



**LOVE IS
LOUDER**
Love Your Neighbor **OUT LOUD**

Gender & Sexuality + Our Faith



LOVE IS LOUDER: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR OUT LOUD | TOOLKIT 02
GENDER & SEXUALITY JUSTICE MINISTRIES

02

GENDER & SEXUALITY JUSTICE MINISTRIES (GSJM)



Love is Louder: Gender & Sexuality + Our Faith is a collective offering from Gender & Sexuality Justice Ministries (GSJM) of the National Setting of the United Church of Christ.



GSJM provides care, education, advocacy, and partnerships for transformative justice. Transformative Justice celebrates all bodies through the ongoing process of subverting personal, collective, and systemic oppression.



We are a team of activists, teachers, organizers, pastors, authors, and abolitionists deeply rooted in our faith and various communities across the globe. Together, we intentionally grow a Just World For All.



Love is Louder: Love Your Neighbor OUTLOUD is an initiative of GSJM seeking to faithfully support the spiritual, physical, and mental well-being of LGBTQIA+ siblings while equipping congregations and faith-based communities with resources and tools for faithful action and care.



Learn more about Love is Louder:
ucc.org/loveislouder



**Learn more about Gender & Sexuality
Justice Ministries:**
ucc.org/gender-sexuality-justice-ministries

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Edited By: xxxxxxx

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What is Gender & Sexuality?

This first section walks your community through what Gender & Sexuality is with common terms, misconceptions, and a visual representation of Gender & Sexuality and the differences between the two.

Inclusive Language & Why Language Matters

This second section dives deeper with your community through common Inclusive Language terms and why using inclusive language matters for the sake of LGBTQIA+ siblings and all people in their human experience.

Putting it all Together: Gender & Sexuality + the Bible

This third section brings together what your community has learned so far and partners this wisdom with biblical interpretation and an introduction to Queer Theology that is expansive, loving and accessible for all.

Glossary of Terms

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INTRODUCTION



“

Embracing the Gender Spectrum and advocating for affirming one's journey through gender & sexuality - not only saves lives - but honors God's unique creation within each of us.

— Rachael Ward, they/them | Minister & Team Lead for Gender & Sexuality Justice


”

What You'll Learn Here:

This tool kit offers an introduction to what Gender & Sexuality is, along with inclusive language practices to love LGBTQIA+ siblings and all individual experiences along the Gender & Sexuality spectrum well.

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SECTION ONE WHAT IS GENDER & SEXUALITY?



This first section helps create common awareness of Gender & Sexuality and terms that exist within the spectrum of Gender & Sexuality. You may spend a lot of time here and may need to re-read and reflect on this section before moving through the rest of the tool kit. *That's ok and encouraged!*

Did You Know?
**Gender & Sexuality
are two separate things.**



Language is Fluid

Language is always evolving. As we continue to discover new things about the universe and ourselves, new words are created. As we learn more about these discoveries, definitions shift to be more expansive and make meaning of these discoveries across different contexts. If you begin to feel overwhelmed or confused, *that's ok*. The most important truth is you're bringing awareness into your being and for others to love one another OUT LOUD and well.

With LGBTQIA+ siblings, always prioritize the definition given by that person in front of you. That person understands their identity better than anyone else, and it is a gift to learn from them! Embrace fluidity over a “one size fits all” mentality. Psalm 139 reminds us that God's creation is expansive and all members of the body matter uniquely to God.

Lean into the expansiveness of what we do not know and what is possible to discover together!

Before we dive into Gender & Sexuality: it's critical to note that **Sexuality** refers to **who we are attracted to** and **Gender** refers to a **personal sense of how we understand who we are**.

With that clarity, we're going to dive into Gender and bridge to Sexuality after we learn a shared foundation of what Gender is and how it functions in the world around us!

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GENDER 101



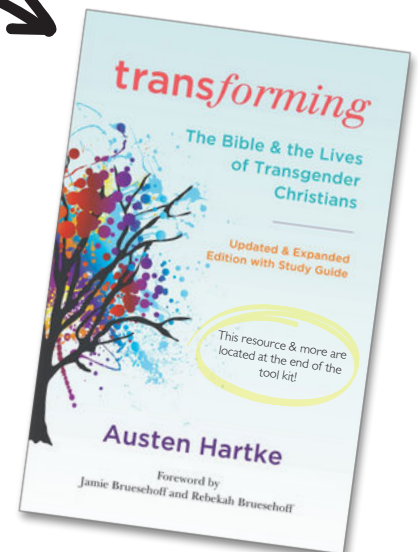
Gender is all around us and intertwined with many of our various identities as human beings.

