

Living Inside Out

The following is a weekend retreat held for LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning, Intersex, and Ally) youth grades 6-12. The goal of the retreat is for the youth to recognize that they are beloved children of God, that who they are has value and they have something to offer the world. We also hope that the youth build peer relationships, are exposed to LGBT adult models, and build skills of advocacy. Included in this guide is: the weekend schedule, bible studies/discussions (teaching time), video resources, and other insights.

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Weekend Schedule:

Friday:

5-6pm Arrival

6pm - Ice breakers (games, etc)

7pm- Welcome and intro to the weekend

8pm- Devotional (queer symbol matching game) -- This is a special place, you are no longer the only one. This is a sacred space for this weekend, and it will be different. Set an intention, what do "I" want to get out of this weekend. You are free to be who ever you are while you're here. Develop a group covenant. This is a space for you-- write what you need to let go of to let this weekend happen on a piece of paper and put it in the camp fire.

9:30- Sing a long with Smores

12am Lights out

Saturday:

8:15 - Mental prep time::morning yoga

8:30- Breakfast

9:30-11 Workshops- Three 30 min sessions (examples: gay history,)

11 Teaching Time 1

12 Lunch/free time

2 Speaker

3 Teaching time 2

4 Sing a long

5 Dinner

6 All camp Activity – Showtunes Kickball (same a traditional kickball, but runners must sing a showtune from 3rd base to home. A designated 3rd base coach may be used to help runners think of a showtune)

7 Teaching time 3

8 Labyrinth

10 Worship

12am lights out

Sunday

8:15 Mental Prep::Morning Yoga

8:30 Breakfast

9:30 High Ropes/ Art – Tie Dye Shirts

12 Lunch

2 Worship

3pm Go home

Teaching Time

Teaching Time happens in small groups with genders still intermixed. The groups are led by LGBT young adults.

Teaching Time 1

Luke 19:1-10(New International Version) - Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

1Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3He wanted to see who Jesus was, but being a short man he could not, because of the crowd. 4So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

5When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." 6So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

7All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a 'sinner.' "

8But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount."

9Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.

10For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."

Discussion:

Have someone read the story of Native American, Two-Spirit We'wha. Find pictures of We'Wha online.

We'Wha was a Zuni indian who lived from 1849-1896. He was what was called a berdache, two spirit, Hee man eh, or winkte. Someone in native american culture who held that title was set apart in their tribe. In fact there were 130 different Native American tribes that a position like this could be found. They would lead sacred dances, be considered matchmakers, healers, and honored members of the community. Someone who held one of those titles in their tribe was almost always a man who dressed, worked, and lived like a woman. If they married they would marry another man (although two "two-spirit's" marrying one another was considered incest), and then he and his husband would live their lives together. For this occurrence was neither odd, or looked down upon. In fact the state of Texas' indigenous peoples were documented by Spanish explorer Cabeza de Vaca who said, " in the time I was among these people, I saw a diabolical thing and it is that I saw a man married to another." What is clear though about "two-spirit" people is that they functioned outside the heterosexual and homosexual dichotomies that came to dominate thinking about sex in the West by the end of the nineteenth century.

But We'Wha's journey starts in the year 1886 when he traveled to Washington DC with anthropologist Matilda Foxe Stevenson. There he captivated DC society. He demonstrated Zuni weaving at the Smithsonian. He appeared at the National Theatre in an amateur theatrical event at which he received "deafening applause". He befriended the speaker of the House and his wife, and even spent time with President Grover Cleveland with whom he presented a hand made gift. We'Wha was known for his pottery and even sold to some galleries and was one of the first Zunies to earn cash. Stevenson documented him as being "the most intelligent of the Zuni tribe, with an "indomitable will and insatiable thirst for knowledge." She also noted that he was "perhaps the tallest person in Zuni: certainly the strongest both mentally and physically." But despite Whe'wa's noted strength and stature President Cleveland and all of Washington society mistakingly believed him to be a woman. We'wha never indicated anything to the contrary. For many years, Stevenson shared this misapprehension- even after she learned the truth, in her writings she always referred to We'Wha as a "she". The Washington Evening Star commented on We'Wha's appearance at the National Theatre as:

“Folks who have formed poetic ideals of an Indian Maiden, after the pattern of Pocahontas or Minnehaha might be disappointed in [We'Wha] on first sight. Her features, and especially her mouth, are rather large; her figure and carriage rather masculine.”

When We'Wha died in 1896 it caused “universal regret and distress” among the Zuni. Stevenson wrote:

“We'Wha's death was regarded as a calamity, and the remains lay in state for an hour or more, during which time not only members of the clans to which she was allied, but the rain priests and theurgists and many others, including children, viewed them. When the blanket was finally closed, a fresh outburst of grief was heard...”

