



CONGREGATIONAL TOOLKIT FOR GUN VIOLENCE PREVENTION

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Introduction

Welcome to the Protect Minnesota Congregational Toolkit!

Why was this created?

This toolkit was created and designed to give any person of faith the education and tools needed to have productive conversations about gun violence prevention in Minnesota.

When was this created?

Beginning in 2021, this material was built by the core members of the PM Interfaith Alliance. This toolkit is a dynamic document, developed in partnership with faith leaders and faithful people from around the state.

What is the purpose of this document?

This material serves as a guide to faith-driven people who are looking to get involved in preventing gun violence.

What can I expect to learn?

- How to tell your personal story
- How you can tie your faith to the impact of gun violence
- How you can better inform your stances with facts and faith expressions, and how to make your own faith expression
- Education on Minnesota's gun legislation and much, much more!

Who We Are

Protect Minnesota informed by communities throughout Minnesota, prevents firearm deaths and injuries through research, education, advocacy, and community-led solutions.



The Protect Minnesota Interfaith Alliance works to engage people of faith around gun violence prevention, through outreach to faith organizations and communities and by creating opportunities for people of faith to engage in the cause.



Anything else I should know?

Use this guide to craft your story, using the aspects of your faith and of gun violence prevention that speak directly to you. Being your authentic self when talking about tough issues is one of the best ways to build bridges with those around you.

Thank you for taking the first step towards being an ally for safer communities!

Let's get started!

Ground rules for group discussion.

If you are going through this material in a group, please follow these ground rules to promote a productive and inclusive conversation.

- We will start and end on time.
- Silence your cell phone.
- Confidentiality is non-negotiable. Each person commits to conventional confidentiality and “double” confidentiality.
- Conventional: What’s said here stays here.
- Double: When a person shares an experience that we sense makes them vulnerable, we do not ask or raise the issue again without asking that person for permission.
- Be an attentive and active listener.
- Speak and participate freely but know that passing is acceptable.
- Respect each person’s right to choose their degree of participation.
- Our time is limited. Be aware of the space you are taking up.
- Practice non-judgment of self and others. Be sensitive to another’s personal story.
- Disrespect is not tolerated. If this is not possible for you, you may leave the event.
- Speak from the “I” perspective and your own experience, not universal ‘you’ or ‘we’.
- This is an educational conversation. Please refrain from sharing political views.

Talking About Gun Violence Prevention in Your Faith Community.

The Why: A personal story does not have to be PERSONAL. Your story does not have to come from personal trauma. All that matters is that you tell people what got you off of the sidelines and into this arena. No story is better or worse than anyone else's!

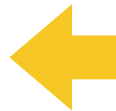
The heart of any conversation that truly connects people is one's own personal story.



If you can connect with others, you have a much stronger chance of turning a chat into a conversation.



That's the core of what we're trying to do: change hearts and minds overtime and for people to take tangible action on this issue.



Stories have been proven to effectively allow others to see themselves in your shoes, and vice versa

The How: There are three important elements to include in your story

1. Why do I feel passionate about this issue
2. How you faith shapes your values on gun violence prevention
3. How do you envision a change, or what change would you like to see

Always remember that you do not need to share your own trauma related to firearms, unless you wish to do so.

Personal Story: Mary's Story

Earl was a loving husband, father and big brother. I was his youngest sister. Even though we were separated by eight and a half years and over 1200 miles much of my adult life, we shared a special bond.

Earl was my mentor. Ever since I can remember, he told me what great potential he saw in me. He taught me how to be a critical thinker but also gave me great advice. We shared a passion for baseball, skiing, singing, ping pong and chess, and a fun rivalry for his MSU Spartans and my U of M Wolverines. And as the big brother, he doled out more than his fair share of teasing as well.

In May 2010, Earl died by suicide at a local shooting range. That morning changed all our lives forever. For me it was shock and heartbreak followed by questions with no answers and my own depression. I miss and think about Earl every day. I try to mark the anniversary of his death each year by attending a Twins baseball game to celebrate our shared passion for the game. Survivors never forget, but we do adapt to a new normal over time.

