

BISHOPS UNITED AGAINST GUN VIOLENCE

2023 Advocacy Gathering Presenter Bios

Pastor Delonte Gholston

Senior Pastor, Peace Fellowship Church and Organizer, PeaceWalksDC

Delonte Gholston was born and raised in Washington D.C., and was educated in DC public schools, Swarthmore College, Georgetown University, and Fuller Theological Seminary.

Raised in the National Baptist Church as a teacher, preacher and musician, his passion for advocacy and development is deeply rooted in his faith. It has led him to serve as part of church renewal and planting movements in Washington and Los Angeles. Gholston is committed to using his passion for art, theology, and social change to bring life and flourishing both to cities and to rural areas. This passion fueled his work with the Downtown LA Clergy Council where he served as the director for the Trust Talks, a community transformation initiative between the Los Angeles Police Department and key stakeholders in downtown Los Angeles.

He currently serves as the senior pastor of Peace Fellowship Church in Deadwood and organizes PeaceWalksDC, a coalition of churches, community organizations, survivors and advocates committed to ending police and community violence.

Roger Marmet

Founder, Peace for DC

Roger Marmet is working to reduce gun violence to honor the memory of his son, Tom Marmet, as well as every other victim of homicide in the district. Tom was 22 when he was killed on October 24, 2018, driving home from his first job out of college, working for So Others Might Eat. Tom's murder was another senseless but preventable tragedy in the plague of Washington's gun violence.

Since then, Roger has dedicated his time to advocacy, and now to action. He is dedicated to building community-powered resources to save lives in the district's most dangerous neighborhoods and bringing philanthropy to helping reduce the homicide rate in the city.

Roger was born in Washington D.C. and had a long career in television before entering the restaurant business. He has been active in the leadership of nonprofit organizations and is now committed to bringing resources to the most desperately needed neighborhoods in the city that he—and his son—loved so much for all their lives.

The Rev. George C. Gilbert Jr.

Holy Trinity United Baptist Church and the Center for Racial Equity and Justice

Rev. Gilbert presently serves as the assistant to the pastor at Holy Trinity United Baptist Church; executive director of The Center For Racial Equity And Justice; professor of urban ministry and hermeneutics at the Washington Baptist Seminary; chairman of the Civic and Social Actions

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Committee of the Missionary Baptist Ministers' Conference of Washington, D.C. and Vicinity; chairman of the Social Justice Commission of the Baptist Convention of D.C. and Vicinity; and member of the Social Justice Commission of the Progressive National Baptist Convention (PNBC). Before the COVID-19 pandemic, he served as the Christian services chaplain for the Washington, D.C. Youth Prison, New Beginnings.

Rev. Gilbert is one of the lead organizers and voices in the District of Columbia for justice, Black Power and mobility. The Howard University Alumni honored Rev. Gilbert with the Community Activist Award in 2012. Mayor Byron Brown of Buffalo, New York, proclaimed December 30, 2013, as Reverend George C. Gilbert, Jr. Day. In August 2013, Reverend Gilbert was a convention speaker for the Progressive National Baptist Convention. At the I Have A Dream Anniversary March On Washington in 2021, Rev. Gilbert was one of the speakers of the day. He serves on the Religious Advisory Board for Door Dash and many advisory boards and committees locally.

Daniel Webster, ScD, MPH

Director, Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Prevention and Policy and Bloomberg Professor of American Health

Daniel Webster is the inaugural Bloomberg Professor of American Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health where he directs the Center for Gun Violence Prevention and Policy and serves as co-lead of the Violence Prevention Workgroup of the Bloomberg American Health Initiative. Webster is one of the nation's leading experts on the prevention of gun violence and has published over 120 articles in scientific journals on topics including gun policy, violence prevention, youth violence, intimate partner violence, suicide, and substance abuse. He is the lead editor and a contributor to *Reducing Gun Violence in America: Informing Policy with Evidence and Analysis* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013).

Webster's research has informed policies to reduce gun violence at the local, state, and federal level. He previously led Baltimore's Homicide Review Commission and now leads the Johns Hopkins-Baltimore Collaborative for Violence Reductions. His awards include the American Public Health Association's David Rall Award for science-based advocacy (2015), Baltimore City's Healthy Equity Leadership Award (2016), Pioneer Award from the Injury Free Coalition for Kids (2017), and Johns Hopkins University Distinguished Alumni Award (2017).

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Douglas John Fisher

Bishop, Diocese of Western Massachusetts and Network Participant, Bishops United Against Gun Violence

The Rt. Rev. Douglas J. Fisher has served the Diocese of Western Massachusetts as bishop since December 2012, after serving twelve years as rector of Grace Church, Millbrook, New York. He has been an ardent advocate for gun safety legislation and an active participant in Bishops United Against Gun Violence and has led direct engagement and public witness at Smith and Wesson, Corp. in Springfield. Bishop Fisher has authored resolutions related to gun violence that were passed by the General Convention of the Episcopal Church in 2018 and 2022.

