

Our Mission:

Parents Reconciling Network unconditionally walks with the parents and families of persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities until all are fully accepted in their families, in their churches, and in society, by advocating for acceptance, providing education, and promoting welcoming communities of faith.

We Are the Parents Reconciling Network

Parents Reconciling Network (PRN) envisions a world that accepts LGBTQI persons free of any form of discrimination in their life experience. We work as a movement in communion with other like organizations to this end. Further, as the heart of the United Methodist Church (UMC), our vision includes change in the policies and practices of the UMC that empowers the full inclusion of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in all aspects of their religious life experience.

Through consultation, resourcing, and small group interactions, Parents Reconciling Network helps parents support their LGBTQI children and each other, shares information, and works for understanding and justice.



The Church's Opposition to Our Children Is Based on Misinformation

We are proud and loving United Methodist parents of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQI) children. Our children were baptized, confirmed, and nurtured in the United Methodist Church, but now it officially rejects them because of who they love or the sex with which they identify.

We believe the church is mistaken, especially since that rejection continues to be based on misinformation, misconceptions, and myths about sexual orientation and gender identity.

This brochure seeks to correct nine of the most common myths about our lesbian, gay, and bisexual children.

Open the Doors

We envision a United Methodist Church which in both policy and practice accords all persons, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, equal membership and full participation in the life of the Church.



We Invite Your Participation!

Parents Reconciling Network is an extension ministry of the Reconciling Ministries Network. For more information, to join, or to send support, contact us at:

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Find us on
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Nine Myths About Our Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Queer Children



A closer look at the misunderstandings which distort the truth about our children

The re-energizing Spirit of God blows mightily when we embrace the inclusive nature of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Correcting Nine Myths Commonly Used to Stigmatize Our Children

Myth 1: The Bible condemns homosexuality.

According to John Boswell in *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*, “the word ‘homosexual’ does not occur in the Bible; no text or manuscript, Hebrew, Greek, Syriac, or Aramaic, contains such a word” (p. 92). Jesus was silent on the subject of homosexuality. His ministry was one of welcome and acceptance, not condemnation. The Bible is most concerned about proper treatment of others and opposes cruelty, exploitation, and abuse among all people—heterosexual and homosexual, alike.

There are only seven verses out of more than 31,000 that are used to support the assertion that the Bible condemns homosexuality. When taken in their historical contexts, and in tracing translations to the original text, the modern interpretation of an anti-homosexuality content is not supported.

Myth 2: Homosexuality is abnormal.

Beginning with Alfred Kinsey’s ground-breaking studies of sexual behavior in American adults in the 1950s, there exists a large body of empirical research refuting the claim that homosexuality is abnormal or pathological. In 1973, homosexuality was eliminated as a mental illness from the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, the official list of mental disorders for psychiatric diagnoses. Some studies indicate that stress from social stigma may increase the risk of depression or anxiety for sexual minorities, but homosexuality, per se, has no empirical correlation with mental illness. The American Psychiatric Association, the American Psychological Association, the American Pediatric Association and other experts denounce so-called “reparative therapy,” understanding same-gender attraction and behavior to be a normal expression of human love, fully as natural and moral as heterosexual attraction and behavior.

Myth 3: Homosexuality is a choice.

Scientific consensus agrees that homosexuality is an innate sexual orientation. It is no more a choice than is heterosexuality. We might ask a heterosexual person, “When did you choose to become attracted to people

of the opposite sex?” Homosexual behavior has been well documented not just among humans but in over 500 species of animals, from koala bears to penguins and seagulls.

Myth 4: Homosexuality can be “cured.”

“Homosexuality is not an illness. It does not require treatment and is not changeable,” (American Psychological Association). Be leery of therapies which claim to change lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons into heterosexuals. “Conversion” and “Reparative” therapy models have been repeatedly discredited by the American Psychological Association and the American Medical Association. In fact, they have proven to be unsuccessful, disastrously destructive, and may even lead to suicidal thoughts and actions.

Myth 5: Homosexual “practice” is a sin.

Our United Methodist Book of Discipline affirms that “sexuality is God’s good gift to all persons” (§161F). Indeed it is a good gift because it arises from our God-given capacity to love others. Homosexuality, like heterosexuality, is morally neutral. And yet, regarding LGBTQI people, an unfair distinction is often made between being and practice: “It’s okay to be gay. Just don’t act gay.” This is an unreasonable and unjust demand which is not made of heterosexuals. It is dis-integrating and wounding to require LGBTQI people to separate flesh from spirit... the truth they know from the truth they live... their being from their doing.

