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Interviewer: Joshua Waits

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Transcript

Joshua Waits: My name is Joshua Waits. I am the Archivist at Virginia Theological Seminary. Today is August 2, 2023. I am here taking the oral history of the Reverend Jamie Samilio. Correct?

Jamie Samilio: It's Samilio.

Joshua Waits: Mili.... Thank you for being with me today.

Jamie Samilio: Thanks for inviting me.

Joshua Waits: To begin with, what is your preferred way to be addressed as far as your name, Reverend Jamie, Mother, Doctor?

Jamie Samilio: Jamie works for me. Jamie's good. It did, Jamie's fine. I have been called mother, but it usually never preceded my name. That's not anything that I identify with, really. I, in fact, I think it would be better if the whole Episcopal church would just adopt Reverend, like, Reverend John, Reverend Bill, Reverend Sally.

Because it levels the playing field, and then the grammar police come in, and say, "It's the Reverend. It has to be the Reverend." It's, like, okay. We're stuck in the patriarchy. Because until we've got generations of people who go by, who don't see the father figure is the head of the church, you will constantly have female rectors who have got male associates, who, anytime there's a problem, the people turn, and go, "Well, John, can you fix this?" And the rector is standing in front of them. Because Father John must know the answer.

Joshua Waits: Yeah.

Jamie Samilio: Mother Mary may not. I'd rather everybody was just Reverend. But it's a tough thing. Changing culture is not easy. I think that's actually what we're talking about today, isn't it?

Joshua Waits: Pretty much, yes.

Jamie Samilio: Okay, well, why don't you go ahead and ask me whatever it is you want to ask me?

Joshua Waits: Okay. Do you have a preferred pronouns that we use?

Jamie Samilio: I'd prefer you use the Jamie, she/her.

Joshua Waits: Okay.

Jamie Samilio: Yo', it, whatever, but yeah, female pronouns.

Joshua Waits: How do you identify?

Jamie Samilio: How do I identify?

Jamie Samilio: Like, on the LGBTQ spectrum?

Jamie Samilio: I'm gay.

Joshua Waits: All right. Would you mind telling me your date and place of birth?

Jamie Samilio: Do I have to give you the year? No.

Joshua Waits: Not if you don't wish to.

Jamie Samilio: Okay. My birthday is May 26th. I was born in Erie, Pennsylvania, right up there on the lake, on one of the Great Lakes.

Joshua Waits: Now....

Jamie Samilio: That's where I'm from.

Joshua Waits: I would like to start off by asking, could you give us, like, a summary version, a CliffsNotes version of your, like, spiritual journey, your spiritual autobiography?

Jamie Samilio: Well, if I gave the year, you'd know, this is gonna take a while. But yeah, I guess I could. Um, I, uh, so I come from a little town that is definitely a Roman Catholic place and I was educated from, literally, kindergarten all the way through my undergrad degree, in a Catholic schools, all Roman Catholic schools.

My father was a Roman Catholic and my mom was, like, a Methodist, but had other Protestant denominations practiced in her family. She was one of 11 kids. But my parochial education had, really, a huge impact on me. I mean I was taught by the Sisters of St. Joseph from kindergarten through 10th grade. Then I switched to the Sisters of Mercy, and went to Mercyhurst.

But I went to Villa grade school, and Villa high school, and that had a big impact because I had religion class either every day or every week, going to school. The thing that that I saw, and that I experienced was how the sisters, especially when I'm in grade school, on the type of relationship they had with each other. They all seemed like they were very happy and at peace.

It was kind of interesting. It's something that I wanted, and I felt this sense of call at a very, very young age. I was probably nine years old. I had this idea that I was going to have something important to say to people, but I didn't know what it meant because I thought I should be a priest. Well, little girls aren't priests in the Roman Catholic Church, and it was not possible. But from those early days, it's no wonder that I ended up being a priest.

I'm called to preach. I guess I just knew that early on. And a lot of it had to do with learning about God and we learned about other religions. By the time I got out of high school, I mean, we were taking classes like Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, On Death and Dying. Or I took that class, I took the Documents of Vatican II, which is, oddly enough, how I became an Episcopalian.

But I never, never had a sense that God wasn't around. There was a church in the school I went to, okay, and a chapel where all the nuns... It was actually, the convent, it was on the other side of the school, and it was a rather large complex. Early on, I developed that sense of spirituality and that understanding that God is right there with us.

So, I have never been in the closet. I didn't even know there was a closet. I wasn't anything. And in fact, I'd have to say, I didn't even identify as being gay until I was 18, and my best friend kissed me. And all of a sudden, it was like, "Oh that's it!" I mean, prior to this I had gone out with some guys. The only thing I could think of was, "Okay, if this is what men and women do together, I'm really not surprised. There's, like, 50 percent of the population is getting divorced". Like, what's the big deal, you know?

Then my best friend kisses me and it's, like, fireworks. I'm, like, my goodness, what the heck was that? I realized; oh, what's that thing called? Gay, that's it. I must be gay. I mean that's.... I immediately knew it.

Joshua Waits: Yeah.

Jamie Samilio: But there I was in college, and I ended up becoming an Episcopalian because I started going out to the gay bar in Erie, and you know, going out dancing. Come on, it was the, it's the '70s, and early '80s, and there's dancing, and everything. And so we're going out and there was a guy who would always go to the bar and his name was Tony. When the bar closed down, he would invite everyone, whether he knew you or not, to come back to his house for breakfast.

So everybody in the bar just left and went to Tony's house. He was one of these guys, he was a used car salesman. He believed right on red, left on red, straight on red with caution, you know. He just lived life like that. He just let everybody into his life.

I found myself sitting at Tony's house one night and there was a guy who was sitting there. His name's Jeff, and we started chatting. Don't forget, this is a year and a half, a couple of years after I have taken the Documents of Vatican II. I said that's how I became an Episcopalian.

I started having this conversation with this guy. And it's wintertime. He's dressed mostly in black and he's got this, one of these lumberjack-type shirts on that's padded. Everybody in Pennsylvania always, you know.... It's cold. It's the middle of winter. We started talking about the church. We started talking about the difference between Roman Catholics and Episcopalians. We have this heated discussion about the Documents of Vatican II. The fact is, I didn't believe in some of what the Documents of Vatican II. I did the Canons of the Church of the Roman Catholic Church were, kind of, at odds at what I really believed.

