

UNIVERSITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Statement on Sexuality and Gender

From time to time University Presbyterian Church (UPC) is asked about its position on sexuality and gender.

In sexuality and gender — as in all of life — we live by the grace of God in Jesus Christ. He is the one who makes us all whole. In God's grace, our lives are not defined by who we are but by who Jesus is. In God's grace, we not only hear God's word of complete affirmation but also God's promise of transformation. While we await the fullness of that promise, we stand together before God, one another, and the world in Jesus Christ.

UPC is a gracious and open family where all are offered warm welcome, and we understand that for some people clarity on this point helps avoid hurt and confusion.

We affirm the dignity of all people.

UPC affirms the dignity and value of every human being regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. We recognize that many of our members and neighbors identify as LGBTQ+, experience same-sex attraction, or are in same-sex marriages. They are valued.

We encourage respectful communication.

We understand that some churches have been a hostile and hurtful environment for people identifying as LGBTQ+. This grieves us deeply. UPC strives for mutual understanding, edification, and encouragement through open and respectful dialogue.

We accept differences of opinion.

As a faith community, UPC is gathered and taught by Jesus Christ. We recognize that we have differing understandings of the Bible among us, encourage everyone to grapple with the biblical texts for themselves, and work to appreciate one another's views. We do not tolerate hostility towards LGBTQ+ people or their expressed understandings.

Our leaders maintain historic orthodoxy.

UPC seeks to order its life and practice by the instruction we believe God has given us in holy Scripture. Therefore, our ordained leaders vow to live under the authority of the Bible, to uphold and teach the essential tenets of the Reformed faith, and to guide our congregational life accordingly.

On November 26, 2013, the Session of UPC adopted "[Essential Tenets](#)" as an expression of the essential tenets of the Reformed faith and as a summary of UPC's consistent teaching since its founding.

We teach that God gives marriage as a covenant between a woman and a man, and that marriage is the only appropriate context for sexual intimacy. We hold this position firmly but respect our members and neighbors who disagree. We ask members and neighbors who disagree with this position to do so respectfully and honor our leaders who follow that teaching.