

# THE FOUR TYPES OF UNITED METHODIST

*The United Methodist Church is often described as a “big tent” with many different perspectives. Some in the church, most notably the Rev. Tom Berlin developed a way of thinking about four main groups. The labels progressive and conservative are imperfect, because people may be conservative on some matters and progressive in others. However, they are used here out of convenience, and they are the most clear and charitable to all sides. Finally, the categories come down to compatibility. This is really a measure of how big of a tent a person is willing to live in and can it include the opposite view.*

<b>PROGRESSIVE NON-COMPATIBILIST</b>	<b>PROGRESSIVE COMPATIBILIST</b>	<b>TRADITIONAL COMPATIBILIST</b>	<b>TRADITIONAL NON-COMPATIBILIST</b>
<p>These folks define themselves a progressive on the issues of human sexuality and other social issues. However, many are committed to Christian orthodoxy but find the social dimensions of the Gospel at the forefront. They are incompatibilists because they can no longer be a part of a denomination that they believe oppresses people in the margins or fails to fully include all.</p>	<p>These folks define themselves as progressive on the issues of human sexuality and other social issues. However, most are orthodox theologically and consider the call to people on the margin living the Gospel not being political. They are compatibilists because they are willing to worship with people who believe differently from them. They believe that working with people with whom they have huge disagreements is part of what it means “to love one’s neighbor.” They find that they learn from their conservative siblings. They are committed to unity in church and find the call to Christian unity central to scripture. They are committed to the UMC and hope one day to change it from within, and don’t plan to give up on those with whom they disagree.</p>	<p>These folks define themselves as conservative on the issues of human sexuality and other social issues. However, surprising to many, because they are Methodists, the social dimension of the gospel like race, poverty and hunger are very important to many of them. They are compatibilists because they enjoy worshipping with people who are different from them. They believe that working with people with whom they have huge disagreements is part of what it means “to love one’s neighbor.” They find that they learn from their progressive sisters and brothers, and maybe even need them. They are committed to unity in church and find the call to Christian unity central to scripture. They are committed to church and hope to change it from within, and don’t plan to give up on those with whom they disagree.</p>	<p>These folks define themselves as conservative on the issues of human sexuality and other social issues. They are incompatibilists because they feel that they can no longer be a part of a denomination that is talking about fully including LGBTQ+ people through marriage and ordination, and including them in some places even if it is a small minority of a 12 Million member church.</p>