

IT COULD HAVE BEEN SALISBURY! (*A response to the Orlando shooting*)



It could have been Salisbury, or Dover or Wilmington! The horrendous shooting spree that took fifty lives on early Sunday morning could have happened in a venue near many of us. The killed and injured could have been our friends...our family members. The killer could have been an acquaintance or neighbor. So, we must do everything we can not to distance ourselves emotionally from the darkness of what happened in Orlando. The ruthlessness is unimaginable. The evil done is unthinkable and indifference on our part unacceptable. This is equally true for the killings on the streets of our cities and the violence done to our own citizens by the seductive elements of racism still embedded in our culture.

Such violence does not happen in a vacuum. It is nurtured by the fear mongers, tolerated by the conflict avoidant and deadly to minorities... of all types. Many of us have practiced a conspiracy of silence that has allowed homophobia, xenophobia and other prejudices to be politically negotiable in mainstream American politics. We are allowing fear to deter the Gospel message that "Jesus Christ announces the nearness of God's kingdom, bringing good news to all who are impoverished, sight to all who are blind, freedom to all who are oppressed, and proclaiming the Lord's favor upon all creation."

All that African Americans, Hispanic/Latinos, the LGBTQ community, other minorities and immigrants want is what the privileged have enjoyed for generations.

...the freedom to celebrate life, to love and be loved.

...the freedom from hunger, illness and economic exploitation.

...the freedom from oppressions which inhibit fair and open participation in defining public policy.

...the freedom to work, serve, and contribute to the common good.

For decades the Presbyterian Church has walked with many who have lived and died to insure that these freedoms are not extinguished or maligned. While we pray in earnest for those who lost loved ones and who now need strength to endure ...let us also pray for the resolve to speak up!

There are conversations across our presbytery being held among Christian, Muslim, and Jewish communities. Consider participating by contacting NCP Interfaith Peacemaker, the Rev. Tom Davis (tcd123@alumni.pitt.edu).

There are educational opportunities to learn more about the challenges facing the LGBTQ community. Check out these resources located at: <http://uwde.org/affinity-groups/pride-council> or contact NCP Teaching Elder, the Rev. Tim Rodden (trodden@christianacare.org).

There are active dialogs in place discussing race relationships and social justice. Join one or contact NCP Mission Advocate, Ruling Elder Terry Dykstra (terrydykstra@gmail.com)!

The one thing we must not do is remain idle and allow fear to define our neighborhoods, our churches and our nation. The "one" we must not overlook is "the Christ" the Prince of Peace whose life, death and resurrection are all testimony that the reign of God is upon us and within us! This is our message. This is our work. Let us not be afraid!

In Christ's Peace, *Jim Moseley*
Executive Presbyter, New Castle Presbytery