

Being 'right with God' is not enough

Feb. 11, 2020

To the Editor,

Response to letter in Jan 31 issue by Ian Moone 'Focus on Faith, Not Climate Change'

The letter by Ian Moone in response to former councillor Bill Kilpatrick raises three points all of which are dubious if not downright fallacious.

- He asserts that we, who live in small towns, are helpless to do anything that can affect climate change or anything of a global nature, so should just concentrate on our local community and our relationship to God. - He appears to accuse Bill Kilpatrick of causing children nightmares about climate change. He argues that if we 'get right with God' nothing can rattle us.

If the first was true then Abraham Lincoln, Joan of Arc, Mahatma Ghandhi, and Jesus Christ (all from very small towns) should have stayed at home and minded their own businesses rather than mess around with issues they should have left to the grown-ups in the big cities.

The second implication that it is Bill Kilpatrick who is causing children's nightmares about climate change certainly grants Bill global powers way beyond Bancroft. Is he responsible for Greta Thunberg and the worldwide movement of young people terrified for their future? Or is the insinuation really about his daughter? After all, how could a young, intelligent, courageous girl come to her own conclusions about what is imperilling her generation's future? In fact that generation is most endangered because of the adult world's complacency, indifference and even hostility to the issue as evidenced by Mr. Moone's letter.

The third point Mr. Moone makes is perhaps the most alarming. If we 'keep faith with God' nothing can rattle us. Is that so? What about the millions of Jews who devoutly put their faith in God as they were led to the crematoriums? What about the Christians who were fed to the lions in the Roman colosseum? What about the devout Christians who were burned at the stake by other devout Christians with slightly different beliefs? While burning on the stake were they not a bit 'rattled'? Or perhaps it only applies to those of the 'true faith' who did the burning? What about the Hindus massacred by devout Muslims or the Muslims massacred by devout Hindus? Alas, faith does not always take care of everything nor guarantee even a modicum of ethical behaviour, in fact it often justifies the very opposite, providing a license to kill the blasphemer, heretic, or unbeliever who is an insult to this or that creed's God.

Finally there is the underlying assumption that Bill Kilpatrick should mind his own business and instead attend to local issues in his community. I have now lived in this community for seven years. Whether helping to build community vegetable gardens to feed the poor, coming out to vigils for women's rights, supporting the good work of Northern Hastings Community Trust, helping supply firewood to people endangered by the cold, hosting numerous charitable activities throughout town, being the only councillor willing to meet with citizens protesting the exorbitant raise in water rates, it was Bill Kilpatrick who was always there. I did not see a single other councillor at any of the important community centered events I attended in the seven years I have lived here. If anyone in town lives up to the Christian ideal of charity and 'loving thy neighbour,' it is Bill Kilpatrick. Mr. Moone owes a profound apology to both Bill Kilpatrick and his daughter who prove their civic worth and sense of personal responsibility every day. I would ask what have you done Mr. Moone for this community to compare? Being 'right with God' is not enough, and has never been enough. If there is a God, I expect he or she expects more of us. That we do what we can to fight evil, and do what we can to create good in the world. That is what should be expected of us not only by a God, but by our children who depend on us for their lives and safety.

Eric Weiner,
Bancroft