



James J. Beates

Reverend Jim Beates

The Reverend James J. Beates, the first openly gay pastor in the Presbytery of Detroit, died Sunday, June 13 in Botsford General Hospital in Farmington Hills of AIDS-related pneumonia. He was 44.

As child of a member of the military, Reverend Beates moved 23 times before he graduated from high school. Despite this regular upheaval he was president of his eighth-grade class, became an Eagle Scout and was a track star.

After high school Beates went on to Pennsylvania State University where received a bachelor's degree. He also received a master's from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and did postgraduate research at the Toronto School of Theology.

While in Toronto, Reverend Beates realized he was gay.

Reverend Beates served in several positions over the last several years in the Presbytery of Detroit. His latest assignment was as a parish associate at the Drayton Avenue Presbyterian Church in Ferndale. His last official act, just before his hospitalization was the May 30 baptism of a member of the Drayton Avenue Presbyterian Church.

Reverend Beates was also an important force in the Friends Alliance, a service organization for HIV-positive people and their family and friends. He was also active with the Presbyterian AIDS Network, the AIDS Interfaith Network, the Presbyterian church's Task Force on Homosexuality and the Church, and More Light Presbyterians, a gay and lesbian church group.

In 1997, he received the Spirit of Detroit award for his work with AIDS agencies.

Reverend Beates made his homosexual-

ity public in April 1996, when he introduced his then-partner to a meeting of about 3,000 of the Detroit area's Presbyterian leaders.

Survivors include his parents, James K. and Marjorie Beates; two sisters; a brother, several nieces and nephews, and many friends and parishoners.

A "Celebration of Life" memorial service is being planned for sometime in July.