

FIRST AND CENTER

Pastor's Blog

March 20, 2018

“March for Our Lives.” The “our” in this title originally referred to children and teens in schools all over the nation. We were reminded of that today in yet another school shooting, resulting in two injuries (one critical) and the death of the shooter, in Maryland. On Saturday, many thousands of people will gather in DC for the main march and, in many cities (including Hartford), for satellite marches with a very clear message articulated by the teens organizing them: do what can be done to lessen the possibility of those who should not have guns getting them. Ban assault rifles to anyone but the military. Ban large capacity ammo magazines. Make background checks universal (currently not required for gun show or online sales).

“Our” also stands for everyone. Recently, the students from Parkland have spoken out against those who would divide them from other kinds of gun violence. They have called attention to the everyday gun violence so many suffer: in city streets, in homes of all kinds, in workplaces, in places of worship, in situations of abuse. Gun violence is not just about one demographic of age or race in the U.S. these days. Our nation’s idolatry of weapons, which has grown to massive proportions, threatens all our lives.

But, a caveat on that last statement. A majority of Americans do NOT own guns. A majority of gun owners are NOT members of the NRA. A majority of Americans, indeed over 90% according to some polls, favor universal background checks and the assault rifle ban. The majority of us are being held hostage by a minority who think the Second Amendment trumps all the others.

It does not. And the marches this weekend are meant to show politicians and others exactly how the majority feels and what action they want taken. Since too many politicians’ idolatry of money is greater even than their idolatry of guns, and since the NRA has deep pockets, they are convinced that they must do the bidding of this tiny minority of Americans. Can we defeat this? God knows, literally. But, we must try. Join us Saturday. If you can’t march, write your elected representatives, or better yet, call them; or better yet, visit their offices. Make your voice heard. We must not let hate and fear win, and as we prepare to remember Jesus’ violent death, we cannot stay silent.



~ The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse
Transitional Pastor