



JUSTICE NETWORK TARRANT COUNTY INCLUSION GUIDE

**How to Create
Welcoming Spaces**



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Introduction

This guide is for you, me, your congregation, institution or organizational community. While one can find plenty of resources scattered across the Internet, we have tried to assemble materials to help you and your community on your journey toward inclusion and welcoming, wherever you are in the process.

As we strive toward creating more welcoming spaces in our religious and communal life, we know that matters of inclusion and equity for LGBTQ+ individuals are not always obvious. This guide serves to make this easier, offering suggestions on avoiding pitfalls and accepting yourselves and your community where you are. Of course, the Justice Network encourages every effort to include LGBTQ+ voices in this work.

Many acronyms describe people with gender and sexual identities who face marginalization in our society. In this guide, we use LGBTQ+, which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning with the + holding space for the expanding and new understanding of different parts of the very diverse gender and sexual identities. Acronyms for other marginalized identities include “I” for intersex, “2” or “2S” for two-spirit, and “A” for asexual. This [article](#) from the Princeton Gender Sexuality Resource Center discusses choices of which acronyms to use.

Language

Naming is crucial to communication, yet language around gender and sexual orientation can be confusing. These resources focus specifically on vocabulary and language concerns:

Vocabulary:

[Gender Unicorn -](#)

A useful graphic that helpfully explains the difference in basic terms, e.g. gender identity vs. gender expression, sexual attraction vs. romantic attraction.

[LGBTQ+ Terminology - Keshet](#)

A more complete listing of important terms widely used in conversations.

Pronouns

[PRONOUNS: A RESOURCE](#)

An excellent brief guide from GLSEN, set up in a FAQs format, with a glossary as well:

[LGBTQ+ Vocabulary Glossary of Terms » The Safe Zone Project](#)

Signage

[Unisex Bathroom ADA Signs](#)

Bathrooms Signs from Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Sign Depot:

(NOTE: If your facility only has gendered bathrooms you can post a sign or otherwise communicate a policy stating: "You are welcome to use the bathroom that best aligns with your gender identity.")

Educational Resources:

material for schools, institutions, congregations & individuals

Inclusion Checklist: [Institutional Self-Assessment | Keshet](#)

This tool will help you find out where you are on the inclusion ladder. Published by a Jewish organization, it is nondenominational and appropriate for all institutions.

Our Whole Lives (OWL): [Our Whole Lives: Lifespan Sexuality Education | UUA.org](#)

Age-Appropriate, Lifespan, Comprehensive Sexuality Education:

- This secular curriculum was jointly developed by the United Church of Christ (UCC) and the Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA). Both the UCC and UUA have supplemental material which, when the curriculum is presented in a congregational setting, add questions and material that connect the curriculum to these faith traditions. OWL programs can be secular, religion-specific, or religiously pluralistic.
- Local OWL classes
 - All Peoples Church UU (contact firstjeffre@gmail.com) is looking to collaborate with other congregations to provide OWL beginning in Fall 2024
 - Webinar series - OWL Taking Flight - eg, Addressing Anti-LGBT Initiatives <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAHw-UGKIGo>

The Safe Zone Project privilege activity: [Privilege for Sale](#)

This is a resource for a class or workshop focused on growing lgbtq+ allies. It powerfully helps participants investigate privilege by inviting them to identify what privileges they find personally important.

Trans Ally Guide: [Being an Effective Trans Ally](#)

This resource is offered by The 519 Space for Change.

Books

- ***With Bi/Pan Representation***
 - [The Library of the Unwritten](#), by A.J Hackwith
 - [Little & Lion](#), by Brandy Cobert
 - [The Sound of Stars](#), by Alechia Dow
 - [The Stars and the Blackness Between them](#), by Junauda Petrus
- ***With Ace (asexual) Representation***
 - [Elatsoe](#), by Darcy Little Bear
 - [Full Disclosure](#), by Cameryn Garrett
 - [Let's Talk About Love](#), by Claire Kann
 - [Sawskill Girls](#), by Claire Legrand
 - [Dare Mighty Things](#), by Heather Kaczynski
- ***With Intersex Representation***
 - [Double Exposure](#), by Bridget Birdsall
 - [None of the Above](#), by I. W. Gregoria
 - [An Unkindness of Ghosts](#), by Rivers Solomon

