



FIRST AND CENTER
Pastor's Blog
March 8, 2018
International Women's Day

With respect to the Chinese proverb, women hold up way more than half the sky. We often do it without compensation, without recognition, and, too often, with abuse, harassment, and a lack of control over our own resources and bodies. Too many of us are holding up that sky with one hand, while the other carries a child without help from a husband or partner.

Lots of us today will celebrate the amazing women in our lives or the brilliant, talented, or powerful women in the world. The ones whose names are known. And yes, I join you in that celebration! My perspective on life changed and enlarged over the years because of women as diverse as Jane Goodall, Maya Angelou, Amy Tan, Marie Curie, Anne Frank, Rosa Parks, Rachel Carson, Jane Austen, Virginia Woolf, Mary Oliver, Sally Ride, Geraldine Ferraro, Toni Morrison, Renee Fleming, Meryl Streep, and Carole King, to name only a very few.

Those are people most of you know about, or you can Google them and something will come up. You don't know the names of my mother or grandmothers, or the names of my children's mothers, foster mothers, social workers, or the nurses who loved them through tough starts in this world. Nor does Google. Then, there are the millions of women all over the world who work many hours a day earning very little money, if any, and care for families as well. Occasionally, we see their faces in the news, but usually only in the context of tragedy: a fire in a factory in India, refugees fleeing Myanmar or Syria, mothers of sick children who drank the water in Flint, Michigan, teachers all over the world, the ones who say, "Me, Too," but don't get their pictures in a magazine or receive a 6 figure settlement from the men who abused and harassed them.

Today, I salute, pray for, and commit to supporting these women (made a Kiva loan lately?), the ones you can't Google and read all about, the ones who appear on no red carpet (but yes, the ones who clean that red carpet and those gowns!), the ones who hold up and hold on and hold out for love, justice, hope.

You amaze and inspire me. God be with you. And may we all work for a world in which love, justice, and hope are possible for all women and those they love.

~ Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,
Transitional Pastor