

February 21, 2001

Diocesan Parishes and Missions

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last year at our Diocesan Convention we passed Resolution #14 in which we asked the Diocese to participate in a discussion on D039, which is the resolution passed by General Convention on human sexuality. Because of the sensitivities of many, it is always a difficult task to engage in such a dialogue. From the onset we knew that flexibility in the process would be helpful. We also wanted to make the process invitational rather than mandatory. We are, after all, one church meeting in many places with a variety of needs and customs. I asked the Wellness Committee to tackle this initiative and report back to the Diocesan Council with a plan. They have faithfully fulfilled their responsibility, and for this I am very thankful.

The Council, at our last meeting, okayed the process and asked that we send it out for your use. You will find that there are three different approaches and that Eric Law's method of dialogue has been incorporated carefully. To find out more about Chuck Denison's workshop, I suggest you contact him directly at (307) 755-1000. You will also note that resources have been suggested for study. We have tried to maintain balance in the list but realize that the list is far from perfect and far from complete.

Regarding the part of the resolution that asks for feedback at our next Convention, we have thought of a couple of possibilities. One is some kind of panel forum. Another may be an open hearing where those who have engaged in the process can share their learnings and hopes. We welcome suggestions from you as we begin this phase of planning.

I do hope that those of you who choose to engage in this dialogue will be guided by prayer and that you will be blessed by a deeper experience of Christian community.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

Bruce E. Caldwell
Bishop of Wyoming

BEC:ema

**34th Annual Convention of the Diocese of Wyoming
Resolution #14**

Be it resolved that this 34th Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of Wyoming recommend that parishes and missions of the diocese take the next year to study and discuss the text of General Convention Resolution D039 using Eric Law's tools and skills for respectful dialogue; and that each parish and mission report back the substance of this process at the 35th Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of Wyoming.

Resolution D039: Human Sexuality: Issues Related to Sexuality and Relationships

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the members of the 73rd General Convention intend for this Church to provide a safe and just structure in which all can utilize their gifts and creative energies for mission, and be it further

Resolved, We acknowledge that while the issues of human sexuality are not yet resolved, there are currently couples in the Body of Christ and in the Church who are living in marriage and couples in the Body of Christ and in the Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships, and be it further

Resolved, We expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful, honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God, and be it further

Resolved, We denounce promiscuity, exploitation and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members, and be it further

Resolved, This Church intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them prayerful support, encouragement and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them, and be it further

Resolved, We acknowledge that some, acting in good conscience, who disagree with the traditional teaching of the Church on human sexuality, will act in contradiction to that position, and be it further

Resolved, That in continuity with previous actions of the General Convention of this Church, and in response to that call for dialogue by the Lambeth Conference, we affirm that those on various sides of controversial issues have a place in the Church, and we reaffirm the imperative to promote conversation between persons of differing experiences and perspectives, while acknowledging the Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage.

**Proposal for Parish Dialogue on D039 Using Eric Law's Tools and Skills
as approved by the Wyoming Diocesan Council
on February 3, 2001**

Background on Resolution #14

Our Diocesan Convention's resolution #14 reflected the mind of the Resolutions Committee after hearing testimony on Friday, September 29th, after experiencing Eric Law's spirit filled teaching, and after prayerful dialogue. The goal of the resolution is to facilitate communication among members of the body of Christ in the Diocese of Wyoming.

The Resolutions Committee presented this resolution with hopes of knitting together the Body of Christ in the face of the myriad issues around human sexuality. The Committee believed that if each congregation works with D039 using Eric Law's guidelines for respectful communication and his iceberg cultural analysis and cycle of Gospel Living the church cannot help but be enriched. Delegates to Diocesan Convention passed Resolution #14 by an overwhelming majority.

Some delegates raised a concern regarding the process for holding parish discussions on D039. There was a feeling that congregations needed resources to assist them in planning and promoting such a dialogue. Our bishop offered the services of Diocesan Council to provide such resources to help individual congregations.

Following convention, the Committee on Leadership Wellness approached the Bishop and said they would be willing to develop parish programs for dialogue. The Rev. Chuck Denison, The Rev. Robin Chance and The Rev. Mary Caucutt have prepared these program resources for parishes to use in engaging in dialogue around General Convention resolution D039. We have been in conversation with the Bishop, The Rev. Ann Fontaine, Ms. Lynne Wilson, Ms. Debbie East, Mr. Dan Clark in preparing these resources.

Parish Dialogue

Each parish will have different needs. Some congregations have a history of discussing sexuality in a church context, some do not. Some church leaders have experience in leading group dialogue on sensitive issues, some do not. Some churches have a great deal of adult education opportunities, some churches have a history of offering seasonal studies, and some congregations have little adult education experience. The Leadership Wellness Committee takes the diversity among Wyoming congregations into account in preparing resources. Some churches need less diocesan support than others. Each church will want to give its discussions a local flavor rather than submit to a one size fits all program given to them by the diocesan powers that be.

With that diversity in mind, the Leadership Wellness Committee offers congregations three different programs to choose from to engage in dialogue (encouraging congregations to mix and match to find the best local fit). Chuck has designed a day long seminar or retreat day for congregations who can best gather a group together for an all day Saturday or Sunday afternoon and evening event. Robin has created a Lenten study program, a five week class that could be offered by a congregation at a time other than Lent if necessary. Mary has worked on a program to fit into a perhaps already existing long term weekly lectionary Bible Study Group.

Each of these three options include Bible study, guidelines for respectful dialogue, iceberg cultural analysis, discussion of the gospel cycle of living, and of course the text of D039. The Bible Study in the programs will not be based in the scriptures which mention the word "homosexuality" but rather (per Eric Law's suggestion) will be more broad based and gospel centered. The guidelines for respectful dialogue will be presented in different ways and the study group given time to practice using them. Included in the respectful dialogue exercises will be the invitation method of discussion. Each study program will include some iceberg exercises for the groups to examine the range of experience and history and theological assumptions we bring to the table. Eric Law's gospel cycle of living will be introduced and each member asked to reflect on balancing the call to listen with the call to speak. And finally, we will bring the groups back time and again to the actual text of D039.

