



A Monthly E-Newsletter For CenterPeace Parents Volume 12 May 2022

"MOM, I'M GAY" — A NEW BEGINNING FOR OUR FAMILY

By Lisa Fuller

Originally published on August 14, 2017 as part of '[Mondays with Moms](#)' on The Missing Peace blog by Sally Gary

Being a lifelong Christian and part of the Church of Christ meant I had never considered that my child could be gay. Yes, I had gay friends and I loved them and sought to include them and let them know that they would always be part of my life. Extended family members? Yes, but not my child. I was a loving mom. An attachment-parenting mom who stayed home and homeschooled and avoided immersion into too much contemporary culture. I actively, lovingly parented and was involved in my children's lives. They wouldn't have the emotional emptiness I was told was at the root of choosing to be gay.

But here we were: "Mom, I think I'm gay."

I thought those words were the beginning of the end, and I also thought they said something about me. I must have done something wrong as a parent. There had to be some magic formula that I had missed because of my own troubled childhood and lack of relationship with my mom. I tried to listen more than I talked because I didn't want to say anything hurtful. I didn't want to hurt my beautiful daughter: the one who made me a mom and who was the first to be my heart walking around outside my body.

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Instead, it was a new beginning. What I've learned over the last thirteen years is that my daughter was brave enough to come out because she knew how much I loved her and because of what I had done **right** as a parent. Some people are gay. I don't have to know why that's true to know that it is true. I didn't decide to be straight; I just am. She didn't decide to be gay; she just is.

And I am thankful.

I am thankful for her honesty and how it taught us to have difficult conversations with grace and love. I am thankful for the home she has created with her wife and the safe harbor they have provided for others. Her life may be different from what I pictured, but it was not my life to create anyway. She is still a beautiful wife, loyal friend, loving daughter, and will someday be an amazing mother.

And I am thankful.

Nourish Your Faith



By Chris Allrock

This spiritual exercise invites you to bring your whole self into the presence of Jesus, holding no part of yourself back from his inviting space.

Close your eyes and picture a large table filled with your favorite foods. Smell the aromas from the food. Around the table are several chairs. In the chairs are people whom you know—friends, family and acquaintances. Everyone present has been invited to this banquet. The invitation has come from Jesus. He sits at the head of the table.

There are two invited guests yet to arrive. The first is your best-self. This is the part of you that makes you proud. This is your public self. This is the you that is kind, compassionate, caring, present, thoughtful, patient, encouraging, supportive, honest, dependable and joyful. This is the self that makes you glad to be you.

As your best-self steps into the room, you see the faces of others who are seated at the table. They smile. They nod with approval.

You see Jesus rise from his seat and quickly close the gap between himself and you. He takes you in his arms, holds you tight and enthusiastically says into your ear,

"I am SO glad you've come!" Jesus motions for you to join him at a chair next to his at the head of the table.

Sit there for a second and allow your best-self to enjoy being in the loving presence of Jesus.

The last invited guest is your worst-self. This is the part of you that fills you with regret. This is your private self. This is the you that is cruel, uncaring, distracted, thoughtless, impatient, critical, dishonest, undependable and bitter. This is the self you wish you never were.

As your worst-self steps into the room, you see the faces of others who are seated at the table. They frown. Their heads shake with disapproval.

But you see Jesus rise from his seat and quickly close the gap between himself and you. He takes you in his arms, holds you tight and enthusiastically says into your ear, "I am SO glad you've come!" Jesus motions for you to join him at a chair next to his at the head of the table.

Sit there for a second and allow your worst-self to enjoy being in the loving presence of Jesus.

Jesus loves both of you. All of you. Each part of you.

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia

May 17

The International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia was created in 2004 to draw the attention to the violence and discrimination experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex people and all other people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, and sex characteristics.

