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# riends Congregational Church relcomes all through its doors

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BY RHONDA REINHART Staff writer

meone once said an open hand olds more friends than a closed fist, the Friends Congregational on Southwood Drive in College adopts a policy that reflects open hearts and minds.

June 16, 1996, the Friends Congreal Church adopted The Open and ning Statement defining the church's i i ceon acceptance and discrimination. ccording to the statement, church bers affirm "That in the spirit of love openness, we welcome into the nunity of faith persons of every sexual orientation, race, nationality, ability, age and gender to

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participate in all aspects of our church's

life and ministry."

Jo Hudson, minister of the church, said the more dramatic part of the statement is the acceptance of gays, lesbians and bisexuals.

"Open and affirming means accepting of all people," she said. Ruth Schemmer, former moderator for

the church and a graduate student in sociology, said society consistently excludes gays and lesbians.

"I can't think of any other group that is more systematically excluded from worshipping God," she said.

Friends Congregational Church is a member of the Brazos Association of the South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ.

The church was formed in 1978 under its original name, College Station United Church of Christ. The name was changed to Friends United Church of Christ to reflect the church's spirit of "oneness with God and with one another.'

PLEASE SEE CHURCH ON

PAGE 5.

## Gay couple dispels stereotypes about homosexuality and AIDS

#### BY AARON MEIER Features editor

wo people meet, they fall in love, they commit to each other and decide to move in together.

This scenario sounds like a typical love story of two people making the tough decision to start a committed relationship. The only distinguishing fact is these two people are both men, homosexuals, in a long-term relationship.

"Brett" and "Chad" have been romantically involved for almost three years and living together for the past two.

Chad said he met Brett walking across the Texas A&M campus.

"He was walking with my roommate, who was gay," Chad said. "Brett asked about me. He called later that week and asked me out.'

Dating in modern times can be intimidating for any couple, but Brett and Chad said dating for them poses special challenges.

"The only difference between a 'hetero' date and a 'homo' date is that we can't figare out who pays," Brett said. Brett said the political and so-

cial environment of

A&M places restraints on homosexual relationships that straight couples do not encounter.

"We know that here in College Station we can't dance, hold hands or whatever,' Brett said. "However, there are other places which are a little more open-minded. We are not here to recruit anyone - no toaster ovens in stock - just live our lives that God gave us.

Brett and Chad said their relationship goes through good times and bad just like any other.

'I cannot sit here and say everything has been great," Brett said. "Everyone gets in fights. We know how difficult it is to find someone you click with, straight or gay, and we click. We fight like a mar-

ried couple — so people say." The couple has exchanged rings, which they said symbolizes their love for each other.

PLEASE SEE COUPLE ON PAGE 5.

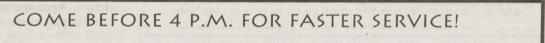
> PHOTOGRAPHY BY DAVE HOUSE Tubbs to re said the groups are onfermainly 16-21 year olds who will dis-

cuss the problems teens face with being gay in high

school. The week concludes with the Open House of the Gender Issues Education Services from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. The whole week gives people a chance to talk before

they take the first step of coming out and tell their parents and friends," Tubbs said.

Any questions on places and times of events can be directed to the GayLine at 845-0321.



Dittle Caesars Pizza APPRECIATION DAY!

### COMING OUT

tinued from Page 1

Coming Out Week begins Monday when the GLBA ts a PFLAG panel to speak on "Coming Out To

Ron Hudson, a junior industrial distribution major ks PFLAG is a great way to inform the public about and lesbians

On Tuesday, Rainbow Christians will present Revnd Jo Hudson of the Friends Congregational Church. Friends Congregational Church is what you call a coming church," Moore said. "Welcoming churches

people of every diversity, i.e. gays and lesbians

are

open to

The Allies, a group of students and staff members who wish to provide a safe haven, a listening ear or an open door to gays, lesbians and bisexuals, are bringing a heterosexual panel to discuss "A Straight Talk on Gay Issues" on Wednesday.

On Thursday, youth groups from Houston, Austin and Dallas, including The Houston Area Team Coalition of Homosexuals, Out Youth Austin, and Hope House of Dallas, will present Gay Youth.





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**FAIR EXHIBITS:** 10:00 to 2 p.m., Memorial Student Center, Rm. 224

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All Graduate, Research & Technical Programs: Abilene Christian University, Angelo State University, CalTech, California School of Professional Psychology, Cornell University, Dallas Baptist University, Duke University, Harvard University, Iowa State University, Lamar University, Miami University-Ohio, Oklahoma State University, Our Lady of the Lake University, Southern Methodist University-School of Engineering, Southern Methodist University Graduate School, Southwest Texas State University Graduate School, Stephen F. Austin University, Texas A&M University-College of Engineering, Texas A&M University-College of Geoscience and Maritime Studies, Texas Christian University, Texas Tech University-Graduate School, University of Arizona, Graduate College, University of Houston-Clear Lake, University of Kansas, University of Michigan, University of North Texas, University of Notre Dame, University of Oklahoma, University of Texas/Arlington, University of Texas/Austin, University of Texas/Austin-College of Engineering, University of Texas/Dallas, University of Texas/San Antonio, University of Washington-Graduate School, University of Wisconsin-Madison

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For More Information, Call the Texas A&M Career Center at 845-5139

