

Study Resources for the Local Church

Dear Friends,

Local churches have been asking for resources that allow them to have a conversation about the divisions in the UMC without creating further division in their own UMC's! Below are books and DVD series that can help with the conversation. If you are aware of others, please email them to info@MainstreamUMC.com with a subject line "Church Resources" so we can keep the list active on our website. This list can be found online at:

<https://mainstreamumc.com/documents/resources/2019-10-11-Resources-for-the-Local-Church.pdf>

- **Rev. Rob Fuquay** has a six-session video resource, "*Faithful and Inclusive: The Bible, Sexuality, and the United Methodist Church.*" This study directly addresses the current climate in the UMC. *Faithful and Inclusive* allows you to gain an understanding of how United Methodists can be both obedient to God's Word and fully welcoming of LGBTQ persons in the church. There is a promo video and a Leader Guide. For more information go to: www.institutefordiscipleship.org/dvd
- **United Methodist Scholars for an Inclusive Church.** Here is a great group of videos for the local church, each is about 15 minutes long. This group is composed of a diversity of scholars from around the connection. The views expressed in each video represent their own personal views and are not necessarily reflective of the views of others or the group as a whole. Here is a link <https://www.umscholars.org/videos.html>
- **Rev. Dr. Stan Copeland and Rev. Scott Gilliland:** *Together: United Methodists of the Temple, Tabernacle and Table.* This book addresses the current impasse within the UMC. *Together* recognizes the long-standing theological and sociopolitical diversity within United Methodism as Traditionalists (Templers) and Progressives (Tabernaclers), but we all gather around a long, broad Table that the Lord sets, and to which He invites ALL of us to feast. For more information go to: https://www.amazon.com/Together-United-Methodists-Temple-Tabernacle-ebook/dp/B07JNVK5J/ref=mp_s_a_1_2?keywords=together+united+methodists&qid=1569946296&sr=8-2
- **Bishop Karen Oliveto, *Our Strangely Warmed Hearts.*** As John Wesley discovered his true spiritual identity, he experienced a strangely warmed heart. Through poignant stories and well-reasoned principles, Karen Oliveto discloses why and how spiritual renewal and a personal call to ministry emerge in the strangely warmed hearts of lesbian and gay Christians. <https://www.abingdonpress.com/product/9781501858918/>
- **Bishop Karen Oliveto, *Together at the Table.*** This is the personal story and public message of Bishop Karen Oliveto, the first openly LGBTQ person to be elected a bishop in The United Methodist Church. Her election was and is controversial, with opponents seeking to have her removed and some even threatening violence against her. Bishop Oliveto believes that the church can stay together--that people of different convictions can remain in communion with one another. <https://www.cokesbury.com/9780664263607-Together-at-the-Table>
- **Rev. Adam Hamilton** has a helpful book entitled: *Making Sense of the Bible, Rediscovering the Power of Scripture Today.* This study is not specific to homosexuality but takes a larger look at the Bible generally. This book also has a companion DVD, designed for group use, featuring Adam Hamilton discussing his ideas in six sessions. Download a free Leader Guide containing

everything needed to guide your group through the study, including session plans, discussion questions, and multiple format options. You can find both the book and the DVD series here: <https://www.christianbook.com/making-bible-rediscovering-power-scripture-today/9781426785573/pd/785573?event=CPOF>