Gender is an individual and social experience - it's how we see ourselves, how the world sees us - *or doesn't* - and how we engage with one another based on the ways we either interpret gender or make space to bear witness to someone sharing their gender in daily life.

The hope is that we can make space for one another to express who God created them to be and support their becoming.

Austen Hartke, author of *Transforming: The Bible & the Lives of Transgender Christians*, offers a helpful breakdown of how to think about Gender in terms of body, mind, and spirit:

- **Biological:** How gender is experienced in the body (internally and externally).
- **Psychological:** How gender is perceived in the mind.
- **Sociological:** How gender shows up in our lives (Gender expression in both communal and individual forms).

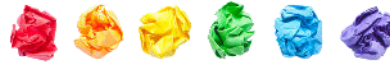


With this in mind, let's break down Gender in a few common terms on the next page!

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GENDER 101

GENDER IDENTITY



Gender Identity is how a person makes sense of their own gender, whether this within the binary of male or female or beyond the spectrum of gender's expansiveness - such as Transgender, Non-Binary, or Gender nonconforming identities.

Here are some examples of common terms individuals may use to share their Gender Identity:

- **Transgender** people are those whose gender identities are different from their genders assigned at birth.
- **Non-binary or Gender nonconforming** people do not see themselves as either a man or a woman, but something outside of or in-between these.
- **Cisgender** people have gender identities that match their assigned gender at birth.

“**Gender Identity is complex because we as humans are complex. A person's gender identity belongs to them.**”

—Rachael Ward, they/them
Minister & Team Lead for Gender & Sexuality Justice

Did You Know?

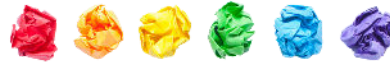
Children as young as 3-years-old form a sense of their gender as a process of developing an understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

A young person may not have the full language yet to explain this, which is why it's important to support our youth in talking freely about their gender and all aspects of their identities in bloom.

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GENDER 101

GENDER ROLES



Gender Roles are societal expectations for how we're supposed to behave based on gender.

These behaviors are things like:

- Jobs
- Hobbies
- Expectations
- Household Income/Responsibilities

Reflection Questions:

Take a second and think of gender roles you've learned.

What are they?

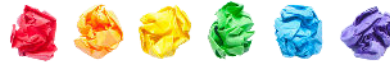
Do they feel representative of your experience? Others you know of in your community?

Have you noticed any harm because of these roles? Have they been applied to you in ways that feel inaccurate to your experience?

“When gender roles oppress the possibility of people living into their true authentic selves, they present a direct threat to that person’s ability to flourish. And, ultimately for God’s kin-dom, too.”

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GENDER 101



GENDER EXPRESSION

Gender Expression is how we demonstrate gender to the world.

This could be through things like:

- Clothing
- Hair Style
- Mannerisms & Various Interests

Words like **feminine, masculine, neutral or fluid** can be used to describe **Gender Expression**.

Reflection Questions:

How do you express your Gender?

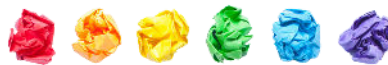
Do you believe we all should be able to express Gender freely?



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GENDER 101

GENDER BINARY



Gender Binary is the idea that sex and gender only have two options - male and female.

BOYS

GIRLS

We've been conditioned to think of Gender & Sexuality in a binary way.

Male and female, masculine and feminine, cisgender and transgender — it's all very this or that only — However, **binaries are limiting and restricting human expression and God's creation in the world!**

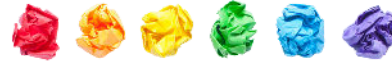
The gender binary holds power to maintain the societal roles expected of us, depending on our cultural setting. Gender fluidity (when a person goes outside the binary) threatens power dynamics, and history shows these disruptions result in violence. Especially the lives of LGBTQIA+ siblings, who are most vulnerable to violence and deep misunderstanding.

