



FIRST AND CENTER

Pastor's Blog

October 4, 2017

Last Thursday, one of our family cats, Jericho, aged almost 22 years, died. That's what I intended to write about in my blog post this week. I wanted to tell you what a gift he had been to our family. He chose my oldest son when we were in a "cat room" in a large animal shelter in Scituate, Massachusetts when Luke was almost 4 and our daughter Leah was 18 months old. Luke is now almost 24 and Leah is 21. Our son, Ben, had not yet been born when we brought Jericho home, and he's now 19. So, Jericho helped us raise all our kids, teaching them about caring for a pet, learning about animals from a pet, learning about love from a pet, and learning about death from him as well. A formidable mouser in his prime, Jericho spent the last couple of years happy to curl up on a lap, purr, sleep, and just love us. We all became better at loving because this cat loved us and we loved him.

That's what I wanted to write about. Then, the shootings in Las Vegas happened. There is no reason at all for any person outside the military to have an assault weapon. The only purpose for such a weapon is to kill people faster. You don't use it to hunt or for target practice. It is a death machine. We need to tell every legislator on every level this until the assault gun ban is reinstated. Period.

Then, I began to read stories of what happened that night, and how people loved one another, spouses protecting each other, strangers trying to get the wounded to safety, people holding the hand of a dying person they did not know. And I'm back to love. In the midst of a gun that spewed hate, people insisted on loving one another. Where did they learn to love like that? At home? At church? From a cat? I don't know, but I do know this: we need to double down everywhere on teaching love. Period.

~ Rev. Shelly Stackhouse,
Pastor