

# Gun Violence

## Breaking News: The Sad Reality of Gun Violence

Rev. Dr. Lavette Renee Paige

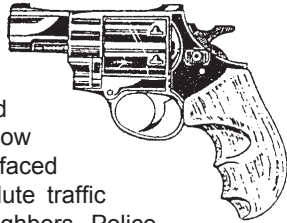
*Coordinating Committee, Heeding God's Call Harrisburg, PA Chapter*

Go in peace! Those are the typical words you can hear me and countless other pastors say to our congregations at the end of the service following the benediction. However, a few weeks ago, as I was preparing to say "Go in Peace", the media was about to say, "Breaking News! a 37 year old African American taxi cab driver, who simply asked for his fare, was murdered. The driver was gunned down in the city of Harrisburg – right between three churches and a mosque!" As the shots rang out, we immediately prayed for God's peace and God's mercy to be with the families and we prayed for the end of this terrible gun violence! When our service ended, the detectives instructed us on how to leave the building. We had to exit from the side door because yellow tape surrounded the crime scene that faced our main entrance. It was an absolute traffic nightmare for our members and neighbors. Police barricades, set up to prevent approaching vehicles from entering the crime scene, blocked our parking lot - a space that is usually set aside for worshippers, part of the sacred space of the church, a place where people should be able to feel safe.

When we hear the words - Breaking News, the average person will turn up the sound and feel a sense of curiosity and dismay. This time, our church and congregation were in the middle of the news story! Later, when I heard that the 20 year old suspect had turned himself in to the police, I began to experience several emotions. First of all, I felt relieved that a murderer was off our streets. However, my next emotion was heartache for the friends and family members of those victimized because of illegal guns in our streets. One mother lost a son to a fatal gunshot and another mother will likely lose a son to imprisonment. Two lives irrevocably impacted and countless other lives negatively influenced. "How could this happen?" is the question everyone was asking; and it is a question to which the church must respond.

The Harrisburg chapter of Heeding God's Call responds immediately to each act of gun violence with public prayer vigils and by personally reaching out to the victim's family. These prayer vigils are a way to bring a sense of peace to a community struggling for answers when anger, overwhelming grief, and sadness is their reality. While our short term goal is to bring comfort to the family and neighbors, our long term goal is to end gun violence and work with local gun stores to stop the straw purchases of handguns that feed the illegal gun trade. The sad reality is that most of the victims and perpetrators of gun violence are young African American males and more often than not, the guns have been obtained through illegal means.

This is not an issue that the church can address alone. Nor can the church ignore the situation and retreat inside, close the doors and do nothing. For the church to do nothing is simply not an



option. Indeed, what Heeding God's Call represents is important. It is absolutely necessary that we pray, and it is important to stand together hand-in-hand with our faith in God – to raise our voices and take action to end gun violence. James 2:17-18 states, "...faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do."

Sadly, we allow illegal guns to enter economically depressed neighborhoods that are already weighed down with a host of systemic problems. The presence of these guns leads to the further detriment of everyone in the community. These tragic acts of violence and senseless murders in our community must end! The epidemic of illegal guns and senseless gun violence can be eradicated. It is a problem that can be resolved by working together to Raise Awareness, Inspire Hope, and Take Action to rid our streets of illegal handguns!

Breaking News: Illegal guns are bad in the hands of anyone – from any age – any background or race! Go in peace! ■

*Rev. Lavette Paige is pastor of Martin Luther King Baptist Church, Harrisburg, PA*

## The Church: Change Agent for Peace

Rev. Belita D. Mitchell

*Chair, Coordinating Committee, Heeding God's Call, Harrisburg, PA Chapter*

*The Rev. Belita Mitchell is a Church of the Brethren pastor who champions the cause of things that make for peace. In her work with Heeding God's Call, Rev. Mitchell strives to bring together people of faith who will stand together to say, "Something must change" and be actively engaged to eliminate illegal gun traffic and the violence that ensues from the use of illegal guns. She explains here her philosophy of how and why the church can be involved in the work against gun violence.*

Too many lives are being destroyed and damaged through the use of illegal guns. More often than not, those being killed are young Black or Hispanic men. The shootings that don't result in death frequently leave lingering complications in health and well-being. In the instance of homicides, the children and families of victims and perpetrators are irrevocably impacted. The community also suffers, because attitudes of hopelessness and helplessness often follow such losses.