However, we know that LGBTQIA+ siblings who live outside of the binary have existed throughout history and various cultures. And we also know we as humans share many traits across our gender identities and expression of gender that dispel the idea of blue = boy and pink = girl. The experiences of LGBTQIA+ siblings in particular as it relates to Gender are vast and vary for each person.

Each individual is the expert in their lives. When we hold these experiences deeply and lean into the mystery of creation, we leave ourselves **open to witness God's kin-dom in bloom.**



GENDER 101



“Embracing the Gender Spectrum Saves Lives”

When we neglect to make space for those across the Gender spectrum, serious harm can take place to individual’s mental, physical or spiritual being.

Within the LGBTQIA+ community, transgender and non-binary siblings deal with higher rates of Gender Dysphoria because of lack of care, oppressive gender roles and bullying. The societal stigma and discrimination weaponized by gender roles and the gender binary create a toxic environment increasing the rate of depression, substance abuse, and suicide ideation. The build of microaggressions across an LGBTQIA+ person’s life around how to dress, speak, behave, who to love, and forced suppression of their true identities creates devastating effects on their lives.

The weaponization of Gender causes devastating effects on each of our lives, how we see God’s creation around us, and how we choose to care for creation around us, too.

Reflection Questions:

How can you show up for LGBTQIA+ siblings who are journeying to discover more about their gender or being faced with persecution for being “different?”

And, how can you show up for yourself as you explore your own Gender Identity?

With our new awareness of Gender, let’s learn about Sexuality on the next page!

“Embracing the Gender Spectrum and advocating for affirming one’s journey through gender & sexuality identities - **not only saves lives** - but honors God’s unique creation within each of us.”

– Rachael Ward, they/them | Minister & Team Lead for Gender & Sexuality Justice

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SEXUALITY 101



Did You Know?

Sexuality has to do with who we are attracted to - not gender expression, identity or anatomical sex?

If you're feeling confused or overwhelmed, take a deep breath!

The image to the right, created by Sam Killermann, is a helpful educational tool that breaks down the differences between Gender & Sexuality in a visual format.

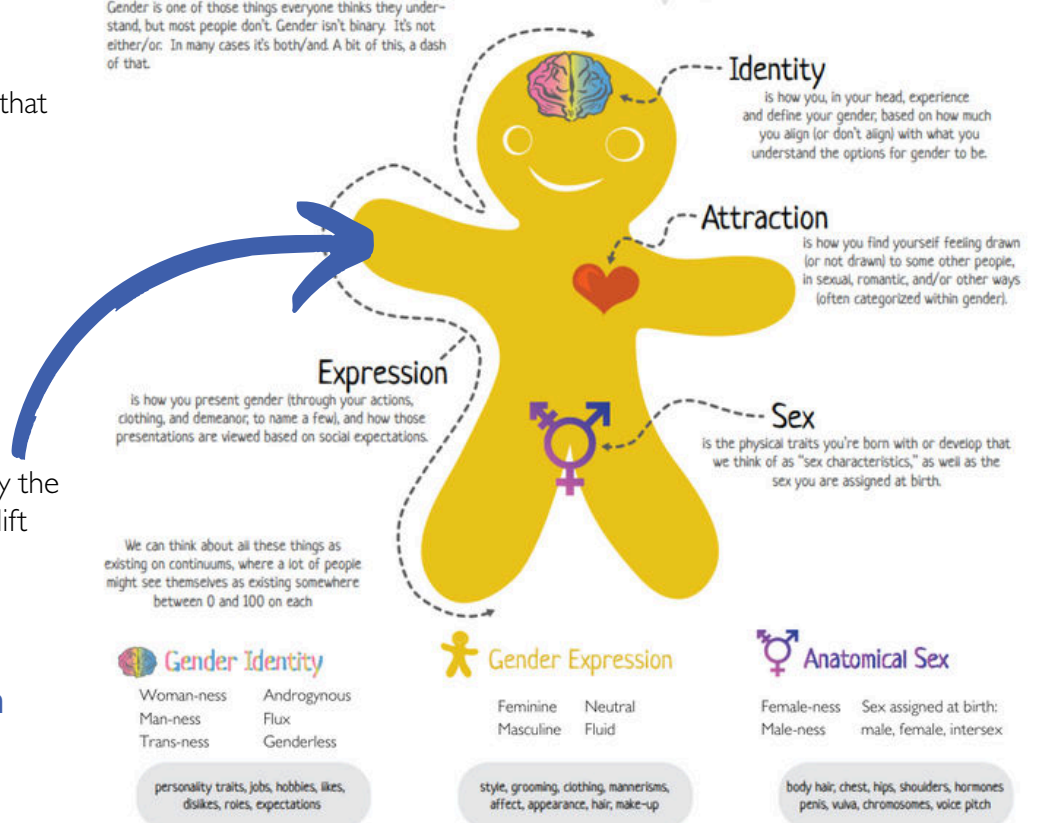
Sam uses a heart to help us bring awareness that sexuality deals with our attraction and gender deals with our internal and external expression of ourselves in the world.

