



*Supporting Lancaster's  
LGBTQ people of faith*

# LGBT Faith Resource List

## Table of Contents

<b>Biblical Interpretation Resources .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Books .....	2
DVDs .....	4
<b>Congregational Resources .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Books .....	5
Curriculum .....	6
DVDs .....	7
<b>Family and Children Resources .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Books .....	8
DVDs .....	10
Online Streaming or Download .....	10
<b>Medical / Psychological Resources.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Books .....	11
<b>Films Shown by Embrace .....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Online Resources .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Podcasts .....</b>	<b>13</b>

Embrace is an interfaith group from the Lancaster, PA, whose goal is to assist individuals, faith communities, and organizations in their growth to affirm and welcome lesbian, gay, bi-, trans-, and other queer and questioning folk.

Email: [embraceLanc@gmail.com](mailto:embraceLanc@gmail.com)

Follow Embrace Lancaster on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/groups/embraceLanc/) <http://www.facebook.com/groups/embraceLanc/>

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# Biblical Interpretation Resources

More can be found at <http://www.welcomingresources.org/bible.xml>

## Books

Bess, Howard H., **Pastor, I Am Gay**, [Palmer, Alaska: Palmer Publishing Company, 1995; 221 pp., ISBN 0964412306]. [Available on Amazon](#)

Pastor, I Am Gay is written from the perspective of an every day working pastor. Bible scholars, theologians, sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists and politicians have filled our book shelves with books about gay persons and their place in society and church. Pastor, I am Gay is unique and stands alone. Pastor Howard Bess remembers very well that he has been given the ministry of reconciliation and has been denied the option of condemnation or rejection. The story-telling style of the book makes for good reading. The reader meets a great array of real life people with whom Pastor Bess worked, once the first parishioner came to him and simply said "Pastor, I am gay." The book becomes a guide for church folk, who are looking for answers that are Biblical, thoughtful and compassionate.

Bettendorf, Craig, **A Biblical Defense Guide for Gays, Lesbians and Those Who Love Them**, [Victoria, BC: Trafford Publishing, 2006; 102 pp., ISBN 1412068258]. [Available on Amazon](#)

Oftentimes cultural prohibitions thrive unchecked by the general populace eventually entering the world of "known understanding". "It is this way because it has always been this way" becomes the reflexive response to change for the dominant culture. This was certainly the case while institutional approval of human slavery existed. It was also the case when Women sought to exert their independence grasping for equality in a male-dominated world. Throughout the past three decades, members of the Gay and Lesbian community have sought freedom from hate as well as religious and societal tolerance gaining some small degree of success. A Biblical Defense Guide was researched and ultimately authored to be used as a tool for mutual understanding. A Biblical Defense Guide will offer interesting insights to all those who seek to understand the historical, cultural, and societal prohibitions that are at work in the world today.

Borg, Marcus, **Reading the Bible Again For the First Time: Taking the Bible Seriously But Not Literally**, Reprint edition, [San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002; 336 pp., ISBN 0060609192]. [Available on Amazon](#)

One of the vital challenges facing thoughtful people today is how to read the Bible faithfully without abandoning our sense of truth and history. Reading the Bible Again for the First Time provides a much-needed solution to the problem of how to have a fully authentic yet contemporary understanding of the scriptures. Many mistakenly believe there are no choices other than fundamentalism or simply rejecting the Bible as something that can bring meaning to our lives. Answering this modern dilemma, acclaimed author Marcus Borg reveals how it is possible to reconcile the Bible with both a scientific and critical way of thinking and our deepest spiritual needs, leading to a contemporary yet grounded experience of the sacred texts.

Boswell **Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality** [University Of Chicago Press, 2005; 442pp., ISBN-10: 0226067114, ISBN-13: 978-0226067117] [Available on Amazon](#)

John Boswell's National Book Award-winning study of the history of attitudes toward homosexuality in the early Christian West was a groundbreaking work that challenged preconceptions about the Church's past relationship to its gay members—among them priests, bishops, and even saints—when it was first published twenty-five years ago. The historical breadth of Boswell's research (from the Greeks to Aquinas) and the variety of sources consulted make this one of the most extensive treatments of any single aspect of Western social history. Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality, still fiercely relevant today, helped form the disciplines of gay and gender studies, and it continues to illuminate the origins and operations of intolerance as a social force.

Helminiak, Daniel A., and John Shelby Spong, **What the Bible Really Says About Homosexuality**, [San Antonio, TX: Alamo Square Press, 2000; 148 pp., ISBN 1-886360-09-X]. [Available on Amazon](#)

Top scholars-like John Boswell, Daniel Boyarin, Bernadette Brooten, L. William Countryman, Victor P. Furnish, Saul M. Olyan and Robin Scroggs-show that those who perceive Bible passages as condemning homosexuality are being misled by faulty translation and poor interpretation. Helminiak, respected theologian and Roman Catholic priest, explains in a clear fashion the fascinating new insights of these scholars. The Bible has been used to justify slavery, inquisitions, apartheid and the subjugation of women. Now read what the Bible really says about homosexuality.

Also available in Spanish: [Lo que la Biblia realmente dice sobre la homosexualidad](#).

