

## **FIRST AND CENTER**

**Pastor's Blog**

**November 1, 2018**

**All Saints Day**

All Saints Day is an opportunity to look back at the past on those who have died who had an important impact on the world. An impact for good, that would be. Although this week, I also think we need to spend some time being honest about those who lived in the past, those who professed a faith in Jesus Christ, whose impact was hurtful and destructive. Because those who don't remember the past in its fullness are, indeed, doomed to repeat it in its fullness.

This week, as we reeled from the shootings at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, an anti-Semitic election flyer was distributed here in Connecticut. Those who created and distributed it were shocked -- shocked that it was perceived as anti-Semitic, and defended their use of it. As people of all political parties condemned this image, suddenly the creator/distributors got some education (or professed to have learned something they didn't know, which, if true, is an indictment of how we teach and learn history in this country) and made a kind of apology.

Great numbers of our Christian ancestors, from early centuries of the church, to the Inquisition, through the Holocaust, to today, have perpetrated hateful theologies about the Jews. The apostle Paul actually tried to prevent this from happening in his words in the book of Romans: epic fail.

So, let's go over this again and spread the word. Christians are not the replacement for Jews as God's chosen people. Jesus did not seek to destroy Judaism. Jesus was a Jew. Much of what Jesus said we can find in the words of the law and the prophets of Judaism. The purpose of Christianity is not to destroy or convert Jews.

The purpose of Christians is this: Love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love your neighbor (including your Jewish neighbor) as you love yourself. End of story. For God's sake, let's give it a try.



~ The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse  
Transitional Minister