As people of faith, the church must join across denominational and theological boundaries to say "It doesn't have to be this way." The role of the church in shaping the collective consciousness is to set a high moral standard which places value on human life and emphasizes the importance of community. Maintaining the safety and sanctity of each of us is the responsibility of us all. Serving as change agents for peace, we can offer hope and support for a better way of behaving to those who might choose to carry and use a gun illegally, as well as those who, through negligence or intention, sell guns into the illegal market.

The call for an end to violence in our streets needs to be supported by the means to achieve that purpose. Programs that educate about the dangers of unchecked illegal gun traffic can be the start of raising awareness. Churches are an ideal place for these educational and inspirational activities to prevail.

## GOD'S CHALLENGE: Hearing the call

*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life, so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him and holding fast to him. ~ Deuteronomy 30:19*

More than 30,000 people are killed by firearms each year in the United States. More than 30 people are shot and murdered each day. Half of them are between the ages of 18 and 35. One third of them are under the age of 20.

Since 1963, when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated, more Americans have been killed by guns in our own country in peacetime than all US military personnel killed in all our wars in the 20th century.

### ***It doesn't have to be this way! We can CHOOSE LIFE!***

The United States has an estimated 283 million guns in civilian hands. Each year about 4.5 million new firearms are sold in this country. Nearly half of these are handguns. Where there are more guns, there are more gun deaths. Higher household gun ownership correlates with higher rates of homicide, suicide and unintentional shooting.

In a typical year, guns are used to murder 30 people in Australia, 60 people in England & Wales, 200 people in Canada, and in the United States... over 10,000!

### ***It doesn't have to be this way! We can CHOOSE LIFE!***

Our shared humanity compels us to care about our brothers and sisters and children dying from gun violence. Our shared laws connect us to their tragic deaths. This is a uniquely US American problem! No other developed country allows individuals the incredible ease of access to guns that we do. No other developed country accepts the prevalence of criminal gun trafficking that we do - networks that move handguns from legal sale at licensed gun stores to illegal street sale. Our country's weak gun laws enable and encourage profit making, at all levels from this death-dealing trade in illegal weapons.

None of us are immune from the affects of this violence. No community - affluent or poor - urban, suburban or rural - black, white, immigrant, native - no community is safe from the wounding, the heart-numbing trauma, the hopelessness. Gun violence may be concentrated in certain cities and neighborhoods, but it's everyone's problem. It's a threat to an entire nation. It's a threat to our souls.

### ***The Church: Change Agent for Peace – Continued from page 1***

The platforms of the pulpit, the Christian Education department, and the fellowship groups of all ages can be used simultaneously to share the message of change and the possibility for a mobilized, action-oriented alternative to the senseless loss of life.

Often times the faith community is able to command the attention of their constituents as well as local social and governmental agencies. This access increases the likelihood that the message for change will be heard. The persistent attention to the ills of handgun violence will no doubt continue to widen the circle of awareness and build pressure on decision makers to "heed the call". As long as straw purchases are allowed to take place on a regular and routine basis, the church must continue the work to reverse that trend. Education to raise awareness of the problem, inspiration to learn skills for a non violent lifestyle, and public witness to demonstrate solidarity are all necessary components to be "Change Agents for Peace". ■

*Rev. Belita Mitchell is pastor of Harrisburg First Church of the Brethren, Harrisburg, PA*

## OUR RESPONSE: Heeding the call

*Since then, we have such a hope, we act with great boldness. ~ 2 Corinthians 3:12*

In recent years, local faith communities have begun to join with community anti-violence efforts, and begun a sustained long-term effort to get this issue into the consciousness, hearts, hands and feet of people of faith in the city and in the suburbs. The vision is nothing less than an appreciable reduction in the number of lives lost to gun violence.

