

Emmanuel Church: Our Understanding of God's Design for Sexuality

We affirm the goodness of creation and the dignity of all people as made in the image of God (*Genesis 1:27; Psalm 8:4-6*). We recognise that all people are sinners in need of salvation through Jesus Christ alone (*Romans 3:23; John 14:6*), and are saved by grace, regardless of sexuality or gender identity (*Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5*). We seek that His love, truth, and grace would characterise all Christian response to questions of sexuality (*John 1:14; Ephesians 4:15*). We also acknowledge with humility and sorrow that the wider Church has not always shown love, grace, or understanding particularly toward those experiencing same-sex attraction or gender dysphoria. We affirm God's love for every person (*John 3:16; Romans 5:8*) and reject all forms of hostility or victimisation (*Micah 6:8*).

We believe marriage is God's good design between one man and one woman (*Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6*), and that sexual intimacy is a gift to be expressed within that covenant alone (*1 Corinthians 6:18-20; Hebrews 13:4*). We also recognise and value singleness in its various forms as a calling from God, with its own joys, gifts, trials, and challenges, and as a full and honoured way of life in Christ (*1 Corinthians 7:7-8, 32-35; Matthew 19:12*).

We warmly welcome all people into the life of the Church, whatever their sexuality (*Romans 15:7*). We desire to walk with one another in love, prayer, and encouragement as we seek to follow Jesus faithfully and biblically (*Colossians 3:12-14; Hebrews 10:24-25*). Leadership is reserved for those seeking to live in repentance and alignment with biblical teaching, even amid ongoing struggles (*1 Timothy 3; Titus 1:6-9; Rom 8:37*).

We do not conduct or bless marriages or unions contrary to this understanding.

As members of the Evangelical Alliance, we affirm the fuller statements to be found here ([Link](#))

Emmanuel Church: Our Understanding of God's Design for Leadership.

As an evangelical charismatic church, we affirm that all people, male and female, are created in the image of God (*Genesis 1:27*) and gifted by the Holy Spirit for ministry and service (*1 Corinthians 12:4-7; Romans 12:4-8*). We adopt a biblically faithful, centrist "third way" approach to leadership: women are fully encouraged and empowered to lead in all areas of church life, including teaching, preaching, pastoral care, ministry oversight, and governance (*Acts 18:26; 21:9; Romans 16:1-2, 3-7; Titus 2:3-5; Philippians 4:2-3*).

At the same time, the role of Senior Minister, who holds ultimate responsibility for defining doctrine and final teaching authority, is reserved for a man, reflecting our understanding of male headship in Scripture as expressed in passages such as *1 Corinthians 11:3* and *Ephesians 5:23-24*, and in accordance with *1 Timothy 2:12*, which we understand as applying specifically to the exercise of teaching authority that safeguards church doctrine, not to general teaching or leadership.

This approach seeks to honour the diversity of gifts God has given, modelling servant leadership, mutual respect, and unity in the Spirit (*Galatians 3:28; Philippians 2:3-4; Ephesians 4:11-13*), while ensuring women can exercise their gifts fully across all other leadership roles. *Within marriage, we affirm that husbands are called to loving, Christlike headship expressed in sacrificial leadership, and that wives are called to a trusting and glad partnership within that loving leadership, reflecting God's good design for mutual flourishing.*

We reject any understanding of leadership or headship that diminishes women, affirming instead the full dignity, equal worth, and shared calling of all who are in Christ.