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# Group Aimed at Helping Mormons Overcome Homosexual Behavior Shuts Down

KUER 90.1 | By [Andrea Smardon](#)

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North Star International is now the largest single faith-based ministry organization for Latter-day Saints who experience same-sex attraction.

A group that once helped gay Mormons attempt to eliminate their same-sex attractions has closed its doors. Salt Lake City-based Evergreen International is turning over its resources and mailing list to an organization for gay Latter Day Saints called [North Star International](#). The merger makes North Star the biggest group in the world that deals with LDS teachings and same-sex attraction.

Evergreen and North Star both aim to support Latter Day Saints who are grappling with same-sex attraction, but they have some differences. For more than 20 years, Evergreen has maintained that people can overcome homosexual behavior, and the organization aimed to help those who wished to do so. The much younger group, North Star, founded in 2006, has no official position on whether it's possible to change sexual orientation. North Star's Board Chairman Jeff Bennion says they welcome a diversity of viewpoints on this.

"We don't think it's either necessary or needed to change your sexual orientation in order to be a faithful Latter Day Saint in good standing with the Church," Bennion says. "While some people say their attractions diminish and other people say they don't, in either case we think those people have a welcome place in the Church, and we want to support them in doing so."

Bennion says the merger was a joint decision by North Star and Evergreen leaders

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attraction.

“There’s already a lot of confusion around this issue among church members, among the world at large, so if could simplify even a piece of it, to create a single piece of it, to create a single place where Latter Day Saints could turn to instead of two, it just seemed like a real win-win for the larger LDS community,” Bennion says.

Neither Evergreen nor North Star has any official connection with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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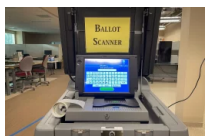


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Andrea Smardon is new at KUER, but she has worked in public broadcasting for more than a decade. Most recently, she worked as a reporter and news announcer for WGBH radio. While in Boston, she produced stories for Morning Edition, Marketplace Money, and The World. Her print work was published in The Boston Globe and Boston.com. Prior to that, she worked at Seattle

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