

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage  
FCUCC  
June 27, 2021

“Weave a Tapestry of Love”

Please pray with me: Holy God, may the words of my mouth and meditations of all of our hearts be pleasing and faithful unto you, for you are our rock and our salvation. Amen.

This Pride Sunday, I have been thinking about the wisdom given us by Paul in our New Testament reading. Paul is encouraging his church to excel at their own generous undertaking. We, too, several years ago, stepped into the important work of being an open and affirming church. And, as does Paul, I would like to encourage us to renew this undertaking with eagerness and joy. Despite the fact that our world has become so much more open for our LGBTQ+ siblings, it is still not a world where they are fully accepted. In many cases, they are bullied, shamed, attacked and, in some cases, killed, just for being who they are. So it's urgent that we renew our covenant.

I also feel that it's important to share and amplify the voices of our LGBTQ+ siblings. As Paul teaches, when we open our hearts in ministry to others, they will share abundantly with us, ministering to us in our needs as well. So I would like to play a 3 ½ minute video provided by the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ. Unfortunately, the audio and the video in the version they sent us do not entirely line up, so it's not the best quality. Also, there was one inappropriate word that we bleeped out, so please don't be surprised when you hear that moment. Let us know see the video:

You might recognize the lie that they're talking about—the lie that your body is bad because you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, or asexual; the lie that you are bad because you have transitioned, or because you haven't, or because you need to pass for work, or because you're gender fluid and people around you can't accept that fluidity. Hear the voices of your siblings which are telling you that you are beloved, and trust that they are right.

I appreciate the inclusivity of these voices. They want us all to understand the way that our society has spread this lie—that the body is bad—everywhere, shaming most of us, in some way. I bet many of you can recognize the lies they are talking about: you're too fat or too thin; too brown or dark; too short or tall; the lie that, because your body has changed—some parts don't work the way

Rev. Dr. Laura Miller-Purrenhage  
FCUCC  
June 27, 2021

they used to, your brain doesn't work like it used to—your body is bad. But hear the voices of your siblings, and trust that they are right.

And learn this lesson that their experiences have forced them to learn—a lesson that they generously bring back to all of us, gay and straight, cis and trans: You all are fearfully and wondrously made. Let the shame that society has covered you with fall away and, as our psalmist says, turn your mourning into dancing. And let this message sink deeply into your heart, into your mind, into your very body: Give yourself a huge hug and tell yourself: I am beloved and I am worthy. Amen.