

Good morning; my name is Lynn Driedger, and I go by he/him. Sometimes my students called me “sir”, so that would work, too.

Twenty-one years ago, our son told us he was gay; eight years later he got married. So when I started to attend this latest series of adult education sessions, I went in thinking that I had a good handle on the topic of the variety of human sexuality. Man, did I have that wrong!

One of the most significant outcomes for me from the sessions has been learning about the growing understanding of the complexity of human sexuality and gender. Whereas I have spent a lot of my adult life knowing only the categories of gay, lesbian, and straight or CIS (those of us whose “gender identity corresponds to their sex as assigned at birth”*), I now see a larger group of variations, as evidenced by the expanding LGBTQ2S+ acronym.

Another thing that I see now more clearly, is that those of us who are outside of the LGBTQ2S+ community, but wish to be better allies, need to learn what the letters stand for. Our church website, under the “Resources” and “Understanding Gender and Sexuality” tabs, has a number of helpful internet links. I also need to practise saying “LGBTQ2S+”, as well as

practising the proper use of pronouns, using she/he/him/her/they according to the preferences of whom I am speaking.

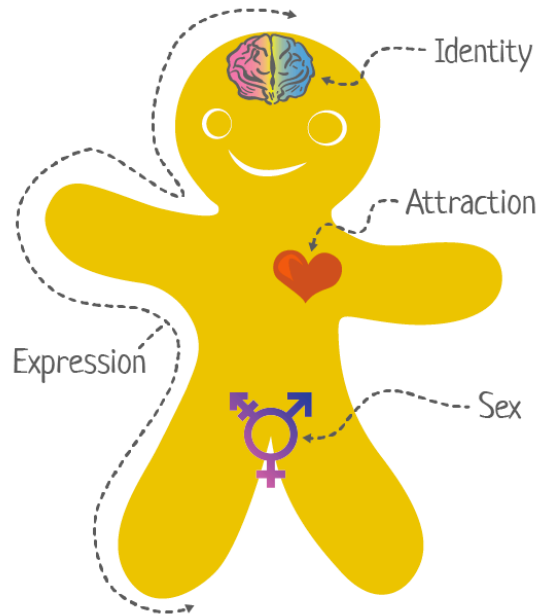
During the class, I was introduced to the Genderbread Person, which I found to be quite helpful in understanding the differences among gender identity, gender expression, and anatomical sex. You can check with Susanne for a copy of this, or look for it on the internet.

As I worked through the adult education sessions, I was told a number of times that those of us outside the LGBTQ2S+ community have some tasks to do in order to be better allies. This comes down to the need to realize, and actively demonstrate, that we are “In This Together”. Then, how do I do this? How do I continue to learn and grow?

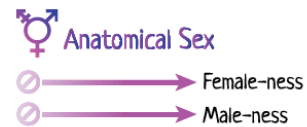
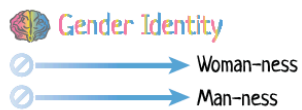
1. Practise saying LGBTQ2S+.
2. Learn what the letters stand for, and know that others may be added.
3. Practise using the preferred pronouns.
4. When confronted with something that makes me feel uncomfortable, ask myself, “Why do I feel this way?”.

**dictionary.com*

The Genderbread Person v4 by its pronounced METROsexual.com



⊖ means a lack of what's on the right side



Identity ≠ Expression ≠ Sex
Gender ≠ Sexual Orientation

Sex Assigned At Birth
 Female Intersex Male