- ***With Trans and Nonbinary Representation***
 - Cemetery Boys, by Aiden Thomas
 - The Death of Vivek Oji, by Akwaeke Emezi
 - Euphoria Kids, by Alison Evans
 - Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe
 - Little Fish, by Casey Plett
 - Nevada, by Imogen Binnie

- ***With 2S (Two Spirit) Representation***
 - Johnny Appleseed, by Joshua Whitehead
 - A Two Spirit Journey, by Ma-Nee Chacaby
 - 47,000 Beads, by Angel Adeyoha and Koja Adeyoha

- ***About Bodies***
 - Bodies Are Cool, by Tyler Feder

- ***LGBTQ+ & Religion***
 - Heterosexism in Contemporary World Religion: Problem and Prospect, eds. Marvin M. Ellison and Judith Plaskow. Includes essays from Christian, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, and Hindu perspectives about heterosexism.
 - Queer Religiosities: An Introduction to Queer and Transgender Studies in Religion by Melissa Wilcox. Comprehensive, comparative, and globally focused. Wilcox provides an overview / history of queer and trans studies and thematically explores themes using case studies of religious communities. The study and discussion questions, filmography, and further resources make this book ideal for group study.
 - Meaningful Flesh: Reflections on Religion and Nature for a Queer Planet ed. Whitney A. Bauman. Essays focusing on religion, nature, and queer theory.

- ***Other***
 - The LGBTQ+ History Book Published in the US by DK Publishing, Division of Penguin Random House LLC., 2023
 - The Book of Pride - LGBTQ Heroes Who Changed The World, by Mason Funk, HarperCollins Publishers, 2019

Health Care Resources:

Local:

AIDS Outreach Center (AOC) - Ft. Worth [AIDS Outreach Center](#)

Providing a continuum of services from testing and prevention efforts through linkage to health care and maintenance of viral suppression.

CAN Community Health - Arlington [CAN Community Health](#)

Services, education and support for people affected by HIV, Hepatitis C, and other sexually transmitted diseases.

HELP Center for LGBT Health and Wellness: [HELP Center for LGBT Health & Wellness](#)

Arlington and Fort Worth Locations. Cutting-edge, community-based health and education services, aimed at preventing AIDS/HIV and other STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections). Available to anyone, whether or not you have insurance, AT NO CHARGE.

Prism Health North Texas - [Prism Health North Texas](#)

Providing Gender Affirming care

Transvive [Trans Wellness Service](#)

HRT access (local)

National (including Texas)

Folx [Folx](#)

Gender affirming care (national including Texas)

GLMA - [Provider Directory](#)

LGBTQ healthcare directory (national including Texas)

Plume [Plume](#)

Gender affirming care (national including Texas)

Queer Health Pod [Queer Health Pod](#)

A Health Podcast by and for Queer People: bringing LGBTQ health questions to the queer experts who can answer them.

Texas Community Support Resources:

Black Tie Dinner DFW - [Black Tie Dinner](#)

Raises funds and provides resources for LGBTQ+ supportive organizations through premier events in partnership with the community.

Coalition for Aging LGBT - www.cfa.lgbt:

Improves and protects the quality of life of older LGBT adults in North Texas through community engagement and advocacy education. Facebook: Coalition for Aging LGBT (North Texas) / Coalition for Aging LGBT (Tarrant)

Dallas Voice - <https://dallasvoice.com/>
The Premier Media Source for LGBT North Texas

Equality Texas - [Equality Texas](#)
Works to secure full equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Texans through political action, education, community organizing, and collaboration: [Community Resources - Equality Texas](#)[Equality Texas](#)

Finn's Place - [Finn's Place](#)
A community center in Fort Worth for trans and gender-diverse people to gather and grow.

GLAAD - <https://glaad.org/region/texas/?page=1>
Works through entertainment, news, and digital media to share stories from the LGBTQ community that accelerate acceptance. community calendar: [LGBTQ Community Calendar | GLAAD](#)

Human Rights Campaign - [Texas - Human Rights Campaign](#)
America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people.

Inclusive Faith Coalition (IFC) - [Inclusive Faith Coalition](#)
Coalition of welcoming congregations in Tarrant County:

Lambda Legal - [Lambda Legal](#)
The oldest and largest national legal organization whose mission is to achieve full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and everyone living with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work. Lambda Legal has an office in Dallas: 3500 Oak Lawn Ave UNIT 500, Dallas, TX 75219. Phone: (214) 219-8585

LGBTQ SAVES - [LGBTQ SAVES](#)
Provides safe and brave spaces for social and personal development of LGBTQ youth.