Along with the actual program suggestions, the Leadership Wellness Committee wanted to provide congregations with two additional resources. We will provide an annotated bibliography for those who wish to engage in additional individual or group study of the issues. We had also hoped that someone in the diocese would sponsor a video taped discussion among people in the diocese with different perspectives on these issues engaging one another while modeling respectful dialogue. The second resource turned out to be too difficult to create within our time constraints. We encourage congregations to invite guest speakers such as gays/lesbians or transgendered people, or parents of gay and lesbian children in to share with their group.

We present these resources with a spirit of helpfulness; please do not feel constrained by them. Use them as you see fit to aid in your congregation's dialogue on D039. The purpose of the bibliography is for use as an additional tool, and not meant to be definitive or conclusive by either the Leadership Wellness Committee or Diocesan Council. As most bibliographies are ongoing and growing in nature, please add any other useful titles to this list, and send any of the three committee members these additions for their reference list.

Rationale

In our discussions, there were some people who hoped the dialogue would be simply about exploring our personal history and experience in order to uncover hidden assumptions about sexuality, there were others who hoped the dialogue would be

based on studying scriptural references to sexuality in the Bible, there were still others who expected that the dialogues would be based in book study. The members of the Leadership Wellness Committee believe that our dialogue needs to include both scripture and human reflection upon it (i.e. experience). We agreed that inflammatory scriptural passages help no one in the current dialogue, and so will try to stay away from specific passages on homosexuality. We considered a book study and felt that many congregations wouldn't be able to support a class with homework. We hope that those whose interest is piqued will continue exploring and plan to give bibliographic resources to support that exploration.

We were concerned that there would be some voices missing from the table in our dialogue. Many churches do not have gay and lesbian members who are willing to share their perspective. Some churches may not have someone who is able to articulate clearly a more conservative sexual ethic. The bishop shared how helpful the house of bishops found a guest panel which included gay, lesbian and transgendered members, ex-gay members, and folks from all parts of the theological continuum on issues of sexuality. He wondered if having regional meetings where such a group would share might not be helpful. We agreed, but were concerned that many local people would not drive such a distance and therefore miss out altogether. We thought a video tape of such a meeting, that each congregation would have access to locally might serve us well. However, there seem to be many issues involved in making such a tape: choosing panel members, setting up discourse, finding folks with technological expertise to pull such a venture together. We on the Leadership Wellness Committee would be willing to help put such a video together but none of us has the technological expertise to accomplish it.

Resolution D039 Parish Discussion Model Weekly Lectionary Bible Study Hour Long Format

Schedule for Dialogue:

1. Opening - Introductions and Check In. Pass out Respectful Communications Guidelines. Preview Format for the hour. (10 minutes)
2. Read Sunday Gospel

By mutual invitation ask all to share what word or phrase stood out in the reading (5 minutes)

3. Read Sunday Gospel a Second Time

By mutual invitation ask all to share what the Gospel is saying to them (5 minutes)

4. Read Assigned “Resolved” from D039

Silent reflection (and writing) on Iceberg Question relating to the resolved (10 minutes)

By mutual invitation ask for sharing from Iceberg Question reflections (10 minutes)

5. Read Gospel a Third Time

In light of the discussion today share by mutual invitation what each member feels the Gospel is calling him or her to do this week (10 minutes)

For the Group Leader:

In the Episcopal Church scripture holds a place of primary authority. However, we recognize that scripture is not the only authority. The Holy Spirit speaks to us today in our lives just as the Holy Spirit inspired the authors of scripture so many years ago. Since scripture is a grounding authority for our community, each of our seven study sessions is begun and ended with scriptural reflection. It is my assumption that the gospel will speak to our discussions and am convinced that the gospel for any given Sunday will shed light on the questions with which we are wrestling. The method of Bible study I have chosen comes from In Dialogue with Scripture: An Episcopal Guide to Studying the Bible, Linda Grenz ed., 1995. It is an approach used in many churches and small groups and works particularly well for relating the passage to our lives and hearing God’s word for us today. The method is recommended for people who are unfamiliar with scripture and for groups with different levels of experience in Bible study. Feel free to modify it as makes sense for your group.

Before the first study session I encourage the Group Leader(s) to review Eric Law’s guidelines for respectful dialogue, the iceberg analysis drawing, the mutual invitation information sheet appended and the full text for D039. As the group leader it is your responsibility to assist the group in maintaining respect, openness and listening ears. As the group leader it is not your responsibility to have the answers, to resolve disagreements, or lead the group to consensus at the end of seven weeks.

When introducing this study please emphasize the ongoing nature of our dialogue. We contract for so many weeks which creates a space for grace. Encourage participants to open their listening ears to one another, at least for seven weeks. At the end of seven weeks our dialogue comes to an end at the parish level, but will continue on the diocesan level and national level and we can reopen it locally whenever we wish.

Week 1

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the members of the 73rd General Convention intend for this Church to provide a safe and just structure in which all can utilize their gifts and creative energies for mission.

Iceberg Question

Think back as far as you can. What is your earliest memory of being safe?

Observation: Who was there? What were they doing? How did that situation make you feel safe? What happened because you were safe? Did anything change?

Investigation: What did this experience teach you about what it means to be safe? What is safety? How can/does the church promote safety of this kind? In light of your experience, what would being in jeopardy look like? What would be the effects of being at risk?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience of safety? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Week 2

Resolved, We acknowledge that while the issues of human sexuality are not yet resolved, there are currently couples in the Body of Christ and in the Church who are living in marriage and couples in the Body of Christ and in the Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships

Iceberg Question

If you are married, consider your own relationship. If you are not married, choose another committed relationship you are currently involved in (does not need to be romantic in nature). Think about what is holy to you about that relationship.

Observation: What is nourishing and fulfilling about that relationship? How has that relationship been blessed and given acceptance by our society? What support does that relationship receive from people around you? What challenges exist to the continuing sanctity or holiness of that relationship?

Investigation: What has this relationship taught you about how committed relationships should be structured? How do you recognize holiness in the relationships of others? How do you think matrimony affects the presence of holiness and blessing in a relationship?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this relationship? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others has relationship instilled in you?

Week 3

Resolved, We expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God

Iceberg Question

Remember when you were a child (6-12 years old). Think of a couple whose relationship you idealized.

Observation: Who were they? In what context did you usually see them? What activities did you engage in with them. What was their relationship like? How did being around them make you feel?

