



Hannover, Ostfildern, March 21, 2023

## Statement of the Executive Officers of the German Unions of Seventh-Day-Adventists in Germany on Dealing with LGBTQ+<sup>1</sup>

### Preliminary Remark

As the Seventh-Day Adventist Church in Germany, we have committed ourselves to an understanding of church as a place where we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live authentically, lovingly, and truthfully. In mercy, patience and grace we conduct people and call for conversion and peace.

We journey together in faith, in an atmosphere of unprejudiced, loving, and appreciative encounters where everyone, regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, or worldview, is warmly welcomed and accepted, and invite our fellow human beings to find a home in our free church. (Plans Paper North and South German Union 2022 – 2027)

The Seventh-day Adventist Church, through the General Conference Executive Committee and the General Conference Session, has issued official statements on the issues of homosexuality and transgenderism, describing and biblically justifying its understanding of them. These statements remain in effect unchanged, and they possess a seminal character for the Church.<sup>2</sup> In 2017, the Presidents of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in Germany published a statement on the Bundestag's "Marriage for All" decision.<sup>3</sup> It states, among other things: Old and New Testament (Genesis 1 + 2; Matthew 19) describe marriage as a union between a man and a woman based on faithfulness. This relationship is characterized by mutual love and trust. (...)

We remain committed to this union of life and love between man and woman and its prominent role in society. We continue to advocate that the concept of marriage should apply to (solely) heterosexual relationships. (...)

Our position on this has not changed.

### The Current Perspective In Our Congregations

We have become aware that the way LGBTQ+ persons are treated in our church has raised many questions and realize that we as a church need to engage in conversation about this issue. In so doing, it is important for us to internalize that we are speaking about people first and not an abstract topic. We are talking about something very personal, and we understand that we as a church together must learn to speak with mutual respect and regard for one another. In so doing, we listen to our fellow human being and perceive him or her as a person loved by God. At the same time, we are obliged to listen to God's Word, which has a binding character for our lives.

---

<sup>1</sup> LGBTQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer. LGBTQ+ has become accepted as shorthand for all genders, gender identities, and sexual orientations that deviate from gender binary and heterosexual norms.

<sup>2</sup> The statements can be found at [www.adventisten.de/uber-uns/presse](http://www.adventisten.de/uber-uns/presse)

<sup>3</sup> To be found at [www.adventisten.de/uber-uns/presse](http://www.adventisten.de/uber-uns/presse)



Nevertheless, we are also aware of the social discourse in which the biblical image of marriage and sexual identity is increasingly being pushed into the background. As a church, therefore, we have a mandate to engage in public discourse and bring the biblical image of partnership (from Genesis 2:24, among others) to the fore. The creation story outlines an image of sexual identity and intimacy that has its place only within the marital relationship between a man and a woman. Deviations from this heterosexual ideal are the result of the general brokenness of humanity. However, church functions only when all church members come together under this brokenness and do not judge one another. Nevertheless, this aspect must not prevent us from focusing on a heterosexual life as an ideal, so that our children and young people in particular experience an authentic role model that they can perceive as a conclusive counter-model to the multitude of social identity models.

### **We Adventists Read And Interpret The Bible From The Gospel**

As Adventists, we read and interpret the Bible from the Gospel, taking Jesus as our model in our discipleship. We are aware that the acceptance of LGBTQ+ persons opens up an area of tension with biblical texts. However, we also believe that our personal beliefs should never be an obstacle to loving and accepting others, even if our own beliefs are different.

### **Our Church is Our Home and a Place of Acceptance.**

In our congregations, too, there are LGBTQ+ persons who experience an ongoing, inner tension between their own, real felt and experienced sexual identity, the biblical statements towards it, and the Adventist understanding of faith on this topic.

Nonetheless, our congregations should offer also them a home and be a safe place of loving acceptance for them, just as they are for all of us.

Love and appreciation characterize our encounters with our friends and guests and with our sisters and brothers, even where we do not share or endorse their opinions or ways of life. We hold these values as essential prerequisites for achieving possible changes in mutual conversation and controversial debate.

The Board of the Northern and Southern German Union Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church

*Johannes Naether*

President

Northern German Union Conference

*Werner Dullinger*

President

Southern German Union Conference

*Alexander Kampmann*

Vicepresident

Northern and Southern German Union  
Conference

*Adrian Ziomek*

Treasurer

Northern and Southern German Union  
Conference