



# IN THE LIFE

Documentary stories from the gay experience

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **IN THE LIFE DEBUTS ITS JANUARY SHOW “TIES THAT BIND” A LOOK AT THE INTERSECTIONS OF RELIGION AND SEXUALITY IN THE LGBT COMMUNITY**



NEW YORK—IN THE LIFE, the only three-time Emmy nominated public television series documenting the gay experience, explores religious devotion and discord in the LGBT community.

The power of religion to shape our lives, our worldview and our political convictions transcends all cultures, faiths, and sexual orientations. The Bible, the Koran, and the Torah are tools for spiritual guidance, comfort, and direction, but many gay and lesbian people endure a sense of alienation from religious communities that fail to see a place for them in their congregations.

In the wake of many defeats sustained by the LGBT community on Election Day, with the historic passage of Proposition 8 in California and similar amendments in other states, the entire country has been witness to how religion is used as a wedge in the larger community.

Believing that homosexuals have no place in the Christian Church, ex-gay ministries like EXODUS International promise gay and lesbian people struggling to live within the margins of religious fundamentalism "freedom from homosexuality through the power of Jesus Christ." In its lead-story, "In God We Trusted," this episode of IN THE LIFE examines evangelical ex-gay ministries that have been established around the country to "re-program" LGBT people into heterosexuals -- often with tragic consequences endured by its members: guilt, desperation, even suicide.

With Christmas and Hanukkah nearly upon us, families in all their diversity will be braving the airports and highways to come together for feasts and to reaffirm their faith at churches and

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temples across the nation. While some will assemble with congregations that recognize LGBT partnerships, others will grapple with religious doctrine that pits the integrity of gay and lesbian sexual identity against faith.

In "A Conversation With..." Bishop Gene Robinson, the first openly gay Bishop ordained by the Episcopal Church, and Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum, spiritual leader of New York City's largest LGBT synagogue, map their spiritual journeys, noting parallels and pivotal moments that lead them to call for a more inclusive theology that celebrates people of all faiths and sexual orientations. "I wanted to be a part of a Judaism that could ask questions in a sophisticated way about the meaning of life, interfaith relations, sexuality, feminism, gender issues," says Kleinbaum, "and I believed that Judaism was actually big enough and strong enough, and that God was sophisticated enough to handle those kinds of questions."

The episode concludes with a "Real to Reel" highlighting Parvez Sharma's groundbreaking film, "A Jihad for Love." This rare portrait of a different kind of "Jihad," meaning: an inner struggle or to strive in the path of God, brings the stories of gay and lesbian Muslims across twelve countries to the forefront of the debate on Muslim scripture and homosexuality.

"Ties That Bind" will begin airing on American Public Television stations January 1st, and be available for free video streaming and downloadable podcasting from the IN THE LIFE website starting January 2nd. To find out when it will be airing in their local areas, to stream or download it, viewers should go to [www.inthelifetv.org](http://www.inthelifetv.org).

#### About In The Life Media

In The Life Media provides information about the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities, documents the ongoing LGBT civil rights movement, and produces diverse images of the LGBT community to create better understanding and acceptance.

#### About IN THE LIFE

Produced by In The Life Media, IN THE LIFE is the longest running television show documenting the gay experience. IN THE LIFE is a three-time Emmy Award nominee, a Lambda Legal Liberty Award honoree, and the recipient of the Courage Award from the New York City Gay and Lesbian Anti-Violence Project. In 2004, GLAAD honored our organization with the prestigious Barbara Gittings Award "for contributions to LGBT media." In 2006, it won the Seigenthaler Award from the National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association for "excellence in network television."

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