



Christmas letter, 1993

Dear Kresha family,

This Christmas is my fourth, and last, in Arizona. My life partner, Susan, and I have decided to heed the claim of California upon our hearts, and plan to move back there in early 1994, probably to the East Bay Area (Oakland, etc.). The heat and intense sun exposure in this lower sonoran desert has been very unpleasant for six months of the year, and we have promised ourselves that our next summer will be in lovely Northern California.

During this past year I have finally had enough "free" time to experience more fully the impact of all the changes in the past five years: Retirement, change of professional identity, getting a theology degree and hospital Chaplaincy training, allowing myself to come out of my lifelong living "in the closet", and identifying myself as a lesbian woman, denial of ordination to the Episcopal Diaconate solely on the grounds of gender orientation, and working as a hospital Chaplain without pay. Much of my energy has been directed toward wrestling with the hard questions, "who am I, really, now?" and "what work is mine to do now?" As I prepare to celebrate my sixtieth birthday in several months, I am hounded by the existential questions of what leads me to healing and wholeness. I found out that the first step toward wholeness is to be truthful about who I have always been.

I hope that sharing my gender identity and religious affiliation will be as prayerfully received as it is offered to all of you. I have chosen the sacred season of Christmas to become vulnerable to all of you. Jesus took on our humanity and became totally vulnerable to show us how much God loves us. "Let us love one another, for love comes from God." 1Jn.4:7

May the blessings of this holy time be with all of you!

Love,
Rita

Merry Christmas

