



LEADERSHIP



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Unity of the Church
and Human Sexuality



Toward a Faithful
United Methodist Witness
Study Guide



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Unity of the Church and Human Sexuality Toward a Faithful United Methodist Witness

Discussion Questions



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session One

Session One

1. Share the last time when you felt the power and presence of God in your church?
2. Share an experience of Holy Conversation. What makes Holy Conversation different from ordinary conversation?
3. What do you believe that Wesley meant when he said, “The best of all is God is with us.” As you reflect on this, share how God is present with you, your family, your church? How does God call forth the best in us as Christians?



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session One

4. How do you respond to people who say that their views about homosexuality change after they witness the godly fruit in the lives of homosexuals? Have your views about homosexuality changed over the years? What changed your thinking?

5. How do you understand what the Bible says about homosexuality and deciding who can be saved? See, for example, Romans 1:26-28; Jude 1:5-8; I Timothy 1:8-11; Galatians 3:27-29.

6. It is often said that United Methodists are divided on issues regarding homosexuality. How divided is your family, your church, perhaps even yourself?



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session Two

Session Two

1. Share a time when you loved God with your mind. Is it possible for you to put on the mind of Christ with persons with whom you disagree?
2. Read and discuss Philippians 4:5.
3. What new thing is God doing in your life? In your church's life? What new thing would you like God to do? Take a few minutes and pray about it.
4. How are you being a faithful, thoughtful disciple? How does your church help? How do thoughtful Christians respond to conflicts over human sexuality? Please give examples.



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session Two

5. Every church has conflict. How do you address conflict? What works best? Share a time when your church overcame conflict.

6. It is often said that people are not usually convinced with facts, especially if their facts differ from yours. What's the best way to change someone's mind? When was the last time you changed your mind about something or someone?

7. Why do we value education in the church? Share some things about God you have recently learned.



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session Two

8. If being the church means that we believe that God's grace is for all people and that we participate in God's transforming love that creates community, how does your local church stack up? How do you know?

9. How can your church be more like the community of faith that God intends? Name ways that your church, your team, your class, your committee puts on the mind of Christ together. How can prayer and Bible study help? What resources might you need?

10. What is the relationship between social witness and spreading scriptural holiness? What does it mean to spread scriptural holiness? What difference does it make?

11. How can you see God at work in dealing with issues related to human sexuality?



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session Three

Session Three

1. In whose face have you seen Jesus recently? How do you recognize the face of Jesus in others?
2. Share what it means to be a United Methodist? How did you become United Methodist?
3. What is your understanding of the mission of your church? the denomination?



Session Three

4. What kinds of missions have you been involved with? Share some of your most meaningful experience of being in mission?
5. Share a story about your experience of the United Methodist connection.
6. How connected is your church to your district, conference, your community, the denomination?
7. Do you think that the days of denominations are over?



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session Three

8. What does it mean to be a world-wide church? What are the advantages and disadvantages?
9. Are there other ways to organize The UMC that might be more helpful in dealing with diversity?
10. If The UMC was to split, what happens to ordination, educational oversight, global mission, hospitals, colleges and universities, and other institutions that are affiliated with The UMC?
11. If The UMC was to split or splinter, what might happen to your local church? What might happen to United Methodist mission in your district? Annual Conference? the world?



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session Four

Session Four

4. These days there seems to be many different genders and some transgendered people. Is this an issue in your church? If it is an issue or might become an issue, how will your church address it?
5. What kind of listener are you? Share a time when you felt heard. What was it like? What happens when someone does not feel heard? What ways can we better hear people with whom we disagree?
6. Take some time and think about ways The United Methodist Church might better serve people who feel strongly about human sexuality, whether for or against?



Session Four

7. Discuss subsidiarity, reconciled diversity, differentiated consensus, and reception. How might these principles help move the church forward? Can you think of other helpful principles?

8. How would your church react if your bishop appointed a practicing homosexual to your church? What would you do?

9. Do you know someone who is homosexual or part of the LGBTQ community?



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Session Four

10. Consider the Pew Research. <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/05/12/support-steady-for-same-sex-marriage-and-acceptance-of-homosexuality/>.

11. How important is it to you that The UMC remain one denomination? How important is it to your church's mission, to the denomination's mission? What if separation from the church destroys local congregations? What if continuing as we are as a denomination hurts people and destroys local congregations?

12. Are you will to offer hospitality to those with whom you have conflict? Are you willing to sacrifice for their benefit?

13. What do you believe is God's will for the future of The United Methodist Church?



HIGHER EDUCATION & MINISTRY

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A dark brown world map is centered on the slide. The map shows the outlines of the continents in a slightly lighter shade of brown. Overlaid on the map, centered horizontally and vertically, is the word "End" in a bold, white, sans-serif font.

End