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Bishop Fisher holds a Bachelor of Arts from St. John's University; a Master of Divinity from Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington, New York, where he was awarded the James Newcombe Award for Outstanding Biblical Scholar; and a Doctor of Ministry from Episcopal Divinity School. Before becoming bishop, he also served as pastor of Holy Innocents in Highland Falls, New York, and as chaplain to United States Military Academy at West Point.

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Bonnie A. Perry

Bishop, Episcopal Diocese of Michigan, Founding Member, End Gun Violence Michigan, and Co-Convener, Bishops United Against Gun Violence

The Rt. Rev. Dr. Bonnie A. Perry is the 11th bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Michigan. Before being ordained as bishop in February 2020, she spent 27 years as rector of All Saints' Episcopal Church in Chicago, one of the largest and the most active congregations in the Diocese of Chicago.

Recognized as a leader in the movement toward sensible and safe gun culture, Perry was elected a co-convener of Bishop's United Against Gun Violence and has since helped lead several responses to gun violence in Michigan. Perry is working to bridge divides in race and the secular world by launching a Spirituality and Race initiative throughout the diocese that includes education and conversation surrounding racial justice, reparations, and reconciliation.

Before becoming bishop, Perry earned a bachelor's degree in biology from the College of the Holy Cross, a Jesuit college in Worcester, Massachusetts, and served in the Jesuit Volunteer Corps in West Oakland and Skid Row, Los Angeles. She holds a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary, and a Doctor of Ministry from Seabury Western Theological Seminary in Evanston, Illinois.

Vicki Schroeder

End Gun Violence Michigan, Co-Director, Interfaith Action of SW Michigan

Vicki Schroeder serves as co-director of Interfaith Action of SW Michigan and its lead advisor on gun safety. She is an experienced healthcare leader and consultant and has held executive roles in a number of health care systems.

Vicki holds a bachelor's degree in business administration, summa cum laude, from Nazareth College and a Master of Arts with concentration in healthcare from Siena Heights University, where she received the Outstanding Leadership Award.

Margaret Hilton

Convener, Gun Violence Prevention Ministry, St. John's Episcopal Church, Bethesda-Chevy Chase

Margaret retired from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering in Medicine in 2018, a year punctuated by the Parkland school shooting, the first March for Our Lives and several other mass shootings. That fall, St. John's rector, the Rev. Sari Ateek, invited parishioners to discuss moving beyond "thoughts and prayers," and in January of 2019, Margaret launched the congregation's GVP ministry. The ministry works to prevent gun violence through prayer, education, and action.

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Jan McNamara

Maryland Moms Demand Action and St. John's Episcopal Church, Bethesda-Chevy Chase

Jan Donohoe McNamara became involved in Moms Demand Action soon after her brother-in-law, John McNamara, was killed during the mass shooting that took place on June 28, 2018, at the offices of the Capital Gazette, a community newspaper located in Annapolis, Maryland. Jan is a communications and development professional who has served in key roles for PBS, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, and Imagination Stage, which is one of largest youth-focused theatre and arts education centers on the East Coast.

Melissa Ladd

Chapter Leader, Maryland Moms Demand Action

Melissa Ladd has served as the volunteer chapter leader of Maryland Moms Demand Action for the past two years. She has held various positions within the Maryland Chapter since 2018. In addition to this work, she is a part-time middle school French teacher and mom to two high schoolers.

Keynote Speaker

Ryane B. Nickens

President and Founder, The TraRon Center

Ryane Nickens is founder and president of The TraRon Center, which—through programming, scholarship and consulting—helps those affected by gun violence heal through the arts.

Ryane has experienced the devastation of gun violence deeply and frequently. Her uncle David, sister Tracy and brother Ronnie were all murdered in shootings, and her mother and sister Danielle have been wounded. But from this grief and trauma she has cultivated a life-giving response.

After graduating from North Carolina Central University, Ryane returned to Washington, and took part in mission and advocacy work in Ward 8, the ward she grew up in. In that work, she felt a call to ministry that led her to enroll at the Howard University School of Divinity where she earned a Master of Divinity degree.

Ryane began laying the groundwork for The TraRon Center while she was a student at Howard and an intern with the Washington Interfaith Network. While organizing a gun violence prevention campaign, Ryane gathered 15 mothers of murder victims for a conversation about community safety. That initial meeting of mothers turned into quarterly meetings for families. During these sessions, it became clear that the survivors of shooting victims needed a safe space to deal with their personal traumas before they could effectively address violence in their own communities.

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Utilizing her love for the arts and her advocacy and administrative work experience, Ryane founded the center. Today, she co-chairs the Washington Interfaith Network's Community Safety/Police Accountability team. She also represents the network in the Metro-Industrial Areas Foundation's Do Not Stand Idly By Campaign and serves in an advisor role with the Washington National Cathedral Church's Gun Violence Group.

Her story has been told in People magazine and Politico, and she has been interviewed on National Public Radio. She told the reporter from Politico: "I was dry bones and someone breathed hope and encouragement into me. I'm going to breathe it into others. This is the breath that God has called me to breathe and I will breathe it."