

FOUNDER

Started in 2014 by Rev. Dr. Beverly Dale, an ordained clergy in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ-DoC) tradition, the Incarnation Institute for Sex & Faith has been supported by private donations, congregational mission budgets, and the Carpenter Foundation. The mission of this woman-centered organization, to help people love their bodies (and the bodies of others) like God does, occurs in a variety of formats: workshop presentations at sexuality and faith-based conferences, YouTube videos (Sex is Good), webinars (Reading the Bible with Sex-Positive Eyes) and providing training opportunities for and certification of IISF Sex & Faith Educators. She co-authored *Advancing Sexual Health for the Christian Client, Data & Dogma* (Routledge 2019).

Dr. Dale, also known as “Rev. Bev,” has spent over 35 years of ministry in both the local parish where she experienced ministering to the wide range of sexual issues of a community setting and as an ecumenical campus minister at the University of Pennsylvania where she was known as a straight ally, feminist, and, at least by some as the “conscience of the University.” As a campus pastor she became conversant with the issues of the hook up culture and was on the advisory boards of the Women’s Center, the African American Resource Center and the LGBT Center.

Her work has been featured in the Philadelphia Inquirer, recognized by the UPenn Women of Color Committee, and by the Diabolique Foundation that called her a Kink-positive Missionary of Pleasure. She currently serves as a clergy-in-residence at a UCC and DoC congregation and teaches at Lancaster Theological Seminary.

www.beverlydale.org



Rev 9/20

LEADERSHIP TRAINING & CERTIFICATION of SEXUAL HEALTH AND THEOLOGICAL PROFESSIONALS



INCARNATION INSTITUTE FOR
SEX & FAITH

As

SEX & FAITH EDUCATORS

www.IncarnationInstitute.org

RATIONALE

Theological and sexological professionals are on the front lines confronting the persisting impact of sexual wounding and ignorance that both diminishes sexual potential for growth and health and creates personal and interpersonal difficulties of parishioners, clients, and students. These issues include low sexual self-confidence, sexual unhappiness and dissatisfaction, sexual guilt and shame, abuse, gay-bashing, racialized violence, and other problems that arise from sexual ignorance, stereotyping and body injustice. Unfortunately, these problematic issues are often created by religion and/or are given religious justification.

This training provides professionals with tools to teach a different narrative than a traditional, sex-negative one by joining a sex-positive understanding of the Christian gospel that focuses on pleasure, grace, and abundance with scientific research that identifies what constitutes healthy sexuality. The two-fold goal is:

To teach clergy to become more aware of the breadth of sexual diversity and the extent of sexual wounding and body injustice
To teach sexologists liberating Christian principles that support healthy sexual development and well-being and body justice

The training is coordinated under the leadership of an ordained Christian clergy and trained clergy and sexology professionals. We are advised by a team of nationally recognized sexologists and academic theologians and practitioners whose academic research and liberative perspectives are woven into our curriculum. In addition, this interdisciplinary training intentionally provides participants the opportunity to interact with those of a contrasting discipline enriching the learning with the experiences, knowledge, and insights with professional colleagues.

SCRIPTURAL MANDATES

This work is grounded in, but not limited to, the life and teachings of Jesus found in the gospels, the early church in Acts, as well as the following: Genesis 1, Song of Songs, John 10:10, Matt 7:12, Mark 12:30-32

INCARNATION INSTITUTE for SEX & FAITH

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Incarnation Institute for Sex & Faith is to help people love their bodies (& the bodies of others) like God does. We do this by teaching an inclusive, science-friendly, and a sex-positive Christianity.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

AN INCLUSIVE FAITH

accepts that diversity is part of God's plan. Differences in sexual orientation, gender identities, sexual interests and relationship choices are to be accepted and celebrated as a given in God's gloriously diverse creation.

No divisions. No domination. All are acceptable.

SCIENCE-FRIENDLY

means that by engaging both faith and intellect, the Bible and science become complementary conversation partners. Scientifically-based knowledge and discoveries can reveal the wonders of creation that inform our understanding of the human body, sexual development and responses. Thus, the ability to spiritually discern God's will for one's life is inextricably linked to reason.

No mind/body split. All is one.

SEX-POSITIVE

means God's grace allows us to explore sexually and sensually -- without judgment -- because the body and pleasure are good. Further, all spiritual journeys require faith, that means to take risks, learn, and grow spiritually trusting in Divine guidance and grace. A sex-positive Christianity assumes an ethic of responsibility and justice found in the Golden Rule and an understanding that all sexual decisions impact the wider community.

