

Remarks by the Rev. Shawn Fiedler of King's Chapel
Interfaith Memorial Service at Emmanuel Episcopal Church on Newbury Street.
June 15, 2016

On Silence

I am young. Like, super young. I am the same age as most of those who died that evening.

I remember seeing a picture in a textbook in history class that featured a pink triangle and the words 'Silence = Death.'

And I have to admit that those words, that picture, has always stumped me. Of course, I understood what it represented. The pink triangle a reminder of those LGBTQ persons who were murdered during the holocaust. 'Silence = Death', a phrase from the AIDS crisis when thousands upon thousands of LGBTQ people were burying their beloveds, their friends, and the nation tried to silence those who cried out.

But I am young—and I didn't live through those moments.

How many times will we go through this routine? A bombing. A shooting. An attack rooted in fear and hatred. How many times will we gather together and hold moments of silence. We stand holding silence; prayerful pause to grieve, to reflect, to remember the dead. How many times will we do this? How many times? How many times will we hold silence until the silence becomes who we are?

Sisters and brothers, we cannot simply have moments of silence and think our work as people of faith is done.

Here's what my tradition teaches: God will not do, what God has given us to do.

God will not do, what God has given us to do, which is to put our bodies, our love, our passions, our voices, and perhaps even our votes where we say they are: in solidarity with those who are suffering.

God will not do, what God has given us to do, which is to teach and preach, work and weep, yell and scream until those who will not listen, who refuse to see us, hear us and see us.

God will not do, what God has given us to do, which is to act-up and act-out, be bold and proud, to never *never* **never** let up, so that our voices—along with the voices of those who have never been able to speak—join together and drown out hatred and fear...because: Silence = Death.

