

W&A Baptists Biennial Worship

The Rev. Tim Phillips, co-pastor of University Baptist Church in Seattle, preached a stirring sermon at the worship service of the Association of Welcoming & Affirming Baptists during the ABC/USA Biennial meeting in Des Moines. Tim's sermon was well needed by many people who felt disheartened by the General Boards dismissal of the four California W&A churches.

Tim's message challenged worshipers to believe that they are unconditionally loved by God, and to respond to Jesus' question, "Do you love me?," by showing that love to others.

In the evangelical style, Tim abandoned the pulpit and stood on the steps of the chancel with his Bible in hand. Tim proclaimed the reconciling love that Jesus Christ extends to all.

Worshipers had processed to St. John's Lutheran Church for the service carrying rainbow flags,

church banners and crosses bearing the names of the four dismissed churches. It was a powerful experience and sight to behold.

Candles from the worship, symbolizing the support for the congregations, were presented to members of each of the dismissed churches ▼

*Some information from **The Inspiriter**,
Newsletter of AWAB*

Bay Area W&A Joint Worship

We've Come This Far By Faith, a joint worship of the Bay Area's five Welcoming & Affirming congregations was held October 4. Representatives from each of the churches, Dolores Street Baptist Church in San Francisco, First Baptist Church of Berkeley, Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church in Oakland, New Community of Faith in San Jose and San Leandro Community Church, participated in the service. The services was a time to

strengthen the ties that bind the churches together and to join in a time of worship and celebration. People came from many different churches across the Bay Area in addition to the W&A congregations.

We were blessed to have the Rev. Nancy Hastings Sehested give a powerful sermon. Nancy told us that our faith and ministries can gain strength in our trials and challenges, that we can be "bushwhacked by blessing." Robert Stapp, director of music at Lakeshore, lead the choir and worshipers in an inspiring musical program which included traditional hymns and South African freedom songs ▼



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