

Susan Gilchrist

Susan Gilchrist, now retired, has taught in higher education for over 40 years. From 1969 she has also been involved in the work of reconciliation in tribal conflict situations. She has engaged in studies and research into the driving forces behind tribal conflict, identity formation and the interactions that are encountered. She has undertaken similar research on gender dysphoria. Susan writes poetry and she has documented her journey through an anthology of poems. Through her counselling involvement she aims to help others who may learn from her experiences. Susan is actively involved in Church of England activities and in ecumenical work. She is currently a committee member and secretary of the Sibyls, a Christian Spirituality group for transgender people, their friends, families and supporters. Susan is closely associated with work to promote the full inclusion of LGBTI people within the Anglican Church. She has acted in an advisory capacity to the Church of England in the "Shared Conversations" process. Together with members of clergy and others she was involved in the organisation of a conference in Birmingham in 2010 on "Sexuality and Human Flourishing", the proceedings of which can be accessed through the website below. She has served on the executive committee of the LGBTI Anglican Coalition, and is also a past co-chair of the Coalition. Susan serves on Government and NHS Advisory panels. She is a member of the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland and is an active member, both in her local Church, and in the congregation of St Martin-in-the-Fields in London.

Susan's own research into the areas of personality development and identity crosses two disciplines. The first of these is a neurophysiological and psychological study into the early development of self-identity and personality. By taking account of the recent advances in neuroscience and brain development; new insights are obtained; and it is shown that a continuous pattern of development can be traced from early infancy into late adult life. The second theme in her work is an extended social, historical and theological study on the implications of this scientific research on the Christian Church. An overview of her work can be found in Gilchrist, S. (2016): "Taking a Different Path": Chapter 10 in: "This Is My Body: Hearing the Theology of Transgender Christians", Ed: Beardsley, T. and O'Brien, M. Publisher: Darton, Longman and Todd. Presentations which have been given to NHS Senior Management, and Parliamentary submissions, concern the topic of gender care pathways. Other papers presented during 2016 include one on "Deuteronomy 22:5 and its Impact on Gender and Sexual Variation in the Christian Church": this was given to a Trans* and Faith Symposium in the University of Warwick. Further papers and a presentation on "An Overview of Science and Theology in Gender and Sexual Variation and Its Impact on the Christian Church" were given to the Durham University/Royal College of Psychiatrists Conference on "Science and Theology in Human Sexuality" which was held at St. John's College, Durham University in September 2016.

Copies of these papers, the presentation slides, additional information and a full bibliography are available via the website: <http://www.tgdr.co.uk/>

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