



Title of Empowerment Workshop:

Identifying and ministering to overt and covert LGBTQ in the church

Empowerment Presenter(s): Chantelle Bittings, LCPC

Empowerment Focus: Ministering to the LGBTQ population

Empowerment Goal(s): To inform and educate women on how to provide effective and compassionate ministry to the LGBTQ population in the church.

Introduction:

Let's begin by recognizing that this is a difficult and controversial conversation to have in the church, however, this discussion is long overdue. Years of ignoring this situation has created an undercurrent of secrecy and shame. This prohibits some from fully experiencing the redemptive work of the cross. As our culture shifts to embrace this lifestyle in the media, entertainment and political arenas, we must be clear on our stance as the body of Christ. This session will in no way attempt to be an exhaustive explanation of the how's and why's of the LGBTQ experience. The goal is to begin the conversation. The elephant in the room must be uncovered.

Empowering Moments (maximum 10 points):

Current terminology and meaning: LGBTQA+ which stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning, asexual and the + is for ally. Gary Gates of UCLA's Williams Institute, estimates that approximately 3.5% of Americans identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual, while 0.3% are transgender.

We will approach this topic based on five fundamental principles.

The first four are found in the Church of God in Christ statement of What We Believe.

First, what we believe about the Bible

- “We believe that the Bible is the Word of God and contains one harmonious and sufficiently complete system of doctrine...

Second, what we believe about man.

- “We believe that man was created holy by God, composed of body and soul. We believe that man, by nature, is sinful and unholy...

Third, what we believe about sin.

- Sin, the Bible teaches, began in the angelic world (Ezekiel 28:11-19; Isaiah 14:12-20), and is transmitted into the blood of the human race through disobedience and deception motivated by unbelief (I Timothy 2:14)...

Fourth, what we believe about salvation.

- Salvation deals with the application of the work of redemption to the sinner with his restoration to divine favor and communion with God...

<http://www.cogic.org/about-company/what-we-believe/>

And finally, what the Bible says about love. **1 John 4:7-8, King James Version (KJV)**

- ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.

⁸ He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.

Practical Tips

- When ministering to anyone, use person centered language, versus sin-focused language.
- The youth department and singles ministry would be great opportunities for in depth teaching on this subject.

Empowering Scriptural Support:

John 3:17, I John 4:7, Romans 3:23

Empowering Application for Everyday Living: Effective ministry is rooted in compassion.

We must be mindful of the fact that souls are in jeopardy. Therefore, it's our duty as disciples of Christ to take the upmost care for His people. This acronym for LOVE will help us to remember these key tips when ministering to the LGBTQ population in our church and anyone else who is held captive by sin.

L- Listen without judgement or opinion. People want to be heard and understood. We often listen to respond, instead of listening to get clarity. Be available to your sisters and brothers who truly need and empathetic ear.

O- Offer hope in Jesus Christ. Christ is the Savior of us ALL.

V- Everyone has VALUE. Let's not be so quick to push people to the side because their sin is different. There is a purpose for all of God's children even when we don't see it.

E – Equip them with the Word of God and Encourage them to live holy lives in Christ Jesus.

Chantelle L. Bittings, LCPC

Chantelle Bittings is a life-time member of the Rehoboth Ministries Church of God in Christ, in Park Forest, IL. She serves in various positions in the church including the Minister of Music, Youth Leader, personal secretary to the Pastor and wherever she can be of service to the ministry. She is devoted wife to Elder Thomas Bittings, and the mother of two sons, Thomas and Gaston Bittings. She is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and finds great joy in helping others. Chantelle Bittings has been dedicated to providing quality mental health services since 2001. She is a graduate of the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana with a Bachelor's degree in psychology. She obtained her master's degree in Counseling Psychology from the Illinois School of Professional Psychology in 2001 and is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the State of Illinois. She is also a National Certified Counselor. In her practice, she provides individual and family therapy and empowers others to make effective changes in their lives. Visit her website: www.cbittingstherapy.com