



Lesbian Gay Bi Trans
and New Apostolic

A Guide for Ministers
of the New Apostolic Church

Introduction	3
Official Position of the NAC	4
Homosexuality and Bible	5
Sexual Orientación	5
Gender Identity	6
Soul Care during the Coming-Out	6
Support Groups	8
Prayer for Same Sex Couples	8

Dear Minister

When a brother or sister in faith asks you for guidance or intercession, it's a sign of deep trust in your ministry and you.

Many times when a person realizes that he is gay or she is lesbian, they do not know whom to trust to talk about their sexual orientation, their fears, doubts and questions related to the subject.

You may be the first confidant, and it is up to you whether your answers offer peace, restraint and guidance to the sibling in front of you, or if your answers cause sadness, disappointment or confusion. A hurtful response, an attitude of rejection or prejudice, can generate sadness, grief and even depression, and lead to leaving church and even a total loss of faith.

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RAINBOW-NAC is a private initiative within the New Apostolic Church which provides containment of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender members, promoting tolerance and solidarity within the Congregations and dialoguing with ecclesiastical authorities in a framework of mutual respect.

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Information about RAINBOW-NAC
www.rainbow-nac.org

If you have any questions or need more information, you can contact Apostle Thomas Schmidt, the Regional Church Interlocutor for LGBTI* members or the RAINBOW-NAC group at the e-mail rainbow.nac.usa@gmail.com



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The position of the Church on homosexuality is not static. Since Chief Apostle Urwyler in 1986 changed the relevant regulations for Holy Communion, the Church is trying to include gay, lesbian, and bisexual brothers and sisters in the Congregations instead of marginalize them.

The position published in January 2005 was removed in March of 2017 from the official website of the New Apostolic Church www.nak.org pending the drafting of a new position.

However, we underline that the following sentence is still valid:

“In this regard we want to point out explicitly that sexual orientation has no significance for the spiritual care of the brethren in the faith.”

The New Apostolic Church:

- **Recognizes that homosexuality is not a disease or a sin, but a condition of the human being.**
- **Recognize that sexual orientation is no impediment to the salvation of the soul.**
- **Values a stable same sex relationship over promiscuous behavior.**
- **Does not recommend abstinence or “conversion therapies”.**

There are very few passages in the Bible that relate to homosexuality (4 in the Old Testament and 2 in the New Testament).

In short, you can say

- The Bible has to be understood in its historical social and cultural context
- The different translations of the Scriptures do not always coincide 100% with the original text and its true meaning
- In those times, same-sex relationships based on love, commitment and loyalty were not known as we know them today. Homosexual behaviors were mainly known as homosexual prostitution, extramarital relationships or as the product of a lustful life.
- Jesus never makes a pronouncement about homosexuality.

Sexual Orientation

Sexual orientation is the permanent emotional attraction to another person, be it loving, sexual or affective. The orientation can be homosexual (same sex attraction), bisexual (attraction to both sexes) or heterosexual (attraction to the opposite sex).

When talking about homosexuality, it is necessary to know that sexual orientation is a condition of the human being which is not chosen. Talking about “sexual choice”, “sexual-option” or “lifestyle” does not apply, it can even be offensive to the brother or sister who is in front of you.

Homosexuality is not a “problem” either. Instead, it can be a problem for a homosexual person to have to deal with a homophobic environment, rejection of one’s own family or bullying.

Gender Identity

In this guide we only briefly mention the gender identity that consists of the whole of biological sex (which is assigned at birth), gender identity (the consciousness of being male or female) and the social role of gender (acceptance and compliance with cultural norms for female and male behavior).

Transgender (or transsexual) people live with the conviction of identifying and belonging to the opposite sex of the visible biological by birth.

There are transgender people from woman to man, and from man to woman. Sexual orientation and gender identity are entirely different spheres, a transsexual person can be heterosexual or homosexual.

Soul Care during the Coming-Out

When we talk about “coming-out”, it refers to the process from discovering one’s homosexual orientation, assuming it, communicating it to close people (family, friends, ministers, etc.) until living openly gay (for example living in a homosexual relationship with knowledge of the respective families, neighbors, colleagues, etc.)

A gay brother or a lesbian sister can approach you at any stage of the Coming-Out.

1. The brother or sister is not yet sure of his or her sexual orientation and suspects that he or she could be gay or lesbian.

Possible answers:

God loves us all equally, regardless of our sexual orientation. That at some point you will be certain of your sexual orientation, and whatever it may be, there is nothing wrong with you and you can be happy and blessed.

In this stage of insecurity it is important to show closeness, unconditional love and accompany with prayers for inner peace and clarity about your sexual orientation.

2. The brother or sister already recognizes that he or she is homosexual:

Possible answers:

That God loves you, exactly how you are. Sexual orientation is not important to God, you are always welcome in the congregation and you can count on the support of the Ministers.

Confidentiality must always be respected, third parties (family or other ministry bearers) cannot be involved without the consent of the brother or sister in question. There is no way to “get someone out of the closet by force”, you have to respect the times and the privacy of the brothers.

Nor can you pray that God will change sexual orientation. Remember that sexual orientation is a condition of the human being.

3. The brother or sister already assumed their sexual orientation:

Possibly, in this case the brother or sister simply wants to inform the Minister about the sexual orientation and wants to be treated like any other member of the congregation. Remember that

“... we want to point out explicitly that sexual orientation has no significance for the spiritual care of the brethren in the faith.”

This statement also applies when a gay couple approaches you to talk about a situation in their life as a couple. The response of the Minister will not be different from the response to heterosexual couples.

In summary it is recommended:

- **Being empathetic and putting yourself in the other’s place**
- **Learn about the topic**
- **Listen and pray with the brothers**
- **Remember that God’s love is unconditional**
- **Put Pastor’s love above any personal prejudice or opinion**
- **Remember that Soul Salvation is not conditioned by sexual orientation**

Support Groups

If a gay brother or lesbian sister has difficulties in assuming their sexual orientation, you can put them in touch with a support group. Find out where there is a group in your vicinity. You can usually talk on the phone or write. It also helps you to learn more about the topic. It is also good for the brothers to know that they are not alone in the Church. There is a group of sisters and brothers of Sexual Diversity within the New Apostolic Church, the “RAINBOW-NAC”. It has a website www.rainbow-nac.org, a Facebook group and an email address: rainbow.nac.usa@gmail.com

Prayers for Same Sex Couples

The Church throughout the world has uniform regulations: In all countries where it is possible to form a legal bond for same-sex couples, for example civil union or marriage, a prayer for the couple can be made. They are called “Prayers for Registered Unions,” the terms “Prayer of Blessing” or “Prayer for Couples” no longer apply.

The couple must have complied with the legal procedure and at least one of the spouses must be new apostolic.

The prayer will not be celebrated within a Divine Service, usually it will take place in the house of the couple. If that is not possible or not desired, it can be celebrated in the church.