

AFFIRMING CHURCHES IN SCOTLAND

These are a small selection of Scottish churches that publicly declare welcome to LGBTQ+ people on their websites/social media.

 **Cults Parish Church, Aberdeen**
www.cultsparishchurch.co.uk

 **Queen's Cross Church, Aberdeen**
www.queenscrosschurch.org.uk/about-us/lgbt/

 **St. Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, Dundee**
www.saintpaulscathedral.net/im-new/

 **Augustine United Church, Edinburgh**
www.augustine.org.uk/whats-on/lgbt-ministry/

 **Broughton St. Mary's Parish Church, Edinburgh**
www.bstmchurch.org.uk/about-us/

 **St. John's Episcopal Church, Edinburgh**
stjohns-edinburgh.org.uk/about/

 **Drumchapel St. Andrew's Church, Glasgow**
drumchapelstandrews.org/about2

 **Langside Church, Glasgow**
www.langsidechurch.org/

 **Metropolitan Community Church, Glasgow**
www.mccinglasgow.co.uk

 **St. Mary's Episcopal Cathedral, Glasgow**
thecathedral.org.uk/activities/lgbt/

 **St. John the Evangelist Church, Johnstone**
secstjohnstmargaret.org.uk

 **Greyfriars Parish Church, Lanark**
www.lanarkgreyfriars.com/we-are-greyfriars/why

 **St. Matthew's Church of Scotland, Perth**
www.perthstmatthews.org.uk

 **St. Margaret of Scotland, Renfrew**
secstjohnstmargaret.org.uk

I praise you because I am Fearfully and Wonderfully Made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well!

PSALM 139:14

Love does no harm to a neighbour. Therefore Love is the fulfilment of the law.

ROMANS 13:10

KALEIDOSCOPE is an affirming online community for people who wish to discuss Christian faith and sexuality, particularly in regards to LGBTQ+ inclusion in the church. It is a safe and respectful environment for people who support or identify as LGBTQ+ and want to discuss questions and grow in their faith. We currently have a Facebook and Instagram page.

Like a kaleidoscope, the Lens of Jesus is equally mesmerizing and eye-opening when interpreting scripture and applying in present day life. 'Homosexuality' has been a controversial subject in many churches (often taboo to talk about), so for some it can feel contradictory to grow a Christian faith while also supporting or identifying as LGBTQ+. We are here to tell you **JESUS LOVES YOU**, unconditionally!

Even if you don't identify as LGBTQ+, but are still curious, a supporter or an ally, you're welcome on our pages. You are not alone and there are other LGBTQ+ people asking similar questions about God and Christianity. We can't wait to hear your stories, questions, and input to discussions!

Feel free to message us on our pages if you have any questions or send a message to our email:
kaleidoscope.lgbtqoffaith@gmail.com



KALEIDOSCOPE

- Affirming LGBTQ+ Community Through Jesus -

**GAY OR STRAIGHT
CIS OR TRANSGENDER
BLACK OR WHITE
YOUNG OR OLD
CATHOLIC OR PROTESTANT
BELIEVER OR UNBELIEVER
ABLE OR DISABLED
RICH OR POOR**

**YOU ARE
Beloved!**

 facebook.com/KaleidoscopeLGBTQCommunity

 instagram.com/kaleidoscope.lgbtq

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE LGBTQ+ AFFIRMING

Some churches already have many signs of inclusion. When the question of becoming an Affirming Church arises, Christians may feel that because they already say “All are welcome”, there is no reason to become Affirming. Being Affirming is not merely about welcoming gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans and queer people. **Words like welcoming and accepting suggest those on the inside have the power to choose to accept those on the outside.** This makes it sound like an act of charity to welcome or accept those who are different or marginalised.

However, it is not our place to welcome anyone because the church is not a private club and we are not the gatekeepers. **Affirmation of LGBTQ+ people and allies and proclaiming a safe space is extremely important;** there’s has been progress in the last few decades, but there is still discrimination, homophobia and hate crimes, even in some “All are welcome” churches. Here are examples of Non-Affirming Churches and the possible journey from shaming to affirming LGBTQ+ people:

“Anti-Gay” Churches

Even though some may claim to welcome all, it’ll be very clear with Anti-Gay churches that LGBTQ+ people are **NOT WELCOME** and told statements like “you’re going to hell”.

“Conditional” Churches

LGBTQ+ people will be tolerated within these churches, but with conditions: don’t stand out, ask God to “change” you, and you must be celibate (i.e. don’t fall in love or have a relationship).

