



# LGBTQ2S+ Task Force Public Forum #1 April 30<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 11:30AM EDT

## **Purpose of this Document:**

We hope this advance reading material serves as a helpful reference tool to assist pastors, members, and delegates in your congregation prepare for our upcoming Public Forum (April 30).

## **Purposes of the Public Forum:**

1) To introduce our congregations to the conversation (3 Questions) the LGBTQ2S+ task force has been asked to facilitate, 2) To give the people in our congregations a chance to read and understand the statements in our Manual, 3) To invite the people in our congregations to consider where the statements in our Manual fit within the overall Christian conversation.

## **Purposes of the LGBTQ2S+ Task Force**

The purpose of this committee is to implement the FMCiC's Strategic Plan for equipping churches to minister more effectively to LGBTQ2S+ people. In addition to providing pastoral resources for churches, **it is leading the denomination in asking the Lord the following three questions:**

- 1. Should we include a statement in our manual encouraging celibacy for LGBTQ2S+ people, and if so, what should that statement entail?*
- 2. Can people with an affirming theology of same-sex sexuality (including LGBTQ2S+ people) be members in our churches, and if so, under what conditions?*
- 3. Is it possible for our clergy who do not align with the FMCiC on our doctrine regarding same sex sexuality still to minister in our movement, and if so, under what conditions?*

## **Details for the Public Forum #1 - APRIL 30<sup>th</sup> @ 11:30am EDT**



Zoom Link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88176713206?pwd=Tnl0N2pJUTdZRklvR1JuK0c2amFwUT09>

Meeting ID: 881 7671 3206; Passcode: 439036

One tap mobile +15873281099, 88176713206# or +16473744685, 88176713206#

We expect to be together for 2hrs 15minutes accounting for two 15-minute breaks.

# Our Statements in the Manual:



*These statements found in chapter 6 of the manual can be read in full here:*

<https://www.fmcic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/CHAPTER-6-2020.pdf>

The statements in our Manual on Sexual Intimacy (630.2.7) are built on the foundation of Love of Others (620.5) and the Worth of All Persons (630.2.1) and include an important acknowledgement.

## **Love of Others**

With regard to Love of Others we attest that “growth in Christ requires taking responsibility to love others, ALL of whom are loved by God and made in His image” (620.5).

## **The Worth of Persons**

With regard to Worth of Persons “we are committed to the worth of all humans regardless of sex, race, colour, or any other distinctions (Acts 10:34-35) and will respect them as persons made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27) and redeemed by Christ’s death and resurrection.”

We must be actively concerned whenever human beings are demeaned, abused, stigmatized, or depersonalized, whether by individuals or institutions (Galatians 3:28; Mark 2:27).

## **Acknowledgement**

Remembering our tendency to be prejudicial, as Christians we must grow in awareness of the worth, rights and needs of others (Philippians 2:3-4; James 2:1, 8-9).

We acknowledge that “the church has often rejected, condemned, and mistreated LGBTQ2S+ people. As followers of Jesus this grieves us, and we strive to live out our convictions about sexuality in ways that are gracious and Christ-Like” (630.2.7).

## **Sexual Intimacy**

The biblical vision for healthy sexual intimacy is that it is a gift from God reserved for marriage between one man and one woman.

We do not believe that the above biblical vision is fulfilled by same-sex sexual intimacy.

We maintain a distinction between same-sex sexual activity and same-sex sexual attraction.

We recognize that this biblical vision contrasts with that of the prevailing culture, and we present it graciously as an alternative to the culture's view of sex and sexuality (excepted from 630.2.7).

