

## Far Right

### EDUCATION

## Creative differences

In the space of just a few weeks, openly gay elementary school teacher Bill Rugh found himself both out of a job and without a church. Leaders at Santa Anita Wesleyan Church in El Monte, Calif., where Rugh was a lifetime member, evicted Creative Planet, his nonprofit arts organization for low-income children, from the church's property in mid November. Among the reasons: Creative Planet offered students yoga classes, which church board members said is unchristian because yoga emphasizes clearing the mind, which in turn leaves a person "too free" and thus open to evil spirits.



Rugh (back, right) leads a class in Santa Monica.

Also suddenly at issue was Rugh's sexual orientation—something Rugh said had never come up before.

For now, Creative Planet is storing its equipment at a nearby Methodist church while the staff ponders its next move. "We're getting support from the majority of parents," said Rugh, who has quit the church. "We're committed to these kids. The show will go on."