A multi-faith organization, begun in Philadelphia in 2009 and quickly spreading to other cities, has organized thousands of people of faith to advocate with local gun shops to adopt a "code of conduct" to deter straw purchasing and illegal trafficking of handguns. Heeding God's Call (see *Resources* on page 6) is raising moral and social barriers to trafficking handguns and inspiring hope by giving people the ability to do something that makes a real difference. The long term goal is to create enough political support to implement legislation to prevent gun violence by engaging and organizing ever-increasing numbers of people of faith at all points of the political spectrum to raise voices and take action.

Heeding God's Call provides inspiration, support and resources for faith communities to form multi-racial, ecumenical and interfaith partnerships to prevent gun violence in their communities. These diverse partnerships increase the effectiveness, power and impact of the advocacy and public witness that can and does save lives.

## HOPE, COMMUNITY, ACTION!

*Let us hold fast to the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who has promised is faithful. ~ Hebrews 10:23*

Experience has shown that effective faith-based organizing for gun violence prevention includes public witness on personal, social and political levels, as well as effective outreach and educational effort.

Political advocacy is not enough to end gun violence in the United States. We simply cannot achieve our goal of saving lives without a sea change in cultural values. Your fundamental objective is to energize a wave of moral and spiritual power that transforms the way the community thinks, feels, and responds to gun violence. Legislative and policy change will follow this wave, rather than lead it.

Below are some suggestions for inspiring and effecting positive change in your congregation and community.

**Educate your congregation about gun violence.** Use online resources, as well as personal contacts with state and national gun violence prevention organizations, to bring speakers and develop educational materials to inform yourselves about the scope of the issue and social and political strategies to address it. Find storytellers, poets, musicians and artists to engage your congregation in a "face-to-face" understanding of the personal toll of gun violence. Connect with, and support the work of, local violence prevention community programs.

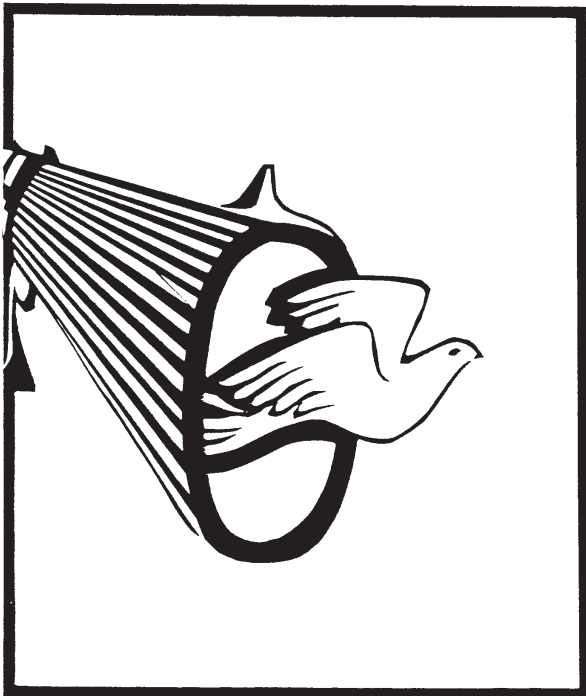
**Make a congregational commitment to take action to end gun violence.** Engage your congregation in a process of discernment and commitment to take positive action to address some of the root causes of gun violence in your country and in your community. A sample *Covenant of Commitment to Act to End Gun*

Violence is presented here for your reference (see page 6), and to serve as a starting point for discussion in your church.

**Organize or participate in prayer vigils and public witness at/near the site of shootings in your area.** A gathering of people of faith and conscience at the physical site where a shooting recently occurred is a powerful experience for those present and for those who witness the event. This kind of public presence makes real the dedication and willingness to support the families and local communities affected by gun violence. Press coverage of these events widens the visibility of the witness and can bring more people into the movement to end gun violence.

