

FRIDAY, APRIL 11

There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.



—Galatians 3:28

When I was a boy, I loved to spend summers at Camp Mitchell, the camp and retreat center for the Diocese of Arkansas. That beautiful spot, set on bluffs overlooking the Arkansas River, is where many young Arkansans found their earliest formation as disciples, and still do. When I entered my teens, I was surprised to hear that a new priest was coming to take charge of the camp. My surprise was because the priest was a woman.

I immediately took it to heart that I would no longer be happy at Camp Mitchell. The priests I had known at camp were a part of the place for me. So, I went to Father Joe Tucker. He, for me, was what a priest looked like and sounded like. He always seemed old, and he always smiled. “Father Joe, how can a woman be a priest?”

“Sean,” he spoke through that smile, “when Jesus stretched out his arms on the cross, he spread them out for the entire world—for every man, and woman, and child. So, it is not only men who can share Christ’s embrace with the world. All people can.”

In that moment, my worldview changed deeply, dramatically. And when I met the Rev. Peggy Bosmyer, the first woman ordained south of the Mason-Dixon line, I was given a vision of Christ that expanded well beyond the horizons of that mountaintop vista.

Today, don’t only seek Christ in all persons; be Christ for all persons.

—Sean McConnell