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Cleveland's Trinity Cathedral to host Gay Games 9 interfaith service in support of LGBT community

Local, national and international leaders from a variety of faith traditions to promote justice, human dignity at interfaith service

CLEVELAND (Aug. 8, 2014) – Nearly 30 local, national and international faith leaders, along with people of faith, will gather at Cleveland's Trinity Cathedral for the Gay Games 9 Interfaith Service Monday, Aug. 11 at 7 p.m. The service, titled "Justice, Equality and Human Dignity for All," will feature music, prayers and messages grounded in the values of justice, equality, and human dignity to uplift the spirits of those gathered to compete in and support Gay Games 9 taking place in Cleveland Aug. 9-16.

The service is open to all Gay Games participants, supporters and spectators, as well as the general public. Members of the media are encouraged to attend.

"Religious leaders from across the world share inspiration for justice, equality and dignity for all, and the witness of this service brings a vitally important message in the face of movements in some places to deny LGBT people their human rights and dignity," said the Rev. Mike Schuenemeyer, the Cleveland-based United Church of Christ's executive minister for health and wholeness advocacy and a coordinator

of the service. “In the context of the Gay Games, participants bring their whole selves, including their faith and spirituality. Northeast Ohio has strong faith leaders who support and affirm not only the Gay Games in Cleveland, but people who are part of the LGBT community here and around the world.”

The service aims to raise positive faith voices, create awareness and promote global solidarity and action in support of human rights, calling on participants to join in the struggle against homophobia, violence, and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The choir from Cleveland’s Mt. Zion United Church of Christ and the Cleveland Drumming Circle will also perform.

Key confirmed speakers include:

- **The Right Reverend Martín De Jesús Barahona:** Bishop of the Anglican Episcopal Church of El Salvador
- **Imam Daayiee Abdullah:** Director of LGBTQI Outreach for Muslims for Progressive Values in Los Angeles, and the first openly-gay imam in America
- **Bishop Yvette A. Flunder:** Presiding Bishop of the Fellowship of Affirming Ministries and Senior Pastor of City of Refuge United Church of Christ in Oakland, Calif.
- **Rabbi Denise Eger:** Founding Rabbi of Congregation Kol Ami, West Hollywood's Reform Synagogue, and President Elect of the Central Conference of American Rabbis in New York City
- **The Very Reverend Tracey Lind:** Dean of Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland

MEDIA OPPORTUNITY:

WHAT: Gay Games 9 Interfaith Service

WHEN: Monday, Aug. 11, 7 p.m.

WHERE: Trinity Cathedral, 2230 Euclid Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115

Speakers will be available for media interviews for about 30 minutes following the service. Copies of the speaker’s statements can also be downloaded from the United Church of Christ website:

<http://www.ucc.org/gg9/>

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