Annual Conference, the format of the gathering has been revised to include opportunities to hear and discuss various proposals and specific courses of action as we pursue the theme, *Pressing On, No Turning Back*. To register, either download a brochure or register online at [www.progressivebrethren.org](http://www.progressivebrethren.org).

### **7. SCN Pastor’s Retreat: *A Circle Ever Wider, A People Ever Free***

Registration is open for *A Circle Ever Wider, A People Ever Free*, a theological retreat for pastors who are serving a welcoming congregation that is part of the Supportive Communities Network. The retreat will be held at Camp Friedenswald in Cassopolis, Michigan on October 17-20, 2011.

A variety of formats including presentations, workshops, panel discussions, and denominational time will be available. In addition, the retreat will include opportunities for worship, free time to relax and enjoy the company of one another, and lots of coffee and tea to keep us going.

Cost for the event is \$125, which includes housing and meals.

### **8. Connecting Families East and West**

Connecting Families Weekend is a relaxing time for Mennonite and Brethren families with lgbt members and lgbt people to gather, share common experiences, and support one another. For nearly two decades this event has been a place of healing and hope for many families and individuals.

BMC is pleased to announce that BMC Oregon is planning a West Coast Connecting Families Weekend. The event will be held on March 30- April 1, 2012 at Camp Myrtlewood in Bridge, Oregon. For additional information, contact [bmcoregon@earthlink.net](mailto:bmcoregon@earthlink.net) or view Connecting Families West Coast on Facebook.

Connecting Families East will be held on April 20-22, 2012 at the Pearlstone Conference and Retreat Center in Reisterstown, Maryland. Randall Spaulding will be the featured presenter. To download a brochure to register for this event, go to [www.bmclgbt.org](http://www.bmclgbt.org).

### **9. In-Between - New Film from BMC**

Finding herself on the fringes of church, Carrie Fry-Miller was once a licensed minister in the Church of the Brethren. She became licensed at a young age, just after her 18th birthday. But when she came out as a lesbian five years later, her license was revoked. It has been a painful process for her and since then she has distanced herself from the church to figure out where, how and if she still has a place within. In collaboration with BMC. Writer, Director, Editor Paul Neudorf. 13 min. Watch on YouTube.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A76\\_gHtZsGI&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A76_gHtZsGI&feature=related)

### **10. Beyond Brokeback**

Come to Beyond Brokeback, an evening beginning with a showing of the movie Brokeback Mountain. Afterward, there will be a panel discussion with a producer of the film and readings, poetry, and music inspired by the movie. Ryan Harrison and Shawn Kirchner of the BMC community will perform music from "Meet Me on the Mountain," their CD of original songs inspired by the novel and motion picture. It will take place on November 13, beginning at 2:00pm at Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University. Tickets are \$25-\$15. For more information and a schedule of the events go to [http://auditoriumtheatre.org/wb/pages/home/performances-events/performances.php?event\\_id=362](http://auditoriumtheatre.org/wb/pages/home/performances-events/performances.php?event_id=362).

### **11. BMC Mourns Loss of Bill Breckbill and Emily Evershed**

BMC mourns the loss of two great friends, Bill Breckbill of Goshen, Indiana and Emily Evershed of Washington, D.C., who both died this past month. Bill served the Mennonite church as a pastor, administrator and leader on local, conference and denominational levels. He was a gentle

yet persistent advocate for lgbt inclusion and worked with the Welcome Committee and the Parents Group in Goshen where he and his wife, Ina Ruth, retired.

Emily was an editorial consultant to BMC's *Dialogue* for a number of issues in the 1970-80's and was a staunch supporter of BMC. Martin Rock (founder of BMC) writes of his friend and colleague, "Emily will be missed. She was humorous, professional, committed to BMC's goals, and very helpful to BMC and me."

## 12. Travel

September 23-25: Carol to La Verne COB in La Verne, California

September 30-October 1: Carol to Northern Plains Storytelling Event

October 6-9: Carol and Reuben to BMC board and BMC Gathering in Michigan

October 17-20: Carol to SCN Pastor's Theological Retreat in Michigan

October 21-23: Carol to Beacon Heights COB in Fort Wayne, Indiana

October 28-30: Carol to Community Mennonite Church in Lancaster, Pennsylvania

November 11-13: Carol to Progressive Brethren Gathering in Elgin, Illinois

November 17-19: Carol and Reuben to Bethel and McPherson College

*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

[Reuben Sancken](#) - Kaleidoscope Coordinator, BMC Volunteer

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Donations to BMC can be made online <http://www.bmclgbt.org/donations.shtml>, or by sending a check to PO Box 6300, Minneapolis, MN 55406. Your contributions make a difference. Thank you for your generous support!