

### Chapter 1 : Reconciling Journey: A Devotional Workbook for Lesbian and Gay Christians

*Reconciling Journey leads the reader through his/her own history of faith and view of God that came out of that experience, and then chapter-by-chapter helps the reader to explore what it means to be a gay or lesbian Christian.*

Long an inclusive faith community with a history of working for social justice, CUMC has been, even prior to , a place where GLBT persons could worship and fellowship in a truly accepting community. Clifton had long been called to be a beacon of inclusiveness and social justice in Clifton and the greater Cincinnati area, and as such, was known for being a progressive church in the area. Under the leadership of Rev. Hill, the church embarked on a journey toward formally affiliating with the RCP and making public its calling to be a sanctuary for those whom the larger church may not have always truly welcomed. He wanted to ensure that we, both as an overall congregation as well as the out GLBT members, were ready for the risk involved with such an endeavor. All involved agreed that this seemed to be the direction God was leading the church, and thus we began what became a three year journey toward officially becoming a reconciling congregation. During this time, we engaged in studies of what the Bible has to say about homosexuality, hosted many speakers on the subject, and prayerfully joined in discussion and dialogue among our membership. Friends from other churches would often ask how our older members were responding to all this change, the perception being that older members would be resistant to such a shift. On the contrary, we would not be the publicly welcoming and progressive church we are today without the passionate guidance of our elders. They were at the forefront of moving us into a place where we could publicly be who we are. We have always been blessed to have many retired Methodist pastors among us, such as Tony and Ruth Drake and Paul and Nancy Stopenhagen, and these long-time crusaders for social justice helped us see who we are and move in the direction God was leading us. This was never an initiative spearheaded solely by our GLBT members, but was embraced by all. Why are we afraid to say it out loud? We were officially the th reconciling congregation St. There are now hundreds of reconciling churches and communities. At the time, we were only the second RC in the West Ohio Conference; now there are over a dozen, and although we are still the only RC in the Cincinnati area, there is a growing interest in the Reconciling Movement here as evidenced by the number of members from other Cincinnati area United Methodist churches who attended our ten year anniversary conference and celebration in the fall of Our decision to become reconciling has not been without risk and hardship. Six or seven long time members decided to move to other churches after we officially affiliated with the RCP. Our local and national communities continue to move in the direction of full inclusiveness, and we continue to be a voice for that needed change both in Cincinnati and the West Ohio Conference. Small but mighty, our voice is heard in many minds and hearts. Much prayerful time and energy was spent on crafting our welcoming statement and it serves as a constant and very public reminder of who God has called us to be: We welcome all people, regardless of gender, race, age, culture, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, economic circumstances, family configuration, or difference of faith perspective. We celebrate the worth, dignity and gifts of every person as a child of God.

### Chapter 2 : Journey of Reconciliation - Wikipedia

*Home / Resources / Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Resources / Living the Journey Reconciling in Christ (RIC) communities are on a lifetime journey of welcoming, including, and celebrating LGBTQIA+ people and their families.*

