

COALITION OF TORAH OBSERVANT MESSIANIC CONGREGATIONS

STATEMENT REGARDING HOMOSEXUALITY

1. CTOMC, as its name implies, bases its understanding of marriage on the *Torah* as *HaShem* revealed it to our people through *Moshe Avienu* at *Har Sinai* (*Sh'mot* 19-21). CTOMC member congregations seek to strictly observe *Torah* insofar as it can be and as it was taught by Messiah and Rabbi *Yeshua*.
2. *Torah* elevates heterosexual marriage as the ideal model and sole legitimate outlet for human sexual expression. It is the basis of the Messianic Jews social life. CTOMC's sensitivity to and understanding of the plight of people with other sexual orientations does not diminish its commitment to that principle. Marriage is the model of correct relationship between *HaShem* and the body of Messiah (see *Yesha'yahu* 54:5; 62:5; *Yiramayahu* 3:14; *Hoshea* 2:19-20).
3. CTOMC prohibits all male and female same-sex sexual interactions as *to'eivah* (abhorred, detested, an abomination). *Torah* instructs us (*Vayikra* 18:22): "You are not to go to bed with a man as with a woman; it is an abomination" and (*Vayikra* 20:13) "If a man goes to bed with a man as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination" and (*Devarim* 23:17) "None of the daughters of Israel shall be a *kedeshah*, nor shall any of the sons of Israel be a *kadesh* (same-sex ritualistic prostitute)." *Torah* views marriage between one man and one woman to be holy unto *HaShem* and the quintessential model of the proper relationship between G-d and man. The ordinary term for a marriage is *Kiddushin* (sanctification). No relationship can be sanctified that G-d finds abominable. Behaviour contrary to holiness is inconsistent with the stated goals and objectives of CTOMC and will not in any manner be allowed, sanctioned, or even merely ignored by members of member congregations.
4. *Torah* views homosexuality as a matter of free will because its law never prescribes a capital penalty where there was no intent (as in *Vayikra* 20:13). CTOMC follows this viewpoint.
5. As *Torah* specifically prohibits homosexual acts:
 - (1) CTOMC will not license to the ministry any person known to be practising homosexuality;
 - (2) CTOMC leaders licensed to perform marriages in their respective secular jurisdictions will not endorse such behaviour by conducting weddings between persons of the same sex;
 - (3) CTOMC leaders will respectfully and politely decline all such requests by same-sex couples as contrary to *Torah* law; and
 - (4) CTOMC congregations will not grant membership in good standing to any person known to be practicing homosexuality and will not allow such a person to teach.
6. Every CTOMC wedding also is a worship service and, as such, is consecrated as holy unto *HaShem*. Likewise, every CTOMC synagogue and meeting place has been consecrated as holy into *HaShem*. Same-sex marriage would desecrate and profane both the holiness of the worship service and the holiness of the place of worship. CTOMC congregations will not knowingly permit same-sex marriages to be solemnized on the property of or in the facilities of any CTOMC congregation. In the case that a CTOMC congregation meets in a rented facility, it will ensure that all holy items have been removed from the premises before a same-sex marriage is conducted in the facility and that the location is rededicated and re-sanctified to *HaShem*'s holy work afterward. Congregational leaders are responsible for ensuring that their facilities usage policies allow only uses consistent with *Torah*'s stated religious beliefs.
7. All human beings are created in the image of G-d (*Breishit* 1:27) and deserve to be treated with

compassion, dignity and respect (*kevod haberiyot*). We cannot bless *HaShem* with the same mouth that curses someone made in G-d's image (*Yaakov* 3:9). Compassion, sympathy, empathy, understanding are essential elements of our faith. CTOMC congregations seek to fulfill the entire range of possible *mitzvot* between persons, regardless of sexual orientation. Embarrassing, harassing or demeaning someone with a homosexual orientation or same-sex attraction is sin that violates *Torah*, just as the act of homosexuality is sin that violates *Torah*. Congregants struggling with an incongruous sexual orientation and a simultaneous desire to live a *Torah*-observant lifestyle deserve our support. Whether sexual orientation is primarily genetic, or rather environmentally generated, is irrelevant to our obligation to treat human beings with same-sex attractions and orientations with dignity and respect.

8. Being created in G-d's image, however, is not the same as conforming to His image through our works (*Yaakov* 2:18) or being transformed by the renewing of our minds (*Romans* 12:2), an aspiration sought by all *Torah*-observant Messianic believers.

9. CTOMC does not forbid a Messianic believer with a homosexual *orientation* to live in and to be a part of our community. It recognizes that such members confront serious emotional, communal and psychological challenges that cause them and their families great pain and suffering. For example, homosexual orientation may greatly increase the risk of suicide among teenagers in our community. CTOMC exhorts its congregations and leaders of the need to be sensitive and empathetic to that reality and to provide responsible and ethical assistance to congregants dealing with these human challenges.

10. Accordingly, a person with homosexual *orientations* or same sex-attractions may be welcomed in our CTOMC communities as full and loved member so long as they do not practice the act of homosexuality, do not teach or endorse such acts, and so long as they are attempting to change their thoughts to conform to the ideals taught by Rabbi *Yeshua*.