Investigation: What did you learn about the roles of men and women from that relationship? What did you learn about God from that relationship?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Week 4

Resolved, We denounce promiscuity, exploitation and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members

Iceberg Question

Think of a time in your life when you have personally experienced and been affected by the ramifications of promiscuity, exploitation or abuse in a relationship.

Observation: Who was involved in the situation? You or someone close to you? How old were you when the situation occurred? What affect did it have on your life? For how long? Who else was affected?

Investigation: In what ways did your brush with exploitation in relationships shape your

perception of power and authority? Sexual morality? The church's role in relationships?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Week 5

Resolved, This Church intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them

Iceberg Question

Think of a time in your life (as a child or as an adult) when you faced a difficult challenge and you were helped by a faith community.

Observation: Who was involved? What did they do or say? How did you feel? Did their words/actions make a difference in your situation? If so, what and how?

Investigation: In what ways did this experience of being prayerfully supported or encouraged in a time of trouble shape your perception and expectations of hospitality, of accountability?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Week 6

Resolved, We acknowledge that some, acting in good conscience, who disagree with the traditional teaching of the Church on human sexuality, will act in contradiction to that position

Iceberg Question

Picture yourself as a teenager (13-17 years old). Remember a family rule that you violated.

Observation: What was the rule that you did not follow? Was the norm spoken or

unspoken? Why did you choose not to follow that family practice? What happened as a result? To you? To your family?

Investigation: In what ways has the experience of breaking a family rule and its consequences (good and bad) affected your perspective on those who do not “follow the rules” in the church family? What does your experience teach you about how the church might respond to diversity in interpreting the traditional teachings on human sexuality?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Week 7

Resolved, That in continuity with previous actions of the General Convention of this church, and in response to the call for dialogue by the Lambeth Conference, we affirm that those on various sides of controversial issues have a place in the Church, and we reaffirm the imperative to promote conversation between persons of differing experiences and perspectives, while acknowledging the Church’s teaching on the sanctity of marriage.

Iceberg Question

Picture yourself as a child (6-12 years old). Recall a scene when there was a conflict in your family.

Observation: Who was involved? If the conflict was expressed, how did the scene play out? If the conflict wasn’t expressed (stayed below the surface), how did the scene play out? What happened to the disagreeing parties? Was the conflict resolved? How?

Investigation: What did your family conflicts teach you about power and authority, who has it... how it is exercised? About dissent and expressing disagreement? About living with those disagreements? About what constitutes a resolution? About the urgency and need for resolutions?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Five Week Lenten Bible Study With Reference to Resolution D039 Hour Long Format

Schedule for Dialogue:

1. Opening - Introductions and Check In. Pass out Respectful Communications Guidelines. Preview Format for the hour. (10 minutes)

2. Read Gospel for the appropriate Sunday in Lent (Years A, B, or C).
By mutual invitation ask everyone to share what the Gospel is saying to them. (10 minutes)

3. Read Assigned "Resolved" from D039.
Silent reflection (and writing) on Iceberg Question relating to the resolved. (10 minutes)

By mutual invitation ask for sharing from Iceberg Question reflections. (10 minutes)

4. Basing the following "Fourth Day Cursillo Questions" on the Iceberg Question, silently reflect and share by mutual invitation. (10 minutes)

Piety - During this experience, what was your moment closest to Christ?

Study - Upon reflection from this experience, what have you done to understand the gift of God and to form your mind after the mind of Christ?

Action - In terms of your plan, what apostolic success did the Lord accomplish through you, and how are you planning to follow up, if necessary?

For the Group Leader:

The format for the Lenten Study is very similar to the "Weekly Lectionary Bible Study" written by Mary Caucutt. Please read her background information for group leaders.

The changes that you will find in the Lenten Study are: 1) That Cursillo questions based upon Piety, Study, and Action are included at the end, and 2) That D039's "Resolved" are based upon the themes of the Lenten readings, and do not follow the same sequence as originally intended in D039.

For those that are familiar with the Cursillo format of reflection, the questions surrounding Piety, Study, and Action are included to provide an area of comfort; also, this Lenten study could be used for Cursillo groups, in place of their regular Bible study. For those unfamiliar with Cursillo reflection, this is a way to introduce them to that

method; or, those particular questions can be completely disregarded from the "Schedule for Dialogue," still leaving an intact Bible Study and Dialogue with which to work.

First Sunday in Lent
Year A - Matthew 4:1-11 Year B - Mark 1:9-13 Year C - Luke 4:1-13

Resolved, the House of Bishops concurring, That the members of the 73rd General Convention intend for this Church to provide a safe and just structure in which all can utilize their gifts and creative energies for mission.

Iceberg Question

Think back to a time in your childhood when you were unexpectedly alone and feeling unsafe for a short period of time.

Observation: What were the circumstances in which this occurred? How did you initially feel? Were you tempted to do anything unusual during this time alone... if so, what? With what inner guidance did you provide for yourself to relieve any fear or anxiety?

Investigation: What did this experience teach you about being alone (in the wilderness)? How did it feel to be temporarily without a safe family structure? What did you learn about yourself in implementing creative energies to find your way through the loneliness?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Piety: During this experience, what was your moment closest to Christ?

Study: Upon reflection from this experience, what have you done to understand the gift of God and to form your mind after Christ?

Action: In terms of your plan, what apostolic success did the Lord accomplish through you, and how are you planning to follow up, if necessary?

Second Sunday in Lent

Year A - John 3:1-17

Year B - Mark 8:31-38

Year C - Luke 13 (22-30) 31-35

Resolved, We acknowledge that some, acting in good conscience, who disagree with the traditional teaching of the Church on human sexuality, will act in contradiction to that position, and be it further

Resolved, that in continuity with previous actions of the General Convention of this Church, and in response to the call for dialogue by the Lambeth Conference, we affirm that those on various sides of controversial issues have a place in the Church, and we reaffirm the imperative to promote conversation between persons of differing experiences and perspectives, while acknowledging the Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage.

Iceberg Question

Think back to a time in your childhood or youth when you had an adamant disagreement with the status quo, preferably other than family issues.

Observations: What precipitated, or led up to, the disagreement? With whom did you disagree? What, if any, institutional structures did you have to go through in order to seek a resolution... and what steps were taken? How was the issue resolved?

Investigation: What did this teach you about authority? What did you learn about yourself? What values did you present to the opposing party in appealing your case? What values did they present to you? Why was the disagreement important to you?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Piety: During this experience, what was your moment closest to Christ?

