



Dear Beloved in Christ,

As we work together to engage, equip, and empower God's people to love and follow Jesus, we are reminded of our call to care for all of God's creation. It is within this call, rooted in our Baptismal Covenant, that we turn our attention to the deep wounds inflicted by gun violence, a scourge upon our communities that tears at the very fabric of our common life.

The Episcopal Church is a strong advocate for common-sense gun safety policies. The Church works through its [Office of Government Relations](#) and through the [Episcopal Public Policy Network](#) to end our national epidemic of gun violence. The Church's positions on Gun Safety and Gun Reform have been approved by our General Convention.

In the Fall of 2023, Gun Violence Prevention became the fifth "reality" area of the Episcopal Church in Colorado. These five realities have been consistently named by Episcopal Churches across Colorado as areas of devastating brokenness in our communities and world that require healing and reconciliation in order that all people may live in justice and peace.

Gun violence remains a pressing issue in the United States, with a particularly distressing aspect being its contribution to suicide rates. In Colorado, the impact of gun-related suicides is profound, reflecting a wider national trend where firearms are the most common method used. The accessibility of guns significantly increases the risk of suicide, as impulsive decisions can lead to irreversible outcomes. This aspect of gun violence often receives less public attention than mass shootings or homicides, yet it accounts for a substantial portion of gun-related deaths. Addressing this issue requires a multifaceted approach, including improved mental health services, responsible gun ownership, and community support networks, to effectively reduce the toll of gun violence on individuals and families in Colorado and beyond.

I want to commend the Diocesan Working Group on Gun Violence Prevention, which has taken significant steps in curating resources, discussing possible actions, and furthering the work of gun violence prevention in our diocese. With the passage of the Diocesan Resolution at our 137th Annual Convention, all churches and/or parishes should review the resolution and move forward with its implementation.

I ask your consideration of how your congregation might incorporate regular prayers for gun violence prevention in worship services, e.g., during the Prayers of the People. If your congregation feels called to do the work of gun violence prevention, the next step is to find committed individuals who can help determine the next steps and faithful action. I invite you to take time to learn together and educate yourselves on the reality of gun violence and how other communities have taken steps to prevent gun violence. Lastly, we

encourage you to advocate. Consider joining the Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence (CFCU), a network to learn about and advocate for or against gun legislation that comes before the Colorado General Assembly from January to May.

We have important work to do. We are called to be beacons of hope and agents of change in a world that yearns for the peace and love of Christ. I invite you to this hard work in the assurance that our labors are not in vain and that, with God's help, we will make a difference. May our efforts be blessed with wisdom, our hearts with courage, and our actions with compassion as we work to heal the brokenness around us.

In the steadfast love of Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kimberly D. Lucas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style. A small cross symbol is written to the left of the first name.

The Right Reverend Kimberly D. Lucas
Bishop, The Episcopal Church in Colorado

Divine Love, guide us to deepen our love for you and one another. We mourn the immense harm wrought by gun violence. We earnestly pray for the transformation of hearts by your Holy Spirit, that righteousness may prevail, mercy may flourish, resources may be employed for holy purposes, and that violence may cease. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Savior. Amen.