



The latest on the Rick Warren debacle

by: Pam Spaulding

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This story is all over the MSM now, and it's big news, no? I wonder if Rachel Maddow will give this issue better coverage than the lame toss-off at the end of her program last night. One can only hope it's actually interesting enough of a topic for that show's audience. (Update: Apparently she found her voice tonight on this topic and spent a good amount of time on her soapbox to take a stand for progressive principles since those who believe in reproductive freedom and LGBTs, among others, have tire marks on our backs from this incident. Thank you, Rachel -- the effort didn't go unnoticed or unappreciated around here.)

I'm doing a roundup of things that have hit my inbox since I was offline.

Barney Frank on Obama and Warren

Congressman Frank doesn't hold back; the Obama crew have to be feeling pretty battered beyond what they expected.

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN FRANK ON PRESIDENT ELECT OBAMA CHOOSING RICK WARREN TO GIVE INAUGURATION INVOCATION

"I am very disappointed by President-elect Barack Obama's decision to honor Reverend Rick Warren with a prominent role in his inauguration. Religious leaders obviously have every right to speak out in opposition to anti-discrimination measures, even in the degrading terms that Rev. Warren has used with regard to same-sex marriage. But that does not confer upon them the right to a place of honor in the inauguration ceremony of a president whose stated commitment to LGBT rights won him the strong support of the great majority of those who support that cause.

"It is irrelevant that Rev. Warren invited Senator Obama to address his congregation, since he extended an equal invitation to Senator McCain. Furthermore, the President-Elect has not simply invited Rev. Warren to give a speech as part of a series in which various views are presented.

The selection of a member of the clergy to occupy this uniquely elevated position has always been considered a mark of respect and approval by those who are being inaugurated."

And here is a statement by the Rev. Rebecca Voelkel of the National Religious Leadership Roundtable:

"As a Christian pastor and a lesbian, I am deeply troubled by President-elect Obama's choice of Pastor Rick Warren to pray at his inauguration. Pastor Warren was one of the leaders in smearing the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community in the recent Proposition 8 campaign in California. His words and actions have solidified the

impression that Christian equals bigot when it comes to the LGBT community. And his leadership was one of the factors in Prop. 8's passage.

"But Pastor Warren and the Saddleback Church, whose membership counts in the 20,000 mark, have also taken a leadership role in the fight against HIV/AIDS. And through this work they are coming to know many LGBT persons and our real lives - as opposed to the lies they have painted us with.

"My prayer is that Pastor Warren allow himself to repent of his hatred and harm to the LGBT community. If he is going to purport to acknowledge God's presence at the inauguration, he must recognize the power and blessing in all our lives - especially LGBT people."