

GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, gun violence is an increasing public health crisis in our state and nation.

- Gun violence claims the lives of over 400 people every year in Minnesota, devastates the lives of over 500 others who are wounded but not killed¹, and costs the state over \$764 million in measurable expenses.² 75% of gun deaths in Minnesota are suicides.
- Gun violence takes the lives of over 36,000 Americans every year.⁴
- Gun violence is the third leading cause of death of children and youth in America, the second leading cause of death of all male youth, and the first leading cause of death of African American male youth.⁵
- Women in the U.S. are 16 times more likely to be killed with a gun than women in other high-income countries.⁶

WHEREAS, public health studies have repeatedly shown that states with the strongest gun violence prevention measures have the lowest rates of gun violence death in all forms.⁷

WHEREAS, as Christians we are called to recognize the pain of those who have lost loved ones by gun violence, the suffering of those who have been injured by gun violence, and the anguish of those incarcerated on account of gun violence--and then to act to prevent such devastations in the future. From scripture we learn that:

- Every human being is created in the image of God, so the loss of even one life from gun violence is an affront to our Creator. (Genesis 1:27, Romans 8:31-39)
- God hears the cries of those who are oppressed and victimized, and sends God's faithful servants to respond by speaking truth to power. (Exodus 3)
- Jesus wept at the tomb of his friend Lazarus, so he understood human grief over the loss of a loved one; he also said "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God." (John 11:35, Matt 5:9)
- Christians are called to action on behalf of our suffering neighbor. (Luke 10:30-37)

WHEREAS, the ELCA Message on Community Violence adopted in 1994 by the ELCA Church Council "calls on members of this church to consider how they might become more involved in countering the reality and fear of violence in their communities."⁸

WHEREAS, a Pastoral Letter on Violence adopted by the ELCA Conference of Bishops in 2013 states that "every person wounded or killed is a precious child of God," and "as bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we lament the tragedy of gun violence in our country." And, invites the whole Church to "the work of advocacy—acting to address the causes and effects of violence."⁹

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod Bishop and staff urge congressional representatives, state legislators, and the governor to support gun violence prevention measures;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Bishop and the Public Voice Committee encourage rostered ministers and congregational leaders of the Minneapolis Area Synod to urge the intent of this resolution to their congressional representatives, state legislators, and the governor;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Public Voice Committee equip members of the Minneapolis Area Synod to engage in education, conversation, and action regarding the prevention of gun violence.

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52 Adopted by: Edina Community Lutheran Church congregation on February 11, 2018 and Crosstown Conference on
53 February 25, 2018

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Background Information

59 1 Minnesota Department of Health

60 2 “The Economic Cost of Gun Violence in Minnesota,” Americans for Responsible Solutions, December 1, 2017.

61 3 Minnesota Department of Health

62 4 ProCon.org, “US Gun Deaths, 1999-2015: Suicides, Homicides, Unintentional Deaths, Legal Intervention Deaths,
63 Deaths from Undetermined Consequences.” July 31, 2017. [http://gun-](http://gun-control.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=006094)
64 [control.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=006094](http://gun-control.procon.org/view.resource.php?resourceID=006094)

65 5 Miniño, 2010; Webster, Whitehill, Vernick, & Curriero, 2012. As reported in “Gun Violence: Prediction,
66 Prevention and Policy,” American Psychiatric Association, by Eric Mankowski

67 6 Grinshteyn, E., & Hemenway, D. (2016). Violent death rates: the US compared with other high-income OECD
68 countries, 2010. *The American journal of medicine*, 129(3), 266-273.

69 7 Firearm Legislation and Firearm-Related Fatalities in the United States. Eric W. Fleegler, MD, MPH; Lois K.
70 Lee, MD, MPH; Michael C. Monuteaux, ScD; David Hemenway, PhD; Rebekah Mannix, MD, MPH. *JAMA Intern*
71 *Med.* 2013;173(9):732-740. Doi: 10.1001/jamainternmed.2013.1286

72 8 elca.org, A Message on Community Violence, 1994: [http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-](http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Community-Violence?_ga=2.212534804.1849969423.1521152000-551583403.1516304168)
73 [Messages/Community-Violence?_ga=2.212534804.1849969423.1521152000-551583403.1516304168](http://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Community-Violence?_ga=2.212534804.1849969423.1521152000-551583403.1516304168)

74 9 elca.org, A Pastoral Letter from the Conference of Bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America,
75 March 4, 2013.

76 [http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/COB_Pastoral_Letter_On_Violence.pdf?_ga=2.1127](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/COB_Pastoral_Letter_On_Violence.pdf?_ga=2.112790020.1849969423.1521152000-551583403.1516304168)
77 [90020.1849969423.1521152000-551583403.1516304168](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/COB_Pastoral_Letter_On_Violence.pdf?_ga=2.112790020.1849969423.1521152000-551583403.1516304168)

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