



A JOINT CHRISTIAN DECLARATION ON 'DIVERSITY OF GENDER AND SEXUALITY'

A Norwegian Christian Ecumenical Project 2024

**Based on our faith in the Bible as the Word of God, on the recognition of biological realities,
and out of respect for the human rights of children – we affirm the following principles:**

On the basis of the BIBLE

- God is the Creator and Sustainer of the universe. He has created human beings male and female.
- All people are created in the image of God. All are deeply loved by Him, have the same inherent human dignity, and are equally precious.
- Marriage is a divine institution inscribed in natural law. Marriage unites one man and one woman. Founded by God, confirmed by Christ and the Apostles, this institution of marriage has been recognised by the Christian church throughout the centuries (cf. Genesis 1:26-28 and Matthew 19:4-6).
- Marriage between one man and one woman constitutes the Biblical framework for sexual relationships. Other forms of sexual relationships represent a 'diversity' at odds with the Bible's theology of creation and with Jesus's ethical teaching, even when these relationships are marked by long-lasting fidelity.
- The doctrine and example of Jesus teach us that every human being is our neighbour. However deeply we may disagree about matters of faith and our very worldview, about ethics and moral codes, we urge all to encounter one another with respect, in a spirit of friendship.

On the basis of BIOLOGY

- There are only two biological sexes: female and male. The sex of each individual is determined at conception.
- Our sex is principally determined by the size and function of the reproductive cells. Women produce large reproductive cells (egg cells); men produce small reproductive cells (sperm cells).
- Further to the crucial importance of reproductive cells, female or male chromosomes (XX or XY) are woven into almost all the body's thousands of billions of cells. The affirmation that there are two biological sexes, and no more, is not invalidated by the fact that some children are born with chromosomal anomalies or by the fact that an extremely small number of children (in Norway, 10-15 children per year) are born with unclearly defined genitalia.

Core values

- We regard the Bible as our highest authority in matters of faith, doctrine, and life. As Christian churches, congregations, and organisations, and as individuals, we commit ourselves to the truths, values, and convictions expressed in this declaration.
- We wish to encounter all people with respect, reasonably and kindly – 'speaking the truth in love' (Ephesians 4:15). But we will not compromise on Biblical truths, even if these truths should conflict with political pressure or societal trends.
- We reject, in every setting, all forms of bullying and ostracism, manipulation and coercion, harassment and hatred, sabotage and violence.
- We hold that much of the content of modern gender ideology, indeed the very concept of 'gender and sexual diversity', is not based on medical and natural science. We find it to be incompatible with our faith, thought, and worldview as Christians.
- We stand up for a democratic, pluralistic, and open-minded society where there is space for diversity of beliefs characterised by mutual respect. Freedom of expression and conscience, as well as religious freedom, are for us central and essential values.
- We hold that public authorities and governmental bodies exceed their mandate and power by attempting to pressure citizens and organisations to adapt to 'queer theory' on gender, sexuality, and marriage. Such activism on the part of government violates religious freedom and freedom of conscience, as well as the rights of parents.
- We, the signatories of this declaration, adhere to the *Declaration on Marriage* published in 2016 by 36 Norwegian Christian organisations and denominations. We stand united with hundreds of millions of Christians of almost all denominations worldwide.

Some 30 Norwegian Christian organisations and denominations are joint publishers of this declaration.

You may find a list of the co-publishers and familiarise yourself with resources elaborating the content of this declaration on the project website

www.Felleskristen.no/english

All co-publishers of this declaration support the intent and message of the document. They are free, however, to express reserve regarding specific formulations in the text. - We encourage all who support the declaration to share it generously with others.

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- The notion that gender is a subjective category and that sexual and gender identity can be freely chosen on the basis of feelings or preference, irrespective of biological sex, is based on ideology. It has no biological or scientific foundation.
- It is immensely problematic to teach children and young people that there are 'boys, girls, and other genders'; that there exists an 'interior gender'; that they may happen to have been 'born in the wrong body'; and that gender is 'fluid'. This manner of influence may lead to confusion, insecurity, and destructive life choices for many children and young people.
- The relationship between mother, father, and child is biologically singular. Divinely ordained, it is the foundation of the family and of society.

Out of respect for the CHILD

- Children are a gift from God. It is no adult's *right* to have a child.
- Human beings originate from the egg of one woman and the sperm of one man. Neither mother nor father, nor the wider family of either, is superfluous or irrelevant in a child's life.
- It is a human right for every child, as far as possible, 'to know and be cared for by his or her parents' (*United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, art. 7.1).
- To deprive children deliberately and intentionally of the right to know their biological mother or father, and their wider families – for example through assisted fertilisation or surrogacy – violates God's will for creation and children's rights.
- Regardless of the manner in which they are conceived, all children are equally precious, equally loved by God.
- Children's rights and the best interests of the child must take precedence over the demands and wishes of adults – in secular society and in the church.