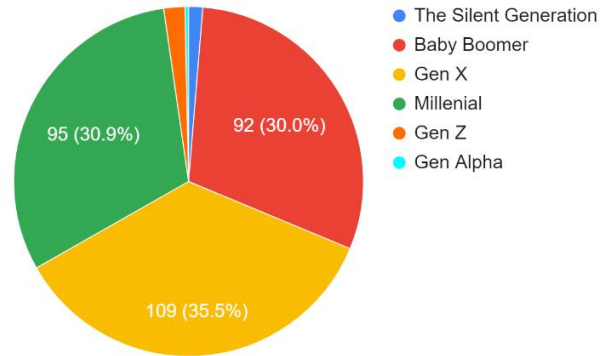


Survey Data

Section 1: Personal Demographics

Question #1: Which age range/generation do you fall under (year of birth in parentheses)?

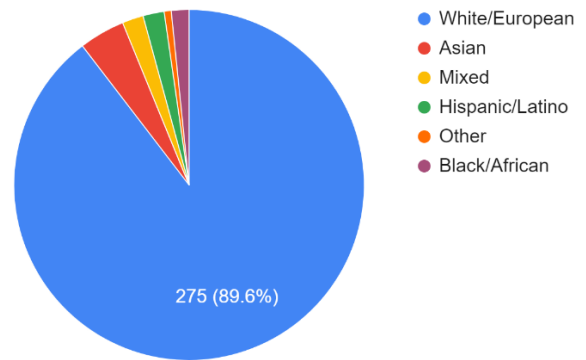
- The Silent Generation (1925 - 1945) – 1.3%
- Baby Boomer (1946 - 1964) – 30.0%
- Generation X (1965 - 1979) – 35.5%
- Millennial (1980 - 1994) – 30.9%
- Generation Z (1995 - 2012) – 2.0%
- Generation Alpha (2013 - present) – 0.3%



Question #2: With which race/ethnicity do you most identify?

Note: The original survey included the term “Native Alaskan” instead of “Alaska Native” which is the preferred terminology for indigenous persons from Alaska.

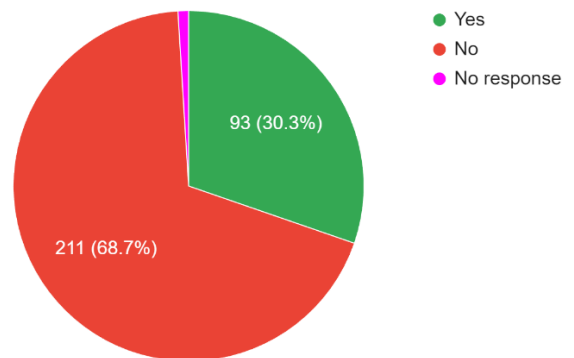
- American Indian/Alaska Native/First Nations – 0.0%
- Asian – 4.2%
- Black/African – 1.6%
- Hispanic/Latino – 2.0%
- Middle Eastern/North African – 0.0%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander – 0.0%
- White/European – 89.6%
- Mixed – 2.0%
- Other – 0.6%



Other Responses: One respondent wrote “Turkish” and one other declined to answer.

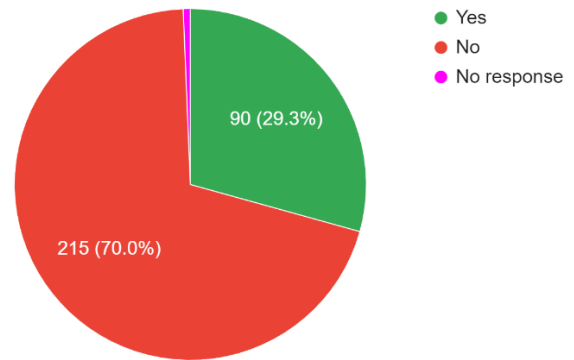
Question #3: Have you ever been a student of North Park University?

- Yes – 30.3%
- No – 68.7%
- No response – 1.0%

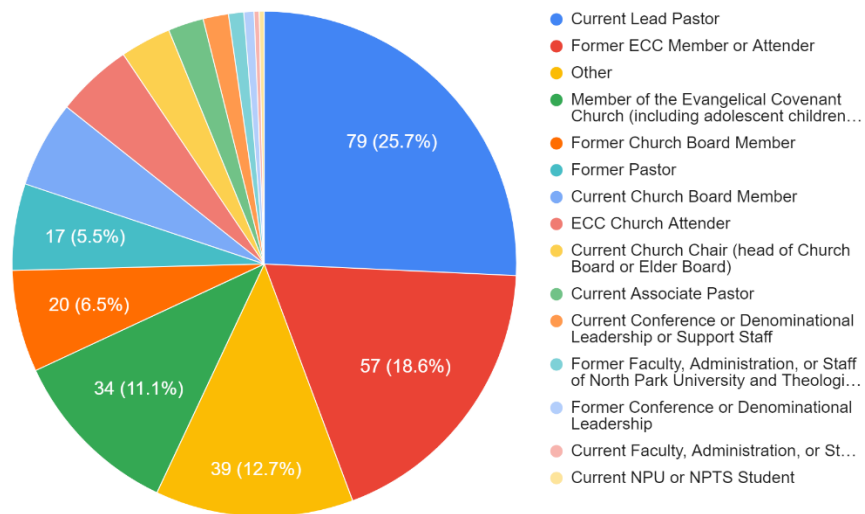


Question #4: Have you ever been a student of North Park Theological Seminary?

- Yes – 29.3%
- No – 70.0%
- No response – 0.7%



Question #5: Which role best describes your current position within the Evangelical Covenant Church? (Feel free to use the "Other" option if your role in the ECC is multivalent.)



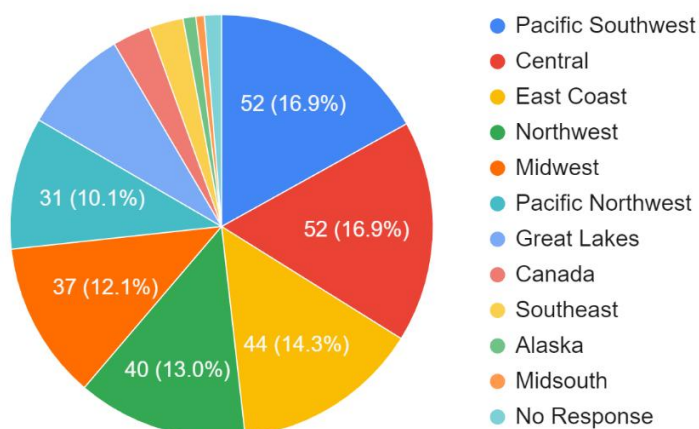
- Current Lead Pastor – 25.7%
- Current Associate Pastor – 2.3%
- Current Church Chair (head of Church Board or Elder Board) – 3.3%
- Current Church Board Member – 5.5%
- Current Conference or Denominational Leadership or Support Staff – 1.6%
- Current Faculty, Administration, or Staff of North Park University and Theological Seminary – 0.3%
- Former Pastor – 5.5%
- Former Church Board Member – 6.5%
- Former Conference or Denominational Leadership – 0.7%
- Former Faculty, Administration, or Staff of North Park University and Theological Seminary – 1.0%
- Current NPU or NPTS Student – 0.3%
- Member of the Evangelical Covenant Church (including adolescent children of members) – 11.1%
- ECC Church Attender – 4.9%
- Former ECC Member or Attender – 18.6%
- Other – 12.7%

Other Responses:

Affirming		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active church member and volunteer assisting pastor. Former youth pastor Covenant Pastor's Wife Current Interim Lead Pastor Current Youth Pastor (Former Associate Pastor) Current Pastor & NPTS student ECC Church Staff Member (Non-Pastoral) ECC member and staff Former Church Chair, Current Church Employee and Member Former ECC attender and former staff at North Park University (both) Former member and youth ministry leader (volunteer) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former member, former church board chair, former church staff Former music ministry director Former pastor, current attender of a church removed from the ECC. Former Youth Pastor Hospital Chaplain, OWS by ECC I was active in the Covenant Church from 1993 until 2017. I was active locally in the conference and in the denomination NPTS Alumnus, Former ECC Member NPU Alum Ordained pastor and conference ministerial executive committee vice-secretary Random attender -- spiritual director with the PSWC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retired Cov. Missionary Retired Covenant pastor Retired ECC missionary + ordained to word and sacrament Retired pastor serving a rural church Senior pastor at non-Covenant church Staff at NPU and ECC church member Transitional Lead Pastor UMC Lead Pastor Wife of a former Covenant pastor [No Response]
Non-affirming		Unclear
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covenant Camp Associate Director Former Pastor and member-current pulpit supply at ECC church [No Response] 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current Conference staff + Member of an ECC church Former CCC member at previous church and prospective ECC member at current church Global Personnel with Serve Globally Pastor/Spiritual Director Retired ordained ECC pastor

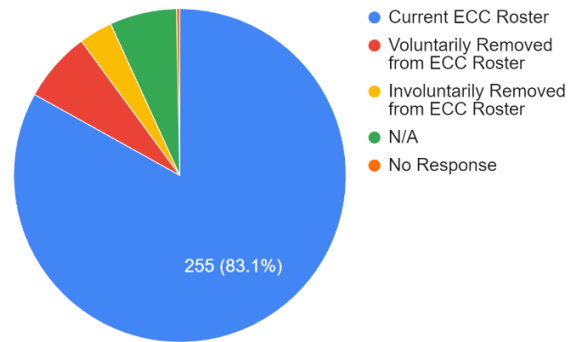
Question #6: In which regional conference of the ECC is the church that you currently attend or most recently attended?

- Alaska – 1.0%
- Canada – 2.9%
- Central – 16.9%
- East Coast – 14.3%
- Great Lakes – 8.1%
- Midsouth – 0.7%
- Midwest – 12.1%
- Northwest – 13.0%
- Pacific Northwest – 10.1%
- Pacific Southwest – 16.9%
- Southeast – 2.6%
- No Response – 1.3%



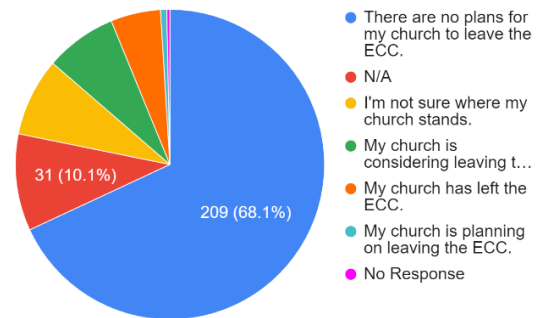
Question #7: What is the status of the ECC church that you currently attend or most recently attended?

- Current ECC Roster – 83.1%
- Involuntarily Removed from ECC Roster – 3.3%
- Voluntarily Removed from ECC Roster – 6.8%
- N/A – 6.5%
- No Response – 0.3%



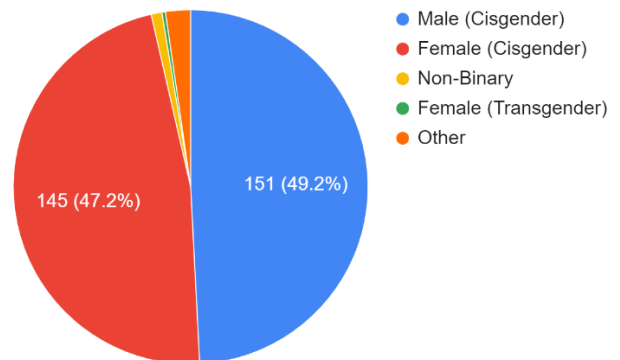
Question #8: To your knowledge, is there any discussion of the church that you currently or most recently attended leaving the ECC?

- There are no plans for my church to leave the ECC. – 68.1%
- My church is considering leaving the ECC. – 7.5%
- My church is planning on leaving the ECC. – 0.7%
- My church has left the ECC. – 5.2%
- I'm not sure where my church stands. – 8.1%
- N/A – 10.1%
- No Response – 0.3%



Question #9: Which choice most closely corresponds to your gender identity?

- Male (Cisgender) – 49.2%
- Female (Cisgender) – 47.2%
- Male (Transgender) – 0.0%
- Female (Transgender) – 0.3%
- Non-Binary – 1.0%
- Agender – 0.0%
- Gender Fluid - 0.0%
- I'm Not Sure – 0.0%
- Other – 2.3%



Other Responses

Affirming

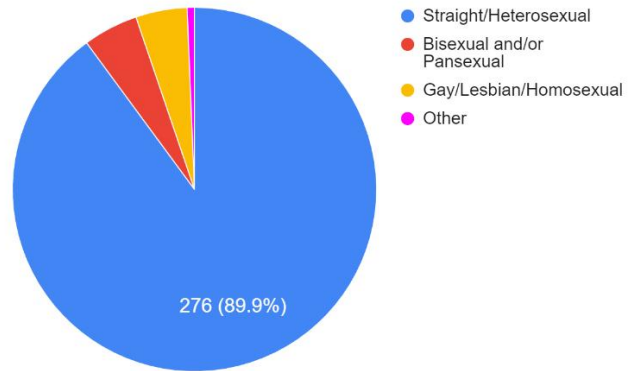
- Female who does not use the term cisgender.
- Just a man

Non-affirming

- I am a child of God - This is the primary label to which I ascribe
- I don't even agree with the premise of the question.
- Male
- Male - I am so happy to be what God made me to be.
- [No Response]

Question #10: Which choice most closely corresponds to your *sexual orientation*?

- Straight/Heterosexual – 89.9%
- Gay/Lesbian/Homosexual – 4.6%
- Bisexual and/or Pansexual – 4.9%
- Asexual and/or Aromantic – 0.0%
- I'm Not Sure – 0.0%
- Other – 0.7%

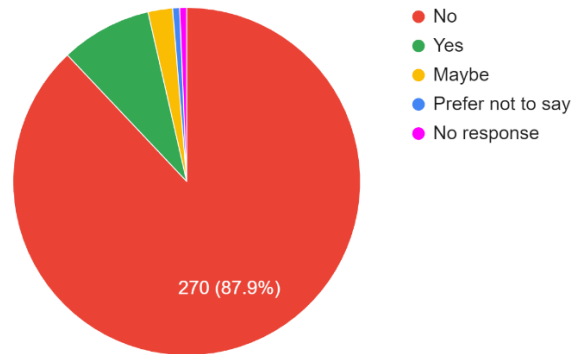


Other Responses



Question #11: Do you consider yourself to be LGBTQ+?

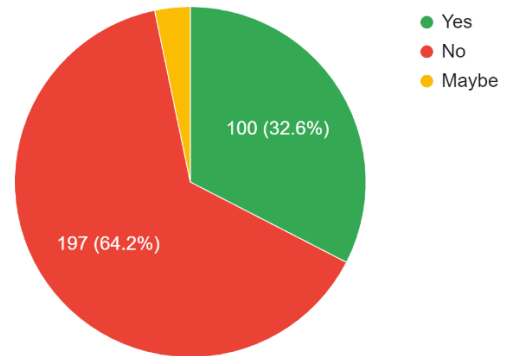
- Yes – 8.5%
- No – 87.9%
- Maybe – 2.3%
- Prefer not to say – 0.7%
- No response – 0.7%



Section 2: Personal Experience with the LGBTQ+ Community

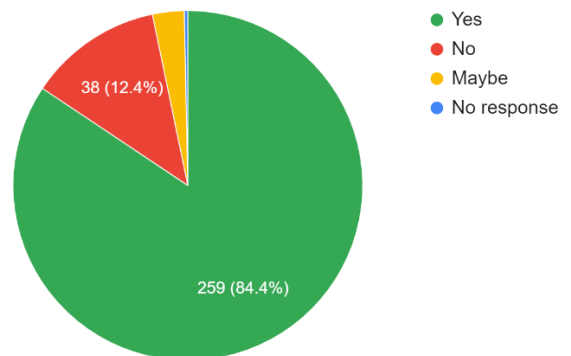
Question #1: Do you have an immediate family member (child, parent, sibling, or spouse) who is LGBTQ+?

- Yes – 32.6%
- No – 64.2%
- Maybe – 3.3%



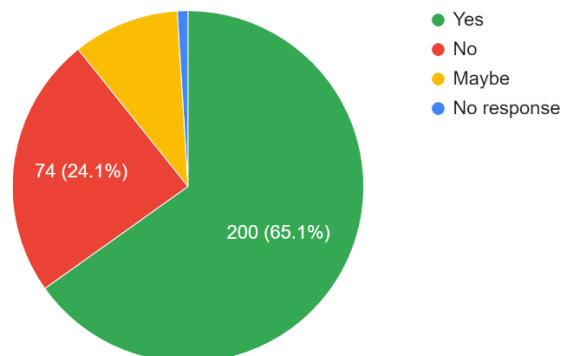
Question #2: Do you have an extended family member or a close personal friend who is LGBTQ+?

- Yes – 84.4%
- No – 12.4%
- Maybe – 2.9%
- No response – 0.3%



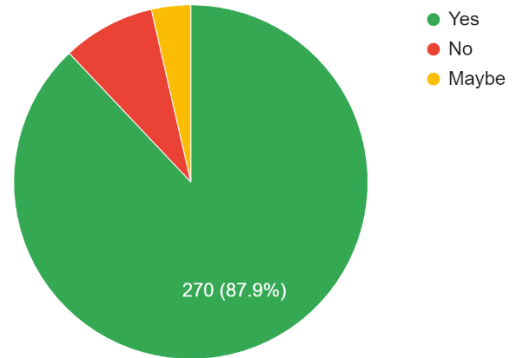
Question #3: Do you have a friend or acquaintance within your church congregation who is LGBTQ+?

- Yes – 65.1%
- No – 24.1%
- Maybe – 9.8%
- No response – 1.0%



Question #4: Do you have an acquaintance, colleague, or friend from your occupation or other social organization you are a part of who is LGBTQ+?

- Yes – 87.9%
- No – 8.5%
- Maybe – 3.6%

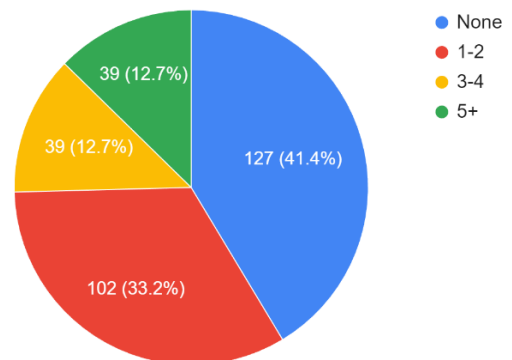


Question #5: Have you read or are you currently reading any books that call for a fully affirming theology and posture towards LGBTQ+ persons within the broad ecumenical Christian Church?

Including, for example, but certainly not limited to the following books:

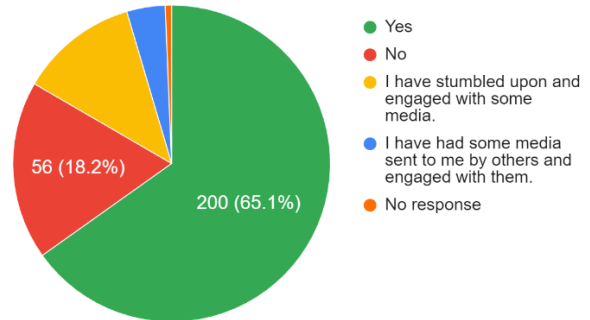
- *God and the Gay Christian* by Matthew Vines
- *Changing Our Mind* by David Gushee
- *Torn* by Justin Lee
- *The Widening of God's Mercy* by Richard and Christopher Hays
- *Jesus, the Bible, and Homosexuality* by Jack Rogers
- *Bible, Gender, Sexuality* by James Brownson
- *UnClobber* by Colby Martin
- *Walking the Bridgeless Canyon* by Kathy Baldock
- etc...