## **Reflection Questions for our time on April 30th**

We encourage you to consider our statements on Sexual Intimacy in advance of the forum and ask:

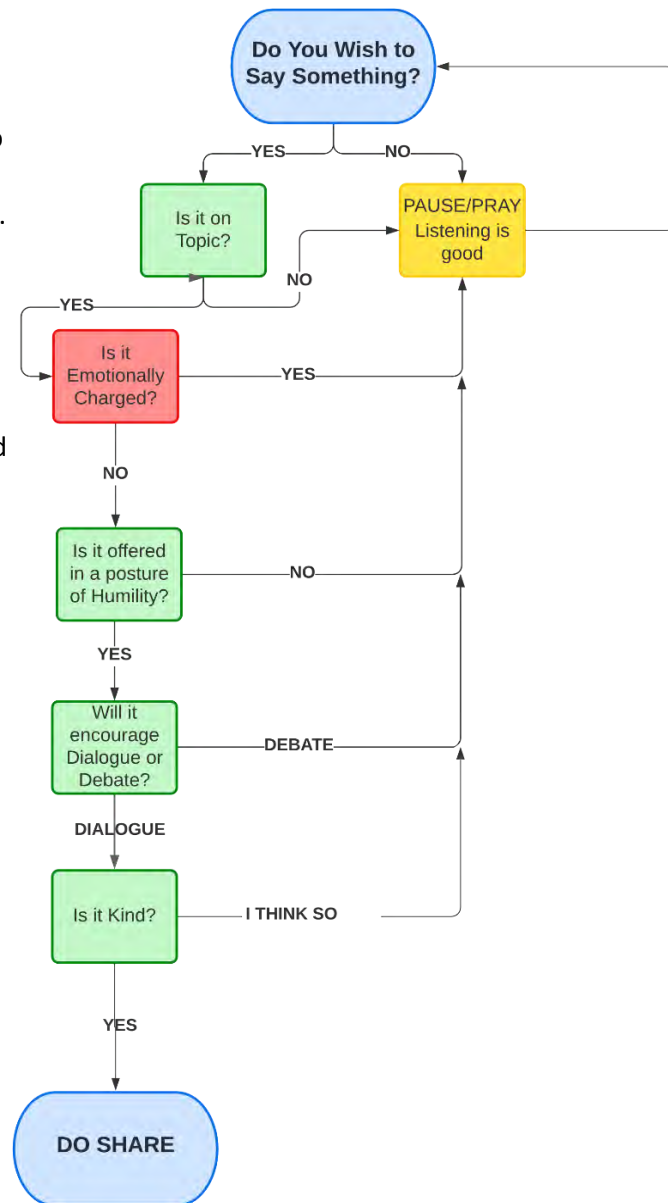
- a) What do you value about our current statements?
- b) What surprises you about our current statements?
- c) What questions do you have about our current statements?
- d) Where would you say these statements place our denomination in the broader Christian conversation concerning LGBTQ2S+2S+ persons?

# Engagement Guidelines: Posture over Position

*We are delighted that you have chosen to engage in this discussion forum.*

We offer these engagement guidelines in an effort to cultivate a space in which all participants feel safe, respected, and valued. We want to help ensure open and fruitful dialogues where all feel able to both share their experiences and viewpoints, as well as learn.

1. It comes back to prayer every time. (see flow chart)
2. Acknowledge that Jesus, who is our peace, is present with us and has already established the possibility of our unity.
3. Join us in believing that the Holy Spirit can and will lead us into good things through these conversations.
4. Be Kind – Your posture is at least as important as your position. Some might suggest that it is even more important.
5. Seek first to listen, understand & learn, maintaining a posture of humility when you take time to share your own thoughts.
6. Assume that there is somebody in the space whose own identity, or that of a family member includes being LGBTQ2+. Assume also that someone hearing may be genuinely surprised and sincerely puzzled as to why these questions are being discussed. Choose your words and present your ideas accordingly.
7. Christians can and do disagree over these topics. Please, avoid demonizing, and De-Christianizing.
8. Try to give people the benefit of the doubt. Don't presume to know what others believe, think, or feel. Don't assume that your convictions are based in love, while others' convictions are based in hate.
9. Stay on topic. Try to stay focused on the conversation at hand.
10. We will choose to respectfully use the correct terminology when referring to LGBTQ2S+.



*As an act of Christian kindness, we will hold one another accountable to the above, applying the same principles.*

# LGBTQ2S+ COMMITTEE TIMELINE

Begin a conference-wide conversation that sets an appropriate tone and allows for ongoing engagement and discussion.