Lee, Justin, **Torn: Rescuing the Gospel from the Gays-vs.-Christians Debate**, [Available on Amazon](#)

In this groundbreaking book, Lee recalls the events--his coming out to his parents, his experiences with the "ex-gay" movement, and his in-depth study of the Bible--that led him, eventually, to self-acceptance.

Martin, Colby, **Unclobber**, [Available on Amazon](#)

Unclobber reexamines each of those frequently quoted passages of Scripture, alternating with author Colby Martin's own story of being fired from an evangelical megachurch when they discovered his stance on sexuality.

Michaelson, Jay, **God vs. Gay? The Religious Case for Equality**. [Boston: Beacon Press, 2011, 212 pp., ISBN 9780807001592]

Raised as a Conservative Jew who had embraced Orthodox Jewish practices, Michaelson provides an insightful look at why Jewish and Christian values support equality for sexual minorities. Moreover, he calls for a religious conversation about sexuality and the Bible . With this starting point, Michaelson examines the texts often used to exclude and oppress gays and lesbians. He argues that "in religious contexts, love tilts the balance in favor of those readings that engender more love, more holiness, and more justice." His well documented book concludes that God vs. gay is a myth.

Rogers, Jack, **Jesus, the Bible, and Homosexuality: Explode the Myths, Heal the Church**, Revised and Expanded edition, [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009; 208 pp., ISBN 066423397X]. [Available on Amazon](#).

In this revised and expanded best seller, Rogers argues for equal rights in both the church and society for lesbians, gays, bisexuals, and transgendered people. He describes how he moved away from opposition to that support, charts the church's history of using biblical passages to oppress marginalized groups, argues for a Christ-centered reading of Scripture, debunks stereotypes about gays and lesbians, and explores texts used most frequently against homosexuals and gay ordination. In this newly revised edition, he maps the recent progress of major U.S. denominations toward full equality for LGBT persons, adds a new chapter that examines how Scripture is best interpreted by Jesus' redemptive life and ministry, and updates his own efforts and experiences. The book also includes a guide for group study or personal reflection. Jack Rogers is Professor of Theology Emeritus at San Francisco Theological Seminary and Moderator of the 213th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Spong, John S., **Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism: A Bishop Rethinks the Meaning of Scripture**, [San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991; 267 pp., ISBN 0060675187]. [Available at Lancaster County Public Library](#). [Available on Amazon](#).

In this provocative best-seller, the out-spoken and controversial Bishop Spong reveals how literal interpretations of Scripture have been used to justify slavery, ban textbooks, deny the rights of gays and lesbians, subordinate women, and justify war and revenge. Spong combines current biblical scholarship, modern science, and most of all, his deep love and respect for Scripture, to lift the Bible out of the prejudices and cultural biases of bygone eras. Eloquent, forthright, and compassionate, Spong liberates the Bible's message of hope for all people.

Vines, Matthew, **God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-Sex Relationships**, [Available on Amazon](#)

Unique in its affirmation of both an orthodox faith and sexual diversity, God and the Gay Christian has sparked heated debate, sincere soul searching, and widespread cultural change on the issue of what it means to be a faithful gay Christian.

## DVDs

**A Fish Out of Water**, by Ky Dickens [2009, DVD, 60 min — Documentary] [Available on Amazon](#)

Fish out of Water tackles the seven Bible verses used to condemn homosexuality and justify marriage discrimination. This feature documentary uses humor and original animation to make a traditionally complex and controversial topic accessible to those who don't like talking about religion and sexuality.

**Anyone and everyone** <http://www.anyoneandeveryone.com/> – 2007 / 57 MINUTES [Available on Amazon](#)

"Anyone and Everyone is a moving and beautiful portrayal of the love between parents and children, and the work some parents are willing to do for the sake of that love."

--Bent Lens Cinema

"... a moving documentary of American families' most heart-wrenching and heartwarming moments."

--Keith York, KPBS Director of TV Programming

Connected by having a son or daughter who is gay, parents across the country discuss their experiences in the documentary Anyone and Everyone. In it, filmmaker Susan Polis Schutz, depicts families from all walks of life. Individuals from such diverse backgrounds as Japanese, Bolivian, and Cherokee, as well as from various religious denominations such as Mormon, Jewish, Roman Catholic, Hindu, and Southern Baptist, share intimate accounts of how their children revealed their sexual orientation and discuss their responses.

The parents also talk about struggling with the pain of their sons and daughters dealing with not being accepted by relatives or friends, and being ostracized by religious congregations.

**For the Bible Tells Me So**, by Daniel Karlake, [First Run Features, DVD, 97 min].

[Available on Amazon](#) [Available at Lancaster County Public Library](#)

Can the love between two people ever be an abomination? Is the chasm separating gays and lesbians and Christianity too wide to cross? Is the Bible an excuse to hate?

Winner of the Audience Award for Best Documentary at the Seattle International Film Festival, Dan Karlake's provocative, entertaining documentary brilliantly reconciles homosexuality and Biblical scripture, and in the process reveals that Church-sanctioned anti-gay bias is based almost solely upon a significant (and often malicious) misinterpretation of the Bible. As the film notes, most Christians live their lives today without feeling obliged to kill anyone who works on the Sabbath or eats shrimp (as a literal reading of scripture dictates).