**Work with local gun shops to adopt a “code of conduct” to eliminate straw purchasing.** Organize an advocacy campaign asking that handgun retailers in your community conduct business in a responsible way that minimizes guns from their shop being sold and used illegally. The linchpins of gun trafficking are criminal entrepreneurs, “straw buyers” who stand in for them to make their bulk purchases and the gun dealers who look the other way and enjoy the profits from volume sales. Walmart recently signed a Partnership Agreement with the coalition of Mayors Against Illegal Guns, intended to minimize straw purchasing. The Partnership Agreement is a ten-point “code of conduct” (see sidebar) that Walmart has adopted for all gun sales. If Walmart can act as a good corporate citizen in the interest of preventing straw purchasing of guns and resulting gun violence, so can gun shops in your community. Doing so would make a serious and permanent dent in the illegal gun business, making illegal guns far less available on streets and in neighborhoods.

**Organize public demonstrations at gun stores that refuse to adopt the code of conduct.** Such a public witness is likely to gain substantial press coverage and appeal to many citizens. Adopting this code of conduct does not require significant expense, and would not cut into profits of any gun dealer who wants to keep handguns off the streets and out of criminal hands. This will be seen by press and public as reasonable. The public nature of the witness will inspire hope by giving people the ability to do something that can make a real difference.



**Partner with other faith communities across economic, religious and racial lines to develop programs, promote awareness and develop legislative and other strategies.**

We need each other in all our glorious and challenging differences to sustain and grow the kind of social change we are after. As we bring together different perspectives, different experiences, different needs and different competencies, we increase the effectiveness, power and impact of our actions. ■

***If you want to walk fast, walk alone. If you want to walk far, walk together. ~ African Proverb***

## **A 10-Point Voluntary Code**

### **RESPONSIBLE FIREARMS RETAILER PARTNERSHIP**

**1. Videotaping the Point of Sale for All Firearms Transactions.** Participating retailers will videotape the point-of-sale of all firearms transactions and maintain videos for six months to deter illegal purchases and monitor employees.

**2. Computerized Crime Gun Trace Log and Alert System.** A computerized system will be provided that participating retailers will implement over time to log crime gun traces relating to the retailer. Once the program is in place, if a customer who has a prior trace at that retailer attempts to purchase a firearm, the sale will be electronically flagged. The retailer would have discretion to proceed with the sale or stop the sale.

**3. Purchaser Declaration.** For sales flagged by the trace alert system, participating retailers will ask purchasers to fill out a declaration indicating that they meet the legal requirement to purchase the firearm.

**4. Deterring Fake IDs.** Participating retailers will only accept valid federal- or state-issued picture IDs as primary identification. Retailers will utilize additional ID checking mechanisms.

**5. Consistent Visible Signage.** Participating retailers will post signage provided by Heeding God’s Call to alert customers of their legal responsibilities at the point-of-sale.

**6. Employee Background Checks.** Participating retailers will conduct criminal background checks for all employees selling or handling firearms.

**7. Employee Responsibility Training.** Participating retailers will participate in an employee responsibility training program focused on deterring illegal purchases. Heeding God’s Call will provide an online training system based on Walmart’s training program.

**8. Inventory Checking.** Participating retailers will conduct daily and quarterly audits. Heeding God’s Call will provide guidelines based on Walmart’s existing audit procedures.

**9. No Sales Without Background Check Results.** Participating retailers would prohibit sales based on “default proceeds,” which are permitted by law when background check has not returned a result within 3 days.

**10. Securing Firearms.** Participating retailers will maintain firearms kept in customer accessible areas in locked cases or locked racks. ■

## STATS: Gun Violence in the United States

### Gun Ownership

- The US has an estimated 283 million guns in civilian hands
- Each year about 4.5 million firearms, including approximately 2 million handguns, are sold in the US
- An estimated 2 million second hand firearms are sold each year
- The percentage of American households with a gun has been steadily declining (1977=54% 2009=33%)
- The average number of guns per owner has increased from 4.1 in 1994 to 6.9 in 2004.

