

FIRST AND CENTER
Pastor's Blog
November 6, 2018
Election Day



In the second century of the life of this congregation, after the formation of the United States, it would have been common for the pastor of Center Church (and others) to give an “election sermon” on the day of or near the time of an election. These sermons were occasionally partisan in nature, but, just as often, they were calls to people to be good citizens and not forget that people died to give them the rights they enjoyed. Or, at that time, anyway, to give white, property-holding men the rights they enjoyed.

If I offered to give an election sermon on this day, I expect I’d have little or no audience (there being other forms of entertainment and people having to go to work), so I’ll pass on that. I guess the closest I can come is this blog. So, here is a briefer election sermon than any of my ancestors ever preached.

People in the 18th century died so that we could form a new nation, a great experiment in democracy (or the closest we could come to democracy at that point in time). People in the 19th century died to try to keep this country together and ensure that the descendants of Africans forcibly brought to this country and enslaved could be free to help shape this nation. People in the 19th and 20th centuries fought and died to make sure that women, Asians, Native Americans, and people of all religions and races could vote and have their say, and exert their influence on the shape of our nation and its values and vision. Today, people are still having to fight to make sure that everyone who has the right to vote has the opportunity to vote.

Therefore, surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let’s work every harder to make sure everyone has a say, and to have our own say. Vote. Speak out on issues that mean something to you. Take part in the civic and political life of our nation. So much depends on it. So many ancestors thought it was important enough to die for.

~ The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,
Transitional Minister