The death of someone loved changes our lives forever. And the movement from the "before" to the "after" is almost always a long, painful journey. From my own experiences with loss as well as those of the thousands of grieving people I have worked with over the years, I have learned that if we are to heal we cannot skirt the outside edges of our grief. Instead, we must journey all through it, sometimes meandering the side roads, sometimes plowing directly into its raw center. I have also learned that the journey requires mourning. There is an important difference, you see. Grief is what you think and feel on the inside after someone you love dies. Mourning is the outward expression of those thoughts and feelings. To mourn is to be an active participant in our grief journeys. We all grieve when someone we love dies, but if we are to heal, we must also mourn. There are six "yield signs" you are likely to encounter on your journey through grief - what I call the "reconciliation needs of mourning. Acknowledging the reality of the death. This first need of mourning involves gently confronting the reality that someone you care about will never physically come back into your life again. Whether the death was sudden or anticipated, acknowledging the full reality of the loss may occur over weeks and months. To survive, you may try to push away the reality of the death at times. You may discover yourself replaying events surrounding the death and confronting memories, both good and bad. This replay is a vital part of this need of mourning. Remember - this first need of mourning, like the other five that follow, may intermittently require your attention for months. Be patient and compassionate with yourself as you work on each of them. Embracing the pain of the loss. It is easier to avoid, repress or deny the pain of grief than it is to confront it, yet it is in confronting our pain that we learn to reconcile ourselves to it. You will probably discover that you need to "dose" yourself in embracing your pain. In other words, you cannot nor should you try to overload yourself with the hurt all at one time. Sometimes you may need to distract yourself from the pain of death, while at other times you will need to create a safe place to move toward it. Unfortunately, our culture tends to encourage the denial of pain. If you openly express your feelings of grief, misinformed friends may advise you to "carry on" or "keep your chin up. Actually, doing well with your grief means becoming well acquainted with your pain. Remembering the person who died. Do you have any kind of relationship with someone when they die? You have a relationship of memory. Precious memories, dreams reflecting the significance of the relationship and objects that link you to the person who died such as photos, souvenirs etc. This need of mourning involves allowing and encouraging yourself to pursue this relationship. But some people may try to take your memories away. Trying to be helpful, they encourage you to take down all the photos of the person who died. They tell you to keep busy or even to move out of your house. But in my experience, remembering the past makes hoping for the future possible. Your future will become open to new experiences only to the extent that you embrace the past. Developing a new self-identity. Part of your self-identity comes from the relationships you have with other people. When someone with whom you have a relationship dies, your self-identity, or the way you see yourself, naturally changes. You may have gone from being a "wife" or "husband" to a "widow" or "widower. A death often requires you to take on new roles that had been filled by the person who died. After all, someone still has to take out the garbage, someone still has to buy the groceries. You confront your changed identity every time you do something that used to be done by the person who died. This can be very hard work and can leave you feeling very drained. You may occasionally feel child-like as you struggle with your changing identity. You may feel a temporarily heightened dependence on others as well as feelings of helplessness, frustration, inadequacy and fear. Many people discover that as they work on this need, they ultimately discover some positive aspects of their changed self-identity. You may develop a renewed confidence in yourself, for example. You may develop a more caring, kind and sensitive part of yourself. You may develop an assertive part of your identity that empowers you to go on living even though you continue to feel a sense of loss. When someone you love dies, you naturally question the meaning and purpose of life. You probably will question your philosophy of life and

explore religious and spiritual values as you work on this need. You may discover yourself searching for meaning in your continued living as you ask "How? It can leave you feeling powerless. The person who died was a part of you. This death means you mourn a loss not only outside of yourself, but inside of yourself as well. At times, overwhelming sadness and loneliness may be your constant companions. You may feel that when this person died, part of you died with him or her. And now you are faced with finding some meaning in going on with your life even though you may often feel so empty. This death also calls for you to confront your own spirituality. You may doubt your faith and have spiritual conflicts and questions racing through your head and heart. This is normal and part of your journey toward renewed living. Receiving ongoing support from others. The quality and quantity of understanding support you get during your grief journey will have a major influence on your capacity to heal. You cannot - nor should you try to - do this alone. Drawing on the experiences and encouragement of friends, fellow mourners or professional counselors is not a weakness but a healthy human need. And because mourning is a process that takes place over time, this support must be available months and even years after the death of someone in your life. Unfortunately, because our society places so much value on the ability to "carry on," "keep your chin up" and "keep busy," many mourners are abandoned shortly after the event of the death. Obviously, these messages encourage you to deny or repress your grief rather than express it. To be truly helpful, the people in your support system must appreciate the impact this death has had on you. They must understand that in order to heal, you must be allowed - even encouraged - to mourn long after the death. And they must encourage you to see mourning not as an enemy to be vanquished but as a necessity to be experienced as a result of having loved. But your journey will never end. People do not "get over" grief. Reconciliation is a term I find more appropriate for what occurs as the mourner works to integrate the new reality of moving forward in life without the physical presence of the person who died. With reconciliation comes a renewed sense of energy and confidence, an ability to fully acknowledge the reality of the death and a capacity to become reinvolved in the activities of living. In reconciliation, the sharp, ever-present pain of grief gives rise to a renewed sense of meaning and purpose. Your feeling of loss will not completely disappear, yet they will soften, and the intense pangs of grief will become less frequent. Hope for a continued life will emerge as you are able to make commitments to the future, realizing that the person who died will never be forgotten, yet knowing that your life can and will move forward.

