



October 22, 2017

In the Wake of Las Vegas

There are more things to say in the wake of Las Vegas shooting than can be given voice in this brief reflection. Let me share these words in the interest of provoking faithful conversation and hopeful change.

I am a gun owner. Have been all my life. From hunting to target shooting to military service, guns have been part of my family for as long as anyone can remember. I carry the memories of my grandfather and his father in the firearms they past to me. Along with them I carry the expectations and ethics for their careful use.

Americans have added to the firearms of our forefathers hand-held and shoulder fired weapons of mass destruction. But we have abandoned the ethic or the expectation for their careful use in a culture that is increasingly driven by fear, division and emotional reactivity. There is a reasonableness to our relationship with guns that is being denied, to protect a right without commensurate responsibility, and our days are growing more and more deadly.

I fully recognize the complexity of this matter. But there must be some coming together across the divide of this issue for without that, increasing numbers of our neighbors will be killed. I am NOT okay with that. We are the people for whom God crossed the boundaries of time and space to connect us with the source of all life, eternal life and each other; so that when one part of the body suffers, we all suffer. The pain of this suffering we bring upon ourselves. Which means we can end it.

If you have not been praying about gun violence, start. If you have been, add more prayer partners. If you are not telling stories/talking about firearms in your congregations and communities, start. If you have been, please let me know so I can pass the word to others. If you're not sure how to start, call me.

Together can we make a change and change is what is needed to find better ways of living into the grace that keeps this world.

- Rev. William P. Worley, Conference Minister

Three Great Loves

Beginning at Synod 2017 and ending at Synod 2019, through the lens of the 3 Great Loves, the United Church of Christ in its many settings of ministry will discern and lift up how we act upon these 3 Great Loves. As we do so, we will tell the story of how we are impacting and transforming the world, as covenantal partners united in common purpose and mission.



So, let's begin...

Now through Spring 2018

Love of Neighbor



Whether it's a neighbor in need who lives next door or on the other side of the world, many are faced with hunger, homelessness, and basic health needs; how does your church incarnate the love of Jesus in seeking to love your neighbor?

The national office wants to hear from you about how you're building a just world for all! Tell us how you (or your church) show love of neighbor, love of children, and love of creation. You can share information about how your ongoing ministry or volunteer work shows the love of Christ or share a story about a particular time your actions illustrated a 3 great love.

To share the great works your church and/or volunteers are doing, go to: <http://3greatloves.uccpages.org/gathering.html>

Remember there is a 3 Great Loves Toolkit. Link to it via the slider at the top of the PSEC website.