

Truth In Progress  
[www.TruthInProgress.com](http://www.TruthInProgress.com)  
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**SEEKING COMMON GROUND WITH THE BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT:  
Event at Broadway United Methodist encourages conversations  
between LGBT Equality and Black Civil Rights Movements**

Truth in Progress, a multi-media project exploring intersections of race, sexual orientation/gender identity, and religion, will host a film screening and public talk at the Broadway United Methodist Church (3338 N. Broadway St.) at 9:45 a.m. on Sunday, July 21. Rev. Gil Caldwell, a straight African American prominent activist in the Civil Rights Movement and co-founder of Truth in Progress, will also preach at the church's 8:45 and 11:00 a.m. services.

Truth in Progress asks how to bring race and sexual orientation/gender identity into the same conversation in "mixed company." Their examination of two historic movements is a springboard for discussion: the Civil Rights Movement and the LGBT Equality Movement, their histories and makeup, not to find equivalencies, but to seek common ground. They especially look at the role of religion in both movements and experiences of discrimination. Founders Caldwell, 79, and white lesbian writer/activist Marilyn Bennett, 51, have been filming a documentary as they travel the country engaging in conversation with activists, religious leaders, artists, "people on the street," and scholars. They've covered Selma (where Caldwell marched with King) and Stonewall, Montana and Texas. In Chicago, they will be working with noted filmmaker Ky Dickens.

Jim Bennett (not related to Marilyn), Midwest Regional Director for Lambda Legal, supports the work of Caldwell and Bennett.

"In Illinois we know how important it is to build broad coalitions to work for justice and equality," Jim Bennett said. "I've known Marilyn and Gil for over a decade when we were working to change United Methodist exclusionary policies. They are visionaries with a keen sense of storytelling. Their documentary Truth in Progress captures the challenges and promise of diverse communities working together for change."

The two chose Chicago for this event because it was where their shared LGBT equality work began as well as with retired United Methodist pastor Greg Dell and the Broadway UMC community in 1999. While the United Methodist Church has not changed their exclusionary policies, the American legal system is making strides.

“We have so much to celebrate right now with the Supreme Court rulings and the tidal wave effect for the rights of lesbian and gay couples. Yet other issues on the national table – voting rights, immigration, equal protection, and the war on women’s health—all effect the LGBT community as we have multiple identities embodied in gender, race, and nationality. While we have advances in civil rights in one area, other issues can flame up in another area,” Marilyn Bennett said. “We have so much to learn from each other and no better time than now to do so.”

“We are looking at very different histories, different experiences, and quite different struggles,” Caldwell said about the two movements. “But the fight for equal rights is always the same fight.

More about the Truth in Progress project, including short videos, a blog, and ways to participate, can be found at [www.TruthInProgress.com](http://www.TruthInProgress.com). The July 21 event is free and open to the public.