You'll notice that attraction is labeled by the heart of the Genderbread person to uplift this difference between Gender & Sexuality.

The Genderbread Person

Gender is one of those things everyone thinks they understand, but most people don't. Gender isn't binary. It's not either/or. In many cases it's both/and. A bit of this, a dash of that.

by its pronounced **METROsexual** .com



Here are some common sexual identities:



Lesbian: As a woman, having a sexual and emotional attraction toward other women.

Bisexual: A person who is attracted to two genders. Often, but not limited to, being attracted to the same gender and other genders. Sometimes shortened to "bi."

Gay: A homosexual person. Often used to describe a male, but it's an identifier for many others.

Homosexual: Sexually attracted to the same sex or gender. This term relies on the gender binary, and assumes there are only two genders. Many LGBTQIA+ people prefer using broader identifiers such as "gay" or "queer" as means of acknowledging genders outside of the gender binary.

Pansexual: A sexual orientation where a person is attracted to people of all - "pan" is a prefix meaning "all" - genders and sexualities.

Queer: An umbrella term describing anyone who identifies as something other than cisgender - also utilized within this umbrella term as a person who is sexually attracted to the same sex or gender or beyond.

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SECTION ONE
KEY TAKE AWAYS



- **Gender & Sexuality are two separate things - Sexuality** refers to who we are attracted to and **Gender** refers to a personal sense of how we understand who we are.
- When a person is sharing their Gender & Sexuality identities with you it is important **not make assumptions or attempt to label individuals.**
- **Gender & Sexuality lives on a spectrum.** Language shifts and changes. **Prioritizing the experiences and shares of those in front of you** allows us to grow, learn and support the lives of all God's creation which is divine and mysterious at the same time.
- All bodies, individuals share various Gender traits across the spectrum – **protecting one's right to express their gender and live into their identity is a just, faithful and loving act!**
- **Let those in front of you lead in sharing their truths** - they are the ultimate expert of their bodies and life.

“With Gender & Sexuality our task from the Creator is consent toward tending to one another and the right to be human and express the unique Imago Dei placed with each of us!”

– Rachael Ward, they/them | Minister & Team Lead for Gender & Sexuality Justice

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SECTION TWO

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE



This second section helps create common awareness inclusive language you can begin using today! From why we use pronouns to best practices on expanding language to work across the gender spectrum!

Pronouns 101

Remember how in Section One we discussed Gender Expression and how critical this is for a person's well-being and experience as a human being?

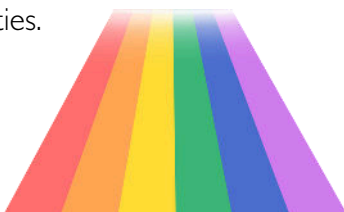
Pronouns play a crucial role in supporting and validating a person's gender!



Pronouns are personal identifiers validating and supporting a person's gender expression. Physical characteristics do not determine a person's pronouns, so it is always best to respectfully ask someone's pronouns if you are unsure.

Above & below are commonly used pronouns to represent a range of gender expressions including male, female, transgender, non-binary, gender nonconforming and other identities.

