



## Faithful Conversation

*James M. Childs*

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Bitter battles over the churches' stance toward its gay and lesbian members have tested the churches' fundamental orientation and even threatened to split whole denominations apart. The blessing of homosexual unions and ordination of gays and lesbians have proven to be special flashpoints at both local and national levels.

Part of the widespread perplexity over the issues stems from their complexity. They involve questions not only of personal ethics and church polity but also of Christian history, conflicting readings of the biblical data, and uncertainty over basic anthropological frameworks, especially as driven by findings of the social sciences.

This volume, initiated by the ELCA seminary presidents in response to a churchwide mandate for study of the issues, is aimed at engendering real reflection and conversation by providing Christians with the basic tools to engage the many dimensions of this question for themselves and with each other. Based on sound scholarship but written in a readable fashion for a broad audience of laypeople and pastors, the volume includes five essays, an authors' forum about how specific issues in the church are affected by these perspectives, a select bibliography of further readings, and directions on how this resource might be used.

Contributors: James M. Childs Jr., Mark Allan Powell, James Arne Nestingen, Martha Ellen Stortz, Richard J. Perry Jr., José David Rodríguez, Daniel L. Olson

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