



A Community of LGBTQs & Allies  
of Wheaton College, Illinois

# DEAR WHEATON STUDENTS,

The recent chapel message on Sexuality and Wholeness and surrounding conversations may have left some of you feeling alienated, ashamed and afraid. It can be difficult to see the danger of messages about sexuality that emphasize “God’s compassion for the broken,” but as a group of LGBTQ Wheaton alumni and allies, we’ve seen the devastating effects these words have had on ourselves and our loved ones. Many of us felt trapped and unable to respond honestly to these messages while we were students. We feared rejection from our friends and our college. We know many of you may fear the same and feel alone or depressed.

**If you are a student and this is part of your story, your sexual identity is not a tragic sign of the sinful nature of the world. You are not tragic. Your desire for companionship, intimacy and love is not shameful. It is to be affirmed and celebrated just as you are to be affirmed and celebrated.**

In our post-Wheaton lives, we have traversed the contradictions we once thought irreconcilable. Our sexuality has become an integral part of our broader pursuit of justice, compassion and love. We can no longer allow ourselves or our loved ones to be trapped in environments that perpetuate self-hatred, depression, and alienation. As people of integrity we must affirm the *full* humanity and dignity of every human being regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

To the broader Wheaton community: remember that there are students who feel they need to hide. We remember how messages and conversations surrounding the “issue of homosexuality” often exacerbated our feelings of isolation, particularly when talk about “compassion” often felt like pity at best, or at worst intolerance cloaked in language of love. Speak against blatant and passive language and actions that dehumanize and marginalize your brothers and sisters. Ask questions. Encourage dialogue. Most of all, listen. Your friends need your support and love. As awkward as the process may be for you, it is guaranteed to be more deeply and constantly difficult for your friends.

For those of you feeling alienated, it gets better. After Wheaton our lives became stories of liberation. Some of us are in relationships and some of us are single. Yet none of us are alone. We have built communities that accept us and do not fear our LGBTQ-ness. You will find a community that, rather than alluding to acceptance contingent on celibacy, welcomes and loves you. It may come as a surprise, but these people will likely include your closest friends from Wheaton you might hide from right now. Never give up hope.

In the meantime we encourage you to reach out from your isolation. We have emerged from the closet to come forward as a quirky, beautiful, and diverse community that is excited to meet you. If you would like to talk to one of us, email [one@onewheaton.com](mailto:one@onewheaton.com) or visit [www.onewheaton.com](http://www.onewheaton.com) for some resources we have found helpful in our own journeys. And always, always remember that though you may feel isolated right now, we are witness to the fact that you are not alone in this experience.

With much love,  
**OneWheaton**