- None – 41.4%
- 1-2 – 33.2%
- 3-4 – 12.7%
- 5+ – 12.7%



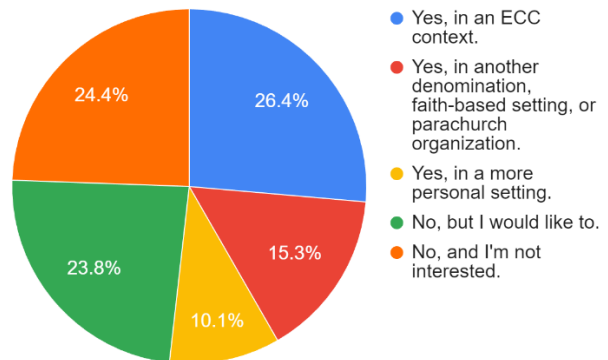
Question #6: Have you intentionally sought out and listened to or read other **media** that calls for a fully **affirming** theology and posture towards LGBTQ+ persons within the broad ecumenical Christian Church? These forms of media would include, but are not limited to movies, documentaries, YouTube videos, speeches or sermons, articles, blog posts, and podcast episodes.

- Yes – **65.1%**
- No – **18.2%**
- I have stumbled upon and engaged with some media. – **12.1%**
- I have had some media sent to me by others and engaged with them. – **3.9%**
- No response – **0.7%**



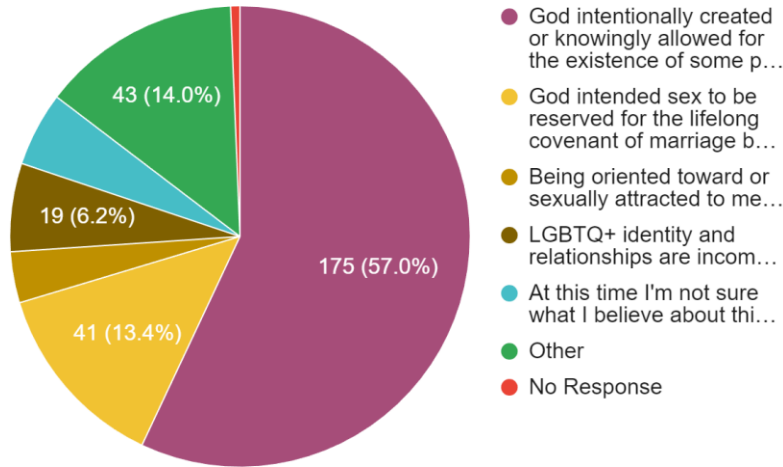
Question #7: Have you ever been involved in a group study, either as a small group, focus group, board, ministry team, pastoral team, whole congregation, or a conference or denominational group, that was organized for the purpose of studying LGBTQ+ inclusion, gay marriage, ordination of queer persons, or other related topics of the intersection of LGBTQ+ identity and the Christian faith?

- Yes, in an ECC context. – **26.4%**
- Yes, in another denomination, faith-based setting, or parachurch organization. – **15.3%**
- Yes, in a more personal setting. – **10.1%**
- No, but I would like to. – **23.8%**
- No, and I'm not interested. – **24.4%**



Section 3: Perspectives Regarding LGBTQ+ Inclusion Within the ECC

Question #1: Which statement most closely aligns with what you currently believe to be the correct Christian view on human sexuality as it relates to sexual orientation?



- God intentionally created or knowingly allowed for the existence of some people to have sexual attractions to members of the same sex. God blesses sexual relationships between members of the same sex within certain ethical boundaries. (Sometimes referred to as "Side A") – **57.0%**
- God intended sex to be reserved for the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. Therefore, God calls all believers (queer and straight alike) to a life of celibacy within community or to a monogamous marriage with a member of the opposite sex (sometimes referred to as a "mixed-orientation marriage"). This position acknowledges the reality of sexual orientation and that queer identity is a healthy way of communicating one's experience and desires. (Sometimes referred to as "Side B".) – **13.4%**
- Being oriented toward or sexually attracted to members of your own gender is sinful, a spiritual sickness, and must be repented of and cured. Heterosexuality is seen as God's best for all people. Efforts to change a person's sexual attraction should be promoted. It is appropriate for a person who has repented for their same-sex attraction or sexual activity to refer to themselves as "ex-gay". (Sometimes referred to as "Side X".) – **3.6%**
- LGBTQ+ identity and relationships are incompatible with the Christian faith. Therefore, Christians attracted to their own sex should renounce LGBTQ+ identification and use non-identity ways for explaining their experience. All Christians are called to remain single or enter an opposite sex marriage. Under this belief, the use of conversion therapy to change a person's sexual attractions is generally not supported. (Sometimes referred to as "Side Y".) – **6.2%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I believe about this issue. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **5.2%**
- Other – **14.0%**
- No response – **0.7%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- Homosexuality is a result of the fall, but that doesn't make them being gay a sin. They should be allowed to live a full and complete life including marriage with those they are attracted to with no repercussions. God blesses their marriages and they can show God's covenant love through the way they live their lives together. (Side A, but with a twist)
- Human sexuality is not reserved to a hetero or monogamous relationship.
- I am now agnostic and have no belief about God. However, if I did, my belief would most closely align with Side A.
- I am theologically challenged by a complete "Side A" position, but in terms of relationships, compassion, justice, and love I adhere to "Side A".
- I believe God intentionally created human beings with a beautiful diversity of sexual orientations and gender identities, all of which bear the divine image and are inherently good. Loving, mutual, and life-giving relationships between queer people are fully blessed by God when lived within the same ethical boundaries of love, justice, and fidelity that apply to all

relationships. Any theology that denies LGBTQ+ people's full dignity or calls them to a standard different from their straight/cisgender siblings distorts both the gospel and the witness of the church.

- I believe that God created LGBTQIA+ individuals and they are compatible with Christianity. I do not believe sexual relationships must only occur in marriage, because there is no scripture that requires it.
- I do not believe there are any boundaries within same sex marriage, attraction. Closer to option 1 without limitations.
- I don't think homosexuality is a sin. I think sex is important and the bible points towards monogamous relationships where sex is treasured and treated with reverence, but these views on human sexuality are rife with both American evangelical bias & recency bias. The framework that personal identity is based on sexual desire is a fairly new/western development that bears no resemblance to what we know of first-century societies in Asia minor or the middle east. If the first choice in this list was the one I most closely identify with, the language is still troublesome. I don't believe God created us with our primary identifiers being based on desire. Check out "The End of Sexual Identity" by Jenell Paris.
- I love all people despite their gender identity; however, I have some issues with terminology or pronouns, and the support of the medical community regarding research into the treatment of women and. Various conditions that affect women only and their bodies.
- I would go further than the first option to say that God doesn't just bless but celebrates same sex relationships and attraction, created it and sides with those oppressed by the ECC and other churches.
- Love is love. No one is excluded.
- Something close to the first question that is not shrouded in the belief that there is a moral or ethical code that applies only to the LGBTQ community.
- While God's design in Eden was for men and woman to be full complimentary partners, we are far from that. To place orientation or gender identity as a moral qualifier in any way, or to assume that straight marriage more accurately reflects Gods intention simply due to orientation is hubris. In humility, LGBTQ folks need to have full rights in the church including leadership and marriage. All are fully valued, fully blessed without condition. Scripture gives us guidelines for discerning spiritual leaders. These include things like humility and love, not orientation or gender identity.

Non-affirming

- All sexual orientations must be submitted to the authority of God the creator, and the best way to understand that is through the authority of Scripture empowered by the discernment of the Holy Spirit. All new revelation will not come in contradiction with past revelation.
- God created two sexes, male and female. God's design for marriage is between one man and one woman. Alternative genders are a result of the Fall; sinful and outside of God's design for humanity. Acceptance and embracing of alternative genders (sexes) is unacceptable. Same sex relationships and marriages are contrary to God's design and are also unacceptable. With love, we are to point individuals confused about their sexuality to God and Christ and the teaching of the bible and the Holy Spirit to deliver them from sexual sin and embrace their God given biological sexual identity.
- God intended sex to be reserved for the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and one woman.
- God intended sex to be reserved for the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. Therefore, God calls all believers (queer and straight alike) to a life of celibacy within community or to a monogamous marriage with a member of the opposite sex (sometimes referred to as a "mixed-orientation marriage"). This position does not require acknowledging sexual orientation and queer identity as a healthy way of communicating one's experience and desires, since it presumes that anything other than God's intentions with His creation are--by definition--sinful. This position does not go so far as to promote the "forced changes" of "Side X" or the essential "incompatibility" with Christianity of "Side Y"--it simply declares LGBTQ+ behaviors are sinful, and that all sinful behaviors (not just those within the context of human sexuality) should not be affirmed, even though the people themselves should be graciously embraced.
- God intended sex to be reserved for the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. Therefore, God calls all believers (queer and straight alike) to a life of celibacy within community or to a monogamous marriage with a member of the opposite sex. I also believe that trans have a mental illness and need mental health care and support, not a catering to their false identity and affirmation of some internal struggles they experience. I also believe that being same sex attracted isn't the problem, it's when people act out their sinful sexual desires that it becomes problematic. I have many thoughts on this - primarily that our identity is about being a child of God and not our sexual inclinations. I could go on, but I think you understand my standing.
- God intended sex to be reserved for the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. Therefore, God calls all believers (queer and straight alike) to a life of celibacy within community or to a monogamous marriage with a member of the opposite sex. Same-sex attraction is a result of the curse and cannot be embraced as healthy, since it--like all other sin, including heterosexual formation, adultery, deceit, pride, unkindness, etc. - are evidence of human kinds' spiritual death and the curse of sin that lies on our world. Like all sin, it can tempt a Christian and there's nothing sinful about being tempted. But as with all other sin, engaging in it is wrong and to be repented of. This covers homosexuality only. There are only two genders, male and female, made by God to image himself as they exist and work together. God

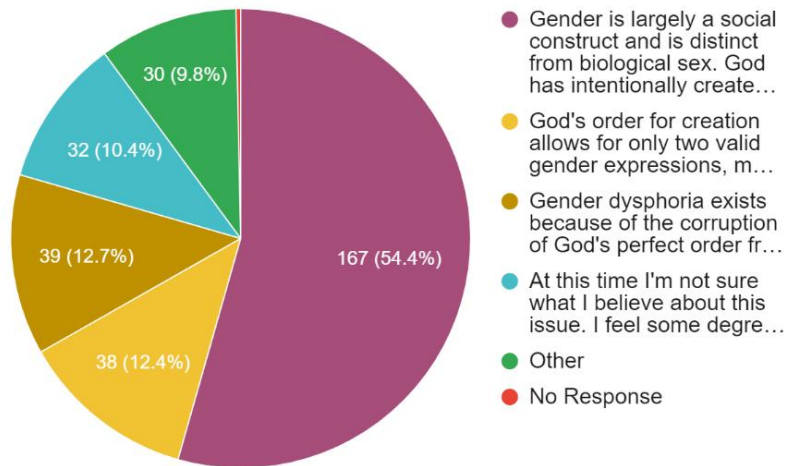
does not make errors in his creation, and those who believe they are not the sex God created them must be lovingly helped to understand God better and trust him faithfully with the circumstances of their lives.

- God intended sex to be reserved for the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. Therefore, God calls all believers to a life of celibacy within community or to a monogamous marriage with a member of the opposite sex. Being oriented toward or sexually attracted to members of your own gender is sinful and must be repented of. Heterosexuality is seen as God's best for all people. Efforts to change a person's sexual attraction should be promoted.
- <https://cbmw.org/about/the-danvers-statement/>
- Human Sexuality (Biblical Definition): Human sexuality is God's good design in creating humanity as male and female, both bearing His image (Genesis 1:26–27). It encompasses our identity as embodied, gendered beings and our capacity for relational intimacy, reflecting God's purposes for companionship, covenant, and fruitfulness. Sexual expression is intended to be holy, reserved for the covenant of marriage, and to mirror Christ's faithfulness to His people (1 Thessalonians 4:3–5; Hebrews 13:4). Marriage (Biblical Definition): Marriage is a covenantal union between one man and one woman, established by God at creation (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4–6). It is a lifelong, exclusive relationship of love, faithfulness, and mutual self-giving, ordered toward companionship (Proverbs 18:22), the bearing and raising of children (Genesis 1:28), and displaying the mystery of Christ's sacrificial love for His church (Ephesians 5:22–33).
- I believe in the Biblical definition of marriage. One man and one woman. People that struggle with same sex attraction should remain celibate.
- I believe what the Bible teaches on marriage and sex. It should be only between a man and a woman in marriage.
- I take the Biblical view.
- I tend toward what you would call "side B." However, I would never encourage someone to be married without levels of connection and attraction in spiritual, emotional, and physical area. I do not affirm that an LGBTQ identity is in anyway God's intended desire and that the embracing of my wants and needs is rarely within the ethos of scripture. It is only in the full willingness to die to our desires that we can embrace God's desires. I do not believe that marriage is the answer to the fulfillment of God's desires.
- LGBTQ+ identity and relationships are incompatible with the Christian faith. I believe that our biological sex defines our identity. People may experience same-sex attractions, but they should not consider those attractions as indicative of their identity. All Christians are called to remain single or enter an opposite sex marriage.
- Most closely align with Side B but do not see an alternative sexual orientation as healthy but also don't see it as something that has to be cured. All sin needs to be repented in everyone of us.
- Side B- God intended sex to be reserved for the lifelong covenant of marriage between one man and one woman. Therefore, God calls all believers (queer and straight alike) to a life of celibacy within community or to a monogamous marriage with a member of the opposite sex (sometimes referred to as a "mixed-orientation marriage"). This position acknowledges the reality of sexual orientation, however understands that queer identity is an unfortunate way of communicating one's experience and desires. (Sometimes referred to as "Side B".)
- Since the fall, people may have a type of sin they're more susceptible to struggle with. Just because current society now embraces and celebrates it doesn't make it any less of a sin. Including other non-sexual sins as well.
- somewhere between "Side X" and "Side Y"
- These definitions are too long and complex for me to check one. My personal stance would be a combination of 2-3.
- We fully support the current ECC human sexuality belief.

Unclear

- Currently moving between Side A and Side B, but not quite fully to Side A yet...
- God intended for marriage to be between one man and one woman, but as in other areas of life, God's intentions have not always been realized. I believe his heart is for all people, regardless of this reality. My call, as a follower of Jesus, is to strive to have the heart of God toward others, as Jesus so often demonstrated.
- God is inclusive of all people created in His image. Our views don't separate anyone from God regardless of their views on sexuality or mine.
- I lean heavily towards the first option "God intentionally created..." but if I am being completely honest it's still something that I am not 100% sure of.
- I'm not sure if I'm A or B but I'm not X or Y. I'm also not sure how much God really wants us to focus on who other people have sex with. I understand discrimination and pain within the church calls Christians to pay attention, though.
- mixture of several
- My theological conviction is side B, but think God may make accommodations due to human limitations.
- None of these statements fully represent my personal beliefs about this. I am closest to "Side A", but generally prefer to start from the question of what is healthy sexuality before targeting a single form of attraction for a specific position.
- Not sure at this time but not ambivalent. Open to different perspectives and recognize it is not so absolute.
- Some mix of Side A and B. Side A.5?

Question #2: Which statement most closely aligns with what you currently believe to be the correct Christian view on gender identity and expression?



- Gender is largely a social construct and is distinct from biological sex. God has intentionally created or knowingly allowed for the existence of some people who have a gender identity that does not necessarily align with their biological sex (also referred to as the "sex assigned at birth"). These individuals may be referred to as transgender, gender fluid, or non-binary and may include, but are not limited to people who are intersex. People who experience these gender identities should always be referred to with their preferred names, titles, and pronouns. Furthermore, they should be fully affirmed into the life and ministry of the Church. – **54.4%**
- God's order for creation allows for only two valid gender expressions, male and female, and that these genders correspond with a person's biological sex. A person experiencing gender dysphoria should receive support, prayer, and therapy until their gender identity aligns with their biological sex. It is okay to use someone's preferred name and pronouns so long as it is communicated that God's will for that person is that they are set free from their gender dysphoria. – **12.4%**
- Gender dysphoria exists because of the corruption of God's perfect order from The Fall. Choosing to live into a gender identity that does not align with one's biological sex is a sinful rejection of God's will. A person should seek to find their identity in Christ as opposed to the disordered identities promoted by the world. It is inappropriate to use a person's preferred name and pronouns when they do not align with the person's biological sex. – **12.7%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I believe about this issue. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **10.4%**
- Other – **9.8%**
- No response – **0.3%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- Again, I'm agnostic. But if I were not, I would choose the first option.
- First Statement but do not agree that gender is largely a social construct.
- Gender dysphoria is a blanket label that encompasses a number of disparate experiences. Gender and biological sex may mean different things in different contexts, even to the same person. God desires all humanity to live lives that are fully integrated with body, mind and spirit, and that are based on self-giving love. God is not gendered, and only the spectrum of sex differences can collectively paint a picture of the image of God. God has created a self-creating universe, and is fundamentally a God of relationship, of love. Seeing the universe as an expression of Will (i.e. "god allowed" or "God intended") fundamentally frames God as a puppet master whose central characteristic is the willful exercise of power, which I believe is wrong. Therefore, we ought to frame this issue as "how would the God we know through Jesus respond with love and wisdom?"
- I believe God created humanity with a diversity of genders and expressions that cannot be reduced to rigid binaries. Gender is a complex interplay of biology, identity, culture, and spirit, and all gender identities (including transgender, non-binary, and gender-fluid) reflect the image of God. To deny or suppress someone's gender identity/expression is to reject part of God's creative work. Faithfulness to Jesus calls us to affirm people fully in their lived gender, using their names and

pronouns, and to welcome them into every aspect of the Church's life and ministry. This affirmation is not accommodation but discipleship, rooted in love, truth-telling, and justice.

- I believe that gender dysphoria is real. I do believe that some (not majority) of this dysphoria can come from brokenness in our world. However, I fully believe that we must affirm and acknowledge the discerned gender of each individual, no matter what!
- I'm not sure, but I would not say ambivalent. I think I just haven't had as much time to sit with this as the marriage one. But of these options, I lean more toward the first.
- See my answer above. I don't think the discussion on a Christian view of gender identity can even happen until the implicit bias on these subjects is unpacked. I don't think God gives a shit about gender identity, nor should we. God gives a shit about the marginalized, therefore we should give a shit about the marginalized and oppressed. Since those people today are the LGBTQ+ community, we should defend them and make space for them at the communion table because there are far too many loud voices telling them they're unloved. They are loved, welcome, and necessary in God's creation.