A helpful practice for pronouns and inclusive language is to share your pronouns openly in meetings, on your email signature, and on your business cards. This creates a culture that embraces sharing, knowing and affirming one another's identities.



| Subjective | Objective | Possessive | Reflexive |
|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| She | Her | Hers | Herself |
| He | Him | His | Himself |
| They | Them | Theirs | Themselves |
| Ze | Hir | Hirs | Hirself |
| Xe | Xem | Xirs | Xemself |
| Ver | Vir | Vis | Verself |

Did You Know?

In Genesis, Adam (Adamah, Biblical Hebrew : אָדָמָה) is a both/and they/them being? That's right the word is genderless - there is not one or the other - but both in representation for Adam.

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SECTION TWO 
INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Gender-neutral language, also known as gender-inclusive language, is a way of speaking and writing that avoids referencing a particular gender, sex, or social gender identity. It also doesn't perpetuate gender stereotypes or discriminate against any of these groups.

Below are examples of how to be inclusive when we speak or write:

| Gendered | Neutral |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Boyfriend/Girlfriend | Partner/Significant Other |
| Mother/Father | Parent |
| Ladies/Gentlemen | Folks/Everyone |
| Mailman/Mailwoman | Postal Service Person |
| Mankind | Humankind |
| Brother/Sister | Sibling |
| Mr./Ms./Mrs. | Mx. |
| His/hers | they/them |



Remember another practice of inclusive language is to ask someone their pronouns, not make assumptions based on appearances and honor that person's shares on their identities.

If you mis-gender someone, course correct and keep growing! If you hear someone mis-gendering someone, lovingly call that individual in and share that person's pronouns.

**Key Take Away
Section Two:**

When we practice gender inclusive language use, we help shift the narrative toward **making space for God's creation to flourish!**

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SECTION THREE 
PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

This third section offers a **faith-based embrace of Gender & Sexuality** from Genesis to Jesus' ministry.

**“In the beginning
God created...”**

Creation Lives in the both/and & Beyond

In section two, we learned that Adam in Hebrew translates to Adamah which means groundling - a **both/and** - genderless being. Adamah, when applying gender-neutral pronouns, would be they/them. This is important when taking a look at Genesis 1:27 (NRSV) to lean into the text and see how creation lives beyond the binary.

Genesis 1:27 in your Bible is indented. This is because it is in the format of Hebrew poetry. The authors of the Bible indent in the form of poetry to slow down the reader to indicate what is being shared has significant importance.

A few things to note before we reading the translation of Genesis 1:27:

- God says, “let’s make humankind in our image.” God when translated from biblical Hebrew is plural, which is an invitation to pause and reflect on how vast and mysterious the divine is. *It’s worth asking ourselves what does this plurality; this fluidity of the Creator mean for us?*
- Genesis 1:27 has the word Adamah repeated 3x, which we learned = a genderless being or they/them.
- Humankind also = a both/and. The biblical Hebrew word used for humankind is Adamah once again.

Now, let’s read Genesis 1:27 with above information:

So, God created
Humankind in his image
In the image of God
he created them
Male and female
he created them

A gender-inclusive and biblically accurate Hebrew translation of this verse shows us that **God** (plural/expansive) says “let’s make **humankind** in our (plural/expansive) **image**.”

God created beings (both/and; expansive) in community - **human community** - as a reflection of **God** in the world (image; Imago Dei).

This **human community** is comprised of **male, female and beyond**. And embraces all of our human complexity of which **God** created in their **image**.

Male and Female in verse 27 represents the diversity of our gendered and non-gendered selves that make up the **human community**.

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SECTION THREE

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

How does Jesus Shows Up to Gender & Sexuality?

Gender Roles, Gender Binary & Gender Expression

There are many examples of Jesus pushing against gender roles, gender binary and gender expression.

Jesus ignores antiquity where women were not allowed to hold positions of power or be heard or seen in certain locations.

For example:

- Jesus' ministry was largely funded by women. In fact, Joanna, the wife of Chuza, the manager of Herod's household, was amongst the women funding Jesus' ministry out of their own means. (Luke 8:3, NRSV)

Jesus breaks gender roles at the intersection of class by subverting political structures to become a force of reason, justice and care.

For example:

- Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey (Matthew 21:1-11, Mark 11:1-11, Luke 19:28-44, John 12:12-19)
- Jesus speaks truth to power from a lower class position throughout New Testament leaning on Hebrew Bible prophets who also subverted lower class positions to be a force of reason and justice and create space for others to be seen/heard as well (Jer. 16:17, Heb. 4:13).
- Jesus gives women roles of power within his ministry (yes, the finances again - Luke 8:3).

