

Good morning. I greet you on November 3, 2020- election day in the United States of America.

It is an odd experience to step into the office of Bishop amidst the ongoing rollercoaster of the pandemic in a world that is enduring or recovering from one natural disaster after another and one of the most anxious and highly polarized elections in the history of our country. This is A LOT!

I know many of us are tired, tired of political news, phone calls, texts, endless social media posts, we yearn to be able to turn it off or tune it out. Yet, as Christians, as Lutherans, as Americans, as Iowans, we are reminded that every voter, every elected official, every person on the ballot, every person at the polls, every human being is one for whom Christ died and is loved and forgiven and set free to love and serve their neighbor. We don't always agree on the candidates, the issues but I do believe we can agree that ultimately Jesus calls us, each of us - to share love, mercy, kindness, forgiveness as God has first forgiven us.

This election day and the days and weeks following may be anxious for our country, for our neighbors, for our congregations, for you and me. I remind you to breathe, to breathe and then to pray, to pray, and then to remember our call from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to love God, with all your heart, your soul, and all your mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself. (Matthew 22:36-39)

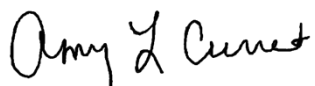
In this love, we turn from what divides us to what unites us - Jesus Christ.

In this love, we turn from our pointing fingers at one another to our hearts united in Christ.

In the love of God, we are free to be ourselves, created in God's image with our thoughts, our opinions, our votes yet bound together by the one who calls us, claims us, gathers us, and sends us out to share Christ's love for our world in need.

I invite you to join me in prayer these days and weeks to come for our country, for our communities, for those who are elected and for those who are defeated, for our neighbors, for our congregations and ministries in the Southeastern Iowa Synod, for pastors, deacons, congregational leaders, for all people, for your fellow congregation members - those you see on the screen these days and those whom you sit 6 feet from at worship. I invite you to pray for patience, for kindness, for dignity, for civility, especially for love for those we disagree with and to remember that everyone - every one - is one for whom Christ Jesus died so that we - all of creation - may have life and have life abundantly. (John 10:10)

Peace be with you, my friends.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy L. Current". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bishop Amy Current
Southeastern Iowa Synod