

Community of Christ Statement of Sexual Ethics

Community of Christ

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The International Leaders Council (ILC), a group of 84 representatives from around the worldwide church, considered the *Community of Christ Statement of Sexual Ethics*. The ILC reached general agreement about the statement's basic principles and affirmations, with specific concern about how some phrases could be interpreted in various cultures. There may be additional revisions to this draft statement. Leaders in each field will determine how to best share materials and information in their cultural contexts.

Statement of Sexual Ethics

We will...

uphold the principles of moral behavior and relationships provided in Doctrine and Covenants 164:6, approved by the World Conference, as foundational for sexual ethics throughout the worldwide church. These principles are:

- a. The worth and giftedness of all people
- b. Protect the most vulnerable
- c. Christ-like love
- d. Mutual respect
- e. Responsibility
- f. Justice
- g. Covenant
- h. Faithfulness

We also Affirm...

- a. Sexuality is part of the goodness and sacredness of human creation and is not inherently sinful.¹
- b. Humans are born as sexual beings and sexually develop during various stages of their lives.
- c. Sexuality embraces the possibilities and joys of loving relationship, pleasure, reproduction, intimacy, and wholeness. All of these possibilities have physical, emotional, and spiritual aspects.
- d. Moral sexual relationships demonstrate the principles of Christ-like love, mutual respect, responsibility, justice, covenant, and faithfulness.
- e. People who engage in moral sexual relationships express sincere concern in motive and act for mutual

consent, personhood, integrity, dignity, wholeness, and the Worth of All Persons. Human worth applies to all regardless of age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, or physical or mental capacity.

- f. The sacrament of monogamous marriage, based on the principle of covenant initiated by God, is the relationship through which sexuality can fulfill its potential to bless human lives. The sacrament of marriage stresses sexual fidelity to one's spouse. It promotes love, trust, companionship, intimacy, spirituality, and peace.²
- g. Couples involved in sexual activity have responsibility for each other's physical, mental, and spiritual health.
- h. Sexual ethics should be the same for all people without discrimination.
- i. People can lead fulfilling lives in harmony with God's will without being sexually active.³

¹ Some Christian traditions view sexual desire and subsequent actions as resulting from original sin and in need of constant forgiveness.

² Doctrine and Covenants 150:10a states that "monogamy is the basic principle on which Christian married life is built." The church recognizes civil marriages as valid. The church offers the sacrament of marriage, which is recognized as legal by most governments. In addition to the human commitment made that includes legal rights, the sacrament of marriage emphasizes God's desire to strengthen and enrich the marriage.

³ Christian tradition teaches that celibacy is a valid personal choice or even the Spirit's gift given to some as part of their discipleship or ministerial calling.

In Addition, We...

- a. Evaluate the morality of sexual activity by the degree of mature love, justice, covenant, and faithfulness present in a relationship.
- b. Stress that sexual desire itself does not morally justify sexual activity.
- c. Renounce as immoral sexual activities that are selfish, irresponsible, promiscuous, degrading, or abusive.
- d. Denounce all forms of exploitation, abuse, and sexual violence. Sexual acts that degrade or dehumanize are contrary to God's will. No physical, emotional, or spiritual violence is acceptable.
- e. Offer safety and healing ministry to those who have been threatened, ostracized, exploited, abused, and violated, or whose relationships have been broken.
- f. Reject sexual expressions that damage or exploit others through harassment, violence, or abuse. These include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment, pornography, genital mutilation, child abuse, incest, rape, prostitution, and human sex trafficking.