



Righteous Anger

Rebekah Choate

Minister for Global Advocacy and Education with Global Ministries

This month I will be celebrating my child's first birthday. As that milestone approaches, I have found myself reflecting on all the things that have changed in the past year. Many are joyful, happy changes like watching my child's personality develop. Some are expected, yet difficult changes like getting less sleep. Others were completely unexpected and were unnoticed until something happened that brought them to light.

One of the changes in that last category has emerged since the end of my parental leave in January and has made itself obvious in the last few weeks. I can no longer read, watch, or listen to news about children being severely injured or killed. Reading news articles about children being killed by bombs in Sudan, Gaza, and Ukraine and by gun violence here in the United States can bring me to tears. Hearing about the abuses being faced by children and families in immigration detention facilities makes me horrified and upset. Even news stories about children killed in accidents are more upsetting than they used to be.

And I don't think these feelings are unique, but they were not something I was prepared to experience. I was prepared for the emotional swings of pregnancy and the immediate post-birth phase, but I have come to realize that these feelings are more than just a result of swings in my hormones. They are a result of permanent changes to my personality now that I am a mother.

I am deeply angry and sad that anyone could hurt a child or think that the death of a child in war is



acceptable “collateral damage.” I am also deeply angered by the people who say that advocating for an end to gun violence or an end to war is being “too political.” Everyone should want children to live safe, happy lives without the fear of violence of any kind. And we all should be sad and upset when children are killed regardless of the circumstances.

And all that is on top of my rage at the hypocrisy shown by many of our elected officials who want women in this country to have more children, all while cutting healthcare, SNAP, WIC, and other benefits that could support women who choose to have children. Not to mention the fact that there is no federal guarantee of parental leave, leaving it up to states and the “generosity” of employers. All while our representatives in Congress benefit from a generous leave policy that they take advantage of when they are sick.

I am so angry about the state of the world and the fact that we can’t seem to solve our differences without bombs. But my child has also brought so much joy and wonder into my life that my call to do advocacy work has been strengthened. Until our swords are turned into plowshares and our spears into pruning hooks, until we love our neighbor as we love ourselves, we still have work to do. Let’s go make some good trouble with our righteous anger.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rebekah Choate serves as Minister for Global Advocacy and Education with Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ.

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