Suicide rates are on the rise, and the majority of suicides are by gunfire. Red flag laws allow guns to be taken from our loved ones temporarily while they may be a danger to themselves or others. On January 1, 2024, Minnesota joined 20 other states and Washington DC with red flag laws.

I joined Moms Demand Action and Protect Minnesota to fight for red flag laws and other common sense gun legislation in America and in Minnesota. I do this work to honor Earl's memory. It's also a way to love and care for my brothers and sisters, at the core of my Catholic faith. My hope is that out of one death, I will be part of the movement that will reverse our increasing gun violence epidemic and save countless lives in America!

Personal Story: Rolf's Story

In October 2007 our middle child, Katherine, went to a house in Savage to answer a Craigslist ad for a babysitter. What she encountered was not a woman needing childcare. She met a 19-year-old man with his father's pistol. It was over in five minutes.

Katherine arrived with a backpack full of children's books and toys. She found part-time work as a nanny to help finance her path toward a graduate degree in Spanish. She loved kids. They loved her. This trip to Savage was nothing new. Except it was her last.

Katherine was brilliant, creative, risk-taking, curious, adventurous. 2 years before she had spent a semester in Argentina blending her love of Spanish and theater. Katherine's dream was to make a career out of these twin loves. But that dream ended with a bullet in her back.

Since then I have spoken about this from different angles. As a gun owner I have nothing against the sporting and responsible use of guns. But as a dad I have talked about grief. As a pastor I have talked about forgiveness. As a citizen I have testified at the state legislature about the brokenness in our communities. I have seen how gun violence corrupts all aspects of our lives.

I saw this as a police chaplain for 17 years. I saw the toll gun violence takes on families and neighborhoods. I saw the toll it takes on police officers. And then they came to our house.

The reality of gun violence is that it comes to all of us—to our homes, to our friendships, to our schools, to our faith communities. Every day across our country, guns kill over 100 people. Through suicide and homicide... through children accidentally shooting each other. In all its various forms, gun violence is growing and the trauma continues to mount.

Responses vary, but some facts are clear. The presence of a gun rarely makes a situation safer. The states with the toughest gun laws have the fewest gun deaths. I know that we can't stop ALL gun deaths. But if we can stop SOME, isn't it worth it?

About four months after Katherine's death a lady asked me, "*Pastor Rolf, how are you getting through this?*" I paused...then gave her this response.

Two factors are getting me through.

1. I believe Katherine met evil that day in the person of that 19-year-old with his father's gun. I believe it was evil's intention not only to stop Katherine, but also her siblings, to cripple my wife's teaching and my ministry, and to ruin our marriage. I won't let that happen. I won't let evil win. So it is pure defiance that is keeping me going.

2. But also, I believe that one day I will meet Katherine again. And I want to hear her say, in that voice that I miss so much, "***Dad, you did great.***" I want her to be proud of her old man. So that is how I am getting through this.

As I write this it is 16 years later. I am sticking with this story. Of course it is a tragedy. But I'm not unique. It can happen to ANY of us if we allow our society to continue on the path we're on.

What are YOU going to do to help stop this madness?

Now it's your turn!

Use this table and write the pieces to your story.

Story

Values

Vision For Change

Current and Relevant Statistics

Now that you have told your personal story, you are equipped with a great way to begin a conversation about gun violence prevention.

Of course, conversations don't begin and end with the intro; so, this section will provide information on up-to-date statistics surrounding gun violence in Minnesota that we have access to. This information will give you more education on the problems we are trying to combat.

Here you will learn and see:

- Data on gun violence in Minnesota
- The root causes of gun violence.
- How we can all work to address these issues.

2022 Minnesota Firearm Death Statistics

559

Minnesotan lives
lost due to gun
violence.

