



Fall 10-23-2000

News Media Advisory

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Recommended Citation

Aaron, Bob, "News Media Advisory" (2000). *News and Events*. 937.
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Oct. 23, 2000

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News Media Advisory

Event: IWU Chapel Service

Speaker: Rev. Gregory Dell, IWU class of 1967, Minister, Broadway United Methodist Church, Chicago

Date: Nov. 1 (Wednesday)

Time: 11 a.m.

Location: IWU's Evelyn Chapel, 1301 N. Park St.

Admission: Open to the public, no admission fee

Sponsors: IWU Chaplain's Office, IWU Gay/Straight Alliance

Background:

The Rev. Gregory Dell is pastor of the Broadway United Methodist Church in Chicago. In March, 1999, Dell went through a church trial resulting from charges filed against him by his denomination for conducting a marriage service of two gay men from the congregation he served. The September, 1998, service was the 33rd such service Dell had conducted. The trial resulted in suspension of his ordination credentials, beginning July 5, 1999. On appeal, the suspension was amended so that it would cease no later than July 1, 2000.

The Chicago Tribune reported on July 3: "Dell was suspended indefinitely in March 1999 by a jury of Chicago-area ministers for uniting two gay men. Without changing that highly publicized verdict, a Methodist appeals board altered the penalty in September 1999 to allow Dell to return to his post by July 1, 2000."

Anticipating his suspension, the Broadway congregation hired Dell to serve one year--July, 1999-June, 2000--as director of In All Things Charity, a national movement in the United Methodist Church working to end the denomination's discriminatory policies toward gays and lesbians.

For almost 40 years, Dell has been involved in social-justice issues. While a high-school student in Midlothian, Ill., he participated in Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s march and efforts to challenge racism in Chicago neighborhoods.

Dell has received many honors, including: "Human Relations Award," Commission on Human Relations of the City of Chicago (2000); "John R. Hammell" Award, Illinois American Civil Liberties Union Gay and Lesbian Rights/AIDS and Civil Liberties Project (2000); "Human First"

Award, Horizons Chicago (1999); "Courageous Resister" Award, Refuse & Resist (1999); and the "Faith and Social Action" Award, United Methodist General Board of Church and Society (1999).

Dell graduated from Illinois Wesleyan in 1967. He graduated magna cum laude from the Duke Divinity School in 1970.