Through the experiences of five very normal, very Christian, very American families -- including those of former House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt and Episcopalian Bishop Gene Robinson -- we discover how insightful people of faith handle the realization of having a gay child. Informed by such respected voices as Bishop Desmond Tutu, Harvard's Peter Gomes, Orthodox Rabbi Steve Greenberg and Reverend Jimmy Creech, **FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO** offers healing, clarity and understanding to anyone caught in the crosshairs of scripture and sexual identity.

Study guide is found at <http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/for-the-bible-tells-me-so-a-study-guide-and-advocacy-training-curriculum>

See <http://www.hrc.org/resources/category/religion-faith> for more information.

## Congregational Resources

More can be found at <http://www.welcomingresources.org/bible.xml>

### Books

Gaede, Beth Ann, **Congregations Talking about Homosexuality: Dialogue on a Difficult Issue** [Herndon, VA: Alban Institute, 1999; 151 pp., ISBN 1566991986]. [Available on Amazon](#)

Gaede, A pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, skillfully weaves together the stories of many congregations and how they faced and dealt with the issue of homosexuality. A helpful resource for assisting congregations that seek to engage in dialogue about one of the most difficult faith issues today, the book does not take a theological stand, but rather draws on the experiences of others who have struggled with how to address this issue from a position of respect for all views.

Hartk, Austin, **Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgendered Christians**, [Available on Amazon](#)

Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians provides access into an underrepresented and misunderstood community and will change the way readers think about transgender people, faith, and the future of Christianity. By introducing transgender issues and language and providing stories of both biblical characters and real-life narratives from transgender Christians.

Lifequest Publications **Taking a New Look: Why Congregations Need LGBT Members**

Clergy and other congregational leaders around North America are painfully aware of the risks that are involved in a congregation becoming fully welcoming and affirming of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. Much less attention has been focused on what congregations lose by not being welcoming and affirming. The reality is that a loving and accepting attitude toward LGBT people brings many blessings to a church.

Polaski, LeDayne McLeese, and Millard Eiland, editors, **Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth**,

Developed to assist clergy and lay leaders in leading a healthy and respectful congregational dialogue on the most difficult task of discernment facing the church in our time, Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth features wisdom distilled from 13 congregations who have undertaken this dialogue. Other materials include articles focused on Bible study and theological reflection, as well as scientific/medical and psychological studies. Stories from gay and lesbian Christians and their families are included, as well as from congregations who have struggled with the questions of sexual orientation and Christian faith. An extensive annotated bibliography encourages further exploration.

<http://www.bpfna.org/rdwt-pdf>

Stephens, Darryl W. **Out of Exodus: A Journey of Open and Affirming Ministry** [Available on Amazon](#)

The story of the Exodus is told in parallel with testimonies, sermons, and personal reflections from a congregation in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, challenging the reader to a journey of faith. Along the way, it becomes clear that open and affirming ministry transcends LGBTQIS+ inclusion. It is also about race relations, poverty, generational change, immigration and any other human created barrier to loving God and neighbor.

Switzer, David & Thornburg, John, **Pastoral Care of Gays, Lesbians, and Their Families** [Available on Amazon](#)

This book, written by a pastoral theologian with years of experience in counseling gay and lesbian individuals and their families, assist both pastoral caregivers and congregations in examining and enhancing their pastoral care of homosexuals and their families. This thoughtful book provides factual information, theological and biblical insight, and practical counseling skills to help congregations become caring communities for gays and lesbians.

Kreider, Roberta Showalter, **The Cost of Truth: Faith Stories of Mennonite and Brethren Leaders and Those Who Might Have Been**

Sincere followers of Jesus share their stories of personal struggle and growth. These are not evil people hell-bent on bringing havoc to other people and to the earth that God has created. They are gentle people, seeking to know God and to follow where God's Spirit leads them. These are the sons and daughters of "our" church-the offspring of the body of Christ. Please listen with compassion to the reality of their lives. [http://www.standupspeakout.com/index.php?page\\_id=348](http://www.standupspeakout.com/index.php?page_id=348)

Wink, Walter **Homosexuality and the Christian Faith: Questions of Conscience for the Churches**, [Available on Amazon](#)

Issues surrounding homosexuality threaten to divide the Christian churches and the people within them. This unique resource presents short pieces from some of the nation's most prominent church leaders - Protestant and Catholic, mainline and evangelical - who address the fundamental moral imperatives about homosexuality. Together they invite the reader to open his or her heart to the Spirit, to tolerance, and to Gospel values. Through personal testimony, factual clarification, and moral suasion, they provide much-needed clarity on the biblical witness and biblical authority, the nature or character of homosexuality and sexual orientation, and many related topics.