### Chapter 3 : CREATED IN HIS IMAGE

*The RIC journey begins when only one person in a faith community wants to specifically welcome LGBTQ people into their midst. The best place to begin is with the Building an Inclusive Church (BIC) toolkit and training.*

Participating in reconciliation activities , such as dialogue sessions or the Kairos Blanket Exercise , are examples of ways that we are exploring what it means to lead within and beyond Vancity we are a founding partner for Reconciliation Canada and adopted reconciliation as a core value in This story focuses on four leadership lessons from our reconciliation journey. Experiencing reconciliation A few weeks ago I participated with about 20 colleagues in the Kairos Blanket Exercise , which was co-facilitated by one of my awesome colleagues, Shannon. The experience was humbling, emotional and inspiring. Whether we acknowledge it or not, we are all on a multi-generational journey of reconciliation. Zooming out and seeing the long road for what it is was important and provided a valuable perspective. It also demonstrated how different people process ideas in diverse ways. The process got me reflecting on where I see myself on this journey. I encourage you to reflect on where you see yourself on this journey. I come to this experience as a straight white able-bodied man of privilege SWAMP and fully acknowledge that people who look like me have been instrumental in messing up the world. Reflecting on the Blanket Exercise, the grace of the facilitation team and the reactions of my colleagues, I see being a better leader as supporting others to get comfortable with being uncomfortable mostly people who are struggling to let go of their power and growing more leaders, especially folks from marginalized communities. As part of our development, we have been asked four questions to inspire thoughts about how reconciliation experiences connect with our growth as leaders. These are my reflections. My leadership journey is all about being quieter. Deeply experiencing a story of Indigenous communities in and around what is now Canada shut me up, which made me uncomfortable because I love to talk and solve problems. In general, I need to be open and present to everything in the world, especially what it means to comprehend truth and reconciliation for Indigenous people in the context of privilege. Wrapping my head “ and my ego ” around this reality informs my leadership journey. Creating community collisions feeds my soul the most. Sharing perspectives, finding common ground and getting the best out of people who would prefer not to work with each other is what I love most about leading people. For example, my roommate from grad school co-founded the very informative ActiveHistory. Shifting leadership Following the experience, in what way s does this shift how you show up as a leader? To be honest, I thought more about being a parent than I did about being a people manager when I reflected on this question. Slowing down and including a diverse community of people in our work needs to happen more because working together will help us all go farther. The journey is long What is one thing that you will do next in relation to reconciliation? I commit to experiencing an Indigenous community event with my family, such as National Aboriginal Day at Trout Lake , and reflecting on what we learned from the experience.

### Chapter 4 : Schedule – "Our Rainbow Journey" ReconcilingWorks Assembly

*Reconciling Journey, Rockford, Illinois. 68 likes. We are an affirming fellowship for GLBT Christians, allies, and those seeking to explore a.*

Ushering in the new year brings thoughts of the journey that lies ahead. A new year, a new decade, welcome to I say, bring it on! Of course I spend every waking hour thinking about my ministry and where God will use me. Who will God bring to help me with it? Can I possibly obtain the equipment necessary to do so? How long will it take? Who is my audience? What is the basis premise of the film? Art, writing, film making, all these things I am not. And then I think back to what I know for sure God will require that I step outside of my comfort zone. He will use me to build community, build bridges, promote reconciliation and create understanding. The film will require interviews, but when? It will require filming locations and object, easy enough. It will require specific music - which my songwriter spouse is happy to provide. It will require marketing. Tonight I remembered an old friend, a woman I met at a Soul Force rally several years ago. At the time of our meeting she had recently left the employment of a subsidiary of Focus on the Family and was having a religious battle in her coming out. She attended church a few times, we socialized on a number of occasions and had coffee a couple of times. This friend of mine is a documentary film maker, producer and graphic designer now living in Seattle. Perhaps all those years ago our paths crossed for the purpose of future collaboration. Funny how God works. I was lucky enough to find an address and will be sending her snail mail this next week. What are the chances? This next year, and decade, has so much change in store for all of us. My classes start next week. My new position at work begins in February. And through the past few months God has been breaking me down, bit by bit, to prepare me to be resculpted. Those layers are being stripped away. My weaknesses have been brought to light. My strengths are being used in brand new ways. Simply, I am wet clay. If nothing else, I hope and pray to better understand love and promote peace. Peace within myself, within my marriage, within my family, my church, my city, my country, the world. I want to be a vessel to promote understanding and elicit knowledge that conquers ignorance and fear. I want to be a vessel to promote reconciliation that transcends self. I want to be a vessel to inspire love that knows no bounds. I want to be a vessel to promote peace. Allow me to be your voice, to be tenacious when facing challenge and to continue to follow the path you predetermined. I am ready to step out in faith, outside my comfort zone, outside of the box. Posted by cswingnz at.