We'Wha was buried in both men's and women's clothing.

What similarities did you hear in the two stories?

Where did We'Wha fit in to society? Where didn't he?

Where did Zacheous fit in to society? Where didn't he?

Do you feel similar to either one of these characters? Both? Neither? Why?

Why do you think Christ would choose to spend time with Zacheous?

What does that mean for you? (this last question you may have to feel out based on discussion. but the intention of the question is that society doesn't tell us who God loves. God tells us. so what does THAT mean for you?)

Teaching Time 2

Exodus 3-4:14(New International Version) - Moses and the Burning Bush

1 Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the desert and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. **2** There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flames of fire from within a bush. Moses saw that though the bush was on fire it did not burn up. **3** So Moses thought, "I will go over and see this strange sight--why the bush does not burn up."

4 When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, "Moses! Moses!" □ And Moses said, "Here I am."

5 "Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." **6** Then he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob." At this, Moses hid his face, because he was afraid to look at God.

7 The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the misery of my people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their slave drivers, and I am concerned about their suffering. **8** So I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land into a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey--the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. **9** And now the cry of the Israelites has reached me, and I have seen the way the Egyptians are oppressing them. **10** So now, go. I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring my people the Israelites out of Egypt."

11 But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?"

12 And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you [a] will worship God on this mountain."

13 Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"

14 God said to Moses, "I am who I am . [b] This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.' "

15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, [c] the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.

16 "Go, assemble the elders of Israel and say to them, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob--appeared to me and said: I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt. **17** And I have promised to bring you up out of your misery in Egypt into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites--a land flowing with milk and honey.'

18 "The elders of Israel will listen to you. Then you and the elders are to go to the king of Egypt and say to him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. Let us take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to the LORD our God.' **19** But I know that the king of Egypt will not let you go unless a mighty hand compels him. **20** So I will stretch out my hand and strike the Egyptians with all the wonders that I will perform among them. After that, he will let you go.

21 "And I will make the Egyptians favorably disposed toward this people, so that when you leave you will not go empty-handed. **22** Every woman is to ask her neighbor and any woman living in her house for articles of silver and gold and for clothing, which you will put on your sons and daughters. And so

you will plunder the Egyptians."

Exodus 4:1-14 - Signs for Moses

1 Moses answered, "What if they do not believe me or listen to me and say, 'The LORD did not appear to you'?"

2 Then the LORD said to him, "What is that in your hand?" □ "A staff," he replied.

3 The LORD said, "Throw it on the ground." □ Moses threw it on the ground and it became a snake, and he ran from it. **4** Then the LORD said to him, "Reach out your hand and take it by the tail." So Moses reached out and took hold of the snake and it turned back into a staff in his hand. **5** "This," said the LORD, "is so that they may believe that the LORD, the God of their fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has appeared to you."

6 Then the LORD said, "Put your hand inside your cloak." So Moses put his hand into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was leprous, [d] like snow.

7 "Now put it back into your cloak," he said. So Moses put his hand back into his cloak, and when he took it out, it was restored, like the rest of his flesh.

8 Then the LORD said, "If they do not believe you or pay attention to the first miraculous sign, they may believe the second. **9** But if they do not believe these two signs or listen to you, take some water from the Nile and pour it on the dry ground. The water you take from the river will become blood on the ground."

10 Moses said to the LORD, "O Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant. I am slow of speech and tongue."

11 The LORD said to him, "Who gave man his mouth? Who makes him deaf or mute? Who gives him sight or makes him blind? Is it not I, the LORD ? **12** Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say."

13 But Moses said, "O Lord, please send someone else to do it."

14 Then the LORD's anger burned against Moses and he said, "What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he can speak well. He is already on his way to meet you, and his heart will be glad when he sees you.

Discussion:

Have someone read the bible stories and the story of Leonard Matlovich. Watch video "Civil Rights Icon Leonard Matlovich on 'Good Morning America' -

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=93oU637sco8>

Leonard Matlovich lived from 1943 to 1988. He was born into a military family. He went into the air force right out of high school, where he volunteered for the vietnam war. He was the president of this country's young republicans and had helped on the campaigns of conservative presidential candidates. He was raised roman catholic, but he left the church because he believed that the reforms of vatican 2 were too radical. In 1968 he became a mormon. He was 25. He was quoted to say "i've always been very conservative. And i've always had a military mind. When i graduated from high school, i was reading about the US involvement in Vietnam and i was so afraid that if i didn't hurry up and get over there, it would be over before i had an opportunity to prove my manhood. You see, i had to prove that even though i had strong attractions to other men, i could go to war just like anyone else." Matlovich was aware of his homosexuality early on but tried to fight it.