MPact DFW - [mpact dfw](#)
Provides safe spaces for gay and bi-sexual men of color.

North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce - [North Texas LGBT Chamber of Commerce](#)
Where Business and Equality Meet

North Texas Pride - www.northtexaspride.com/:
Advocates unity, equality and community integration for LGBTQ and allies through forums and events that promote pride, self-acceptance, education, awareness, social interaction.

North Texas Transportation Network - [North Texas TRANSportation Network](#)
provides travel grants to North Texas Families seeking out-of-state health care for trans and gender-diverse minors.

Parents of Trans Youth - [Parents of Trans Youth](#)

provides learning, support, and community to parents and caregivers of transgender, nonbinary, and gender diverse kids.

PFLAG Fort Worth - [PFLAG – Fort Worth](#)

promotes the health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, their families and friends:

PFLAG Publications:

- A publication about understanding LGBTQ issues and how to become an ally: [Be not afraid - PFLAG](#)
- A booklet with a broad look at LGBTQ families, including personal experiences: [Faith In Our Families - PFLAG](#)
- [Supporting Your LGBTQ+ Grandchild - PFLAG](#)

Texas Freedom Network (TFN) - [LGBTQIA+ Rights Archives - Texas Freedom Network](#)

Advocacy organization fighting for LGBTQ rights

Texas House LGBTQ Caucus - [TEXAS HOUSE LGBTQ CAUCUS](#)

A forum for Texas Legislators to discuss issues that affect LGBTQ Texans.

Texas Trans Kids - [Resources for Transgender Youth in Texas](#)

Resources specific to trans kids.

Transgender Education Network of Texas (TENT) - [Transgender Education Network of Texas](#)

Advocacy organization protecting the rights of the Transgender community:

Trans-Cendence International - [Trans-Cendence International](#)

Advocate for and assist transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals through outreach and collaborative support.

Denominational/Movement Specific Resources

Buddhist

Books and other media:

[My Buddha is Pink: Buddhism from an LGBTQI Perspective](#) by Richard Harrold.
Harrold practices in the Thai Forest Theraveda tradition. (2019)

[Radical Dharma: Talking Race, Love, and Liberation](#), by Rev. angel Kyodo williams and Lama Rod Owens, with Jasmine Syedullah, PhD

Christian

Organizations

Cathedral of Hope:

Sexuality and Faith Resources: [secular and religious resources](#)

Supporting our [transgender communities](#).

[Soulforce](#)

“Works to end the religious and political oppression of LGBTQI people by breaking open the ideologies of Christian Supremacy and healing our communities’ spirits from Spiritual Violence,” offers many downloadable resources in its [resource library](#).

The Rainbow Well:

[An Affirming 2SLGBTQIA+ Resource Hub on Faith, Gender, & Sexuality](#)

Trinity Presbyterian support groups:

[Open Hearts \(LGBTQ+ Family and Friends\) - Trinity Presbyterian](#)

[Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches \(MCC\)](#), founded in 1968 prior to the Stonewall riots by Rev. Elder Troy Perry, launched an international movement and prophetic witness that changed the face of Christianity and helped fuel an international movement for LGBTQ rights and equality. MCC has a presence in over 20 countries.

Publications

[Well Chosen Words](#) A brochure addressing gender-specific and gender-neutral pronouns

Books and other media:

[Family of Origin, Family of Choice](#), by Katie Hays & Susan Chiasson.

First-person stories of what can happen when a person comes out to their family of origin, and how they can find equilibrium over time. (2021)

[For the Bible Tells Me So: the Biblical Theological Necessity of LGBTQ+ Inclusion in the Church](#), by Katie Hays (2020)

A short, easy-to-read summary of how the Bible speaks to questions of sexual orientation and gender identity — how it seems to say “no” but actually gives a resounding “yes” to the rainbow of human expression.

[New Directions for Holy Questions: Progressive Christian Theology for Families](#)

by Claire Brown and Anita Peebles

This book for families centers around life’s big questions with each of its 19 chapters addressing one question. Each chapter includes a story from the bible, a modern social justice story, open-ended questions, and a spiritual practice.

Our Lives Matter: A Womanist Queer Theology by Pamela R. Lightsey (2015) Dr. Lightsey uses a womanist approach to reflect upon Methodist doctrine and practice through the stories of Black LGBTQ women.