White, Mel, **Stranger at the Gate: To Be Gay and Christian in America** 352 pages, Plume April 1, 1995 ISBN: 0452273811 [Available at Lancaster County Public Library](#), [Available on Amazon](#)

This is the account of a deeply religious man's coming to terms with his gayness and the impact that process had on his life. A former ghostwriter for Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, Billy Graham, and other religious-right personalities, White offers a compelling story; gay readers raised in a fundamentalist Christian environment will find themselves saying, "That happened to me." Yet the book's subtitle is somewhat misleading. This is not really so much about being gay and Christian in America as it is the story of one individual's struggles. To describe what it means to be gay and Christian is truly a difficult task; perhaps there is no one concrete definition. Recommended for public, academic, and theological libraries and gay/lesbian resource centers. — Lee Arnold, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia

## Curriculum

**All in God's Family**, <http://www.welcomingresources.org/resources.htm#aigf>

- CURRICULUM: **All in God's Family: Creating Allies for Our LGBT Families**  
(from the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Institute for Welcoming Resources)
- BOOK: **Families Like Mine**  
by Abigail Garner
- VIDEO: **In My Shoes: Stories of Youth with LGBT Parents**  
(documentary by Jen Gilomen, produced by the COLAGE Youth Leadership and Action Program)
- CD-ROM: **That's So Gay: Portraits of Youth with LGBT Parents**  
(produced by the COLAGE Youth Leadership and Action Program)

**Bridging the Gap: Conversations on Befriending our Gay Neighbours**; Canada, [Available on Amazon](#)

Bridging the Gap is an interactive DVD resource especially useful for small groups. Intended to be a catalyst for courageous conversations and fearless, love-based relational engagement with gay neighbours, BTG seeks to address prevalent questions, attitudes, and hang-ups that keep Christ-followers from hanging out and being 'Jesus with skin on' for the gay people in their circle of influence.

**Building an Inclusive Church**, Institute for Welcoming Resources, <http://www.welcomingresources.org/communityorg.htm>

Perhaps you are a leader (lay or ordained) in a congregation which is considering becoming welcoming to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (lgbt) persons. Perhaps you are committed deeply to helping other congregations in your denomination become more welcoming of lgbt folks. Either scenario means that this training will be very helpful to you in honing your skills and gaining more knowledge about how to help congregations through those tough conversations toward a more fully inclusive church.

**Our Whole Lives: Lifespan Sexuality Education**, UUA & UCC, <https://www.uua.org/re/owl>

Honest, accurate information about sexuality changes lives. It dismantles stereotypes and assumptions, builds self-acceptance and self-esteem, fosters healthy relationships, improves decision making, and has the potential to save lives. For these reasons and more, we are proud to offer Our Whole Lives (OWL), a comprehensive, lifespan sexuality education curricula for use in both secular settings and faith communities. Our Whole Lives provides accurate, developmentally appropriate information for age groups from Kindergarten through adulthood.

## DVDs

**Coming out Strong**, Brethren and Mennonite Council [www.bmclgbt.org](http://www.bmclgbt.org) Overview: <https://www.bmclgbt.org/videos>

Individuals of all ages tell their story of being gay or Lesbian in Mennonite and Brethren Church Communities with many difficult and challenging experiences some staying in the church with special effects and others leaving. The stories are poignant and sometimes unusual like a father whose boys go to school and all know of the 2 fathers family and are accepted at school but not at church. These real people report on "How they did it"

**Out in the Silence**, Dean Hamer and Joseph Wilson, <http://wpsu.org/outinthesilence>

Following the story of a small American town confronting a firestorm of controversy ignited by a same-sex wedding announcement and the brutal bullying of a gay teen, this gripping documentary will challenge you to rethink your values and help close the gaps that divide our communities.

The aim of Out in the Silence is to expand public awareness about the difficulties that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people face in rural and small town America and to promote dialogue and action that will help people on all sides of the issues find common ground. Buy the DVD: [http://wpsu.org/outinthesilence/support\\_buy\\_dvd](http://wpsu.org/outinthesilence/support_buy_dvd) **(Available at the Lancaster County Public Library)**

**Testimony Time: A Positive Perspective on Homosexuality**, by Hospitality Plus Committee, [Gethsemene Lutheran Church]

Join Pastor Lowell O. Erdahl as he presents "Testimony Time! Sharing My Present Convictions Concerning a Positive Perspective on Homosexuality." Rev. Erdahl has been a strong advocate for LGBT people and their families for many years, and he brings his years of experience to this video. Also included is an introduction by Pastor Anita Hill of St. Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church (St. Paul, Minnesota). Great for congregational adult forums. Rev. Erdahl is Bishop Emeritus of the St. Paul Area Synod of the ELCA, having also served 20 years as a parish pastor and 5 years on the faculty of Luther Seminary. He also is the author and co-author of several books on love, marriage, and relationships, including Sexual Fulfillment for Single and Married, Straight and Gay, Young and Old (with Rev. Herb Chilstrom).

## Family and Children Resources

More can be found at <http://www.welcomingresources.org/bible.xml>

### Books

Aarons, Leroy, **Prayers for Bobby: A Mother's Coming to Terms with the Suicide of Her Gay Son**, [San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995; 288 pp., ISBN 0062511238], [Available on Amazon](#)

Bobby Griffith was an all-American boy... and he was gay. Faced with an irresolvable conflict - for both his family and his religion taught him that being gay was "wrong" - Bobby chose to take his own life. Prayers for Bobby, nominated for a 1996 Lambda Literary Award, is the story of the emotional journey that led Bobby to this tragic conclusion. But it is also the story of Bobby's mother, a fearful churchgoer who first prayed that her son would be "healed," then anguished over his suicide, and ultimately transformed herself into a national crusader for gay and lesbian youth. As told through Bobby's poignant journal entries and his mother's reminiscences, Prayers for Bobby is at once a moving personal story, a true profile in courage, and a call to arms to parents everywhere.

