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**WHAT DOES
IT MEAN
TO BE
WELCOMING**

?

**NAVIGATING
LGBT QUESTIONS
IN YOUR CHURCH**



A STATEMENT ON SEXUALITY

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, HUNTSVILLE
(APPROVED NOVEMBER 13, 2016)

ROOTED IN THE MESSAGE of Scripture as we understand it, and consistent with Christian teaching through 2,000 years, we, the members of First Baptist Church of Huntsville, reaffirm the following beliefs regarding sexuality:

- We believe sexuality is a beautiful gift established by a loving God who knows a gift of such great value can reach its potential only within the covenant of marriage.

Genesis 2:18, 22-24; Proverbs 5:18-19; Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5

- We believe marriage is a divine institution between a man and a woman.

Genesis 2:18, 22-24; Mark 10:6-9

- We believe any act of sexual intimacy outside of marriage is incompatible with biblical teaching.

Exodus 20:14; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:18-20; 1 Corinthians 7:2; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; Hebrews 13:4

- We believe all of us belonging to a church family requires a commitment to increasing holiness in every area of our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit, the practice of spiritual disciplines, and the support of our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Romans 12:1-2; Philippians 2:1-5; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Peter 1:13-16; 1 John 3:1-3

- We believe spiritual leadership carries a high standard of behavior. That behavior includes, but is not limited to, sexual choices.

Matthew 18:6; 1 Timothy 3:1-12; 1 Timothy 4:12; James 3:1; 1 Peter 5:3

- We believe all persons are created in the image of God and are deserving of respect and compassion regardless of their sexual orientation or choices.

Genesis 1:27; Genesis 5:1-2; Mark 12:28-31; Colossians 3:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 1:3

- We believe the diversity of our congregation on complex issues enriches our journey and our ministry.

John 17:22-23; Romans 15:5-6; Ephesians 4:1-5; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Philippians 1:9-11; Philippians 2:1-5

- We believe none of us is without a desperate need for God's grace.

Luke 5:31-32; John 1:16; John 8:1-11; Romans 3:23-24; Ephesians 2:8-9

This position statement is our best attempt at balancing grace and truth, the two equally important facets of the Christian faith embodied in the Lord Jesus.

IMPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP AND LEADERSHIP

Membership

As members of FBC, we uphold the biblical standard of holiness, which would include such practices as truthfulness in business dealings, honesty in our academic pursuits, sincerity in our

relationships, and fairness in our dealings with people who might otherwise be treated unfairly. We also teach the biblical standard of sexual purity while emphasizing that the important decision is to be sexually pure from this point forward. Membership in First Baptist Church implies a public commitment to faith in Jesus and a willingness to undergo, with others on the same journey, ongoing transformation. Church membership requires from present and potential members a commitment to ethical and moral purity. We welcome among us those who are willing to strive alongside us toward ever-increasing holiness and spiritual maturity.

Leadership

We believe spiritual leadership carries a high standard of behavior. That behavior includes, though it is not limited to, sexual choices. Therefore, a sexual life that is above reproach is requisite for ordination to the role of deacon or to vocational ministry. We further expect a life of sexual purity for those teaching in the discipleship programs of the church, such as in Sunday school and small groups, and those serving on the Leadership Council.