

RELEASE: Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence – Statement on Parkland School Shooting and Call to Action

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***Interfaith Coalition Issues Statement on Parkland School Shooting and Call to Action***

On Wednesday, February 14, seventeen lives were taken from this Earth at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. We mourn this loss of life, and the transformation of a place of learning and community into a site of death and destruction. To the dead, the injured, and the hundreds of family members, friends, and communities that are grieving, we commit our prayers and our tireless action to prevent gun violence.

The shooting in Parkland is the 30<sup>th</sup> mass shooting since the beginning of the year, six weeks ago. No other country in the world tolerates this level of deadly slaughter. Gun violence shames this country daily.

As members of the faith community, we firmly believe that in the face of gun violence, the invocation of “thoughts and prayers” without action is sacrilege. The job of people of faith—especially those legislators who profess faith—is not to offer empty words. The role of the faith community does not begin after the killings. Statements, prayers, and funerary rites do not exhaust the extent of our work, nor the substance of the faiths we claim. Our faiths call us to transformative action that heals our society.

Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence is a coalition of 50 national faith organizations, denominations, and groups committed to the prevention of gun violence. We engage in advocacy and organizing, seeking legislative and societal change that will transform the reality of “93 gun deaths daily.” In recent months we have held press conferences, advocated with Congressional leaders, worked against state bills that would allow guns in houses of worship, and opposed federal proposals to mandate concealed carry reciprocity.

It is time for faith-based organizations to become part of this larger movement to prevent gun violence. We invite all national faith-based groups to join our coalition.

We call on all faith communities to engage in this work, take up this cause, and ensure that the voices of people of faith are present in the development of solutions to prevent gun violence.

We urge all local, state, and regional faith groups, denominations, and houses of worship to reach out to the members of Faiths United who represent you at a national level in our coalition. Below is a list of these member organizations of Faiths United. Online at [www.faithsunited.org](http://www.faithsunited.org), you can read about the policies and actions we support. We stand ready to help you engage in the call to end gun violence. Together, our voices will be even stronger. Together, we can make a meaningful difference.

We are with you in prayer, in work, and in action of solidarity.

Signed,

**FAITHS UNITED TO PREVENT GUN VIOLENCE**

African American Ministers In Action

African Methodist Episcopal Church – Social Action Commission

Alliance of Baptists

AME Church – Social Action Commission

American Baptist Home Mission Societies

BPFNA ~ Bautistas por la Paz

Bend the Arc Jewish Action

Bishops United Against Gun Violence

Bon Secours Health System, Inc.

Bon Secours Kentucky Health System

Catholic Health Association of the United States

Catholic Health Initiatives

Catholics in Alliance for the Common Good

CHURCH WOMEN UNITED, INC.

Conference of Major Superiors of Men

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces

Disciples Justice Action Network

Dominican Sisters of Peace

The Episcopal Church

Episcopal Peace Fellowship

Faith in Public Life

Fellowship of Reconciliation

Franciscan Action Network

Friends Committee on National Legislation

Global Justice Institute

God Before Guns

Heeding God's Call to End Gun Violence

Jewish Women International

Leadership Conference of Women Religious

Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office

Methodist Federation for Social Action

Metropolitan Community Churches

National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd

National Council of Churches  
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice  
Pace e Bene Nonviolence Service and Campaign Nonviolence  
Pax Christi USA  
Progressive National Baptist Convention, Inc  
Rabbinical Assembly  
Rabbis Against Gun Violence  
Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association  
Sikh Council on Religion and Education  
Sisters of Mercy of the Americas' Institute Leadership Team  
Unitarian Universalist Association  
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries  
The United Methodist Church – General Board of Church and Society  
United Methodist Women  
Union for Reform Judaism  
Washington National Cathedral  
Women of Reform Judaism