



## Memorial to the Lost

**Question:** How many shirts are on display here?

**Answer:** 265.

**Q:** Why 265?

**A:** That's how many residents of Philadelphia were murdered in 2017 by guns, which maintains Philadelphia's position as having the highest *per capita* gun death rate of the ten most populous American cities.

**Q:** What's the point of the Memorial?

**A:** Each shirt has the name, age and the date of each 2017 victim's death. Each name represents a whole human being, a child of God. Each one deserves to be remembered. Each death deserves to be noted and mourned.

**Q:** It looks like a cemetery.

**A:** Unlike a cemetery, this memorial isn't put behind trees and gates where no one can see it. It's on public view where folks driving, biking, or walking by can be reminded of the gun violence that happens day in and day out—in Philadelphia, yes, and throughout the country.

**Q:** What are you expecting people to feel when they see the memorial and realize what it is?

A. Some feel grief at the tremendous loss of life, some sadness for the families and friends who have lost a loved one. Others feel anger at the slaughter that destroys so many lives—or anger at those who allow it to go on...

Q: I don't feel like I can just walk away. What can I do to help?

A: There are many possible responses to the carnage, just as there many causes for violence. We at *Heeding God's Call to End Gun Violence* focus on combating the flow of illegal guns, in particular straw purchasing.

Q: Straw purchasing?

A: Straw purchasing is when a person buys a gun—or many guns—for resale to people who cannot legally buy weapons for themselves because they have a criminal record, certain domestic violence or mental illness issues or because they're not old enough to buy them. Straw purchasing is the main way that handguns flood onto the streets and end up illegally in the hands of those who become responsible for the loss of, or injury to, our fragile human lives, and the lives of those we love.

Q: Can you tell me more about *Heeding God's Call to End Gun Violence*?

A: Our organization is made up of multi-faith communities banding together to curb illegal gun trafficking. We hold public vigils at gun shops where straw purchases happen and public witnesses at gun murder sites, and we raise awareness and educate about gun violence through presentations to religious and other community groups.

Q: How can I help?

A: You can join us. Go to our website and fill out the contact form to receive our notices. You can root for us and pray for us. You can assist us financially with a donation of any size. You can use your own experience and skill set to help us. Just let us know how you would like to help, see contact information below.

Q: That's it?

A: Remember to pray for the 265 lives that were lost last year—and the ones still being lost daily—and for the families mourning every one of those lost lives. And spread the word. Tell everyone you meet.

When great numbers of us join together in prayerful action, things will change. They will.

**HEEDING GOD'S CALL TO END GUN VIOLENCE™**

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## Litany Honoring Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Leader: In every time in history, God has chosen men and women to serve the needs of his people. Such a servant was Martin Luther King, Jr., whose birth we celebrate. We are deeply thankful for the life of this twentieth century prophet.

**People: May the wisdom and words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. rekindle our faith.**

Leader: May the deep love that Dr. King had for all people give us vision and courage, that we too might work miracles in the lives of those who continue to hate.

**People: Dr. King taught that only love can overcome hatred, bitterness and fear.**

Leader: May his struggle for social transformation continue in this generation. May all people come to believe that with perseverance, "We Shall Overcome."

**People: "But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." (Amos. 5:24)**

Leader: May the work of Dr. King continue to eradicate racial justice and its ungodly consequences.

**People: Dr. King pursued his dream of racial equality by appealing to the conscience of his enemies.**

Leader: May we continue to cultivate the nonviolent discipline of Dr. King, abandoning unrestrained acts of force.

**People: He taught us that a heart full of grace and love is just as important as an education.**

Leader: May the spirit of Dr. King continue to flow through our daily living.

**People: He believed in self-respect and dignity, even though he knew that there would be difficult days ahead.**

Leader: May we have the courage of Dr. King as we continue to stand up for justice, reconciliation and truth, despite challenge and controversy.

**People: Dr. King said that war is never a victory, regardless of the outcome.**

Leader: May the peace of the risen Christ cause the fury of war to vanish from the face of the earth.

**All: Dr. King went to the mountain top; he saw the Promised Land; and he reassured us that we will get there one day. God of Glory, be with us on the journey.**

# God of Mercy, You Have Shown Us

## A Hymn Lamenting Gun Violence

BEACH SPRING 8.7.8.7 D



God of mer - cy, you have shown us ways of liv - ing that are  
On a street where neigh - bors gath - er, shots are heard; a young girl -  
God, we pray for those who suf - fer when this world seems so un -  
God, re - new our faith and vi - sion; make us those who bold - ly



good: "Work for jus - tice, treas - ure kind - ness, hum - bly  
dies. On a cam - pus, stu - dents scat - ter as the  
fair; May your church be quick to of - fer lov - ing  
lead! May we work for just de - ci - sions that bring



jour - ney with the Lord." Yet your peo - ple here are  
vio - lence claims more lives. In a fam - ily filled with  
com - fort, gen - tle care. And we pray: A - mid the  
true se - cur - i - ty. Help us change this vio - lent



griev - ing, hurt by wea - pons that de - stroy. Help us  
an - ger, tem - pers flare and shots re - sound. God of  
vio - lence, may we speak your truth, O Lord! Give us  
cul - ture based on i - dols, built on fear. Help us



turn to you, be - liev - ing in your way that brings us joy.  
love, we weep and won - der at the vio - lence all a - round.  
strength to break the si - lence, say - ing, "This can be no more!"  
build a peace - ful fu - ture with your world of peo - ple here.

Biblical References: Micah 6:8; Luke 1:79; Romans 12:15; I John 4:16-21; Matthew 5:9

Tune: The Sacred Harp, 1844. Harm. James H. Wood, 1958.

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In interfaith worship services, this line may be used:

Change the original text of "May your church be quick to offer loving comfort, gentle care."

to interfaith text: "May we all be quick to offer loving, comfort, gentle care."

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