



Committee on Faith and Order

The United Methodist Church

Bishop David A. Bard, Chairperson

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January 26, 2025

Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde
Washington National Cathedral
3101 Wisconsin Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20016

Dear Bishop Budde,

Grace and peace to you from God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Committee on Faith and Order of The United Methodist Church is a resource for our denomination that provides “a venue and context for ongoing conversation on matters of faith, doctrine, order and discipline” (Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, ¶445.1). We gathered this weekend to engage in our work and in some of our discussion reflected on the theological conversation happening in the United States at this time, including your sermon at the National Cathedral on January 21.

Your sermon sought to ground national unity in honoring the inherent dignity of all, in honest conversation and in humility. Because you ended your sermon asking the newly elected U.S. President to have mercy on frightened and vulnerable persons, you have been the recipient of vitriol and threats to your well-being. A resolution has even been introduced in the House of Representatives condemning your sermon. At the same time, many voices have risen to support you and we join those voices.

In The United Methodist Church we encourage our bishops to live out “a prophetic commitment for the transformation of the Church and the world.” We say, “the role of the bishop is to be a prophetic voice for justice in a suffering and conflicted world” (The Book of Discipline ¶403.1.d). We believe this is in keeping with the prophetic tradition of Amos who encouraged us to “let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an everflowing stream” and Micah who told us that what the Lord requires is justice, kindness and humility before God. We believe this is in keeping with the ministry of Jesus who took special care for the least. We witnessed such episcopal leadership in you this week. You inspired and encouraged us. As a committee we found your sermon profoundly rooted in the prophetic tradition of our shared Christian faith, while being delivered with gentleness and respect. We are pleased to call you a friend in Christ and offer our prayers.

Grace and Peace,

David A Bard

Bishop David A. Bard for The United Methodist Committee on Faith and Order

Cc: Bishop Tracy Smith Malone, President of the Council of Bishop of The United Methodist Church