

Transcript
Bishop Mark Hanson
It Gets Better video

My name is Mark Hanson, and I am presiding bishop of the largest Lutheran church in North America -- the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

I am a father of six and a grandfather of four.

I've listened with pain and shock to reports of young people taking their lives because they've been bullied and tormented for being different, for being gay or perceived to be gay, for being the people God created them to be.

I can only imagine what it's like to be bullied for being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

But I do know how bullying can destroy someone.

One day, I came home and found our daughter curled up in the fetal position on the floor weeping uncontrollably. She was struggling to know who she was as a bi-racial young woman.

She felt bruised by words people had spoken about her, words that ate away at her sense of identity and self-worth. I sat down by her on the floor holding her in my arms.

Words have the power to harm and the power to heal.

Sometimes the words of my Christian brothers and sisters have hurt you. And I also know that our silence causes you pain.

Today, I want to speak honestly with you and offer you the hope I have in Christ: You are a beloved child of God. Your life carries the dignity and the beauty of God's creation. God has called you by name and claimed you forever. There's a place for you in this world and in this church.

As a Christian I trust that God is working in this world for justice and peace through you and through me.

It gets better.

“For I'm convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

May it be so. Amen.