**Mellissa Green’s Pastor Speaks**

Nashville Evangelical Church Comes Out for Marriage Equality <http://time.com/3687368/gracepointe-church-nashville-marriage-equality/>

Melissa Green’s Pastor – Stan Mitchell

Jan 29, 2015 By Eliszbeth Dias

[Listen to the last ten minutes of the YouTube you will find in the Link above. This pastor is a full blown Emergent, Eastern Mystical follower]

Three Sundays ago in Franklin, Tenn., twenty minutes south of Nashville and in the heart of the country's contemporary Christian music industry, pastor Stan Mitchell of GracePointe Church preached what was perhaps the most important sermon of his life. You can watch it above--start around 44:40 if you are short on time.

For the past three years, GracePointe has engaged itself in a time of listening on the topic of sexual orientation and identity. It began around the time that the country star Carrie Underwood, who goes to GracePointe, spoke out in favor of marriage equality in 2012, and the Westboro Baptist picketers showed up the church.

That was a time when, as Mitchell, 46, explains, the position of the church on marriage was classically evangelical. People who were not heterosexual could be members, but they could not serve on the board, lead worship or other church groups. They could be baptized and receive communion, but they could not be married or have their children dedicated.

For congregants on all sides of the debate, the conversation over the past three years has been at times painful, even devastating. For Mitchell, it has been a deeply personal as well as a spiritual journey, especially as he has seen it divide friends and family. And on Sunday, Jan. 11, the church reached a conclusion, as Mitchell shared: