

DEAR MEMBERS AND FRIENDS OF UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST CONGREGATIONS,

We live in a society of many cultures that is deeply conflicted about human sexuality. The daily images and messages we receive influence how we see ourselves and how we relate to others as human beings in the fullest sense.

In response to the actions of General Synod and to the needs expressed by members of the United Church of Christ congregations in surveys and personal stories, the United Church of Christ has completed life-span resources that bring the ministry of sexuality to members of all ages.

The use of *Our Whole Lives — Sexuality and Our Faith* and *Created in God's Image* gives people a profound opportunity to grow in their faith and put their values into practice. These resources seek to nurture religious community and to provide avenues for spiritual growth, prophetic vision, and action for justice. They promote the worth and dignity of every participant and are grounded in and intentionally expressive of our values as a faith community and tradition.

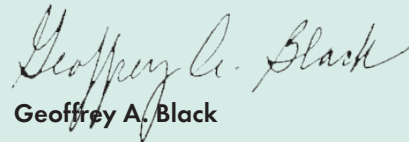
These resources help parents and guardians in their role as the primary sexuality educators of their children and create partnerships between families and the church through parent orientation and education

programs. The use of these resources provides an antidote to a culture that is saturated with mixed messages and misinformation about sexuality.

Since 2000, over 1,200 United Church of Christ members have been trained as *Our Whole Lives* facilitators. Together with our Unitarian Universalist Association partners, over 40,000 children, youth, young adults and adults have received the life-affirming and life-saving information provided by *Our Whole Lives*.

We welcome and encourage churches to become involved in providing the educational and spiritual experiences these resources provide. It may be one of the best gifts we will ever give our children, youth, young adults and adults.

Blessings,



Geoffrey A. Black

General Minister and President



Ann L. Hanson

Minister for Sexuality Education and Justice

LEADERSHIP

The success of any sexuality education program is dependent on its leadership. The choosing of facilitators for *Our Whole Lives — Sexuality and Our Faith* and *Created in God's Image* must be a discerning process done carefully and prayerfully. These resources are intended to be facilitated by two leaders of different genders. This team approach allows the sharing of preparation, problem solving, and the joys and challenges associated with program implementation. It also models collaboration and mutually respectful leadership for participants.

TRAINING

Facilitator training is necessary for *Our Whole Lives* and is available from the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association.

If your church, association, conference, or group is interested in sponsoring a training event, or for further information, please contact:

Ms. Ann L. Hanson

Minister for Sexuality Education and Justice
700 Prospect Ave. Cleveland, OH 44115-1100
216-736-3718; hanson@ucc.org
ucc.org/justice/sexuality-education



Our Whole Lives — Sexuality and Our Faith and Created in God's Image



*Comprehensive Sexuality
Education Programs
for all ages in the
United Church of Christ*



OVERVIEW

OUR WHOLE LIVES — SEXUALITY AND OUR FAITH

Our Whole Lives is a series of comprehensive sexuality education resources written by human sexuality educators for use in churches, schools, and community settings. A separate resource, *Sexuality and Our Faith*, provides materials for incorporating faith-based teaching into each session.

A parent's guide is used for K-1 and 4-6 programs. *The Advocacy Manual* may be purchased separately for use in congregations.

Our Whole Lives VALUES:

- SELF WORTH
- SEXUAL HEALTH
- RESPONSIBILITY
- JUSTICE AND INCLUSIVITY

Prices vary. Call 800.537.3394 to order.



THEMES COMMON TO EACH AGE LEVEL

- PARENT orientation sessions (for children and youth resources) that affirm parents as the primary sexuality educators of their children
- EFFECTIVE group building to create a safe and supportive peer group
- UP-TO-DATE information and honest, age-appropriate answers to all participants' questions
- A VARIETY of highly engaging activities that include values clarification and decision-making skills
- A COMPREHENSIVE approach to understanding sexuality throughout society and throughout life
- ACCEPTANCE of diversity
- EDUCATION to identify and avoid sexual abuse, exploitation, and harassment
- ENCOURAGEMENT to act for justice
- A WELL DESIGNED, teacher-friendly leader's guide
- RELIGIOUS foundations provided by *Sexuality and Our Faith*. Each session includes biblically-based and worship-centered resources.



To be involved with these young people in one of the most important stages of their lives is an honor that is not taken lightly.

— OWL teacher and parent

When I first went to OWL, I didn't know what to expect. Now I know it has changed my life. Everything I learned will help me in my life.

— Middle school student

What a gift! Most faith communities shy away from conversations about sexuality, but ours has embraced it and made it a central part of the transition our children make into adulthood.

— Parent

Don't ever stop offering OWL at church. I took it when I was in high school and I think it saved my life. Every kid should see themselves the way OWL sees them.

— College student

OWL is quickly becoming the best youth ministry in our church. Our youth group has tripled in size — and some of their parents are now joining the church.

— Pastor

CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE

Published in 1993, *Created in God's Image: A Human Sexuality Program for Ministry and Mission* is a biblically-based and worship-centered resource for small group study that focuses on identity, relationships, and sexuality from a community and individual perspective. It provides a forum for adults to discuss and learn about the many aspects of sexuality and prepares congregations for ministry and mission in human sexuality needs and issues.

\$5 per copy — call 216.736.3718 to order.

