

## TRANSGENDERISM & GENDER DYSPHORIA at Medway Community Church

*At Medway Community Church (MCC) we believe that whether culturally in vogue or out, the Scriptures are inerrant and the only infallible rule for faith and conduct; consequently, we strive to maintain a Biblically derived ethic of gender. MCC seeks to be a community of grace where people of all lifestyles and experiences are both welcome to worship and warmly encouraged to explore the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ.*

**Q: At MCC, are those who identify as transgender welcome at worship services and other church functions?**

Absolutely. MCC welcomes all people and strives to show no partiality (James 2:1-5) regardless of lifestyle or gender identity. We invite all to attend worship services, fellowship gatherings, and community outreach events. It is our strong conviction that *each* individual is in need of the saving grace of the Gospel and that God does not leave humanity to its fallen condition (1 Timothy 2:4). Our church family is encouraged to invite all friends, family, and neighbors to MCC, showing respect and love for them as image bearers of the Creator God.

**Q: How will I be treated at MCC if a member of my family identifies as transgender?**

You will be loved by the MCC community, as will your family member. At MCC, all are welcomed *as* sinners in need of grace, *by* sinners in need of grace. As it relates to transgenderism and gender dysphoria, it is our desire to come alongside anyone navigating this unique experience, striving to show compassion, helping them explore Biblical truth, and encouraging them to find their identity in Christ.

**Q: What is MCC's response to members questioning their gender identity?**

It is MCC's sincerely held belief that, in God's original and good order, humans were created male and female, together reflecting the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27). These distinct creations remain for gender, even after the distorting effects of the Fall (Genesis 3:7-24). MCC members seek to align with Biblical values and embrace Biblical categories of biological sex. Members of MCC encourage and uplift one another in their mutual pursuit to glorify God. It is our privilege to lovingly come alongside fellow members who struggle with any issue in their lives, and this includes gender identity. While the fall affects our hearts, minds, and bodies, the Gospel offers freedom and hope to all who trust in Christ for their redemption (2 Cor 5:17).

**Q: Does MCC believe gender and biological sex are inseparable?**

Yes, we do. The Bible states our bodies are "very good" (Genesis 1:31) and "sacred" (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 & Romans 12:1) yet does not create a division between the concepts of biological sex and gender. Both the Old and New Testament testify to God's creation of male and female created in His image, meaning they are the *same* in their shared humanity, yet *distinct* as male and female (Genesis 1:27, Matthew 19:4). This distinctiveness points to our complementary and relational nature, much like the relationships that exists within the Trinity.

**Q: Is there scriptural evidence that a transgender lifestyle is inconsistent with Christian conduct?**

Yes, there is. Multiple passages describe God's assignment of biological sex, define the goodness and sacredness of His creation, and offer general instructions about Christian living. In addition, there are also five specific texts that directly address transgender behavior. Two of these texts are in the Old Testament (Leviticus 18, Deuteronomy 22) and three are in the New Testament (Romans 1, 1 Corinthians 6, and 1 Corinthians 11). Whenever the Bible mentions crossing gender boundaries, it speaks of this as out of alignment with Christian faith (Deuteronomy 22:5, 1 Corinthians 6:9, Romans 1:26-27).

**Q: Does MCC recommend using a transgender individual's preferred pronouns?**

Within the broader Christian community, there is sincere disagreement on this question. We strive to approach this question with humility, grace, and Biblical grounding without needlessly binding the conscience of one another. In short, here are two perspectives you will most likely find at MCC:

- Christians are to be people of the truth. To utilize preferred pronouns that are not in alignment with an individual's biological sex is to contradict God's purposeful design for those individuals. Genesis 1:27 states, *"male and female he created them"* and John 17:17 states, *"Sanctify them in the truth, your word is truth."* Though conversationally awkward in practice, rather than utilizing pronouns, it may be best to utilize an individual's proper name.
- Christians are to be people who seek peace. Given that our schools and workplaces default to preferred pronouns, to violate an individual's expressed desire may be needlessly provocative, disrupting communication and opportunity for relationship. For this present-day tension, Paul's distinct instructions regarding circumcision in Greek (Acts 16:3) versus Jewish (Galatians 5:2) contexts may provide a helpful analogue. Romans 12:18 states, *"If it is possible, as much as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."*

**Q: Am I welcome to participate in ministry that is aligned to my personal gender identity, even if it is not representative of my biological sex?**

We maintain that Scripture connects biology with sexual identity. Transgender individuals are encouraged to participate in co-ed events and/or activities aligned to their biological sex. This practice is meant to affirm the integrity of the church body with the truth that men and women are created distinct and at times most effectively disciplined in complementary ways.

**Q: May I use a bathroom of my personal choice at MCC?**

It is our request that members and guests use a bathroom aligned to their biological sex. For the comfort of all our guests, there are also single-user bathrooms available in Fellowship Hall.

**Q: Does MCC recommend that someone who identifies as transgender should undergo transition therapy or alter their body?**

No. MCC is committed to loving and caring for every person in accordance with our Biblical obligation before God. We do not affirm the resolution of tension between one's biological sex and one's misaligned experience of gender by the adoption of a social identity that is discordant with one's birth sex. Likewise, we do not affirm medical intervention to change one's birth sex.

**Q: In summary, what are MCC's guiding principles as it relates to transgenderism and/ gender dysphoria?**

1. Christians are to be people who seek peace and extend welcome, without partiality, to all (James 2:1-5; Romans 12:18).
2. Truth is defined by the Word of God. Christians are to be people of the truth. (John 17:17).
3. Humans were created distinctly male and female, together reflecting the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27).
4. Whenever the Bible mentions crossing gender boundaries, it speaks of this as out of alignment with Christian faith (Deuteronomy 22:5, 1 Corinthians 6:9, Romans 1:26-27).
5. Members of MCC encourage and uplift one another in their mutual pursuit to glorify God. It is our privilege to lovingly come alongside fellow members who struggle with any issue in their lives, and this includes gender identity. (Galatians 6:2, John 13:34-35, Colossians 3:12-17)
6. While the fall affects our hearts, minds, and bodies, the Gospel offers freedom and hope to all who trust in Christ for their redemption (2 Cor 5:17).



*(unanimously approved by the Board of Elders 11/2022)*