can the church be good news to LGBT teens?
Adolescent Response

- Survival Mindset vs. Thriving Mindset
- World Beneath vs. Community Integration
- Surrogate Family vs. Familial Belonging
- Incongruent Identity vs. Congruent Identity
- Moral Disengagement vs. Engaged Morality
Conversations on the Fringe (CotF) is an organization seeking creative and innovative ways to bridge the gap between marginalized youth and those entities (particularly families, schools and churches) that serve youth in contemporary society.
Social Media <3

Twitter Hashtags

#UYWI
#conversefringe
#25yearsofimpact

Instagram

#UYWI
@conversationsonthefringe
Group Activity

Match up with a partner. Every time you pin your partner's thumb for three seconds, you get a point. Keep count.

After the 30 second buzzer sounds stop and count the numbers of points each person earned.

#UYWI
What is your theological starting point?

Genesis 1 (the Imago Dei)

or

Genesis 3 (sinful nature)
Original Blessing (Genesis 1)

Of the world's three major religions, only Christianity holds to a doctrine of original sin. Ideas are powerful, and they shape who we are and who we become. The fact that many Christians believe there is something in human nature that is, and will always be, contrary to God, is not just a problem but a tragedy. So why do the doctrine's assumptions of human nature so infiltrate our pulpits, sermons, and theological bookshelves? How is it so misconstrued in times of grief, pastoral care, and personal shame? How did we fall so far from God's original blessing in the garden to this pervasive belief in humanity's innate inability to do good?

#UYWI

Danielle Shroyer – Original Blessing: Putting Sin in its Rightful Place
Original Sin  (Genesis 3)

The original sin is separation, not the result of sin. It is us deciding that we or an “other” is not worthy of connection and belonging, and thus not worthy of God. The original sin is us separating from God and each other because of shame. Therefore, restoration is the bringing of the family back together in all its diverse beauty and ugliness.

But, if we’re not careful, we can actually do damage in the way we attempt restoration. Colonizing others to be, act, think, and value what we do is not restoration. It is a faux restoration. Our differences will leak out in a desire for authentic expression of who we are and if that makes the majority uncomfortable, or threatens their power over the culture, they will try to force them back into compliance with the majority culture. This creates oppressed and marginalized groups. New “rules and laws” must then be created to ensure divergence doesn’t happened again (Orwellian).

#UYWI
Disgust and Contamination Psychology
Log vs. Speck

Confession
Divorce
Pornography
Infidelity
In the closet
Lack of Humility
Hoarders of Grace

Hypocrisy

#UYWI
View of Gender
View of gender

God: Single Gendered (binary) vs. Genderful

Gender training/Social constructs/Pursuit of power

Transcends gender (in Christ)
View of gender

**Toxic Masculinity**

- Sense of right
- Sense of duty
- Ability to objectify
- Ideology > People
- Might equals right
- Goal directed

#UYWI
View of gender

**Toxic Femininity**

- Sense of wrong
- Sense of subjugation/servitude
- Ability to be objectified/hypersexualized/body image
- Others needs before own (primary caretaker)
- Powerlessness
- Relationship-focused

#UYWI
View of Gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beautiful/Sexy</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caretaker</td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Powerful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional</td>
<td>Angry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B!+(#</td>
<td>Macho</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft</td>
<td>Provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive</td>
<td>Protector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Gender Unicorn

Gender Identity: Female/Woman/Girl, Male/Man/Boy, Other Gender(s)

Gender Expression: Feminine, Masculine, Other

Sex Assigned at Birth: Female, Male, Other/Intersex

Physically Attracted to: Women, Men, Other Gender(s)

Emotionally Attracted to: Women, Men, Other Gender(s)

To learn more, go to: www.transstudent.org/gender

Design by Landyn Pan and Anna Moore
surveying the landscape

#UYWI
3 Perspectives

On “Side A” is the belief that God blesses same-sex marriages.

On “Side B” is the belief that God calls gay Christians to lifelong celibacy.

The third belief is being gay and a Christian are incompatible with each other and therefore not possible.