Non-affirming

- Again, I don't accept the first one but parts of the 2nd & 3rd.
- Again, I identify most clearly with Options 2 and 3 above, up until the point where we attempt to actively force people to change until they meet our own standards of rectitude. We can believe that someone's gender identity constitutes dysphoria while still affirming the human being with grace.
- Gender dysphoria exists as part of the brokenness of a fallen world. Choosing to live into a gender identity that does not align with one's biological sense is subjective confusion and unreality. It is disregarding the reality of your God-given objective identity. A person should seek to find their identity in Christ, as opposed to the disordered identities and confusion promoted by the world. I would choose to meet the person where they are at, but work toward helping them reject the confusion, and come to terms with their objective, biological identity.
- Gender dysphoria exists because of the corruption of God's perfect order from The Fall. Choosing to live into a gender identity that does not align with one's biological sex is a sinful rejection of God's will. A person should seek to find their identity in Christ as opposed to the disordered identities promoted by the world. It is inappropriate to use a person's preferred pronouns when they do not align with the person's biological sex. It is appropriate to use a person's preferred name not given to them at birth.
- Gender Identity (Biblical View) God created humanity in His image as male and female (Genesis 1:26–27). Gender is not self-determined but divinely given, rooted in God's creation and revealed through our biological sex. While sin and the fall have brought brokenness and confusion into every aspect of human life (Romans 8:20–23), including our sense of identity, Scripture affirms that our gender is part of God's good design and should be embraced as such (Psalm 139:13–16). Our true identity is ultimately found in Christ, not in self-definition (Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:3). Gender Expression (Biblical View) The Bible teaches that men and women are equal in dignity and value yet distinct in their roles and expressions (Genesis 2:18–24; 1 Corinthians 11:3–16). Gender expression should honor God's design, reflect modesty, and avoid intentional confusion between male and female distinctions (Deuteronomy 22:5). At the same time, Scripture emphasizes inner godliness over external appearance (1 Peter 3:3–4).
- God created man and woman.
- God does not/did not make mistakes but is holy and pure. Our genetic makeup is part of His creation, not some arbitrary biological phenomenon.
- God's order for creation allows for only two genders, male and female, and these correspond with the person's biological sex.
- I don't like these options; they are too polarized / binary. There's really no "Side B" option here. People have gender dysphoria or are trans, and that is real and can't be changed (there is a spectrum here as well, with some who experience this more severely than others so perhaps a type of 'change' can happen in the lesser cases, but where their gender identity is still a part of their ongoing story. It also should be noted that many teens today are approaching gender like it is multiple choice. I have two kids in middle school and see it with their friends. These are different cases than the adults I know (or teens who are genuinely trans) who are crippled by the struggle.) I don't believe the solution is to transition. I also don't believe a truly trans person can become cisgender. There is a middle road of acceptance and of broadening our understandings of socially-acceptable masculine and feminine categories, which is how I approach this pastorally. I'm surprised/disappointed that a view like this isn't represented on this survey, and my guess is a lot of Covenanters would hold to something similar to this. The current choices pit A against B & C, which is like pitting Side A against Side X and saying pick one.
- I mostly agree with the first view, with some nuance. I'm very hesitant to be fully affirming of physical transitions such as puberty blockers, hormonal treatments, or surgical options. I believe that when an individual experiences some sort of gender dysphoria, the problem lies with the psychological impact of gendered social constructs, not the body itself. Additionally, the research on the long-term impacts of medical transition options is still underdeveloped. I'm more

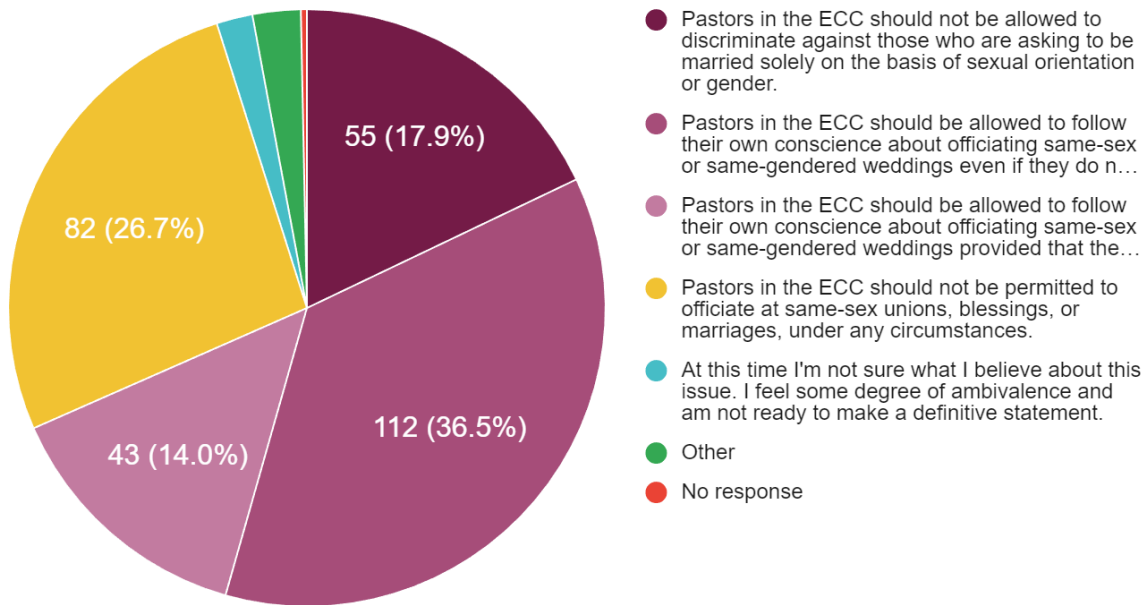
inclined to encourage therapy while acknowledging that therapy may not result in a gender identity that aligns with biological sex.

- I'm in a space between the 2nd and 3rd option, while not fully agreeing with either statement.
- Male and Female, He created them. Two biological sexes. Definitions of gender are rooted in masculinity and femininity which are socially constructed.

Unclear

- Between 1 and 2.
- I believe persons experiencing gender dysphoria should, first of all, have their rights and safety protected in society and in the church. I am deeply concerned about irreversible medical treatments given to minors for gender dysphoria. The participation of biological males who have undergone male puberty in women's only sports is problematic from the standpoint of fairness and safety. At the same time, we want the church to be open to transgender individuals. So, it's a mixed answer, I suppose!
- I closely align with option #1. I have issues with preferred names, titles and pronouns.
- Most closely with the first option. I am still working through my beliefs though. I was raised with basically the 3rd belief, which feels like the opposite of the 1st. Therefore, my mind and heart have been working through this.
- Mostly option A (Gender is largely a social construct and is distinct from biological sex...) but unsure on full affirmation.
- None of these fully represent my understanding of gender. I would take elements of all three. The most important part to me, though, is that people should be fully affirmed into the life and ministry of the church, regardless of definitions of sex and gender, and that their preferred names, titles and pronouns should be respected and used.
- None of these positions really represent the complexity I see. I don't think all gender queer people are talking about or experiencing the same thing and it requires more individualized responses. I also don't think gender expression and medical treatments are equal.
- Not sure, but not ambivalent.
- The first option: "Gender is largely a social construct..." best fits my views. As with the previous question, I am not 100% sure and am still seeking knowledge on the subject.
- We all suffer identity harms due to our fallen nature. Those who are queer should be given grace to live the best way they can under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- Wording and explanations in this question are difficult.

Question #3: Which statement most closely aligns with your perspective on the officiating of same-sex or same-gendered weddings within the Evangelical Covenant Church?



- Pastors in the ECC should not be allowed to discriminate against those who are asking to be married solely on the basis of sexual orientation or gender. – **17.9%**
- Pastors in the ECC should be allowed to follow their own conscience about officiating same-sex or same-gendered weddings even if they do not have broad approval from their congregation. – **36.5%**
- Pastors in the ECC should be allowed to follow their own conscience about officiating same-sex or same-gendered weddings, provided that they have broad approval from their congregation. – **14.0%**
- Pastors in the ECC should not be permitted to officiate at same-sex unions, blessings, or marriages, under any circumstances. – **26.7%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I believe about this issue. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **2.0%**
- Other – **2.6%**
- No response – **0.3%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- At this time, I lean more toward the 1st option (pastors should not be allowed to discriminate) but I wouldn't want to force someone who has not yet learned the truth.
- I am conflicted between the second and third options.
- I believe God created humanity with a diversity of genders and expressions that cannot be reduced to rigid binaries. Gender is a complex interplay of biology, identity, culture, and spirit, and all gender identities (including transgender, non-binary, and gender-fluid) reflect the image of God. To deny or suppress someone's gender identity/expression is to reject part of God's creative work. Faithfulness to Jesus calls us to affirm people fully in their lived gender, using their names and pronouns, and to welcome them into every aspect of the Church's life and ministry. This affirmation is not accommodation but discipleship, rooted in love, truth-telling, and justice.
- I left the ECC to attend an open and affirming denomination so that I would not have to worry about this question.

Non-affirming

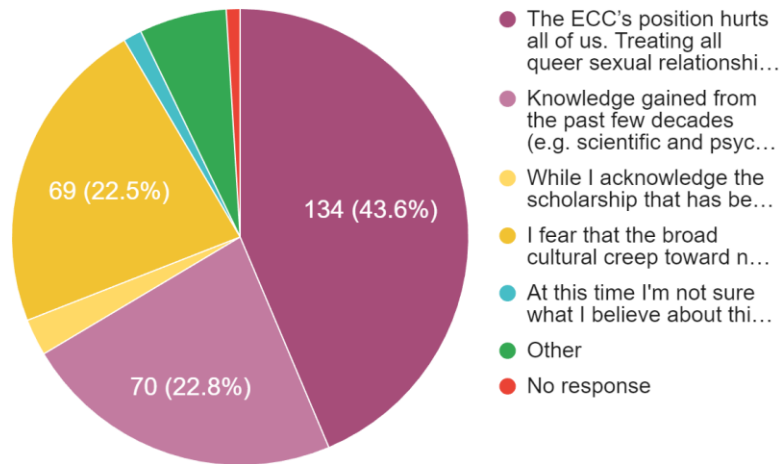
- ECC pastors should not be permitted to officiate. I do think there is a distinction between state/socially defined marriage and Biblical marriage. The ECC has the right as a covenant of members to define the terms of that covenant.

- Pastors in the ECC should not be permitted to officiate at same-sex unions, blessings, or marriages, under any circumstances--if for no other reason than that we have signed an Ethical Code that said that we wouldn't. But again, if same-sex/same-gendered unions are in fact sinful, we should refrain from performing them whether we've signed anything or not.

Unclear

- As a pastor I have agreed to be under the care and guidance of the larger church, and for now there is no permission to officiate same-sex unions. I am free to leave the church and join any number of other denominations that do permit it. Likewise my congregation is free to leave the denomination without fear of repercussion if they choose this is an issue worth withdrawing over.
- Not sure, but not ambivalent.

Question #4: Which statement most closely matches your perspective on the ECC's position on human sexuality as communicated by the [Resolution on Human Sexuality \(1996\)](#)?



- The ECC's position hurts all of us. Treating all queer sexual relationships as inherently broken and sinful undermines our Christian witness and does violence to the Gospel. God is calling on the Church to repent over its exclusion of sexual minorities and to reform harmful language and practices. It is time for the ECC to change its guidelines to align with the prophetic movement that is calling for the full inclusion and affirmation of queer people. – **43.6%**
- Knowledge gained from the past few decades (e.g. scientific and psychological research, theology and biblical studies, personal experience with queer people, etc.) has challenged my own understanding of human sexuality and its intersection with Christian ethics. Queer inclusion has caused division in our denomination, and we ignore it at our own peril. It is time right now for our polity at the denominational, conference, and congregational levels to intentionally listen, study, discern God's calling, and reevaluate the current position. – **22.8%**
- While I acknowledge the scholarship that has been done pointing to a more inclusive posture towards queer relationships, I remain unconvinced of those conclusions. I do not view this as an issue that currently requires deeper reflection or debate and believe that ECC pastors and leaders should continue to adhere to current policies. I could be convinced of reevaluating those policies if there was widespread support among the ministerium. – **2.6%**
- I fear that the broad cultural creep toward normalization and acceptance of homosexual relationships is undermining the clear biblical teaching on acceptable sexual behavior. Queer sexuality is sinful and damages our relationship with God. The ECC should remain set apart from the world and hold firmly to the accepted position on human sexuality as only being valid within the confines of a marriage between one man and one woman. – **22.5%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I believe about this issue. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **1.3%**
- Other – **6.2%**
- No response – **1.0%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- I mostly agree w the first choice here, but would add the real issue at hand is not sexuality- it's authority. And that's been co-opted since 2019 and woven tightly to whiteness and patriarchal leadership commitments. So, without addressing that core authority grab that happened, and has increasingly been centered and protected since 2019, I don't believe much can shift or be repaired.
- It should be a non-discussion, just like a person's income, favorite band, or hair color. It's just another way that humans exist that doesn't determine their value in God's kingdom. We are all equal, regardless of sexual orientation.
- My posture is between the 1st and 2nd options. If option #2 was phrased "Queer EXclusion has caused division..." I would concur with that.
- Now that I have left the Covenant, I fully embrace choice 1. While in the Covenant, I advocated for choice 2 and for congregations and pastors to choose how to handle these issues, similar to how the Covenant allow some churches to decide to not have women in their pulpit or even more important the practice of the sacrament of baptism. We can

agree to disagree on a sacrament and remain in fellowship but cannot see our way to allow for a sexual ethic that includes all.

- The ECC's 1996 Resolution on Human Sexuality is theologically flawed and pastorally harmful. It imposes a double standard on queer people that is inconsistent with the gospel of Christ, which proclaims freedom, dignity, and belonging for all. Far from protecting biblical authority, the resolution narrows our reading of scripture and resists the Spirit's work of joining us across difference. I believe the ECC must repent of the exclusion, silencing, and trauma caused by this position and commit to a renewed identity rooted in love, justice, and full affirmation of 2SLGBTQIA+ siblings. Anything less compromises both our witness and our integrity.
- The ECC's position on human sexuality is garbage, of course, but it brings forth a larger issue: Freedom in Christ and the ECC's betrayal of Pietism. We're not majoring on the majors anymore - We're taking six verses in the bible and letting them tear apart a denomination whose credo used to be "Where is it written?" This was, hypothetically, able to respectfully leave room for a wide interpretation of beliefs within a body of believers, so long as they were faithful to their congregation and scripture. By declaring official interpretations of scripture like what was done in 1996, we've hindered the ability to have a living encounter with Christ.
- The ECC's resolution is an overreach on the congregational polity. Congregations should be allowed to discern God's will and act accordingly.
- The position in 1996, contextually, was more-or-less progressive at the time. To place a 2025 lens on a 1996 statement is a mistake. Would we place a 1990 lens on a 1960 statement on divorce or women in ministry? Surely not. We should consider it in its relevant context and update our position now 30 years later according to our progressive and inclusive history.

Non-affirming

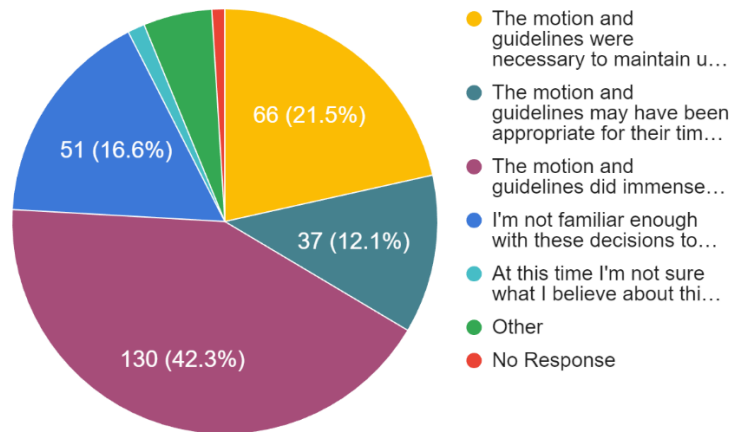
- I agree and affirm the discerned position is appropriate and correct. The policies of the ECC should come in compliance with the discerned position, and there is a posture that we should take that expresses love and affirm the shared image bearer of all humanity.
- I anticipated some bias based on the email I read, but this question and its prompts significantly reveals that bias, in my opinion. The first two options are phrased very positively. The third option that acknowledges scholarship seems to be the author's attempt at framing this perspective as "I hear you, but I'm stubborn." I most resonate with that perspective, but I would phrase it more like this: While I acknowledge the scholarship that has been done pointing to a more inclusive posture towards queer relationships, I remain convinced that the biblical standard for marriage and sexuality is for fidelity in heterosexual marriage and celibacy in singleness. I also acknowledge the hurt the church (broadly, not just the ECC) has inflicted on LGBTQ+ communities. The ECC needs a deeper reflection on how to lovingly disciple LGBTQ+ communities while maintaining fidelity to Scripture's standards regarding marriage and sexuality.
- I believe that the Bible is very clear that same-sex relationships are not God's will. Pastors, as ones who teach, defend and exemplify the teachings of scripture should not give in to societal or relational pressures. They should simply defer to the clear teaching of scripture, and say, "I cannot perform a marriage ceremony that is not condoned by the word of God." I would hope that the ECC remains clear and firm in this regard.
- I fear that the broad cultural creep toward normalization and acceptance of homosexual relationships is undermining the clear biblical teaching on acceptable sexual behavior. Sexuality outside of marriage context is sinful and damages our relationship with God. The ECC should remain set apart from the world and hold firmly to the accepted position on human sexuality as only being valid within the confines of a marriage between one man and one woman.
- I'm good with the current stance.
- I'm somewhere between options B, C and D. To clarify, I think we should always be open to reevaluating policies if it is in light of a better understanding of scripture. I always want to humbly remain open to that on any issue. Theologically, I remain convinced that marriage is a sacrament that by design requires sexual difference (i.e., Christ and the Church are not the same). That said, I would like to see our wording on our "discerned position" and on our "resolution of human sexuality" be updated to something much more in line with resources and pastoral papers by the Center of Faith, Sexuality, and Gender. Also, Park Hills Church San Diego (Evan Wickham) has in my humble opinion the best wording on a compelling theology of marriage. That said, I want to empower LGBTQ+ followers of Jesus in all areas of ministry and church fellowship if they commit to celibacy in singleness and heterosexual monogamy in marriage.
- While I acknowledge the scholarship that has been done pointing to a more inclusive posture towards queer relationships, I remain unconvinced of those conclusions. I do not view this as an issue that currently requires deeper reflection or debate and believe that ECC pastors and leaders should continue to adhere to current policies.

Unclear

- Again, problematic statement options.

- I appreciate the document and believe it to be generally positive. However, I also believe the document falls short of acknowledging our LGBTQ+ siblings and how we can remain in fellowship with those who are not in harmony with the document.
- I don't see a lot of people changing their minds one way or the other. The church continues to allow congregations from other denominations to join, some of which are drawn by the current ECC stance on these issues. I don't see the official stance changing for a good while -- perhaps a generation. I think they have been clear about their stance since 1996, so I am left wondering why so much energy is devoted to changing it when a majority don't want to have the conversation.
- Mostly the first position, but also the ECC has focused so much on the non-heterosexual aspects of the position to the exclusion of teachings on abusive relationships, which have a high prevalence starting in teenage years, definitely occur in the church setting, and for years have been managed in very unhealthy ways. There are more issues around human sexuality than the perceived gender of the partners, and I fear that the ECC's haste to focus on the perceived sin of one group of "other" has permitted unhealthy and unbiblical positions on safety in intimate relationships, leading to continued blame and shame where it does not belong.

Question #5: Which statement most closely matches your perspective on the [motion from the 119th Annual Meeting](#) (2004, see the bottom of page 2) and the subsequent [Guidelines for Covenant Pastors and Congregations Regarding Human Sexuality \(2015\)](#)?



- The motion and guidelines were necessary to maintain unity about how Covenant ministers and churches should be treating the issue of same-sex marriage in ways that align with the denomination's discerned position on human sexuality. – **21.5%**
- The motion and guidelines may have been appropriate for their times, but changes in the ECC demand that we reevaluate these decisions. – **12.1%**
- The motion and guidelines did immense harm to the Covenant by constricting our policies to a narrowed view of sexual ethics, for which there is not unanimity. – **42.3%**
- I'm not familiar enough with these decisions to have a strong opinion. – **16.6%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I believe about this issue. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **4.3%**
- Other – **1.5%**
- No response – **0.3%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- I didn't even know that happened.
- I left the ECC to not get into these details. They need to be attuned to the work of the Holy Spirit as noted on the previous question.
- The 2004 motion and 2015 guidelines inflicted profound harm by codifying exclusion into the life of the Covenant. They replaced our pietist heritage of freedom in Christ and respect for diverse convictions with a rigid policy that silenced dissent, delegitimized queer lives, and disciplined pastors who sought to minister faithfully. Rather than preserving unity, these decisions fractured trust, drove out beloved congregations, and betrayed our witness to the radical hospitality of the gospel. I believe they should be rescinded, and that the ECC must return to a posture of humility, discernment, and inclusion where all members (queer and straight alike) can fully belong.
- The 2004 motion I'm largely ambivalent about. It probably was just forecasting the demographic changes in the Covenant. The 2015 guidelines are a direct affront to our history and polity and, frankly, they violate the very essence of what it is to be Covenant.
- The motion and guidelines did violence to the LGBTQ+ community and those who love them. It must be changed. How can God's people close the doors on those God loves?
- The procedural practices in both 1996 and 2004 were flawed due to their rush, their ignoring of standing rules, and in the case of 2004, the lack of follow-through on an exploratory paper that includes dissenting positions. The spirit of the conversations was lacking grace, and our staunch refusal to reexamine non-essential positions has turned thoughts on marriage into a litmus test for orthodoxy. There are ways to remedy these things, but we have yet to have the courage to have an honest and open conversation.
- The status quo vote on the guidelines essentially negates the motion at best, and at worst ignores it. So, I'm not sure what I'm being asked to comment on here.