Baker Jean M., **How Homophobia Hurts Children: Nurturing Diversity at Home, at School, and in the Community**, [New York : Harrington Park Press, c2002; 224 pp., ISBN 1560231637}. [Available at Lancaster County Public Library](#)

This book illustrates the ways that children growing up to be gay are harmed by homophobia before anyone, including themselves, even knows they are gay. This compelling and sympathetic volume describes many simple ways that these children can be helped to understand that they can grow up to lead normal lives, with hopes and dreams for their futures. How Homophobia Hurts Children: Nurturing Diversity at Home, at School, and in the Community brings home the voices of these children. They describe what it was like to discover that the degrading words about homosexuals they've heard all their lives were directed at themselves. Wonderful resource for education & counseling professionals.

Bayly, Michael J., editor, **Creating Safe Environments for LGBT Students: A Catholic Schools Perspective**, [Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press, 2007; 172 pp., ISBN 156023606X], [Available on Amazon](#)

A comprehensive training guidebook for educators who are committed to diversity and the full inclusion of LGBT students in every aspect of the Catholic high school experience. Based on five years of pilot testing in Catholic schools, this unique book emphasizes safe-staff training in integrating the Church's pastoral, social, and moral dimensions with the special needs of LGBT students. The book presents strategies and resources for building safer schools, helpful materials for communicating with parents, and general guidelines for developing and maintaining professional helping relationships with LGBT students.

Bernstein, Robert, **Straight Parents, Gay Children: Keeping Families Together**, [New York: Thunder's Mouth Press, 2003; 208 pp., ISBN 1-56025-452-1], [Available on Amazon](#)

Straight Parents, Gay Children is Robert Bernstein's moving account of how he came to terms with his daughter's homosexuality and how the experience has enriched his life. Bernstein - winner of the 1996 Award for Best Scholarship on the Subject of Intolerance, awarded by the Gustaves Myers Center for the Study of Human Rights in North America - discusses the myths surrounding homosexuality, accepting the news, parents who speak out, public figures who have gay children, and more. Straight Parents, Gay Children is a survival guide for all parents who wish to help their gay children cope with the inevitable cruelty from which they cannot hide. This revised and updated edition includes an introduction by Robert MacNeil of MacNeil/Lehrer Productions and a foreword by Betty DeGeneres

Harris, Robie H., **It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing Up, Sex & Sexual Health**, 10th anniversary edition, [Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press, 2009; 93 pp., ISBN 9780763644833]. [Available at Lancaster County Public Library,](#) [Available on Amazon](#)

It's Perfectly Normal - for preteens and teens age 10 and up - provides accurate, unbiased answers to nearly every conceivable question, from conception and puberty to birth control and AIDS. This book is available in Spanish (Sexo... Que Es?) and in over twenty-five languages.

Jennings, Kevin, **Always my child : a parent's guide to understanding your gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered or questioning son or daughter**, [New York : Simon & Schuster, c2003; 323 p. ISBN 0743226496] [Available at Lancaster County Public Library,](#) [Available on Amazon](#)

The first book to focus on the day-to-day experiences of adolescents dealing with sexual identity issues, Always My Child provides the insights and practical strategies parents need to support their kids and cope themselves. Parents whose children are gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or who are going through a "questioning phase" are often in the dark about what their children face every day. As a result, offering support that will comfort and fortify them feels like solving a puzzle with missing pieces. In Always My Child, Kevin Jennings supplies the missing pieces by guiding parents through the world their child inhabits. He explains what these teens often encounter--teasing and harassment--and offers solutions for parents who want to better understand their LGBTQ children and learn how to protect their self-esteem. Always My Child makes it possible for parents to create the kind of relationship with their children that allows them to grow into emotionally healthy adults.

McDougall, Bryce, editor, **My Child Is Gay: How Parents React When They Hear the News**, [Australia: Allen & Unwin, 1998; 193 pp., ISBN 1864486589], [Available on Amazon](#)

Parents' honest and revealing responses to the news their child is gay. A must for any parent who is struggling with their feelings.

Marcus, Eric, **Is It a Choice? - 2nd edition: Answers to 300 of the Most Frequently Asked Questions About Gays and Lesbian People**, Paperback: 240 pages , HarperSanFrancisco; Revised edition (June 1, 1999) ISBN-10: 006251623x ISBN-13: 978-0062516237; Spanish version, Se elige?, [Available on Amazon](#)

There Is No Such Thing As a Stupid Question. In this newly revised edition, Eric Marcus provides insightful, no-nonsense answers to hundreds of the most commonly asked questions about homosexuality. Offering frank insight on everything you've always wanted-and needed-to know about same-gender relationships, coming out, family roles, politics, and much more.

