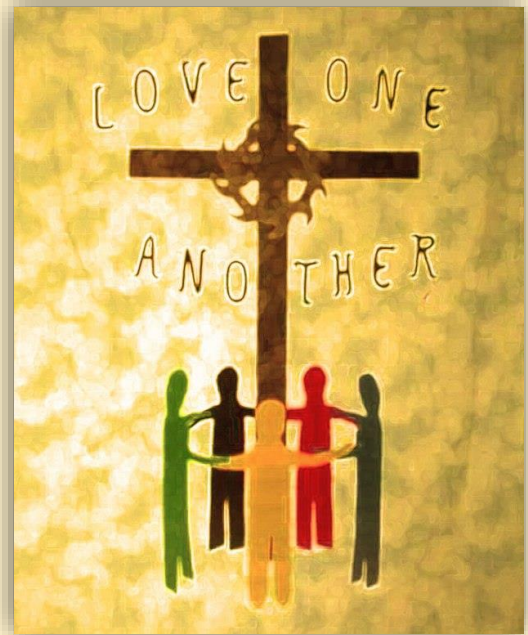


## **FIRST AND CENTER**

**Pastor's Blog**

**November 14, 2018**

In the “good news” department this week, Connecticut celebrated the tenth anniversary of the legalization of marriage between same-gender partners! In the words of Lin-Manuel Miranda, this ruling celebrated that “Love is love is love is love.” Thanks be to God that in Connecticut (and now, nationwide) people in leadership saw the truth of that and enabled same-gender partners to have the same rights and responsibilities as hetero partners.



I did my first wedding at Center Church about ten days ago (congrats, Logan and Dani!) And then, this past Sunday we blessed the marriage of Maegen and Kyle, who had been married this summer in Vermont, but wanted the blessing of this congregation. There is a line in the wedding service I often use (for all couples) that notes that there is an ancient tradition that every time two people commit to one another for a lifetime, the whole world is blessed. That kind of love, tradition goes, emanates from the couple to all of us, and we find that we can celebrate and live love more fully ourselves.

I believe that is true. If you get a chance to check out the Facebook Live recording of the Sunday Service, you will see our children reaching out their hands in blessing to Maegen and Kyle. Their love and joy simply beamed out through their hands and eyes. Their presence at that moment gave me hope. For I believe one of the main functions of a church is to grow disciples for Jesus, and the central commandments Jesus gave us all include the command to love. We need to teach our children and remind each other as adults not to be enemies of love in any part of our lives, but rather partners of love, fulfilling the command, even when it is hard, to love one another as we have been loved by God.

As 1 John 3:18 puts it: *“Little children, let us love one another not just with words but in action and truth.”*

~ The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,  
Transitional Minister