

POSITION AND POLICY STATEMENT ON MARRIAGE AND HUMAN SEXUALITY

Unanimously affirmed by the members of Good Hope Baptist Church on Wednesday, July 13, 2016

A. Summary Statement on Marriage & Human Sexuality

We believe marriage is a monogamous, heterosexual union instituted and ordained by God (Genesis 2:18-25; Ephesians 5:22-33). As such, it is to be an exclusive covenantal union of one man, born a man, and one woman, born a woman, for the purpose of a lifetime of mutual commitment and companionship. A civil government's sanction of a union will be recognized as a legitimate marriage by this church only to the extent that it is consistent with this belief.

B. Position on Marriage & Human Sexuality

We believe that the term "marriage" has only one meaning- it is a union sanctioned by God that joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive relationship, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other.

We believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity is to occur outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, polygamy or any attempt to change one's gender, or disagreement with one's biological gender, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the church as the local Body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to the church members and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by our church in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this position statement on Marriage and Human Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to one's created identity as male or female to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking forgiveness and mercy through Jesus Christ.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with the Scriptures nor the doctrine and practices of this church.

C. Policy Regarding Marriage and Human Sexuality

The Bible explains the original intention and core elements of marriage. In the New Testament, various epistles give explicit instructions on the union of a man and a woman. In light of this revelation from God, our church views marriage as a profound spiritual institution established by God. Due to the nature and importance of marriage in the biblical record, we adopt the following policy:

Clergy

1. Only licensed or ordained pastors shall officiate at marriage ceremonies conducted on church property.
2. Clergy not employed by Good Hope Baptist Church may officiate at weddings on church premises only after agreeing to follow the marriage beliefs and policies of Good Hope Baptist Church, including this

document. Such clergy need the approval of the Senior Pastor or his designee before officiating at any wedding.

3. Pastors shall not officiate at a same sex or trans-gender marriage ceremony regardless of where it is held.

Applicants

1. Applicants desiring to have a ceremony performed by a pastor employed by Good Hope Baptist Church, or to use the facilities of the church, shall affirm their agreement with the Marriage and Human Sexuality Position and Policy of Good Hope Baptist Church, and shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent therewith.
2. Applicants shall receive the necessary premarital counseling as required by Good Hope Baptist Church before a ceremony may be performed by a pastor or his designee.

Premises

1. We reserve the right to decline the request of any person to use Good Hope Baptist Church facilities or property for a ceremony when, in our judgment, there are significant concerns that one or both of the applicants may not be qualified to enter into the sacred union of marriage for theological, doctrinal, moral or legal reasons.
2. We reserve the right to decline the request of any person to use Good Hope Baptist Church facilities or property to host or house any group, function or event inconsistent with the biblical standards for marriage and this policy on Marriage and Human Sexuality.

Weddings

We reserve the right to decline the request of any person to use Church facilities or property to perform or participate in any wedding ceremony inconsistent with the biblical standards for marriage and this policy on Marriage and Human Sexuality.