

["LONG" CHURCH NEWSLETTER ARTICLE]

Optional First Paragraph:

Our church has taken important stands for justice in the past. Now we have the opportunity to support an action to help change the hearts and minds of leaders of the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) during the SBC annual meeting in June.

Help to Confront Discriminatory Southern Baptist Policies

Gandhi's grandson to lead workshops in St. Louis

The Southern Baptist Convention continues to wreak havoc on gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) individuals and their families both inside and outside the church with policies that call homosexuality a "very poor and sinful choice." The SBC also describes homosexual relationships as "always sinful, impure... and perverted." Those words lead to ruined lives, divided churches, suffering and even death.

Soulforce, an interfaith movement committed to ending spiritual violence perpetuated by religious policies and teachings against GLBT people, is again confronting the SBC's discriminatory policies at the SBC's annual meeting, held this year in St. Louis.

The "Journey to St. Louis" will include the Soulforce Institute for Nonviolent Change, June 7-9, which will include training in the principles and techniques of nonviolence taught by Arun Gandhi, grandson of Mahatma Gandhi, the Rev. Dr. Mel White, co-founder of Soulforce, and civil rights leaders from the '50s and '60s.

"Sharing Our Stories," in which Baptists will describe their faith journeys, will be held the morning and afternoon of June 10.

That evening, Soulforce's "24 Hours of Justice" will begin with continued training in the techniques of nonviolence and direct action, and resume the next day with prayerful vigils at the America's Center, where the SBC annual meeting is being held.

There are a variety of ways to participate in this important event, including helping to publicize it, signing up to participate or making a financial contribution.

Want to hear more? Contact Karen Weldin, co-chair, Journey to St. Louis, at 1-877-705-6393 or (918) 452-2761 or via e-mail at karen@soulforce.org.