Tigert, Leanne McCall (Editor), Brown, Timothy J. (Editor), **Coming Out Young And Faithful**, [Pilgrim Press, c2001, 142pp., ISBN 0829814140] Available at Lancaster Theological Seminary, [Available on Amazon](#)

Some live lives surrounded by love and support. Others live in constant fear of rejection and violence. Some are actively involved in their faith communities. Others have left their faith traditions behind. These are the stories of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning teenagers who describe their experiences in their communities and churches. They speak of their hurts and hopes. They speak of their vision for themselves and their church communities. The stories and information in this book, including ministry and advocacy resources, will help individuals and faith communities open doors of affirmation, love and commitment to the needs of LGBT youth and young adults.

## DVDs

**Bullied: A Student, a School and a Cast that Made History**, by TeachingTolerance, [Teaching Tolerance: A Project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, DVD and study guide, 40 min.]. [Available at Lancaster County Public Library](#)

A documentary film that chronicles one student's ordeal at the hands of anti-gay bullies and offers an inspiring message of hope to those fighting harassment today. It can become a cornerstone of anti-bullying efforts in middle and high schools.

Bullied is designed to help administrators, teachers and counselors create a safer school environment for all students, not just those who are gay and lesbian. It is also intended to help all students understand the terrible toll bullying can take on its victims, and to encourage students to stand up for their classmates who are being harassed. <http://www.tolerance.org/bullied>

**Growing up gay** Brian Mcnaught

A Middle age Man tells his story of growing up in a devout Catholic home as first child and realizing he was different and afraid of telling his devout parents that he was gay” . He says “why would any 14 yr old boy chose to be gay and have to tell his parents the worst thing they could imagine “I am gay”. He said I never chose that at all. A well delivered careful explanation to a group of adults the reality of homosexuality as realized by a 14 yr old boy

**When I Knew: A Different Beginning**, by Fenton Bailey, [HBO Documentary Films, 1:45], [Available on Amazon](#)

Alternately candid, funny, poignant and heartbreaking, When I Knew documents a cross-section of men and women of all ages and lifestyles who invoke the exact moment in their lives – whether as toddlers, grade-schoolers, teens or young adults – when they knew, once and for all, that they were gay. Inspired by the book of the same name by Robert Trachtenberg, award-winning filmmakers Fenton Bailey and Randy Barbato (The Eyes of Tammy Faye) capture a wide array of answers to the question: “When did I know?” through this inventive portrait of gay men and women, each remembering the unique experience that brought them to the conclusion that they would never be “straight.” Though some of the stories are tainted with loss, most proudly affirm that embracing one’s sexual orientation is key to being true to yourself.

## Online Streaming or Download

**A Place in the Middle, The True Meaning of Aloha**, by Dean Hamer and Joe Wilson, [Independent Lens, 0:25].

A PLACE IN THE MIDDLE is the true story of a young girl in Hawai'i who dreams of leading the boys-only hula group at her school, and a teacher who empowers her through traditional culture. This kid-friendly educational film is a great way to get youth thinking and talking about the values of diversity and inclusion, the power of knowing your heritage, and how to create a school climate of aloha – from their own point of view! The film, adapted from the PBS Independent Lens feature documentary [KUMU HINA](#), approaches diversity and cultural preservation in a kid-friendly way by telling the story through the youth's own point of view and colorful animation. <http://aplaceinthemiddle.org/>

## Medical / Psychological Resources

More can be found at <http://www.welcomingresources.org/bible.xml>

### Books

Bellis, Alice Ogden, and Terry L. Tufford, **Science, Scripture, and Homosexuality**, [Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2002; 128 pp., ISBN 082981485X], [Available on Amazon](#)

Written in a highly accessible manner, this book explains the basics of genetics and the growing evidence suggesting an organic basis for homosexuality.

Besen, Wayne R., **Anything But Straight: Unmasking the Scandals and Lies Behind the Ex-Gay Myth**, [New York: Haworth Press/Harrington Park Press, 2003; 242 pp., ISBN 1560234466], [Available on Amazon](#)

Nationally recognized activist Wayne Besen spent four years examining the phenomenon of "ex-gay" ministries and reparative therapies - interviewing leaders, attending conferences, and visiting ministries undercover as he accumulated hundreds of hours of research. The result is this groundbreaking exposé of the controversial movement that's revered by independent religious groups and reviled by gay and lesbian organizations. The book examines "ex-gay" groups such as Love in Action, Exodus International, Homosexuals Anonymous, and profiles a cast of characters that includes Pat Robertson, Rev. Jerry Falwell, "ex-gay" poster boy John Paulk, National Association of Research and Therapy of Homosexuality activist Richard Cohen, and psychiatrist Dr. Robert Spitzer.

Downs, Alan, **The Velvet Rage: Overcoming the Pain of Growing Up Gay in a Straight Man's World**, [Available on Amazon](#)

In *The Velvet Rage*, psychologist Alan Downs draws on his own struggle with shame and anger, contemporary research, and stories from his patients to passionately describe the stages of a gay man's journey out of shame and offers practical and inspired strategies to stop the cycle of avoidance and self-defeating behavior.

