



November 8, 2017

IN DIFFICULT TIMES

Last Sunday, we honored All Saints' Day in worship. As I looked around the sanctuary, I remembered all of the times that we met for memorial services, in hospital rooms, and for prayer for the ones we have loved and lost.

It was just two hours later that the congregation of the First Baptist Church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, met for worship, and then met with violence. There are too many who have joined too soon with the company of the saints. It was true last Sunday, and on many days before.

I pray to God with lamentation for the scourge of violence that claims too many lives. I pray with thanksgiving for the lives of those who have died. I pray for faith.

I've been remembering the words of Anne Frank. Her diary has been read again and again, not only because of the terrible world from which it comes, but for the spirit that inspired the one who wrote it.

"It's difficult in times like these: ideals, dreams and cherished hopes rise within us, only to be crushed by grim reality. It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart. It's utterly impossible for me to build my life on a foundation of chaos, suffering and death. I see the world being slowly transformed into a wilderness, I hear the approaching thunder that, one day, will destroy us too, I feel the suffering of millions. And yet, when I look up at the sky, I somehow feel that everything will change for the better, that this cruelty too shall end, that peace and tranquility will return once more. In the meantime, I must hold on to my ideals. Perhaps the day will come when I'll be able to realize them!"

I'll see you in church.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Matthew Wooster
Senior Minister