

## For Ministers, Religious Educators and Leaders



# October, 2009 – National Coming Out Day A Story for All Ages

In 1988, BGLT advocates designated October 11 as National Coming Out Day. This year, October 11 falls on a Sunday, giving many Unitarian Universalist congregations the opportunity to acknowledge National Coming Out Day in worship, reflection or social action.

This story from Creating Home, a Tapestry of Faith K/1 curriculum, lifts up the timeless concept that love makes a family. Tapestry of Faith lifespan faith development programs are published online for congregations to use, at no charge. See all Tapestry of Faith programs for children, youth, adults, and multigenerational groups: [www.uua.org/tapestryoffaith](http://www.uua.org/tapestryoffaith).

## A Penguin Family

At the Central Park Zoo in New York City, there were two penguins named Roy and Silo, who adored each other. It is typical for penguins to find a partner, a mate—one other penguin that is special to them. Usually, it is one female and one male penguin that like each other and become a penguin couple. They have fun together and help each other out.

When a female lays an egg, her partner takes turns with her, sitting on the egg to keep it warm so it will hatch. Then a baby penguin pokes out of its shell to be born, and the two penguins become its parents and take care of it together.

Well, Roy and Silo were partners. The zookeepers could all see that they did everything together that the other penguin couples did. They talked to each other in penguin language. They swam together. They would wrap their necks around each other to show their affection. But one thing they did not do was lay an egg and take turns sitting on it. Only female penguins lay eggs, and Roy and Silo were both males.

The zookeepers could see that Roy and Silo wanted to be penguin parents, though. One time, a zookeeper saw that Roy and Silo were taking turns sitting on a rock. The rock was shaped like a penguin egg. Roy and Silo were keeping it warm so it would hatch. Of course, the rock would never hatch into a baby penguin. Then the zookeepers noticed that another pair of penguins, one female and one male, had two eggs that they were trying to keep warm at the same time. The zookeepers knew that this would be very hard for them to do. They decided to give both eggs a good chance to hatch into baby penguins, and at the same time give Roy and Silo a chance to become penguin parents.

The zookeepers gave Roy and Silo the egg that needed to be kept warm. First Roy sat on the egg, and then Silo. They took turns keeping the egg warm, just like the other penguin partners. And finally, one day, Roy and Silo's egg began to hatch. And out popped a perfectly healthy baby girl penguin.

The zookeepers welcomed the new baby penguin with the name "Tango." A tango is a dance for two dancers. To dance a tango, the partners have to stand very close together and understand each other's movements.

When two tango dancers have a good partnership, their dancing looks very lovely and graceful. The way Roy and Silo were such good partners together reminded the zookeepers of a beautiful tango dance.

After Tango was born, Roy and Silo did what parents do. They kept Tango warm. They brought her food in their beaks and fed it to her. And in a few months, Tango was ready to do most things for herself. Her parents Roy and Silo raised her very well.