He pointed out the fact that, if you don't believe it all, you're actually not Roman Catholic. We have this discussion. It's, like, 3 o'clock in the morning and 4 o'clock in the morning. And so, nice to meet you. Next week, I go to the bar. I go to Tony's house, and there he is again. So we continue to have this discussion. When we're done with this discussion and I'm learning all this stuff about the Episcopal church, and he stands up to leave.

Yeah, he told me he was at Mercyhurst College, and that's where I was going to school. He stands up to leave and he pulls his collar, his collar together. I kept looking at him thinking, "He wore that same outfit last week. Does he not have any other clothes?" He stands up, and he puts his collar together, and he reaches in his pocket, and puts his collar tab in. I looked at him and I said, "You're with the theater department. What play are we doing that's got a priest in it?"

At which point he says to me, he goes, "I'm not with the theater department. I'm with campus ministry. I'm the Episcopal priest assigned to campus ministry. And we should not waste all those years of parochial training that you had. I need a Sunday school teacher, how would you like to come and teach Sunday school at the Episcopal church? I'm in charge of it, of two missions, and I'd like to know if you'd like to come, and teach?" That's how I became an Episcopalian.

I was received in the church a couple of years later, a year or so later, by Donald Davis, Bishop Donald Davis, who actually was my, I went to high school with his son, Addison. I graduated with Addison. It was kind of interesting that I became an Episcopalian. Then I moved out of Erie, and I spent the next, almost 40 years outside of Washington D.C. in Virginia. When I was in Virginia, I.... God, God called.

In fact, Jeff wanted me, the priest, wanted me to seek ordination. And I'm, like, okay. I'm an art major at a liberal college. I did inhale. Okay, and I'm gay. I really don't think that I am, you know, the figure that you want to put up in front of the community as an example of how to live. Are you kidding? You must have the wrong number. God called; told God, "You've gotta, got, you got to have the wrong number." He kept calling.

I get to Virginia, and I ended up being a youth minister at St. Michael's in Arlington. I was working in publishing at the time. They came up with this program called MACE, a Masters in Christian Education with Locke Bowman and Dr. Amy, at the time, Amy Geary Dyer, Dr. Dyer. And so I went and I decided to apply for that program. And the priest at the church that I was at had a very strong belief that being gay is a choice. It's a choice, you choose. You choose to live in sin.

And I went through the process of filling out the application. She thought it was a great idea for me to go to VTS and get a Masters in Christian Education. Because I ended up, I was the superintendent of the Sunday school. I'm now the youth minister there. I was great with the kids. I've had all those years of parochial school, religion class.

It taught me all kinds of things to teach people about Jesus, and I loved doing it. I loved teaching. Going in and getting that degree was fine, but when it came across that I got my letters of recommendation, and several of them said, "You should really look at her for the priesthood," I didn't write them. They came from other sources.

I ended up getting set up, as it were, I found this out later, that I was asked directly whether or not I was a practicing homosexual? In my intake exam with the psychiatrist, you have to have a psychiatric review. He asked me directly that question. I don't lie so I said, "Yes." He then asked me four times whether or not he should tell VTS this information, and three times I said, "No."

The final time, I said, after he convinced me that things in the church were changing; and the fact that I had that been with my partner then, Beth, like, 12 or 13 years, he said, "This is what we should do. We should really tell them. This is good. This is good. This is positive." I ended up going, and putting my application in, and I was turned down for acceptance to Virginia Theological Seminary.

This was in the early '90s. The reason I was turned down, I was called in. The day that I got the phone call was the day that on the Eastern Seaboard, all of the phone lines went out. Like, the phones weren't working and stuff. There was a big thing that happened. On that day, I got a phone call, and it went through.

I got called to come to VTS. So I went and I met with Dean Reed, and then Associate Dean Martha Horne. And Dean Reed had just written this paper on human sexuality with Bob Pritchard. It had just come out on homosexuality.

Joshua Waits: Wholesome, something.

Jamie Samilio: Yes. It's actually in the material you sent me. I am well aware of what that is. I read it all the way through. It says, "90 percent of the population is straight, and 10 percent of the population is gay," which is pretty much understood by most of the world. I mean, that was the accepted number for, still is, I think, in many cases. Gender fluidity is changing that number a bit, but it went on, basically to say that it's a choice.

At any rate, you move forward here. I went in to talk to him. I asked him, I said.... He looked at me and he said, "Jamie, I'm, I need to tell you that you are not being accepted at Virginia Seminary. The reason is that you are a practicing homosexual. According to Virginia Seminary's policies at this point, you are not permitted. It is deemed that you would be a bad influence on the community." Yep.

I sat there a minute and I said, "How is the rest of my application? I mean, it took.... I had to go get my GREs. I had to take my GREs. I had to write this paper. I had to put all my experience on it. I collected my.... How is the rest of my application?" He sat there, and he didn't say anything. Martha Horne actually said, "Jamie, it was fine. In fact, we were excited to have you because the Masters in Christian Education program is about to launch its own curriculum. They're about to publish curriculum, and you work in publishing."

I said, "Yes, I do." You know how to publish, and put together, and literally create, and print books. I said, "Yes, I do," and how to mail them, and distribute them, absolutely. I said, "I was excited to read about that," and I said.... She said, "Your application was fine. There was nothing wrong with it." I said, "Okay, so, but I'm not being accepted because I'm gay." She said, "Yes, that's right. That's the policy." I said, "Okay, I have a question." He said, "What's that?"

I said, "Do you think that there are currently any students at Virginia Seminary who are going to school here who are gay?" He said, "Yes, there are. In fact, I'm positive there are. I know, know, that there are people here who are going to school here."

I said, "So, I was just over at the library and there's this big thing up on the wall. It says, 'I am the truth, and the life, and the way.'" I said, "Because I've told the truth, I can't come to school here. But because somewhere on their applications, they've either lied or it's been a lie of omission, you're okay with them being here."

There was a long pause, and he said, "Their paperwork is clean." I said, "Okay." I said, "So what would happen if I vowed celibacy, would you forgive me and then let me in?" He took a minute and he said, "I'm really sorry you're not coming to seminary here." I said, "Well," I said, "I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to pray for you because you, sir, are a bigot." I said, "But I also understand and respect that the policies of this place won't let me in. Your job is to uphold those policies. I'm going to pray for you because you are a bigot." He looked at me and he said, "I guess I am."

