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Friends,

I write to you in response to the document originating in the United States and being shared on social media and elsewhere. I find "The Nashville Statement" to be particularly offensive because it originates from within the church. In it, the authors of the document attempt to use morality to define Christianity. As your bishop, I find this deeply disturbing.

Perhaps most troubling is that the statement tries to set out who can be part of the church based on who they are. We have debated the issue of sexuality in the church for too long. It is time to stop trying to convince others that they are wrong, so that they will believe the same as we do.

We in the diocese recognize that Christians read, understand and apply the Bible from a variety of perspectives. We have and will continue to live together and accept these various perspectives in our diocese. We will resist characterizing others as "wrong" because they have a different understanding of scripture than we do.

It is however, important for us to be discerning and to reject any interpretation of scripture that discriminates against others on any grounds including age, cultural background, gender, origin, religion, physical or mental health or ability, fertility, marital status or sexual orientation.

During this year of reconciliation, we as a diocesan community have considered ways we can use different opinions, attitudes and beliefs for creativity and inspiration; to build up the body of Christ, not to tear it down. As we continue on our sacred journey towards truth telling, healing and reconciliation may we learn from one another and from how God speaks within and through each of us.

Yours,

Logan

*"I would not open windows into men's souls."—Elizabeth I*