



Dear Friends of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin,

We are a Reconciling in Christ Synod. As a RIC synod we have declared that we welcome all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. **June is Pride month.** It is a month set aside to recognize the influence that LGBTQ+ people have had around the world. Some might be tempted to think about pride month and bring up images of marches and the abundance of rainbow merchandise that is available at Target right now- but that would be to miss the point entirely. Pride is about welcome and inclusion.

Our presiding bishop, Elizabeth Eaton, was recently quoted in the media to say:

“When we say all are welcome, we mean all are welcome, and we believe God creates humanity in diversity,”

Her quote came in response to the election of the first transgender bishop in the ELCA on May 8th, Rev. Dr Megan Rohrer. They were elected to serve the Sierra Pacific Synod and will be installed in September.

God does create humanity in diversity. Our diversity is a beautiful thing. It is to be celebrated. I pray that as a synod and as congregations and ministries of the SCSW we become ever more intentional in our welcome to all. Our welcome is not about boxes, or certain situations, or criteria that needs to be met. Our welcome is the welcome that God extends. Our welcome is the love of Jesus.

I remind you of the language that we as a synod adopted when we became a RIC synod:

Following Jesus, who commanded his followers, ‘Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another,’ and believing that all persons are created in the image of God, the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin, ELCA, strives to be fully inclusive for all. This synod welcomes people of every race, background, age, political affiliation, economic and social status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and mental and physical ability, while striving to enable all people to participate fully in the life and work of the church and its expressions.

May God bless and keep you in the fullness of love!

Bishop Joy