The date of May 17 was specifically chosen to commemorate the World Health Organization's decision in 1990 to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder. The Day represents a major global annual landmark to draw the attention of decision makers, the media, the public, corporations, opinion leaders, local authorities, etc. to the alarming situation faced by people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities or expressions, and sex characteristics.

from May17.org

BETTER TOGETHER: CREATING SPACE FOR PARENTS

By Tim Hall

In 2010, my wife Robin and I received news that shifted our lives in ways we were unprepared to experience. When our oldest son Tanner was a sophomore in high school, he came downstairs one night in tears. We were not sure what had happened but we were crying with him before we even knew what he would say. He revealed that night he believed he was same-sex attracted.

As a youth pastor, I was prepared for almost anything my two boys would reveal to me. "Dad, I tried drugs this weekend." "Dad, I binge drink on the weekends." "Dad, I got my girlfriend pregnant." But Robin and I never imagined our oldest would reveal he felt he was gay.



I remember the tailspin I was in, not having a clue how to handle this new information or what was expected of me as a parent. I really only knew one thing and that was to stay in relationship with my son and love him no matter what curveball came our way. To this day, twelve years later, we have a wonderful relationship with both our sons.

Robin and I remembered how lost we felt initially. We prayerfully considered our feelings and inability to find space to process the choices and change we would be engaged with in order to journey with our son. We also realized our particular tribe, Churches of Christ, doesn't really allow space to unpack, debrief, discover and reimagine life with a family member who identifies as gay.

Years into our journey, Robin and I continued to feel a call to help other parents who might be in the same position we were so many years ago. As news of our decision to journey with our son in love, rather than ostracize him, spread through friends and family and other congregations, we noticed many were reaching out to us for answers about their children who had come out.

So, about four years ago, Robin and I decided to create space in our home for parents of same-sex attracted children to come into a safe, non-judgmental environment and share their story. Without any real advertising except word of mouth, we had eleven families show up to talk about their story the first time we met. We discovered a real need for parents to be able to process their life and journey.

Robin and I don't claim to have all the answers but you will find listening ears and loving hearts. We all love our children. We all want the best for them. We all pray for safety, wisdom and discernment. Robin and I love the interaction with parents who truly desire the best and healthiest family relationships.

The important thing to remember: love your kiddo. Don't be afraid. Lean into them. Ask questions. Never stop living life with them. They need you. Your voice will always be one of the most important in their lives. My hope is God will continue to guide you and give you what's needed in the moment. Blessings on your journey.

Interested in joining or starting a parent group?

Groups typically meet monthly, either in person or on online. Check out centerpeace.net/parent-support-groups or contact info@centerpeace.net

Register now

Featuring:



Jeff
Chu



Sally
Gary



Candace
Hardnett



Matthew
Vines



Joel
Hollier



Justin
Lee

Find more resources
at CenterPeace.net:

[Support Groups](#)

[Group Spiritual Direction](#)

[Retreats](#)

[Reading List](#)

["The Missing Peace"](#)
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CENTERPEACE AFTER-CONFERENCE: WORKSHOP FOR PARENTS

November 5, 1:30 - 5:00 pm

Parenting an LGBTQ child can be one of the most rewarding, yet challenging aspects of a person's life. But you don't have to walk this journey alone. For the past sixteen years, CenterPeace has helped parents stay connected to their children. Learning to love and support our LGBTQ children requires us to go deeper with God. The reward comes in the realization that God's unconditional love for each of us is more profound than we ever realized. That's the blessing – that our picture of God is transformed into the truly loving being that God is.

If you're wanting to learn more about how you can love your LGBTQ child unconditionally and thus model God's love, join us after the CenterPeace Conference for a post-conference workshop especially for parents. You'll hear from Christian moms and dads who have walked the same path, and who are discovering peace in their families and in their churches. Even more, you'll have another opportunity to listen to the music of gifted artist and mom of a gay daughter, **Staci Frenes!** The author of [Love Makes Room - And Other Things I Learned When My Daughter Came Out](#), Staci will share more of her own story, moving us into deeper relationship with God – and with our children.



Staci
Frenes