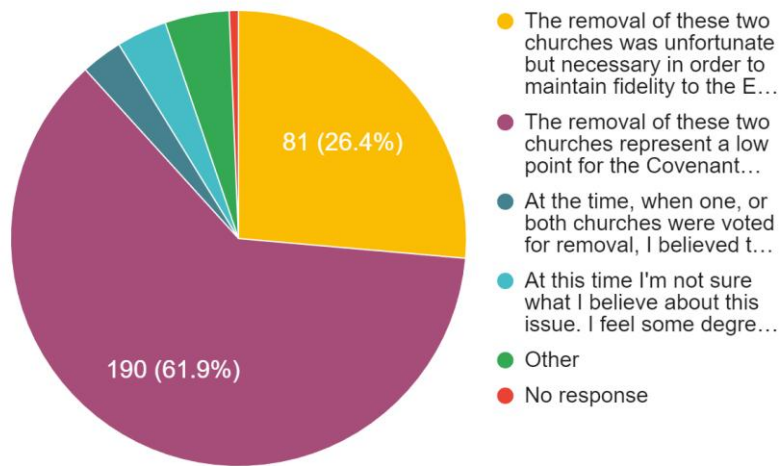
Non-affirming

- <https://cbmw.org/about/the-danvers-statement/>
- I have to start skipping questions with extra reading because this is getting too long.
- No need for change.
- The motion was Biblical and represented the views of a large majority of the ECC. If people disagreed they should have already left.
- The motion was necessary because members of the ministerium were embracing and acting on a revisionist theology of human sexuality. In recent years MANY of our 'side A' ministerium members have been opting out and clarity on the ECC's embrace of the historic biblical sexual ethic should eventually allow us to remove the 2004 statement as a guide for practice because our theology will be aligned again and most if not all revisionist pastors will have left for credentialing bodies that are 'side A'.
- The motions are Biblically sound and therefore appropriate to adopt. No change is needed, nor should it be sought.
- We don't need human resolutions and motions. We need to follow what the Bible says

Unclear

- I agree with #2. The ECC's Resolution is from 1996. That was different time when it comes to how society viewed sexuality - the "purging" was still happening as late as the early 1990s.
- Sorry, I don't have those in my head at the moment. I do like the idea of each pastor being able to carry their own convictions (such as with baptism) while at the same time agreeing to be under the guidance of the larger church. If it's too much of a dissonance, they can seek to change the rules (though that is a lengthy process) or find a church home that aligns with their convictions better. I, myself, had to leave a denomination to join this one over theological and ecclesiastical practice. It was a bit jarring, but I am much happier here. I know it may sound a bit off-putting to say, "well someone can just leave" but it's something I have done myself and I found peace in it. I wish that peace for anyone.

Question #6: Which statement most closely matches your perspective on the involuntary removal of First Covenant Church of Minneapolis in 2019 and Awaken Church in 2023 from the roster of Evangelical Covenant Churches.



- The removal of these two churches was unfortunate but necessary in order to maintain fidelity to the ECC's policies, resolutions, and guidelines. Should any other churches be found in violation of the ECC's policies in the future, and are unwilling to withdraw, they should also be subject to discipline and removal. – **26.4%**
- The removal of these two churches represent a low point for the Covenant and constitute a betrayal of our collective affirmation of "freedom in Christ". – **61.9%**
- At the time, when one, or both churches were voted for removal, I believed that it was the correct, necessary decision, but since that time I've come to believe that the ECC made a mistake, and I wish that we had found a way to live in harmony with congregations that have divergent views. – **2.9%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I believe about this issue. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **3.6%**
- Other – **4.6%**
- No response – **0.7%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- I mostly agree with choice 2 here. I would add that this decision cracked the foundations of the denomination in spiritual and relational and practical ways. The cost of it has not really been named or dealt with, because of pain, denial, anxiety, and fear.
- If this was related to their policies on sexuality and gender, I'd say it was a low point.
- I don't know anything about this.
- The removals of First Covenant Minneapolis and Awaken Church were acts of injustice that revealed the ECC's fear of diversity rather than its trust in Christ. These decisions betrayed our stated commitment to freedom in Christ and did deep harm to queer people, their families, and countless others who long for a church that embodies radical hospitality. Far from protecting unity, these expulsions fractured the body of Christ and undermined our witness to the gospel of reconciliation. I believe the ECC must repent of these actions, restore relationships where possible, and reimagine our life together in ways that fully affirm 2SLGBTQIA+ siblings.

Non-affirming

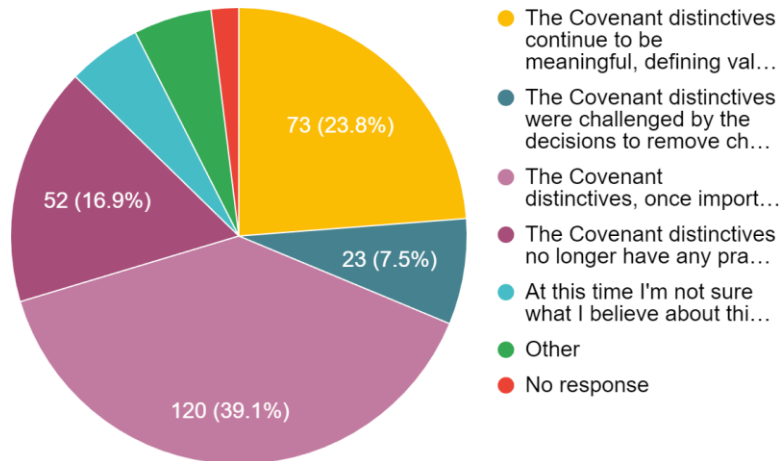
- I grieve the removal of the churches. But more so I grieve that we have been told the only way to love someone is to accept all of their faults and sins. This is the core of the issue and is antithetical to life with Christ. While I invite the freedom of choice of our country and individuals, that freedom is not the narrow path. When a church chooses to put personal feelings above scripture they compromise the heart of "freedom IN CHRIST." In the USA we have freedom to choose far more good and negative things, but to choose Christ involves conforming ourselves to his standard. This is a standard which has only been argued from a perspective of social justice and not scripture.

- If a church doesn't agree with the ECC's position on gender and sexuality, it makes sense they would voluntarily leave without hard feelings. When it gets to the point of involuntary removal, I wonder why they didn't just leave on their own a lot sooner if they made up their mind about their convictions/theological conclusions and those differed from the ECC. There are lots of good reasons to leave a denomination, and this could be one of them for some churches.
- Removal of churches that reject the clear teaching of the bible is a grievous necessity.
- The removal of these churches was necessary, mainly due to their unwillingness to permit their pastors to be disciplined by the Board of Ordered Ministry.
- Why bother removing them when the denomination is doing what they think is right in their own eyes? Doesn't that give every church and pastor the right to do what they think is right in their own eyes? If you aren't going to lead with Biblical principles, don't expect the churches and pastors to.

Unclear

- A mixture of the first and second responses. I am more familiar with the FCCM situation, and I am aware that there were personality and behavioral issues that included and went beyond the church, its pastor, the ECC, and the BOOM.
- I don't feel "ambivalent" but I am not sure what I think. I am not familiar enough with how this process happened. I am saddened by it though.
- I don't know enough about these specific instances to have an informed opinion
- I think these situations are too complex to fit into any of the above categories. Though I do lament that these actions were taken.
- The method was flawed and divisive; should have been handled differently.

Question #7: The Evangelical Covenant Church has adopted a list of "distinctives" as part of its ecclesial identity, consisting of "We are..." statements, including "...*evangelical* but not *exclusive*," "...*biblical* but not *doctrinaire*," and "...*traditional* but not *rigid*." In light of the tightening of guidelines on sexuality and the subsequent decisions to disfellowship churches and remove the ordination of pastors, what is your perspective on the Covenant distinctives?



- The Covenant distinctives continue to be meaningful, defining values of the ECC. The decisions to bind the 1996 resolution and to involuntarily remove churches were made by the collective action of the Annual Meeting, and therefore represent the will of the broader denomination to maintain adherence to biblicism and tradition. – **23.8%**
- The Covenant distinctives were challenged by the decisions to remove churches over divergent views on human sexuality. Overall, they are still meaningful orientation points for our denomination, but the involuntary removal of churches does somewhat trouble this narrative. – **7.5%**
- The Covenant distinctives, once important points of orientation for our denomination, were deeply violated when we started voting out churches over differing views on sexuality. A return to those key values would require, at the very least, a commitment to hold space for differing viewpoints on sexuality and to no longer discipline congregations over the same. – **39.1%**
- The Covenant distinctives no longer have any practical meaning in the wake of the involuntary removal of churches. Those decisions now qualify the ECC as exclusive, doctrinaire, and rigid. A return to a denomination-wide affirmation of those distinctives will be fraught and may not be possible in the near term. – **16.9%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I believe about this issue. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **1.5%**
- Other – **1.5%**
- No response – **0.6%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- Again - left the ECC
- I didn't know about these.
- I left the Cov 23 years ago because of bullying my kids. I tried going back after our son came out and was only met with drama and rudeness. My husband's church has many queer people in it and it seems very progressive and NOT traditional ECC, for which I'm glad. But too much religious trauma for me. I'm done.
- I think along the lines of option 4 above - that the distinctives no longer have meaning. However, my hope is that they are still aspirational.
- Not aware of this.
- The Covenant distinctives were meant to safeguard freedom in Christ and resist narrow doctrinal control, but the enforcement of the 1996 resolution and the removal of churches and pastors have hollowed them out. By disciplining congregations over human sexuality, the ECC contradicted its own claim to be evangelical but not exclusive, biblical but not doctrinaire, and traditional but not rigid. These values cannot simply be claimed while our actions deny them. For the

distinctives to regain integrity, the ECC must repent of exclusion, recommit to holding space for theological diversity, and embody love and justice in ways that include 2SLGBTQIA+ siblings as full members of Christ's body.

- The ECC should never have had directives. The denomination was founded on discussion, listening, and loving. A directive likens a creed, which is not needed.

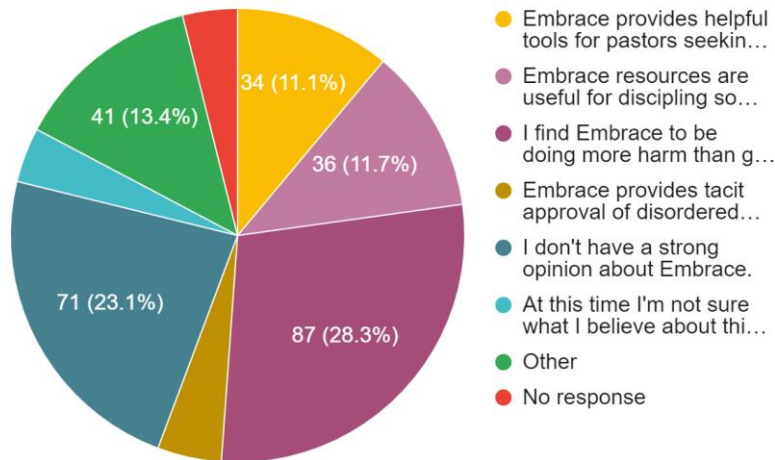
Non-affirming

- ECC's lack of a clear doctrinal statement is dangerous. We must obey all of the Word of God and stop functionally deleting portions of the Bible.
- One of the distinctives is about the centrality of Scripture. Scripture is clear (in my opinion, though I understand this is debated) about sexual ethics. Freedom in Christ, as a distinctive, does not overrule Scriptural standards. Thus, churches or clergy that are out of alignment of Scripture should voluntarily remove themselves if they are unwilling to abide by the distinctives of the ECC.
- Perhaps we need a more robust definition for what it means to be "biblical but not doctrinaire". Should we be open to changing our perspectives if it is in light of a better reading of scripture? Absolutely! Christians have changed their mind on a whole host of issues such as slavery, and women in ministry leadership (thank God!) because there is trajectory one can follow from the OT, to the Gospels, to the NT (i.e., a better reading of scripture). However, that same trajectory is not there when it comes to marriage. What the OT says, is repeated by Jesus in the Gospels, and then again in the NT. While I remain open to seeing the trajectory in scripture, I remain unconvinced that there really is one when it comes to the topic of marriage between one man and one woman.
- The Covenant distinctives are not meaningful, defining values of the ECC. They are just clumsy imprecise words. The decisions to bind the 1996 resolution and to involuntarily remove churches were made by the collective action of the Annual Meeting, and therefore represent the will of the broader denomination to maintain adherence to biblicism and tradition.
- The Covenant distinctives used to be "where is it written" and our nickname the readers. Now it is "go with the flow of the world" so there is nothing substantially different from the Covenant than any other denomination that has taken this path

Unclear

- A combination of 2 and 3 above.
- All of the above? The first 4 options are not exclusive to the others, and all have some truth in them.
- I have not heard of the distinctives before.
- The Covenant Distinctives are case applicable as in the wording.
- Unfortunately saying "we are Biblical" only means what the latest incarnation of the collective understanding thinks is Biblical. But this is where we are. A majority of the delegates to the annual meetings have been unswayed by arguments that scripture tells the church to be affirming. The best compromise, in my view, is the "Side B" interpretation, which seems deeply thoughtful and purposely committed to living with parts of scripture that are challenging or limit us. And really, aren't there a lot of parts of scripture that do that, even outside of questions of sexuality and orientation? Greed, honesty, compassion, justice... all areas where I need scripture's word spoken into my life.

Question #8: Which statement most closely matches your perspective on the ECC's *Embrace* resources on Human Sexuality?



- Embrace provides helpful tools for pastors seeking to disciple LGBTQ+ congregants in a healthy manner that is consistent with the ECC's sexual ethic. – 11.7%
- Embrace resources are useful for discipling some members of the LGBTQ+ community, and their families, but should be expanded to include more diverse perspectives that honor affirming viewpoints. – 11.7%
- I find Embrace to be doing more harm than good in promoting an untenable posture toward the LGBTQ+ community. Embrace should either be overhauled to extend affirmation to all queer members of our churches, or should be removed. – 28.3%
- Embrace provides tacit approval of disordered and sinful identities and should more clearly promote exchanging these identities for Biblical expressions of sexuality. – 4.6%
- I don't have a strong opinion about Embrace. – 23.1%
- At this time, I'm not sure what I believe about this issue. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – 3.9%
- Other – 13.4%
- No response – 3.9%

Other Responses:

Affirming

- As of 2020, I would have opted for the second or third option. I have not followed further developments but I fear they may have gotten worse, considering the trajectory of the denomination at that time.
- Don't know the material.
- Embrace has failed to move the conversation beyond one story and/or perspective. Our continued reliance on one resource and one story hinders our ability to understand the mosaic of experience that people in our congregations and communities possess. In general, Embrace does an OK job of introducing people who have never thought about LGBTQ people in churches to the reality that exists, but does little beyond that. That particular resource felt old and stretched 10 years ago and has remained largely unchanged in the last decade.
- Embrace has helpful elements - but I have experienced pushback from many of the resources for even those being too liberal (i.e. recommendations for hospitality around pronoun usage, housing for trans campers on retreats, etc.).
- Embrace is a symptom of a wider move by the Covenant ministerium and denominational governance toward inflicting abuse of all kinds (including spiritual abuse) on members without accountability or consequence. The ECC is deeply sick and hurting many people in addition to LGBTQ+ people and their allies.
- I am no longer a member of ECC and am unfamiliar with this.
- I am not familiar with Embrace.
- I can't have a meaningful opinion on this resource as I am not familiar with it.
- I don't know what Embrace is.
- I don't know what Embrace teaches to be honest, never looked at it, but given who wrote it I would guess it's largely harmful - but that may be unfair without reading it. Its stance on sexuality is not clear at least I can say.

- I have never heard of Embrace.
- I have not spent enough time looking at Embrace resources to be able to state an opinion. To my knowledge, my church/pastors have not used this resource.
- I know of the resources but have not read them. Therefore, I am not qualified to evaluate the materials with respect to my personal views on sexuality.
- I know what Embrace is, but I don't have detailed knowledge of its content.
- I think we should be affirming of the LGBTQ community.
- I'm not familiar with Embrace.
- I'm not familiar.
- N/A
- Not aware of it.
- Not familiar with Embrace. (x2)
- The Embrace resources, while presented as compassionate, ultimately reinforce a posture of non-affirmation that causes harm to queer people and their families. By framing 2sLGBTQIA+ identity as something to be managed rather than fully celebrated, they undermine both pastoral care and Christian witness. Any resource that refuses to affirm the goodness of queer identity and relationships is complicit in exclusion and trauma. I believe true discipleship requires resources that affirm 2SLGBTQIA+ people as whole, beloved, and called by God, and Embrace falls short of that gospel vision.
- This is my first introduction to "Embrace". At a glance, I feel it is doing more harm than good.

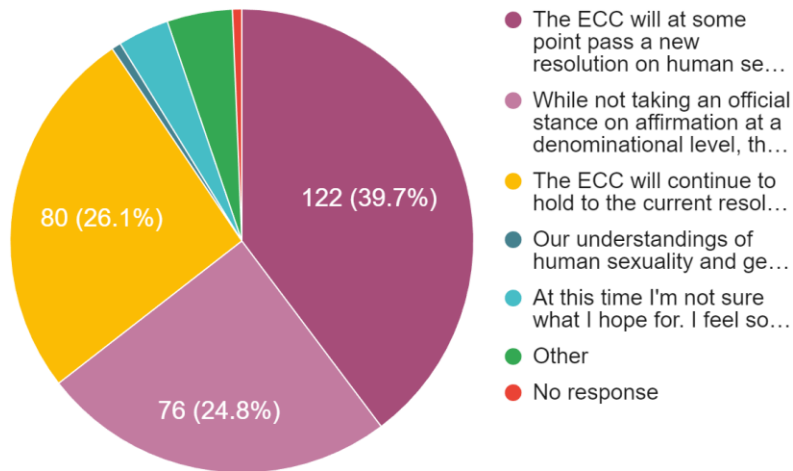
Non-affirming

- I am not familiar enough with Embrace to answer this question.
- I am not familiar enough with the materials.
- I am not familiar with Embrace. I do feel we need to find ways to love all Christians the way Jesus would love them showing grace, mercy, and compassion but at the same time not caving into accepting beliefs or ways of life that are contrary to God's word just because of changes in public perception of varying lifestyles. Jesus forgave the women at the well but told her to go and sin no more.
- I am not familiar with this.
- I do not know about "Embrace." We are to lovingly (as Christ did) speak the truth to sinners. We can obey God's Word and love people without "embracing" their sin. Jesus clearly said, "Go and sin no more." We should do the same in love!
- I find these resources to be well curated and incredibly helpful.
- I have not reviewed enough of the Embrace resources to form an opinion, but from what I can see I think that is a step closer to "Affirming" than I am comfortable with.
- Never heard of or used Embrace.
- Not familiar enough to respond.