I left there, and a day later Martha Horne called me, and asked me to go out to lunch. We sat and we had a long talk. She said she was going to work to get this changed, that I should be able to go to school. Every year I would call Martha and I'd say, "Martha, can I come to school yet?" No, not for year one or two or three or four. Finally, one year, I said, "Martha, can I come to school?"

Like, every year in April, just before you apply, I would call her. One year she said, "You can. You can come to school, but it's don't ask, don't tell." Okay, don't, you can't tell anybody who you are. I said, "No, I need to be able to wait, Martha." I'm going to wait until I can come to school and be the child that God created me to be just as I am. When I can come to school, then you can tell me. I didn't go. I waited, and I called again in one year.

Finally, the next year she answered and said, "You can come to school now," and said, "But you live close by," and she goes, "Because here's the thing, you can come to school, but you can't stay on campus." They still hadn't lifted the housing restriction. I said, "Okay." That's the year that I went and applied to school. I already knew Dr. Dyer. I knew Amy Dyer. I had met her years before, in fact. I went through my interview with her and she couldn't quite figure out how I was so sure that I was going to get accepted to the program because she's the one who did the accepting.

It took a long time for us to finally have the conversation, after, a long time after I was already in the program, that she came to realize why I was so sure. It's because I had been talking to the dean for half a dozen years. In fact, I did something on conflict and I did the section for my, one of my classes on conflict management. I also, on appearances and things, and on how we are swayed by people's appearances, and what they look like. I'd come in that day in cutoff jeans and a T-shirt.

What I did was I had gone to Martha Horne, and borrowed one of her collars. I gave them all something to do and said, "Okay, I'll be back in just a minute." Then I run over to the ladies room; I'll be right back. When I came back in, I had changed. I had had my nails done, everything. I changed into a full dress suit with the collar, the whole nine yards. When I walked back in the door, and Amy looked up at me, she just was, like.... Because there I am, a layperson in a collar, like, this is like a giant sin on the seminary.

And he said, "My goodness, where in the world did you get the collar? You know you're not supposed to be wearing one of those." I said, "It's okay. It's the Dean's," at which point she was, like.... We talked after that, like, what are you doing with the Dean's? How do you know that? Tell me the rest of the story." So I did, did do that.

But I got my MACE degree. As far as what the temperature of the seminary was at the time, I think the first LGBTQ group had formed at some point. In fact, Martha called me and she said, "I want to know, if you'd like to be part of this group," even though I wasn't in school just then. She said, "I'd like to know if you'd like to go join the group of people who's there." Because allies, it wasn't just gay people, straight people had also joined the group as allies at the time.

I remember sitting there and listening to them talking about how they would want to do: Let's do this event, maybe we could run a blood drive, maybe this way, we'll show everybody that we're just normal people capable of reaching out, and giving things back to God. That we're capable of just like everybody else, we're just, we're able to serve in ministry in the church as an LGBTQ community.

And I listened to them, and I said, "I don't think that's, I don't think that's what I want to do. I don't think I want to do that." They said, "What do you mean?" I said, "Why don't you join the people who are already running the blood drive, and just go, and be yourself. Go help them as an openly gay man." Or they came up with that "L" word. I hate that "L" word. Come on, I went to an all girls school as a kid.

Let me tell you, the worst thing you can call a little girl in an all girls school. I can't even say the word, it's like saying the "F" word for me. It's the "L" word. This whole new thing came about. It is only politically correct to call you by that. You're not gay anymore. I'm, like, screw that. You're not calling me by that name. At any rate, I said, "Can't you go be who you are?" Why do you want to separate yourself from the community and do things on your own as a group to show them that you're normal?

I don't get it. No, I just want to go out there and be the best version of Jamie that I can be must as God created me. I just, I don't understand wanting to discern that this is a gay run event. "Look, we're gay and look what a nice job we did." I don't get that. I don't think I want to do that so I didn't join the group; or I would have been one of the founding members that you heard about in the Archive sometime later. But I'm not because I didn't. I went on and I actually, well, I became a.... I had already become the youth minister at a church in Arlington. That's how I ended up at the MACE program.

But at any rate, I got to the point where I was at a church in Virginia and things did open up a little bit. I switched and I started going to St. John's, Lafayette Square in downtown D.C. I was, I felt it, indeed. God called back. I explored ordained ministry in Virginia, and was basically told, "Welcome to the Old Dominion, don't bother to apply."

Peter Lee was the Bishop. And he had, definitely, he has been an advocate, but wasn't always. He was careful, he was treading lightly. He needed to. But basically, I was told, "Don't bother." Just don't, don't put yourself, don't put your church through it. Don't bother.

I went to St. John's, Lafayette Square and Jane Dixon was there. Some of this, of course, overlaps. I mean this is overlapping stories I'm telling you. But it's she who worked with Martha Horne to get some of the policies changed at VTS. And so I found myself in front of Jane Dixon. And that was, uh, I ended up not becoming a priest in the diocese of Washington. I went back and I used my MACE degree, and became the interim director of Christian Ed at Holy Cross in Dunn Loring, Virginia.

After spending 20 years at St. John's, Lafayette Square, I, uh, switched, and I went over to Dunn Loring. And I was there about a year and a half, and their associate rector said to me, "I think you need to go to the discernment conference for ordination." I'm, like, is God calling back, really? Another? You've been calling me for 32 years. You've got to be kidding. I kept hanging up on you, I kept telling you it was the wrong number.

Then I tried to call you, and just couldn't get an answer, and, yeah, I was told not to bother. Your calling back again? I had all but resigned myself that it wasn't going to happen. This time all of the doors flew open, and I got accepted. Bishop Susan Goff said, "Yes, Jamie, I'm going to ordain you," and she did.

Some of the hardest things I had to do, was even after the MACE degree. I remember, and this, my MACE, fellow MACE people remember this, too, my classmates remember. They were all sitting there and we all had to introduce ourselves. I was sitting there trying to think of what I was going to say, and it was, like, on the first day of class or so. There was, a couple of them were sitting off onto the side, and they were talking about their kids, and whatever, and such. One of them said, "You know what I hate. I hate it when people who don't have kids talk about their nieces and nephews."

I had just been sitting there thinking about what I was going to say about my nephew because he's the only. I don't have any kids, my other sister, kids are older and. He's the one who I was closest to. I thought, "Well, I can't say that, what am I gonna say? What in the world am I going to say? It was very uncomfortable. We talked about it later, and I told them what they said, and what impact that had.

