



Bishop Karen Oliveto, one of my sheroes, is a woman whom I know will make the United Methodist Church an inclusive place in all ways possible – that is her heart. The struggle to do so continues to make way for those who live on the margins of a church that historically attended to the margins by its very nature. John Wesley countered the powers-that-be in the Anglican world because they did not pay attention to people who did not have the privileges they enjoyed.

Karen, you are in love with the United Methodist heritage, the church we have inherited, and all the people you meet – even those who say hateful things about and to you. There is something prophetic about a leader who can stand grounded in her faith while others throw rocks. We have had a number of short conversations about life, face-to-face, and a few others via the increasingly frequent use of social media/e-conversation. Your steadiness of heart, even in painful moments, is a light to us all. To see you become Bishop in a church that has become unwieldy in its use of power, especially power “against,” heartened so many of us who walk in solidarity and who yearn for the day when the church can become the church without litmus tests and so-called purity codes. You, grounded and breaking ground, are the right person for this place and time.

Deep peace and deeper blessing to you and Robin in your ministries. Dear Faithful One, Beloved Child, know that we hold you in the light every moment of every day. May that light shine brighter and brighter, even amidst chaos, and never be extinguished.

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