Study: Upon reflection from this experience, what have you done to understand the gift of God and to form your mind after the mind of Christ?

Action: In terms of your plan, what apostolic success did the Lord accomplish through you, and how are you planning to follow up, if necessary.

Third Sunday in Lent
Year A - John 4:5-26 (27-38) 39-42 Year B - John 2:13-22
Year C - Luke 13:1-9

Resolved, We acknowledge that while the issues of human sexuality are not yet resolved, there are currently couples in the Body of Christ and in the Church who are living in marriage and couples in the Body of Christ and in the Church who are living in other life-long committed relationships, and be it further

Resolved, We expect such relationships will be characterized by fidelity, monogamy, mutual affection and respect, careful honest communication, and the holy love which enables those in such relationships to see in each other the image of God

Iceberg Question

Think of a special relationship that you have, or have had, with someone other than a dating or marriage relationship, i.e., friend, original family member, extended family member, a person at work, etc.

Observation: Who is/was this person, and how did you originally meet him/her? What was the initial basis of your relationship? How did that relationship evolve? What feelings did you have toward this person? If the relationship has ended, how did you feel during that time?

Investigation: What values did you bring to the relationship? What values did the other person bring to the relationship? What did you learn about yourself from this relationship? What did you learn about the other person from this relationship? What did you learn about God from this relationship?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Piety: During this experience, what was your moment closest to Christ?

Study: Upon reflection from this experience, what have you done to understand the gift of God and to form your mind after the mind of Christ?

Action: In terms of your plan, what apostolic success did the Lord accomplish through you, and how are you planning to follow up, if necessary?

Fourth Sunday in Lent
Year A - John 9:1-13 (14-27) 28-38 Year B - John 6:4-15
Year C - Luke 15:11-32

Resolved, This Church intends to hold all its members accountable to these values, and will provide for them the prayerful support, encouragement and pastoral care necessary to live faithfully by them

Iceberg Question

Think of a physical, emotional, or spiritual challenge you have experienced in your lifetime.

Observation: What circumstances surrounded this challenge? Who else was involved in the situation as antagonists or protagonists? How did each of these antagonists or protagonists provide you with the impetus to make healthy decisions?

Investigation: What surprised you about other people's reactions to your situation? What surprised you about your own reactions to your situation? To whom did you turn for support... and why?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Piety: During this experience, what was your moment closest to Christ?

Study: Upon reflection from this experience, what have you done to understand the gift of God and to form your mind after the mind of Christ?

Action: In terms of your plan, what apostolic success did the Lord accomplish through you, and how are you planning to follow up, if necessary?

Fifth Sunday in Lent

Year A - John 11:(1-16) 17-44 Year B - John 12:20-33 Year C - Luke 20:9-19

Resolved, We denounce promiscuity, exploitation and abusiveness in the relationships of any of our members

Iceberg Question

Think of a time in your life when you were affected by the physical death of a loved one, or the emotional and/or spiritual death of a relationship?

Observation: What events immediately preceded the death that you still remember quite vividly? What were you feeling? What actions of others simplified or complicated your own emotions or actions?

Investigation: How did you find the actions of others to be detrimental to your own grieving process? Were any of these actions exceedingly demanding... how? What values were conflicting? What/who helped the most in your grieving process... and why?

Interpretation: What did you learn from reflecting on this experience? Explicitly? Implicitly? What value, belief, attitude and assumption about others did this experience instill in you?

Piety: During this experience, what was your moment closest to Christ?

Study: Upon reflection from this experience, what have you done to understand the gift of God and to form your mind after the mind of Christ?

Action: In terms of your plan, what apostolic success did the Lord accomplish through you, and how are you planning to follow up, if necessary?

Appendix 1 - a copy of Respectful Communication Guidelines.

Appendix 2 - a copy of Iceberg Analogy of Culture.

Appendix 3 - a copy of Mutual Invitation.

RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION GUIDELINES

R = take RESPONSIBILITY for what you say
and feel without blaming others

E = use EMPATHETIC listening

S = be SENSITIVE to differences in communication
styles

P = PONDER on what you hear and feel before
you speak

E = EXAMINE your own assumptions and perceptions

C = keep CONFIDENTIALITY

T = TOLERATE ambiguity because we are NOT
here to debate who is right or wrong

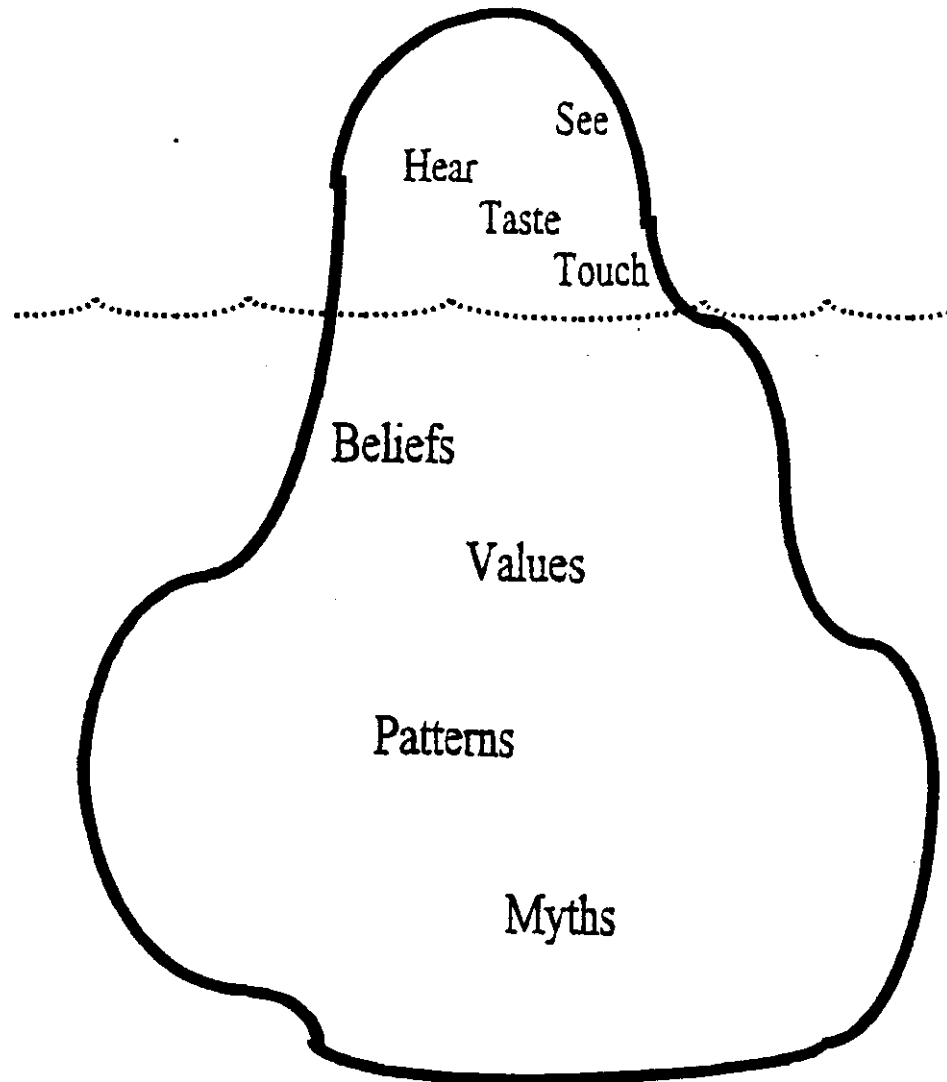
ICEBERG ANALOGY OF CULTURE

EXTERNAL CULTURES

- Explicitly Learned
- Conscious
- Easily Changed
- Objective Knowledge

INTERNAL CULTURES

- Implicitly Learned
- Unconscious
- Difficult to Change
- Subjective Knowledge



Modified from: Gary R. Weaver. "Understanding and Coping with Cross-Cultural Adjustment Stress."

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Mutual Invitation

Objectives:	To facilitate sharing and discussion in a multi-cultural group.
Type of Group:	Any
Size of Group:	under 15
Setting:	Participant should sit in a circle
Materials:	Newsprint and markers
Time Required:	Depending on the size of the group. A good way to tell how much time will be required for each round of sharing is to multiple the number of participants by 5 minutes.

How to Proceed:

- A. Let participants know how much time is put aside for this process.
- B. Introduce the topic to be discussed, information to be gathered or questions(s) to be answered. Write this on a newsprint and put up on wall so that all can see it.
- C. Introduce the process by reading the following instruction:
*In order to ensure that everyone, who wants to share, the opportunity to speak, we will proceed in the following way:
The leader or designated person will share first. After that person has spoken, he or she then invites another to share. Who you invite does not need to be the person next to you. After the next person has spoken, that person is given the privilege of invite another to share. If you don't want to say anything, simply say "pass" and proceed to invite another to share. We will do this until everyone has been invited.*

If this is the first time you use this with the groups, it could be very awkward at first. The tendency is to give up on the process and go back to the whoever-wants-to-talk-can-talk away. If you are persistent in using this process every time you facilitate a gathering, the group will eventually get used to it and would have great fun with it. A good way to ensure that the process would go well the first time is to make sure there are a couple of people in the group who had done this before. As you begin the process, invite them first.

Problems to Anticipate:

This process addresses the difference in the perception of personal power among the participants. Some people will be eager for their turns, others will be reluctant to speak when they are invited. If a person speaks very briefly and then does not or forgets to invite the next person, do not invite for him/her. Simply point out that this person has the privilege to invite the next person to speak. This is especially important if a person "passes." By ensuring that this person still has the privilege to invite, you affirm and value that person independent of that person's verbal ability.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES FOR DIALOGUE ON D039

Personal Histories

Friends & Family: True Stories of Gay America's Straight Allies by Dan Woog Alyson

A collection of true stories of parents and friends of Lesbians and Gay men who are doing remarkable things within and for the Gay rights movement. (D. Clark)

The Truth Shall Set You Free: A Memoir by Sally Lowe Whitehead

A newspaper columnist describes her lifelong search for spiritual faith, her discovery after twenty-one years of marriage and six sons that her husband was Gay, the struggle to accept the truth, and her coming to a joyous new vision of God and family.(D. Clark)

Deborah Kolodny's [Editor] Blessed Bi Spirit (Continuum). (A. Fontaine)

Where Does a Mother Go to Resign? by Barbara E. Johnson

Barbara Johnson is the Founder of Spatula Ministries, a non-profit organization designed to "...peel parents off the ceiling with a spatula of love and begin them on the road to recovery." She is a best selling author, humorist, and much sought-after conference speaker. *Where Does a Mother Go to Resign?* is the original story of how Barbara Johnson faced, as a wife and mother, the crippling of her husband, the deaths of two sons, and the homosexuality of a third who disappeared into the gay lifestyle for over eleven years. (D. Clark)

Both Feet Firmly Planted in Midair: My Spiritual Journey by John McNeill

John McNeill, a gay-and-proud Christian scholar, who made history with his landmark 1976 book "The Church and the Homosexual." "Both Feet Firmly Planted in Midair" is McNeill's autobiography. (D. Clark)

Stranger at the Gate by Rev. Mel White

Mel White, an evangelical minister and former ghostwriter for Jerry Falwell, Pat Robertson, and other prominent leaders of the religious right, here describes his half-century-long struggle to accept himself as a gay Christian. Deeply angered by the recent gay-bashing tactics of his former clients, White says he could stand to ``be a ghost no longer"; after years in the closet, writing for others, he finally had to tell his own story. (D. Clark)

Am I Blue? Coming Out From the Silence by Ed. Marion Dane

This book is a great collection of stories. Some funny, some serious, all are about GLBT young adults. This collection teaches us that we are all human and share all the same thoughts, gay or straight. (D. Clark)

Growing Up Gay/Growing Up Lesbian: A Literary Anthology by Bennett L. Singer, editor

This anthology, combines famous writers' pieces on growing up gay or lesbian with writings by young adults. It includes a variety of writing styles -- short stories, poems, essays -- and a healthy diversity of authors. It comes highly recommended for anyone going through the coming-out process, as well as family members and others interested in gay/lesbian/ bisexual issues. (D. Clark)

Family Outing by Chastity Bono

The author tells her story of coming out to herself and her family, and interviews several other gay and lesbian persons and their families, as well as her mother. This book provides an understanding of the diverse ways in which gay and lesbian individuals and their families deal with issues relating to the coming out process. (R. Chance)

For Parents/Friends/Families of Gays and Lesbians

Trans Forming Families: Real Stories About Transgendered Loved Ones, Mary Boenke, editor, 1999. Available from Mary Boenke, 180 Bailey Blvd., Hardy, VA 24101. \$13.95 includes shipping & handling. For more info call 540-890-3957.

A compilation of stories and includes a glossary and resource lists. (A. Fontaine)

Understanding Sexual Identity: A Book for Gay and Lesbian Teens by Janice Rench

A straightforward, no-nonsense approach to help young people understand others who may be different from themselves. Questions and answers provide general information about relationships, health, religion, and homophobic behavior. Throughout, the tone is nonjudgmental and open, but never graphic. (D. Clark)

Now That You Know: A Parents' Guide to Understanding their Gay and Lesbian Children. Fairchild, Betty and Nancy Hayward, 3rd edition (Harvest Books, 1998).

Recommended as a pastoral resource by the folks at the Integrity booth at General Convention 2000. (M. Caucutt)

Pastor, I Am Gay by Rev. Howard H. Bess

This book takes problems experienced by the gay men and lesbians the author has known with appropriate seriousness, yet he is discerning in distinguishing between problems that relate to their humanness and those that relate to their sexuality. This book can be a wonderful focus for adult study groups in churches, for gay men and lesbians, for families dealing with a loved one having "come out" and for anyone with a curiosity about the subject. (D. Clark)

Someone I Love Is Gay : How Family & Friends Can Respond by Anita Worthen, Bob Davies

From her heart Anita Worthen writes this practical and compassionate book that is a "must" for any parent reeling from the news that their son or daughter is gay. Reading this book is often the very first time that a parent or a family member discovers that they are not alone, that others have been there too, and that what they are feeling is normal.

Free Your Mind : The Book for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Youth--And Their Allies

by Ellen Bass, Kate Kaufman

Perhaps the most comprehensive resource available for gay and lesbian young people - and those that want to give them support. It offers practical advice not only for youth, but also gives space to parents, educators, and other adults who want to lend support to bisexual, gay, and lesbian youth. It features personal comments from teens who have been there/done that. This book can help young people accept themselves, make rational decisions on coming out, and deal with parents, friends, faith and religion, and many other topics... and serve as a primer for those adults who would like to help gay teens, but aren't quite sure how to go about it. (D. Clark)

Coming Out to God: Prayers for Lesbians and Gay Men, Their Families and Friends by Chris Glaser

This is an excellent prayer guide and most find it to be very user friendly. Its not focused on any particular issue (e.g. AIDS or "coming out"). It tends to be mainstream Protestant in content. Can be used to assist in your daily meditations.(D. Clark)

There's Something I've Been Meaning to Tell You by Lorelee MacPike (ed.)

How do people come out of the closet to their families and their own children? These true stories of Lesbian and Gay parents opening up with their children are both heartbreaking and heartwarming, but above all, they are honest. The stories explore such questions as How does one begin? Why do some children react well while others never accept the truth? Why do these parents feel they must risk changing their child's world by telling them? For anyone sensitive to the dilemma of explaining a socially difficult subject to a child, this is an excellent book. (D. Clark)

When Someone You Know Is Gay by Susan and Daniel Cohan

A guide to understanding homosexuality describes what it means to be homosexual, encourages readers to examine their own prejudices, and helps them sort out their mixed feelings on the issue. (D. Clark)

Church Study Resources

The Bush was Blazing but not Consumed. Eric H. F. Law (Chalice Press, 1996)

The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb. Eric H. F. Law (Chalice Press, 1997)

Eric Law's theory for creating a milieu which supports multi-cultural community. Even if a congregation considers

itself a single culture, this book can offer helpful resources to bridge gaps that arise over generational, gender or issue differences. (M. Caucutt)

Inclusion: Making Room for Grace. Eric H. F. Law (Chalice Press, 2000)

This book contains background and Gospel basis for guidelines for respectful dialogue. Also includes chapters on creating room for grace in dialogue in congregations around sensitive issues. Appendices offer a range of group study options. (M. Caucutt)

Continuing the Dialogue: A Pastoral Study Document of the House of Bishops to the Church as the Church Considers Issues of Human Sexuality. (Forward Movement Publications, 1995). A 120 page book which includes sections on the history of the sexuality debate in the Episcopal Church, interpreting scripture, theology of marriage, theology of those living outside the covenant of marriage and issues around sexual violence. The book also includes a study guide for congregations. (M. Caucutt)

"Spiritual Direction and the Gay Person" by James L. Empereur, S.J. (A. Fontaine)

Homosexuality and Ethics. Batchelor, Edward ed. (Pilgrim Press, 1982)

Writings from theologians, Thomas Aquinas to the British Friends, on the subject of homosexuality. Presents ethical arguments from a variety of vantage points - all Jewish or Christian. (M. Caucutt)

Our Selves, Our Souls and Bodies: Sexuality and the Household of God. Charles Hefling ed. (Cowley Publications, 1996)

A series of thoughtful essays which address but do not attempt to answer definitively the many dimensions of the church's current debate over human sexuality. Each essay stands on its own as a personal reflection from a particular perspective. Taken together they offer a variety of views and voices. (M. Caucutt)

What Christians Think about Homosexuality, by L. R. Holben

This is an excellent resource book. In six chapters it covers a continuum of viewpoints on homosexuality, from far right to far left--while endorsing none. It will be extremely valuable to anyone who wants to understand the theological perspectives of those who agree OR disagree with them on this issue. It can be used as a tool to open doors to dialogue. The book is thorough, well-researched, and beautifully written. It's a real find for serious, committed Christians of all stripes who want to deal with this issue.

(D. Clark)

Is the Homosexual My Neighbor? A Positive Christian Response. Letha Scanzoni and Virginia R. Mollenkott

Overall, the book is informative, spiritually and mentally, about homosexuality. It shows that one's sexuality and one's walk with Christ need not be mutually exclusive, and in many cases, CANNOT be mutually exclusive. For homosexual Christians, the book shows the unconditional love of Christ, regardless of sexuality. For non-homosexual Christians, the book is an inspiration on how they should "love" all their brothers and sisters in Christ, regardless of sexuality. (D. Clark)

Congregations Talking about Homosexuality: Dialogue On A Difficult Issue by Beth Ann Gaede (ed.)

