



My Pride Story
by Irish McCarthy
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I am Eileen McCarthy, daughter of Veronica Falk, sister of three brothers, mother of one daughter, oh, and by the way, I'm gay.

Lesbian is the label some would give me, but I won't let it diminish my worth.

My mother, in her wisdom, called me finally, tearfully and said "I love you – but I can't understand who you are fully. I think it's because my generation doesn't know enough about your preferences. But I love you. Can you forgive and understand what my ignorance and prejudice of my generation is not ready to believe, in what you are."

"We believe it's our fault – we didn't do something right – we failed you. And then I see the depth of love you had for this woman who has passed away – and I have only seen caring and kindness by her to you and us all."
"So that I worry for your wellbeing, in this hard path of life you choose."
"Though I cannot accept, I must respect the love I have seen. Please forgive me. I love you. You are my daughter. I see a person who insists on being who she is."

My lady, my Eva. Always said she was not ready to declare to the world who we are, who we love. "Until 51% of the population says – "ah, that's fine – they're just gay."

She would be amazed at how far the new generations have brought recognition, and even in some cases, acceptance. So that they do not dismiss us as those queers but rather casually state of you: now, they're gay. So, forget it, fella, they'll befriend you, but not wed you. So the birth of Gay Pride is celebrated. It is the acknowledgment of the struggles, hardships and recognition of the courage it took, still takes, to proclaim "I'm gay." Its recognition of our worth to our community.

Still, please recognize that it took "Legions of Christians" who persevered and protected and supported us as the "other world wanted to persecute our minister John Jeter. Who, by the way, was gay.

Today, we are the United Church of Christ. By the way "Open and Affirming". We are a family. We are a family united in all our differences and preferences, but always loving each other and supporting our endeavors.

Oh, by the way – I am gay. They call me "Irish", a name I prefer because it was giving to me by my teenage softball teammates, because as designated leader, I ordered uniforms of emerald green and named the team "The Shamrocks". They said to me, as we played our first game together, "My gosh, we're green. You must be Irish."

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