It never dawned on them that, "I'm sorry, you who are not part of the mainstream, my goodness, don't talk about stuff you don't know about." What are you? But what I do know about is that that's my family. Don't talk about my family because it's not part of the mainstream norm. They're the man, and a woman, and children, like, "Okay." We had a long talk about it. They apologized, actually. They said it just never occurred to them. In some ways when I just did sacred ground, you don't know what you don't know.

When you start learning the truth about how you have been socialized and oriented, you don't understand. You don't have empathy for the other people. You just don't. It's kind of an awakening. You wonder, like, "How in the world did I live this whole time thinking one thing; and thinking I was cruising along, and how good I was at doing this, and that and then finding out, 'I've been offending people for decades?'"

Like, oh, so I went back as an Anglican study student. I was walking across the campus and I ran into Kathy Grieb. I was pretty upset. She asked me what was wrong? I mean, I was like I am now, tears in my eyes, and I.... She said, asked me, what was going on? I said, "It's hard to have to come back to a place where you've been rejected and go to school here." Because there was so much pain in this place for me.

What's funny is I worked for the Dioceses of Washington for, like, eight and a half years. They had rejected me. I remember that same feeling, walking into Diocesan house the very first day, and going up to my office. I realized, "Huh." That is another part of my story, the Reverend Canon Mary Sulerud became my spiritual director when I was going to go for the discernment process.

The rector of the church in Arlington said, "You need a spiritual director." Mary will tell you that I got sent to her to quote, "Straighten me out and explain to her —" explain to me, you know, "That being gay was a choice." Instead, we are now family. She came to understand. She came to change. Together we discovered what it really meant to walk with someone in spiritual direction and what it really meant to walk in each other's shoes.

And it became really clear that, you know what, sometimes you really have to spend some time with somebody to change your perspective, and to understand that people are just people. And that God calls people, and we need to stop cherry-picking pieces of scripture. Probably the most powerful piece of scripture does come out of Romans and it's right after the thing that, you know, the piece of scripture that people most often use the club the LGBTQ+ community over the head. It says, "Lo be to you who stands in the way who's one's desire is only to serve God."

I think that that's probably what we hung onto most of all. That's the lesson. It's a lesson we learned. Now, do you have any questions for me? Because I haven't shut up for.... All right, now, don't get me started. I'm a storyteller. Now, that's what happens.

Joshua Waits: Well, thank you. Thank you for sharing your story. I find that some of these parts of your story, they're truly fascinating. So you grew up with this Roman Catholic education. And you did not find.... Your story, I don't want to put words in your mouth, but from what I'm hearing, your Catholic education was not the horror story, nuns, whacking you out with the rulers all the time. You actually were inspired by them. Is that correct?

Jamie Samilio: Yeah. It was one of the finest schools in the city.

Joshua Waits: Did you —? You said you felt this sense of call when you were nine. But - did you consider that it may be a call to religious life in the Catholic church or was it that you felt called to the altar?

Jamie Samilio: Oh my goodness, oh yes, I mean it was one of these things, like, yeah, you should become a nun. I'm, like, I knew, I'm not supposed to become a nun. No, I'm supposed to become a.... I want to become a priest. It was, like, no, girls aren't priests. You can't do that. All right. Well then, I'm not doing it. I'm supposed to be a priest. And I could never resolve it. I knew God called me to ministry, but it wasn't to become a nun.

But, yes, I was a very good Catholic girl. You bet; I absolutely did what those nuns told me to do. Now, let me be clear about this. They said, "Good little girls, young women, should absolutely never sleep with men out of wedlock. Never, it's a sin." And I never did.

Joshua Waits: They should be proud of their tutelage.

Jamie Samilio: Absolutely, I did exactly what they said. Just be careful what you ask for.

Joshua Waits: Do you think –?

Jamie Samilio: God, that's going to be in the transcript.

Joshua Waits: Well, you talk about how you were inspired by the relationship with each other, and how happy they felt. Do you think that has had some lasting impact on how you internalize and interpret women loving each other?

Jamie Samilio: No –

Joshua Waits: No?

Jamie Samilio: – Not particularly. What I found is that they had a bond with each other. They were family. They were family, that was, that was, that was what they were. They were friends. There was no intimacy between them. They were good to one another. They sat and they laughed. They ate lunch together and laughed together.

They were in the same room having lunch with us. They weren't sequestered. They were at a big table in the middle of the room with the entire school around them. The little Italian ladies cooked lunch, you know. And they weren't just nuns. There were some lay teachers there too.

But that whole group of people were kind, and considerate towards one another, and helpful to one another. And there was just this nice, calm relationship. And they taught us religion and they taught us that we should care about one another. And oh my goodness, the reason that I was a good lector at St. John's, Lafayette Square has everything to do with the Sisters of St. Joseph making us all read out loud every day, cold, out of a book they'd give us.

Open your book to this page, all right, starting here, one paragraph each; everybody go. We would have to read in turn every day. Every day, almost all the way through sixth grade, I think. So yeah, you made really good -

[Crosstalk]

Joshua Waits: - get over the public speaking fears.

Jamie Samilio: Yeah, it made good practice for being a lector.

Joshua Waits: Then you said you never came out. You had this, the revelation of....

Jamie Samilio: I didn't.... Well, go ahead.

Joshua Waits: No, no. No, go finish what you were saying, so you never actually.... You were never in as it was. Is that a better way of putting it?

Jamie Samilio: Well, once I figured out that I was actually attracted to my friend, yes, I was in because I didn't know who to tell. I felt like, "My goodness, I, have I sinned?" Do I need a priest? I feel, what have I done? I needed to kind of figure it out. Then, yes, I did practice being in and out. I mean, I told my sisters. I told my family. But I had to be very careful back in the day. You didn't just tell people that.

Over the years we've received death threats. I got fired once for being gay. It was legal. I was working in Maryland. It's still, I think, legal in Maryland to fire somebody for their.... No, I think they changed that. At any rate, at the time, it was quite legal to fire someone for being gay. I was indeed dismissed for that reason. Yeah, you didn't tell everybody. But was I out? Yes, I was out. But I, also, I'm still.... I never was and I'm still not into PDAs. I'm not into....

Here's a little social experiment. If I were to say to you, Joshua, "Tell me five things about yourself." would being gay be in the first five? Was that the one thing that you identify with the most? I mean, it'd be, like, I have two sisters. I grew up in Pennsylvania on the lake. I play the piano and I paint. I like doing that. I know how to drive stick shift. I come from a huge family. You're going to have to get to 10, 12. I'm married.

