

Pierce Church Leadership Board Statement on Human Sexuality

The Leadership Board at Pierce Church affirms the historical position (see below) of the United Methodist Church, which traces its doctrinal roots to the beginning of the Wesleyan Holiness tradition established over two hundred years ago. From this tradition is the Biblically rooted conviction that God’s creative intent for humans is that we are sexual beings, that sexuality is a good gift, and that sexual relations are meant to be expressed within the covenant of a monogamous, heterosexual marriage (Gen. 2:24; Mt. 19:4-6; Heb. 13:4).

We believe that all persons are individuals of sacred worth and are of immeasurable value created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). We want to make it abundantly clear that our conviction on the practice of homosexuality is not meant to be communicated in such a way that would exclude anyone from the ministry of the church, both globally and its local expression in Upland, Indiana. It is a conviction on human behavior of which we believe there is a clear Scriptural statement, similar in many ways to other forms of human behaviors that are addressed in the Bible as practices outside of God’s creative intent and will for our lives. As a Leadership Board we commit to the following:

- We will welcome everyone at Pierce Church.
- We will live together in Christian community, welcoming, forgiving, and loving one another.
- We will pray for wisdom—asking the Lord to guide us into deeper understanding on topics where there are differing perspectives.

In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) Jesus’ message is abundantly clear: The gospel of the Kingdom is that no one is beyond beatitude. We thank God for his mercy and pray for his guidance.

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United Methodist Church Current Statement on Human Sexuality

We affirm that sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. We call everyone to responsible stewardship of this sacred gift. Although all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage.

We deplore all forms of the commercialization, abuse, and exploitation of sex. We call for strict global enforcement of laws prohibiting the sexual exploitation of children and for adequate protection, guidance, and counseling for abused children. All persons, regardless of age, gender, marital status, or sexual orientation, are entitled to have their human and civil rights ensured and to be protected against violence. The Church should support the family in providing age-appropriate education regarding sexuality to children, youth, and adults.

We affirm that all persons are individuals of sacred worth, created in the image of God. All persons need the ministry of the Church in their struggles for human fulfillment, as well as the spiritual and emotional care of a fellowship that enables reconciling relationships with God, with others, and with self. The United Methodist Church does not condone the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. We affirm that God's grace is available to all. We will seek to live together in Christian community, welcoming, forgiving, and loving one another, as Christ has loved and accepted us. We implore families and churches not to reject or condemn lesbian and gay members and friends. We commit ourselves to be in ministry for and with all persons.