



January 7, 2021

Just after saying “Amen” in the recording of my sermon this week, Jon, our tech partner, called out that the US Capitol had been stormed (and a few hours later the governor’s mansion in our own state). There is no reality in which this is okay.

Media reports have mirrored our reactions, with some being carefully modulated and others as heated as we have been conditioned to expect and use in current public discourse.

There is so much wrong with the actions of these people in WADC. These were terrorizing, bullying, violent actions from our neighbors and fellow citizens instead of positive, helpful participation in a community.

As people of faith, God has called us to respond: take it to Jesus, denounce violent actions and speech, and work for justice. Time and time again when people of faith have been confronted with tragedy, hate, fear, violence, death and abuse of power, we take it to Jesus.

We get on our knees and pray. We lament the pain. We use our real words from the heart to let God know that we are hurting and that our hope still lies in the strength and promises of Jesus. We take comfort knowing that Jesus walks with us in this life no matter where we are, no matter what’s happening.

And then we get up off our knees and go out into the world – which is the Kingdom of God – with Jesus, and we speak and work for justice. This event didn’t happen in a vacuum. Tensions in this country have been building and have been stoked for years - maybe forever. Every time justice is subverted we are all hurt.

So, we repent of our part in the perpetuation of injustice and seek to root it out: we go out to stand for the just treatment of all. We go out and stand with those who have been abused by the powerful. We stand with those who are at the mercy of a system that discriminates against people because of their skin color, economic status, or social class. We stand with our siblings who are suffering for lack of their basic needs being met. We stand with those who have been incarcerated and sentenced harshly. We stand with our siblings who suffer from mental or physical illnesses. We stand with Jesus and our neighbor, and we work for justice. We stand, and we speak.

Wednesday, January 6, is the day the church celebrates Epiphany – the coming of the Magi and the revelation of Jesus as Savior and light of the world. This year, the day revealed more than our savior. It revealed how much work there still is to do in our country.

And still, our call as followers of Jesus is the same today as it was before Wednesday: to love and serve God and our neighbor, to pray for healing and work for reconciliation, to stand against violence and intimidation, to promote justice for all.

Praying for peace and justice for you,  
Pastors Kent and Alison Shane