

Some clergy speak out for same-sex relationships

Elliot Burton asks why clergy are not vocally supporting same-sex relationships (Voice of the People, Feb. 2).

There are many of us who are working publicly and who are willing to solemnize same-sex marriages and/or holy unions.

While my own denomination, the United Methodist Church, is still officially opposed to same-sex relationships, there are many active clergy who are working to change the rule and many other retired clergy who are acting in opposition to it.

In New England Conference, some 85 retired clergy are among the "reconciling clergy" committed to supporting and solemnizing same-sex relationships.

We acknowledge and celebrate God's presence within those relationships.

We look with respect and admiration to our colleagues in the United

Church of Christ, the Unitarian Universalists and the Episcopal Church who have already made such a leap.

The Episcopal Church has an openly gay bishop, preferring to be faithful to God than bow to the demands of a more restrictive theology, thus risking a split in its denomination.

In matters of sexuality, more "conservative" voices are often the loudest, but many of us within the church have been in the vanguard of those supporting a woman's right to choose, in gender equality and now in the struggle for equal regard for homosexuals.

Indeed, I often think that self-styled "conservatives" use sexual issues as a smokescreen to divert us from the vital issues of economic justice and peace-making and what is still the most pervasive sin of American society, racism.

Rev. Donald J. Rudalevige
Cape Elizabeth

Portland Press Herald

A6 Portland Press Herald / Monday, February 18, 2008