

Drag Queen Church: Major Network Glorifies Drag Queen Pastor in Pulpit

Many in the LGBTQ community, including Pastor Craig Duke of Newburgh United Methodist Church in Newburgh, Indiana, would like to conveniently omit Deuteronomy 22:5 from God's Word.

That passage of scripture reads: "A woman must not wear man's clothing, nor is a man to put on a woman's clothing. For all that do so are abominations to the Lord your God."

Duke not only ignores that passage from the Old Testament, he blatantly flaunts his denial of the scripture, and on national television.

When invited to be a part of HBO's reality show "We're Here," a show that follows drag artists as they travel to small cities and towns across the United States, transforming locals into drag queens, Duke jumped at the chance.

"It was an incredibly wonderful, refreshing, deepening, powerful, spiritual experience," Duke told *Religion News Service* in a recent article.

Not exactly how you would expect a pastor to respond.

Duke is a pastor in the United Methodist Church, which is currently deadlocked over the inclusion of its LGBTQ members, including whether or not LGBTQ United Methodists can be ordained and whether clergy can perform same-sex marriages. United Methodist leaders introduced a proposal to split the denomination ahead of the 2020 meeting of its global decision-making body, the General Conference. But that meeting—as well as any action on the proposal—already has been postponed twice by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The United Methodist General Conference is set for August 2022.

Those differing views within his own congregation made his appearance on the HBO program a “challenging experience,” Duke said.

Duke isn’t the only drag queen in the pulpit. Isaac Simmons is the first openly gay man to be certified within the Illinois Great Rivers Conference, and the first drag queen certified in the United Methodist Church at Hope United Methodist Church in Bloomington, Illinois, RNS reported in April.

In April, Hope Church celebrated Drag Sunday with a message from Simmons, who now refers to himself as Ms. Penny Cost.

Janet Boynes, a former member of the LGBTQ community and the founder of Janet Boynes Ministries, says the message that pastors like Duke and Simmons are certainly sending the wrong message to the youth in church as well as those unbelievers who are searching for Jesus and need the church to light the way.

The Bible says it very clearly in Deuteronomy 22:5 and for a pastor to wear women’s clothing is, “detestable and an abomination to the Lord,” Boynes says. “We are to be an example to others in how we carry ourselves and not make others following us stumble. What this pastor is doing is leading our Millennials and Gen Zs down the wrong path and he will be held accountable.

“This scripture speaks of the sovereignty of God. He is all knowing and all powerful. When He engenders a man or woman, He does not make mistakes. He has created each one of us with a purpose and a destiny. Psalms 139:13-14 says He formed our inner parts and that we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

“Current trends tell us we can be whatever gender/s we choose to be and much confusion has come out of that thought process.

Our true fulfillment comes with aligning ourselves with His will and purpose for our lives. It is very dangerous to look God in the eye and decide that we know better than He does. It is especially dangerous when pastors or leaders influence those under them and cause them to step away from the truth.”

Janet Boynes Ministries’ mission is to help people get spiritual guidance and be set free from homosexuality and other sexual sins through the power of Jesus Christ.

Religion News Service contributed to this report.

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