

LGBTIQ+ Pre-Pride Community Dialogue in Kwa Thema

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The Ekurhuleni Pride Organising Committee (EPOC LGBTI), in partnership with I Am Self Identity and Access Chapter 2 (AC2), hosted a community dialogue in Kwa Thema, a township on the Eaststrand of Johannesburg, on 28 November 2020 in preparation for the Ekurhuleni Pride Picnic that EPOC hosted on 5 December 2020.

The dialogue was aimed at addressing Gender Based Violence (GBV), the importance of Pride, homosexuality, and religion. Included were guest speakers from the South African Police Services (SAPS), Reverend Tebogo Moema (of the Abafundisi television show), Bontle Khalo Mohapi (EPOC facilitator), McMillan (AC2), and the host Ntsupe Mohapi (EPOC).

Rev. Moema spoke about homosexuality and religion, and pointed out how people create their own angry God: a God that hates. Moema spoke of God as rather a God of diversity: "God created the trees and the animals with different sizes purposes and shapes, that's when the diversity started," he said.

Bontle Mohapi touched on binaries and boxes, breaking down and explaining the acronym LGBTIQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, +). The SAPS talked of ways to help the community report crimes, violence, and corruption: "The community should always check the name tag of a police officer so they can report them," said Constable Malobola.

The event was attended by LGBTIQ+ community members in Kwa Thema, parents of the LGBTIQ+ and other community members. "It is important for this organisation to host another dialogue to educate parents about LGBTIQ+, so they would know how to treat their kids, friends and community [who are part of the LGBTIQ+ community] as a whole," said uMam Esther, a Brigadier at the Kwa-Thema Police Station who is also a Pastor.

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