

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN NORTHERN ILLINOIS

## THE DIOCESE OF CHICAGO

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Office of the Bishop

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Dear Sisters and Brothers,

With the recent murder of Dr. George Tiller in Kansas, it may be the case that you will be asked about the Episcopal Church's position on abortion. To help you answer such questions, I have included below the text of Resolution 1994-A054 from our seventy-first General Convention. As is normative for our tradition, that resolution affirms the sacredness of all human life and calls for the Church to be deeply pastoral in those cases where abortion is being considered.



CELEBRATING  
AND SHARING  
OUR FAITH

A document entitled, *Rachel's Tears, Hannah's Hopes: Liturgies and Prayers for Healing from Loss Related to Childbearing and Childbirth*, is being presented to General Convention this summer. The liturgies in *Rachel's Tears, Hannah's Hopes* use the biblical traditions of lament and rejoicing to create a prayerful space in which women and men may offer their hopes, grief and decisions to God in the context of the Christian community. I believe these liturgies flow from the powerful depths of our biblical, liturgical and pastoral traditions. I will be actively promoting their acceptance by General Convention.

It seems to me that both Resolution 1994-A054 and *Rachel's Tears, Hannah's Hopes* embody the idea that the sacredness of life means taking seriously life in all its complexity. This conviction means that we strive, in the Holy Spirit, to be faithfully present to each other and Christ—during calm times, happy times, and the most painful of times. For us, the sacredness of life is a lived reality, deeply pastoral in nature, which is proclaimed in the local baptismal community as we place all our hopes in the Word made flesh, Jesus our Savior. When the reality of life's sacredness is lived in this way, we do not reject those whom we feel have sinned, nor do we disparage those who are different from us. We lament that anyone would act to negate life by committing murder as a response to those with whom they disagree.

Yours in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Jeffrey D. Lee".

Jeffrey D. Lee,  
Bishop of Chicago