Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors:
Human Sexuality, the Bible, & The United Methodist Church
Rev. Dr. Tommy Brumett

- Statement of Purpose
  - The purpose of this class is to help us understand that we can believe the Word of God as it comes to us through the Bible and we can affirm and fully accept our LGBTQ family. We don't have to choose. We can be church together.
- So what is this about?
  - It is NOT about:
    - politics
    - liberal or conservative
    - a concession to societal values
  - It IS about:
    - faith
    - us (our friends, family, and neighbors)
- Prepare hearts and minds to listen
  - Silence and prayer

SECTION I: THE BIBLE

- How do we read the Bible?
  - The Bible contains the Living Word
    - The Word is found in the words
    - It is transformative - it changes our lives
    - It is a gift of the Holy Spirit
  - We read through the lens of Jesus
    - Jesus interprets the law and the prophets
  - We all interpret Scripture
    - God doesn't change, but our understanding and our cultural context change.
    - Examples:
      - eating shrimp (Lev. 11:10-11)
      - haircuts (I Tim. 2:9)
      - slavery (Gen. 9: 20-25)
      - organ transplants/blood transfusions (Lev. 17:10)
  - We read through the lens of love
    - God commands us to love
    - Love of neighbor causes us to re-read Scripture

- What the Bible actually says
  - Scripture people often cite against homosexuality:
    - Genesis 19, Leviticus 18: 22, Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1: 26-27, 1 Corinthians 6: 9, 1 Timothy 1: 10
  - Verses that hold us to a higher standard:
    - Luke 10: 26-28 Greatest Commandment
    - Matthew 7: 12 Golden Rule
    - Romans 13: 8-10 Love Fulfills the Law
    - Acts 15: 1-29 Jerusalem Council
    - Galatians 3:28 All one in Christ Jesus
    - Galatians 5:6 Faith working through love
    - 1 Timothy 4: 1-6 Everything God created is good
  - Other things you may have heard:
    - "Love the sinner, hate the sin"
    - It's Adam and Eve, not Adam and Steve
    - The Bible says it's a sin
  - What I believe:
    - Our LGBTQ family members are created whole and beautiful as they are. It's not a choice, not an abomination, not a sin. It's not forbidden in the Bible by those very few verses. Therefore, I follow Jesus and the early church, and I broaden my definition of love. I believe this is what God calls us to do.

SECTION II: THE CHURCH

- Methodist history
- Book of Discipline
- General Conference 2019
  - The One Church Plan
    - Bishop supported
    - Removed restrictive language from Book of Discipline
    - Gave pastors and churches freedom to work through this issue in their own context.
  - The Traditionalist Plan
    - Maintains restrictive language from Book of Discipline
    - Enacts punitive measures for disobedience.
- Our Tradition
  - Wesleyan Tradition
  - Quadrilateral
    - Scripture
    - Tradition
    - Experience
    - Reason
- What next?
  - Judicial council
  - Bishops, Pastors and Churches meeting
  - Pray, stay informed, speak truth to power
- Closing Prayer

HAVE QUESTIONS?

Visit Sharingtheheart.org/Open-Hearts-Minds-Doors and submit your questions online. Questions will be anonymous, and answers will be posted in the FAQ section.

RESOURCES

Books

God and the Gay Christian: The Biblical Case in Support of Same-Sex Relationships. Matthew Vines

"In Dealing with Homosexuality." *When Christians Get it Wrong*, Chapter 5. Adam Hamilton

Making Sense of the Bible. Adam Hamilton

The Loyal Opposition: Struggling with the Church on Homosexuality. Tex Sample and Amy DeLong

Together at the Table. Karen Oliveto, UMC Bishop

Bible, Gender, and Sexuality: Reframing the Church's Debate on Same-Sex Relationships. James Brownson

Finishing the Journey: Question and Answers from United Methodists of Conviction. Northaven United Methodist Church, ed.

Links/DVDs

"The Great Debate." Justin Lee. http://geekyjustin.com/great-debate

The Bible and Human Sexuality: Claiming God's Good Gift. United Methodist Women publication. https://www.unitedmethodistwomen.org/downloads/mission-study-bible-and-human-sexuality-leader.pdf

Incompatible with Christian Teaching. DVD. (Stories of Methodist LGBT clergy and lay members and their allies)