

# **Manifesto On the Costs of Heterosexism and Racism**

UMOC, April 2, 2005

We reject our church and society's obsession with forcing people into closets by terrorizing them with derogatory labels and dividing their identities into racial/ethnic, and sexual, and spiritual categories in order to stigmatize some parts, and honor others.

We reject the treatment of people of color as objects needed to fill "diversity" slots and assuage guilt, or as educational tools to be probed and dissected.

We reject the requirement for people of color, especially queer people of color to choose between two communities, deciding which is the lesser evil either homophobia in one community or white racism (and homophobia) in another, selecting the parts of themselves that will be acceptable to the majority.

We must reject these attitudes and behaviors because they falsify the gospel and teach all of us the idolatrous practice of worshipping heterosexuality and white privilege, draining the church of integrity and effectiveness in its outreach and mission to the world.

These attitudes and behaviors lock communities of color into patterns of hypocrisy, denial, and oppressive acts against their own lgbt members.

They are destructive of our spiritual and emotional wholeness, and of the rich and creative contributions we have to offer.

Therefore, we prayerfully call upon our white allies and straight allies across all communities to continue to stand with us even when it means risking their status, privilege, and ordination, and to explore for themselves their responses to the question: "what can I do?"

We prayerfully call upon Bishops and District Superintendents to keep their promises and commitments to serve those of us in the church who are vulnerable and stigmatized because of our race/ethnicity and/or sexual orientation.

We prayerfully call upon the varied UM communities of Color to get out of the shallow waters of superficial unity that conceal injustice and spiritual wounding of their own lgbt members; to resist the efforts to divide and conquer our communities by representatives of the dominant power groups in church and society.

We prayerfully call upon ourselves to step forward, acknowledging our fearfulness yet holding fast to our faith in God to resist in every way and every place the painful, exhausting, and interwoven evils of homophobia and racism.