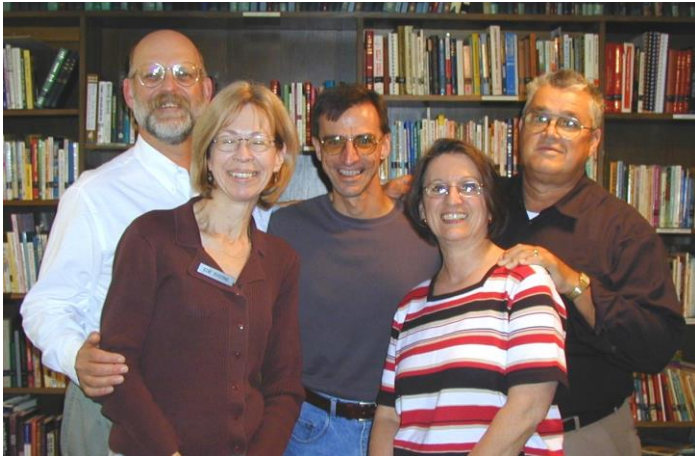


Love – The Key to a Healing Heart – Renee Boyle

Renee is one of the founding members of Healing Hearts, a confidential support group for the parents and the family of persons dealing with same sex attraction.



Some of the Healing Hearts leaders. From left Scott and Edie, Dan Hitz, Renee and Mike Boyle.

In 1990 I started praying specifically to learn what unconditional love looked like. It had never been modeled for me as a child, and I really had no idea what it was. Little did I know that two years later real lessons about love would begin. You see, it was in the fall of 1992 our son told us he was gay.

Those first two years were rough. My son and I had always been close and now we were estranged. My husband and I told no one, afraid of how people might react. As Christians we didn't know how we were supposed to act.

Should we kick him out of the house and preach to him at every opportunity? Or did God want us to do something much more radical? Could it be that God wanted us to love him?

Yes, of course we were to love him. My prayer to learn how to love was being answered.

After hearing Barbara Johnson speak in 1993, I contacted her hoping I could connect with other parents in the Detroit area who shared the same burden. Sadly, there were no groups she could refer me to. But she did give me the name of another lady who was also looking for support. We didn't feel capable of starting anything as formal as a real support group, but apparently the Lord had other plans, and a year and a half later, on September 11, 1994, Healing Hearts was born, when 4 couples met in a home in Sterling Heights.

During that first meeting, we found understanding and much comfort knowing we were not alone. Three of the four couples talked about their years in counseling and thoughts of suicide; we discussed our pain and grief due to estrangement from our children; and we shared our concern and desire for our kids to know and honor God. We wanted to know how our Christian faith would sustain us.

That one meeting helped more than years of therapy. Shortly after that meeting, we decided we wanted to reach out to other parents, to get the word out that they are not alone and to provide the same comfort to them that we had found in one another. We wanted Christian parents to know that they don't have to make a choice between their faith and their child. We wanted to give them permission to love their kids and still hold on to their faith.

Since then, we have offered support through monthly meetings, e-mail, phone calls, and private meetings on request. We have established partnerships with Barbara Johnson, Reconciliation Ministries, Focus on the Family, and various churches in the Southeast Michigan area. We have met parents from Toledo to Traverse City; from Port Huron to Lansing; and we've even talked to parents from other states, and have reached out to our children's partners.

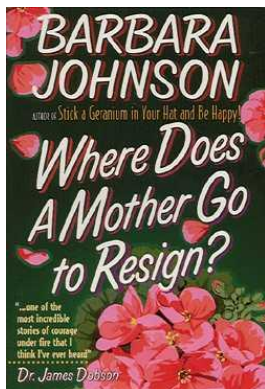
We treasure the support we have received from Reconciliation Ministries as Tom Cole, Dan Hitz and others have helped us to understand our kids a little bit better. Conferences like Love Won Out have provided invaluable information; facts that counter the popular, but mistaken views about homosexuality in our society and the media. We know now that change is possible – not only change for our children, but also change for ourselves. We have hope – hope for our families, and hope in our Lord who does immeasurably more than we can think or ask. Most importantly, we are learning what God's unconditional love really is.

If you are a Christian parent who is struggling with your child's homosexuality, please contact us at one of the numbers below. We would love to talk to you and make sure you receive invitations to our monthly meetings. Each day that you suffer alone is one day too many.

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Recommended Reading – Renee Boyle

Where Does A Mother Go To Resign? – Barbara Johnson



This is the first book Healing Hearts recommends to hurting parents. In her own unique and very honest approach to all the wrong ways of handling devastating news, Barbara Johnson shares her story of discovering her son's homosexuality. You will laugh and cry with her as she takes you from being disowned by her son, and then reconciled after 11 long years. You will find release for your own pain, and you will learn to wrap yourself in God's comfort.

**You can order *Where Does A Mother Go To Resign?*
at www.regenbooks.org.**