Hilton, Bruce, **Can Homophobia be cured? Wrestling with Questions that Challenge the Church** [Abingdon Press, 1992, 118 pp., ISBN: 0687046319]. [Available at Lancaster County Public Library](#), [Available on Amazon](#)

This is an excellent survey of the issues people in the USA raise in the church wrestling with how to treat Homosexuals. While the doctrinal examples are United Methodist, the biblical issues apply to any denomination. It reads like it comes from a newspaper columnist, which it does.

It would be a good quick read for anyone wanting to understand the history of homosexual issues in the church, the biblical references most commonly used to condemn or support homosexuality.

It also includes excerpts from the writings of prominent (and not so prominent) people who resist the churches' condemnation of homosexuals and a surprising list of prominent people throughout history known to be homosexuals.

Mondimore, Francis Mark, **A Natural History of Homosexuality** [The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1996]. [Available at Lancaster County Public Library](#), [Available on Amazon](#)

"I know of no other book that summarizes the latest research in biology and psychology as clearly and effectively" A terrible sin, A gift from the gods, a mental illness, a natural human variation---throughout history people have defined homosexuality in all of these ways. Since the word "homosexuality" was coined in 1869, scholars and scientists in a variety of fields have sought to understand same-sex intimacy. In "A Natural History of Homosexuality" psychiatrist Francis Mondimore explores the complex landscape of sexual orientation, explains how homosexuality has been understood and defined from ancient times to the present, and synthesizes the latest discoveries in biology, psychology, and anthropology.

Roberts, Matthias, **Beyond Shame: Creating a Healthy Sex Life on Your Own Terms**. [Available on Amazon](#)

We all carry sexual shame. Whether we grew up in the repressive purity culture of American Evangelical Christianity or not, we've all been taught in subtle and not-so-subtle ways that sex (outside of very specific contexts) is immoral and taboo. Psychotherapist Matthias Roberts helps readers overcome their shame around sex

## Films Shown by Embrace

**Brother Outsider: The Life of Bayard Rustin**, by Sam Pollard, Nancy Kates, and Bennett Singer [2010, 84 min- Documentary] **(Available at Lancaster County Public Library)**

2012 marks the 100th anniversary of Bayard Rustin's birth. Brother Outsider has introduced millions of viewers around the world to the life and work of Bayard Rustin—a visionary strategist and activist who has been called “the unknown hero” of the civil rights movement. A disciple of Gandhi, a mentor to Martin Luther King Jr., and the architect of the 1963 March on Washington, Rustin dared to live as an openly gay man during the fiercely homophobic 1940s, 1950s and 1960s [http://rustin.org/?page\\_id=3](http://rustin.org/?page_id=3) [Taken from the website]

**Call Me Malcolm** by Joe Parlagreco and the United Church of Christ [2005, 85 min – Documentary]

Call Me Malcolm is an amazing story of the human spirit and God's spirit, and the liberating struggle to realize and express with confidence the marvelous gift of one's truest sense of self. As Malcolm shares his own story and through the stories of others we meet, Call Me Malcolm offers us a glimpse into the real lives of real people who are transgender. <http://www.ucc.org/lgbt/callmemalcolm.html> available on Youtube at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sh4Pv10IFyc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sh4Pv10IFyc)

**Fish Can't Fly** by T. Joe Murray [2005, 93 min – Documentary] , [Available on Amazon](#)

Taking a secular point of view, the video explores the lives of gay men and women of faith as they recall their journeys to put their sexuality and spirituality in harmony. While the whole concept of changing ones' sexual orientation may be viewed with a high level of skepticism, ridicule and even humor by the larger GLBT community, these are the stories of those who have tried. Finding that their strong religious convictions and faith seemed to be used against them, these are the personal stories of people who have participated in “ex-gay” ministries and found in fact that they did not provide a “cure” .... the answers seemed to come from within.” [Taken from the website]

**A Jihad for Love**, by Parvez Sharma [2007, 81 min — Documentary ] **(Available at Lancaster County Public Library)**

From the heart of Islam, a documentary on gay, lesbian, and transgender Muslims across the world.

Trailer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=78jUBRio3So> Available from Amazon.com

**Love Free or Die**, by Sandra Itkoff and Macky Alston [2011, 83 min – Documentary] , Available on Amazon

“Love Free or Die” is about Gene Robinson, the first openly gay person to become a bishop in the historic traditions of Christendom. The documentary follows Robinson from small-town churches in the New Hampshire North Country to Washington's Lincoln Memorial to London's Lambeth Palace, as he calls for all to stand for equality – inspiring bishops, priests and ordinary folk to come out from the shadows and change history. <http://www.lovefreeordiemovie.com/>

**Out of the Box** by Louise Brooks [200?, 45 min – Documentary]

A groundbreaking documentary giving voice to the witness of transgender people of faith in the Episcopal church. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QzCANWGsEdc>

**This is What Love in Action Looks Like** by Morgan Jon Fox [2012, 73 min – Documentary]

In the summer of 2005, Zach, a 16-year-old boy from Memphis, Tennessee wrote on his MySpace blog that he had told his parents he was gay. Within days of his coming out, his mother and father would send him to Love In Action (LIA), a fundamentalist Christian program that refers to homosexuality as an addictive behavior. Zach's parents had enlisted the support of LIA's newly formed program for teens, called Refuge, with the hope that his gay “addiction” could be cured. His blog entries quickly spread from his friends, to the local community, to the nation through the internet. In a remarkably short time, daily protests were organized outside the campus of LIA. Available on [YouTube](#) and [Amazon Prime](#)

