



STATEMENT ON GENDER AND SEXUALITY

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably created each person as distinctly male or female (Gen. 1:26–31; 2:18–25; 5:1–2). This distinction in gender is both real and inextricably linked to our material bodies, and as such, sexual identity and expression are also to be fixed in relation to God's gift of gender to the individual person. These two distinct and divinely representative genders together reflect the image and nature of God. We believe that the fullest, most rewarding experience of life includes the acceptance of a person's God-given biological gender.

We believe that sexuality refers to God's design and pattern for the procreative relationship between male and female, as well as the experience of sexual desire within that design. We further believe that gender refers to biological differences in males and females. Further, as humanity is created in the image of God, we recognize that we are composed of body and spirit. This composition is seen in numerous places in Scripture beginning with our creation account (Gen. 2:7). We believe that gender and sexuality are inseparably tied to the biology of humanity. As such, we reject any denigration of humanity's reflection of God's image upon them that carries either the denial or degradation of the importance of the human body.

We believe it is God's purpose for sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. As a sign, marriage is to be understood as pointing to the reality of Christ's faithfulness to his Church, and as such sexual fidelity within marriage is not only wise but glorifying to God. Any form of sexual activity outside of marriage between a man and a woman—including adultery, fornication, homosexuality, and pornography—is contrary to God's design for marriage and harmful to the spiritual health of those involved (1 Cor. 6:15–7:6; Eph. 5:3–7).

We believe that all people, regardless of whether or not our views are shared, must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Tit. 3:2). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated since they are not in accord with Scripture or the doctrines of the church. We teach that the faithful proclamation of the Scripture, including the call to repentance, does not constitute hate speech, or hateful and harassing behavior, but is instead a fundamental part of the church's loving mission to the world (Matt. 28:16–20; 2 Cor. 5:11–20; 1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:1–2).

We believe that disobedience to God's design for gender and sexuality is the result of sin. All people are impacted by sin (Rom. 3:23). The impact of sin is both personal and cultural. The solution, then, to human disobedience to God's design for gender and sexuality is the gospel. We believe that God forgives and reconciles to himself all who repent of their sin and trust in the atoning work of Christ. We believe God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess sin related to marriage, gender, or sexuality as he does with all other sin. (Acts 3:19–21; Rom. 10:9–10; 1 Cor. 6:9–11).