Skillfully weaves together the stories of many congregations and how they faced and dealt with the issue of homosexuality. The book is a helpful resource for assisting congregations that need to engage in dialogue about one of the most difficult faith issues today. (D. Clark)

Claiming the Promise Bible Study: An Ecumenical Welcoming Bible Study Resource on Homosexuality Produced by United Methodist News Service, official news agency of the United Methodist Church. CONTACT: Linda Bloom

Claiming the Promise is a ground-breaking, new curriculum on the Bible and homosexuality.

Examines biblical references to same-sex conduct in light of the broader biblical message which affirms we are children or heirs of the Promise. Explores biblical authority and biblical interpretation. Discusses "gracious hospitality," "gift-ed sexuality," and "inclusive holiness." Tackles hard questions of "right relationship," lust/love, and sexual responsibility. Curriculum includes both a study book and leader's guide and can be used for group or individual study. Planned for seven one- to two-hour sessions. (D. Clark)

Claiming the Promise can now be purchased from Integrity using the order form at

<<http://www.integrityusa.org/claimingthepromise/>>

The cost is \$9.95 for the leader's guide and \$5.95 for each participant study book. (A. Fontaine)

Can Homophobia Be Cured? Wrestling with Questions that Challenge the Church by Bruce Hilton.

This is an excellent survey (118 pages) of the issues people in the USA raise in the church's 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. (D. Clark)

Marriage After Modernity: Christian Marriage in Post Modern Times Adrian Thatcher (New York University Press, 1999).

This book offers new hope for Christian marriage at a time of unprecedented social and theological change. It provides an unreserved commendation of Christian marriage, reaffirming its status as a sacrament and institution of mutual self-giving. At the same time, it breaks new ground. It draws on earlier traditions of betrothal and informal marriage to accept some forms of pre-marital cohabitation and provides a new defense of the link between marriage and procreation by sketching a theology of liberation for children. Chapters shed new light on divorce and legitimate theological grounds for 'the parting of the ways,' contraception, and the question of whether marriage is a heterosexual institution. Particular attention is paid throughout the book to overcoming the androcentric bias of much Christian thought and the distorting effect it has had on marriage. Marriage After Modernity argues for a vision of marriage which does not abandon its history, and which draws upon its premodern roots to grapple with our current social, cultural, and intellectual upheavals.

Adrian Thatcher is Professor of Applied Theology at the University College of St. Mark and St. John in Plymouth, England. (M. Caucutt)

Scripture

Scripture & Homosexuality, by Marion L. Soards

For those looking for a contemporary study of the church's encounter with homosexuality, this is one of the best. It offers a thorough analysis of relevant Biblical passages, examining them in the light of church history and tradition. The author is compassionate and thoroughly orthodox, generally reflecting a reformed tradition. (D. Clark)

Homosexuality: Contemporary Claims Examined in Light of the Bible and Other Ancient Literature and Law by James B. DeYoung.

A balance between explaining his concepts of exegesis and what he believes versus current gay-affirming viewpoints and beliefs he disputes. (A. Fontaine)

The Women's Bible Commentary. Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H Ringe, eds.

Has commentary on all texts relating to homosexuality in the Bible, just look up the passage about which you have questions. (R. Johnson)

The Moral Teaching of Paul, Victor Furnish (Abingdon, 1979)

This book covers the range of Paul's writings on sexual ethics, not restricted to passages dealing with homosexuality, or homosexual behavior. I have found the perspectives presented to be useful for parishioners struggling with a range of issues. (M. Caucutt)

The New Testament and Homosexuality. Robin Scroggs

If you think that the reason Christians should oppose homosexuality is "because the Bible says it's wrong" then, you should buy this book. One of my seminary professors recommended this book to me while I was an M.Div. student, and I have recommended it to many others since. Scroggs does an excellent job of introducing the reader to basic principles of biblical interpretation and then applying those principles to the (very few) verses that seem to address homosexuality. (D. Clark)

What the Bible Really Says About Homosexuality. Daniel A. Helminiak

Homosexuality is one of those topics that tears apart individuals and communities when discussed without sensitivity and insight. This little volume goes a long way in demonstrating that, theologically

speaking, the topic is not as clear-cut as many fundamentalists would have us believe. If you are a Christian struggling with this issue in your own life, or if you know those who are struggling, this book will be an invaluable aid to you. (D. Clark)

For the Gay/Lesbian person who seeks to change his/her sexuality

(note: the American Medical Association, American Psychiatric Association, American Psychological Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Counseling Association and National Association of Social Workers have issued statements which oppose or are critical of therapies focused on attempts to change sexual orientation)

The Truth About Homosexuality : The Cry of the Faithful, by John F. Harvey

A presentation of orthodox Catholic teaching on homosexuality and suggestions for pastoral outreach. The author is the founder of Courage, an organization for homosexuals who accept the challenge to live according to Gospel values. (D. Clark)

Desires in Conflict, by Joe Dallas

Joe Dallas has been through it all and is able to speak not only from a strong Biblical and psychological knowledge base, but also from personal experience. Conversationally written directly to the Christian struggling with homosexuality, this book gives powerful encouragement and practical advice. He covers the range of aspects of the religious and psychological processes of growth and change. It's easy to read, but may be emotionally and spiritually challenging. This book can also be a resource for parents, family members, and church members who seek to understand how they can help the struggler. (D. Clark)

Coming Out of Homosexuality : New Freedom for Men & Women, by Bob Davies, Lori Rentzel

This book is biblically based and gives an in depth explanation on the causes of homosexuality. For those of who feel split apart by a disconnect between Christianity and homosexual feelings, this book gives practical advice on how to cope and overcome. (D. Clark)

Homosexuality: A New Christian Ethic by Elizabeth R. Moberly

The author, a research psychologist, formerly at Cambridge, presents a theory of homosexual root causes. She describes homosexuality as coming out of unmet needs and detachment from the same-sex parent, a description of root causes that opens the way to changing sexual orientation. (D. Clark)

My Genes Made Me Do It! by Neal and Briar Whitehead

The book, written by a journalist and a research scientist with a Ph.D. in biochemistry concludes that a close, careful examination of the scientific evidence does not support current views that homosexuality is genetic, intrinsic or fixed.(D. Clark)

Crisis in Ministry: Wesleyan Response to the Gay Right Movement by Robert L. Kuyper

