

## FIRST AND CENTER

### Pastor's Blog

February 22, 2018



According to the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, the purpose of people “keeping and bearing arms” as individuals is so that citizens can be prepared to serve in the Army. The purpose is not for sport, not for self-protection in your own home, not for any other reason than the ability of the country to gather a “well-regulated militia” at need. In those days, the military did not supply its soldiers guns, nor train them in their use. They expected the soldiers to bring their own weapons and be ready to use them. Read it. Learn history.

How has this morphed into carte blanche for anyone to keep any kind of gun in their homes with as little regulation as possible?

How has this morphed into people advocating against any kind of background check for a person to hold an automatic weapon and fire it at will?

How has this morphed into the President declaring it is wrong for elderly people who have been declared mentally incompetent to have their guns removed from their homes?

How has this morphed into people suggesting our schools should become armed camps?

How has this morphed into people elevating the right to bear guns over any other rights protected by the Constitution or suggested in our Declaration of Independence? Clearly, my right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness is trumped by someone else's right to buy, openly carry, and threaten me with their gun at will.

How has this become a centerpiece of racism in this country, that would allow police to kill a black man who had committed no crime, but legally openly carried a legal handgun in his car and had informed a white police officer of that fact, thus prompting the police officer to kill him and escape any consequences for the action? Are gun rights only for white people? Oh, wait a minute; that was probably the “original intent” of the Constitution, most of whose “rights” originally were meant only for white, free, men, so some Supreme Court Justices would uphold this.

How is it that an organization (the NRA), whose members make up a small minority of US citizens, now control a majority of members of the Senate and House as well as the President, through millions of dollars funneled to their campaigns?

And how do all those good, God-fearing, gun-loving folk reconcile God's command “do not kill,” and Jesus' command to love our enemies with the policies they promote?

I am holding on to Jesus' words that he has come to give us life, and life abundant. I believe the vast majority of Americans hope this country may be a place of peace and peaceful co-existence. I believe that, perhaps, the children are leading us. God bless them. I know that I'm a dreamer, but I am quite sure I am not the only one.

~ Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,  
Transitional Minister