

Straight Clergy, Gay Family Members

CFLAG

***Clergy Families
and Friends
of Lesbians and
Gays***

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CLERGY FAMILIES AND
FRIENDS OF LESBIANS AND
GAYS

Address Correction Required

*“We only change our minds after
our hearts change in response to
loving someone who is gay.”*
— The Rev. Gray Temple

*“Love your children as God loves
them—for who they are, not in
spite of who they are.”*
— The Rev. Douglas Brown,
OHC

To learn more about CFLAG
or to join the network, visit our
website at www.clergyflag.com
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What does it mean to be a church leader today and the straight parent, sibling or spouse of a gay person? Well over a thousand straight Episcopal clergy and their spouses have gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender (GLBT) children or other family members. In addition, an unknown number of straight spouses are married to, or have been married to, GLBT clergy.

Many, if not most, families are challenged when a GLBT child or other family member comes out. For clergy families, the issues are both deeply personal and unavoidably professional.

Who we are

Now, straight Episcopal clergy and their spouses¹ across the country have formed a national network of Clergy Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (CFLAG). Our purpose is to share experiences and support, then explore opportunities to reach out to families and GLBT people in our parishes and across the church family, as we all seek new ways to remain one family under God.

¹ Including straight spouses of GLBT clergy

We share this experience with our Christian, Jewish and Muslim clergy friends in the U.S. and around the world, and we invite them to join us. Together, we are among an estimated one in four families worldwide who have GLBT family members. If that number surprises you, stop and think. Every gay or lesbian person has two parents, and most have at least one sibling, not to mention cousins, grandparents, aunts and uncles. Add us up, and we family members are everywhere—including in every congregation in this country and across the globe.

Sharing our experience

For many of us, having a GLBT family member has been a journey of love, as we have unlearned the myths that still abound. We have discovered the joy of celebrating difference in the GLBT people we love and all that they bring to our families and the world. This journey has deepened our faith and opened new windows on the world.

Over time, we have found that coming out as family members brings a new freedom, helps us and others grow, and makes the world a better place for those we love. We have learned that straight family members and friends can bring understanding where there is misunderstanding. We have seen God's love hold families together when disagreement and fear threaten to tear them apart.

Our families and the church family

Our experience gives us hope that the church family can stay together in love, and we can unlearn the myths we hold about each other.

The church's debate today is not abstract. It is about us and our children, siblings, parents, cousins and spouses or ex-spouses. Straight clergy with GLBT family members have much to give the church at this time, and we hope to help families find their voices.

How does it work?

CFLAG is an online network of clergy families and friends of GLBT people. We communicate on an e-mail listserve and are developing other ways to reach each other and serve the church.

We welcome clergy and spouses of all faiths who have gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender children or other family members.