



A statement from the Leaders of Arbury Road Baptist Church on inclusivity

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

John 13: 34-35

We want to affirm that everyone is welcome in our church. We welcome people of all ages, genders, ethnicities and sexualities. We are aware that some people don't feel that they would be welcome in any church and so we want provide clarity on our position as church leaders.

We are aware that there are a wide variety of beliefs and positions held on LGBTQ+ issues. As our church values say, we want to keep Jesus at the centre of everything that happens in the life of our church. This means we take the Bible seriously and open ourselves to the Holy Spirit so that He would reveal who Jesus is to us all.

The Bible shows us that Jesus loves us all, regardless of our circumstances and regardless of our theological positions. Jesus also encourages his church to love one another as he has loved us, that through our love people might know that we are his disciples.

We will always hold these two principles at the core of all that we do in our church. If you come to Arbury Road Baptist Church we would love to welcome you as you are. We will keep Jesus at the centre of our conversations, we will love you, and hope that you would love us in return.

You may not always agree with everything that others say or believe. Jesus shows us that love goes far further than agreeing with one another and having the same morals and ethics. We also believe that the unity of the church is vitally important. Where opinions differ, we recognise that it is not our place to judge. Only Jesus can judge. As we explain the perspectives we hold, we will always be open to hearing your voice too.

We recognise that this is a deeply personal issue for many and we are cautious about making public statements that might cause hurt, offense or mis-understanding and prevent anyone from knowing Jesus and his love for them.

If you are concerned about LGBTQ+ issues in the life of our church, we invite you to talk to our leadership team and we'd love to explore this with you more.

Approved by the church meeting: September 2023