



Dear Bishop Karen,

I read with interest and gratitude the good news that the Western Jurisdiction of the United Methodist Church elected you as their bishop.

Congratulations to you and to Robin.

I know it took courage for the people of your region to make this choice, and I know it is taking courage for you to respond with grace and clarity to those who don't understand the why's behind this momentous step.

My prayer for you is that when criticism grows colder and misunderstandings grow hotter, your light will shine brighter and stronger with grace, humility, and Christ-like meekness.

And I pray that millions of LGBTQ people, their families, and their friends will know that even though many churches still close their doors and say, "Not welcome here," more and more congregations and denominations are opening minds, opening hearts, and opening doors. In this way, these courageous and compassionate congregations are re-presenting the story from the gospels where people opened a hole in the roof when the doors were blocked, so that Jesus was available to everyone.

In these dangerous times, your work is more important than ever.

Please know of my respect and solidarity, with prayers

In Christ's love  
Brian D. McLaren