



Hello St. John's and friends!

March 24, 2024

As we are beginning to wind down our Lenten season, and prepare our hearts for Holy Week, I am reflecting on the Resurrection that Easter will bring. This is not to rush Easter, as the journey is every bit as important as the destination. In fact, in many ways the journey itself is vital to reaching the destination with integrity and all the wisdom that the journey provides. Like all good stories, Jesus' Resurrection started long ago, long before what would become Holy Week, or even Lent.

I am writing to you now to share a bit about my own journey in the hopes that it will not be a distraction, but rather a facet of myself that will bring us even closer as we live our authentic truths together. My journey to today began long before there were appropriate words and concepts about gender that made sense for me and who I am. I have for a long time felt that I didn't fit into the limiting and constraining boxes of the binary genders.

When I first heard the term nonbinary, my interest was piqued, and I threw myself into researching what this meant. It turns out that it means different things for those who identify as nonbinary. For me it really means that I don't feel male or female. I just feel like me. And, if the world must force you into a box, then this is the one that fits me best.

And so, I want to share that my pronouns are they/them, and that I am happy to answer any questions you might have about being nonbinary, pronouns, or anything else that you would like to dialogue about that may help increase your understanding.

In addition, like many (but by no means all) who fall under the umbrella of "transgender" versus "cisgender", I am receiving gender affirming surgery at the beginning of April and will be out recovering for four to six weeks. This is a very positive event for me, life-giving even, and so I would ask for your prayers for recovery, and thanksgiving that my body will finally reflect what I've always known to be true for me.

St. John's, you are in many ways my family. You have loved and supported me when I first showed up with Heather as a soul looking for a church...through my starting seminary and ultimately discerning a call to the ministry...and as a lay pastor, then Deacon, and now as your Assistant Priest. I pray you will do the same now.

I share this letter in a political and religious climate and culture where children and young adults need desperately to see and hear adults stand proud in who they are. If standing in my truth helps even one person stand in their truth, or begin to feel healed and truly seen by the church...then my witness will have been worth any negativity the world may have in store. I thank each and every one of you for your open hearts, with which I see you love on the world without limits every day.

In God's peace and love,

**GROW IN GOD, ACT IN SERVICE, WITNESS IN LOVE**

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