

Grand Rapids Church Celebrates Reconciliation with Chaplain to LGBTQ People” by Callie Feyen, *The Banner*, July 14, 2022; “Republicans Should Reject the Gay-Marriage Bill” by The Editors, *National Review*, July 21, 2022.

On November 2, 1975, Bob Rayburn, the founding president of Covenant College and Seminary, visited me in New York City to follow up on what I’d said in my lecture on homosexuality on March 7, in Kansas City. He’d attended my lecture with one of his fellow Covenant faculty members. I told him I now was planning to found Evangelicals Concerned. Right away, he suggested that it be launched during the very next National Association of Evangelicals convention, set to meet in February, in Washington, DC. So, that’s what we did. The NAE, of course, took umbrage at our reporting this, while it provided a booth for Guy Charles to push his “ex-gay” hoax at that same NAE meeting. This was before Charles’ predatory sex assaults on his “ex-gay” clients were publicly exposed and his “ex-gay” treatment sessions shut down by his Charismatic sponsors.

Most of the “ex-gay” movement has crumbled since then. Increasingly, evangelicals have come to see the *reality* in EC’s biblically-supported message in these matters.

Since 1980, EC has sponsored 82 summer ConnEctions – each year in the East, until 2012 in the West, and seven summers in the Midwest. We’ve featured 115 keynoters and have never *repeated* a keynoter at the very *same region’s* retreat so that our critics can’t accuse us of rotating but a scarce few, i.e., a “rarity”, of *evangelical* supporters.

Over EC’s nearly half-century, our advocates have included major evangelical Biblical scholars, theologians, historians, pastors, writers, musicians, *et al.* Christian Reformed folks among them have included, e.g., Marten Woudstra, a founder of the evangelical New International Version (NIV), overseer of its Hebrew Bible translation and President of the Evangelical Theological Society. Other EC supporters and keynoters from CRC circles include theology and philosophy professors such as Lewis B. Smedes and Nicholas Wolterstorff, as well as the founding editor of *The Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, Hal Ellens, Stephanie Sandberg of the Calvin Center for Faith and Writing and Ruth Rus, a longtime Calvin music teacher. But our latest CRC keynoter cancelled at the last minute, evidently under increasing pressure from growing homophobia within the CRC denomination, though she didn’t specify the details.

A long-time defender of a biblical understanding of these issues in Christian Reformed circles is Jim Lucas. He keynoted our Western ConnEction in 2000. After decades of rejection by his home CRC congregation, he’s now received its very warmly reconciling apologies, even while CRC bureaucrats mount a *resurgence* of homophobia, “elevating it to the status of confession or declaration of faith”, arguing that, “The church must warn its members that those who refuse to repent of these [homosexual] sins -- as well as of idolatry, greed, and other such sins – will not inherit the kingdom of God.” So now, it’s said that the CRC “must discipline those who refuse to repent of such sins for the sake of their souls.” This is a very disturbing egress to prior CRC’s ignorance and prejudice!

Ironically, the antigay CRC voters, themselves, are guilty of *egregious greed* in their desire for *marriage for themselves* but *not* for those who are *as involuntarily* drawn to a person of the *same sex* as the antigay are *involuntarily attracted* to a person of

the *other sex*. This heartless demand by the CRC overlords ignores Jesus’ *intuitive* Golden Rule.

Many CRC officials warn that this selfish shift will alienate younger CRC generations and those with *given* same-sex orientations. As one member put it: “This motion harms LGBTQ people, harms the church’s witness, and naming this as confession will have disastrous consequences for people and institutions.” A third of Calvin University’s faculty has signed a letter of deep concern over the matter. Some plan to leave.

Jim Lucas is scheduled to be one of our guest keynoters for EC’s 2023 ConnEction. Our other guest keynoter is Cindy Stevens-Pino, Marsha Stevens-Pino’s life partner and co-manager of BALM Ministries. Again, we’ll not meet in-person for health reasons.

The Christian Reformed Church doesn’t hold the patent on lost empathy for same-sex oriented folks. *National Review’s* late July editorial attack on same-sex marriage notes in its subtitle, that, “The Editors [credited for the tirade] comprise the senior editorial staff of the National Review magazine and website.” They resent that, “47 Republicans joined with the House majority to stick with the redefinition of marriage that the Supreme Court ordered in 2015.” Clearly, *NR’s* editors are not as well-informed or as humane as those of a half-century ago, when *NR’s* founder, Bill Buckley, Jr., was in charge. Back then, two members of *NR’s* Advisory Board were also on the Advisory Board of our own Homosexual Community Counseling Center – openly gay historian and journalist David Brudnoy and prominent psychoanalyst Ernest van den Haag, who, whenever antigay psychoanalysts told him that all of their own *homosexual* patients were *sick*, quipped, to make his point: “and so, too, are all of my *heterosexual* patients”.

Today’s *NR* editors admit: “We do not deny that committed same-sex relationships can and often do have much of great value: affection, mutual caregiving, love. Some same-sex relationships clearly exceed some opposite-sex ones in these important measures.” Then, as though having given themselves permission, they lapse into virtue signaling irrationalities, asserting: e.g., “Love needs no license from the state.” But it sure helps! Against so much of the evidence to the contrary, they say, “The stipulation that marriage unites two people, and only two people, does not rest on any official determination that three or more people cannot have the same feelings for one another, provide the same care, and so on — as ‘throuples’ have increasingly insisted”. Oops! They seem to be utterly oblivious to the inevitable jealousy that gets set into play with such a competitive arrangement. They ignore the tragic evidence of child rearing with no father figure in the family circle, as such absence is enforced for compliance with irrational social welfare rules.