Unclear

- Don't know this material.
- Embrace is unknown to me.
- I didn't know it existed and would have to read very carefully.
- I don't know enough about the program, but if there's any judgement towards the people being counseled, it needs to be overhauled.
- I have no first-hand knowledge or experience of Embrace, but have heard that it is damaging and not helpful.
- I have no knowledge of Embrace.
- I have not heard of the Embrace resources before, so I don't know anything about what they say.
- I'm not familiar with it.
- Not familiar enough with Embrace to choose a position

Question #9: What do you hope will be the long-term trajectory of the ECC regarding queer inclusion and affirmation?



- The ECC will at some point pass a new resolution on human sexuality that affirms the validity of same-sex marriage and relationships as having equal moral status at opposite-sex relationships as well as honoring the dignity of transgendered persons. – **39.7%**
- While not taking an official stance on affirmation at a denominational level, the ECC will end its current policy of discipline and removal of pastors and congregations whose ministry to queer persons leads them to blessing marriages, effectively allowing the matter of affirmation to be decided on a church-by-church basis. – **24.8%**
- The ECC will continue to hold to the current resolution on human sexuality and take disciplinary action against pastors and congregations that go against it. – **26.1%**
- Our understandings of human sexuality and gender will prove to be so divisive that they will lead to a denominational split. – **0.7%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I hope for. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **3.6%**
- Other – **4.6%**
- No response – **0.7%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- I hope the ECC gets their shit together and moves away from their simultaneously egalitarian & homophobic/transphobic views and has a change of heart. I hope ECC leaders repent, confess, and atone for what they've done to the churches, pastors, and congregants they've cut from the body. I hope we rejoin, forgive, and move on.
- I hope the ECC goes bankrupt and ceases to exist, since it has fully adopted white nationalist principles.
- I hope the ECC will repent of the harm it has done to queer people and reclaim its pietist roots of freedom in Christ by embracing full affirmation. My prayer is that the denomination I once called home not only ends policies of exclusion and discipline but actively celebrates queer identity and relationships as gifts of God. The long-term trajectory I desire is for the ECC to become a community where queer and trans siblings are seen as central to the witness of the gospel, shaping a church marked by justice, love, and kinship. Anything less falls short of the Spirit's call.
- I left the Covenant in 2022 after 24 years and have joined a fully affirming congregation with many members who claim a letter (lgbtq+ia). It is so nice to not have to spend one more ounce of energy on this issue. The Covenant's stance does not bear good fruit, in my opinion, and is based in fear. I am grateful to no longer be a part of the harm and sad that the Covenant could not live into the potential of their claimed distinctives.
- I prefer 1, but 2 would be a huge step forward.
- I'm no longer part of the ECC. I have moved on to openly, enthusiastically affirming faith space (ELCA).
- It's not a hope. The ECC will either affirm LGBTQ individuals or functionally cease to exist by the year 2050. It's not even a question of hope. I suppose I HOPE we choose to exist rather than die.
- Selection 1 would be my long term hope, but I would welcome answer 2 in the meantime.

- The ECC will ask forgiveness for the great harm it has caused to so many queer Covenanters who have left the Covenant and the church and feel harm was done by the church to them. They officially publicly make amends and pass a new resolution

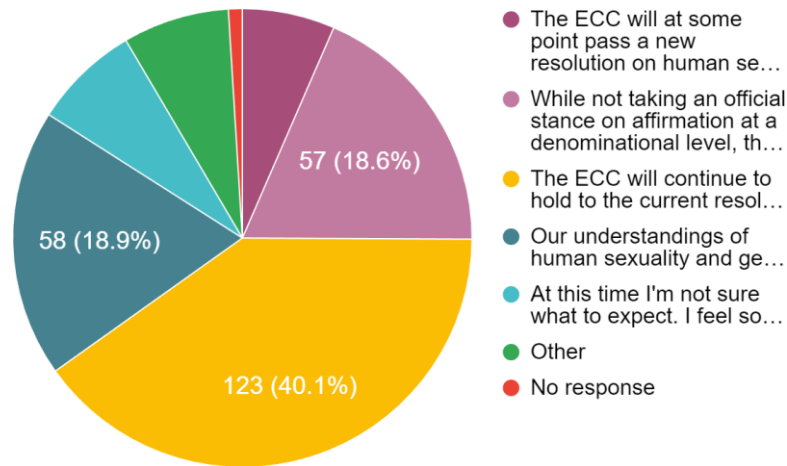
Non-affirming

- I hope that the ECC will maintain what it genuinely believes is a Biblical position, but continue in dialogue together to best understand how to live out Biblical values in ways that respect and demonstrate grace to a culture that has been damaged by distortions and toxic applications of those Biblical truths that showed hatred instead of love.
- I hope the Covenant repents and returns to the Biblical values that it started with.
- My hope is that the ECC maintains their conviction on what marriage is, while being deeply committed to Embrace. I have no hope for discipline or denominational split, but it makes sense for church communities who no longer hold to the discerned position to part ways from the denomination, while maintaining amicable relations with the ECC. This is basically what [redacted], has done in the [redacted] Conference. They did not try to get the denomination to align with their views, but rather realized that their views no longer aligned with the ECC's and therefore in good conscience have decided not to renew their ministry licenses with the ECC.

Unclear

- Allowing further discussion and a different process.
- With all the brokenness of American Christianity and the infiltration of Christian Nationalism into the Covenant, I don't know what I hope for anymore.

Question #10: What do you expect will be the long-term trajectory of the ECC regarding queer inclusion and affirmation?



- The ECC will at some point pass a new resolution on human sexuality that affirms the validity of same-sex marriage and relationships as having equal moral status at opposite-sex relationships as well as honoring the dignity of transgendered persons. – **6.5%**
- While not taking an official stance on affirmation at a denominational level, the ECC will end its current policy of discipline and removal of pastors and congregations whose ministry to queer persons leads them to blessing marriages, effectively allowing the matter of affirmation to be decided on a church-by-church basis. – **18.6%**
- The ECC will continue to hold to the current resolution on human sexuality and take disciplinary action against pastors and congregations that go against it. – **40.1%**
- Our understandings of human sexuality and gender will prove to be so divisive that they will lead to a denominational split. – **18.9%**
- At this time, I'm not sure what I expect. I feel some degree of ambivalence and am not ready to make a definitive statement. – **7.5%**
- Other – **7.5%**
- No response – **1.0%**

Other Responses:

Affirming

- I expect that, as it continues to remove members holding historical ECC values, the ECC will be absorbed into political evangelicalism and openly participate in the attempt to turn the US into a theocracy.
- I expect the ECC will continue to experience fractures as long as it holds to exclusionary policies, and that more churches will choose to leave rather than comply. Over time, the denomination will be forced either to reckon with the Spirit's call to full affirmation or to diminish into an increasingly narrow and rigid body. While I cannot predict the exact outcome, I believe queer people will remain part of the Covenant regardless, and their presence and witness will ultimately reshape the denomination, whether from within or beyond its formal structures.
- I left the ECC for its harmful and narrowed view on God's people and haven't looked back.
- I think both the current resolution will stand, and disciplinary action will be taken against pastors and congregations. More congregations and pastors will leave voluntarily rather than facing discipline. Unfortunately, there isn't a critical enough mass of churches to form a denomination, though some kind of loose affiliation of churches might form.
- It depends on who stays in leadership. Right now, there's a stronghold of those who reject LGBTQ people. Maybe that will change, but I doubt it.
- It seems as though the denominational goal is uniformity over unity, and dissenting voices, be they pastoral or congregational, will quietly leave until there are no dissenting voices remaining.
- No expectations.
- Not sure. I'm not following it that closely anymore. But I HOPE and PRAY for answer #1.
- The denomination will split or fold.
- The ECC will continue to hold the current resolution, and it will ultimately end in a fracturing of the denomination.

- The ECC will continue to hold the current resolution, resulting in more and more mass exodus from the denomination, creating a shell version of what was once a more truly beautiful mosaic of faithful followers of Jesus who were "better together".
- They will split or slowly die as more and more people view Christian churches like this as hating people and not accepting and more young people leave.

Non-affirming

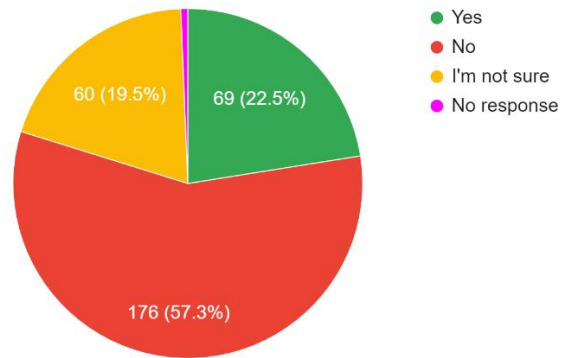
- I genuinely don't know what to expect will happen.
- It's a leading & unfair question seeking your favored response.
- No idea, but I don't feel ambivalent.
- The "Affirming" wing of the ECC will continue to push and push until it gains enough support to pass a resolution affirming same-sex marriage and relationships as having equal moral status as heterosexual ones.
- The first bullet, and I, as well as the church I serve, will leave the denomination.

Unclear

- A combination of 3 and 4 above.
- As the Covenant continues to hold to our position, we will slowly lose the progressive-leaning members of our denomination, not in a split but in a dissolution. This will make us even more conservative, and we will adjust accordingly. There is not enough energy behind the affirming side to split into 2 groups - progressives would rather go join another group than destroy the ECC.
- I feel probably the Denomination will hold its ground. I don't know what that looks like for each conference. The [redacted] conference for example, may tend to lean a different way and I don't know what that will mean for the denominational relationship. I also feel like any conference stance change would be a long way off. If the denomination is on a trajectory of change, that will be a very long way off. There could be a lot of division as we wait for it and in the wake of it.
- Prayerfully hopeful. Not ambivalent.
- The ECC will collapse from factors unrelated to LGBT inclusion.
- This issue as well as others currently under debate will likely lead to a diminished ECC if not a split.

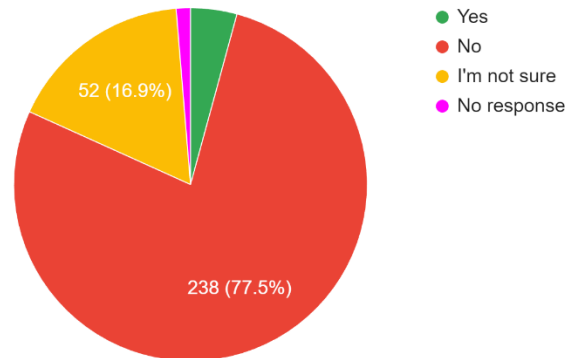
Question #11: Is the ECC, on the whole, a safe place for LGBTQ+ people?

- Yes – 22.5%
- No – 57.3%
- I'm not sure – 19.5%
- No response – 0.7%



Question #12: Is the ECC, on the whole, a safe place for LGBTQ-affirming pastors?

- Yes – 4.2%
- No – 77.5%
- I'm not sure – 16.9%
- No response – 1.3%



Question #13: *OPTIONAL* Referring to the previous two questions, what does "safe" mean to you?

Responses:

LGBTQ+ Voices

- "Safe" means I can be my authentic self in church. It means my husband or partner and I can attend and fully participate in church life without judgment, gossip, or consternation from anyone else about us or our relationship. "Safe" means that the church welcomes us to contribute my gifts for the benefit and building up believers, regardless of our sexual orientation and our relationship as spouses or partners, including leadership.
- A place without institutional or interpersonal reprisals for holding affirming views or being 2SLGBTQIA+, where any such action by leaders, members, etc. is held accountable.
- Ability to minister and worship as one's whole self and with one's full family, without fear of recrimination.
- Able to exist without fear of reprisal or harm.
- Accepting, non-judgmental, and affirming.
- An environment where it can be reasonably expected to avoid most physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual harms (at least as it relates to being LGBTQ/affirming).
- Being respected in their entirety and not subject to "love the sinner, hate the sin" mentality.
- Being safe means to have the ability to worship as oneself without fear of verbal or physical violence.
- Being welcomed and honored within your community context as your whole self, however you are experiencing and exploring your sense of self at any given time.
- Freedom from harm.

- Fully inclusive and affirming of queer people and those who affirm and include queer people.
- Honesty. Integrity.
- I feel safe at my specific church because of the many affirming individuals in my congregation and because the pastoral staff have my back regardless of their personal hang ups about LGBTQ+ individuals. I am uncertain I would feel safe at all ECC churches and frankly I don't know how any affirming pastor could possibly feel safe in a denomination that has taken action against affirming pastors.
- I think safe means being able to be present in church as your full self (which is often not attainable for non-queer members too!).
- It means you won't lose your job on the basis of your heterosexuality or norm heterosexuality if employed by an ECC church, and it means not having your options for church inclusion and blessing limited solely on the basis of your sexuality either.
- Not toxic. A place here you are accepted fully as a whole person and don't have to hide in the closet or be judged. A place where you are not going to be fired or separated for your very identity.
- Safe means accepted as no different than any other member.
- You will not lose friendships or invitations into ministry by discussing queerness.
- As a Side B LGBTQ+ pastor myself, I have thus far felt safe in the ECC in the sense that I don't believe I will lose my current job and I have been welcomed with open arms by my congregation and conference. I am fully out in all my life contexts. If/when I search for new roles at other ECC churches, I do not know if identifying as gay will be a deal-breaker or will otherwise hinder opportunities for me. I know that my experience so far may not be universal to the denomination. As for affirming pastors... I'm not one, so I can't say.
- It would mean that I could bring my non-gender-conforming child to church (or other settings with ECC friends/family) and not worry about being questioned, confronted, or "prayed for" in a way that implies my child is sinful for the way they experience or express their gender. I definitely don't have clarity on the topic of gender writ large — but I do know that a lot of people in the ECC believe they do and that my child is on the wrong side of it.

Affirming

- "Safe" = personal acceptance, respectful treatment, and a lack of "disciplinary actions" for LGBTQ+ individuals and affirming pastors by non-affirming members and clergy.
- "Safe" for LGBTQ+ persons = embracing gender & sexual expression aligned with one's self-knowledge in consenting relationships; children are embraced for expressing their gender, however fluid. "Safe" for pastors = able to perform marriages, baptisms, and pastoral care to all LGBTQ+ persons without fear or possibility of losing their job, ordination, ministry level for doing so.
- "Safe" means being able to use one's own pastoral discernment about this topic without fear of being called before the Board of Ordered Ministry and, eventually, having credentials removed.
- "Safe" means the pastor does not just desire their church to be affirming, but able to act on that desire without discipline. For queer congregants, safe means full acceptance in all aspects of congregational life and ministry, and freedom from "disciplining" that requires them to renounce their sexuality.
- Safe means a place where one can be their full self.
- The pastor can preach, teach, lead, welcome and marry freely, exhibiting and expressing full support for LGBTQ+ people and theology without fear of discrimination, discipline or having their ordination revoked.
- Job security for affirming pastors and staff; equal treatment of members who seek leadership positions, etc.; wide open embrace of gay members and new attendees, etc.
- 100% loved and accepted in all areas.
- A pastor should not fear performing a same sex marriage.
- A place free from the fear of mental/emotional harm from judgmental words, actions, and behaviors relating to one's sexual orientation and gender identity. A place that fosters an affirming community and psychological safety.
- A place that is free from retribution or judgement.
- A place that will affirm them and their beliefs.
- A place where people can be themselves as God has so beautifully created them, with all rights as all other members. Where sexuality is no longer an "issue" and people can just BE, be married, serve, etc. Where LGBTQ+ people won't think they have to choose between their faith and who they are. Where LGBTQ+ people won't take theology taught and take their own lives over what it says about them. Where pastors aren't allowed to discriminate based on gender and sexuality against those who ask to be married. Where pastors and communities aren't kicked out over this. The ECC is deeply unsafe for LGBTQ+ people and affirming people. It's not worth it to stick around...there are so many more healthy communities where people will be and are not just affirmed but celebrated!!! It's scary to leave but worth it.
- A place where you can share your thoughts and convictions without fear of being ostracized or ignored.

- Able to honestly uphold our called ability to love others, particularly those in close relationship with us.
- Able to pursue ministry to LGBTQ community without fear of discipline or expulsion.
- Able to share & practice their affirming perspectives publicly without reprisal.
- Affirmed in their LGBT+ status, allowed to hold any roles within the church, such as volunteer work. Or for a pastor, being free to perform a ceremony for a same sex couple without losing license.
- Allowed to think, lead and pastor how they believe they should.
- Being safe in ministry means that we are free to discern and express our theological understandings of sexuality without being in fear of discipline or exclusion.
- Can be fully themselves (not have to hide) and not be in fear of repercussions, bullying, ostracizing, etc. in the church.
- Can I speak freely? Can I follow my own conscience? Can I be myself?
- ECC is feeling very, "don't ask, don't tell".
- Emotional and professional support from congregations and denominational leadership. The ability to engage fully as members of the body of Christ.
- Feeling accepted for who we are and not limited based on lived out sexual orientation.
- Following the guidance of the Holy Spirit and allowing churches to fully embrace members to be fully who they were created to be without shame, judgement, or repercussions.
- For pastors, safe means they have no fear of losing their job or ordination for their support of the LGBTQ+ community. For LGBTQ+ people, they are made to seem different, sinful, and wrong within the ECC and cannot be who God made them to be freely within church. This is unsafe.
- For the first question, full-affirmation and inclusion of LGBTQ+ people is a basic necessity. For the second, I can concede that not performing a wedding would be an acceptable compromise, for now, but the fact that one can be brought before the Board of Ordered Ministry for praying at their OWN CHILD'S WEDDING, or those of other friends or loved ones, makes it inherently unsafe to be LGBTQ-affirming as a credentialed pastor in the ECC.
- Free from bias and judgment, and a space where individuals are loved and treated as equals.
- Fully accepted.
- Fully affirmed in expression and inclusion in community of faith at all levels.
- Having a fucking job. Being able to hold someone else's beliefs as true even if you disagree with them. Loving first, asking questions second.
I was spiritually abused, fired, and made to sign an NDA when the head pastors of my church found out I [participated in a gay-inclusive organization].
- I believe that someone from the LGBTQ+ community can expect kindness from the members at my church should they ever take the risk of walking through our doors; BUT I don't see this as safe. "Safe" to me includes emotional safety. If I were in the LGBTQ+ community, I would never walk through the doors of a church that was not open and affirming because that would signal to me that they have not done their work to love and welcome all of me. At best, I think I might be tolerated and treated kindly but would never be able to be vulnerable and feel cherished- leading to the inability to have authentic relationships. I would brace myself for ignorant/uninformed comments and exclusionary policies. As a family member to a sibling who grew up in the church, I know that they couldn't and wouldn't put themselves in this kind of position as it would trigger past experiences of feeling unwanted, lesser-than, dirty, broken, and dangerous.
- I cannot speak openly or share information with some colleagues without being "marked" (targeted/watched) and unofficially disqualified or turned away from serving in leadership in the conference or denomination.
- I don't feel safe here pertains to actual 'acts of violence' but more so a place of belonging and ability to live their faith authentically.
- In the first question, safe means being respected and not judged. In the second question, it means being able to receive the same opportunities that non-affirming pastors would receive, and feeling confident that you will continue to have a job.
- Inclusive and fully affirming. Not a half-baked "all are welcome" approach that puts the onus on marginalized individuals to compromise in order to "fit-in".
- No fear of retaliatory measures from removal of membership/ordination, excommunication, silencing, bullying.
- One won't be judged or be made to feel ashamed in a safe place.
- Open and affirming.
- People can lose their jobs, be disciplined, be kicked out, etc. Others can't be open about their sexuality without sighing and sad smiles and sin being thought about in the background of their minds. Bleah.
- People should feel they can be wholly themselves, loved as children of God.
- Relational safety: Without significant risk of humiliation, rejection, or abandonment.

