

# The Empty Closet

## Christian Leaders Denounce Right Wing Use of Faith Against Gays

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Written by National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

**The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force today strongly praised the statement put forth by the Council of Bishops, Elders and Christian Leaders denouncing hostility that uses Christianity against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and opening the doors of their faith communities to all.** On the fifth anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, the Council denounced the “portrayal by Christian extremists of the tragedy of Sept. 11 as God’s judgment on America for the presence of gays and lesbians and all political manipulation in the name of Jesus.”

The statement was adopted at the national gathering of more than 25 Christian leaders who represent organizations that reach 98 million Americans, including leaders from conservative groups such as the Evangelical Network.

**“This historic statement from the faith community proclaims that discrimination against and rejection and oppression of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their families are incompatible with the Christian ethic of love,” said Matt Foreman, the Task Force’s executive director. “The religious right’s tactics of using Christianity to divide and oppress lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people are unpatriotic, anti-democratic and unfair. We applaud the courage of the many faith leaders who in this powerful statement reject bigotry and discrimination veiled in the false cloak of piety. We reaffirm our commitment to working with welcoming faith communities to create a more just and peaceful world for all.”**

The resolution adopted at the Council of Bishops, Elders and Christian Leaders calls for five critical steps to end discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people:

- \* Realize that the “relationships of same-gender loving couples are equal” and are worthy of both the right to civil marriage and the rites of Christian marriage.
- \* Reaffirm the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people to full equality under the law, including adoption rights, employment and housing protections, and the right to serve openly in the military.
- \* Refute the “ex-gay notion that sexual orientation and gender identity can and should be changed.”
- \* Refuse to cooperate with or support political or religious leaders who condemn the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.
- \* Reclaim faith and speak boldly on “God’s call for justice, wholeness and peace,” working on behalf of all oppressed people.

To read the full statement, go to  
[www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/Statement\\_Bishops\\_EldersCouncil.pdf](http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/Statement_Bishops_EldersCouncil.pdf).