

## **A Prayer of Confession & Hope**

*By: Rev. Dr. Rob McClellan, Westminster Presbyterian Church –Tiburon, CA*

The member assisting with worship this morning came to my study before the service and asked if he could add to the Scripture reading. This is not a usual occurrence, asking for more Scripture! It became clear his motivation when he told me which verse it was, from the Kethuvim, a verse that speaks of wisdom,

***Proverbs 3:18:***

***She is a tree of life to those who grasp her,  
And whoever holds on to her is happy.***

Let us pray,

How sad they must be, they who have lost touch with wisdom, whose fingers no longer recognize the texture of the bark on the tree of life and who instead grasp for the steely trigger of violence fueled by ignorance or hatred or prejudice.

Heal my own ignorance and hatred and prejudice.

Forgive my forgetfulness of what it requires to cooperate with the divine in building a world with love and forgive the forgetfulness of my people.

As a Christian, I repent of the ways in which I have been too silent in the face of anti-Semitism, of taking advantage of being able to be in solidarity when it is convenient, of thinking too easily, “this too shall pass,” when it is, in part, my responsibility to help it pass.

As a Christian, I denounce violence and I acknowledge the power of words to incite violence. I turn to the power of the word to birth new creation, and a peaceable kingdom for all.

And finally, as a Christian, I remember that the one I claim to follow was born a Jew, lived a Jew, died a Jew. I do not pray as a friend of the Jewish people. I pray as kin.

As kin, as family, I pray a blessing on our gathering this night, on those from every tradition, on those who find themselves between traditions, on those who feel no connection to a formal tradition at all, that in Spirit we are made aware of connection, that our prayers mystically reach those directly affected by bloodshed in Pittsburgh, and that we are emboldened to walk side by side wherever we must go until, grasping in the dark if we must, we find once again our common wisdom. Amen.