- Respected, comfortable, embraced, ability to be open about sexuality, not fearing discrimination, judgement, and damnation.
- Room to speak freely without fear of retribution or consequences.
- Safe = welcomed, celebrated, and included in sacraments and activities.
- Safe for LGBTQI people means that they find love and acceptance for who they are and are loved accordingly. They are allowed and given the same rights and privileges that belong to heteronormative people.
- Safe for the LGBTQ+ person means full acceptance. When we provide acceptance with limitations, we cause harm to people in the long term. Like the child who was loved in their home but only as much as they didn't speak up too often, or didn't get their clothes too dirty . . .
Safe for the pastor means being able to pastor their congregants and community without disconnect between their beliefs and their actions.
- Safe means a place where one can be completely free to be in a healthy loving Christian relationship with anyone of their choosing.
- Safe means accepted and finding a sense of belonging.
- Safe means free from discrimination and retaliation. I believe some Cov Churches may be more or less safe for LGBTQ members, but pastors are not safe regardless of their willingness to adhere to the rules as outlined (as evidenced by my own story).
- Safe means providing an environment or community where it is possible to express your position without fear of retaliation or consequences, and to find support for your viewpoint.
- Safe means that anyone who wants to participate in the church and share the love of Christ can do so to whatever degree of honesty they feel compelled to do. The pastor has the freedom and safety to guide and bless all of his/her congregants as they truly are without concern for reprisal from the denomination.
- Safe means that these individuals can bring their full selves without fear of physical, verbal or spiritual violence that is connected to their sexual or gender identity. And that if this kind of violence were to happen, that the work of repair and repentance would be done to restore safety.
- Safe means welcoming, affirming, accepting and creating space that allows people to THRIVE.
- Safe means you can live your life/carry out your work without fear you will be penalized for your identity.
- Safe to me, in this context, means LGBTQ+ people will not be shamed and will be accepted as equals in ECC.
- Safe would mean allowing individuals to live openly in their identity without fear of rejection. For pastors it would mean they'd be allowed to support and create a safe space for LGBTQ+ individuals without fear of reprimand or expulsion.
- Safe would mean people can be fully themselves. As a whole, that is not true for LGBTQ+ people and it is not true for affirming pastors who cannot love and serve their LGBTQ+ community members in the way they desire.
- Safety means NOT being taught in church that God created you with an innate need for intimacy and partnership with another human, allowed for you to feel that desire for a person of your same gender, but withholds from you any way for you to fulfill that need in a holy way. God did not create us to hate us. Safety is being embraced for who you are, completely.
- That ALL people are treated the same...with no restrictions. It's about loving Jesus and our neighbors.
- That any member of the LGBTQ community feels welcome and not be considered a deviant but rather a valued member of the ECC community.
- That people can come as they are and feel valued, recognized for the spiritual gifts they bring, not be judged for who they are.
- That there are local churches where an LGBTQ person could be out, including a couple. They would not be attacked or shamed. However, safe might not mean being married by that pastor. I've had a gay couple tell me they felt safe and happy in the church, though they were confused as to why they couldn't be married there. Maybe "sad" is the better word. But not unsafe. As a pastor, I could foresee a situation where a person or persons come after me for being vocal about LGBTQ matters/people.
- That's why I'm not sure. I can't prescribe what a safe place is for LGBTQ people, and as a pastor, I don't think the ECC is more or less safe than other denominations. Everywhere has their own messed up version of orthodoxy, us included. I don't like that this is ours, and it definitely can be difficult.
- The ability to be fully public about one's own sexuality without fear of discipline or prejudice.
- The freedom for people to live out the full expression of their beliefs as regards the LGBTQ community (within the construct of monogamy) without judgement, censure, rejection, or exclusion.
- The freedom to be open about one's gender identity/sexual orientation without fear or threat of being blocked from serving or being kicked out.
- There will be continued policing of leaders and churches on this one topic and without a significant prophetic change, repair, and restoration of healthy authority and expectations across culture, it will proceed unchecked even if much of the power it wields remains invisible- it's got roots now throughout our denom.

- They're usually treated fine from what I've seen.
- To be "safe," there needs to be more than mere tolerance but true belonging and belovedness.
- To be embraced and supported in all manner of church functions and sacraments including marriage.
- To be your authentic self.
- To me "safe" means that pastors are free to express their beliefs and parishioners are free to be open about who they are.
- Welcome, affirmed and accepted as beloved.
- Welcomed, embraced, engaged, offered leadership opportunities, offered opportunities in services (reading scripture, praying).
- Welcoming.
- Where the LGBTQ+ community can grow, flourish, be themselves, etc.
- You can openly be yourself without someone treating you negatively or looking down on you.
- You don't have to change who you are, to feel the love of Christ and His body.
- You'll not be accepted into the church community and, if you're a pastor, you'll be fired.
- Safe means being able to participate. Current pastors may not even participate in LGBTQ+ religious activities.

Non-affirming

- A place where the person feels free to share who they are and still be loved.
- For people attending, a place extending God's truth and love, recognizing all have sinned and need salvation through faith in Jesus. Safe does not mean God allows us to continue in any sin. Safe does not mean God allows hypocrisy or false teaching.
- "Safe" means valued and supported in their pursuit of following Jesus. I think people struggling with gender dysphoria are still accepted and loved, but they should understand that following Jesus means leaving such dysphoria behind.
- A place where a person can expect the type of love that always does what is best for them, God's covenantal *hesed*, which may mean something done that a person doesn't like. LGBTQ people should always feel safe to come to the church and find the truth and the mercy and grace of God to give them new spiritual life transformed and transforming into the image of Christ. Pastors who promote and sin must also feel safe in the *hesed* sense, but that means discipline and correction for them. They shouldn't "feel" safe promoting sin in God's church.
- A place where anyone can be welcomed and supported. A place where everyone can hear God's word and teachings and implement them into their lives for the better. Straight, Gay, Queer, Bi, Trans.... White, Black, Asian.... all are sinners... all can benefit from the teachings of God. I find it rather odd that everyone gets so hung up on the hot topic of LGBTQ... but not on the masses of straight couples having pre-marital sex... seems off. I think sin from all groups and all persons (including myself) should be recognized equally.
- A place where they will be heard, but held accountable to God's truth. I think "safe" is thrown around in our culture to mean that people can speak freely with no accountability or expectation to align with agreed upon expectations or doctrine. Safe doesn't mean "without consequence for belief or action" it means you won't be physically harmed. We are allowed to disagree while also upholding the foundation ideologies we stand on. Love & safety does not mean condoning or agreeing with false or warped ideas/theology.
- A place where we are loved and disciples of Christ, being taught and disciplined in the Word of God.
- Affirming.
- All are welcome to services and ministry, but their lifestyle is not approved by the Bible.
- All sinners are welcome and should be supported in Love as they repent of their sins.
- At least in my congregation safe would mean that we will show love and compassion to all but that doesn't mean accepting a non-repenting lifestyle of any kind that goes against God's word.
- Being able to share pro LGBTQ stances without consequences.
- Coddling and Approving.
- Embraced well, even when not affirmed.
- From perspective of an LGBTQ+ person at our church, we would plan to treat them with love but we would not accept their lifestyle as acceptable. Whether they would feel safe is up to the individual. With respect to LGBTQ-affirming pastors, my opinion is that they should not feel secure in continuing in their role as pastor. If they insist on embracing the LGBTQ+ lifestyle as normal and acceptable and intend to perform same-sex marriages or unions they should be removed.
- Full membership and embrace for those seeking to live a righteous life within the parameters of our manner and form with regard to same sex union and gender identity.
- Great question, because I don't love the word. In the former question, I believe that the vast majority of ECC churches and certainly the denomination as a whole is welcoming to LGBTQ+ people. I have never heard of an instance of LGBTQ+ people being turned away or belittled. I think it's very important to distinguish between not welcoming people and not marrying people, that's a huge difference. Even the most hardline "side B" people in the ECC that I know are deeply loving and welcoming to everyone. In the latter question, I guess safe means, "Is it a safe place to hold credentialing?" Well, no, if

you intend to teach affirming theology or marry same-sex couples, your credentials are not safe in the ECC, nor should they be.

- He/she will receive no physical harm.
- I assume that both questions conflate "safe" with "affirmed and celebrated". This is not what it means to me, but I used that definition to answer the questions.
- I assume you're using it to mean, "something that's acceptable and not considered sinful".
- I believe "safe" to mean that they are loved, invited, heard, and empowered. I do not believe that affirming pastors are being faithful to the one ethic the Covenant has had since the beginning "where is it written?" This is the ethic that defines "freedom in Christ." As such it is not a "safe" place for those pastors because they are not holding up the core ethic to which they have affirmed. But every church should be a place for anyone to come in whatever state and receive the life transforming power of Jesus, not to affirm them, but to transform and sanctify them.
- I care for more about biblical, faithful, and obedient than safe.
- I don't believe the two questions mentioned above should be limited to yes, no, and I'm not sure. No one can know the feelings of every person and pastor in the ECC. People may feel "unsafe" simply because the church holds traditional views on marriage and gender but are treated with love and respect. Others may feel "unsafe" due to abuse from church leaders and members. The first scenario would meet my definition of safe: speaking and holding to biblical truth while loving the whole person as they come to us.
- I think "safe" is determined by the people and pastors in question, and I can't speak for them.
- I'm not sure that even matters. What does it mean to you?
- If by "safe" we mean that no one will consciously do them harm, then yes, I think that the ECC is a "safe" place. If by "safe" we mean that no one will ever disagree with them or hold them accountable for ripple effects of actions or beliefs that run contrary to what the ECC has communally discerned over the years, then perhaps not. But I refuse to believe that disagreement (even over things that matter to us deeply) essentially causes us as humans to be "unsafe" with one another.
- If safe means affirming, then I think the answer above is no. If safe means loving and kind while not affirming, then the answer is yes.
- It is against the bylaws of the ECC to be an LGBTQ Pastor/Elder. *[Editorial Note: This is not true. The ECC constitution and bylaws enumerate pastoral qualifications in Articles III-V. Neither there, nor in fact anywhere in the bylaws, are the words "LGBTQ", "gay", "lesbian", "transgender", "homosexual", "same-sex marriage/wedding", "sex", or "sexuality" ever mentioned.]*
- It means that everyone is welcome to come and receive the grace of God and respond to the truth of His word. We are not a safe place for LGBT-affirming pastors, nor should be we, since they have by definition rejected clear Biblical teaching.
- It means we can love people without accepting or embracing sinful behavior. We can show kindness without celebrating sin. We can love on and still teach that our sinful desires, no matter what they are, are sin and hurt God and his redemptive plan for humanity.
- It means we radically love everyone who walks in our doors, regardless of gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, political leanings, or in this case sexual orientation and identity, AND we don't compromise on Jesus' high call toward sacrificial discipleship in all areas of our life including our sexuality. We ask, "what does it mean to submit our sexuality (whether straight or gay) to Jesus as Lord?"
- It's a poor choice of words in both questions... Especially the 2nd question.
- It's different in different contexts. Is the ECC a safe place for "LGBTQ+" people? Yes, in that all should be treated with dignity and respect as made in God image. But it should not be "safe" as in affirming sin and sinful lifestyles. So, affirming pastors should not be safe from the discipline or consequences of affirming sin. All people in all circumstances should be physically safe at all times.
- LGBTQ-affirming pastors and laypeople should be removed until they repent.
- Not in danger.
- Offering same-sex marriage.
- Physical and psychological safety in that people that are LGBTQ+ are loved and as Christ loves. It also means we dialogue with them in examining scripture and trying to find biblical truth together. "Safe" does not mean that we agree with them, that we don't speak to them through the Holy Spirit about what we see as biblical truth, and it does not mean that the congregation should not discipline those that are in leadership positions that we see as promoting sinful actions. It is not sinful to have same sex attraction. Just as it is not sinful to be tempted to view pornography. It is sinful to proceed with either of those desires.
- Safe in that they will not be ostracized or harassed but welcomed.
- Safe means it's a space where conversation can take place. I fear that in our current environment safe only means "if you agree with me."

- Safe means the ability to claim whatever label one chooses and affirm any and all practices of broader LGBTQ+ community.
- Safe means they are loved and valued while not having the church affirm their beliefs on this issue.
- That the pastors will not conduct same-sex marriages but will counsel and show the love of Jesus to individuals struggling with these issues. Congregations will love all people and show love as Jesus yet hate the sin.
- That's the catch, isn't it? Is God safe? Why are we told to fear Him? I believe fire is safe if you understand it's power and live accordingly.
- The people who oppose these behaviors usually just leave so the people left behind will all have the same views. Or the ones that do stay will be cancelled for speaking out.
- The question isn't even safe. The fact you are asking is showing that this isn't a credible question. Your results, whatever they will be, will give no actionable data.
- To do no harm. Difference of conviction is not harm.
- Welcome, invited.
- Welcomed with love and Biblical truth.
- Welcoming.
- You seem to be conflating LGBTQ+ people with sexually active LGBTQ+ people, which is a loaded way to create a survey and/or set up a debate. It assumes that someone's identity is based on their sex life or that sex is essential for a fulfilling life, which is a false equivalence and is unfortunate to what I thought was going to be a more objective, less-agenda'd survey. I understand the empathy to allow LGBTQ people to have sex and to be in a marriage, but the above conflation is still not helpful and is manipulative. You can be fully LGBTQ and not be having sex with your same sex or at all. I know many LGBTQ people like this, as well as straight single people, and I'd never shame them that they must be having sex or must be married in order to be whole or complete, or that their identity should be in sex or a spouse. With the question about LGBTQ-affirming pastors, you know what you are signing on for when you sign on with the ECC. Why sign on if you are LGBTQ-affirming? Sign on with an open and affirming denomination, if that is your conviction. There are lots of them out there, and honestly, I'm thankful for the ones who are preaching the gospel and preaching from Scripture, as this is a newer development overall. There will be LGBTQ people who want to be in sexual relationships /marriages with the same sex, despite what we believe and teach about Scripture and God's design, and it's okay to refer them to these churches and still maintain positive relationships with them.
- Your wording is intentionally misleading, in this context safe has no connection with violence or hate only the ability to remain in a pastoral role with same-sex affirmation.
- Affirm the sin.

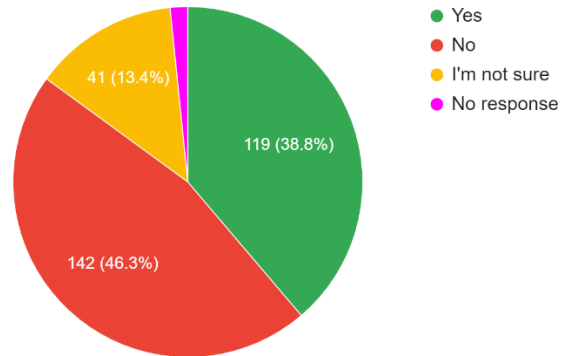
Unclear

- "Safe", as long as privacy is protected.
- 1) Affirmed; 2) Freedom to act upon their conscience with full affirmation.
- A place to voice your differing opinion without losing congregants, your ordination, or your status among the ministerium. I have lost congregants, friends, and positions simply by questioning the Covenant Position, not even fighting against it.
- A place where discussion can happen regardless of position, and understanding can happen without uniformity.
- A place where one does not need to hide their beliefs.
- Able to fully express one's ideas and identity freely.
- Accepting (x2)
- Affirming without cause for being removed from my church or position.
- Can they belong and be part of the community?
- Emotionally safe, your job is not in jeopardy, embraced, safe to be the person you are without judgement.
- Free of judgement, criticism and exclusion from participating in church activities.
- Free to continue in fellowship, using their gifts for the good of the body of Christ and those who do not yet belong to it.
- Freedom to have a different opinion without relational fallout.
- I can't answer the above questions precisely because of the ambiguity of the word "safe" in the context. Also, as a non-affirming pastor and a cis-male heterosexual, I cannot speak to the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ people within the ECC apart from the few relationships I have with such persons.
- I don't think people would feel comfortable being "out" and if that's something about themselves they need to hide at church, church is not safe.
- It's unclear as to the degree of safety offered to pastors and to congregants.
- No fear of judgement or job loss.
- People who identify as LGBTQ+ feel and acknowledge full inclusion. Pastors and leaders who are allies can be so and act accordingly in ECC or ECC-adjacent ministry settings.

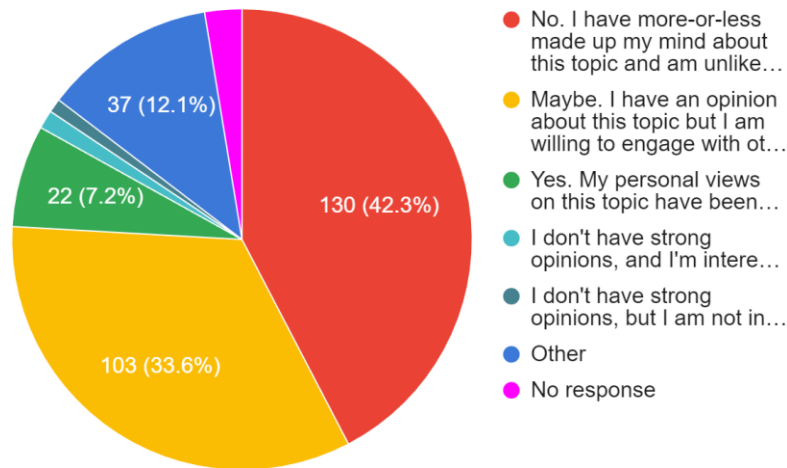
- Presence is neither celebrated nor condemned; their full acceptance as people.
- Providing a non-judgmental place to be yourself and worship God, and feel the love of Jesus as demonstrated by the love and acceptance from others.
- Respected. Treated as an equal member.
- Safe means being able to express your sexuality, gender identity and/or views on those issues without fear of rejection as a parishioner, church worker or ordained minister.
- Safe would mean no risk of being verbally attacked or treated as a second-class Christian.
- Safe would mean that we return to the Covenant ethos that existed for over a hundred years, which allowed Covenant churches and pastors to hold differing opinions on non-essential matters without fear of punishment or dismissal. The ways in which the ECC are "handling" this issue is unquestionably UN-Covenant.
- Space for an affirming viewpoint that allows them to hold the view openly and not fear losing their job or credentials.
- Speaking for Canada, I think most of our churches believe they are welcoming and people don't have to be ashamed. They wouldn't turn someone away on a Sunday morning. The degree to which our congregations are willing to accept and discuss and be open, varies. And even within each congregation there is differing opinion. But most of our churches are not affirming. So safe in that you won't be run out of the building. But safe as in you can be who you are, and we won't try to change you, and you'll never feel out of place?... Probably not.
- Supportive and life-giving.
- Thanks for the space to clarify -- physically safe = YES, or at least I hope so. Safe from being exposed to an opposing opinion about their lifestyle = NO. Hopefully emotionally safe even if there is no agreement. Pastors do risk their status if they perform same-sex unions, this is well understood, so to some degree their livelihood is not safe if they perform these unions.
- That is the question! I believe everyone is safe in Covenant congregations. That means they will be loved and embraced. It also means that they will be called to repent and allow the Spirit of God to transform them. The Church should be like Jesus, full of grace and truth.
- This is why I answered, "I'm not sure." Would I feel supported and stood-up-for in even being allowed to pray, let alone officiate in a same sex ceremony? I don't think I would feel safe. I think I would be risking my career and ordination. Yet would I feel supported and respected by many of my ECC colleagues if I did choose to officiate? I do believe so. I am thankful for the agree to disagree theology that many of my long term ECC colleagues still hold for each other. This is our history of how we were raised into this denomination.
- To be fully accepted and not judged.
- Without retribution.
- You're able to express your feelings and ideas toward the topic and be okay and not pushed out or ostracized.

Question #14: Do you believe that it is possible for the church to sincerely extend love and welcome to the LGBTQ+ community without a posture of full affirmation?

