

# **MILE HI CHURCH YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY**

## **GENDER INCLUSION AND LGBTQ POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

Mile Hi Church is wholeheartedly committed to inclusiveness, understanding, and equitable treatment of all youth and staff. We are committed to creating an atmosphere where individuals and communities of diverse sexuality and gender identity and expression are safe, supported, respected, empowered, and truly equal. Mile Hi Church is inclusive and welcoming of all forms of diversity.

Mile Hi Church prohibits discrimination against or harassment of any person in any of its programs or activities on the basis of sex, gender identity, gender expression, or sexual orientation.

### **GENERAL:**

- Youth are not obligated to share their gender identity.
- Youth who choose to share their gender identity will be given the opportunity to discuss the options available for bathrooms, sleeping, and showering.
- A person's gender identity will not be additionally verified. Verification is neither necessary nor appropriate. We do not require any medical or identification documentation that reflects an individual's gender identity. Youth are not required to notify Mile Hi Church that they are transgender or intersex and electing not to share is perfectly fine. If an individual chooses to disclose that they are transgender or intersex, or at any stage of a gender transition, we will treat that person no differently than other youth.
- Staff, volunteers, and youth are encouraged to ask for and address each other with the pronouns and/or names they use.
- Individuals who identify as transgender or intersex sleep, use the restroom, shower and participate in alignment with their gender identity. Sleeping options, restrooms and shower facilities may be designated as male, female, or non-binary, and will be provided in a manner that respects the privacy of all youth.
- Participants must be dressed appropriately for activities regardless of gender.
- In general, Mile Hi Church avoids segregating and categorizing campers by gender in its program and activities.
- Staff remain available at all times to discuss any concerns that parents or youth may have about participating in our programs.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY:**

- Mile Hi Church will not notify parents of other youth that a transgender or intersex youth will be attending camps and/or activities. Gender identity and sex assigned at birth are considered personally identifiable information, which must be kept confidential. Protecting transgender and intersex individuals' privacy is critical to maintaining safety and well-being, ensuring that individuals are treated consistent with their gender identity, and preventing potential harm. The same is true for sexual orientation. If parents or youth are uncomfortable with these policies, they may decide to limit their own participation.

- Information regarding a youth's gender identity is confidential and will only be shared with others (staff, volunteers) if there is a legitimate programmatic need to provide for the youth, and only shared with the youth and/or family's permission.

#### OVERNIGHT CAMPS AND ACTIVITIES:

- In general and when possible, for overnight camps and activities, Mile Hi Church will provide options which are designated as male, female, and non-binary. Youth will be assigned in accordance with the gender designated in the registration materials. Youth who choose to identify themselves as transgender or intersex will be assigned in accordance with the gender identity they use.
- Registration information about overnight trips and activities that include the choice of male, female, or non-binary may be shared with personnel specific to that event as far as the names of the individuals in each option.

#### DISCRIMINATION AND HARRASSMENT:

- Gender inclusion and LGBTQ policies and practices prohibit us from collecting or disclosing information about individuals' gender identity, and our view is that a youth refusing to share a space with another youth who identifies as transgender is discriminatory. While youth (or their parents or guardians) may choose not to participate in Mile Hi Church camps and activities, we will not allow discrimination against any individual, despite objections or concerns from staff members, volunteers, youth, and family members.
- Staff members and volunteers will respond to and fully investigate any report of harassment, whether received directly from a youth or an adult. Mile Hi Church is committed to providing a safe environment free of harassment based on any individual's sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. If staff determine that harassment has occurred, the individual who breached the code of conduct related to harassment may be asked, at a minimum, to leave early at their own expense.
- In all cases, Mile Hi Church youth will be treated according to their gender identity, even in circumstances in which the youth's own parent or guardian raises objections or concerns. While the parents or guardians may choose to not allow their child to participate, we will not discriminate against the youth to accommodate the parents' or guardians' discomfort.
- Mile Hi Church provides an equal opportunity for all youth and families to participate in our programs. Ensuring full participation for transgender youth does not infringe on the rights or opportunities of other youth, and participation by all youth is entirely voluntary.

#### QUESTIONS:

Questions or concerns regarding Mile Hi Church Youth & Family Gender Inclusion and LGBTQ Policies and Practices can be directed to Stacy Butters, [sbutters@milehichurch.org](mailto:sbutters@milehichurch.org) , 720-974-2249.

#### HELPFUL TERMINOLOGY:

**SEX ASSIGNED AT BIRTH:** Refers to a person's sex designation as recorded on their birth certificate. Generally, a medical professional or guardian designates a newborn's sex as "male" or "female" after examining the infant's genitalia.

**INTERSEX:** A term that refers to a person who has a combination of male and female physiological attributes. Sometimes people are designated intersex at birth after an examination of genitalia; other times, people are designated intersex later in life.

**GENDER IDENTITY:** Refers to a person's internal sense of their own gender. Everyone has a gender identity. A person's gender identity may or may not match their sex assigned at birth. Some common gender identities include man, woman, gender neutral, transgender man, transgender woman, and gender non-binary. But people may have other gender identities as well.

**TRANSGENDER:** A term that refers to a person whose gender identity does not match the sex they were assigned at birth. A transgender male refers to a person who identifies as male but was assigned female sex at birth. A transgender female refers to a person who identifies as female but was assigned male sex at birth.

**GENDER TRANSITION:** Refers to a process in which a person asserts the sex that corresponds to their gender identity rather than their sex assigned at birth. A person in gender transition may (or may not) undergo gender transition surgery, alter their dress/grooming habits, change their name, or use pronouns that are consistent with their gender identity. A person may begin gender transition at any point in their life, and gender transition may happen over a short or extended duration of time.

**GENDER EXPRESSION:** Refers to how a person presents their gender to others. This can include how a person dresses, styles their hair, speaks, and many other factors.

**SEXUAL ORIENTATION:** Refers to who a person who is attracted to. Although often confused, gender identity and sexual orientation are two distinct and separate aspects of a person's identity.