



THE SALVATION ARMY UNITED KINGDOM TERRITORY  
WITH THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

**POSITIONAL STATEMENT**

**HUMAN SEXUALITY**

Human sexuality is part of God's creation and as such it is good<sup>1</sup> and to be celebrated.<sup>2</sup> Like the rest of creation and human life, the use of our sexuality can fall short of God's intentions and be misused.<sup>3</sup> Human sexuality includes a mix of identity, feelings and behaviours that are not always fully understood by the individual concerned or by society as a whole. Sexual identity is widely accepted to be unchosen by the individual. The Salvation Army believes that it is wrong to discriminate against anyone in the provision of goods and services, and social and pastoral care because of their presumed or declared identity.<sup>4</sup>

The Salvation Army endorses biblical teaching which sees humans as responsible for their behaviours, including behaviour resulting from sexual feelings however powerful.<sup>5</sup> Sexual behaviour is wrong when it lacks consent from either partner, or is undertaken with people unable to give fully informed consent (children and vulnerable adults), or when it involves violence or coercion.

The Salvation Army teaches that sexual acts should take place only in a monogamous heterosexual marriage, believing that this reflects God's intentions for sexual behaviour and provides the best environment for raising children. Marriage is a covenant between God and wife and husband, ideally providing resources of grace, forgiveness and love to sustain a lifelong faithful relationship.<sup>6</sup> Loving relationships that can support human flourishing will involve commitment, communication, consent, forbearance, forgiveness, respect and faithfulness. For those who do not share Christian beliefs we advocate a state-recognised marriage characterised by mutual loving commitment and shared responsibility within a relationship.<sup>7</sup>

We condemn all exploitation of sexual behaviour and feelings. This includes all types of sexual abuse, pornography and prostitution. We endorse the work of those who support people whose lives have been damaged by the abuse of human sexuality. The Salvation Army takes seriously policies to safeguard children and vulnerable adults.<sup>8</sup>

**Revised November 2010**

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 1:27-31

<sup>2</sup> Song of Solomon 8:6-7

<sup>3</sup> Genesis 3:16

<sup>4</sup> International Mission Statement of The Salvation Army: 'The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based upon the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in his name without discrimination.'

<sup>5</sup> 2 Samuel 12:1-24

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 19:1-9

<sup>7</sup> 1 John 4:16-21

<sup>8</sup> The Salvation Army's child protection and best practice policy and procedures are contained in the *Safe & Sound* manual. Every adult working with children must agree to endorse and adopt the relationship parameters and best working practices contained within the policies.