

“Both religion and sexuality heal the split between ourselves and the universe. We discover that we are indeed ‘part of everything’ and one with the mystery of life.”

~Dorothee Soelle

## Our Whole Lives Program **VALUES**

### **Self Worth**

People are entitled to dignity and self-worth and to their own attitudes and beliefs about sexuality.

### **Sexual Health**

Knowledge about human sexuality is helpful, not harmful. Every person has the right to accurate information about sexuality and to have their questions answered.

Healthy sexual relationships are...

- consensual (partners agree about what they will do together sexually)
- non-exploitative (partners have equal power, and neither pressures or forces the other into activities or behaviors.)
- mutually pleasurable
- safe (sexual activity bring no or low risk of unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, or emotional pain)
- developmentally appropriate (sexual activity is appropriate to the age and maturity of partners)
- based on mutual expectations and caring
- respectful (partners value honesty and keeping commitments made to others)

Sexual intercourse is only one of the many valid ways of expressing sexual feelings with a partner. It is healthier for young teens to postpone sexual intercourse.

### **Responsibility**

We are called to enrich our lives by expressing sexuality in ways that enhance human wholeness and fulfillment and that express love, commitment, delight, and pleasure.

All persons have the right and obligation to make responsible sexual choices.

### **Justice and Inclusivity**

We need to avoid double standards. People of all ages, sexual identities, races, ethnicities, genders, backgrounds, income levels, physical and mental abilities, and sexual orientations must have equal value and rights.

Sexual relationships should never be coercive or exploitative.

All the following are natural in the range of human sexual experience: being romantically and sexually attracted to more than one gender (*bisexual*), the same gender (*homosexual*), another gender (*heterosexual*), and/or to those with a more fluid understanding of their own and others' gender (*pansexual*), and not experiencing sexual attraction (*asexual*).

“I believe that this is the most significant life-enhancing opportunity our religious communities could offer youth.”

~ Rev. Judith Gooch