

First and Center
Pastor's Blog
February 5, 2019

"...and I think of the ice I waded out on as a kid, of how often the world seems like it's going to shatter, but then, miraculously, mercilessly, does not." ~ Adam Scheffler

Seen on a Facebook post: One person says to another "Is this rain ever going to quit?" And the companion says, "It always has."



Tonight, the President of the United States will give the annual State of the Union speech, followed by a Democratic response. Overnight and tomorrow, there will be much hand-wringing and sky-is-falling commentary on media and social media. It will be emotionally exhausting. Because no matter how you spin it, there are many things about the state of our union here that are not good. Much needs to be addressed by our government that will not be. Guns. Just immigration reform. Equity in education for rural and urban poor students. Racism. The environment and climate change. The list could go on and on.

It all seems too much for those of us outside the government to take on. I read a comment on Facebook from someone who called out the churches in Chicago for not taking in homeless folk during the recent freeze. This person was not part of a church, nor did they contribute to a church, but held churches responsible for fixing a problem. As many churches close, cities and towns discover the hard truth of how much churches contributed to the wellbeing of the people among whom they dwelt, most of them not part of the church community or contributing time or money to the ministries. Now those needs must be met by government or other financially stressed non-profits.

In the midst of this comes this poem at the top, actually the last lines of a longer poem. And the story about the rain. Wasn't it MAD magazine that used to say, "Don't panic!!" When we act out of panic, we often act poorly. Let us listen. Pray together. Imagine together. Do what we can do together. If you are part of a church, be the church for the world, the sacred center that holds. William Wordsworth once wrote these lines: "And central peace subsisting at the heart of endless agitation."

Will this rain ever stop? It always has.

~ The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse
Transitional Minister