

RESOURCES for Christians on Nonbinary Affirmation

I originally compiled these resources for a person seeking to help their Christian parents understand and accept them as a nonbinary person.

NOTE: I don't recommend throwing a ton of these resources at a person all at once; it tends to overwhelm or even annoy people, in my experience. Read through them yourself, and pick just a few to show them *or* use the information in them to have conversations of your own with them.

If you have more questions or if you would like a different kind of resource, let me know! I have a ridiculous number of resources so I can likely dig up whatever you need. Reach me at queerlychristian36@gmail.com or at blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com.

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What is nonbinary? What are they pronouns all about?

Here's an awesome masterpost full of links that can help you, including tips on explaining being genderqueer/nonbinary, a site where people can practice new pronouns, and a reflection on why loved ones should respect your pronouns:

<http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/155957723341/coming-out-resources-for-nonbinary-folks>

An example of how we use singular they pronouns all the time in everyday speech:

<http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/159692216224>

An article on using neopronouns

<https://www.bustle.com/articles/121131-i-switched-to-gender-neutral-pronouns-and-this-is-what-i-learned>

A video on neopronouns: https://youtu.be/OwfzKPza_fE

How can you be nonbinary *and* Christian?

An interview with nonbinary Christian M Barclay (who is now a Methodist deacon!):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-16U2YYFph8&list=PLwWfCs7vnwdC1wblAmH3_klm0fE7oN9tE&index=41

And Austen Hartke's vid "How to Reconcile Faith and Identity"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gZkp_XsL2ys&list=PLwWfCs7vnwdC1wblAmH3_klm0fE7oN9tE&index=36

Why should Christians accept (or even celebrate) nonbinary people?

Here's an article on including diverse genders in church:

http://newsacred.org/2015/08/a-church-beyond-the-binary/?utm_content=buffer9f021&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer

Here's an awesome article on welcoming trans people in church:

<https://www.queertheology.com/faith-justice-transgender-christian/>

Mental health! Trans and nonbinary people who are invalidated suffer mentally; those who are affirmed are more mentally healthy!

<http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/142710750181/since-yall-were-so-great-about-spreading-my>

What does the Bible “say”?

Note: depending on how your parents read scripture, you may hit some roadblocks -- especially if they read scripture as the literal, inerrant Word of God. I read scripture as a work *inspired* by God through which the Word of God (Jesus!!) is revealed, but which was written by humans (mainly men) living in patriarchal cultures and thus their biases and limitations are included. It probably won't be helpful to imply that however your parents read the Bible is “wrong,” but maybe they can come to see that *other* ways of reading the Bible are not necessarily “wrong” either.

- [I describe my own interpretation framework here.](#)
- And I've got some more stuff on reading the Bible in my “interpretation” tag: <http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/tagged/interpretation>
- You also might find Austen Hartke's “Are You Taking the Bible Seriously?” vid helpful in describing why and how one might read the Bible *not* as God's literal word: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6gv5M4VmM4&list=PLwWfCs7vnwdC1wblAmH3_klm0fE7oN9tE&index=63

This link leads to a pdf chapter of Justin Tanis' 2003 book *Transgendered*; the chapter discusses “Gender Variance in Scripture.” It's got wonderful stuff on Genesis 1 and 2, on eunuchs, on Deuteronomy...

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1rx1qYrflE_25nO2VBcEtrDteh78VNXLa/view?usp=sharing

Other resources on Genesis 1 and 2:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_IO6ZIMUOk&index=1&list=PLwWfCs7vnwdC1wblAmH3_klm0fE7oN9tE
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jwILSR578_4&index=2&list=PLwWfCs7vnwdC1wblAmH3_klm0fE7oN9tE
- <http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/158789224681/possible-biblical-view-of-gender>
- <http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/126714376341/beginning-and-end-is-a-pairing-that-represents>

Other resources on eunuchs:

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VHI6Y1lxIYM&index=4&list=PLwWfCs7vnwdC1wblAmH3_klm0fE7oN9tE
- <https://petersontoscano.com/ethiopianeunuch/>
- <https://petersontoscano.com/eunuch-inclusive-esther-queer-theology-101/>
- <https://petersontoscano.com/seeing-eunuchs-in-the-bible/>

Isaiah 11:

<http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/158031987506/it-is-right-there-in-this-text-you-hold-sacred>

A long look at the “clobber claims,” the Bible passages used against LGBT (well, mainly LGB) folks:

<http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/141990574911/if-its-okay-to-be-gay-then-why-dose-the-bible>

- Look at the “But what does the Bible say” section of my resources page for even more looks at the clobber claims and other stuff in scripture:

<http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/138702498076/lgbta-christian-resources>

To me, deconstructing how the Bible does not *condemn* LGBT folks is only the first step -- we can also see how scripture **affirms** us! See posts in my “good fruit” tag for instance:

