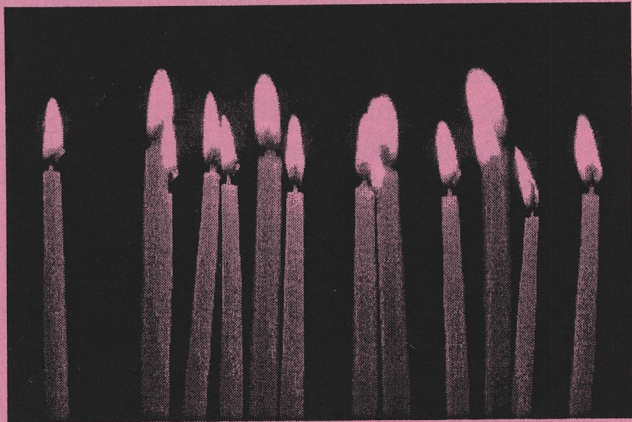


HIV/AIDS Vigil



World AIDS Day

Friday, December 1, 2006

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

Why AIDS Memorials Matter

Naming names matters. The devastations of the epidemic get lost when it becomes a scoresheet, of anonymous body counts of "victims." But the listing of names has an irreplaceable impact in the fight against AIDS — particularly within the communities hardest hit.

Grief too has been isolated by this epidemic. Much as early AIDS organizations sought to establish a community of response to misinformation and inaction around the illness, the Memorial seeks to recognize the communal context of grief, mourning, and remembrance. Even if only a small portion of the dead may be listed by name, the experience of memorial efforts show the tremendous power of naming names as a means of humanizing the massive losses in a way that statistics can never achieve.

An AIDS memorial performs a number of critical individual and social functions. It gives a focus for personal and public grief. It counters the silencing and denial, the isolation and rejection, that so often mark the experience of people living with HIV/AIDS.

The memorial, finally, is much more than a quiescent memory. Its identifiable presence contributes directly to the communal awareness that is necessary to lessen the great sufferings ahead for many people. Unlike a war memorial, where there is a definite end after which a structure may be built, an AIDS memorial will do its service even in the thick of the epidemic.

Some day it will be possible to list the last death from AIDS. But in the meantime, over the next decades, the suffering of the ill and the surviving will be diminished by the AIDS memorial. In it, a community of grief takes form. The struggle against the silence and suppression gets a focus. Within the turbulent midst of an epidemic, a memorial thus helps bring it to an earlier end.

~Michael Lynch (1944 - 1991)

Welcome / Lighting of the Main Candles

Rainbow Chorus: "*If You Search*"
by Ruth Elaine Schram

Reading: *A Dirge Without Music*
By Edna St. Vincent Millay

Rainbow Chorus: "*Light A Candle*"
Music/Lyrics by Al Kasha and Wayne Tester
Arranged by Ruth Elaine Schram

Reading: *Circles of Stone: To Those Unnamed*
By Shoshanna Jay Addley

Video Presentation

Rainbow Chorus: "*Deep Peace*"
By Ruth Elaine Schram

Reciting of Names/
Individual Candle Lighting

Moment of Silence

(Please join us for light refreshments)

Special Thanks.....

Rev. John Borthwick and St. Andrew's
Presbyterian Church

The Rainbow Chorus for their many years of participation
at the AIDS Vigil

All of our past, present, and future donors without whom
we would not be able to serve our community

The Wellness Centre, University of Guelph

Student Housing Services, University of Guelph

ACG Volunteers for their hard work,
dedication, and compassion

The AIDS Committee Board of Directors
for their energy, drive, and heart



AIDS COMMITTEE OF GUELPH
AND WELLINGTON COUNTY