This book, written by the founder of Transforming Congregations in the United Methodist Church, offers a presentation of how Methodists who are true to orthodox Christianity and Wesleyan traditions can effectively address homosexuality-offering both the doctrinal truth and compassionate help. A very helpful book for helping people in any denomination. (D. Clark)

Setting Love in Order : Hope and Healing for the Homosexual by Mario Bergner

To anybody who identifies themselves as a homosexual and is looking to change his or her orientation, this book offers loving, compassionate advice that centers on a relationship with Jesus. It describes how to walk with the spirit and how to open yourself to Jesus and his wonderful forgiving love. (D. Clark)

Welcoming but Not Affirming : An Evangelical Response to Homosexuality by Stanley J. Grenz

A sane, moderate, compelling voice taking the "traditional" (but not reactionary) viewpoint, that homosexuality can be compassionately discussed and homosexual persons compassionately ministered to, without wholesale affirmation of their orientation and behavior as God's will for their lives. (D. Clark)

Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth, by Jeffrey Satinover

A sampling of opinions with regard to the causes of homosexuality yields varied results. Opinions in a large

percentage of cases are shaped not by individual research or study but by the dogma of the "Politically Correct". Dr. Satinover's book puts forth in plain language, supported by assiduous research and reasoned conclusions based on that research, the facts being obscured by proponents of homosexuality. (D. Clark)

The Broken Image : Restoring Personal Wholeness Through Healing Prayer, by Leanne Payne
Payne brings the essential elements of healing prayer ministry into focus within the context of sexual woundedness and the homosexual struggle. Case studies show the dynamic results of prayer as well as examine the psychological, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of the issue at hand. (D. Clark)

Straight & Narrow? : Compassion & Clarity in the Homosexuality Debate, by Thomas E. Schmidt

Writing with Christian perspective and empathy, Schmidt addresses all the main points of the current debate-- what the Bible really says and means about homosexuality; the health effects of homosexual behavior; whether or not people are born with homosexual orientations; and the cogency of recent pro-gay reconstructions of history. This book is the most comprehensive and readable Christian book on the subject. (D. Clark)

WEB BASED RESOURCES

Integrity <http://www.integrityusa.org/>

Integrity is a nonprofit organization of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered Episcopalians and their straight friends. For over 25 years, since being founded by Dr. Louie Crew in rural Georgia, Integrity has been the leading grassroots voice for the full inclusion of homosexual persons in the Episcopal Church and equal access to its rites. However, advocacy is only one facet of the ministry. In over 60 chapters in the United States the primary activities are:

- Worship in a supportive environment
- Emotional support and counseling
- Spiritual nourishment and Christian education
- Service to the church, and
- Outreach to the gay/lesbian community

(D. Clark)

The Oasis <http://www.dioceseofnewark.org/theoasis/>

This site highlights the ministry of cultural and racial diversity in the Episcopal Diocese of Newark with all who experience prejudice and oppression because of their sexual orientation, as well as their families and friends, offering reconciliation, education, liberation and hope to all who seek sanctuary, empowerment, justice and peace.

- Founded on our Baptismal Covenant
- Claiming the Gospel promise of liberation
- In solidarity with the prophetic witness of scripture
- Embodied in justice, hospitality and love

(D. Clark)

Into His Own <http://religion.rutgers.edu/iho/>

Into His Own is designed as a tool for the historical study of Christian scriptures. Since the works in the New Testament were composed in implicit & often explicit dialog with first century champions of Jewish tradition, the bulk of the passages included here have been excerpted from works written by Jewish authors, especially those composed after the Hebrew scriptures that can be found in any Christian "Old Testament." But there are also selections from non-Jewish sources that help bring the writings of Christian authors into a clearer cultural perspective. (D. Clark)

Resources for the parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered youth

<http://www.pe.net/~bidstrup/parents.htm>

A user friendly site that uses a question and answer format to deal with a wide range of issues facing families with homosexual children (D. Clark)

Christian Resources about Homosexuality and AIDS

<http://www.messiah.edu/hpages/facstaff/chase/h/index.htm>

Here is Christian help for people who are dealing with homosexuality, their families, and their friends. We provide the names of people who can help. We provide references to books and articles that can help. As we have permission, we provide the full text of articles. We provide testimonies. An apologetics section provides a Christian response to common questions asked about homosexuality. (D. Clark)

Transformation Christian Ministries <http://www.tcmnj.org/>

This is one of 125 Ex-Gay ministries in the United States and abroad that are affiliated with Exodus International based in Seattle, Washington. Transformation emphasizes the compassion of Jesus Christ and the transforming nature of a personal relationship with God. The organization takes the position that homosexuality is not innate and strongly believes that a homosexual neurosis takes hold early in childhood. The materials presented are for those who are unhappy being homosexual and have a desire to leave the gay lifestyle. (D. Clark)

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life - In the Case of John Boswell

<http://www.firstthings.com/ftissues/ft9403/public.html>

Until a few years ago there was little need to defend the assertion that Christianity has, in a clear and sustained manner, always taught that homosexual acts are morally wrong. That has now changed, and the change can be dated from 1980, the publication of John Boswell's *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality* (University of Chicago Press). The influence of that book is truly remarkable; it has become a kind of sacred text for those who want to morally legitimate the homosexual movement. This article by John Neuhaus, published in the *First Things Magazine* (March 94), reviews Boswell's book from a traditional Anglican perspective. It is especially valuable in sorting through the Biblical and cultural references in Boswell's work. (D. Clark)

The Portland Fellowship

<http://www.portlandfellowship.com/index.cfm>

Since 1980, The Portland Fellowship has been helping men and women find a way out of homosexuality through the power of Jesus Christ. With more than 15 years of research and experience, The Portland Fellowship has gained recognition throughout Oregon as a leading authority on healing for the homosexual. Over the years the group has counseled thousands of men and women and continues to provide on-going services to 100 people monthly. The site has a number of useful resources for youth. (D. Clark)

APA statements on reparative or conversion therapies.

http://www.psych.org/pract_of_psych/copptherapyaddendum83100.cfm

The American Psychiatric Association along with the AMA and the National Association of Social Workers speaks out against so called "reparative therapies". All three groups claim the therapy is not only ineffectual but causes harm to the individual. Includes extensive endnotes on therapeutic resources. (A. Fontaine)

G/B/L/T

affirming

www.whosoever.org

critical

www.whosoever.com

(A. Fontaine)