

Brian McLaren's Son Marries Same-Sex Partner

By Audrey Barrick, Christian Post Reporter

September 25, 2012

The son of author and speaker Brian McLaren, who is often identified as part of the controversial emergent church, married his same-sex partner this past weekend.

Trevor Douglas McLaren, 28, wed Owen Patrick Ryan on Saturday in Washington, according to The New York Times. The marriage ceremony was officiated by a Universal Life minister, and his father, Brian McLaren, led a commitment ceremony with "traditional Christian elements" afterward.

The elder McLaren recently recalled to NPR the time his son – one of four sons – came out to him.

It had just been a couple of years when McLaren shifted his thinking and abandoned the traditional view of homosexuality being a sin that he grew up with.

"I had gone through my change in this view before I ever guessed that any of my kids might be gay," he said on the radio program.

"I was a good kid, I believed what I'd been told. And as a pastor, I started having gay people come out to me and what became clearer and clearer to me is that their experience was not explained by the theology I inherited," he explained. "And that it would be unjust to continue to uphold what I'd been taught. Maybe I could say it like this: My call to love God and love my neighbor was in conflict with what I'd been taught the Bible required me to say and do."

Recalling the time his son came out to him, McLaren stated, "So I went through that shift in my own thinking. Couple of years after that, when I really in some ways come out myself as a person who no longer supported the traditional view and one of my sons came out to me, I just remember I cried and cried because my thought is 'Oh no, if my son has been going

through the same kind of pain so many other people did and I didn't know it, I just couldn't live with that."

To his relief, he said, his son Trevor never worried about his parents accepting him.

McLaren is the author of *A New Kind of Christianity* and most recently *Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha and Mohammed Cross the Road?*. Decades ago, he and a number of pastors had started what was called the emerging church movement to reach young people. But that later became divided as some pastors, including Mark Driscoll, left over theological concerns.

Matthew Schmitz, deputy editor of First Things, summed up McLaren's journey in an article Tuesday: "Brian McLaren started out wanting to reach the unchurched end up performing a commitment ceremony that stood outside the church not only physically (at the Woodend Sanctuary of the Audubon Naturalist Society in Chevy Chase, Md) but also doctrinally - in contravention of clearly delineated Christian teaching on the nature of sex and marriage. His desire for a more authentic and less abstracted faith took him away from the concrete body of Christ."

SIDEBAR COMMENT:

What caught my eye is the Universal Life minister doing the marriage ceremony in the apartment and then later a commitment ceremony by Brian McLaren.

The Universal Life Church

(<http://www.themonastery.org/ordination?gclid=CKS4rMab17ICFYWMgodmBEALQ>) grants ordination to all for free regardless of belief, so this is a believe anything you want faith. Now his dad did a commitment ceremony by not the marriage ceremony. Why the commitment ceremony? Does his dad disapprove of gay marriage or was it his son's and partner's choice to use a Universal Life minister? How does his dad feel about his son's sexual orientation?

Trevor McLaren and Owen Ryan

Published: September 23, 2012, The New York Times

Trevor Douglas McLaren and Owen Patrick Ryan were married Saturday in Washington. Guy Cecil, the executive director of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee and a Universal Life minister, officiated at the couple's apartment.



Later in the day, the **Rev. Brian D. McLaren, Mr. McLaren's father and the former pastor of Cedar Ridge Community Church in Spencerville, Md.,** led a commitment ceremony with traditional Christian elements before family and friends at the Woodend Sanctuary of the Audubon Naturalist Society in Chevy Chase, Md.

Mr. McLaren (left), 28, is a senior sales associate in Washington for salesforce.com, a company that sells software used on the Internet. He graduated from Pepperdine University in Malibu, Calif.

He is also a son of Grace A. McLaren, who lives with the Rev. McLaren in Marco Island, Fla., and who is a real estate agent for Keller Williams there. **Mr. McLaren's father, who writes and speaks on Christianity and spirituality, is the author of "A New Kind of Christian" and other books.**

Mr. Ryan, 35, is the deputy director for public policy in the Washington office of the Foundation for AIDS Research. He graduated from the Catholic University of America in Washington and received master's degrees in public health and in international affairs from Columbia.

He is a son of Eileen and James Ryan of South Amboy, N.J. His mother retired as a nurse for an Old Bridge, N.J., pediatrician. His father retired as the administrator of the job-training program for adults at the Perth Amboy, N.J., campus of Middlesex County Vocational and Technical School.