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March 28, 2007
 Campus News - OCTOBER 9th, 2002

Evangelist Enrages Students

PAUL EPPOLITO - Campus News Editor

New York City-based Christian Evangelist Greg Davis filled the front entrance to the Student Union with a crowd of angry students after delivering a "fire and brimstone" speech Tuesday afternoon.

Davis stood on a bench outside of the Union and preached to a crowd of students, claiming certain lifestyles, such as homosexuality, are immoral, and he urged students to repent before God.

He said he is not affiliated with any specific organization, but "the Bible commands I go out and preach the gospel, so people can be saved." Davis said he came to UB to "preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

According to Davis, universities and colleges are a good place to preach, because "college campuses are public, and there are a lot of young people who haven't heard (the gospel). I believe the older you get, the harder your heart gets."

He held up a recent issue of UB's student magazine, "Generation," featuring an article covering "Coming Out Week," an event sponsored by UB's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Alliance, to illustrate his point that homosexuality should be condemned.

Representatives from the organization came outside, sat on the bench from which Davis was preaching and held up a LGBTA banner for the crowd to see. The mass of approximately 100 students erupted in cheers when the banner was held up next to Davis.

Rachel Parrino, the president of the LGBTA, said she was glad to see such a large group of UB students protesting Davis.

"I think it's great because people aren't really listening to it or taking it seriously," Parrino said. "Giving him attention is kind of what he looking for, but they're really not listening to him seriously."

As the demonstration went on, the crowd grew increasingly belligerent and moved closer to Davis.

A University Police officer, who asked that The Spectrum withhold his name, said he was there to ensure a peaceful demonstration.

For most of the hour that Davis spent preaching, members of the crowd shouted profanity-laden responses to his proclamations.

"(Davis is) probably a fanatic," said Adam Malinowski, a sophomore computer science major. "He has a right to express his opinion, but not at the expense of others, such as homosexuals."

At one point during the demonstration, Jonathan Shimon, a freshman, walked to a bench behind Davis, and tried to start a "peace and love" demonstration. Shimon was unsuccessful in attracting a crowd of his own.

He said that while he is not against Davis personally, he is against the way Davis presents his message.

"I think he's just standing out here shouting bigotry," he said. "If everyone was just a little bit nicer and made an effort, the world would be a better place."

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