It wasn't until his work as a race-relations instructor that he truly came to terms with who he was. Every

day he reminded his classes of the plea of his hero, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. that they judge people by the content of their character, not by the color of their skin. eventually the words sank in not only to his students but to Matlovich himself. And so on March 6, 1975 Technical Sergeant Leonard Matlovich walked into the office of his superior officer Captain Dennis Collins, and stated "i have a letter i'd like for you to read". The letter read

"After some years of uncertainty, i have arrived at the conclusion that my sexual preferences are homosexual as opposed to heterosexual. I have also concluded that my sexual preferences will in no way interfere with my Air Force duties, as my preferences are now open. It is therefore requested that those provisions in AFM-39-12 relating to the discharge of homosexuals to be waved in my case...

... in sum, I consider myself to be a homosexual and fully qualified for military service. My almost twelve years of unblemished service supports this position."

After Collins read the first few sentences he slumped into his chair and said "what does this mean". Matlovich replied "It means Brown verses board of education."

In November of 1975 Matlovich was dishonorably discharged, and in an instant became one of the most famous gay activists in our countries history. He was on the cover of Time Magazine. In 1978 the us court of appeals ruled the that discharges of both Matlovich and another named Ensign Berg were "illegal" and revoked the dishonorable portion. But did not reinstate either man. Which is what Matlovich was fighting for. Finally after two more years, in 1980 the US Air Force re-instated Matlovich due to a court order. But in a last ditch effort to not to have to fully take him back they offered him a tax free 160,000 to withdrawl and have the case against him dropped. Matlovich knew that even though he had been reinstated, the Air Force would be taking the case to the supreme court, and with the newly elected Ronald Regan and a more conservative court system.... he would never win. So he took the money. In his civilian days he became a key activist in gay rights. And even was a friend of Harvey Milk (Matlovich gave the euolgoy at Milks' funeral). On June 22, 1988 Matlovich died of AIDS in West Hollywood, at the age of 44. The inscription on his gravestone reads "When I was in the military, they gave me a medal for killing two men, and a discharge for loving one."

What similarities did you hear in the two stories?

How did Leonard struggling with his identity help/hinder what he did?

How did Moses' struggle with his identity help/hinder what he did?

What similarities do you feel like you have to either one of these men?

Why would God have chosen Moses?

Would you go so far to say that God chose Leonard Matlovich? Why? Why not?

What kinds of things do you think you have inside of you? How will you shake up the world?

Teaching Time 3

Esther 4:1-17 (New International Version) - Mordecai Persuades Esther to Help

1 When Mordecai learned of all that had been done, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out into the city, wailing loudly and bitterly. **2** But he went only as far as the king's gate, because no one clothed in sackcloth was allowed to enter it. **3** In every province to which the edict and order of the king came, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping and wailing. Many lay in sackcloth and ashes.

4 When Esther's maids and eunuchs came and told her about Mordecai, she was in great distress. She sent clothes for him to put on instead of his sackcloth, but he would not accept them. **5** Then Esther summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs assigned to attend her, and ordered him to find out what was troubling Mordecai and why.

6 So Hathach went out to Mordecai in the open square of the city in front of the king's gate. **7** Mordecai told him everything that had happened to him, including the exact amount of money Haman had promised to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews. **8** He also gave him a copy of the text of the edict for their annihilation, which had been published in Susa, to show to Esther and explain it to her, and he told him to urge her to go into the king's presence to beg for mercy and plead with him for her people.

9 Hathach went back and reported to Esther what Mordecai had said. **10** Then she instructed him to say to Mordecai, **11** "All the king's officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king."

12 When Esther's words were reported to Mordecai, **13** he sent back this answer: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. **14** For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"

15 Then Esther sent this reply to Mordecai: **16** "Go, gather together all the Jews who are in Susa, and fast for me. Do not eat or drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will fast as you do. When this is done, I will go to the king, even though it is against the law. And if I perish, I perish."

17 So Mordecai went away and carried out all of Esther's instructions.

Discussion:

Read the bible story and a brief biography of Ellen Degeneres. Watch the video "Ellen DeGeneres at Tulane's 2009 Commencement Speech" - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0JccudODwwY>

Ellen Degeneres was born on January 26th 1958 in New Orleans Louisiana. After her parents divorced, she and her mother moved to Atlanta, Texas in 1974 where Degeneres graduated from high school.

What similarities did you hear in the two stories?

what kind of role did timing play in these two stories?

What kind of role did fear play?

What did these two women stand to lose by "coming out"?

Other Insights

Housing – Youth are housed in rooms/cabins by gender. They decide which room they will be in and a staff member/small group leader is in each room. This may need to be adjusted according to the number of participants. You also may want to consider a unisex cabin for anyone who would like it. Shower and bathroom facilities are private.

Adaptations – adaptations may be made to make this retreat relative to your area or another age group such as young adults. Activities may be interchanged depending upon the facilities in your area.