

## Glorious Church

‘For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent, for Jerusalem’s sake I will not remain quiet, till her righteousness shines forth like the dawn, her salvation like a blazing torch.’

(Is. 62:1, 2)

It is too easy to dismiss the Church as inadequate to convey the whole Gospel to LGBT+ persons: she appears to slalom from rigorous truth—a fortress inaccessible--to grace that can only be described as flabby in failing to recognize what ails us, to faith-filled but gnostic in promising spiritual ‘healing’ without touching what drives our sexual ‘diversity.’

But I will not forget what she can be! On the eve of our 40th-year celebration on August 7-9th, we at DSM/LW champion the Bride who is making herself winsome for the broken, chaste for her soon-coming King.

At our recent training in Kansas City, I saw Jesus equipping His Church to embody Himself through members who fuse ‘grace and truth’ (Jn. 1:17). He manifested Himself in a host of Christians who knelt to wash the feet of those desperate for salvation--body, soul, and spirit.

For such a time as this! Elizabeth Woning wrote a brief, compelling exhortation to the Church in Charisma News (July 2nd) to make a way for many former LGBT+ persons who in the aftermath of Bostock (the Supreme Court decision that officially altered ‘sex’ to include LGBT+ diversity) are wholeheartedly seeking Jesus through His body. More than ever, vulnerable members need the community of Jesus, brimming with grace and truth!

I am buoyed by three expressions of ‘church’ in Kansas City who are tending to vulnerable members mercifully and responsibly: Redeemer Fellowship in Midtown (a large expression of the Acts 29 movement), International House of Prayer in South Kansas City, and the Catholic Diocese of Kansas City/St. Joseph (which serves many parishes in a large geographic area under one bishop). Each of these communities are distinct from the other--Redeemer is reformed and thoughtfully biblical, IHOP a non-stop prayer and worship center fueled by zealous young adults, and the Diocese, well, a vast and diverse group united by the Eucharist and RCC authority structures.

What these three communities have in common are leaders who champion what it means to be human--made in God’s image as male and female, who thoroughly believe that Jesus can transform any identification to the contrary, and who work hard to provide practical, effective means for such transformation. Each of the three communities have strong lead men who commission colleagues to head up pastoral care arms that provide solid counsel and groups like Living Waters.

These three faithful arms of Jesus can say in good conscience: we do and will do all we can to shelter persons broken by the enslaving ‘liberties’ of our day. For them and for all communities

who emulate them, we declare: 'Your righteousness is shining forth like the dawn, your salvation like a blazing torch', O Glorious Church!