



*. . . Virginia's Faith Voices
for LGBT Equality*

December 23, 2013

Ms. Peggy Gillespie, Co-Director
Family Diversity Projects
PO Box 1246 Amherst, MA 01004-1246

Dear Ms. Gillespie,

I write to express our gratitude for the wonderful photo exhibits—*Love Makes a Family* and *We Have Faith*—that have been circulating among congregations in Northern Virginia. We really appreciate the work of the Family Diversity Projects to prepare and share these testimonies to love and diversity.

We in Virginia who continue to work toward equality for LGBT folks, and especially we who work in the context of faith, recognize the great power of images and stories to open hearts and minds. Also, I have come to think of some of those pictured as allies who encourage me; and I know they do that for many others.

My husband and I were privileged to be visiting Alexandria when the exhibit was in Christ Church there, and we were deeply moved by the juxtaposition of the photos of contemporary families with the history that church represents. It was especially moving to see the photos and read the stories while under the gaze of the very large monuments to George Washington and Robert E. Lee in the front of the sanctuary (they both attended there). It just brought home how telling and showing our stories makes a real difference.

Personally, I would hope we could share these over a number of years all across Virginia, perhaps especially in the south and west and parts of coastal Virginia where acceptance of sexual and gender diversity is less clear. We shall work towards that, because I know they will make an enormous contribution to the cause (even as I know they probably will be needed and wanted elsewhere).

I also know that Family Diversity Projects relies on foundation support to make the exhibits available. The support from the Arcus Foundation and E.Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation has been invaluable in this project, as in so many others. I hope they continue to support the FDP photo outreach, so that the exhibits can be offered to congregations on a donation basis.

Many locations simply do not have this sort of item in their budgets, and support in various locations has ranged from \$50 to \$250. However, these exhibits really help to open minds and

change lives. I believe this will be especially true in more rural and isolated parts of Virginia where we have yet to get the photos displayed (we are committed to working toward that).

I am pleased to share with you the locations of the exhibits, so far:

- Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington
- Unitarian Universalist Church of Loudoun
- Unitarian Universalist Church of Reston
- Clarendon Presbyterian Church, Arlington
- Christ Church Episcopal, Alexandria
- The Celebration Center Science of Mind, Falls Church
- Little River United Church of Christ, Annandale
- Temple Rodef Shalom (Reform), Falls Church
- Washington Plaza Baptist Church, Reston

Again, thank you, for sharing this great resource with POFEV, and through us with Virginia. We look forward to continuing our connection with you and your great organization, as we each work toward a world of more openness and widely shared love and care.

In faith and hope, and gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robin Gorsline", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Rev. Dr. Robin H. Gorsline, President & CEO

cc: Ms. Rhonda Buckner, POFEV Exhibits Coordinator