Homicides
29%



Suicides
71%

Key Facts:

- Gun deaths in MN are up 42% since 2019.
- 88% of suicides were committed by men, and 89% were over the age of 40.
- 50% of those who died by firearm homicide were Black.

Other Minnesota Stats to Know:

- 54% of Minnesotans who own firearms DO NOT properly store them.
- Most homicides in Minnesota are committed with a firearm.

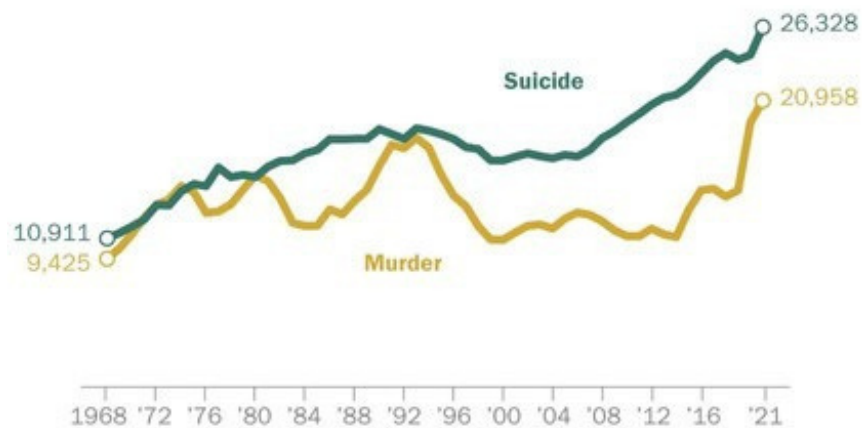
General Gun Violence Statistics

Daily Gun Violence in America:

- 1 American dies by firearm suicide every 22 minutes.
- Black Americans are 2 times as likely as white Americans to die from gun violence.

Gun Violence in Schools:

- In 80% of school shootings, the weapon was obtained from home, or from a friend or relative.
- In ALL school shootings, there are warning signs displayed beforehand: withdrawal, bullying, making threats, etc.
- In 77% of school shooting incidents, others were aware of the shooter's plans in advance.



Note: Gun murders and suicides between 1968 and 1978 are classified by the CDC as involving firearms and explosives; those between 1979 and 2021 include firearms only.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Nationwide & Large Scale:

- 4.5 million children live in a home with a loaded & unlocked firearm. The US accounts for 35% of all firearm suicides, despite accounting for just 4% of the world's total population.
- In 2021, a record 48,830 Americans lost their lives to gun violence. The United States has more guns than it does people.

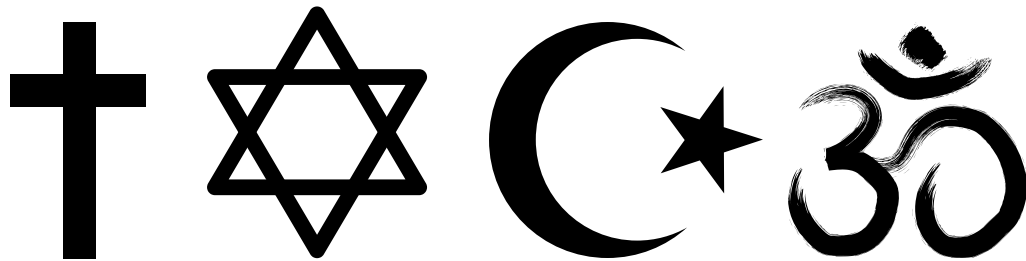
Root Causes of Gun Violence

- Poverty
- Employment instability
- Lack of access to transit
- Substance Abuse Disorder
- Housing and food instability
- Lack of mental health services
- Generational & historical trauma
- Lack of safe & secure firearm storage
- Hesitancy from leaders to discuss & address gun violence
- Easy access to firearms for people in crisis or with ill intent
- Lack of access to education opportunities & after-school programs

How can Minnesotans work to address these problems?