- Yes – 38.8%
- No – 46.3%
- I'm not sure – 13.4%
- No response – 1.6%



Question #15: Regardless of your current opinion on LGBTQ+ affirmation and inclusion in the church, are you interested in learning more and are you open to changing your mind?





- No. I have more-or-less made up my mind about this topic and am unlikely to change my mind. – 42.3%
- Maybe. I have an opinion about this topic, but I am willing to engage with others with an open mind and acknowledge the possibility that my mind could be changed about some things. – 33.6%
- Yes. My personal views on this topic have been shaken, and I'm interested in learning more with the possibility of changing my mind. – 7.2%
- I don't have strong opinions, and I'm interested in learning more. – 1.3%
- I don't have strong opinions, but I am not interested in learning more, at this time. – 1.0%
- Other – 12.1%
- No response – 2.6%

Other Responses:

Affirming

- After being a youth pastor, attending college and seminary at NPU, and working at Covenant offices, I left the church over this. And am done with the Covenant like so many other gay people who have left.
- As an ECC pastor who is open and affirming, I am a lifelong learner and am always open to learn more. I am trying to hold a church together that has a wide range of diverse opinions on LGBTQ+ inclusion.
- Change my mind on... What?
- I already have changed my mind. I grew up non-affirming. My faith, study of scripture and beloved ones made me find my stance now. I celebrate LGBTQ+ people and will work for their freedom everywhere and at all times.

- I am  inclusive and affirming Mama Bear  I will not ever not LOVE my queer community.
- I am a narthex episcopalian -- my gay daughter is a priest in the episcopalian church and we go back and forth -- I am quite inclusive and affirming with a spirit of celebration for same-sex unions.
- I am becoming increasingly affirming and inclusive. I do not have a settled conviction on every relevant issue, but I am highly unlikely to become less affirming and inclusive.
- I am convinced that queer affirmation is faithful to the gospel, but I remain open to deepening my understanding through scripture, theology, lived experience, and dialogue. My openness is not about reconsidering the dignity of queer people, which is settled, but about continually learning how best to embody justice, love, and belonging in the church.
- I have appreciated that the ECC has been inclusive on many issues - it is time for the move to share the love of Jesus for any and all who want it. The youth especially find the church to be old and rigid and does not show love but judgement. If we want to be a church that shows the Jesus was we need to act on it - throw the doors open wide.
- I have made up my mind that affirmation and inclusion is necessary for a healthy and whole church that reflects Christ more accurately. I am also willing to keep learning more about this topic.
- I have strong opinions AND I want to keep learning!
- I would have checked maybe knowing that I am wholeheartedly in favor of an open and affirming church/denomination, and recognize that I may not have all the answers to this issue. One can always learn more and change attitudes and perspectives.
- I've left for a fully inclusive denomination where I am learning more (ELCA).
- I've tried for years trying to come alongside people to "change" their minds. People are stubborn as an ass. You can't change someone's mind unless they want to learn and love with an open heart and mind. It would help if they KNEW someone who was LGBTQIA to learn from and love. They are my favorite people.
- My mind is made up about this topic, but I'm willing to learn how we can grow together.
- No, since I am no longer a member. I'm curious how this debate will end, and I'm very concerned as faculty of NPU. However, I found it necessary to leave the ECC for a more welcoming congregation.
- Somewhere between option one and two.

Non-affirming

- I am always open and interested in more information. By the nature of it that would include the possibility of changing my mind. However, I don't believe any new information or new revelation will contradict old revelation. And I do believe that scripture is clear. And scripture is a revelation of God.
- I am always open to learning and changing my mind if it is in light of a better reading of Scripture. It's the affirmations of the "Centrality of the Word", and the "Dependence on the Holy Spirit", and the rest that must inform and frame our affirmation of "Freedom in Christ".
- I believe the Bible is clear God's position on sexual identity and marriage between one man and one woman. I have heard arguments of inclusion, and, in my opinion, they do not hold up to the scrutiny of Scripture.
- I don't like the language of these options. While I feel strongly about what I believe, I am open to an engaging conversation that leaves space to express differences of opinions. I sift through man-made traditions and the basic principles of this world that have guided my thoughts to this point, but at the same time scripture seems clear on this to me. I would have to have a Damascus Road experience to shift off of my current stance.
- I have done copious amounts of research. I wish there was sound doctrine to support LGBTQ concepts. I have found none.
- I think it is important to discuss these important realities, and I am always up for a study and conversation.
- I'm always interested in communication and discussion, but I doubt that I'll change my mind any more than you think that you'll probably change yours on this topic. That's not being stubborn--it's being honest with ourselves that we've come to conclusions for good reasons.
- I'm always open to changing my mind, but every time I've dug into this more deeply in scripture, I've found myself MORE convinced of the historic biblical position, not less convinced. And I have desperately wanted to change my mind.
- I'm good with a Biblical understanding of human sexuality.
- My conviction is very deep and I can't see myself changing my mind, but I'm always open to dialogue and learning from other perspectives.
- No. (x2)
- The Bible is crystal clear and will never change!
- The first answer makes it sound like I am stubborn and unwilling to listen to anyone or anything different than what I believe but I have thought this through, prayed about it, and had conversations with others about this topic and do not believe I would change my stance.

Unclear

- I'm willing to live and let live.
- I always want to be open. And I think I can tell when I won't be persuaded of something, if that makes sense. I want full inclusion but I can't square all of it with scripture, and the arguments from affirming scholars are not persuasive. The ECC is at its core a scripture-centered denomination, it will be very hard for it to change course.
- I'm not really interested in learning more.
- I'm willing to continue learning and to walk alongside affirming pastors. I'm even happy to serve alongside them, as long as our disagreements do not amount to a denial of biblical authority. However, having spent considerable time considering this topic and having come to the ECC from an affirming denomination that was split because of disagreements over biblical authority as it applies to sexuality, I'm pretty settled in my conviction and believe it to be biblically consistent.
- This issue has not been adequately or fully understood across the ECC, so reactions have been emotional or willful without addressing the unanswered questions that have arisen.
- Yes. I believe we should always have a posture of the humble learner. We should always listen more than we speak. But I would not say my views have been shaken. I would say they continue to grow and hopefully move more toward loving my neighbor.

Section 4: Open-Ended Survey Reflection

Question: What is your response to the survey? Did taking the survey bring up any noteworthy thoughts, feelings, or memories? Is there anything else that you would like to share that wasn't captured by the survey questions? Please let me know your thoughts.

Responses:

LGBTQ+ Voices


- I almost didn't answer. I haven't attended much at all, but my son-in-law's family is at the leadership, and his brother is pastor there and I have a trans adult child. So, this is still up for me. Thanks for making it and including.
- I am sad for the ECC and the way that it has rejected its queer members and allowed for the poor treatment of North Park students and alums, and the punishment of ECC pastors who affirm queer people. So many wasted years when the ECC could've been doing the work of Christ.
- I grew up in an ECC church in Canada. I was sent and supported as a missionary (through a non-ECC organization). When I came out as queer and affirming, we were cut off. We were mistreated, lied to, etc. As were members of my extended family.
- I think the ECC is hopeless on this issue and therefore hopeless as a Christian denomination. It is not the Covenant church in which I was raised.
- I'll send you a separate message, but I left the ECC almost a decade ago, so I don't know the latest developments. These responses come from a long history in the ECC, but I was already gone by the Omaha meeting. I left after Adam Phillips' church in Portland was expelled [Christ Church: Portland was a church plant for whom the ECC rescinded support], and after NPU Chaplain Judy Peterson was canned for officiating a same-sex marriage. By that time, I thought things had become irretrievable.
- I'm reminded how hopeless I feel in regards to the ECC.
- It did make me remember being 16 and realizing I'd never get married at my home church. This is particularly pressing since I am getting (gay) married this year and it will not be at my home church or by my home pastor, even though he would be the logical choice if I wasn't gay.
- It is an important survey to give, as this is a contentious topic without an easy solution. I do think some of the questions could've stood to be proofread by a queer person, the term "transgendered" for example is simply not in use in any way. As an example, I did not become transgendered, I am transgender.
- The survey brought up mixed feelings but mostly made me glad I chose to leave for my own mental and emotional and spiritual health.
- Thank you for creating it! I'd be curious to know what led you to make this- your personal interactions with Embrace, and the ECC's engagement both theologically and practically with our queer siblings in Christ. Basically, I'd like to know more of why you are going to all this effort. This helps me trust more that this is an ok place for some of the telling of my own story.
- The more I learn about God's love and hear from queer people, the more affirming I become.
- This survey reminds me how heartbroken I am by the Covenant's stance on this issue. My whole reason for joining the Covenant was because of its lack of doctrine & its commitment to freedom of personal faith. So, so disappointing to see the narrowing of the Covenant's embrace of agreeing to disagree. A terrible loss.
- When I started at NPTS, the ECC was on the verge of being moderately open, then the fundamentalist evangelicals arrived and as always the church cared more about property value than people.
- Some of the questions/answer prompts made it very clear to me that this project is biased towards an affirming perspective. That is not invalidating of the project; I think it can still gather good data and drive meaningful conversations. Some of the responses that reflected a more traditional biblical sexual ethic were phrased in ways that roughly translated to me as "No, I'm stubborn, and I'm not changing my mind on this." I think the survey could have had more participation of folks from a Side B/traditional biblical sexual ethic crowd in the design/writing phase. Nevertheless, I'm glad someone is doing this work, even if it feels biased from the start.
- Engaging with these questions churns up so much grief and disgust with the denomination that I grew up in and still consider to be my extended family. I left my ECC church over LGBTQ+ issues but still pray that somehow, someday my family can safely return to it. Given that my child recently came out as trans, I fear that day of reconciliation is farther away than ever for us.

Affirming

- I no longer identify as a Christian, in large part due to the views and exclusionary actions of the Covenant Church, a community I gave my life to (Cov church member, NPU grad, Covenant missionary, Cov Denominational leadership) until 2019.
- 1 of my 3 kids identifies as cisgender. They have all walked away from the Covenant. I hope they all find their way back to Faith, but our denomination's position on LGBTQ+ sure doesn't help.
- A jaded feeling, somewhat. It's not that I don't hope things get better, but I'm very skeptical. The ECC is entrenched in fear, greed, and a reactive spirit that has no room for freedom in Christ.
- Appreciate all your efforts.
- As I have just started at a UCC church with the intention of transferring my ordination, I found this a helpful reflection point, although it brought up some sadness about the ECC's treatment of this issue and why I feel compelled to change denominations.
- Curious how people respond to/interpret the "clobber texts" in light of the ministry of Jesus and alongside other OT laws that we do not follow today.
- Even if the ECC allowed for freedom of thought on this topic I don't think I would be able to find an ECC church that would be welcoming enough for me to attend.
- Excellent survey.
- For me, this is an issue of sadness. I love my church family and I'm committed to [my home church]. However, I am haunted by the inauthenticity/inconsistency of how I live my life and my beliefs about LGBTQ+ and the stance of the ECC. I hope I don't have to choose. It's a no-win situation.
- Hmmmm, yes, I have many, many feelings about this topic. I know you've tried to reach out before directly- I've been unsure how to engage your questions and when I have the energy for it, to be honest. But let's try a conversation sometime soon. I do think this is an identity defining reality for the ECC. I honestly wonder if it's already been established and embedded, and the cost felt. But I always want to lean toward hope - and perhaps seeds planted now help make room for something later on.
- Hopefully more discussion will help.
- I am curious about what you envision as realistic outcome of this work. Do you actually believe that the ECC could change their position and become a fully affirming denomination at some point in the near future (next 20 years or so)? With churches and pastors being kicked out, and churches, pastors, and members leaving as a result, those who hold an affirming position will continue to become a smaller minority, especially while the Covenant continues to grow with new churches and members joining in part because of alignment with the ECC's current position on human sexuality.
- I am currently attending a Methodist church, and our pastor is gay and is married. I understand many people can't wrap their heads around that.
- I am grateful that this survey is being done. Hopefully it will shed light on this situation.
- I am open to conversations! However, I will always side on the error of love. I don't intend to spend time in conversation with those who do harm or allow for harm to be done (i.e. who can't be moved or open to the Spirit).
- I am thankful that someone is asking these questions. Thank you.
- I believe including gender identity in the same category as sexual orientation conflates two very different issues. I am fully affirming of same-sex relationships, but consider transgenderism a very different phenomenon and am skeptical about the totalizing identity-based declarations of many activists. See Andrew Sullivan's recent op-ed about how the trans rights movement has co-opted and perhaps even tarnished the important work of the gay rights movement.
- I don't think the common member understands the deep trauma associated with being cast out of a faith community.
- I enjoyed the survey. It brought some closure to me, having graduated and entered my first call in 2019. It also reminded me of how hurt I was by the decision made at the annual meeting that year, because the Pietist side of the ECC has always meant more to me than the Movement Evangelical side. The most powerful memory I had while taking it was of my last Midwinter in Denver, where the Posture Shift program was presented. The speaker talked about praying at the weddings of loved ones and a representative of the ECC cut him off and clarified that it was not allowed under the current guidelines. That was when I knew I would not be able to be ordained in the ECC, although it wasn't confirmed until the Annual Meeting that year. It still makes me quite sad and angry. We used to be comfortable living in the tension, but we've let the American culture war kill the denomination; it just doesn't know it's dead yet.
- I feel hopeless about the situation we are in.
- I feel that I should note [my local church] pastoral staff did the very best they could in accepting my gay daughter and my transgender daughter when they came out, given the current stance of the ECC. I would be willing to share more about our experience with this.
- I feel very free of this conversation. But I pray ECC leaders will listen to the Holy Spirit.

- I have a trans child who grew up in our ECC church, they were on the worship team for a few years but was challenged when some congregants were vocal in their disapproval. I went to our pastor who assured me that when it came down to grace vs truth that he would always err on the side of grace. Our family chose to stay because our pastor's loving kindness. Those congregants left our church. Our pastor also taught this past Sunday that "religion without mercy misses the heart of God". We continue to serve & be part of the work being done at this church.
- I have worked my way through this issue years ago -- it is sad to realize the ECC is still making this a 'thing.' It's so NOT a thing anymore. At [my local church] we do have a trans-man in our small group. [Our church] is already an "open" space, but our dear friend knows it is not a 'safe' space for him and his partner. But are they welcome? Of course -- just not celebrated and not a safe space for them to bring their friends.
- I hope the Covenant realizes how many young people have left the Covenant because of this issue.
- I hope this is the first step towards change within the ECC and that we can start accepting and embracing the LGBTQ+ community.
- I offered a few responses that were in between the options listed.
- I requested my removal from the ECC ordination rolls after they began purging faithful pastors over LGBTQ issues. The failure of the church on the issue led to me leaving church all together and mostly the entire construct of Christian faith.
- I think, in addition to harm caused to LGBTQ+ members (and the LGBTQ+ community as a whole), the removal of churches was detrimental to all congregations in the loss of membership. It created unnecessary division, grief, financial issues, and a lack of diversity (and God LOVES diversity in His church!). After the 2019 annual meeting, several LGBTQ+ members and allies left our church, and it was incredibly painful to lose these friends and the gifts that we received from them. Additionally, trust has been broken between the church and the denomination. There are a lot of feelings of bitterness toward all things ECC, which is too bad because the ECC is doing a lot of good things, too. I think the denomination needs to acknowledge this and has work to do in repairing its relationship with member churches. A lament of the decision and its aftermath would be welcomed at my church, I know.
It also makes me sad that I don't feel like my church is a place I can invite people to. I have a Christian trans friend who recently moved to my city. I did not feel comfortable inviting them to my church because of the ECC's position and recommended more affirming churches. Fortunately, they have found a church where they are loved and accepted, but this dissonance between my personal convictions and the church's positions have been an internal struggle. I want to stay committed to my church and the people here, but it is increasingly harder the longer the ECC holds onto this stance.
- I think that one of the important distinctives for me is the 1996 binding of the resolution on human sexuality because, as far as I am aware, it is the ONLY resolution to be bound. Resolutions were written specifically as short position papers and are not ever to be bound. [Editorial Note: The 1996 Resolution on Human Sexuality was "bound", which is to say, identified as the basis for ECC policy, at the 2004 Annual Meeting.]
- I used to be proud to reference the inclusion of the Covenant. The rigid, and dare I say, punitive way that ECC has dealt with issue in the past 20 or so years has been and is problematic and actually not Christlike. I understand that there needs to be learning and understanding and it takes time, but I think ECC has dug in their heels and is on the wrong side of things. I had written my letter of resignation from the ECC just before Covid hit. It is written just not sent. My dad joined the church when a neighbor boy scout's mom brought him to church, his family started to attend, then my mom joined because she saw a belief bigger than herself then we three children were brought in, then my 2 children. That is 3 generations who experienced the first open door of inclusion. Sad to say I am the last one here, and rather precariously. The Covenant has been my home - but home has become quite unwelcoming. I have some hope.
- I'd be curious to know how many of the respondents have, like my family, left the ECC over this issue. We currently are members of an Open and Affirming UCC congregation, and as a church we are able to address other needs in our community because we aren't spending our energy fighting this battle.
- I'm encouraged by this survey and hope the conversation continues. I've been distressed by churches being pushed out of the ECC based on this issue and it surprised me when I first heard of it because I think of the ECC as an open place for theological disagreement.
- I'm glad you're doing this!
- I'm grateful for this space to process my feelings around the ECC's discerned position. However, it has brought up deep emotions of sadness concerning my many queer students and their safety in this denomination that I love so deeply.
- I'm thankful for this work but feel skeptical about its outcome. But the fight should continue.
- [Editorial Note: This response was given by a member of FCC Minneapolis, who attended during the church's disciplinary action and subsequent removal from the ECC. For reasons of privacy, I will not be sharing the entire statement.] At the annual meeting, my pastor was stripped of his ministry credentials, and our beloved church community--people who had loved and supported us during this incredibly difficult season--was excommunicated from the denomination it helped start. The entire experience was one of the most intense experiences of my life. It was painful to watch my faith community be used as a pawn in a power struggle rooted in upholding the patriarchy--not in furthering Christ's mission. It was spiritually exhausting to repeatedly invest precious energy in fruitless conversations where my church members,

my pastor and leadership appealed to the Covenant distinctives and begged for grace--only to be treated like petulant and disobedient children. It was devastating to watch people I didn't know weigh the value of my pastor, our church, and our leadership, and for us to be deemed expendable.

