

## Principles Guiding the United Church of Christ Commitment to Sexuality Education

- *All of us are sexual beings, no matter what our sexual orientation or gender is or whether we are young or old; partnered, single, or celibate; widowed or divorced; able-bodied or physically disabled.*
  - *It is sometimes erroneously assumed that sexual feelings begin with puberty and diminish as one approaches old age. In fact, our sexual responses begin in the womb, quickly grow to include sexual feelings, and both remain a vital part of our experience until we die.*
  - *These principles guide our church's mission to provide comprehensive sexuality education to our congregations.*
1. ***Sexuality is a God-Given Gift.***
  2. The purposes of sexuality are to enhance human wholeness and fulfillment, to express love, commitment, delight, and pleasure, to bring new life into the world, and to give glory to God.
  3. When making decisions about sexuality, the primary guide is Gods' call to love and justice as revealed in both Testaments.
  4. From a biblical perspective, sexuality is intended to express mutuality, love, and justice. In judging whether behavior is ethical or unethical, the norms of mutuality, love and justice are the central criteria.
  5. From a biblical perspective, sexuality is distorted by unethical behaviors, attitudes, and systems that foster violence, exploitation, infidelity, assertion of power, and the treatment of persons as objects.
  6. In developing a just sexual morality, we need to avoid double standards.
  7. A responsible and mature sexual ethic respects the moral agency of every person. When faced with ethical decisions, each of us needs to be accorded the freedom and responsibility to choose.
  8. The church, at all levels, ought to be a context for discussion about human sexuality.
  9. The church ought to encourage and support advocacy with those who are sexually oppressed or the victims of sexual violence and abuse. The church can and must have a role in defining and implementing public policy.

***"To offer sexuality education in a congregation is to acknowledge that human sexuality is simply too important, too beautiful and too potentially dangerous to be ignored in a religious community."***

*- Rev. Lena Breen, Mt. Vernon, WA*

Sources: [Sexuality and Our Faith: a Companion to Our Whole Lives Grades 7-9](#). Page 94-98. These Principles were adopted by the United Church of Christ following an extensive study by the Board for Homeland Ministries requested by the General Synod of the UCC in 1983.