

# **#Peacemakers2019: Time to Build a Movement to End Gun Violence**

The communities of El Paso, Texas, and Dayton, Ohio, were attacked by domestic terrorism last weekend.

Family and friends were enjoying a wonderful weekend when their American dream was destroyed by two gunmen filled with rage, anger and hate.

When the bullets fell quiet, over 30 of our fellow citizens lay dead, numerous more injured, and scores of others scarred for life.

Far too often, this type of evil has become far too common in our society. With each mass killing by domestic terrorists, we are quick to offer thoughts and prayers but slow to offer significant changes that could prevent such evil from spreading.

Friends, we must stop this epidemic of violence fueled by hate and carried out through weapons of war.

It has become apparent that certain lawmakers are more interested in conserving their political power rather than attacking this deadly issue.

As a Christian minister, I can no longer stand aside waiting for the next mass

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shooting to erupt. Engaging the topic of domestic gun violence will not be easy, but it is an essential task for any Christian that worships the Prince of Peace.

Jesus understood more than most the unusual paradox of peace. As an advocate and agent for peace, he experienced firsthand that peacemakers were controversial and despised by the powerful. He understood that peace brought division, ultimately costing him his life.

In the Sermon on the Mount, he declared, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God” (Matthew 5:9).

However, merely five chapters later, Jesus proclaimed, “Do not think that I have come to bring peace to earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword” (Matthew 10:34).

He went on to describe the division, “For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and one’s foes will be members of one’s own household” (Matthew 10:35-36).

The paradox of peace is that there will be many who oppose peace based upon power and privilege. Jesus knew firsthand that his gospel of peace for the world would be met with hostility and anger.

Jesus demonstrated that peace could only be achieved through unwavering commitment, remarkable sacrifice and steadfast resolve.

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When Jesus' enemies came to arrest him, Peter wielded his sword, but Jesus responded, "Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword" (Matthew 26:52).

As a Christian minister committed to peace, I am calling on my fellow Christians to take action. We can no longer offer just our thoughts and prayers. Our words must become flesh, dwelling in the world as advocacy and justice.

The time for action is now, and the action we need more than anything is common-sense legislation that would create a more peaceful society.

Therefore, I am asking my fellow disciples to phone their elected officials to demand the following:

1. Pass a domestic terrorism bill protecting citizens from anti-American terrorists within our own borders.
2. Pass sensible gun legislation creating extensive background checks, closing gun show loopholes and eliminating weapons of war from the general population.

These laws can be written and adopted with respect to both the First and Second Amendments.

When James Madison and the other Founding Fathers penned those immortal words of the U.S. Constitution, they encouraged future generations of Americans to become a more perfect union.

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After 200 years of American evolution, we must accept the challenge from the founders and rise up to move this glorious cause forward. We are all Americans, each one too precious to lose to senseless gun violence.

If we can rise up to meet this crisis head on and create a safer environment for future generations of Americans, we can stand proud of making our union a little more perfect for the next generation.

For those interested in making peace, [contact your elected representatives](#) and let them know the time is now to pass a domestic terrorism bill and sensible gun legislation.

After you reach out to them, post your experience on social media with the hashtag: [#Peacemakers2019](#). It's time to build a movement and make a difference before another mass shooting erupts.

We are in this together and only together can we be successful. If we fail, when the next mass shooting explodes, we will all have blood on our hands.

The time is now, pick up the phone, and let's get something done.

[#Peacemakers2019](#)