Gun Violence in North Carolina
Faith and Gun Violence

- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. *Matthew 5:9*
- God said to me, “Have you seen this, son of man? Is it a trivial matter for the people of Judah to do the detestable things they are doing here? Must they also fill the land with violence and continually arouse my anger?” *Ezekiel 8:17*
- He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. *Isaiah 2:4*
- And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love. *1 Corinthians 13:13*

The Council's View on Gun Violence

Several times in the past couple of decades, the North Carolina Council of Churches has spoken out about the proliferation of guns and gun violence. In 1994, we said:

**Gun violence, especially handgun violence, has increasingly become a cause for alarm in our nation and state.** As Christians, we especially are disturbed. The way of Christ is a way of peace, reconciliation, forgiveness, and love for enemies. The spirit of Christ is sharply opposed to the spirit of violence and the instruments of violence. It is also opposed to the law of retaliation or responding to injury with injury. Christ rejected the use of violence in the pursuit of his mission. When one of the disciples drew his sword in defense of Jesus, the Lord said, “Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword” (Matthew 26:52).

In 2017, we said:

In Christianity, there is the seminal witness of the Prince of Peace. And for many who share the Abrahamic traditions there is the long-standing confession of the prophets reminding us not to put our trust in false idols. In too many cases, guns have become idols worshiped in the misguided pursuit of safety. But the statistics bear out that guns do not inherently keep us safe; in fact, they can and often do put us and those we love in danger.
Gun Violence in America

Black males are 10x more likely than white males to be shot and injured in assaults involving guns.

Gun Violence in North Carolina

Gun violence poses a serious health risk to the people of North Carolina, claiming over 1,311 lives each year.2

From 2007 to 2016, 209 women were killed with a gun by their intimate partner in North Carolina.3

Guns are the 3rd-leading cause of death for North Carolina children ages 1–17.4

There have been at least 9,037 shootings here since 2014 in NC

3,813 people were killed; 7,566 people were injured5
Solutions to Prevent Gun Violence in North Carolina

What Legislators Can Do:

Save our Background Check System on all handgun sales

- 2020 brought record gun sales as panic-buying continued to climb during the COVID-19 pandemic, making strong background check laws even more important. ⁶

Pass extreme risk protection legislation

- This allows families and household members, as well as law enforcement officers, to petition a court to remove an individual’s access to guns if he or she poses an imminent danger to self or others. ⁷

Invest in violence intervention programs

- Violence intervention programs have been shown to be effective at breaking the cycle of gun violence in communities that are most impacted. ⁸

Strengthen prohibitions on abusers purchasing firearms

- State laws are needed to subject unmarried domestic violence perpetrators to federal prohibitions on firearm possession and restore judicial discretion to remove firearms from persons subject to domestic violence restraining orders. These legislative changes are associated with a significant reduction in the number of intimate partner homicides.

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