**Through My Eyes** by Gay Christian Network [2009, 45 min – Documentary]

Young Christians enter the gay debate. The video describes what they really think, how they perceive the church, and what they wish other Christians knew. The emphasis is primarily youth from evangelical Christian backgrounds. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QImNx1JA3BI>

**Trembling before G-d**, by Sandi Simcha Dubowski [2001, 80 min — Documentary ]

This award-winning documentary examines the stories of LGBT Orthodox and Hasidic Jews who struggle to reconcile their faith and their sexual orientation. Learn more about the film: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ts7bhOau0Wc>  
[Available on Amazon Prime](#)

**Wise Kids** by Stephen Cone [2011, 95 min-- fictional account] (**Available at Lancaster County Public Library**)

Three teenagers from a southern Baptist church, the radiant, redheaded Brea (Molly Kunz), the minister's daughter; the tall, skinny Tim (Tyler Ross), an aspiring filmmaker; and the intense, devout Laura (Allison Torem), whose prayers reiterate the words "amazing" and "awesome," explore issues of sexuality, a crisis of faith, and the meaning of friendship. <https://www.wolfevideo.com/products/wise-kids-the> [Also on Amazon Prime](#)

## Online Resources

We'd like to thank the **NGLTF Institute for Welcoming Resources** for much of this content.

You can access even more of their assets at: <http://www.welcomingresources.org/>

➤ Recursos en español son disponibles aquí <http://www.welcomingresources.org/espanol.xml>

**Believe Out Loud** <http://www.believeoutloud.com/> Jesus Christ called each of us to love one another. At its core, this is what Believe Out Loud is about – helping churches live out this Christian principle by becoming fully inclusive of all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

**Brethren Mennonite Council for LGBT Interests (BMC)** <http://www.bmcigbt.org> The Church of the Brethren & Mennonite Church support and advocacy group.

**GLSEN** For nearly 30 years GLSEN has been there every step of the way to ensure the rights of LGBTQ youth are protected.

<https://www.glsen.org/>

<https://www.glsen.org/activity/misgendering-and-respect-pronouns> It is important to acknowledge that transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals take a risk when coming out (through pronouns or otherwise). The video with the Australian students effectively shows how important it is to transgender and gender non-conforming individuals that people try to use their identified pronouns.

**Human Rights Campaign, Religion and Faith**, <https://www.hrc.org/explore/topic/religion-faith> The HRC Religion and Faith Program's mission is to mobilize people of faith to advocate for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender equality.

Jesus in Love Blog, LGBTQ Christian books <http://jesusinlove.blogspot.com/2016/09/basic-lgbtq-christian-books-where-to.html?m=1>

**LGBT Scholarship & Mentorship Program** <https://www.hrc.org/explore/topic/religion-faith>

Beginning in 2010, HRC launched an annual seminary scholarship and mentorship program to nurture and promote promising religious scholars and theologians interested in LGBT studies. See above link to HRC for more information.

**Silent Witness Peacekeepers Alliance** <http://www.silentwitnesspa.org/> An organization of gay and straight allies dedicated to providing a non-confrontational buffer between the LGBT (lesbian/gay/bisexual/transgender) community and those who would protest LGBT events.

**Soulforce**, <http://www.soulforce.org/> An organization devoted to changing the hearts and minds of religious leaders who engage in anti-homosexual campaigns.

## Podcasts

**Queerology** <https://matthiasroberts.com/queerology/>

How might we live better as queer people of faith and allies? Matthias brings together theologians, psychologists, poets, thinkers, and change makers for conversations around belief and being.

**Blue Babies Pink** <https://www.bluebabiespink.com/> (Podcast and Blog)

For nine years, B.T. Harman kept a secret journal of thoughts on being gay and Christian, knowing one day he'd shout the story he feared most. One Tuesday morning, he logged on Facebook and began shouting ...

**The Liturgist "Episode 20"** <https://theliturgists.com/podcast/2015/5/18/episode-20-lgbtq>

[Donald Miller](#) and [J.J. Peterson](#); [Matthew Vines](#); [Melissa Greene](#), [Stan Mitchell](#), and Tabitha from GracePointe; [Preston Sprinkle](#); and [Ed Gungor](#) join [Science Mike](#) and [Michael Gungor](#) to share their stories and perspectives on LGBTQ persons and the Church.

**Life on Side B** <https://lifeonsideb.podbean.com/>

Exploring the joy, beauty, and challenges of living in the traditional sexual ethic as LGBT+/SSA Christians.

**Revisionist History "Generous Orthodoxy"** <http://revisionisthistory.com/episodes/09-generous-orthodoxy>

Chester Wenger, the Mennonite pastor and missionary who made headlines in 2014 when he performed a same-sex wedding ceremony for his son, is featured guest on this episode of bestselling author Malcolm Gladwell's podcast