

February 8, 2007

Dear Covenant Alumni,

Late last semester an organization called Soulforce (www.soulforce.org) contacted Covenant to say they would like to bring the Equality Ride (www.equalityride.com) to our campus. The Equality Ride is a national bus tour of college campuses sponsored by Soulforce to challenge policies that they claim discriminate against homosexuals. This group targets colleges and universities that maintain a biblically-based stance on the issue of homosexuality, as Covenant does, and attempts to generate negative media attention to these institutions.

We did not invite these visitors to our campus. However, based on the Equality Ride's past actions and their statements to us recently, we know that they are coming to Covenant whether we grant them permission or not. Other institutions have refused them permission to visit their campuses, and the Equality Ride visited anyway. Equality Ride officials have told us directly that they plan to visit Covenant regardless of whether we grant them permission.

We presented the organization with a proposed Letter of Agreement, to be signed by both Covenant and Equality Ride officials. The Letter of Agreement stipulated guidelines and a schedule for their visit. The schedule included meetings with key administrators, faculty, and student leaders in a designated room, but not free access for the Equality Ride participants to roam campus and meet with anyone of their choosing.

We repeatedly asked that Soulforce accept our hospitality and respect our expectations by signing the Letter of Agreement. Equality Ride officials stated that, while they would agree to not enter residence halls or distribute literature, they would not agree to only meet with designated people in a designated room; they want unsupervised access to roam the campus and meet with any student or community member. Because the Equality Ride officials have chosen not to accept our offer, we are considering not allowing them on our campus. We regret that they have chosen this course of action.

Equality Ride officials have brought to our attention that they may find an off-campus location in the community where they will invite students and others to join them. Institutionally, we do not have control over what the group does away from Covenant's campus or whether students visit the group at an off-campus location.

We will take every precaution to prepare our students, faculty, and staff for this visit so that they will be informed and able to make wise decisions.

Our policy is clear as it relates to a student's sexual conduct. When students enroll at Covenant, they voluntarily sign the biblically-based Standards of Conduct (www.covenant.edu/standardsofconduct), agreeing to *abstain from "sexual sins (such as premarital sex, adultery, homosexual behavior and the use or possession of obscene or pornographic material.)"* We remain firmly committed to our biblically-based standards of sexuality.

In addition to communicating with you as an alum, we are also now contacting students, parents, faculty, staff, and our board of trustees to inform them of this event and our plans to manage it.

We ask that you join us in prayer as we seek wisdom to handle this situation responsibly and in a Christ-like manner. We are a community that teaches students what it means to be Christian servant-leaders. This is an opportunity for us to live that out.

I have also included a question-and-answer document to provide you with further insight. If you have additional questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at rowe@covenant.edu or call 706.419.1649.

Sincerely,

Marshall Rowe
Director of Alumni Relations
Covenant College