<http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/tagged/good%20fruit>

See also Justin Tanis’s chapter on “**Gender as Calling**”:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1q3TUIx-fv-jTkASjm9PIQr8emSf4kDp7/view?usp=sharing>

Responses to other common arguments against us:

For a ton you can wander through my “rebuttals” tag:

<http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/tagged/rebuttals>

I have a “dialogue” tag with posts specifically about having conversations with more reluctant people: http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/tagged/dialogue_tag

Here’s a doc with brief summaries of many of Austen Hartke’s videos that are helpful for allies/congregants in particular:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1gfPb1qniOf479RhKCjeOfCIs_eaTQqG2/view?usp=sharing

“This is just your cross to bear” / “You need to deny yourself”

- <http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/165487206901/what-are-your-thoughts-on-the-verse-luke-923>
- <http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/166433089486/a-queer-seminarian-i-was-happy-to-be-part-of>

“God doesn’t make mistakes”

- <http://blessedarethebinarybreakers.tumblr.com/post/161835578541/if-god-makes-us-the-way-we-all-are-with-no>

Your body is a temple — you cannot change it!

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPyLn0YxBIc&index=43&list=PLwWfCs7vnwdC1wblAmH3_klm0fE7oN9tE

More Online Resources

Online Communities (talk to other people!)

- [Transmission Ministry Collective](#): “an online community of transgender and gender-expansive Christians committed to growing our faith, supporting each other, and healing the world.”
- [Our Bible App](#): “a progressive community...celebrating our many diversities and faith capacities” that includes devotionals and chatrooms
- [Queer Theology offers](#) resources, classes, and more for both LGBTQA+ persons and their parents / others in their lives

Collections of Queer Christian theologies / resources

- [Queer Grace Encyclopedia](#) collects articles that respond to common questions around being queer & Christian
- [My “TransChristianity” site](#) that explores biblical stories of gender diversity, plus gender diversity throughout Christian history
- [QSpirit](#) also explores queerness in the Bible & throughout Christian history
- [OtherWise Academy is an up-and-coming online resource](#) that aims to provide **educational opportunities for those providing spiritual care to Transgender, Intersex, Non-Binary, Two Spirit, and OtherWise People.**
 - Current curricula available free from the website include lots of trans and intersex 101.

Podcasts

- [The Bible Bash podcast](#): each episode takes a queer look at a passage of the Bible
- [Blessed Are the Binary Breakers](#): my own podcast! I interview trans persons of various faith backgrounds, or share my own trans theology / Bible readings

FURTHER READING: Books full of affirmation for LGBTQA+ / Queer Christians

Books that **argue against** anti-LGBT theologies and **present & argue for** LGBT-affirming theologies

- [*Queerfully and Wonderfully Made: A Guide for LGBTQ+ Christian Teens*](#) edited by Leigh Finke — this book is made for teens, but I think that anyone who wants an easy-to-read overview of lots of LGBTQ+ basics could greatly benefit from this book.

Content includes **advice** for when you're questioning, pondering whether to come out, fearing discrimination / rejection from loved ones, dealing with anxiety and depression; unpacking anti-LGBT church stuff & presenting affirming theology (including "queer icons of Christianity"); tips for "queering your community"; and a whole bunch of other stuff!

In this book, "You'll get insight and support from an amazing group of LGBTQ+ professionals, as well as **testimonies** from young adult queer Christians who've recently been exactly where you are. You'll walk away with a lot of answers, prepared with **tools** to help. But most importantly, you'll hear the good news: God loves you exactly as you are."

- [*Welcoming and Affirming: A Guide to Supporting & Working with LGBTQ+ Christian Youth*](#) — the companion text to the previous book!

"A handbook for pastors, youth workers, church leaders, educators, and other adults in Christian settings, the book provides answers to the most pressing questions about sexuality, gender, mental health, safe sex, and more."

- [*OtherWise Christian: A Guidebook for Transgender Liberation*](#) by Chris Paige — This book attempts to make academic stuff more accessible and easier to read (along with updating older texts' language).

It "**reviews 25 years of transgender-affirming biblical scholarship**" to assert "that the Bible shows us story after story of OtherWise-gendered people being used by God to further the kingdom. Yet, we have been bamboozled by a restrictive gender ideology that is aligned with empire, white supremacy and Christian supremacy. Jesus and our biblical ancestors invite us to join a **gender-full resistance!**"

- [**Transforming: The Bible and the Lives of Transgender Christians** by Austen Hartke](#) — an even easier read than the previous book, theology is interspersed with witness:

“Weaving **biblical examples of gender nonconformity** and transformation with the stories and voices of **contemporary** trans Christians, Hartke’s approach is both pastoral and prophetic as he addresses harmful Christian theology that has been used to further marginalize and exclude trans people.