- **Bishop Kenneth H. Carter, Jr** has a helpful book *“Embracing the Wideness.”* Bishop Carter is the UM Bishop in Florida and the President of the Council of Bishops. His book shows that a generous orthodoxy is possible for the United Methodist Church because scripture supports *both* a confessing movement and a reconciling movement. This book can be used in a 4-week study. Here is a link: <https://www.abingdonpress.com/product/9781501871566/>
- **Bishop Gene Robinson** has a Book, *“God Believes in Love; Straight Talk About Gay Marriage.”* He is the Bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire in the Episcopal Church, the first openly gay person elected to the episcopate and a leading religious spokesperson for gay rights and gay marriage—a groundbreaking book that persuasively makes the case for same-sex marriage using a commonsense, reasoned, religious argument. This can be used as a book study of 4-6 weeks depending on your group. Here is a link: https://books.google.com/books/about/God_Believes_in_Love.html?id=KIPnC9ko6zwC&source=kp_book_description
- **Co-Authors Rev. Lee Johnson and Dr. Barbara Lukert, MD.** Rev. Johnson has been in ministry for more than 30 years and is an ordained Elder in the Great Plains Annual Conference. Dr. Lukert is Professor of Medicine Emerita at the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Kansas City, Kansas. She practiced Endocrinology at the university for over 30 years. They have written a compelling article about the scientific and biological facts about sexual orientation and gender. You can read this here: <https://mainstreamumc.com/scripture/additional-study-tools/scripture-science-sexuality/>
- **Rev. Adolf Hansen** has a book, *“Is It Time: Helping Laity and Clergy Discuss homosexuality One Question at a Time.”* Rev. Hansen is Theologian in Residence, St. Luke’s UMC in Indianapolis, and Senior Scholar and Vice President Emeritus, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois. Here is a link to his book: <https://www.amazon.com/Time-Helping-Discuss-Homosexuality-Question/dp/1501859730>
- **Bishop Richard Wilke** has a fine video about his growth in understanding and welcoming LGBTQ persons. Like many, it started with the love of his own daughter. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0EOq-1uet_Y
- **Paul Chilcote’s** new book, *Active Faith: Resisting 4 Dangerous Ideologies with the Wesleyan Way.* Excellent Wesleyan foundation for dealing with our issues in the UMC right now. Brief, four chapter publication with questions for reflection and discussion, written in simple style for a high level of accessibility (<https://www.cokesbury.com/p-9781791001728-Active-Faith-1>)
- **Dr. Ashley Boggan Dreff’s** book *Entangled: A History of American Methodism, Politics, and Sexuality.* More academic in nature but still a really great and really important resource. <https://www.gbhem.org/publishing/publications/entangled-a-history-of-american-methodism-politics-and-sexuality/>
- **David N. Field** *Our Purpose is Love: The Wesleyan Way to Be the Church.* We live in a time of great division in the world, and too often we find this polarization mirrored in the church. A leader guide is also available. <https://www.abingdonpress.com/product/9781501868672/>
- **John H. Tyson** *Homosexuality: A Conversion: How a Conservative Pastor Outgrew the Idea that Homosexuality is a Sin.* Most of us grew up with only part of the story concerning our gay and

lesbian neighbors. We thought people chose to be homosexual, and that with God's help they could choose to be straight. New scientific research shows that sexual orientation is determined in the waters of the womb, not in the waters of baptism. Being straight or gay is not an act of will, it is a gift of God. <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/43172130-homosexuality>

- **William B. Lawrence** *A Methodist Requiem: Words of Hope and Resurrection for the Church*. What we now see as our troubles can give us new opportunities to seize God's promises and be strengthened by the mission to which God calls us. The mission of Methodism will endure. <https://www.gbhem.org/publishing/publications/methodist-requiem-words-of-hope-and-resurrection-for-the-church/>
- **Abingdon Press** *Living Faithfully: Human Sexuality and The United Methodist Church*. Living Faithfully is a four-part study with leader guide designed to help you understand the shape of the human sexuality debate and what it means for the present and the future of the church. Each chapter includes background on the Bible, Christian theology, history, stories from diverse viewpoints, and United Methodist structure and practice to guide reflection and conversation. <https://www.abingdonpress.com/product/9781501859779/>
- **General Board of Higher Education and Ministry** *Unity of the Church and Human Sexuality: Toward a Faithful United Methodist Witness: Study Guide*,. Join the conversation. Suitable for a four-week study, this resource addresses how the church can be a witness and provide for a diversified human community. Based on the research of Dr. Charles M. Wood, this study guide offers United Methodists an opportunity to think about what has become a cultural and ecclesial flash point--human sexuality--and comes out of the conviction that the church is thirsty for theological conversation. <https://www.amazon.com/Unity-Church-Human-Sexuality-Methodist/dp/0938162306>
- **Ellen A. Brubaker**, *The Bible and Human Sexuality: Claiming God's Good Gift*. "If you are looking for a faithful, thought-provoking study of scripture in all of its strangeness and complexity, come ready to learn!" <https://www.amazon.com/Bible-Human-Sexuality-Claiming-Gods/dp/1940182387>
- **Sparkhouse**, *Dialogues on Sexuality*. This is a small-group series that local churches can use as a starting point for discussion about where the United Methodist Church is. <https://www.wearesparkhouse.org/store/category/286973/Dialogues-On-Sexuality>
- **Larry Duggins and Andrea L. Lingle**, editors, *Rooted in Grace: Essays on Dialogue Without Division*. Rooted in Grace is a collection of essays, liturgies, and spiritual exercises focused on staying connected during difficult discussions. Each essay includes questions for discussion for ease of use in small groups and Sunday School lessons. <https://www.amazon.com/Rooted-Grace-Dialogue-Without-Division/dp/1724524089>
- **Karen R. Keen**, *Scripture, Ethics, and the Possibility of Same-Sex Relationships*. "When it comes to same-sex relationships, this book contains the most thoughtful, balanced, biblically grounded discussion you're likely to encounter anywhere. With pastoral sensitivity and respect for biblical authority, Keen breaks through current stalemates in the debate surrounding faith and sexual identity." <https://www.eerdmans.com/Products/7654/scripture-ethics-and-the-possibility-of-samesex-relationships.aspx>
- **Steve Harper**, *Holy Love: A Biblical Theology for Human Sexuality*. In *Holy Love*, Steve Harper strives to articulate the truth about the teachings of the Bible and Wesleyan tradition on human sexuality. This very accessible book is intended for church leaders, small groups, and those

