



ALONG FOR THE JOURNEY: PASTORAL CARE FOR LGBTQ YOUTH, PART 3

Alex McNeill, he/him

Executive Director, More Light Presbyterians

Jess Cook, they/them

Program and Communications Manager, More Light Presbyterians

Shelley Donaldson, she/her

Senior High Youth Coordinator, Fourth Presbyterian Church, Chicago

Ashley Goff, she/her

Minister for Spiritual Formation at Church of the Pilgrims, Washington, DC



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



**INTRODUCTIONS
WHAT IS ONE GIFT
YOU'VE EXPERIENCED
WORKING WITH LGBTQ YOUTH?**



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



What we will cover today:

- Lock-Ins
- How to talk to parents when a youth comes out
- How to talk to the congregation when a youth comes out
- How to uphold a policy when challenges arise



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



LOCK-INS

Remember: When you're setting up your lock-in, keep it simple, neutral, and clear. It doesn't have to be complicated.



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



Lock-Ins: Ground Rules

- Keep it basic
- Use positives
- Include others
- The Sort-of-Golden Rule
- Jesus isn't your maid
- Put away your cell phones
- Respect where others are



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



Lock-Ins: Bathrooms

- Find the **ACTUAL** bathrooms closest to where your group is staying.
- If there isn't an individual stall, then designate a gender neutral one; and **DON'T** make it the one that is the farthest away!



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



Lock-Ins: Sleeping Arrangements

- Use one large room (minimum one Shelley in between).
- Sleep wherever you want.
- No one is allowed to sleep in anyone else's sleeping bag. If you can't be in a large room, go to the sanctuary. If you can't do that, make it camp-out style in someone's backyard.
- Include others



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



5 CONVERSATIONS YOU WILL HAVE



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



5 conversations you will have

1. Talking to LGBTQ youth in your congregation
2. Talking to other youth
3. Talking to an LGBTQ youth's parent/s
4. Talking to the parents of the other youth
5. Talking to the rest of the Church (including your congregation and other congregations)



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



HOW TO TALK TO PARENTS



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



Parents of LGBTQ Youth

- Recognize they may not yet be supportive (this is a journey!)
- Encourage them to take it one step at a time - parents often freak out thinking 12 steps down. Again, this is a journey.
- Remind them their child's LGBTQ identity doesn't mean they will end up lonely and childless
- Encourage them to avoid putting the weight of explaining every bit of information on the youth
- Having an LGBTQ youth doesn't mean the rules are out the window - especially around sleepovers, etc.
- Respect confidentiality of the youth!!



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



Parents of Other Youth

- Honor confidentiality
- Get support of other clergy/leaders
- Know you local and national resources



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



HOW TO TALK TO THE CONGREGATION



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



Talking to the Congregation

- Remember your baptismal promises - when we baptize children into our community, it isn't conditional
- We are baptized as infants to visually illustrate not only our place in the community, but also because God's grace is given even when we do not have the capacity to ask for it
- Identify conversation partners in the congregation
- Look at your policies and implement policies that affirm and support LGBTQ people
- Do a book study or Sunday school class (hint - each part of this series will fit perfectly into a Sunday school class!)



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)





RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES: CHURCH OF THE PILGRIMS



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



Church of the Pilgrims

- Have a clear line of communication
- Know who is responsible for enforcing various policies so participants can get the most out of the trip
- Stand firm when you need to stand firm
- Avoid making youth responsible for advocating for themselves
- Recognize that everyone may be at a different place in their journey



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



FINAL THOUGHTS



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)



QUESTIONS?



www.mlp.org
[@morelightpresby](https://twitter.com/morelightpresby)

