

Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality

What we believe about Marriage, Gender and Human Sexuality

We believe that God created all things to display His immeasurable glory (Colossians 1:16). The pinnacle of God's creation was a man and woman (male and female) created in His image (Genesis 1-2). From the very beginning, God established the institution of marriage between a man and woman as an unchanging and permanent part of the display of God's glory in the world (Genesis 2:18-25; Ephesians 5:22-33).

Therefore, we believe that God is the only one who can define, explain, and set boundaries on marriage and sexuality. We, then, must follow God's purposes and design rather than any culture, organization or government.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female, and this gift of gender is part of the goodness of God's creation. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). So, we believe that rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person and contrary to God's creation and design.

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as defined in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25).

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4) and any sexual activity outside of the protections of a biblical marriage is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

Yet, we believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11). As a church, we believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). We believe that compassion and kindness come most importantly not by condoning sin or by ignoring God's commands in Scripture, but by calling sinners to repent of their sin and to believe in Jesus. Therefore, it is our desire to help those who struggle with sexual sin, seeking to love people in Jesus' name, and pointing all people to Jesus' power to forgive and to heal.

Our Faith Based Policy

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of our church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church's members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by this church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Human Sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

Membership, Leadership and Staff:

1. Every pastor, minister, or employee hired by the church shall affirm their agreement with our church's statement on Marriage, Gender and Human Sexuality and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. Church leaders, teachers and members are expected to teach and live in a manner that is consistent with this policy.
3. The pastors and elders of this church shall be subject to dismissal for violating this Statement on Marriage, Gender and Human Sexuality by officiating at a marriage ceremony that violates the letter or spirit of this policy.

Applicants for a wedding performed by church staff:

1. Applicants wishing to have a ceremony performed by a minister of the church shall affirm this Statement on Marriage, Gender and Human Sexuality and shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
2. Applicants shall participate in premarital counseling by one of the pastors employed by this church or other persons who, in the sole opinion of the Senior Pastor of the church have the appropriate training, experience, and spiritual understanding to provide such counseling. All pastoral staff, counselors or other persons providing premarital counseling shall affirm this Statement on Marriage, Gender and Human Sexuality.

Use of Facilities:

1. Any marriage performed on church premises shall be officiated by an ordained or duly licensed minister. Any official not employed by this church shall serve at the discretion of the Senior Pastor.
2. Ministers officiating marriage ceremonies on church premises, whether or not employed by the church, shall affirm their agreement with this Statement on Marriage, Gender and Human Sexuality adopted by this church and conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent therewith.
3. Ministers assigned by the church to implement the procedures contained in this policy may, in his discretion, decline to provide church facilities for, and/or decline to officiate at a ceremony when in his judgment, there are significant concerns that one or both of the applicants may not be qualified to enter into the sacred bond of marriage for theological, doctrinal, moral or legal reasons.