1. **Safe Schools** Provide parents, schools, and students with resources about safe storage and mental healthcare for youth.
2. **Community Investment** Uplifting allies in the community, street medic trainings, and more; advocating for local community investment.
3. **Suicide Prevention** Addressing disparities in rural communities and communities of color
4. **Responsible Ownership** Make safe storage equipment readily available.
5. **Eliminate Systemic Inequities** Advocate for community and legislative changes that address public safety.
6. **Faith Community Engagement** Work with your faith community to address gun violence and its root causes.

Faith Expressions: What They Are, And How To Craft One



Your faith is a key tool in our fight to make neighborhoods and communities across Minnesota safer from gun violence in all forms. When talking to members of your faith community about gun violence, it can be useful to talk about how and why your faith is driving you to have these conversations.

Interfaith Alliance members were asked to create their own Faith Expressions, a short document that explains these ties, binding faith and gun violence prevention together. Their examples follow, across multiple faiths, so you can get ideas on how to craft your own!

Each of you has your own personal connection to your faith. Whether that is specific sections of religious text, moments in the history of your faith, or events that have happened in your local faith community. On the next page, you will find an activity created to assist you in finding these connections!

Sharing your Faith Expression in written form, or as part of a larger group discussion, is a great way to get others to start mentally tying their faith to their advocacy!

Christian : Catholic Faith Expression

The Catholic Church has a history of social teaching that stems from Sacred Scripture from the Book of Genesis through the Gospels and writings of the Apostles. These teachings encourage both charitable works to meet the immediate needs of people and families and social justice to address structures that attack human dignity, oppress people, and contribute to poverty. As Catholics, we are called to be witnesses to our faith by living responsibly and building a just society.

Catholic social teaching tells us that all people are created in God's image, and all human life is sacred.

“God created man and woman in his image” (Genesis 1:25-31).

“Thou shalt not kill” (Exodus 20:13).

Every person has a right to life and to the things that preserve their dignity and quality of life. We each have a duty and responsibility to care for each other, and to work together for the common good and well-being of all – individuals, families, and especially the poor and vulnerable.

“I am my brother's and sister's keeper” (Genesis 4:8-15).

We must oppose forces that perpetuate poverty and abuse the vulnerable. “True worship is to work for justice and care for the poor and oppressed” (Isaiah 58:5-7).

We must protect the dignity of workers by respecting their rights to decent, meaningful work and fair wages. “Those who become rich by abusing their workers have sinned against God” (James 5:1-5).

God calls us to be peacemakers, to live in right relationship with others, ourselves, and God. “These are the things you should do: Speak truth, judge well, make peace” (Zechariah 8:15).

We must show our respect for the Creator by honoring and protecting our planet and its people – living in relationship with all of God's creation. Humans are commanded to care for God's creation in Genesis 2:15. We do all this by following God's commandments and example.

Clearly these teachings call Catholics to work together to prevent gun violence. Gun violence disregards the sanctity of human life. It disproportionately affects the poor and vulnerable, and nearly 2/3 of all gun deaths in the US are suicides. Protecting all members of our society can take many forms – advocating for laws that keep guns out of the wrong hands, facilitating responsible gun ownership and use through education and training, taking measures to prevent those in crisis from harming themselves or others, and more. Protecting workers' rights will help the poor in communities that typically see more gun violence to support their families. Being peacemakers reduces conflict and gun violence. Working to prevent gun violence shows love for God's creation and proclaims His glory.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), has taken a strong and active position against gun violence. The USCCB website has a wealth of information on its anti-gun violence position and activities at <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/criminal-justice-restorative-justice/upload/Backgrounder-on-Gun-Violence-2020-01.pdf>

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Christian : Protestant Faith Expression

What is a Biblical ethic for gun violence prevention?

