

Our Belief about Human Sexuality

INTRODUCTION

We seek to honor God with our body, mind and soul, including our behavior as sexual beings made in the image of God. This statement defines and clarifies the beliefs of Transform Minnesota regarding human sexuality, sexual behavior and God's design for marriage and human relationships. Our religious beliefs about these matters are drawn from the Bible, which we hold to be the authoritative Word of God and is our guide in all areas of faith and living.

AFFIRMATIONS

Transform Minnesota affirms the following:

1. **Sex is a good gift from God.** After God created humans – male and female in his image, with sexual capacity and sexual drives – God looked at all he had made and pronounced it “very good” (Gen. 1:31). Our sexuality is a core element of our humanity, with physical, relational and spiritual components. When sex is experienced as God intended, it is one of his greatest gifts to humanity. (1 Tim. 4:3-4)
2. **Marriage is a part of God's plan for humanity, although not every person will become married.** As first described in the early chapters of Genesis and affirmed by Jesus in Matthew 19, marriage is a God-ordained, covenant relationship between a man and a woman. Marriage is intended to be lifelong and sexually exclusive (Matthew 19, Hebrews 13). Marriage is iconic, intended to picture the relationship between God and his people (Ephesians 5).
3. **Sexual intimacy is a gift of God to be experienced within a marriage relationship.** (Genesis 2:22-24; Eph. 5:31-32, 1 Cor. 6:15-20, 1 Thes. 4:3-5, Heb. 13:4). God's good gift of sex has specific purposes: it is a one-flesh union that consummates marriage (Gen. 2:24), has the potential for procreation (Gen. 1:28), as a way to express love to one's spouse (Song of Solomon, 1 Cor. 7:3-4), and as a means to experience pleasure and enjoyment.
4. **God created humans in the image of God with either male or female gender** (Gen. 1:27). Our masculinity or femininity reflects the image of God and is part of his created order. Put together, the female and male gender reveal God to us more fully. We honor God by affirming the goodness in each gender and by delighting in our unique design as either male or female.

Our Response:

While affirming God's good gifts of sex, marriage and gender, we confess that all of human existence has been deeply damaged by humanity's fall into sin (Gen. 3; Rom. 3:23, 5:12). The effects of sin, whether the result of our individual choices or experiences, or the universal consequences of living in a fallen world, have marred our sexuality, identity and relationships.

- **Holiness:** All who are followers of Jesus Christ are called to submit themselves, including their sexuality, relationships and identity, to God's holy standards and designs for us. Whether married or single, male or female, heterosexually or same-sex oriented, all Christ-followers are called to pursue holiness. (Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 6:18; Rom. 6:17-19)
- **Dignity:** All persons have been created in the image of God and should be accorded human dignity no matter their relationship status, orientation or gender. We believe therefore that hateful, fearful, unconcerned harassment of persons because of their sexual behavior, orientation or gender identity should be repudiated. We endeavor to welcome all among us, while understanding we do not affirm or endorse any behavior or lifestyle that is contrary to God's design for human sexuality and relationships. (Gen. 1:27)
- **Orientation:** We believe that heterosexuality is God's revealed will for humanity, and that a chaste and faithful expression of this orientation (whether in singleness or in marriage) is the ideal to which God calls all people.
- **Gender:** Biblical recognition of our sexual identity as male or female as created by God (Gen. 1:27), means that we cannot support or affirm the designation of gender by the adoption of a psychological identity inconsistent with a person's birth gender. We do not support attempts or changes made via medical, psychological, or any other intervention, to one's given biological birth sex in order to self-select gender and sexual identity.
- **Behavior:** There are many forms of sexual behavior that we believe are not intended by God, and which followers of Jesus should abstain from, such as: adultery, pre-marital sex, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, incest, and pedophilia. (Gen. 19; Lev. 18, 20; Rom. 1:18-32; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:16-21; 1 Tim. 1:8-11).
- **Hope:** We believe there is hope for healing, whether in this age or the age to come, by the power of the Holy Spirit, for all persons struggling to align their sexual desires, orientation or gender identity with God's holy intention, and that the church should minister with deep compassion and patience towards those seeking to find their true identity in Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. 5:17)

POLICY

This statement is the official position and operative policy of Transform Minnesota. All of its employees, officers, directors and volunteers must affirm and adhere to this doctrinal and religious statement defining our beliefs regarding human sexuality. Behavior or counter-witnessing that does otherwise will impede and burden our integrity and religious mission.