

Gun violence: It surrounds us in this country. Just think about how many mass shootings you have heard about in the last month. We barely have time to mourn one before the next one happens. But should we really be surprised? Laws are passed that allow anyone and everyone to carry a gun, no matter the circumstances or the capacity of the person to responsibly handle a weapon. We let people “stand their ground” and invoke the “castle doctrine,” leading to overreactions and unwarranted violence. Having more guns is even offered by some as the answer to our country’s epidemic of gun violence.

As people of faith, this continued gun violence, and the death, injury, and trauma that result from it, should be of particular concern to us. As Christians, we believe that all people who suffer from violence, whether as victims, survivors, family members or communities, are deserving of being treated with dignity and in ways that recognize their sacred worth. Silence in the face of continuing gun violence at the very least violates God’s commandment that we love our neighbor as ourselves.

So what are we to do in the face of what feels like yet another intransigent problem? Step one is always to learn. And when we begin to understand the causes of violence, we can begin to work for changes to those things that cause it, to insist that our leaders act in ways that will actually reduce gun violence instead of passing ever more lax gun laws.

Therefore, the Justice Team asks that Glenn’s Church Council agree to the following resolution:

1. That in accordance with the provisions of General Conference Resolution #3428, a sign be placed on the Youth and Activities Building stating that is a drug-free, alcohol-free, weapons-free space.
2. That in accordance with the provisions of Resolution #3428, the Justice Team prepare a letter for members of Glenn’s congregation to voluntarily sign, to be sent to Georgia’s Governor, Lt. Governor, the Mayor of Atlanta, and state and federal legislators that serve the area in which Glenn is located, which letter will ask the legislators to advocate for and pass the following gun violence prevention laws and policies:

Repeal of the 2022 Constitutional Carry Law and reinstatement of a requirement for concealed carry permits

Universal Background Checks on all gun purchases, including gun shows and private sales

Red Flag laws

Raise minimum age to buy guns to 21

Prohibit further sales of large-capacity weapons

Prohibit sale of high-capacity magazines and bump stocks

Extension of waiting periods for all firearm sales

Expansion of mental healthcare

Require safe gun storage

Repeal of Stand Your Ground Laws

3. That Glenn submit a resolution from the Church Council to the North Georgia Annual Conference asking that the Conference send a similar letter to the state and federal legislators representing the areas that comprise the North Georgia Conference.

4. That the Justice Team, working with the pastors, Director of Music and Worship Arts, and the Worship Committee, host a service of lament for the community, and make available at that time information about gun violence prevention advocacy, safe storage, and other relevant topics.