

SUMMARY OF THE CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT ON HUMAN SEXUALITY

[Please note: this document is intended as to be a summary only of the more detailed exposition created by the WELS Conference of Presidents and adopted by them on October 21, 2019. We encourage readers to consult the more comprehensive statement. It can be found [here](#).]

God's Word declares that God created humanity with a twofold sexuality, "Male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27). He created male and female to unite them in marriage and bless them with children (Gen 2:20–24; Matt 19:6). Our tragic fall into sin, with all the corruption that it entails, has changed neither the basic truth of creation as defined in Scripture nor God's purpose for humanity. Therefore, sexuality is not a social construct and cannot simply be changed by human will, desire or feeling. Sexuality is a gracious gift of God, fundamental to human nature and foundational to society.

A distinction must be made between the essence of humanity itself and the sin that is inherent in all of us. Sin pollutes our whole being: our thinking, feeling, and willing. This remains true of Christians. In fact, the power of indwelling sin makes the Christian's life one of constant inner struggle. As Paul writes "What I do is not the good I want to do; no the evil that I do not want to do, this I keep on doing" (Rom 7:19). It is a struggle that defies our understanding (Rom 7:15) and leads to that heart-wrenching cry, "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?" (Rom 7:24). The only solution is not to rely upon our own powers, but to find solace in God's pardoning grace alone, "Thanks be to God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom 7:24; see also 8:1).

As Christians, we rejoice in our Creator's design. He has wonderfully fashioned us as human beings, "giving us our bodies and souls...and all our members"¹(Ps 139:13-14). We gratefully embrace our identity as creatures of God, precious in his sight (Gen 1:26-27; Ps 139:17).

As Christians, we accept the purpose and truth of Jesus' incarnation is to set us free from sin by his redeeming love. Jesus gives the Christian a new identity in himself, set free to be what God has made us to be and to confess him in the world, body and soul (Ro 6:14; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Co 6:19).

As Christians, we delight in our exalted status as a holy people in whom God dwells by his Spirit (Eph 2:22; 1 Co 3:16; 6:19). By his Spirit, God renews his image in us day by day (Eph 4:24; Col 3:10).

As we struggle against sin and live by faith in Christ, we are encouraged by these descriptions of our identity. We are encouraged by the thought that the new birth of faith flows into the new life of faith. This means we are not only freed from sin's guilt, but we are also freed from its absolute power to control and determine our conduct (Rom 8:9; 6:14, 18, 23). The Spirit works in us the new creation (2 Cor 5:17). Through God's grace, he liberates us to live a new and holy life (Rom 6:1–7, 12–13). With the power of the Spirit, we call out to God as our Father in all needs and distresses (Rom 8:15). With the power of the Spirit we "put to death the misdeeds of the body" (Rom 8:13) and are able to live lives dedicated to God (Rom 6:22).

We affirm these biblical truths and pledge to act in accordance with them. We will avoid affirming or encouraging any action that is out of step with these beliefs. With the compassion of Christ, we will walk with those who struggle with contrary thoughts and help them in their struggle against sin, yet not in such a way as to condone or affirm it.

¹ *Luther's Small Catechism*. Milwaukee, Northwestern, 2017, p. 130.

BULLET POINT SUMMARY OF STATEMENT ON HUMAN SEXUALITY

1. God created a twofold sexuality, male and female. This twofold sexuality is fundamental to human nature and foundational to society. It is not a social construct that can be changed by human will, desire or feeling.
2. Sex is a gracious gift from God intended for male and female within the bonds of marriage and to bless them with children.
3. Sin infects God's whole creation and pollutes our whole being: thinking, feeling and willing. Sin does not, however, change the essence of humanity itself.
4. In our painful struggles, we are encouraged by our identity as God's created, redeemed, and sanctified humanity.
5. We are freed from sin, not by our own will or power, but solely through the pardoning grace of God, through Jesus Christ.
6. Lives lived by faith in Christ are lives of struggling against sin.
7. In Christ, our bodies are his temple, we are freed from sin's power and control, and freed to live a new and holy life.
8. We will avoid affirming or encouraging actions that are out of step with these beliefs *and* with the compassion of Christ, we will walk with those who struggle with contrary thoughts and help them in their struggle against sin.

Gender Identity Task Force
Draft # 2 of "Summary Statement"
November 1, 2022