*Injury Prevention (2007); ATF (2000); National Opinion Research Center (2008); Pew Research Center (2009)*

### Gun Deaths

- More than 30,000 people are killed by firearms each year in the US
- More than 30 people are shot and murdered each day
  - 1/2 of them are between the ages of 18 and 35
  - 1/3 of them are under the age of 20
- Homicide is the 2nd leading cause of death among 15-24 year-olds

### Gun Homicides (average annually)

- Less than 50: Japan
- Less than 150: Germany, Italy, France
- Less than 200: Canada
- More than 10,000: USA

*IANSA (International Action Network on Small Arms of the United Nations)*

### Injuries and Deaths from Guns

Every time a gun injures or kills in self-defense, one is used:

- 11 times in a completed or attempted suicide
- 7 times in a criminal assault or homicide
- 4 times in an unintentional shooting death or injury

*Journal of Trauma, injury, Infection and Critical Care (1998)*

### Costs of Gun Violence

- Firearm homicides and assaults cost federal, state and local governments \$4.7 billion annually including costs for medical care, mental health, emergency transport, police, criminal justice and lost taxes. They also state that when lost productivity, lost quality of life, and pain and suffering are

added to medical costs, estimates of the annual cost of firearm violence range from \$20 billion to \$100 billion.

- US taxpayers pay for almost half (\$1.1 billion or 49%) of lifetime medical costs for gunshot injuries

*Public Services Research Institute in 2008*

### Guns Recovered from Crime

- Only 1% of gun dealers account for almost 60% of crime guns recovered and traced by police
- In one year, at least 30,000 guns were "lost" out of gun dealers inventories
- Guns with a short "time to crime" are disproportionately represented among crime guns. Guns sold as part of a multiple sale at a gun dealer were up to 64% more likely to be used in a crime than guns not part of such sales.
- "No background check" sales account for an estimated 40% of gun sales in the U.S.

*ATF (2000); Brady Center; National Institute of Justice (1993, 2007); Police Foundation (1997)*

### Some Interesting Poll Data

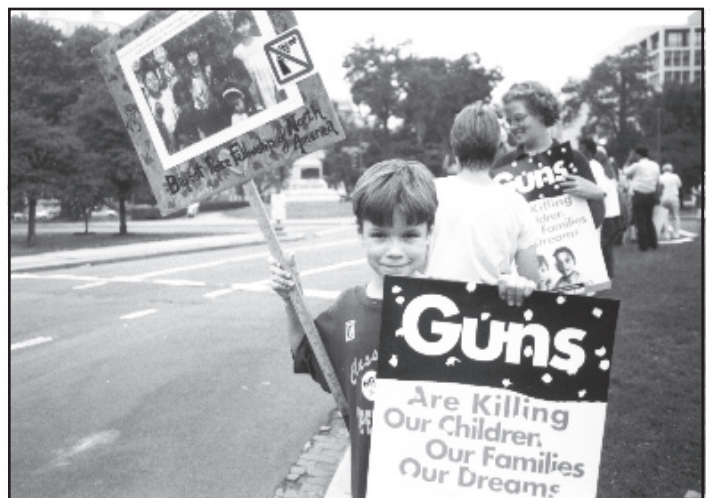
- 77% of NRA members favor a waiting period for purchase of a handgun
- 82% of American support limiting the sales of military-style assault weapons
- 94% of police chiefs favor requiring a background check for all handgun sales.
- Support for background checks on private gun sales, including gun shows:
  - 87% of Americans, 83% of gun owners, 69% of NRA gun owners
- Support for limiting handgun sales to one per person per month:
  - 65% of Americans, 59% of gun owners
- Support for registration of handguns
  - 79% of Americans, 69% of police chiefs, 61% of gun owners, 59% of NRA members

*CNN/Opinion Research Corporation Poll (2008); Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research (2008); Mayors Against Illegal Guns (2009); National Opinion Research Center (2003); American Journal of Preventative Medicine (2006); Violence & Victims (1993) ■*

## Thanks!

We are deeply grateful to the Harrisburg, PA chapter of Heeding God's Call for creating this monograph. Therese Miller, Rev. Belita Mitchell, and Rev. Lavette Paige (organizer of the chapter's Quick Response Witness prayer vigils at shooting sights) all contributed. Our deepest thanks go to them for this resource and for their faithful witness through this work.