Justin Lee – Gay Christian Network

#UYWI
3 More Perspectives (why?)

1. Born that way (most): biological same-gender/multi-gender attraction/arousal

2. Nurtured that way (some): trauma-informed

3. Conditioned that way (few): pornography induced sexual arousal of same-sex genitals

#UYWI
language matters
Language matters

For a complete list of LGBPTTQQIIAA+ definitions go to:

http://bit.ly/2cWRJYj

#UYWI
Risk factors

Alcohol and Drug Use
Abuse and Homelessness
Sexual Exploitation
Depression and Suicide
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behavior/Identity</th>
<th>Earlier Studies*</th>
<th>More Recent Studies**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Females</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First awareness of same-sex attraction</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First same-sex experience</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First self-identified as lesbian or gay</td>
<td>19-21</td>
<td>21-23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Studies of adults who remembered their experiences as children and adolescents

**Studies of adolescents who describe their experiences as they were happening or right after they happened

From “A Providers Introduction to Substance Abuse Treatment for LGBT Individuals”www.samhsa.gov
Risk factors

Alcohol and Drug Use

A meta-analysis from the University of Pittsburgh that was published in 2008 found that lesbian, gay and bisexual adolescents were 190 percent more likely to use drugs or alcohol than heterosexual youth. The numbers for bisexual and lesbian teenagers were even more significant—bisexual teens were 340 percent more likely to abuse substances, while lesbian teens were 400 percent more likely to abuse substances.

#UYWI
Risk factors

Abuse and Homelessness

The National School Climate Survey conducted by GLSEN in 2014 reported these statistics on bullying:
82% of LGBT youth had problems during the previous year with bullying about sexual orientation.
64% felt unsafe at school due to sexual orientation.
44% felt unsafe at school due to gender identification.
32% did not go to school for at least one day because of feeling unsafe.

#UYWI
Risk factors

Abuse and Homelessness

42% of LGBT youth have experienced cyber bullying, 25% more than once, 35% receive online threats, and 58% say something bad is said to them or about them online (bullyingstatistics.org).

GLSEN also found that cyber bullying of LGBT youth is three times higher than other student’s experience. 33% report sexual harassment online, which is four times higher than the experience of other students. 27% of LGBT youth do not feel safe online. 20% report receiving harassing text messages from other students.

#UYWI
Risk factors

Abuse and Homelessness

- Up to 40% of homeless youth population are LGBT.
- Up to 7% of general youth population are LGBT.
Risk factors

Abuse and Homelessness
Risk factors

Primary Needs of LGBQ Youth

- Housing (26%)
- Acceptance/Emotional Support (19%)
- Employment (18%)
- Health Care (18%)
- Other (13%)
- Education (7%)
Risk factors

Needs of Transgender Youth

- Housing (28%)
- Transition-Related Support (26%)
- Employment (19%)
- Health Care (13%)
- Other (8%)
- Education (7%)
Risk factors

Physical and Mental Health of Homeless LGBTQ Youth
Risk factors

Survival Sex and Sexual Exploitation

“Survival Sex,” or trading sex for cash or shelter. The practice is common among teenagers and young adults who, the report finds, have few other “viable means for meeting their basic needs.”

This is most common among homeless LGBT youth who lack resources to meet their basic needs.

#UYWI
Risk factors

Survival Sex and Sexual Exploitation

LGBT minors who are homeless are at the highest risk for sex trafficking and sexual exploitation. According to the U.S. National Coalition for the Homeless (www.nationalhomeless.org), homeless LGBT youth are much more vulnerable to sexual exploitation and trafficking than other homeless youths. For instance, only 20 percent of homeless youth are LGBT in the United States, and 58.7 percent of them are exploited through sexual prostitution.

#UYWI
Risk factors

Depression and Suicide

Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among young people ages 10 to 24.

The rate of suicide attempts is 4 times greater for LGB youth and 2 times greater for questioning youth than that of straight youth.

#UYWI
Risk factors

Depression and Suicide

Suicide attempts by LGB youth and questioning youth are 4 to 6 times more likely to result in injury, poisoning, or overdose that requires treatment from a doctor or nurse, compared to their straight peers.

