

A Time For Prayer, Awareness, & Action

The country is dealing with the aftershocks from two mass shootings in as many days in two different regions of the country. Pray for those who have lost loved ones, those who have been injured, and all the families affected. Remember the communities involved. Pray that people will put saving lives and working to prevent such senseless tragedies in the future ahead of the need for personal power and their control issues. Call people to put the good of their neighbors ahead of self-interest and work for the good of all. Help us learn that violence does not solve problems. It only brings death and destruction.



After mass shootings, the media is full of news about the issue of guns and what can be done to stop such incidents from happening. There is a public outcry for action, and political leaders attempt to respond. Some listen to the public and look for workable solutions. Some seek a way to maintain the status quo while doing just enough to be able to say they responded.

Mass tragedies capture the public's attention and give the horrible reality of gun violence a public face for a time. While public attention to the issue may force a needed debate about guns, attention to mass shootings fades, the hard questions about gun violence remain unanswered, meaningful changes are not made. The national love affair with guns continues.

Mass shooting tragedies are not the whole story about guns. The rest of the story affects far more people than do mass shootings, but remains in the shadows. Here is part of that hidden story:

- Only one percent of all gun deaths in the US are from mass shootings
- 22,000 gun deaths in the US each year are from suicide. That included the deaths of 950 children and teenagers
- Two thirds of all gun deaths are suicides, and half of all suicides are gun deaths
- In states with high gun ownership rates, people are four times more likely to die by gun suicide
- Owning a gun triples one's suicide risk and elevates the suicide risk for everyone in the gun owner's household
- The US gun suicide rate is eight times higher than in other high-income countries
- This is one area where laws requiring a permit to purchase a gun along with background check requirements is known to make a measurable difference. When Connecticut enacted such laws, their gun suicide rate dropped 15 percent. When Missouri repealed such laws, their gun suicide rate went up 16 percent.
- 80 percent of children who commit suicide with a gun, use a relatives' gun.

(statistics from Gun Violence Archive & Everytown Research)

This week in your prayer time:

- Pray for victims of violence, especially gun violence.
- Pray for those living with violence or with war.
- Pray for refugees and all displaced people.

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