Now, it might come out, if I tell you I'm married, and you ask me who I'm married to, and I tell you it's a female. But being gay has never been even one of the top five things about myself that I instantly identify with. If you ask anybody who's straight to tell them five things about themselves, they don't say, "I'm straight."

Joshua Waits: Yeah.

Jamie Samilio: Do they? I mean, have you ever said to somebody, "Hi, what do you do? Tell me about yourself," and they go, "Well, first of all, I want you to know, I'm straight?" It's, and if they said that to me, I'd say, "That's okay, this is taken." I don't get it. So I have never.... I self-identified myself as that's one of the top things I feel people would need to know to get to know me.

I try to be a really good neighbor and friend. I love telling stories. I like going to the movies. Think about things that you want people to know about you when you're getting to know them, where the heck does --? I guess it'd be tantamount to saying to somebody, "Tell me about yourself," and they say, "I'm straight. I like the missionary position." Like, what? How stupid and insane does that sound?

Joshua Waits: Right.

Jamie Samilio: It sounds just as crazy as looking at a gay person and saying, "I want you to know, I'm okay with you being gay." Let me tell you, I have turned to some straight people who have said some pretty dumb things, and were trying to dip toe, and said, "I want you to know, the fact, Joshua, that you like to sleep with women is okay with me. I just, I just want you to know that's okay with me."

Yeah, I mean, that's.... I don't know what your preference is, but I'm just saying to you that I would, I was, I've said that back to people before, "I want you to know it's okay with me that you're straight." Seriously, I think your whole community is fine. Ninety percent of the world, and every time....

Joshua Waits: I think people should have the same rights as the rest of us do.

Jamie Samilio: Right. Every time I have said that to somebody, they've got, they've said something, like, "Oh my goodness, have I sounded that dumb?" Yeah, yes, you have. You sound that dumb. I think that that's probably what underpins the foundation of the idea of, "Let's have an LGBTQ+ group so that we can show everyone we're normal."

They could do things together like normal people. Oh my goodness, can we all just get along? You know, can't we all just be one people? You go to Europe and they could care less. Yeah, well, sure, there are some, but for the most part it's just not the issue that it is here.

Joshua Waits: Very true.

Jamie Samilio: Yeah.

Joshua Waits: What was it like in your early 20s when you were going to college, and you were still Roman Catholic, and you were still, and you accepted that you are attracted to women? What was it like still being Roman Catholic at that time?

Jamie Samilio: Frankly, I didn't start going to church as an adult until I went to the Episcopal Church. My parents sent me to church school, but they quit going to church when I was, like, three. I went to church in school. I went to church at school. We almost never went to church except my sister Cheryl, when she could drive, would take me to church, and we would go to the church up the street.

But she would take me to church. But my family were not churchgoers. They got angry at the church and quit going. It was my dad who was the Roman Catholic. My mother had converted so she didn't particularly care.

Joshua Waits: Yeah.

Jamie Samilio: She ran that part of the house anyway, so. Dad was happy to get up and go golfing. I, in fact, it was difficult sometimes in religion class because they'd say, "What color were the vestments on Sunday?" I'd never have any idea because I wasn't there. When I told Sister Theogene, she'd ask that question; I'd say, "I don't know. We didn't go to church on Sunday." What do you mean you didn't go to church on Sunday, why didn't your family go?

It was, like, oh please don't ask me. Please don't ask me what colors. I did not know what colors they were. So yeah, I went to church as a.... I went to the Episcopal Church in college, and I already knew they accepted me. Because I got told so after going to the gay bar by some guy wearing black who was campus ministry.

Joshua Waits: You encountered Episcopal evangelism in a gay bar as it were.

Jamie Samilio: Actually, what I understand, that was the mission. There was no integrity group. There was no outreach to the gay community in Erie, Pennsylvania at the time. The bishop actually had assigned him to do some outreach and was failing miserably. We knew everybody and so we got to be very good friends and then invited him into the community.

He did, in fact, start the outreach and started a newsletter. They eventually started an integrity chapter. They eventually, there's now a nice, thriving, Christian, gay community out there. But can you imagine? There you are, going out, trying to make inroads to the gay community, and you approach somebody, and say, "It's nice to meet you," and whatever. You want to come and have dinner? Then it's, like, would you like to talk about God? It's, like, no. Yeah, next. Can you talk to these guys?

Joshua Waits: Yeah.

Jamie Samilio: But it was very different because Sylvia and I knew everybody. We knew the whole.... We knew the whole community. It was a lot easier to get introductions. We had house masses and things like that, invited a bunch of people over, and they got to know more people. I actually started making inroads in his congregations. Some folks started actually attending church so it was a nice growth for those communities.

Joshua Waits: Yeah.

[Crosstalk]

Jamie Samilio: You have to.... I have to remind. I have to make a note and say, "By the way, I talked about you a bunch, but didn't give your actual name." I'll have to ask him whether or not I can divulge that information?

Joshua Waits: Yeah. When you tell your story there's a lot of rejection, you know. Fired from one job, don't even try to –

Jamie Samilio: Yeah.

Joshua Waits: – To discern in Virginia. When you were younger, girls aren't allowed to be priests.

Jamie Samilio: Yeah.

Joshua Waits: The blatant rejection when you first try at VTS. Even your recurring phone calls with Martha Horne, it's, like, every year, and what, still there's another reminder of that rejection. What got you through those rejections and, sort of, also, strengthened your resolve to keep pressing towards this call that you felt? Why didn't you just give up?

Jamie Samilio: I try not to think about it. A little bit of Scarlett O'Hara; I'm not going to think about that today. I'll think about that tomorrow. Right now, I think I'm gonna go to work and grow my business. On Sunday, I'm going to go to church and figure it out. I tried not going to church and it didn't feel very good.

It left a big, empty spot. Not, putting myself, putting distance between myself, and God, and not worshipping in the tradition I'd come to love did not feel right. I didn't stop doing it. Okay, but I did it on my terms. I engaged in ministries that I knew that were needed, that were positive. That's what I did.

I, actually, during one of those rejections, I'm pretty sure I know what I said because some of this stuff I said, and I didn't make it up. It just kind of came out of my mouth that, those words that are, "Don't worry about what you're supposed to say at the time. God will put the words in your mouth." And at one of those, I said, "God has called me to ministry."

