

# Anglican Church – Diocese of Sydney

## Doctrine Statement on Gender Identity

1. The Bible teaches us that God is the Creator of all things (Genesis 1:1; Hebrews 11:3) and that human beings are created in his image (Genesis 1:26), according to his design through and for his beloved Son, Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:16). All human beings receive their existence as a gift of God. We are creatures who are not able to create ourselves. We are always accountable to our Creator for the way we use what he has given to us (2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 4:13).
2. From the beginning, God created humanity in the form of two biological sexes – male and female (Genesis 1:26-27; Matthew 19:4). The Bible never endorses a divergence between biological sex and gender identity or expression. For example, in Mark 10:6-7 Jesus recognises that the male/female distinction of Genesis 1:27 is the foundation of the man/wife distinction of Genesis 2:24. Nor does the Bible ever envisage a 'third sex' – eunuchs are still regarded as male. In the creative purposes of God, gender manifests biological sex, which is either male or female
3. Like the rest of creation, human nature was damaged and distorted as a result of the sin of the first man and woman, but not destroyed by it (Genesis 3:21-22; Romans 1:18-32; 8:19-23). All people continue to be made in the image of God as male or female, though they fall short of the glory of God (Genesis 5:1-2; 9:6; James 3:9; Rom 3:23). But this has impacted every facet of our human nature, including our biology and psychology. The normative relationship between biological sex and gender is disrupted in various ways, but not rendered void or irrelevant. Our gender identity is not simply a social construct. Jesus spoke of how 'from the beginning God *made* them male and female' (Matthew 19:4–6). The Apostle Paul wrote of a natural and appropriate distinction between the sexes (1 Corinthians 11:11–12). The experience of incongruence between objective biological sex and subjective gender identity is one of the consequences of human rebellion in the Garden of Eden but this in no way diminishes a person's full humanity or dignity in God's eyes (Psalm 8:3–5).
4. Biological sex is a fundamental aspect of embodiment in God's ordering of human life. Blurring the distinctions between male and female, or seeking to present one's sex as contrary to one's biology, is an attempt at self-creation that involves a denial of the biologically-sexed body that God has given to us (Deuteronomy 22:5; Leviticus 18:22; 20:13; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; 11:4-5; 13-15; Ephesians 5:29-31). However, in our broken world there are those for whom biological sex is indeterminate or ambiguous (intersex). These cases are complex but do not involve a denial of God as Creator, or any diminution of the dignity and full humanity of such a person.
5. The gospel of Jesus Christ is a message of forgiveness and new life as well as a summons to repentance and faith (Mark 1:15). In him we are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). By God's grace we are 'in Christ Jesus' (1 Corinthians 1:30), which means our identity is to be found in him. This transcends all other notions of identity and liberates us from our attempts to construct our own identity. The gospel does not do away with gender but rather denies any suggestion of privileged status before God based on gender (Galatians 3:28). It also holds out the promise of a day when all dissonance, frustration and distress will be gone forever (Revelation 21:4). In the interim, God's offer of eternal life in Christ Jesus includes the gift of his Holy Spirit who transforms us into the image of Christ from one degree of glory to another (2 Corinthians 3:18).
6. God made all people and loves all people (Genesis 1:27; Deuteronomy 10:18; John 3:16). God's pattern for human flourishing is good for all people, since all are created in his image, whether or not they have placed their trust in Christ (Matthew 5:43-45; Luke 6:35-36). Christians are called to do good to all people (Galatians 6:9-10), which includes encouraging them to embrace God's pattern for human wholeness and sharing with them the good news of the Saviour through whom he will make all things new (Revelation 21:5).



I Certify that the Doctrine Statement as printed is in accordance with the Doctrine Statement as reported.

P COLGAN  
Chair of Committees

I Certify that this Doctrine Statement was passed by the Synod of the Diocese of Sydney on 22 October 2019.

D GLYNN  
Secretary

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