



FIRST, DO NO HARM

A TOOLKIT FOR CONVERSATIONS

A FEW DEFINITIONS TO REMEMBER:

Defining **HARM**: Harm is different from discomfort. Discomfort is the unease that arises from conflict. The response to discomfort is endurance. Harm in this context means repeating the oppression of marginalized people who have historically and culturally been emotionally, physically, and economically brutalized (ie: assaulted, silenced, dehumanized) by dominant powers in interpersonal and systemic ways. The appropriate response to harm is to stop and repair on the conditions set by marginalized people. This process is not meant to shame people of dominant identities. The focus is on the experience of marginalized people. Harm has been done to people of color, queer, and trans people.

Defining **GRACE**: Grace is different than pleasantness. Pleasantness is extending courtesy for the sake of collectively enjoyable experience. Grace, as modeled by Jesus, means offering feedback (ie action/responses) that allows individuals and communities to more closely reflect God's vision for the world. Grace certainly involves forgiveness and patience, though it also involves disruption of harm of marginalized people. Grace overthrows systems of power, it overturns tables. It agitates, transforms, and roots us.

Source: Our Movement Forward (umcsetfree.com)

ABOUT MARGINALIZATION:

To be **MARGINALIZED** means you are on the fringes of society, excluded or isolated. The systems of a society work to further exclude you or silence your voice. You may be spoken about as an issue rather than as a person.

To be in the **MINORITY** means you are a small fraction of the population. There are times when you might be of a minority viewpoint or opinion within a gathering or group of people. This is not the same as being marginalized, and it is not helpful to compare the feeling of holding a minority viewpoint to being marginalized. Whatever your beliefs, views, or opinions, if you are white, straight, able-bodied, and cis-gender, you are of a dominant identity in the Minnesota Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church.

A person may hold a minority viewpoint without being marginalized, **especially if that person has other forms of power and authority**. For example, if someone is at risk of violence or of losing their livelihood, vocation, or status within the community by speaking the truth of their identity, that person is marginalized within the system. If someone is at risk of being disliked or dismissed for expressing an unpopular viewpoint, that person is not necessarily marginalized.

Until we are all free, we are none of us free.
Emma Lazarus

MINNESOTA METHODISTS IS A GRASSROOTS MOVEMENT.
WE ENVISION A METHODISM ROOTED IN JESUS, GROUNDED IN WESLEYAN THEOLOGY,
INCLUSIVE OF ALL PERSONS, AND ENGAGED IN THE WORK OF JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION.
FOR MORE INFORMATION, LINKS TO RESOURCES, OR TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT, VISIT
WWW.MINNESOTAMETHODISTS.ORG.

RADICAL SOLIDARITY AND THE BELOVED COMMUNITY

We lift up radical solidarity as a way of being in communion with one another that represents our shared resurrected reality. Radical solidarity is a responsibility rooted in our mutual connection and interdependence. In the same way that Jesus laid down his life for ours, we are called to lay down our lives for our spiritual siblings. Radical solidarity calls for those who live at the privileged center to joyfully move to the margins.

We value a beloved community that strives for liberation in its vision, structures, and processes but most importantly in our relationships with each other. We acknowledge our own imperfections, and we know that we will fall short of these shared visions for the kin-dom of God we seek to co-create. Our vision is one of a “reality-based hope” rooted in the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Source: Our Movement Forward (umcsetfree.com)

POSITIVE WAYS TO ENGAGE

Be open to listening | Be aware of your implicit biases | Do your research to learn more about the history of the struggle in which you are participating | Do the inner work to figure out a way to acknowledge how you participate in oppressive systems | Do the outer work and figure out how to change the oppressive systems | Do amplify the voices of those without your privilege

Source: Guide to Allyship (guidetoallyship.com)

SOME NUANCES OF SEX, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY

Sex (as assigned at birth) or anatomical sex characteristics: This refers to biological characteristics. These include internal and external body parts, body chemistry, hormones, and chromosomes.

Gender identity: This is about how a person feels inside, about who they are: feminine, masculine, neither, or both. Since ideas about gender change over time and culture, this can be a confusing thing to talk about.

cis-gender: (pronounced “sis-gender”) refers to someone whose sex (as assigned at birth) and gender identity match

transgender or trans: refers to someone whose sex (as assigned at birth) and gender identity are not a match.

queer or genderqueer: terms used to identify as outside the norms of a binary system that doesn’t include everyone.

Gender expression: This is how a person chooses to show up in the world. Gender expression includes clothing, shoes, jewelry, make up, accessories, hairstyles, language, behavior—even some professions are still considered gendered.

Sexual orientation: This term can imply that it’s all about sex acts, which is not accurate, because even people who are not sexually active still have an orientation. Orientation is really about what happens in our hearts. Orientation is about who a person is romantically attracted to, falls in love with, or wants to make a home/family with. Within orientation, there is also the distinction between romantic attraction and sexual attraction.

Source: excerpts from Rev. Ann Lock, Pacific Northwest Conference

L	G	B	T	Q	I	A	+
LESBIAN:	GAY:	BISEXUAL:	TRANSGENDER:	QUEER OR QUESTIONING:	INTERSEX:	ASEXUAL:	NO LABELS
A WOMAN WHO IS SEXUALLY ATTRACTED TO WOMEN	A MAN WHO IS SEXUALLY ATTRACTED TO MEN	SOMEONE WHO IS SEXUALLY ATTRACTED TO BOTH MEN AND WOMEN	SOMEONE WHOSE GENDER IDENTITY IS DIFFERENT FROM THEIR ASSIGNED SEX	SOMEONE WHOSE IDENTITY DOES NOT CONFORM TO DOMINANT NORMS	SOMEONE BORN WITH PHYSICAL ANATOMY THAT DOES NOT FIT THE MALE/FEMALE GENDER BINARY	SOMEONE WHO DOES NOT EXPERIENCE SEXUAL ATTRACTION	CAN FULLY DESCRIBE ALL PEOPLE.

for more explanations and terminology: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/21/style/lgbtq-gender-language.html>