interested in understanding the Bible's teaching on this fundamental component of human life, experience and relationships. <https://www.abingdonpress.com/product/9781501896088/>

- **Mark Achtemeier**, *The Bible's Yes to Same-Sex Marriage: New Edition with Study Guide: An Evangelical's Change of Heart*. Achtemeier, a Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pastor and theologian, wants to lead his readers toward the same "change of heart" that caused him to embrace same-sex marriage. He writes graciously and gently. But his book will be persuasive only to those who already agree with him. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/bibles-yes-same-sex-marriage/>
- **Augsburg Fortress**, *Dialogues on Sexuality*. This is designed for churches and focuses on interviews with LGBTQ persons and persons of color: <https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/category/286975/Dialogues-On-Sexuality>
- **Augsburg Fortress**, DVD *Ending the Silence, Confronting Sexual Shame in the Church*: Start a conversation about sexuality in your community. This documentary explores sexuality and the church, including patriarchy and the church, women's sexuality and the church, sex and marriage, and why language matters. This documentary features interviews from key advocates and ministry leaders, providing an in-depth exploration of what sexuality means to churches and communities today. <https://www.augsburgfortress.org/store/product/9781506458755/Ending-the-Silence-Confronting-Sexual-Shame-in-the-Church-DVD>
- **Bruce W. Lowe**, *A Letter to Louise*. I wrote this letter to Louise, reflecting what I now have come to believe is the truth about homosexuality, what the Bible says and what God wants us to think and do about it. <http://godmademegay.blogspot.com/p/letter-to-louise.html>
- **Dale McConkey**, *United Methodists Divided: Understanding Our Differences Over Homosexuality*. Written prior to General Conference 2019, this book strives to present an impartial overview of our dilemma, explaining traditionalist and progressive views by drawing upon the Wesleyan Quadrilateral. <https://www.amazon.com/United-Methodists-Divided-Understanding-Homosexuality/dp/1732660700>
- **Darryl W. Stephens** has written two books addressing the current state of the UMC. For an insightful and balanced study of the Social Principles and the history and theology of Methodist social witness, see *Methodist Morals: Social Principles in the Public Church's Witness* (University of Tennessee Press, 2016) <https://www.cokesbury.com/9781621902409-Methodist-Morals?refq=methodist%20morals>, with six-session study guide by Ruth A. Daugherty: goo.gl/7KeCta. For an inspiring read of sermons, testimony, theological reflection, and conversation about ministry with LGBTQIA+ folks, see *Out of Exodus: A Journey of Open and Affirming Ministry* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2018) <https://www.cokesbury.com/9781532630286-Out-of-Exodus?refq=out%20of%20exodus>. Reading our lives through the story of Exodus, we learn that open and affirming ministry is about more than LGBTQIA+ inclusion. It is also about race relations, poverty, generational change, divorce, immigration, and any other human-created barrier to loving God and neighbor.

If any of the above links do not work, please cut and paste them directly into your browser. Thank you.

Mainstream UMC is committed to identifying and lifting up resources for the benefit of the church. We are not responsible for the content of these resources, nor do we receive any

financial benefit by listing them. We are simply compiling an easily accessible list. Please send suggestions to be included on our website to info@MainstreamUMC.com subject line "Church Resources".

Thank You,

Mainstream UMC

www.MainstreamUMC.com