### Chapter 5 : Four Leadership Lessons from our Reconciliation Journey » The Potentiality

*The general purpose of the workbook is to help gay and lesbian Christians reconcile their spirituality and sexuality, and to live their lives as people reconciled both to God and to their sexual orientation.*

A Statement of Counsel to the Church that said: Therefore self-avowed practicing homosexuals are not to be certified as candidates, ordained as ministers, or appointed to serve in The United Methodist Church. The Common Table started us on the journey to reconciliation. This group was established to prayerfully research, review, discuss and discover feelings surrounding the letter from retired bishops to the Conference. We worked in many ways to educate and welcome all! Our Summer Lecture Series included Dr. Steven Kraftchick from Emory University: A Conversation with Paul "Uncensored." Alice Rogers from the Candler School of Theology. The Rainbow Advocacy met with the Church Council to consider our next steps as a congregation toward becoming a recognized Reconciling Church. We identified the immediate goal: We also listed specific ways to make it happen, including events and guests, and then we noted that the end goal would be to formally vote on RMN membership. Church Council approved the plan. We held these events with great attendance and support. Glenn Memorial United Methodist Church welcomes all persons into the full life and ministry of our congregation, regardless of race, culture, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, family or socioeconomic status, education, politics, physical or mental ability, or faith history. In August , Church Council approved the motion made by the Rainbow Advocacy to hold a Church Conference, which would allow the entire membership of the church to have a vote. A Church Conference vote was presided over by the District Superintendent and followed strict procedures to be conducted properly. Both votes were very well attended. The experience gave us the sense of being a real family "imperfect, but no less caring. The second vote occurred on the day of the Pride Parade. Our float riders got the news while parading with great celebration. On a personal note, the Common Table effort sparked great conversation in my family. My grown children were vocal about not attending church because of the Methodist stance on homosexuality. My kids were present at both votes, as were so many others. They were in church to vote, to hear and share, and then to celebrate the good news. This has been a short year with so many milestones, but it was a very long time coming.

### Chapter 6 : A Reconciling Congregation - Eden Prairie United Methodist Church

*Reconciling Ministries Network is a national network of churches, groups and individuals who support each other in their Christian ministry of witness and outreach. Since , the Reconciling Congregation movement has grown to more than Reconciling Congregations, Campus Ministries and Annual Conferences.*

Ca Sandra Bochonok is a psychologist and a pastor. The general purpose of the workbook is to help gay and lesbian Christians reconcile their spirituality and sexuality, and to live their lives as people reconciled both to God and to their sexual orientation. There are times when queer Christians attempt to resolve the tension they feel between their sexuality and spirituality only by conducting an intense study of a handful of texts that are used to condemn gays and lesbians. Studying the Bible is not a mistake, but relying only an intense examination of a few passages of the Bible might not be enough to reconcile Christianity and a homosexual or bisexual orientation. This devotional workbook approaches the Bible after readers have taken the time to understand the factors that influenced their image of God, and understand what it means to be reconciled to Christ. Important people and events can be very powerful forces in shaping our image of God. In some cases, gay and lesbian Christians build an image of God that has more to do with their families, society, or religion than it does with God. Queer Christians are vulnerable to building Christian imagery on destructive parenting. Reactions to God and to other authority figures can become confused. By working through the workbook, people understand what being reconciled in Jesus Christ means. Those who are reconciled in Christ, do not take upon themselves the shame and guilt for sins of a homophobic culture. Being reconciled to God requires a change in perspective. People who are reconciled do not see themselves as victims, and understand that nobody other than Jesus can bring a charge against them. Once readers have a sense of the factors that contributed to their view of God, and understand what it means to be reconciled to God, they are encouraged to see the Bible in a new way. Gays and lesbians are encouraged to dig deep for fresh meaning to some of the texts that are used to condemn homosexuals. A refreshing approach to prayer is presented. Reflections and exercises encourage people to understand prayer as including elements of imagery, relaxation, and affirmation. Listening to God includes giving up the restrictions gays and lesbians impose on themselves. Gay and lesbian members of the body of Christ are encouraged to understand the gifts they bring to the church and to be living witnesses of God. Sandra Bochonok describes the impact of the transformed gay and lesbian Christian life very well. Our witness speaks to people who might otherwise never know the saving grace of our Redeemer.

### Chapter 7 : The Journey of Reconciliaiton

*Reconciling Journey is a nine-week workbook for lesbian and gay Christians who have come to a crossroad in their journey, those who have renounced Christianity, but.*

### Chapter 8 : Reconciling Congregation – Clifton United Methodist Church

*There are six "yield signs" you are likely to encounter on your journey through grief – what I call the "reconciliation needs of mourning." For while your grief journey will be an intensely personal, unique experience, all mourners must yield to this set of basic human needs if they are to heal.*

### Chapter 9 : Journeys of Reconciliation

*I jumped into the seminary journey just believing that God would bring everyone else along with me. Infact, that just hasn't happened. I met some wonderful co-workers in LA and spent a good amount of time sharing my journey with another Christian.*