Nearly half of young transgender people have seriously thought about taking their lives, and one quarter report having made a suicide attempt.

#UYWI
Risk factors

Depression and Suicide

LGB youth who come from highly rejecting families are 8.4 times as likely to have attempted suicide as LGB peers who reported no or low levels of family rejection.

1 out of 6 students nationwide (grades 9-12) seriously considered suicide in the past year.

#UYWI
Incarnation

Where do we start?
Where does Jesus start?
What does it mean to be pastoral?

#UYWI
what does it mean provide to pastoral care?

Keen self-awareness
Genuine care
Accurate empathy
Trustworthiness
Listening skills
Gracious truth-giving
Accepting-style of interpersonal relationships
Deep knowledge of the heart of God

#UYWI
Move from they/them to we/us

Normalize (don’t demonize deviation from the norm and don’t overreact)

Do no harm/unconditional positive regard

See God in them (Imago Dei)

Be a good neighbor

#UYWI
Find God with them
Pray intentionally
Listen carefully
Repent humbly
Re-Jesus the church

#UYWI
Welcome all

Offer pastoral care

Sanctification is a journey

Acceptance precedes repentance

In essentials unity, in nonessentials liberty, in all things love

#UYWI
Lean towards grace

Educate yourself and others on risk factors for LGBT youth (i.e., suicide awareness training)

Provide emotional, physical, relational, and spiritual support

Create opportunities for them to express themselves through art, rituals, and prayer

#UYWI
Never “Out” a queer student to anyone else, including their family.
Families

Support families who have gay kids / Listen and be present / Encourage them to lean in and not away / Educate on signs of bullying/depression/suicide/substance use / Help them bear the burdens of their kids / Provide them resources / Pray for them to be able to love their gay child well / Connect them to other parents of gay youth / Love them and their gay child

#UYWI
A Prayer for the Children
A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

We pray for young people
Who put chocolate fingers everywhere,
Who like to be tickled,
Who stomp in puddles and ruin their new pants,
Who ask for $20 before they leave with their friends,
Who erase holes in math workbooks,
Who never put away their shoes.
A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

And we pray for those
Who dodge bullets on their way home from school,
Who can’t bound down the street in new sneakers,
Who choose to carry a gun as their only means of security,
Who are born in places we wouldn’t be caught dead in,
Who are afraid to shop or drive because of the color of their skin,
For young bodies which are assaulted by those sworn to protect them,
Who live in an X-rated world.
A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

We pray for young people
Who bring us sticky kisses and fistfuls of dandelions,
Who sleep with the cat and bury goldfish,
Who hug us in a hurry and forget their lunch money,
Who leave make-up all over the sink,
Who slurp their soup.

#UYWI
A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

And we pray for those
Who never get dessert,
Who never had a safe blanket to drag behind them,
Who can’t find any bread to steal,
Who don’t have any rooms or lockers to clean up,
Whose pictures aren’t on anybody’s phones,
Whose monsters are real.

#UYWI
A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

We pray for young people
Who spend all their money before Tuesday,
Who throw tantrums in the grocery store and pick at their food,
Who like ghost stories,
Who stay out past curfew while their parents wait for them,
Who get visits from the tooth fairy,
Who think they’re far too old to be hugged good-bye,
Who squirm in church and scream on the phone,
Whose tears we sometimes laugh at and whose smiles can make us cry.

#UYWI
A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

And we pray for those
Whose nightmares come in the daytime,
Who will eat anything,
Who have never seen a dentist,
Who are never spoiled by anyone,
Who don’t have anyone they feel safe enough to come out to,
Who have called 9-1-1 for an overdosing parent,
Who go to bed hungry and cry themselves to sleep,
Who live and move, but have no being.

#UYWI
A PRAYER FOR CHILDREN

We pray for young people
Who want to be carried
And for those who must,
For those we never give up on
And for those who never get a second chance,
For those we smother,
And for those who will grab the hand of anybody kind enough to offer it.
We pray for young people.

Amen.

#UYWI
Fringe Resources/Training
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