



SILENT WITNESS TRAINING

Thursday May 14th, 2009
 6:30PM to 8:30 PM
 First Reformed Church UCC
 44 E. Orange St.
 Lancaster PA 17603

Silent Witness training will be offered in the Education Building of First Reformed Church UCC, Lancaster on Thursday May 14th, 2009, from 6:30PM until 8:30PM. Training is provided at no cost to participants, although freewill donations will be accepted. Those planning to attend are asked to contact Barry L. Russell – email at rainbownetcreations@yahoo.com or telephone at 717.380.1071.

Silent Witness PA (SWPA) is an organization of gay and straight allies dedicated to providing a non-confrontational buffer between those who condemn others based on their sexual orientation or identity and those they condemn. SW provides visual protection from "street preachers" and protesters at events such as Pridefests, the showing of films such as "*Jim in Bold*" and "*For the Bible Tells Me So*", or staging of plays such as "The Laramie Project", using their bodies and rainbow umbrellas as shields. In times of need, SW intervenes to prevent confrontations between protesters and event participants, often acting as escorts for those who would like to attend such events.



Silent Witnesses receive significant training in non-confrontation techniques specially designed for the type of work they do. (This is the purpose of the session to be held on May 14th.) Only those who have received this training may participate in an event as a Silent Witness. Silent Witnesses are easily recognized by their special safety vests and rainbow umbrellas. Where there are those

who publicly promote hate, Silent Witness will be there to help provide a loving, supportive front opposing them. SW participants are not counter-protesters. Instead, they provide a visual representation of support for those in society who may feel marginalized - a kind of "human spiritual firewall" between GLBT folks and those individuals who believe GLBT's are an abomination on the face of the earth.

First Reformed Church UCC is located in downtown Lancaster at 44 E. Orange St. Directions and parking information are available at the church's website, www.firstreformedlanaster.org. More detailed information and background on Silent Witness PA may be found at the group's website, www.silentwitnesspa.org. More info about the work of Rainbow Rose Community, a Lancaster based GLBT human and social justice group can be obtained by sending an email to rainbowrosepa@gmail.com.