

Sunday, April 20 1997

THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE...

Last in the series "The Welcoming Congregation"
with lay minister Mary Mullen.

Prelude by Emily Owens, "Little Shepherd"

Chalice Lighting - Nancy Graham

Song - "Gathered Here," p. 389 - a round, to be sung a capella

Children's Story (Children go to their classes after the story.)

This Little Light of Mine...

Offering opportunities to reflect on this series, place yourself on an attitude and an action continuum, develop ideas and plans for yourself and for Prairie ...

What were your highlights? insights? thoughts? feelings? gains in understanding?

What will you do to combat homophobia? What should Prairie do?
Any further questions about homosexuality, homophobia, heterosexism?

Song - "This Little Light of Mine," p. 118

Joys and Concerns (Offering baskets go around at this time.)

Introduction of Visitors

Announcements

Song - "I've Got Peace Like a River," p. 100

With Love, Arleigh

Postlude

Readings that go with "The Welcoming Congregation" services are still available.

"Twenty Questions About Homosexuality," "Homophobia: A Weapon of Sexism"
"How This Society Oppresses Lesbians and Gay Men,"
"Biblical Perspectives on Homosexuality," "What Does the Bible Say About
"Homosexuality?" "Inclusive Liturgy and Preaching"
"We Can Make Changes"

Attitude Continuum

Repulsion - Pity - Tolerance - Acceptance -
Support - Appreciation

Repulsion: Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people are sinful, sick, and immoral and their behavior must not be tolerated in any way.

Pity: Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people are sad because they aren't normal and cannot live a happy heterosexual life. They need our help.

Tolerance: Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people exist and always have. We must tolerate them even if we object to their lifestyle.

Acceptance: Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people are fine as long as they mind their own business, keep to themselves, and don't flaunt their lifestyle or ask for 'special privileges' (civil rights, open acknowledgment).

Support: Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people deserve the same rights and respect as everyone else. I still may be uncomfortable, but I believe discrimination against gay, lesbian, and bisexual people is wrong.

Appreciation: Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people are valued members of the community and a valid part of the diversity of our community. My life is enriched because there are openly gay, lesbian and bisexual people in my community.

Action Continuum

Oppressing - Denying/Ignoring -
Recognizing/Not Acting - Recognizing/Acting -
Educating Self - Educating Others -
Supporting/Encouraging - Initiating/Preventing

Oppressing: Telling gay jokes; avoiding people who are (or might be) gay, lesbian or bisexual people; working to prevent the passage of gay-rights laws; participating in harassment of or violence against gay, lesbian or bisexual people.

Denying/Ignoring: Allowing gay, lesbian or bisexual oppression to continue. (This category includes behavior that is not actively anti-gay, but supports anti-gay actions with silent consent by denying or ignoring that such oppression is a problem.)

Recognizing/Not Acting: Recognizing oppression and its harmful effects, but taking no action to stop homophobic behavior, because of fear, lack of information, or confusion about what to do; feeling discomfort **with the incongruence between your inner beliefs and your lack of action** on these beliefs.

Recognizing/Acting: Recognizing oppression and taking action to stop it. (Though your response may go no further than objecting to homophobic behavior, this is an important step in the transition from silent **disapproval to choosing to speak out against homophobia.**)

Educating Self: Taking action to learn more about lesbian, gay, and bisexual people, homophobia, and heterosexism. This includes reading books, attending workshops, participating in discussion groups, joining organizations, and attending gay, lesbian, and bisexual cultural events. (This category is a prerequisite to the last three, which involve interacting with others about homophobia. To engage others comfortably and confidently, we need to learn more ourselves.)

Educating Others: Rather than only objecting to homophobic behavior, engaging people in dialogue to increase their awareness of gay, lesbian and oppression.

Supporting/Encouraging: Supporting and encouraging others who are speaking out against homophobia, or who are working to be more inclusive of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people.

Initiating/Preventing: Working to change individual and institutional actions that exclude or denigrate people because of their sexual orientation - for example, planning educational programs; including sexual orientation in institutional non-discrimination statements; explicitly inviting gay, lesbian or bisexual people to become open and appreciated members of a community.