

Speaking Outline

Why a LGBT+ Conference?

As a nation, New Zealand is predominantly accepting of LGBT+ people. But being a sporting nation, we do have a problem with homophobia, particularly in sports and strong stereotyping about what sort of people play particular sports.

New Zealand churches are slowly progressing, but with the recent change that saw same-sex marriage upheld by law, the church has had to consider its position. In most cases, churches have taken a conservative view and see same-sex marriage as sinful, and have therefore restricted leadership and other duties for LGBT+ people.

New Zealand has a population of 4 million people and we pride ourselves on being a diverse nation. This extends to our LGBTI+ community and we also have two additional cultures included in this community:

- Takatāpui [Tar kaa tar poo e] is a Māori word meaning a devoted partner of the same sex.
- Fa'afafine [Far far feen a] are Samoan biological males who behave in a range of feminine ways. They have been an integral part of Samoan communities for centuries. 'Fa'afafine' translates as 'in the manner of a woman'. There may be equivalent identities for females who adopt masculine social roles in Pacific cultures, but evidence is scarce.

For many years now, St Matthews-in-the-City, Ponsonby Baptist and All Saints Ponsonby have been leading the way and have been accepting of the LGBTI+ community. They have been walking in the Pride Parades and affirming same-sex couples and transgender Christians, and have been a refuge for hurting Christians.

We are aware that a number of people, who once grew up in churches, have simply left because of the tension between sexuality and identity, faith and church. We therefore want to create a fresh event for the LGBT+ community who do have faith or would like to relook at engaging with God and Christianity.

Target Audience

As this is the first time we have produced this event, we are unsure of the demographics of the people who will attend. However, we believe we will see the following groups represented:

- Same-sex couples searching for acceptance of their relationship in a church context
- LGBT+ people who have a Christian faith but do not go to church
- LGBT+ people who attend churches and are involved in their church communities
- Christians questioning their sexuality and spirituality
- Youth who are wrestling with coming out in a Christian context
- People who have left church due to feeling excluded
- Straight allies who strongly affirm same-sex relationships
- Church and community leaders wanting to engage in the LGBT+ conversation



Programme

Friday

7.00pm Welcome // Session 1: Justin Lee

9.30pm Close

Saturday

9.30am Session 2: Justin Lee

11.30am Break

2.00pm Seminars 1 & 2

3.15pm Break (Afternoon Tea provided)

3.30pm Seminars 3 & 4

5.00pm Dinner // Social Event

Sunday

9.00am Community Project // Brunch

1.00pm Session 3: Amanda Pilbrow

2.30pm Break (Afternoon Tea provided)

2.45pm Seminars 5 & 6

4.00pm Session 4: Q&A with Justin Lee

5.00pm Dinner Break

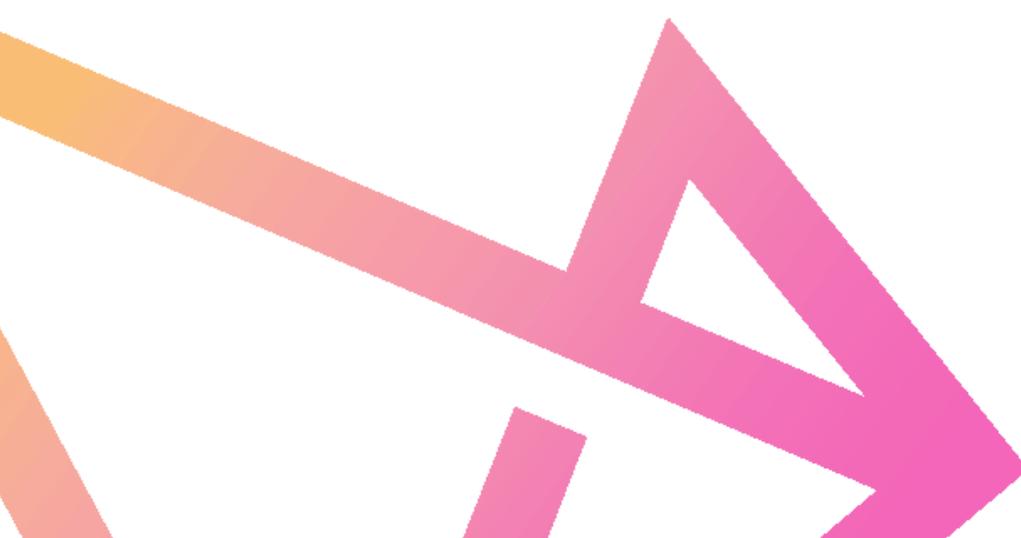
7.30pm Traditional Service at St. Matthew-in-the-City

