

RESOURCES FROM THE UNITED METHODIST ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED CLERGY  
FOR TEACHING AND PREACHING ABOUT HUMAN SEXUALITY  
MAY 2018

Compiled by the Rev Harvey C Martz, D.Min

- Adam Hamilton, MAKING SENSE OF THE BIBLE. Harper One Press, 2014. Hamilton's book is an excellent and accessible resource for a short sermon series or a small group study, focusing in particular on chapters one, fourteen through eighteen, and twenty-eight.
- Ellen Brubaker THE BIBLE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY: CLAIMING GOD'S GOOD GIFT. United Methodist Women, 2016. While I have not used this four session study resource, I have heard positive feedback from pastors and leaders in UMW Mission schools who have taught the material. I do believe that the best place to begin in talking about same gender issues is, first of all, with an overview of human sexuality itself.
- Kittredge Cherry, ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH: EARLY CHURCH WELCOMED QUEERS IN BIBLE STORY. Qspirit.net, April 18, 2018. A treatment of this explosive story in Acts 8:26-40.
- Jill M Johnson, et al. LIVING FAITHFULLY; HUMAN SEXUALITY AND THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. Abingdon Press, 2017. This volume is one of a group of new resources from Abingdon that is designed to be useful as the United Methodist Church approaches our called General Conference of 2019. I highly recommend the usefulness of this as a congregational study. The book does contain a Leaders Guide for a small group study
- Joe Miller, Jr. HOMOSEXUALITY; A SCRIPTURAL WAY FORWARD FOR THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH. EnerPower Press, 2015. Rev Miller has written a quite scholarly textual study of some of the "Clobber Passages" in Scripture and presented them in context, arguing that they are not quite what they seem to be at first glance. The book will be most useful for serious students of scripture. It is one I commend to pastors for background for preaching about human sexuality.
- Karen Oliveto, OUR STRANGELY WARMED HEARTS. Abingdon Press, 2018. Dr John Harnish says of Bishop Oliveto's book, "While there will be many who disagree with the author's conclusions, this book offers a valuable review of the history of the struggle over homosexuality in the nation and in the United Methodist Church that should be helpful to all who are concerned. She speaks with personal warmth and eloquence about the importance of an inclusive church..." My own copy has many dog-eared pages with salient quotes. (HCM). See also Bishop Oliveto's next book to be published in summer of 2018, TOGETHER AT THE TABLE.
- William H Willimon, FEAR OF THE OTHER. Abingdon Press, 2016. Bishop Willimon reminds us in five pithy chapters that when we "otherize" people, we betray the teachings of Christ. Dr Tex Sample says of the book, "This gutsy, biblically rich theologically searing book by Wilimon gigs everybody's sacred cow...The ground beneath us shakes the walls that divides us." Discussion questions at the end of each chapter make it a superb small group resource.

- Walter Wink, HOMOSEXUALITY AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH. Fortress Press, 1999. Dr Wink edited this pioneering volume comprised of six sections featuring authors such as William Sloane Coffin, Richard Rohr, Peggy Campolo, and John Cobb. It could be an excellent group study for six weeks, and that is the way in which I used it right after its initial publication at St Andrew United Methodist Church.

In DVD format: FOR THE BIBLE TELLS ME SO. Interviews with five Christian American families, people of faith, handling the realization of having a gay family member. I have used clips from this film in a sermon series on Human Sexuality.

[www.forthebibletellsmeso.org](http://www.forthebibletellsmeso.org).

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With the exception of Joe Miller’s scholarly book above, which does a detailed exegesis of the “clobber passages” and is most useful for clergy, I think that all of the above recommendations will serve as invaluable small group study resources. As I have written, the LIVING FAITHFULLY volume already contains a Leader’s Guide at the end of the book which could also serve as a dialogue resource if a pastor uses the chapter material for a four week sermon series and designs a dialogue time after each worship service for congregants who want some question and answer time with the pastor.

In addition, the UMW book by Ellen Brubaker, THE BIBLE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY contains a detailed four session study guide that can also be utilized as a guide for a four week sermon series in a local congregation. Brubaker has also included three pages of bibliography with additional suggestions for reading and background.

Dr. Don Messer and I believe that we United Methodists are in a Kairos moment in our church. Between now and the February 2019 called General Conference, we have the opportunity, as we never had had before, to study and pray and be in dialogue about Scripture and Sexuality.

Dr. Messer and I believe it is incumbent especially upon pastors and educators to use the above resources and other resources to help the Methodist people in our congregations to love God with all our minds as well as with all our hearts, souls, and strength.

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