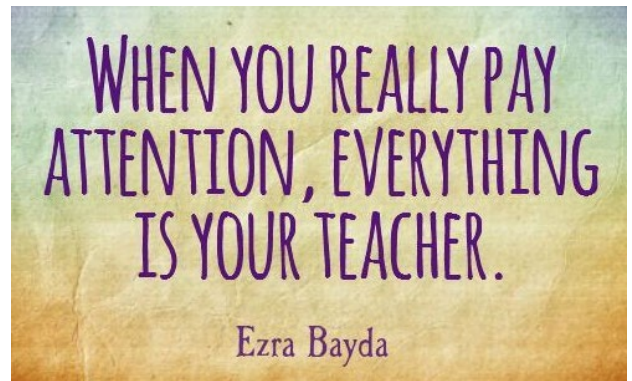


First and Center
Pastor's Blog
September 17, 2019



Pay attention. I probably said those words thousands of times to my children when they were young. I sometimes say it now when members of the church say no one told them about something that was in the weekly email, newsletter, and announced in church! Pet peeve of most clergy, by the way.

Pay attention: the earth is telling us something about the climate changing, and we need to listen and learn and act.

Pay attention: we are a little over a year from a Presidential and Congressional election, and we need to pay attention to who is running and whom we want to support.

Pay attention: the rights of women and minorities in this country are being whittled away piece by piece. We cannot let this happen; the consequences are too clear from history.

Pay attention: to history. It is indeed true that those who do not study and learn from the past are doomed to repeat it. And in the case of what's going on today in Washington, we are doomed to repeat it because of people in power who have not learned from the past.

Pay attention: to the ways God is surely at work in the midst of all the stuff going on today. There is always hope, always possibility, always love lurking, even in unexpected places.

I heard earlier today that one of my sheroes died today. Cokie Roberts worked as a journalist with both NPR and ABC News. A pioneering woman in broadcasting, hers became a voice I trusted to help me figure out what was going on in the world. I learned to pay attention when Cokie reported, because I knew it was something that would help me navigate.

Is there someone in your life, or in the larger world, that helps you figure things out? The gospels are a go-to for me; have you read them lately? Are you listening to what's going on in the world? It matters! Pay attention!!

~ The Rev. Shelly Stackhouse
Transitional Minister