

Remembering All Who Have Been Affected By Gun Violence

(Adapted from Moral Call: a Vermont Interfaith Prayer and Remembrance Vigil, December 15, 2015)

Leader: We raise our prayers in remembrance of the victims of gun violence, both those who have been injured and those who have been killed, in Parkland, Florida; in cities and towns across our country, and close to home in Connecticut. We hold their memories dear. We treasure those lives permanently altered through injury or those taken in senseless acts of violence, and we pray that they might find rest and peace. May their lives continue to make a difference in our world. Together we pray.

All: God of Mercy, heal our broken hearts.

Leader: We raise our prayers in remembrance of the families and friends of the victims of gun violence in our nation and in Connecticut. Comfort those who mourn. Dry the tears of those who weep. Sustain those who feel diminished. Impart courage to the hearts of those who feel helpless. Together we pray.

All: God of Peace, sustain our broken hearts.

Leader: We raise our prayers in remembrance of all communities torn apart by gun violence. We are too familiar with places like Parkland, Florida; Columbine and Aurora, Colorado; Orlando, Florida; Newtown, Connecticut; Roseburg, Oregon; Charleston and Townville, South Carolina; and the cities of Connecticut. Each incident of violence affects all of us in our daily lives and work. Renew our resolve to pursue peace in our cities and towns and to respect the dignity of all human beings. Together we pray.

All: God of Comfort, encourage our broken hearts.

Leader: We raise our prayers in remembrance of school teachers and administrators who put their students' needs ahead of their own safety. We pray for first responders, including police, fire and rescue personnel who witness the horror of gun violence while in service to our communities, and we pray for all those with responsibility for law enforcement. We give thanks for their call to protect and serve and to seek justice, which is inspirational to others, and we pray that their emotional wounds will be healed.
Together we pray.

All: God of Courage, inspire our broken hearts.

Leader: We raise our prayers for those lives taken by gun violence through suicide, and also for those lives taken through accidental shootings, especially when those shootings involve children. Console and strengthen those whose despair is great.
Together we pray.

All: God of Hope, comfort our broken hearts.

Leader: We raise our prayers in remembrance of all people impacted by gun violence, as gun violence knows no boundaries but can affect all nationalities, races, cultures, faiths, genders, and socioeconomic classes; it can affect us where we live, where we worship, where we work, where we study, and where we play.
Together we pray.

All: God of Love, transform our broken hearts.

Leader: We raise our prayers for those who have committed acts of gun violence and for their families, in our nation and especially here in Connecticut. We remember those suffering from mental illness who have gone untreated, and those suffering from loneliness and isolation. We pray for those who would use guns, power and violence rather than respect and dignity to reconcile differences. Grant us the strength to pursue justice with a voice of love.
Together we pray.

All: God of Forgiveness, enlighten our broken hearts.

Leader: We raise our prayers for all community leaders and elected officials. We pray especially for the young adult leaders of the March for our Lives movement. Give them insight, wisdom, and courage to address head on the epidemic of gun violence. Pour forth your Spirit on all our neighborhoods and break the chains of violence that bind your people.

All: God of Power, strengthen our broken hearts.

Leader: We pray today for ourselves and for others in our lives who have been touched by gun violence. During the silent pause, I invite you to offer the names (either silently or aloud) of those for whom you pray.

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Together we pray.

All: God of Astonishing Mercy, Compassion and Immeasurable Love, restore our broken hearts and enliven our confidence to find new ways to revive our world to become one of peace. Amen