

**1996 Forum "And God Loves Each One. A Search for Understanding: Understanding Homosexuals"**

**AND GOD LOVES EACH ONE  
ROCK SPRING CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
SEARCH FOR UNDERSTANDING SEMINAR, PART III**

Goal: To gain a better understanding of sexuality, homosexuals, homophobia, and our faith

**I. October 6, 1996, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

Understanding Homosexuals

Gays and lesbians and parents of gays and lesbians will discuss their journey with homosexuality. What it is like growing up gay, to be "in the closet," and "coming out" will be explored.

-- Kirsten Kingdon, mother of a gay, attorney, member of the NY Avenue Presbyterian Church Task Force on Sexuality, and PFLAG Metro (keynote—20 minutes)

-- James Fisher, Arlington Human Rights Commission, Counselor, Past President of Arlington Gay and Lesbian Alliance (10 minutes)

-- Rev. Linda Kaufman, Episcopal priest at Foundry United Methodist Church and former director of the Dinner Program for Homeless Women at First Congregational Church, Washington, D.C. (10 minutes).

Break (10 minutes)

What helps our understanding of homosexuality and what hinders it. An exploration of our inner struggles, perspectives, and feelings.

-- Dr. Suzan Stafford, psychotherapist and facilitator in private practice, Washington, D.C. (50 minutes)

**II. October 13, 1996, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

Understanding Homosexuality

Current research on homosexuality will be discussed from the scientific (genetic, biological, environmental) and psychological perspectives. What science can and cannot tell us about our sexuality, human nature, and why we think and feel the way we do, will be explored.

-- Chandler Burr, Author of *A Separate Creation – The Search for the Biological Origins of Sexual Orientation* (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

-- Dr. Monica Baruch, psychotherapist in private practice, Washington, D.C. (10 minutes)

**III. October 20, 1996, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

Understanding the Scriptures, homophobia, and our faith

We will explore the theological underpinnings of our faith and the Bible as they related to homosexuality; how the practice of homosexuality and the church's teachings can be compatible—all people in God's image; what hate does; and how the church can reach out and build self-affirmation in the context of caring relationships.

-- Rev. William Johnson, Minister for AIDS Programs and Ministries Coordination, Division of American Missionary Association, UCC Board for Homeland Ministries, Cleveland, Ohio (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Individual and congregational concerns relating to homosexuality will be explored as well as the needs and opportunities for the church to serve the total community.

-- Rev. Jean Alexander, Pastor, Bethesda United Church of Christ, Bethesda, Maryland (30 minutes)

-- Rev. Lin Ludy, Chair of the UCC Support Group for Parents of Gays and Lesbians, Arlington, Virginia (10 minutes)

**IV. October 27, 1996, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

Understanding gays' and lesbians' issues

Issues affecting gays and lesbians, nationally and in Arlington, such as housing, employment, social services, partner benefits, commitment, etc., will be explored, along with possible options.

-- Steve Gunderson, US Congressman from Wisconsin and author of the recently published book, *House and Home*, and partner Rob Morris (30 minutes)

-- Jay Fiset, Director, Whitman-Walker Clinic of Arlington and community leader; and partner Rob Rosen (30 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

-- Dr. Laura Young, Chair, Community Services Board, and psychotherapist in private practice, Washington, D.C. (15 minutes)

-- James Hunter, Chair, Arlington County Board and member of Rock Spring Church (15 minutes)

Closing remarks

-- Rev. Chuck Wildman, Senior Minister, Rock Spring Church (10 minutes)

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Seminar Planning Committee:

Cherie Bottum      Susan Limberg  
Gail Briggs        Claudia Sturges  
Gina Dale          Rev. Chuck Wildman

John Bottum – Seminar Moderator  
Rock Spring Congregational United Church of Christ  
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