

“When Kids Come Out” – A Four-Session Class for Parents of LGBT Children

When a child comes out to his/her/their family, it often raises many questions for both the child and for the family. For example:

- What does it mean for the family when a child comes out to his/her/their parents?
- What does it mean for the parents’ relationship to their church?
- What does it mean for the parents’ own faith?
- How do parents navigate their own “coming out” after their children have come out to them?

These questions are among those that will be addressed in the four-session class that will be held on Wednesday evenings from October 21 through November 11 at the Livingston United Methodist Church. The meetings will begin at 7:00 pm and conclude by 8:30 pm. The church is located at 200 E Livingston Avenue, Columbus. Parking is available at the church. Look for signs directing you to “Kids Coming Out” class at the church.

The aims of the group include:

1. Providing support and encouragement to a child who comes out as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender.
2. Navigating relationships in the local congregation in which the parents participate after a child has come out.
3. Coming out as parents of an LGBT child to other family members and friends, and those in the church.
4. Providing a safe place for parents and family members to share their stories about their LGBT sons and daughters and their relationships with them.

The Rev. Jim Waugh, retired pastor in the West Ohio Conference, will lead the group. Jim and his wife, Carol, have an adult daughter, Lisa, who came out to them several years ago. Jim is also a member of the Steering Committee for the Parents Reconciling Network.

Participants in past groups report that the group was helpful to them. A few comments include:

- ✓ “Learning about how others have navigated ‘coming out’ (as parents).”
- ✓ “The brochures/readings as well as general discussion around these topics.”
- ✓ “Just being able to share and know there would be no judgment.

While the main focus of the class is parents of LGBT children, other family members (such as grandparents, siblings) will benefit from the discussion and sharing in the class.

If you have questions or need more information, please feel free to email Jim: jwaugh3@mac.com.