The fact that the Episcopal Church has not figured out what to do with me is not my problem. It's the Episcopal Church's problem. Okay. God's called me to ministry. Whether you ordain me or not doesn't mean that God has not called me to ministry to teach, and to preach, and to be out there in the world doing what God has called me to do.

Okay. So this is not my problem. God's called me to ministry. You can't figure out what to do with me. Let me know when you figure it out. And I, I, that was, that's, that was it. It's, like, okay, this just isn't. It's not ready yet. It's, like, you check the oven. Is it cooked yet? No. Should we pull it out early? No. Let it sit there. When it's done, we'll pull it out and do something with it. Okay. But for right now, you just have to wait.

Well, what do you do in the meantime? Well, you go on and you live your life. You go on and you live your life. You do the next right thing in front of you. Yeah. Wait, let me be sad and dwell on this. Okay, I'm done. Now, this is it. Can we just move along? It doesn't, in the same way, and in fact, this is one of those theological things. It's something happens, something wonderful happens. What we tend to do is we tend to build a monument on the place where that wonderful, fabulous thing has happened.

Okay, we build the church on it. If we stay in that moment and in that church, we end up having with the Reverend Luis León calls an edifice complex. Okay. We begin worshipping the building. In some ways in that same line of thought, when something horrible happens we can't sit in that moment, either. When a good things happen, and good moments happen, we're called to go forward from there into the world, and spread that good news.

In the same way that when bad things happen, we are called to go out into the world and set that aside. We cannot dwell in that place forever. Okay, you can't dwell in the good moment that happened and try to hang onto it. Okay, because if you do that, you're hiding it from the whole world.

It's inside here and nobody can see it when you hang onto it like that. We're supposed to open it up and let it go. Well, the same thing when something bad happens. If you hang onto this thing, eventually your hands aren't free to do anything else. And in fact, you're captured there, so you also have to open your hands up, and let it go. I made that up just for you.

Joshua Waits: Well, thank you.

Jamie Samilio: Right now, on the spot, just made that up but it seemed to work well.

Joshua Waits: Well, thank you.

Jamie Samilio: Sure.

Joshua Waits: I'm trying to put a timeline to -

Jamie Samilio: Excuse me, one second. Dear person transcribing this, I'm so sorry.

Joshua Waits: My light has gone out on here. I'm interested about, like, sort of, the timing because you said that you got called by.... The phone call, that had been the.... The phone lines went down on the Eastern Seaboard and....

Jamie Samilio: In the '90s.

Joshua Waits: I'm wondering if that was in 1993?

Jamie Samilio: Yeah, I think so.

Joshua Waits: Because that would have been when that, the three, no, the two hurricanes and the tropical storm met, and it caused the blizzards that went through the south, and power outages, and all this. Because also, because I'm.... Because you met with Dean Reed.

Jamie Samilio: Yes.

Joshua Waits: He retires –

Jamie Samilio: Right.

Joshua Waits: – In '93, and Martha Horne becomes Dean in '94.

Jamie Samilio: Correct. That's the timing. That's the story, right there.

Joshua Waits: Yeah. Then you have the relationship that just rose with Martha Horne, sort of, saying because. It's not on you, but the others, but certainly, you seem to be a catalyst that gets Martha Horne going, "We're going to change this policy." But was it just an annual conversation with her? Or did you and her actually grow a stronger bond and friendship over those years?

Jamie Samilio: No, it was just I called her once a year for.... That's it.

Joshua Waits: And I'm assuming...

Jamie Samilio: March 12th, 1993, it says, "A massive storm system broke down nearly half of the U.S.'s population." It sounds like that that's probably about right.

Joshua Waits: Yeah, no I'm thinking that, Dr. Reed. I remember that particular instance because I remember being in the snow in Georgia. My aunt, I met my, walking with my aunt, and I fell down, and she dragged me for 20 feet through a snowbank. My Uncle had to say, "Pick the child up." It was '93.

Jamie Samilio: No, it was, literally, I called her once a year on the phone. I didn't have it, other than going out to lunch, and having that conversation with her at one point afterwards, I did not see her in person or anything about any of this. I made a phone call to her and she took my call every year for several years.

Joshua Waits: Was it around that same time when you went to start working at St. John's, Lafayette Square?

Jamie Samilio: No, I went to St. John's Lafayette Square, yeah, just as it was just prior to Luis León, literally about three months prior to Luis León becoming the rector.

Joshua Waits: Okay. You said you were there for 20 years?

Jamie Samilio: Just about 20 years, yeah.

Joshua Waits: You were the youth minister.

Jamie Samilio: No, I was the youth minister at St. Michael's in Arlington.

Joshua Waits: Okay. You were just -

Jamie Samilio: I left there. I left there in '93. We're talking, I was the youth minister from, what, '89, '90, '91, yeah, or maybe '90, '91, '92, '93. I was the youth minister in Arlington under Charles Gill.

Joshua Waits: St. John's, Lafayette Square, you were just a parishioner?

Jamie Samilio: I was a parishioner, but I was on the altar guild and the flower committee. And I became part of the Pastoral Care Team and I served on the altar with Luis at the 8 o'clock service, almost, so many Sundays. Yeah, there weren't too many 8 o'clock people, but I was there so many Sundays.

Joshua Waits: This was when Bishop Jane Dixon, though she wasn't Bishop at the time, came

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Jamie Samilio: It was Bishop Ronald Haines.

Joshua Waits: But Jane Dixon started working there while you were there as well. Is that what she --?

Jamie Samilio: Jane Dixon was the suffragan bishop --

Joshua Waits: I see.

Jamie Samilio: -- Of EDOW, the Episcopal Dioceses of Washington. Ronald Haines was the bishop.

Joshua Waits: So how did she try to convince you? Because didn't you say that she -
[Crosstalk]

Jamie Samilio: But you have back scroll it all the way to.... You have to go all the way through the '90s? Now you're in 2000, by the time I engaged Jane Dixon.

Joshua Waits: Okay. It wasn't? I'm trying to see because --

[Crosstalk]

Jamie Samilio: No.

Joshua Waits: -- We were overlapping it.

Jamie Samilio: I left and went to St. John's. Probably in the mid '90s, I looked at ordination in the Diocese of Washington, mid '90s. And I definitely got rejected there, but I kept going to St. John's, Lafayette Square, and I stayed there.

Joshua Waits: Okay.

Jamie Samilio: I did all kinds of stuff. So I got rejected by the Diocese of Washington. Well, it's, like, did I ever actually become a postulate there? That's the question they ask when you go to Virginia, "Were you ever denied postulancy?" It's, like, no, I wasn't. You know, I didn't - They had a different type of discernment program.

