

ANNUAL REPORT (2007)
of Integrity-Palm Beach
prepared by Ben Lowe (Vice-President)

In 2007 Integrity-Palm Beach undertook several initiatives. In March the chapter held its second annual fundraiser for the Little Roses Orphanage in Honduras, with Bishop Frade and his wife, Diane, who is very involved in the ministry, attending. Later that month, for the first time, St. Andrew's built a float and marched in the annual LGBT pride parade down Lake Avenue to Bryant Park in Lake Worth, where the Integrity booth provided information about both the church and local chapter during the two-day Pride Fest. Later in the year Integrity-Palm Beach, with the help of Fr. Rasmus and other delegates, presented a resolution at the annual diocesan meeting asking that the diocese support specific measures that would facilitate full inclusion of LGBT people into the life of the church. While the resolution failed it provoked some much needed conversation about where the diocese should move on these matters. In addition, in 2007, the chapter began advertising in the regional Out on the Coast magazine and began an email list of members who wish to receive updated news about the chapter and national organization. In November, several members attended a lecture by and reception for Bishop Gene Robinson at the Shepherd Law Center in Fort Lauderdale where he was a visiting scholar. Finally, as with the previous year, Integrity participated in the Angel Tree program at Christmas, this time in conjunction with the St. Andrew's congregation.

The past year included a number of interesting monthly programs including speakers from "Project YES," an organization whose mission is to teach communication skills to organizations that work with LGBT youth; Rev. Mimi Howard, deacon at Good Shepherd in Tequesta, who spoke on the environmental initiatives of the Episcopal Church's Millennium Development project; Rev. Chuck David, chaplain of Hospice of Palm Beach (and now our assistant priest), who spoke about his ministry; Ethelene Jones, President of the Palm Beach County ACLU; Greg Boster, who talked about holistic living and healing; and Fr. John Tidy from All Souls' Church in Miami Beach. Local Integrity members also contributed to the program offerings this year. In June, we celebrated member Herb Steer's 90th birthday, and dedicated a fountain to him (accompanied by bagpipe music!) and in September, the chapter threw a farewell party for Integrity-Palm Beach founder, Vance Oden, who was moving to Mexico. In October, Ben Lowe presented a video interview with and information about Davis Mac-Iyalla, the head of Changing Attitudes-Nigeria, regarding the persecution of gays by religious authorities in his native country. The following month, our own Deacon Pat Masterman offered fascinating insights into her spiritual journey with the Lakota, and led members in a traditional Give-Away ceremony.

Fr. Rasmus and member, Doug Cornwall, also spoke at meetings during the year.

Integrity-Palm Beach has been blessed with committed members over the years, from St. Andrew's but also from many other area churches. It strives to be a refuge for those who feel spiritually persecuted on account of their sexual orientation and gender expression. It continues to seek new avenues of outreach to these people in our community.

The Integrity Board members for 2007 were: Margot Emery (President/Convener), Ben Lowe (Vice-President), Patrick McKenna (Secretary Treasurer), Deacon Pat Masterman (Program Chair) and Fr. Paul Rasmus.