- In graduate school working on a minor in genetics in the 80s and 90s these subjects were openly discussed.
- In the early 1980s, I met a gay guy in one of my art classes. I saw that he was human. Later, when I lived near Santa Cruz, I met many same-sex attracted people and again recognized their common humanity. In my work as a spiritual director, I encountered several more and a trans person. By that time, I was also working under a bivocational ministry license. (When I could no longer sign the paper honestly, I gave up that license.) My LGBTQ clients understood that I was doing what I could within the denomination to change their hard stance and they all encouraged me to persist. I continued until it became clear that the denomination was hardening its stance and resisting entertaining welcoming our LGBTQ+ neighbors as equally loved by God. At that point I left the Covenant, and after some searching, I became an Episcopalian.
- It codified the process I've gone through over the past 20+ years to become affirming. I "accidentally" drifted away from ECC around the time LGBTQIA inclusion became a flashpoint, for completely unrelated reasons but I do not recognize the denomination in which I was baptized, confirmed, married, and served on committees. But sadly, based on my time as a congregant and lay leader at an ECC church, as well as being a student and employee at North Park University, I am disappointed but not surprised this is the direction the denomination went.
- It continues to disturb me that the church focuses on what it considers to be sexual sin, to the exclusion of other sins. Of the seven deadly sins, six are overlooked.
- It frustrated me to be reminded that our church is still in such chaos over this. I remember being so saddened when our longtime pastor, Steve Armfield, was basically defrocked for officiating his son's marriage to another man. I remembered the time I turned down being an elder because I am affirming of the LGBTQ+ community and felt that being a leader in The ECC church would look like I was approving of their non-affirming stance and would let down the LGBTQ+ friends and family that I have. However, I am grateful that The ECC is even having this conversation around non-cis identifies.
- It honestly brings up a little trauma from my time in the ECC (I was denied ordination around this and pushed out of my church as I was committed to full inclusion and celebration of LGBTQ+ people and did not appreciate the denomination's handling of abuse towards women either. It felt like the ECC was happy to take the money of women and LGBTQ+ pastors for seminary and training but was unwilling to hire us or keep us on when our perspectives went against the "old boys club.") and I am further committed to liberation for LGBTQ+ people in my spaces and places now. I am again grateful I left the ECC and found home and safety elsewhere. Due to all of this I developed health issues. I have found freedom and hope and health in leaving the ECC.
- It stirred up the pain I felt when I realized the church I grew up in wasn't accepting of my child. People I loved in the ECC turned their backs on us. What hurt even more was seeing the glee some expressed when First Covenant was forced out. How could anyone be joyful about a church being pushed out?
- Lots of religious trauma in my years with the covenant. Not just LGBTQIA but over the years. I left 25 years ago and tried to come back 6 years ago and I couldn't stay. I married into the covenant 50 years ago. I am not evangelical. But because my husband and his family (including my brother-in-law is a pastor) they are  ECC so like I said it is a part of my life but our kids and I do not attend.
- My child is LGBTQ. I was in somewhat of a leadership position in my church. I feared that I would be removed from my position because of my love, acceptance, and support of my child. The trajectory of the ECC in this area is a key reason I have left the denomination.
- No, thoroughly done.
- No. I've unfortunately become completely numb to this conversation.
- Not at this time.
- Not really. Omaha in 2019 was a nightmare - we were there. Shady and back-door deals were made, and things were done out of order to achieve their desired results. The Reformation Project conference in Fall 2019 restored and healed me. I won't go back to the Covenant. And I won't ever say I belong to a denomination again. I used to describe myself as "I'm Covenant", but I refuse to say "I'm Presbyterian" now. I'm a member of a Presbyterian church, but I won't ever again align with a denomination. I follow Jesus. That's all.
- Not trying to be snarky, but it made me REALLY thankful to be out of the struggle. I commend those who stay to push, but I hope more people realize they can find peace by leaving. (I say this as a member of 40+ years; leaving was not easy.)
- Our church has suffered losses in the last years. We are rebuilding. I feel that the ECC stance on queer folks will be a very big stumbling stone for the people we are trying to reach with God's love in our community.
- Reading this brought back all sorts of drama and trauma in my past: marrying into the covenant 50 years ago (it's in my husband's family blood line), all the evangelical stuff (I'm not evangelical anymore), dealing with rude pastors when our son came out, and then the Preston sprinkle shit Yes drama and trauma.... I can finally say I am done with church. I will remember the good but lots of unpleasant stuff too. Jonny, I am so proud of you for keeping on the good fight to include our dear friends and family who are queer. I tried for so long. So many tears. So many friends I've lost!

Those who want to be a part of the church should be ~~100~~ included and loved. Keep up the good work Jonny. It's hard to get people to change. I'd rather be in a room full of queer people watching a drag queen show than in a church. It's way more loving and fun!!! By the way, Jesus will be sitting with us having a beer too!

- Reminded me how happy I am to now be in an affirming denomination. This question of inclusion seems so overdue.
- Thanks for doing this.
- The survey did not provide enough answers for someone who is no longer attending a Covenant church.
- The work that went into this was clear in how you crafted the response options. I cannot wait to see the summary!
- This lifelong Covenanter and mother of a gay son can no longer affiliate with a denomination that is not inclusive and accepting.
- This reminded me how disappointing the ECC has been, and also how far the ECC is from where I think they should be. I also think it is so disappointing that this conversation is still needed. It's so disheartening.
- This survey on one hand encourages me that there are people open to and working towards inclusion while on the other hand deeply pains me that the denomination I was raised in, participated in, and had my children baptized in is rigid and judgmental. My family and I left the ECC due to its views and unbiblical, unchristian statements about the LGBTQIA+ community.
- This survey was a reminder of the deep pain of my church being kicked out of the ECC and having my ordination revoked due to our being open and affirming. It has meant the loss of my faith and moving completely on from ministry. I hope the ECC will eventually find itself on the right side of history and repent for the pain they've caused. But I've moved on, have forgiven the ECC, and rarely think of the denomination that supposedly "formed" me.
- Very pleased that this survey is taking place!
- Very thorough and intentional! It's so encouraging to know there are still efforts to push back on the current stance of the ECC and provide additional information to consider. Only thing I would add is a question in between my HOPE for the ECC and what I EXPECT for the ECC, and that is what I think the ECC should do next. While I hope the ECC is one day fully affirming, I think the best course of action, in the near future is to drop their position and allow individual churches to decide for themselves, similar to other "issues" that are debated and not clear in the Bible. I grew up in the ECC believing we were a denomination centered around community, rather than belief. But that is no longer the case. We need to re-root ourselves in asking "where is it written?", agreeing to still come to the table even if we disagree, and only holding each other accountable the core truths of the Gospel. Trying to argue for full affirmation from the ECC right now will only cause more harm; we need to meet halfway and try to continue the conversation around letting it go for now.
- We left the Covenant Church after 50 years because it was no longer a Pietist denomination. It was willing to discriminate against people based solely on prejudice and fear. A non-credal church chose one point of belief to remove pastors and congregations as well as deny the benefits of sacraments to individuals. We are completely at home as Swedish-American pietists in the Episcopal Church.
- We need to be willing to listen to others who are on different journeys...that's how we learn as we all are in this world!
- Well done.
- Yes, it definitely brought up all the feelings. Your questions were very well written. Thank you for allowing me to participate.

Non-affirming

- After reading through this, I have to say it was a complete waste of time. The Evangelical Covenant Church doesn't need more surveys, projects, or attempts to "reimagine" biblical truth. What we need is the courage to stand firmly on the authority of God's Word. The Bible is clear, and our calling as a denomination is clear: to faithfully preach, teach, and live in obedience to it.
The ECC must move forward with the removal of all churches, professors, and pastors who reject and distort biblical truth. Tolerating heresy under the guise of diversity or curiosity only weakens the witness of the church and confuses the next generation. This is not about opinion or preference—it is about truth.
For the health of our churches and the future of our mission, we must close the door on this debate and move on in faithfulness to Christ.
- Every time I receive an email like this, I understand why so many Covenant churches are choosing to leave. This issue has been addressed, and the discerned voice of the Annual Meeting has not shifted. The Covenant is one of the few denominations that is not punitive if churches wish to leave. I do not understand why anybody would fight to stay in a body that they have obviously drifted from.
- Good survey.
- I am horrified and deeply grieved at the very idea of promoting any kind of sin, but far more so at and suggestion of changing the definition of the Gospel or even suggesting the possibility of anything other than faith in Christ alone as necessary for salvation and thus determinative of church membership.

- I am unhappy about you putting your personal ideas forward as the correct ones and putting churches in the ECC in a bad light. The Bible does NOT affirm same-sex marriages or genders other than, ... "God created male and female" period. You are taking cultural ideas and changing scriptures to fit cultural ideas. This is wrong and creates pain and strife within the body of believers. You are creating disunity within the church and should stop immediately. Though I'm sure you will try to throw my answers away as they do not support your own, I have always shown love and care to those I know in the LBGQT+ community and invited them to church. We can love the person and hate the sin, no matter the sin.
- I appreciate your survey and sincere effort to bring about change. While I disagree with your desired result, I respect your integrity. Thank you for offering "other" as a response.
- I believe that discussions need to be had regarding pastoring and embracing LGBTQ+ people in churches and communities, while holding to biblical conviction. This survey focused primarily on emotions and experiences but gave little attention to Scripture. Freedom in Christ is an essential distinction of the ECC, but our first affirmation is the centrality of the word of God.
- I believe that this survey is disturbing within a denomination (ECC) whose foundation is rooted in Biblical principles and not cultural influences. Maybe our people should be more careful in regard to theological discussion and focus more on biblical discussion. I firmly believe there is a difference.
- I believe there is no outcome to pursuing this pathway other than a version of what happened among the UMC, UCC, ELCA, etc. who split over this issue. If you consider those places a light and place where the world looks for the Gospel, then I guess continue the path. To my eyes, they have lost their light, by choice.
- I feel it's a continuation of the same problem. The ECC is a covenant of churches by which churches voluntarily choose to participate with full knowledge and awareness of the discerned stances, all of stances. To continue to argue against those positions is to not be in harmony. In the same way that we are voluntarily choosing to participate, we can live into our religious freedom in Christ by voluntarily choosing not to participate. Should we disagree with the discerned positions of the ECC.
- I shared most of them in the comments already. I'm surprised by the agenda of the survey, where I initially thought it was meant to just gather data and/or celebrate the LGBTQ people in the ECC who are living out a traditional biblical sexual ethic. They need to be in color and highlighted so our more conservative churches can see LGBTQ people exist and are picking up their cross and following Jesus in this amazing, role-model type of way. They need to be our keynote speakers and pastors, without the ignorant fears so many conservative people have. The slant of this survey and it seems, The ECC in Color, diminishes these experiences and the opportunity to highlight an alternative way of being fully LGBTQ and fully Covenant. "In Color" should not be the same as "In Bed" or "Having Sex," which seems to be how you're defining it. This diminishes the personhood of LGBTQ people and how they experience their queerness in all the non-sexual parts of life.
- I think it is ridiculous that the Covenant is trying to conform to society instead of following the teachings from the Bible.
- I think it is so sad that so many wish to trade in Gods best for worldly good. The Bible is the inherent word of God and to twist it into something just to feel good is so sad. We can love one another without accepting sin. We can care for all people without watering down the Word of God.
- I think it's good to be talking about these things and broadening our care for LGBTQ+ members of our congregations. I believe the ECC's position is right and that we should hold to it, but that doesn't negate that we owe much more care and discipleship to side-B queer folks. It's a lonely place to be, with side A people saying they should just pursue relationships and marriage, leaving them ostracized amongst much of the rest of the queer community who don't understand their decision to be faithful to their convictions, but also ostracizing from the other end of spectrum to have so many in our church communities thinking there is something inherently sinful about a queer orientation and leave queer folks abandoned on that side as well. Side B churches and pastors have a unique opportunity to care well for folks that are getting left behind and left out by both sides of this discussion.
- I think my only reaction to the survey is that it feels about 10 years too late. We've been through about 5 iterations of revisionist groups that have organized and failed. The questions asked here feel like questions being asked at the beginning or middle of a heated debate in our denomination, but my sense is that this conversation, at least the Side A vs. Side B conversation, is all but over in the ECC. As many old school covenanters were slowly becoming open and affirming, the denomination was growing quickly, but all of the new growth was from conservative ethnic churches and transfer growth from churches fleeing open and affirming denominations. That kind of institutional momentum is impossible to shift. And now, not only has the ECC quickly grown with mostly side B Christians, at the same time most agitators from the Side A group are leaving, the conversation is changing, and those who are left are earnestly desiring to talk about anything else. I think we do need to have robust conversations about LGBTQ+ inclusion, linking arms with organizations like ReVoice, and leaning into our historic biblical perspective. That is the future.
- I thought some answers you gave were bias. Terms like "I fear" represented the traditional perspective, while progressive responses did not accompany those emotive statements. I felt increasingly dismissive of this survey because of that bias. I used to have a more affirming view of LGBTQ+ issues, but the behaviors and lack of wisdom from that perspective have

led me increasingly away from an affirming position. Churches under the rainbow flag stumble to a close, in my experience.

- I went to Covenant Bible College in 1993/4. Even back then our professors recommended to not go to North Park because of its teaching (it wasn't called Woke or Social Justice back then) and even 2 or 3 decades before that the Covenant was beginning all the compromises and moving towards worldly views and away from Biblical views. It is sad but all foretold.
- I would say that it is not worded very neutrally. Despite efforts to be balanced, it biases heavily toward a progressive stance on full inclusion.
- In my role as an ordained pastor, I will work to voice and teach what the Bible and Church tradition have held for the history of the church. There are two genders by God's design and to pretend otherwise is to take God's roll. I believe that is what led to the fall of Lucifer. God and I love all people, all of whom have sinned. We are all called to turn from our sin to a closer walk with Jesus.
- None at this time.
- Our church would dismiss me as pastor if I was open and affirming. I think it is important to also realize and recognize this dynamic in our denomination. Some of what has happened in our denomination has caused people all sides of this issue to feel "unsafe," not just the LGBTQ+ community.
- The constant push to bring into alignment to what society wants the church to accept but is biblically against GOD'S will only hasten the departure of the biblical-based churches in the denomination. Either the church will split or slowly fracture.
- The reason we are leaving the Covenant is because they are leaning more and more in the direction of affirming all things LGBTQ. In my opinion, the writing is on the walls. We are getting out before they go down this road.
- The survey makes me concerned that there are even people who consider themselves "Christian" to be considering homosexuality as a biblical way of life.
- This survey is full of the opinions and pining of man, not scripture; that tells a lot about the topic at hand. We should get back to what scripture is very clear on with this issue.
- This survey is more likely to tear the ECC apart than our doctrine.
- Unfortunately, the survey is clearly not written in a way that is impartial or acknowledges the pastoral heart and longing and struggle by which I have shaped my heart for ministry and my heart for the LGBTQ community. While I clearly affirm the ECC position, I walk into every relationship and interaction with a heart to see someone's full self with compassion and listening. I always nuance my interactions with an invitation to disagree and listen. But the work of denying translation and animosity and villain status that is put on about affirming scripture is a disservice to everyone. Until the LGBTQ+ "Christian" community can agree what a godly sexual ethic is and what might be included in the term "sexual immorality" there is no real conversation that can take place about affirming, because it is drawn up as a two-choice option accept all of us and what we think and feel or accept none. I whole heartedly reject this definition because it ignores the need for all of us to be transformed by Christ. It is for this lack of nuance and sensitivity that I'm concerned about sharing my name and church.
- You might have asked if respondents are familiar with the writings of Alissa Childers, Rosaria Butterfield, or Christopher Yuan. Also, you seem to have a very shallow and unbiblical understanding of love. Love divorced from truth is just sentimentality.

Unclear

- The Covenant church has always agreed to disagree. I don't see why this issue is any different. I realize every ECC church and members will not agree on stances but that's ok as long as there is acceptance in differing opinions from both sides.
- Feel a greater need for a theological conversation to examine scripture and the arguments for and against "moral equivalency."
- *[Editorial Note: This person works for the ECC and asked me to keep their identity private, so I am only including a portion of their response.]* I don't want it to be this way, but there has been negative response from the leadership of the denomination regarding this project, as I'm sure you are well aware. I think this is important work. I don't know the full history on why it's being done outside of the denominational participation, but I imagine you've come up against resistance. The denominational response is sad to me. One of the things said is "we don't know who this is or why they are doing it or what they plan to do with the information". I find that a hard statement to swallow. Regarding how I felt taking the survey - I have been wading through this topic for a few years now. I grew up with traditional conservative teaching on this. But my heart tells me that it's not black and white. There are so many aspects to evaluate. In the end, love comes first. I don't know what that means yet as far as statements and resolutions and doctrine and policy. But I know love comes first. What does love (JESUS) require of me?
- I am angry at how this seems to be an issue that the church has doubled down on, disregarding other positions and systems of the past and present that cause harm and have caused harm, which remain unreconciled without full restorative justice or healing, such as positions on assimilation of American Indians in areas where the ECC was

expanding, lack of support for inclusion based on race, limited affirmation of women (especially single women or as part of a childless couple), those who have been abused, etc. I worry that this will be another issue that may have partial resolution someday without a true exploration of harm, lament, confession, and healing.

- I am sad that this topic is a reason that I decided to step away from pastoral ministry in the ECC. As a former youth pastor, I am so honored that I have dozens of students who are confident to be in committed same-sex relationships and marriages, yet my heart breaks as they are not all feeling “approved” or accepted by their own church family. Will I return to ministry? I think so. Will it be with the ECC? I am not sure. If the ECC truly stood behind our Waldenstrom stance to agree to disagree and be congregational, then I would be much more loyal to my generational deep commitment to the ECC.
- I appreciate your efforts in lifting up LGBTQ+ affirming voices in our denomination and for framing it in Covenant values of unity.
- I felt the rage against the covenant again rising up in me. Every memory I have there is tainted by all I now know.
- I think there is more nuance than most people realize between an open and affirming stance and where most of the Covenant is at. I'm not sure your survey fully captures some of that nuance. Nevertheless, it was a good exercise for me, and I think we need more opportunities to both personally reflect and communally engage in this topic.
- I was tempted to type some open responses but went with the responses that best fit my feelings at the time, hopefully so you get better data.
- I don't know if changing the “form” of governance will make the church more attractive to the LGBTQ+ community. We can't even get cis-gendered people to come to church.
- It caused me to reflect and think deeply about my current position on these very important issues and how to engage them.
- It did bring up a lot of thoughts. My personal views of affirming the LGBTQ+ community have evolved drastically over the years (away from viewing certain lifestyles as sinful towards being fully accepting). I am still struggling with my views on how the church should adapt or change.
- It's really sad to know how many people have been alienated by the church as a whole and have left Christianity behind as a result. Until this point, I've always been proud of the Covenant's open arms and the stance on this topic is unrecognizable.

Supportive counseling can be really helpful as individuals try to sort out their thoughts, as certainly some people are confused about what they are feeling. We should be a place that can help without judgement.

- Thank you for continuing this conversation.
- THANK YOU for doing this -- I am interested in whatever results you choose to publish.
- Thank you for providing this opportunity to address these challenges. Where is the ECC leadership in this discussion? Silent!
- Thanks for making this happen. I'm excited to see what it opens for us.
- Thanks for your work.
- The biases of this survey and the surveyor are clear. I'm grateful for that. However, surveys like these cannot account for the range of positions between inclusion/exclusion and affirmation/non-affirmation. Though my theology is non-affirming and my biblical convictions have been settled through much conversation, study, prayer, and listening, my posture toward LGBTQ+ members of our church (yes, we have and have had LGBTQ+ members in our congregation, and they know we're non-affirming) is not stereotypical of a non-affirming pastor. I know many non-affirming pastors who reflect that same dynamic. This issue requires serious conversation and consideration, but it isn't as simple as love=affirmation and non-affirmation=harm.
- The issue in question, at least for me, seems to be the ECC's adoption of mainline evangelical churches insufficiently cognizant and representative of the Covenant's sixth affirmation which, as a result, is becoming largely worthless. It is changing the complexion of our collective from a broadly accepting and communally-discerned body to one that “tows the line” with the newer (and wealthier) congregations calling the ECC home.
- The last question about safety helped me re-evaluate some of my earlier answers. I'm still not sure about a lot, and I'm not sure if I'll ever be more sure, but it's a good question. Separately, I worry that if the church (local or as a denomination) focuses too much on morality, we lose sight of becoming more loving and just, as Christ.
- Theologically, I'm still trying to figure it out. Practically and realistically... yes I believe we need to be affirming and accepting as evident as the immense harm we Christians have caused to God's children and our call to love one another. I will share this survey with fellow church members who are LGBTQ+.
- This is a very challenging and difficult topic, but somehow still needs to be addressed. This survey is a good first step. Personally, when you really dig in, I don't think the Bible has as strong a stance against homosexuality to the extent that many Christians perceive it to have. Sure, there are passages here and there that talk about the behavior being vile, but even if we were to conclude that homosexuality is a sin, who are we to judge and discriminate against those who practice that behavior, when we are all equally sinful in other ways? Is homosexuality even brought up in the Ten

Commandments? Are we not all guilty of violating many of the Ten Commandments ourselves (idolatry, coveting, lying, dishonoring our parents, not loving our neighbor ... etc.)? How hypocritical it is of us as Christians to discriminate against gays.