



WWW.WEARORANGE.ORG

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

As we begin to emerge from our long COVID-19 shelter in place, I am mindful that our congregations have much on their hearts and minds. Throughout this time, we have seen both the best and worst of our society. On the one hand, the outpouring of care and support has been profoundly hopeful. Conversely, many ongoing issues have been highlighted or gotten worse; especially the glaring inequity in health care and the epidemic of gun violence, which kills 100 people every single day.

During this pandemic, while mass shootings have decreased, other incidents of gun violence have increased, particularly domestic violence murder and suicide. The combination of conditions where families are forced to shelter with abusers while support services may be more difficult to reach, along with the significant increase in gun sales, have made for dangerous situations.

This is why I am hoping that during **the first weekend of June** your congregation will participate in **WEAR ORANGE**, a gun violence prevention movement of Everytown for Gun Safety and Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America, that honors and remembers the victims and survivors of gun violence. **Wear Orange** encourages everyone in the community to wear the color orange as a symbol of the value of human life and to honor 15 year old Hadiya Pendleton's who was shot and killed in Chicago just one week after performing at President Obama's 2nd inaugural parade in 2013; her favorite color was **orange**.

We are specifically asking that you observe this **WEAR ORANGE** weekend of **June 5 – 7**, in your worship through prayers, sermon, announcements, newsletter, and any creative way that you can imagine to honor those impacted by gun violence as a means of taking action toward healing and hope.

Resources for prayer and your newsletter are included as additional attachments to this email.

To help us capture the breadth of this year's **WEAR ORANGE** movement, it would be of tremendous help to us, for our records, if you can let us know what your congregation does and *very* approximately how many people you believe were reached. My colleague Margo Calano* will contact you for this information after June 7th.

Thank you in advance for your participation in making our communities safer for all who live, work, play, and pray here.

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*Margo Calano, Local Group Event Lead, CT-Shoreline Moms Demand Action
Dawn Carafeno, Local Group Lead, CT-Shoreline Moms Demand Action

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN ANNOUNCEMENT:

WEEKEND OF JUNE 5th-7th

WEAR ORANGE IN HOPE FOR A FUTURE FREE OF GUN VIOLENCE

FACT: 100+: Every day, more than 100 Americans are killed with guns.

FACT: 2ND Firearms are the second leading cause of death for American children and teens.

FACT: 3x Access to a gun increases the risk of death by suicide by 3x.

Our faith tradition teaches us the importance of honoring life and acting decisively against violence. **WEAR ORANGE** is a Gun Violence prevention movement of **Everytown for Gun Safety** <https://everytown.org/> and **Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America** <https://momsdemandaction.org/> that honors the victims and survivors of gun violence in America. **WEAR ORANGE** encourages everyone to wear orange in recognition of the value of human life and to honor Hadiya Pendleton, who was 15 years old when she was gunned down two weeks after her appearance at Obama's inauguration. Her favorite color was orange. www.wearorange.org

*Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt;
you shall raise up the foundations of many generations;
you shall be called the repairer of the breach,
the restorer of streets to live in. (Isaiah 58:12)*

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

1) Gracious God, Inspire us with the gift of shalom, the gift of wholeness and the promise of your presence. Give us wisdom to seek nonviolence as an answer to the violence of our lives and world. Give us courage to seek wholeness in a fractured and divided world, to find reconciliation rather than revenge, to abandon the instruments of violence and death and entrust our lives, our homes and our families to you. May your presence fill us and others with the thirst for unity, wholeness, and the desire to see all people valued as created in your image. May we and others receive your Shalom that we might be faithful instruments of your love. Amen. *(Adapted from Episcopal Peace Fellowship, "Gift of Shalom")*

2) G-d of the slain, G-d of the murdered and the victim,
The voice of lamentation echoes across the land.
Wailing beside graves opened too soon, weeping beside stains of blood
From the dead and the injured pouring forth from bullet wounds:
The child shot, the suicide, the domestic assault, the gang violence,
The mass murder, the long night of death made easy by guns and automatic weapons.
The long night of sorrow made easy by reckless access to machines of slaughter.

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Source of justice, rock of strength and truth,
You call upon us to stand in the name of common sense and reason:
To witness on behalf of the innocent and the cut down –
The widowed, orphaned and bereaved – to answer the scourge of senseless loss,
To advocate for gun control, to remove military weapons from a civilian population,
To return sanity to our laws, our policies and our lives.

Bless those who dedicate themselves to gun control. Grant them fortitude and perseverance.
May the work of their hands never falter nor despair deter them from their holy calling.

Bless those who are mourning the dead. Grant them solace and comfort.
Bless those who are healing from the trauma of gun violence.
Grant them lives of health and prosperity, joy and peace.

Blessed are You, G-d of All being, who summons us to choose life,
First, choose life. Above all, choose life.

By Alden Solovy

3) Let us lament with all those who are touched by gun violence
Let us lament the shooter's choice for violence
Let us lament laws that allow violent men easy access to guns
Let us lament our politicians' unwillingness to work for change
Let us lament with the hearts broken by loss today
Let us lament all the lives cut short today
Let us lament, O God, and then let us rise from our knees to work for change
In the name of Christ, the prince of peace. Amen.

*The Rev. Dr. Ellen Clark-King, Executive Pastor and Canon for Social Justice, Grace Church
Episcopal Cathedral*

Remembering All Who Have Been Affected By Gun Violence
(Adapted from *Moral Call: a Vermont Interfaith Prayer and Remembrance Vigil*)

Leader: We pray in remembrance of those impacted of gun violence, both those who have been injured and those who have been killed 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 pray in remembrance of all communities torn apart by gun violence. We are too familiar with places like Parkland, Columbine, Aurora, Orlando, Newtown, Roseburg, Charleston and El Paso, but there are countless others. 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 pray in remembrance of school teachers and administrators who put their students' needs ahead of their own safety. We pray for first responders 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 pray for those lives taken by gun violence through suicide, and through accidental shootings, especially when those shootings involve children. We pray for those who are impacted by gun violence through domestic violence during this time of pandemic. Console and strengthen those whose despair is great.

Together we pray.

All: God of Hope, comfort our broken hearts.

Leader: We pray 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 pray for those who have committed acts of gun violence and for their families. We remember those suffering from mental illness who have gone untreated, and those suffering from loneliness and isolation. We pray for those who 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.