Jesus ignores gender roles and gender binary by showcasing tenderness and emotion demystifying the role of a man to be strong, independent, and emotionless.

For example:

- Jesus cries (John 11:35, Luke 19:41, Hebrews 5:7-9)
- Jesus speaks to the woman who touched his garment breaking culturally gendered stigmas (Mark 5:21-34)
- Mary sees Jesus first at tomb (John 20:11-28)
- Trusting women with his finances (Luke 8:3)
- and more

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ONWARD FROM HERE CONCLUSION



There will always be more to learn and experience with Gender & Sexuality. What we can hold as truth is that our faith calls us to be loving forces of reason and justice toward all bodies and people's human experiences.

God seeks love **OUT LOUD** in our tending to ourselves and one another in our diverse human community
uniquely and wonderfully made.

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RESOURCES

- Bisexual Resource Center - biresource.org
- Center for Black Equity - centerforblackequity.org
- Gender Spectrum - genderspectrum.org
- GLSEN - glsen.org
- GSA Network - gsanetwork.org
- Homeless Youth Alliance - homelessyouthalliance.org
- Institute for Judaism & Sexual Orientation - ijso.huc.edu
- Intersex Society of North America - isna.org
- It Gets Better Project - itgetsbetter.org
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center - gaycenter.org
- LGBT National Help Center - glnh.org
- Many Voices - manyvoices.org
- Marsha P. Johnson Institute - mashup.org
- Muslims for Progressive Values - mpvusa.org
- NAACP - naacp.org
- The Naming Project - thenamingproject.org
- National Black Justice Coalition - nbjc.org
- National Center for Lesbian Rights - nclrights.org
- National Center for Transgender Equality - transequality.org
- National Coalition for the Homeless - nationalhomeless.org
- National LGBTQ Task Force - thetaskforce.org
- PFLAG - pflag.org
- Qlatinx - qlatinx.org
- The Queen's English - thequeensenglishus.com
- SAGE (Advocacy & Services for LGBT Elders) - sageusa.org
- Sylvia Rivera Law Project - srlp.org
- Transgender Law Center - transgenderlawcenter.org
- Trans Women of Color Collective - twocc.us
- The Trevor Project - thetrevorproject.org
- True Colors United - truecolorsunited.org

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GLOSSARY

Androgyny or Androgynous – A term often used to reference a person’s outward gender expression, although it is occasionally used to describe someone whose gender identity falls outside of the gender binary. When applied to gender expression, androgyny may involve appearances that combine conventionally masculine and feminine traits, or gender presentations that fall outside of the binary.

Binding – The process of flattening or reshaping one’s chest with constricting material to create a more traditionally masculine or androgynous appearance (PFLAG, 2019). Some methods of binding (such as the use of duct tape or Ace bandages) may pose long-term health risks, including muscle tears, lung damage, and/or rib bruising. Medical-grade binders are made with stretchier, more breathable material, offering some transgender people a lower-risk way to bind. Some transgender people have created community organizations designed to send other trans people safe, medical-grade binders for free, preventing some of the health problems associated with binding.

Bodily Autonomy – An ideology that supports a person’s fundamental right to self-governance over their body without external influence or coercion. The concept of bodily autonomy (or bodily integrity) is applicable to a wide range of scenarios, including the freedom to choose one’s own family planning options, consensual sexual partners (regardless of gender), and medical treatment. The phrase “my body, my choice” is a feminist slogan that reflects one of the fundamental principles of bodily autonomy.

Cisgender Privilege – A set of legal standards, social norms, institutions, and other contributing factors granting cisgender people superior civil protections, rights, status, and freedoms compared to their transgender counterparts. Cisgender privilege results from the belief that cisgender people are superior to transgender individuals and resultantly some transgender individuals consider cisgender privilege a form of transphobia. *During the first few months of her transition, Tiana found herself feeling jealous of her cisgender co-workers who were able to use the women’s restroom without fear of being attacked—they acted as if they weren’t even aware of their cisgender privilege.*

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GLOSSARY

Cishet – A slang term used mostly within the transgender community to describe cisgender, heterosexual individuals. *Maya was irritated when she noticed the cishet neighbors handing out invitations to their unborn child’s gender-reveal party.*

Cisnormativity – Adherence to the conventions of the gender binary, which may include conforming to traditional gender roles, gender presentations, and expectations based on one’s birth assignment. Cisnormativity originates from the presumption that cisgender identities, gender expressions, and lived experiences are more natural, valid, and normal than those of transgender individuals.