Therese Miller is one of the founders of Heeding God's Call, and was Director of the national ecumenical peace gathering by the same name, held in January 2009. Peace gathering planners organized a full day of programming at ten different houses of worship across the greater Philadelphia area, concluding with a rally at a gun shop notorious for its key role in the illegal trafficking of handguns. This significant public witness, with over 1,000 people demonstrating in the street in single-digit temperatures, provided the incubator and birthplace of Heeding God's Call, a fast-growing coalition of faith communities taking action to prevent gun violence. Heeding God's Call held regular vigils at this gun shop, Colosimo's Gun Center in Philadelphia, until September 2009 when the US Department of Justice filed charges against the owner. A week later, the shop was closed.



Jon Buttry at a Baptist Peace Fellowship vigil outside the National Rifle Association's headquarters in Washington, DC. 1998



## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Why shouldn't we just hire more police? Doesn't that mean we'll be safer without sacrificing gun owners' rights?

Without doubt, better and more efficient law enforcement is a critical part of reducing gun crime and violence. But, as police chiefs across the country have said repeatedly: "We cannot arrest our way out of this problem." Law enforcement executives know that handguns move far too easily from legal sale at gun shops to illegal sale on street corners and across playgrounds. This knowledge is why law enforcement typically favors moderate limits on handgun purchases. Lawful societies have a duty to balance individual privilege with public safety. Ours does it every day using laws and legislation. Whatever the gun lobby may want people to believe, there is no absolute "right" to purchase as many handguns as anyone might wish. Besides, it is fanciful to describe limiting individuals to the purchase of twelve handguns per year as a sacrifice of anything other than the ability to illegally supply handguns to prohibited purchasers who cannot buy handguns legally themselves.

### 2. Isn't gun violence just an urban problem?

No, illegal handgun violence strikes nearly every community of any size across the USA. Recently released FBI data shows that, while crime in general has declined in recent years across the country, handgun crime and violence has increased. Evidence from cities and towns in PA, such as Allentown, York, Reading, Harrisburg, Erie and others, confirms this trend. This is a symptom of the growing efficiency of the business of illegal handguns, which puts handguns into the hands of more and younger people. Sadly, more handguns in more hands translates into more death and injury. As long as lax gun laws encourage the easy movement of handguns from gun shops to illegal street sale, handgun crime and violence will grow across the country.

### 3. Doesn't the Constitution guarantee me the right to have as many guns as I want in my home?

No, of course not. The US Supreme Court recently struck down a Washington, DC municipal ordinance banning private possession of handguns and found that individuals have a right to possess handguns in their homes for self-defense. However, in the same ruling the Court specifically approved the ability of states and municipalities to regulate the possession and purchase of firearms, including quantities of same.

### 4. I'm a hunter and I just want to hunt deer. Why do you want to take away my rights?

No one is seeking to interfere in any way with your ability to hunt. We seek only to reduce the availability of handguns to people we all agree shouldn't have them. Legislation we seek, mainly a law to limit the number and frequency of purchase of handguns, does not restrict long gun sales or purchases at all. And, limiting individuals to as many as twelve handguns per year is not a hardship on anyone but illegal handgun traffickers and their criminal customers.

### 5. Doesn't having a handgun in my house make me safer?

There is abundant evidence that keeping a handgun in a home makes that home much less safe. Handguns in homes are far more likely to be used to wound or kill residents of the home, their families, friends or neighbors than any intruder. Law enforcers recommend alarms and

dogs as more effective and infinitely safer ways to discourage intruders.