Joshua Waits: Right.

Jamie Samilio: I never was a postulate and then denied ordination. I never became a postulate in D.C. because they basically took the field from 12 candidates down to three. They said they were only taking as many as they thought they could place in the next four years, and that was it. A matter of your sense of call did not seem to fall into it. It was a matter of how many candidates they could place. I didn't end up in the Diocese of Washington. So I stayed at St. John's until I graduated with my MACE degree.

The Reverend Canon Mary Sulerud, I actually worked for the Diocese of Washington in the late '90s, all the way, you know, for years, and almost a decade, I was a consultant after that. Mary basically called me and said, "Hey, listen, I was talking to somebody, and they need an interim director of Christian Ed, and you need to go talk to this guy." And so I did. I went and talked to Wes Medley at Holy Cross.

And I did that and I really love the church, so I told Luis. I said, "I've got to take a sabbatical because I'm going to do this little interim job until they find another Christian Ed director for six months or so." I fell in love with the congregation. So I started going to both congregations at the same time. Then I finally said, you know, I'm leaving St. John's. About a year later, they said, "Do you want to go to the discernment conference?" So I did.

Joshua Waits: You came to VTS around 2003 to get your MACE degree.

Jamie Samilio: I graduated with my MACE degree in 2005. Okay, I was there - They gave you seven years to finish it. I did it in '97, '98, '99. Then it took me a while, I wrote the thesis or whatever. It, maybe it was '98, '99; I forget, but it was late. But it was in the '90s, '98, '99, someplace in there. But I graduated in 2005.

Joshua Waits: I see, so VTS....

Jamie Samilio: I also graduated in 2015.

Joshua Waits: Yes, because you had, that's when you got your Anglican studies.

Jamie Samilio: Right.

Joshua Waits: All right. I'm seeing the timeline now. You, in January 21st of '97 is when the board changed the policy where you can be openly gay and be admitted. Then that means you must have called Martha Horne in April of -?

Jamie Samilio: '94, '95, '96, '97, but the policy was still don't ask, don't tell. I think I had to wait until '98.

Joshua Waits: All right. You would have called in April. She would have said, "Yes, you can come now." You enrolled and started in '98, somewhere in there?

Jamie Samilio: I think, '98, yeah.

Joshua Waits: All right. So when, while you....

Jamie Samilio: I mean, I can look it up. It's in the records.

Joshua Waits: Yeah. It's in my records, but. I'm curious, so that whole policy change is an interesting moment in VTS history.

Jamie Samilio: Uh-huh.

Joshua Waits: Because it, one, it changed the focus and shape of the seminary forever. Also, I mean, it's not a unanimous decision across the board.

Jamie Samilio: No. I don't think that Bob was happy.

Joshua Waits: Okay. Well, and so that's my next question. When you started attending VTS.

Jamie Samilio: I had Bob Pritchard.

Joshua Waits: And so, what was it like, even though the seminary has this policy change, what is it like? What was it like for you to be an openly gay person, person attending VTS in the late '90s, and the early 2000s?

Jamie Samilio: So it's just me. Maybe it's just me? I didn't feel any different than I feel any other time. Okay. I mean, I didn't talk about my sexuality. I didn't, other than the fact that they met Sylvia. They all seemed pretty accepting of her. But you're talking about the MACE group.

You're not talking about the mainstream seminary. You're talking about the summer program where we got together for four weeks. We all needed each other and there were 12 of us. And that's it. Okay. It wasn't integrated with the whole seminary. So it is a completely different sort of a situation.

Joshua Waits: Was there any --? Did you feel any sort of tension amongst those 12 people in the MACE group?

[Crosstalk]

Jamie Samilio: There was. I think the guy's name was Pierre. There was one guy who just seemed to have issues and super conservative or whatever. You know what? It's kind of like this. I have a set of beliefs. If I am going to follow my baptismal vows, and I am going to uphold the dignity of all people, it means that I'm going to respect you, and I'm going to respect your opinions.

It doesn't mean I'm going to like your opinions, follow your opinions. I may not even argue with you. My father taught me a long time ago. He said to me, he said, "Jamie, it is unethical to have a battle of wits with the unarmed, so just don't engage. Just don't engage, don't go. It's not worth your time."

You can say whatever you want. My tendency is you can, and you can tell me all the bad things there are about being gay. How I'm going to burn in hell. I can listen to you, and I can talk to you. You can go on and on, and wax on about it. Generally, when I've had that happen, my response has been, "Well, all sin is an abomination before God, all of it."

And the worst sin that we can possibly have is to do what the Bible tells us not to ever do, and that's to judge other people. Which you've just done, so see you in hell. And I mean it. Okay. If my human sexuality, as God created me to be, is in fact some subconscious choice that I am making, I guess I'll find out. Won't we all? But your judgment of it, I'm positive you're going to find out.

Joshua Waits: Right.

Jamie Samilio: Wow, see how I drove off the road and you had another question for me that was related, but now it's not. Go ahead. I hope you're having fun with this. Was it worth waiting for?

Joshua Waits: Yes, it was.

Jamie Samilio: You have three mis-tries.

Joshua Waits: Actually was. How was it different when you came for your Anglican Studies program?

Jamie Samilio: My goodness, so there were eight of us in the Anglican Studies program. Most, all of us had graduated from some seminary. One was a Baptist, I think. There were some Methodists. One was, just other ministers who had been ministers, actually, actively been ministers in other denominations who came to understand that the Episcopalians were actually, in fact, that we are right, and wanted to join us. Yet, this I will strike from.... Don't bother even putting it in, just strike that last line -

[Crosstalk]

Joshua Waits: Okay.

Jamie Samilio: – Whoever's listening. But no, we'd already graduated. I think most of the seminary between 20, the bulk of the students were between, what, 26 and 36 years old, the major bulk of students. The snot-nosed kids – you're going to strike that, too – that were there. Then there are some 40 and 50 years old, year-olds, and then there's us. We've already graduated. We're just there for Anglican Studies. And for two of us, we graduated from VTS.

I had to ask all kinds of questions, like, "Are you really taking me, going to make me take Church History from you?" I took Church History from you. I got an A. Do I have to really take Church History again? Don't you think it's kind of a waste to take? And it was, so I got to.... They did make some exceptions just because it's, like, okay, you got an A in Church History. No, we're not going to make you take it again. Good, because I really don't....