Cissexism – The idea that cisgender people are more natural, valid, and “normal” than their transgender counterparts, resulting in social norms, laws, and individual behaviors that reinforce the gender binary and consequently marginalize, oppress, and/or erase the existence of transgender people (see: cisnormativity). Cissexism is based on the presumption that one’s assigned sex and gender are inherently aligned with their gender identity.

DFAB – Designated Female at Birth (also known as AFAB, or Assigned Female at Birth). Refers to people assigned female based on external primary sex characteristics.

DMAB – Designated Male at Birth (also known as AMAB, or Assigned Male at Birth). Refers to people assigned male based on external primary sex characteristics.

FTM – Abbreviation standing for “Female to Male” describing an individual assigned female at birth whose gender identity is male or transmasculine. The term is sometimes used to describe binary transgender men.

Gender-Affirming Surgery – Any one of a number of surgical procedures intended to alleviate the dissonance between a person’s body and their gender identity. Colloquially, gender-affirming surgery may be referred to as “bottom” or “top” surgery, with bottom surgery pertaining to removal and/or reconstruction of a person’s primary sex characteristics and/or external genitalia, and “top surgery” consisting of removal, reconstruction, or augmentation of the breast tissue. Not all transgender people elect to have surgery as part of their medical transition, and some transgender people choose not to medically transition at all.

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GLOSSARY

Gender Binary – The classification of gender into two distinct, opposite categories of male and female based on a person’s physical anatomy. In colonized western societies, gender is seen as naturally and inherently aligned with primary sex characteristics—i.e. biologically determined and immutable. Those who subscribe to the notion of binary genders tend to view gender as rigid and uncompromising, with little tolerance for variations that fall in between or outside of the male-female dichotomy. Many people do not realize that the gender binary does not exist in a number of present-day societies.

Gender Congruence – The state of feeling aligned and/or comfortable with the relationship between one’s gender identity and their body, gender expression, and/or gender role. *Christian felt a greater sense of gender congruence when binding and wearing loose-fitting clothing, as doing so allowed their gender expression to align more closely with their transmasculine identity.*

Gender Dissonance – The emotional distress associated with the cognitive dissonance between an individual’s assigned sex, body, and/or social experiences, and their internal, personal experience of gender. May be used as a less clinical and/or pathologizing term for “gender dysphoria” (see: gender dysphoria, DSM-5).

Gender Dysphoria – A clinical term used to describe the psychological distress resulting from the dissonance between a transgender person’s assigned sex, body, and/or social experiences and their internal experience of gender. The phrase may refer to DSM-5 criteria for medical diagnosis (see: DSM-5, gatekeeping). It is important to note that not all transgender people suffer from gender dysphoria and that experiencing gender dysphoria is not a prerequisite for being transgender. Furthermore, gender dysphoria is not merely disliking one’s body. Rather, gender dysphoria is the psychological distress that their bodies experience due to their bodies not aligning with their gender (Kennedy, 2015, p. 201).

Gender-Expansive – A gender identity, presentation and/or expression that transcends commonly held notions of gender within a given society (see: gender binary).

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GLOSSARY

Gender Expression – The external manifestation of a person’s gender identity, which may or may not conform to gender stereotypes and may be expressed through clothing, appearance, behavior, and/or prosthetics. *Jaime’s gender expression was traditionally feminine; they liked to wear dresses, high heels, and make-up.*

Genderfluid – A state of fluctuating, or shifting, between various genders, depending on a person’s internal state. Genderfluid individuals may or may not change their gender expression, pronouns, and/or name due to shifts in their gender identity. Genderfluid individuals’ expression of their identities may be context-sensitive and/or based on preferences/feelings.