### 6. Do gun violence prevention laws prevent crime? The NRA says no.

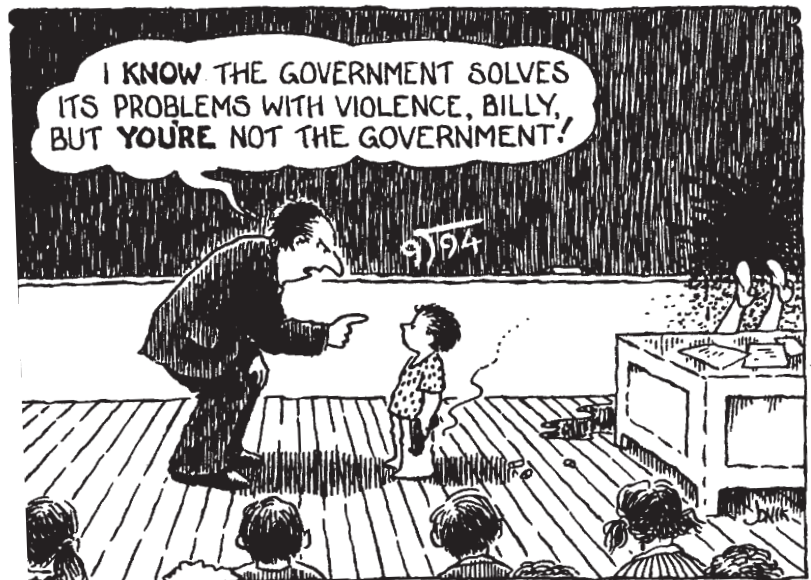
Every other developed country in the world, including our neighbor Canada, has laws that severely limit the availability of handguns. These same countries also have crime and violence, much like ours in the US. But none of these countries has more than a tiny fraction of the rate of the per capita handgun crime and violence that we have. Further, the American states that typically have the lowest per capita rates of handgun violence are also among the states with the strongest gun laws. Clearly, laws to prevent handgun violence work.

### 7. Why is it that in cities with strong gun control legislation, like Washington DC, the homicide rate is higher than in cities with weaker/fewer laws?

Actually, according to a recently released study, Philadelphia, under Pennsylvania's weak gun laws, has the highest rate of violent crime among the largest cities in the country. Note that New York, which has among the most strict gun regulations, has a rate substantially less than half that of Philadelphia's, and two cities among the ten most populous in the country, San Diego and San Jose, also have among the lowest rates of gun violence. Both exist under California's strict gun laws. More germane yet is that the states with the lowest per capita rates of gun violence (per federal CDC data) are all states with relatively strong gun laws (MA, HI, NJ, NY and CT)

### 8. Why are hunters and other sportsmen so opposed to handgun control? You don't shoot deer with a handgun!

Actually, most hunters and sportsmen are not opposed to reasonable limits on access to handguns. It just seems that they are because the gun lobby spends millions of dollars in public campaigns to convince the media and politicians that they speak for everyday hunters and sportsmen, when, in fact, they speak for the gun industry that funds their activities. Rather, hunters and sportsmen are every bit as concerned about illegal handgun crime as are gun violence prevention advocates, and most of them favor moderate limits on handgun purchases. According to a recent Pennsylvania statewide survey, for instance, a majority of hunters support a statewide One Handgun A Month law. ■



## Covenant of Commitment to Act to End Gun Violence

*I call heaven and earth to witness against you today that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life, so that you and your descendants may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying him and holding fast to him. ~ Deuteronomy 30:19*

Through these words, we are called to order our communities and human relationships to reflect God's justice and the promise of Shalom. We are deeply committed to upholding the value of human life and opposing those forces which threaten it. The overwhelming presence of guns in our national consciousness cannot be separated from the communal despair we feel as we witness our self-destruction. It is time to address this helplessness. The scandalous level of firearms violence in the United States screams to heaven for healing. The groans of the victims demand a response from the faith community – a response rooted in the confidence of the prophetic vision that our communities will one day be restored to safety.

