



Action Alert

From the Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness
Compassion, Peace, and Justice Ministries

Raising A Prophetic Voice through the Social Justice Policy of Presbyterians since 1946

Our hearts are breaking. Within the span of one week, the United States has been devastated by the scourge of gun violence in Uvalde, Texas, Buffalo, New York, and Santa Ana, California. In an elementary school, beautiful children were slain by an 18-year-old in possession of two assault weapons and a handgun purchased days after his birthday. In Buffalo, African Americans who went to the grocery store were murdered by someone to whom they posed no threat of replacement. In California, Presbyterians, in one of our congregations, Irvine Taiwanese Presbyterian Church, were killed by someone who considered their presence offensive.

Each situation is radically different, the persons affected are from diverse backgrounds, and the causes are not capable of being understood by a rational mind. But what each one has in common is the fact that the possession of guns made the acts possible. The abundance of weapons of mass destruction in the hands of Americans is causing this country to bleed. The all-too available, easy access, to both legal and illegal firearms, is a plague to this nation.

It is time that we come to the conclusion that some rights are not as valuable as others. The right to life is supreme. The right to go to school, the grocery store, or church, and return home safely, reigns over the right to possess a gun. Regardless of how angry it might make some, or the confrontations we will face, the church must take a firm and unapologetic stand against gun violence by agreeing that the first step is the limitation of the possession of guns by Americans. And that includes handguns, especially assault weapons. We cannot back down from that position because lives are at stake and the mental well-being of our children is at risk.

There are at least two important steps we must take. Barrage your members of Congress demanding that the Senate pass an extensive background check for every gun purchase. The Enhanced Background Checks Act of 2021 passed the House of Representatives in March 2021. The Senate must pass this bill. Secondly, we demand that Congress rescinds the 2005 Protection of Lawful Commerce in Arms Act that shields gun manufacturers from lawsuits. The parents of Sandy Hook are relentless in pursuing lawsuits and are making some breakthroughs. Gun manufacturers must be held accountable by people of faith calling them out publicly in local communities, writing letter-after-letter to the editor in newspapers, and holding protests in front of facilities protesting that they are a public nuisance and a threat to world peace. Our concentration is on an end to gun violence in this country, but also around the world and these companies play a major role in the proliferation of weapons globally.

As followers of Jesus, we affirm him as the Prince of Peace. If we are to be true to our discipleship, then it will mean sacrificial exertion on our part. We must move into uncomfortable spaces and extend ourselves for the benefit of others. We cannot be comfortable until the world is transformed into a safer place for our children. We cannot experience peace until there is peace for all. We cannot be silent, and we will not allow our detractors to silence us. Something will be done, the question is, will we be a part of it? Young adults are mobilizing even as you read this statement. Students Demand Action called for a

walk-out by students from classrooms on Thursday at noon. March for our Lives organizers will be in Washington, DC, on June 11th for a mass rally and march. What are we going to do?

Jesus set the example for us when he took the time to bless the little children, despite the objections of others, illustrating that they must be first in our lives. "People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them." (Mark 10:13-16)

Contact your Senators NOW and tell them to end gun violence!

Click the link below to log in and send your message:

https://www.votervoice.net/BroadcastLinks/LL_RKGB1RNBEYO0w8N1FA