Gender Identity – An individual’s innate, internal conception of being male, female, both, neither, or any combination thereof, which may or may not correspond to the person’s external anatomy or assigned sex at birth (LGBT Health Education Center, 2019). Transgender people have a gender identity that is different than the one assigned to them at birth.

Harm Reduction – A range of public health policies that emphasize education and prevention rather than pathologizing, criminalizing, and/or punishing potentially unsafe activities, both legal and illicit. The harm reduction model allows an individual to determine whether they want to stop or change a behavior, and may be applied to a variety of scenarios including (but not limited to) recreational drug use, self-injury, and sexual activity. In the latter example, a harm reduction approach may consist of sex education (as opposed to abstinence-only education), pre- and post-HIV exposure prophylaxis, and/or condom distribution to at-risk populations.

Heteronormativity – Sometimes used as slang within the LGBTQIA+ community to refer to people who view humanity/society as all heterosexual/cisgender; the perspective that only being heterosexual/cisgender is “normal” disregards the experiences of people who do not identify as heterosexual/cisgender.

Heterosexism – Deliberate and/or unconscious acts of prejudice or discrimination against those who are not heterosexual, including gender-based, blanket assumptions and/or generalizations regarding a person’s sexual orientation. Presuming that all men experience sexual attraction to women, for instance, is an example of heterosexism.

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GLOSSARY

Microaggression – A brief, subtle statement, action, or behavior that reflects and reinforces prejudicial, insulting, and dehumanizing ideas regarding marginalized groups of people. The question “*Have you lost weight?*” may be considered a microaggression, as it implies that the speaker believes the person they’re addressing was formerly overweight.

Non-Binary – An umbrella term used to describe someone whose gender identity falls outside of the traditional western binary; a gender identity that cannot be classified as exclusively male or female. *Payton is non-binary—their gender identity fluctuates between male and female, and sometimes they feel they don’t have a gender identity at all.*

Pronouns – Grammatical terms used to reference a person in place of a proper noun, often connected to gender (Wilson, 2014). “He,” “she,” “they,” “ze,” etc. are all examples of pronouns. *Sidney’s pronouns are she/her, but she occasionally goes by they/them pronouns, as well.*

Queer – A gender identity or sexual orientation that deviates from cisgender, heterosexual identities, norms, or practices (Wilson, 2014). In some contexts, “queer” may be used as a pejorative term; on the other hand, some LGBTQIA+ people have reclaimed the title as an empowering description of their gender identity and/or sexual orientation.

Transgender – An umbrella term describing individuals whose gender identity differs from the one assigned to them at birth. The transgender population is comprised of diverse people and is found in numerous nations throughout the world. Since gender identity and sexual orientation are separate concepts, transgender people can be heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, asexual, sexually fluid, or various other orientations.

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- **Transforming: The Bible & the Lives of Transgender Christians**, Austen Hartke.
- **Gender: What Everyone Needs to Know**, Laura Schroth-Erickson
- **Affirmations for Queer People 100+ Positive Messages to Affirm, Empower, and Inspire**, Jess Vosseteig
- **Holding Change**, adrienne maree brown
- **Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds**, adrienne maree brown

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APPENDIX

Books:

- Queer Conception: The Complete Fertility Guide for Queer and Trans Parents-To-Be
- Saving Our Own Lives
- Liberated to the Bone
- White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America
- Trans Bodies, Trans Selves
- The Transgender Issue: Trans Justice Is Justice for All
- Transforming: The Bible & Lives of Transgender People
- I Bring the Voices of My People: A Womanist Vision for Racial Reconciliation
- The Queer and Transgender Resilience Workbook: Skills for Navigating Sexual Orientation and Gender Expression
- Transgender History: The Roots of Today's Revolution
- Gender Queer: A Memoir
- Beyond Worship: Meditations on Queer Worship, Liturgy, & Theology
- Radical Love: Introduction to Queer Theology
- Embodied Activism: Engaging the body to cultivate liberation, justice, and authentic connection

Videos:

- What Happens If You're Transgender In The Church | State Of Grace | Refinery29
- A letter to transgender Christians

Courses:

- Transfigured: An Online Course in Transgender Theology, Austen Hartke

Podcasts:

- Queerology, Matthias Roberts
- Queer Theology
- How to be Human, Rachael Ward