QUALITIES OF AN AFFIRMING CHURCH

- Public statement of inclusion to **ALL** specifying sexual orientations and gender identities (commonly on web home pages, about/mission statement pages or on social media descriptions).
- Safe environment where discrimination is challenged
- LGBTQ+ people are baptised, become church members and participate in leadership roles in the congregation
- Marriage and/or blessings on same-sex unions
- Inclusive language
- Occasionally represent LGBTQ+ in services, online platforms and resources
- Further endeavours for equality beyond LGBTQ+ – disability, economic status, age, race, ethnicity, etc

WHAT IS A CLOBBER PASSAGE?

There are **SIX biblical verses** about homosexuality which Christians have used to justify discrimination against LGBTQ+ people. These are known as “Clobber Passages” as they are used to ‘clobber’ those who don’t fit the **heterosexual cisgender normative**. Writers such as Colby Martin (Unclobber) have tried to undo this damage by revealing that the Bible doesn’t say what we’ve always assumed or been taught about homosexuality.

In Bible study, **CONTEXT IS EVERYTHING!** Who wrote what, when, for whom, and why? What about original languages, translations and cultural context? The word “homosexual” (meaning a person’s inborn and natural desire to enter into a relationship with someone of the same-sex) didn’t exist in any language until 1869. **AND it wasn’t in any translation of the Bible until 1946** – and it was later admitted by the original translation committee that their use of the word “homosexual” was an error. Therefore, these six verses need a good long look before they are justified as weapons against LGBTQ+ people. Homosexuality has always existed, but the recognised concept of it being natural and inborn (or of same-sex unions) is still very new.

Non-affirming: Homosexuality was the reason God destroyed Gomorrah.

SODOM & GOMORRAH:
Genesis 19:1-38

Affirming: Nowhere in the Bible is same-sex behaviour named as the sin that destroyed the city – other Bible references say it was the oppression of the poor and needy, and lacking hospitality. ...Ironie!

Affirming: Christ is the “end of the law”, and Christians rarely regard all Old Testament laws and penalties as applicable today. When did you last see the death penalty used for someone working on a Sunday?

THE OLD LAWS:
Leviticus 18:22 & 20:13

Non-affirming: The law forbids same-sex relationships.

SEXUAL EXCESS:
Romans 1:25-27

Non-affirming: Paul condemns same-sex behaviour as “shameful” and “unnatural.”

Affirming: Paul said men with long hair was “unnatural” (not customary to gender norms), and in Romans he refers to lustful same-sex acts – not loving, committed and faithful relationships.

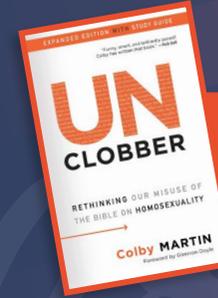
Non-affirming: Paul warns against the malakoi and arsenokoitai, meaning “men who have sex with men.”

VICE LIST:
1 Corinthians 6:9-11 & 1 Timothy 1:9-10

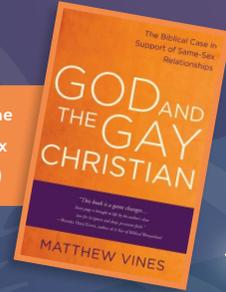
Affirming: The only known same-sex acts referenced were pederasty, prostitution, and sex with enslaved men. Same-sex marriages between equals did not exist in the ancient world.

Read more about homosexuality and the Bible in these books!

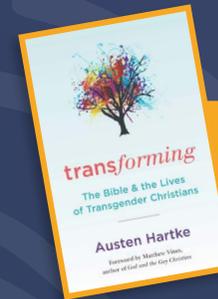
AFFIRMING LGBTQ+ CHRISTIAN BOOKS



“UnClobber: Rethinking Our Misuse of the Bible on Homosexuality” by Colby Martin (2022)



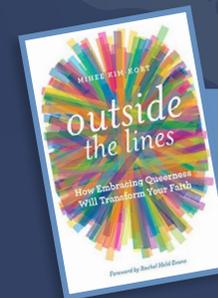
“God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-Sex Relationships” by Matthew Vines (2015)



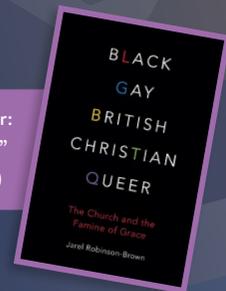
“Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians” by Austen Hartke (2018)



“Outlove: A Queer Christian Survival Story” by Julie Rodgers (2021)



“Outside The Lines: How Embracing Queerness Will Transform Your Faith” by Mihee Kim-Kort (2018)



“Black Gay British Christian Queer: The Church and The Famine of Grace” by Jarel Robinson-Brown (2021)