*BECAUSE we are losing eight children a day to gun-related deaths;*

*BECAUSE too many children, families and communities are thrown into desperate grief and trauma;*

*BECAUSE too many congregations have buried children and sought to bring the comfort of God's peace to families wracked by this epidemic of violence;*

*BECAUSE we cannot do this work alone...*

We join in covenant with other communities of faith to raise awareness of gun violence as a spiritual and moral crisis.

We call on every congregation, synagogue, mosque, and gathering of people of faith to work toward a peaceable society where all children have the opportunity to grow and prosper, and

where everyone can live without fear of being cut down by firearm violence.

We commit ourselves to:

- Educate our congregation about gun violence prevention;
- Work with local gun shops to adopt a "Code of Conduct" to eliminate legal purchases of guns for illegal resale (straw purchases).
- Partner with other faith communities across geographic, religious and racial lines to develop programs, promote awareness and develop community and legislative strategies;
- Actively support and collaborate with local gun violence prevention organizations and efforts in our local communities.

As people of faith, we embrace Dr. Martin Luther King's hope for peace and safety in our communities. We resist apathy to this epidemic of violence, because fear, closed doors, and separation will not end it. We unite to bring God's vision of a peaceable kingdom.



## Resources

### Organizations

1. Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence: [www.bradycampaign.org](http://www.bradycampaign.org)
2. Coalition to Stop Gun Violence: [www.csgv.org](http://www.csgv.org)
3. Heeding God's Call: [www.heedinggodscall.org](http://www.heedinggodscall.org)
4. Mayors Against Illegal Guns Coalition: [www.mayorsagainstillegalguns.org/html/home/home.shtml](http://www.mayorsagainstillegalguns.org/html/home/home.shtml)
5. States United to Prevent Gun Violence: [www.supgv.org](http://www.supgv.org)  
Contains listing of state-based gun violence prevention organizations
6. Faith in Action to Prevent Gun Violence Brady Campaign: [www.bradycenter.org/advocates/faith](http://www.bradycenter.org/advocates/faith)  
Lists ways for a congregation to be involved as well as free Faith Resources including sermons, a worship guide and other materials.

### Information/Data

1. "Limited Access: Mobilizing for Gun Control", Rev. Dr. Drick Boyd, *Christian Century*, 26 July 2011
2. Centers for Disease Control data on state firearm death rates (Violence Policy Center): [www.vpc.org/fadeathchart.htm](http://www.vpc.org/fadeathchart.htm)

3. Trace the Guns: The Link Between Gun Laws and Interstate Gun Trafficking: [www.heedinggodscall.org/files/pdf/MAIG-20100927-guns-report-\(final\).pdf](http://www.heedinggodscall.org/files/pdf/MAIG-20100927-guns-report-(final).pdf)

### Curriculum/Worship

1. Preventing Gun Violence: A 4-session study guide developed by the Mennonite Central Committee <https://resources.mcc.org/content/preventing-gun-violence-packet>
2. Comprehensive Worship Guide: [www.bradycenter.org/site/DocServer/SabbathGuide\\_08.pdf?docID=941](http://www.bradycenter.org/site/DocServer/SabbathGuide_08.pdf?docID=941)

### Resolutions

1. "Ending Gun Violence: A resolution and Call to Action" National Council of Churches (PDF download available) [www.ncccusa.org/NCCpolicies/endinggunviolence.pdf](http://www.ncccusa.org/NCCpolicies/endinggunviolence.pdf)
2. "Gun Violence, Gospel Values: Mobilizing in Response to God's Call", Presbyterian Church USA (PDF download available) <http://www.pcusa.org/resource/gun-violence-gospel-values-mobilizing-response-god/>  
This is a substantial piece with lots of good material.



**Baptist Peace Fellowship  
of North America**

4800 Wedgewood Dr. | Charlotte, NC 28210 USA  
704/521-6051 | [www.bpna.org](http://www.bpna.org)

*The Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America gathers, equips and mobilizes Baptists to build a culture of peace rooted in justice. We labour with a wonderful array of peacemakers to change the world.*