Rainbow Theology: Bridging Race, Sexuality, and Spirit by Patrick S. Cheng (2013). Cheng is an Episcopal priest who has systematically collected theological writings from diverse LGBTIQ people of color. His book reflects upon the intersections of race and queer sexuality and theological themes of multiplicity, middle spaces, and mediation.

Samuel de Witt Proctor Conference Clergy Conversations (Pride edition)
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=rnDsSIQrs9s>

Where the Edge Gathers: Building a Community of Radical Inclusion by Yvette A. Flunder. Bishop Flunder, a womanist theologian, is the founder of the City of Refuge UCC in San Francisco and Presiding Bishop of [The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries](#). This book applies the use of “village ethics” to building and maintaining communities that center the most marginalized people. In addition, she has included several sermons.

Jewish

Organizations:

Keshet: [Keshet](#)

National Organization working toward the full equality of LGBTQ+ Jews and their families

Moving Traditions: [Jewish Youth Programs - Moving Traditions](#)

Provides safe spaces and programming for LGBTQ+ Jews to connect, grow and thrive:

Southern Jewish Resource Network for Sexual and Gender Diversity: [Sojourn](#)

Guides:

- A Quick Guide for LGBTQ inclusion: [A Quick Guide for LGBTQ Inclusion - Keshet](#)
This guide gives quick tips and information on creating a fully inclusive community where everyone can feel seen, heard and whole.
- Made In God's Image: https://urj.org/sites/default/files/2021-07/Keshet_RAC_Transgender_Inclusion_Guide_July_2021.pdf
This guide, from Keshet and the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, focuses especially on inclusivity in a congregational setting.
- Making Jewish Ritual Spaces All-Gender Inclusive
This guide, from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA), is more comprehensive and contains a section on inclusion in Jewish rituals:

- [YACHAD/TOGETHER: An inclusion Guide for the Conservative/Masorti Movt: Inclusion Guide - LGBTQ+ Working Group of the SJC](#)

Books and other media:

[Becoming Eve: My Journey from Orthodox Rabbi To Transgender Woman](#), by Abby Chava Stein (2019)

[Mishkan Ga'Avah: Where Pride Dwells: A Celebration on LGBTQ Jewish Life and Ritual](#), Edited by Denise L. Eger (2020)

[A Rainbow Thread: An Anthology of Queer Jewish Texts from the First Century to 1969](#), by Noam Sienna (2019)

[The Soul of the Stranger: Reading God and Torah from a Transgender Perspective](#), by [Joy Ladin](#) (2018)

[Through The Door of Life: A Jewish Journey Between Genders](#), by [Joy Ladin](#) (2013)

[Torah Queeries: Weekly Commentaries on the Hebrew Bible](#), edited by Gregg Drinkwater, Joshua Lesser and David Shneer (2009)

[Trembling Before G-d](#) (Movie) Documentary about gay and lesbian Orthodox Jews reconciling their sexuality with their faith. (2001)

[Wrestling with God and Men: Homosexuality in the Jewish Tradition](#), by Rabbi Steven Greenberg (2005)

Sikh

Books and other media:

["Policing the Bodies of Transgender & Queer Sikhs"](#) by [pradeep singh kehal](#).

United Methodist

Reconciling Ministries Network (www.rmnetwork.org) is an organization seeking the inclusion of people of all sexual orientations and gender identities in the policy and practices of the United Methodist Church.

Unitarian Universalist (UU)

UU Guidelines for Welcoming Congregations:

[Guidelines and Action Steps for Welcoming Congregations | UUA.org](#)

LGBTQ Ministries: [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Justice | UUA.org](#)

- MONTHLY Trans/NB gatherings with UPLIFT (Uplifting LGBTQ+ Experience Within and Beyond Unitarian Universalism)! [Transgender / Nonbinary Monthly Gatherings - 4th Tuesdays @ 8pm ET / 5pm PT | UUA.org](#)
- Educational Resources [Resources of Support for Transgender and Non-Binary People | UUA.org](#)

Transforming Hearts Collective / Online Course: [Transforming Hearts Collective](#)

- NOTE: UU Congregations in Texas may access this course through the Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry ([Transgender Inclusion in Congregations – Texas Unitarian Universalist Justice Ministry](#)). All Peoples UU will have a cohort starting in February 2024.

Invitation to Make this A More Useful and Responsive Guide

You can help us build on this initial effort by sending us your ideas, additional resources, etc. If you have suggestions regarding adapting or changing this document, please send them to: Sarah Berel-Harrop at sberelharrop@uuma.org.