

# Swedish Lutheran Church elects lesbian bishop: Eva Brunne

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The newly elected Lutheran bishop of Stockholm says that being a lesbian means that she wants to stand alongside people who feel powerless.

“I know what it is to be called into question,” Eva Brunne said in an article on the Web site of the Church of Sweden after her May 26 election. “I am in the lucky situation that I have power, and I can use it for the benefit of those who have no power.”

Brunne, currently the dean of the Stockholm diocese, is the first Church of Sweden bishop to live in a registered homosexual partnership, the Uppsala-headquartered church said, and she is believed to be the first openly lesbian bishop in the world.

Brunne, 55, lives with priest Gunilla Linden in a partnership that has received a church blessing. They have a three-year-old son.

“Once you have been baptized, no one can say you cannot be part of the church because you are homo-, bi- or transsexual,” the Web site of the French periodical *Ttu* quoted Brunne as saying.

In the election for the post, she received 413 votes to Hans Ulfve brand’s 365; she will succeed Bishop Caroline Krook, who is to retire in November.

Lutheran churches throughout the world hold different views about matters of human sexuality, including the acceptance of homosexuals in church life and blessings for same-sex relationships. The Swedish church has faced criticism particularly from Lutheran churches in Africa. *-Religion News Service, Ecumenical News International*