I'll just pull my old paper out. It's not plagiarization; if it's plagiarization, if I've already written it. So they didn't do that. It was a good program. But what was interesting is that the misunderstanding of what Anglican Studies students were. There should have been some more communication. I mean, I don't think the regular students even knew. It's just, like, "Look, there's a bunch of old people in our class now and they're only here for a year. How's that fair?"

I had a discussion with one person who is particularly picky about that, didn't quite get it; and asked me, sort of, a condescendingly one day, she said, "When you graduate with your Anglican Studies, will you have the same amount of credits as an MDiv?" I looked at her and I said, "No, no, I won't. No, I won't have as many as an MDiv, not at all. I'll have 24 more than an MDiv". Oh! It, it's, it was, like, no, we're not just there for one year, and you go out, and get to be a priest on 20 credits that you get in a year.

I already graduated. I have 60. Yeah. I'll have 84 or whatever ridiculous amount it was. You guys only need 76. Whatever the numbers were, it was half a dozen more than an MDiv. It was just really, kind of, like, "Oh." I said, "Yeah, and most of these people may have even more." One of them was a, already had their PhD. The answer was, "Yeah." And she has 125.

Joshua Waits: Yeah.

Jamie Samilio: How many? How many? How many do you need for MDiv? Yeah, now, we had 20, 30. She got 40 more than you. Yeah, but it was just so.... It seemed like such a shock to the poor thing, like, she thought we were getting some deal. It's, like, yes. It's a whole extra year after already.... We have a t-shirt, it says, "Anglican studies because graduating from seminary once is not enough." Yeah no, we do. We actually made up t-shirts and we all have one. They're purple.

Joshua Waits: That's funny.

Jamie Samilio: Yep.

Joshua Waits: So while you were attending VTS during all this time, are there any, like, key events and moments that really stand out? A lot of people talk about either.... Gene Robinson's consecration always comes up or the Obergefell ruling. Did any events come up that seemed to, sort of, shift how things were going here at the seminary?

Jamie Samilio: Actually, something happened to me when Gene Robinson got ordained. What it was, is I was working for the Diocese of Washington. They needed somebody to say something on camera, some member of the LGBTQ community, whatever, and whatever.

And so, I got asked if I wanted to take an interview with one of the news stations, being an EDOW, representative of EDOW, and a member of the LGBTQ+ community. What bothered me the most is that the "L" word appeared in front of my name. I was really ticked off.

But the part of what I said that didn't really get onto the TV was this: I said the thing that bothers me most about Gene Robinson, about the announcement that Gene Robinson has been made ordained a Bishop in the Episcopal Church, is the fact that the only question they're asking about Gene Robinson is about his human sexuality, and not about his ministry or the good that he has done in the church, and in the world.

That's the most difficult thing that I have to watch about this whole thing. It's been a long time coming. It should have happened. It's the right thing to do. But it's really disturbing that all anybody is focusing on is his human sexuality. When I was denied entrance to VTS, my mother said probably one of the more prophetic things. She asked me, she said, "Jamie, why didn't they let you into school?"

I said, "Well, mom, you have to take a psychological, you have a psychological evaluation." They asked me directly if I was a practicing homosexual and I told them that I was. I said, "And so, the people at the seminary also asked me to confirm that, and I told the truth."

I mean, my mother had always taught us, if you do something, and you lie about it, you get punished twice, once for doing it, and once for lying about it. I told the truth. She said to me, she said, "What kind of voyeuristic pervert would ask you about your sexuality? When they asked you about your sexuality, why didn't you tell them it's normal? Because it's normal for you."

I said, "You know, Mom, if I had thought about it, I would have told them. I was just, my sexuality is simply normal." I said, "I wouldn't. If they ask me again, I'll make sure to say that." I loved it. What kind of voyeuristic perverts ask you about your sexual preferences in order to get into school?

That was the question I had for VTS. What the heck are you doing asking about people's sexuality in order to allow them to be educated? Really? Especially with that etching of truths,

and the life, and the way, but as long as your paperwork's clean, and you've got cash, come on in.

Fascinating, oh, well, part of my story. I guess in some ways, I'm a visual person. I see things in pictures. This whole thing that happened with VTS, I see myself standing on top of a hill on top of the Holy Hills. It's as if I've taken a snowball, and all I did was I threw it down the hill. I hit Martha Horne, and Jane Dixon, and a few other people, and pushed it until it grew into a giant, giant, huge avalanche that, kind of, broke apart.

Whatever glass wall was there in front of the seminary, not a ceiling, but a wall, I just threw the snowball rolling down the hill. And part of it, I think, was because I didn't protest. I asked what it was that I did right. How was my application? I worked hard on it. I got a decent grade on the GRE. So I think that that was it. I don't know that this makes me patient A, but.

Joshua Waits: As long as we don't call you patient L. Well, thank you very much.

[Crosstalk]

Jamie Samilio: Are you sure? We've only been talking for an hour and 24 minutes. I mean, we could go for the next six minutes, make it even, but.

Joshua Waits: Well, I think your analogy of the snowball rolling down the hill is a wonderful way to sum up. Thank you so much for being willing to roll the snowball.

Jamie Samilio: Yep.

Joshua Waits: Thank you for taking the time to share with me your experience. Before I stop recording, is there anything else you would like to share?

Jamie Samilio: There was a lot of temptation at that time. I was very good friends with a man who had started the huge protest group in, LGBTQ protest group. It wasn't. There was no Q+ back and then. It was just the LGB, you know, that's it. He was actually in charge of rallying thousands of people to come and protest at places.

And he was talking to me. He says, "I can have 2,000 people in front of the Gates at Seminary tomorrow, if you want them." I could have actually turned that whole thing into a huge, massive incident. I had no problem with it at all. He was sitting in my living room. He was a good friend. And it was so long ago. He was actually a good friend of a friend of mine. He said, "I'd love to get my hands on that."

Like, no, no, that's not what I'm supposed to do. This isn't a fight that I'm going to fight like this. I want to go to school there. I know that I'm called to do something here. Taking up a sword is not what I'm supposed to do so I didn't. I picked up the phone and called Martha next year. So okay. May God bless and keep you in faith, and health, and love all the days of your life.

Joshua Waits: Thanks be to God.

Jamie Samilio: Amen. See ya.

Joshua Waits: See you. Thank you so much.

Jamie Samilio: Sure, it was fun.

[END OF TAPE]