

# When Holy Conferencing Is Neither

## What to Bring to the Conversation:

- ✓ **Your Awareness!** Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people are largely absent from the “dialogue” and their stories will not be told or heard. This will be a conversation *about*, not *with* them.
- ✓ **The Truth!** “Homosexuality is not an illness. It does not require treatment and it is not changeable.” (The American Psychological Association)
- ✓ **Your Voice!** Speak up. Nothing is more powerful than sharing your story about the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people you know and love or about how you became open and inclusive.
- ✓ **Your Focus!** Stay on message. This is not about who we like or don’t like; it is about the Gospel of Jesus Christ which implores us to draw the circle ever wider.

Policies that exclude and silence are unworthy of what it means to be church.

“Conversation about Human Sexuality” should not be about the acceptability of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people. It should be about the unacceptability of discrimination.

Our conversation will be fruitful only if it challenges us to see those who are rejected and marginalized, opens our hearts to their pain, and inspires us to work for full inclusion.

**Romans 8: 38-39**

**Love Prevails at [LoveOnTrial.org](http://LoveOnTrial.org)**

*“You want to know how big God’s love is?*

*The answer: It’s very big. It’s bigger than you’re comfortable with.”*

*From Anne Lamott’s, Grace (Eventually)*

# SOME HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

## OPPRESSION

The use of power and authority to disempower, marginalize, silence, and subordinate others

## HETEROSEXISM

The system of advantages bestowed on heterosexuals granting them superior status and rights in a culture and its institutions only because of their sexual orientation

## HOMOPHOBIA

The irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against same-gender love and gay and lesbian persons

*OR*

The fear that someone will think *you are gay*

## GENDER IDENTITY

The inner sense of being male or female – which is sometimes in conflict with one's biological gender

## SEXUAL ORIENTATION

The continuum of enduring emotional, romantic, or sexual attraction to another person, ranging from exclusively homosexual to exclusively heterosexual