“Hartke’s scriptural basis for a trans-affirming theology **offers a healing balm for queer and trans people** who have ever questioned that God loves them based on ‘what it says in the Bible,’ while challenging progressive Christian communities to **center trans perspectives** in their efforts to become truly open and affirming.”

- (About the two books above: pick Paige’s book if you want *aaaaall* the trans theology and don’t mind a slightly more academic feel; pick Hartke’s book if you want a briefer overview of trans theology with more storytelling.)

- [**Bad Theology Kills: Undoing Toxic Belief and Reclaiming Your Spiritual Authority** by Kevin Garcia](#) — “[Kevin Garcia] believed that God could never love them because they were queer, leading to a **deadly shame** that nearly took Kevin’s life. Kevin felt trapped by fear. Fear of losing their community, their family, and even their connection to God.

“That is until Kevin changed their mind, finally hearing the voice of the Spirit calling them to believe something better, and to step in to truly abundant life. **Through personal experience, classical theological devices, and a fair bit of profanity**, Kevin dives into some of the most common toxic belief patterns that are killing our communities, showing you how to undo them, and **how to create new, better theology** to lead you back to your spiritual authority.”

- [**Queer Virtue: What LGBTQ People Know About Life and Love and How It Can Revitalize Christianity**](#) by Rev. Elizabeth Edman — the author is a lesbian Episcopal priest.

“Edman posits that Christianity, at its scriptural core, incessantly challenges its adherents to **rupture false binaries**, to “queer” lines that pit people against one another. Thus, Edman asserts that Christianity, far from being hostile to queer people, **is itself inherently queer**. ...Lively and impassioned, Edman proposes that queer experience be **celebrated** as inherently **valuable**, ethically virtuous, and illuminating the sacred.”

- [*Our Lives Matter: A Womanist Queer Theology*](#) by Pamela Lightsey — this one's more academic. This book "uses the tenor of the 2014 national protests that emerged as a response to excessive police force against Black people to frame the book as following the discursive tradition of **liberation theologies** broadly speaking and womanist theology specifically.

"Using a womanist methodological approach, Pamela R. Lightsey helps readers explore the **impact of oppression against Black LBTQ women** while introducing them to the emergent intellectual movement known as queer theology."

[You can watch a YouTube interview with Pamela Lightsey about this book here.](#)

Memoirs & Anthologies of LGBTQA+ Perspectives

- [*Trans-Forming Proclamation: A Transgender Theology of Daring Existence*](#) by [Liam Hooper](#) — The memoir-mixed-with-theology of a trans man who graduated from Christian seminary and converted to **Judaism**.

"Hooper demonstrates his love of both the Hebrew language and the wisdom of nature itself, bouncing back and forth between the insights gleaned from his beloved Grandma Daught and sacred texts dear to both Jewish and Christian traditions."

- [*Does Jesus Really Love Me?*](#) by [Jeff Chu](#) — this book incorporates a sense of humor as it covers serious topics. It's "part memoir and part investigative analysis that explores the explosive and confusing **intersection** of faith, politics, and sexuality in Christian America.

From Brooklyn to Nashville to California, from Westboro Baptist Church...to the pioneering Episcopalian bishop Mary Glasspool...Chu captures spiritual snapshots of Christian America at a remarkable moment, when **tensions** between both sides in the culture wars have rarely been higher.

- [*OtherWise Christian 2: Stories of Resistance*](#) edited by Chris Paige — an anthology of personal reflections, drawing on both classic articles and new content from contemporary trans, nonbinary, intersex, and otherwise gender nonconforming authors

Poetry collections by trans writers that explore God's love & solidarity with us

- [**Queering Lent by Slat's Toole**](#) — poems by a nonbinary Christian minister exploring their journey through religious trauma into God's queer embrace. You can find some of the [poems from this collection in my #slats tag](#).
- [**The Backwater Sermons by Jay Hulme**](#) — poems by a trans "poet, performer, educator, and speaker with a love of ancient church buildings that led him to a sudden and life-changing encounter with the God he had never believed in."
- [**The Kin\(g\)dom in the Rubble**](#) by Avery Arden (previously Avery Smith) — (oh gee, that's me!)

"This collection of 38 poems envisions a world turned on its head by the **incoming reign of a queer God** – a reign so close we inhale it with every breath, yet so distant it might well take a billion years more to fully immerse us. These poems **wrestle with God, humanity, and the Bible from a queer and trans perspective**, drawing from the author's Catholic and Presbyterian backgrounds to do so.

"Scripture and science, nature and personal experience mingle together in the text as bitterness melts into expectant joy and **wounds yield unimaginable blessings.**"

You can find some of the poems included in this book [on my website here](#).

- [**Tree by SJ Blasko**](#) — Tree is "a collection of poetry that explores what it means to be in **community**, in **faith**, and in **love**."