

Statement on Gender, Marriage, and Sexuality *Adopted at Voter's Meeting 11/20/2016*

We believe that Holy Scripture provides us with a clear, unchangeable understanding of gender, marriage, and sexuality, and that our belief and practice should be based solely on the teachings of Holy Scripture, not on political opinion or cultural bias.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Gen. 1:26-27). Rejection of one's biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term marriage has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Gen. 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 Cor. 6:18; 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4). We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matt. 15:18-20; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

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

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; Rom. 10:9-10; 1 Cor. 6:9-11). We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hatred and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines of Faith Lutheran Church.

While we reject same-sex marriage, we do not reject individuals who struggle with same-sex attraction, but we seek to love them and call them to repentance and faith in Christ's forgiveness, just as we do for all sinners. We cannot bless same-sex marriage (just as we cannot bless sexual intercourse outside of the marriage of one man and one woman) because we cannot bless what God calls sin. To do so would be to place those who engage in such behavior outside the need for repentance and forgiveness, and thus outside the need for redemption in Christ. Our concerns are always ultimately pastoral, focused on the care of souls in Christ. We seek to be faithful to the Word of God because we care about people.