Monday

9.30am Session 5: Amana Pilbrow

11.30am BBQ Lunch (provided)

2.00pm Closing Session





Session 1: Justin Lee

Story & You Are Good

- Your testimony
- You are made in the image of God
- It's not bad to be LGBT+, it's good
 - It has a positive effect in the world
 - We all have something to contribute
- Lead into ministry

Session 2: Justin Lee

Labels

- Labels are helpful for people to understand themselves
 - Galations 3:26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
- Labels can be harmful for community as they create judgement and stereotyping
- Moving beyond the label
- Realising this doesn't affect God's Love
- Cognitively understand who they are
 - Taking on label without understanding themselves first

Session 3: Amanda Pilbrow + Panel

How to Care for Our Community

- How to pastorally care for LGBT Christians: to move forward in including and loving LGBT people, regardless of theological position.
- What does unity look like in the midst of disagreement?
- Is your church safe for LGBTQIAFT people?
- Shame aspect
- What level of involvement can an LGBT person have in churches?
 - Youth + sexual education
 - Seniors
 - Takatapui

Panel: possible speakers
Neil Ballantyne
Rosie Bradley
Ruth McConnell

Ann Moody
Kay McGregor
Josh Sanford



Session 4: Justin Lee (hosted by Peter L)

Question & Answers

- People will text in questions and we will have some prepared
 - How is the church progressing in USA?
 - How is the church responding to GCN?
 - How do I tell me conservative pastor I'm LGBT+?

Session 5: Amanda Pilbrow + Guests

Where to from here

- Set a standard – don't let people look down on you because you are LGBT+
- Call to evangelise is for us too
- Love your neighbour
- Support activity in the LGBT community
- Join an online LGBT Christian community like Diverse Church NZ to connect with others
- Support church leaders in helping them create safe church spaces
- Become role model to the community
- Find a church and/or community you can be a part of to progress change
- Identity – God sends you
- Ian B to talk about Diverse Church Community – action people to join right then
- Ryan? – to talk about South Auckland Life Group





Seminar 1: Bill and Julie

We are Family!

- How to support your LGBT+ family and friends
- How to react to their 'coming out'
- Sex education – understanding the risk & not being afraid to talk about it
- Tell Story

Seminar 2: Hosted by Craig

The T Tribe – Understanding our Transgender community

- Overview/Intro into Transgender
 - How it came to be (Basic)
 - Gender Dysphoria
 - Story of Discovery (Stephanie)
 - ?? Stephen Ball from Life Line

Seminar 3: Peter Lineham, Caroline Blyth, James Harding & Justin Lee

Theology and Sexuality

- Biblical interruptions
- Affirming verses

Seminar 4: Bruce Pilbrow + Couple

Relationships and Role Models – how to function as a Christian LGBT couple

- God's model for committed relationships
 - Christ Centred
 - Respectful
 - Loving/Honouring/Self Sacrificing
 - Committed
 - Monogamous
 - Encouraging
 - Breakups
- Navigating God's standard (purity in a promiscuous culture)



Seminar 5: Tash Holmes

Creatively Engage

- Worship
- Songs
- Art
- Service

Seminar 6: Glen, Neil + Guests

Coming Out

- Personal Stories
- Freedom to be who you were made to be
- Freedom from Shame for yourself
- The shame your family or friends might experience
- How to make sure you or someone you know stay 'well' through the process

