



ST. ANDREW'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Why do people list pronouns in their email signature?

At St. Andrew's, we say: "God loves you. No exceptions." This means we are committed to being a welcoming and inclusive place for all. Including pronouns is an indication that we acknowledge and respect people's gender identity. This is our effort to affirm that we are all God's beloved and that we embrace people of all genders, including those who identify as transgender, gender-nonconforming, and non-binary.

Why is all of this so important?

Gender is important to someone's sense of self. To use the wrong pronouns can cause someone to feel disrespected, alienated, or [dysphoric](#) (or a combination of the three). Gender expression (someone's clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, etc.) is not the same thing as gender identity, so we want to use the pronouns people use for themselves. For example, someone who identifies as gender non-conforming may use the pronouns "they/them/theirs."

Which pronouns should I use?

When introducing yourself to another parishioner or a newcomer, you can create a safe place by sharing your pronouns and inviting the person to share theirs. For example, you might say: "My name is Terry, and my pronouns are she and her. Please feel free to share yours if you would like."

If you aren't sure of someone's name or pronouns, but you have already asked or met the person, simply ask for them to remind you. Sharing pronouns and making it safe for others to share theirs is affirming—especially in a place like a church since some religious groups have been unsafe places for LGBTQIA+ folks.

What if I mess up?

Be gentle with yourself and with others. Learning to do new things always takes time, and correcting yourself with a brief apology shows you respect the person.

Adapted from: The YMCA

You can find more information here: <https://pronouns.org/what-and-why>
<https://www.episcopalchurch.org/organizations-affiliations/lgbtq/lgbtq-welcome/>