

How can we have a fair and helpful dialogue?

As more congregations and denominations talk of staring processes about the church's relationship with its lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (lgbt) members, we must remember that not all processes are created equal.

A process offering integrity and hope:

- ✓ Hears all generational voices, but pays particular attention to the voice of young adults.
- ✓ Expects vulnerability to be shared.
- ✓ Is educational, drawing from resources that include the social and natural sciences.
- ✓ Consistently challenges inaccurate stereotypes and negative characterizations.
- ✓ Has lgbt people involved in all aspects of the work and views BMC as a resource.
- ✓ Is conscious about how the "issue" is framed.
- ✓ Acknowledges that the church is not a neutral bystander between two sides.
- ✓ Begins from a place of grace and anticipation for what God can and is doing among us.
- ✓ Pays careful attention to the human costs, particularly of those most marginalized.

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Suggested Resources:

Accompaniment: A Resource For Youth Leaders ¹

*Building an Inclusive Church: A Welcoming Toolkit*²

*Coming Out Strong: Information and Resources
for LGBTQA Brethren and Mennonite Youth* ¹

*Doing Process Well: Recommendations for
Brethren Congregations* ¹

*Doing Process Well: Recommendations for
Mennonite Congregations* ¹

*Safe Zone: A Workshop Guide For Leaders and
Participants* ¹

*Taking a New Look: Why Congregations Need
LGBT Members* ³

¹ Available from www.bmcigbt.org or the BMC office

² Available from www.welcomingresources.org/welcomingtoolkit

³ Available from www.churchstuff.com/glbthospitality

Feel free to contact BMC with questions or comments. BMC is also available for consultations, assessments and trainings with congregations, denominations and other groups.

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bmc@bmcigbt.org
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