



January 22, 2025

The Right Rev. Dr. Mariann Edgar Budde
Episcopal Diocese of Washington
Episcopal Church House
Mount St. Alban
Washington DC, 20016-5094

Dear Bishop Budde,

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus the Christ. Let me first start by saying you are my new hero.

I have the honour of serving The United Church of Canada as Moderator through August of this year. I am a member of the Heiltsuk First Nation, and the first Indigenous woman to serve in my role. I am also a dual citizen of Canada and the United States. When I was at the Graduate Theological Union studying for my PhD, I married an undocumented worker from Guatemala, and we had two children who are US born. My husband was Guatemalan at the time (he's an American citizen now), and I was not yet an American citizen. I am an openly bisexual cis-het woman married to a cis-het man, our children are neurodiverse (one with autism and one with ADHD), and I have queer and gender-queer niblings, nieces and nephews in my extended circle.

The story you told in your sermon was my story. The story of my people. Never mind all of the decolonizing of American history we could get into.

What you preached, and then speaking directly to the president, was bold and prophetic. And it was deeply rooted in our faith tradition. You stood on the shoulders of generations of political theologians who preached, in love, that the compulsion to dominate must not be allowed to reign.

I can already see in today's headlines the firestorm of reaction that is being hurled at you, and so I wanted to send you this love note to say that you are seen and loved. So many of us across this continent and the world are standing shoulder with you to say, in love, "not in my name, and not in the name of our God."

If there is anything I can do through my own ministry to support you and our colleagues in leadership in the US, please never hesitate to ask.

Monday was Martin Luther King Jr. Day. One of my favourite quotes from MLK Jr is:

“The ultimate measure of a [person] is not where [they] stand in moments of comfort and convenience, but where [they] stand at times of challenge and controversy.” [Adapted for gender inclusion]

Thank you for being that person who stood up for all of us, but especially those made most marginal in society; for those most at risk.

In Christ’s love,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carmen Lansdowne".

The Right Rev. Dr. Carmen Lansdowne
44th Moderator, The United Church of Canada