Myth 6: Marriage is between a man and a woman.

Attitudes are changing, and marriage between same gender partners is legal in an increasing number of states and countries worldwide. Mutual love and respect, not the gender of the marriage partners, are what make unions strong and valid. We believe fidelity in committed same-gender relationships ought to be as welcomed and blessed by the church as a heterosexual marriage. We look forward to the day when these unions will be fully recognized.

Myth 7: Opposing homosexuality is “Christian.”

As United Methodists, we have a long-cherished tradition of honoring a variety of beliefs, expressions of faith, and biblical interpretations. As followers

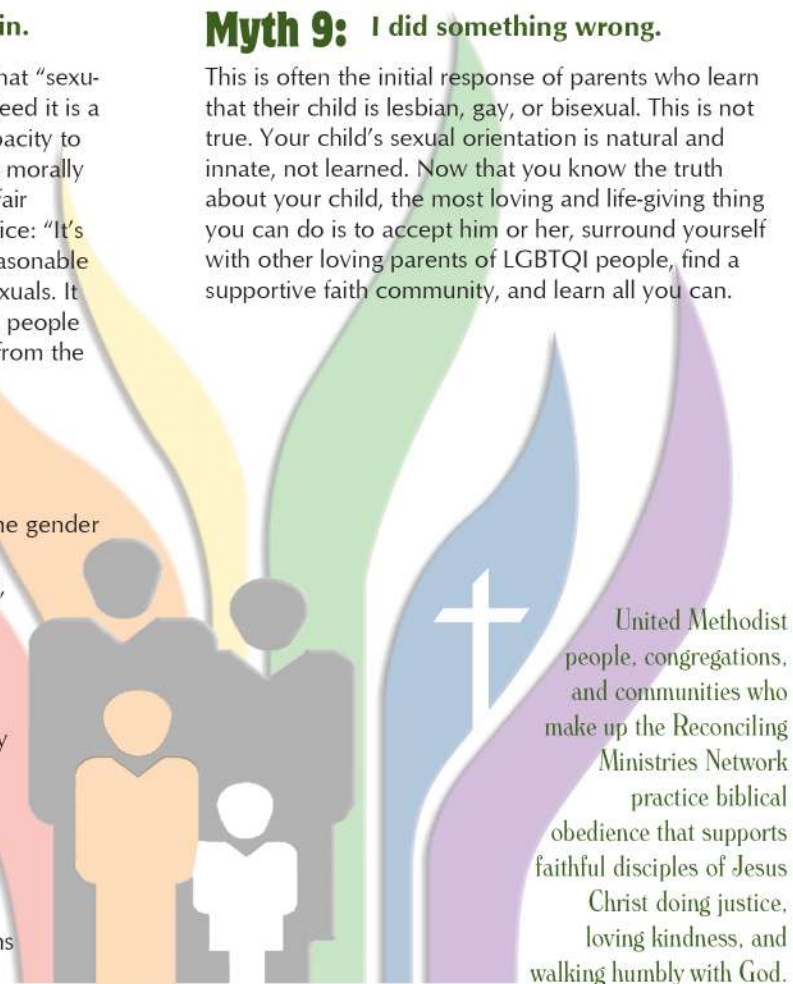
of Jesus and recipients of God’s grace, we know that our primary role as disciples is to extend God’s love to others. Using God and faith to disguise our own fear, discomfort, or narrow-mindedness is never Christian. People of good faith can—and do—embrace LGBTQI people as the beloved children of God they are.

Myth 8: Accepting homosexuals will ruin the church.

In fact, we often find just the opposite to be true. Many faith communities have experienced significant revitalization after they’ve genuinely welcomed LGBTQI Christians and their families into their shared lives and ministries.

Myth 9: I did something wrong.

This is often the initial response of parents who learn that their child is lesbian, gay, or bisexual. This is not true. Your child’s sexual orientation is natural and innate, not learned. Now that you know the truth about your child, the most loving and life-giving thing you can do is to accept him or her, surround yourself with other loving parents of LGBTQI people, find a supportive faith community, and learn all you can.



United Methodist people, congregations, and communities who make up the Reconciling Ministries Network practice biblical obedience that supports faithful disciples of Jesus Christ doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with God.