No shame. No guilt. All are free in Christ.

ONE SENTENCE MISSION

Helping people love their bodies (& those of others) like God does

RESPONSIBILITIES OF IISF SEX & FAITH EDUCATORS

Provide annual documentation of participants and programming being presented under the auspices of IISF to IISF
Identify an IISF affiliation on all relevant programming
Assist in recruiting additional professional leaders for IISF training
Maintain ethical and professional standards in all programming and presentations affiliated as an IISF Sex & Faith educator
Become financial supporters at a personally discerned level and support the organization to promote the wider vision IISF Sex & Faith Educators

NOTE: Applicants, if accepted for Level #1, are not required to pursue IISF certification.

What clergy & sexologists are saying...

- It engaged my heart and my intellect, presented clearly and was well-developed.
- I believe this to be the kind of training that people can take out into all facets of their world and communities
- This training helps us all do more healing work with the faith based community. It allows us to articulate that it's okay to love pleasure and God!
-left me wanting more than I received, affirmed there is a lot of work to be done and that I am not alone in my efforts to address a significant challenge in our approach to sexuality

WHO YOU ARE

You have completed a minimum of one-year academic training in either theology or sexology from an accredited degree-granting institution OR certificate-granting experience in related non-profit work.

You recognize a need for a counter narrative to cultural negativity that can serve as a means for both personal and social liberation and healing for individuals and society.

You seek to affiliate with IISF as a partner to provide education that is inclusive, science-friendly and grounded in sex-positive Christian theology.

INITIAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Successful completion of IISF Professional Leadership Training Level #1 and Level #2

- Assume a leadership role in at least one Level #1 training
- Adopt a successful peer relationship with a trained colleague from a contrasting discipline for supervision and ongoing education
- Provide programmatic leadership for 3 sex-positive Christian events (or 50 participants) within eighteen months of Level #2 training that is either self- initiated and approved by the IISF or in response to an IISF request, OR Submit a paper for possible publication within eighteen months of completion of Level #2 training representing IISF values and mission for a general audience or professionals
- Volunteer as a mentor to IISF participants seeking certification

GENERAL INFORMATION ON CERTIFICATION

Upon successful completion of the above requirements, participants are issued a diploma of certification as an "IISF Sex & Faith Educator" valid for two (2) years.

Attendance at an IISF refresher course and participation in an IISF-approved or IISF-hosted event constitutes automatic two-year renewal.

LEARNING GOALS

The IISF participants should have the following individual learning goals:

- Become sexually aware
 - Able to live comfortably/gracefully in one's own body and to engage others in respectful and caring ways
 - Able to identify one's own personal inner wounding, unresolved sexual traumas, or situations which might impede ability to remain sexually appropriate as a professional or to set appropriate personal boundaries
 - Able to claim one's sexuality as morally good and direct one's erotic power in ethically principled ways
 - Able to identify those sexual issues that would impede having an unbiased response
- Be able to distinguish between a sexual moral legalistic framework versus a justice-centered one
- Be comfortable discussing sexuality in the context of faith language and theological constructs
- Be able to articulate the interconnectedness of race, class, homophobia, and heterosexism for sexual/body justice
- Be able to identify and communicate a variety of faith positions that address mind/body/spirit disconnects and those which encourage personal autonomy, flexibility, and increase body/sexual justice both personally and societally
- Be knowledgeable of definitions of sexual and relational health as determined by the World Health Organization (WHO) and peer-reviewed research of secular science as well as by faith-based progressive organizations.

AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE TRAINING IISF GRADUATES WILL HAVE INCREASED MOTIVATION TO:

- Respond publicly to sexually inaccurate statements in the wider culture
- Engage in more public positive advocacy for justice on a variety of sexual issues
- Empower and strengthen women, racial and sexual minority communities for increased body justice
- Promote sexual health, rights, and justice with special attention to reproductive justice and the concerns of marginalized communities.
- Be able to distinguish between unhealthy and healthy sexually intimate relationships
 - To address and reduce sexual and racialized violence, harassment, misconduct
 - To educate about healthy boundaries using scientific and religious resources
 - To promote effective communication about sexual matters using faith language
 - To articulate sexual decision-making skills to all ages using faith language

CERTIFICATION BENEFITS

- Access to other sexology & theology certified professionals with similar interests & goals
- Access to IISF training, resources and information
- Referrals as educators for IISF
- Listing in the IISF Directory
- Peer-to-peer, community support