We may begin in Genesis 1 and 2 with the two creation accounts. God created the earth and all life and it was “good.” “Good” is the Will of God, meaning a Garden of Eden, a Creation, in harmony, in balance, in peace, in nonviolence, in SHALOM. Similarly, humankind was created in God’s image, to reflect God’s goodness and God’s Will. Yet, contrary to God’s will, humankind chose to sin, to disobey God’s Will, choosing to deny living in the Image of God, and to harm God’s Creation by killing. The Will of God/Image of God is further clarified in the Ten Commandments, each of which is a call to a nonviolent life. But what about the Old Testament war stories, which have served as theological justifications of state violence throughout history? In sum, it is proper to think of this violence as the embodiment of human brokenness and a rejection of God’s Will and being created in the Image of God.

So why Jesus?

Jesus Christ was necessary to remind us what it means to be fully human, people created in the Image of God to do the Will of God. The Cross of Christ exemplifies taking violence upon oneself rather than inflicting it on others. He came to direct us in how to reflect God’s original intention for us to do God’s nonviolent Will in the world. The Image of God/Will of God are linked in Jesus Christ. In the Sermon the Mount, Jesus enjoins all followers: “Blessed are the peacemakers.” Then later, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and might. And your neighbor as yourself.” There is no “eye for an eye.” Furthermore, it is this Jesus love that casts out fear. Fear is a prime motivator for gun violence. The foundational ethic of Jesus was nonviolence.

In Galatians 5:22-23, the Apostle Paul writes of the fruits of the spirit: “Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, generosity, and self control.” The “fruits” are nonviolent.

It is clear that gun violence prevention is consistent with a Biblical ethic of nonviolence, compelling personal and public actions which promote safety and limit gun violence.

Christian: Proverbs Faith Expression

Proverbs Christian Fellowship is founded on teachings from the Bible. We believe that the Bible is the only inspired and infallible word of God. These teachings strongly encourage us to love our neighbor. John 13 :34-35 reads a new command I give to you. Love one another as I have loved you so you must love one another by this. Everyone will know that you are my disciples. If you love one another, this isn't any kind of love. Jesus tells us we are to love as He loved remembering. He is about to go to the cross the greatest act of Love and it's to this extent that we are to love those around us. We understand the purpose of piety and protest piety being how we live out. Our faith as it relates to the salvific work of Christ to secure our eternal security protest is our understanding that social justice must be a part of our living out. Our faith Psalm 82 :3 reads give Justice to the weak and the fatherless maintain the right of The afflicted and the destitute.

One of our Core Values is Love/ Image of God: The love of God has for us doesn't change depending on what we do or don't do. God's love is based on His true, caring, and loving heart. We are captured by God's beautiful biblical vision for cultural diversity where people and cultures are treasured and celebrated as creations of God. We clearly understand the value of all humanity and deserve to be treated with the utmost respect and value for what they bring.

Matthew 26:5 2 reads then Jesus said to him put your sword back into its place for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. Jesus said this to Peter when Peter tried to mount an imprudent defense of Jesus against the mob. That had come to arrest him. Peter's actions were not only futile against such a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, but his rash behavior also belied Jesus submissive attitude and worked against the fulfillment of Scripture. Often vengeance is accompanied by violence and we must be servants of love and peace and not impulsive violent Acts. 2nd Corinthians 5:14 reads either way, Christ's love controls us since we believe that Christ died for all. We also believe that we have all died in our old life. Isaiah 58:12 reads you'll use the old rubble of past lives to build a new rebuild the foundations from out of your past. You'll be known as those who can fix anything, restore old ruins rebuild and renovate make the community livable again. God less says He wants our service to go beyond our own personal growth to acts of kindness, charity, Justice and generosity. These acts will promote peace and stable livability in our communities. Whether they are part of the church, it will allow Bridges to be built that will equip and empower all those with whom we come in contact with to promote safe spaces.

America has historically embraced the concept of personal freedom that resonates with this principle and the founding documents guarantee wide freedoms regarding firearms. More important is the morality of the person welding the gun and that is too often the missing consideration in the gun control argument. There is nothing unspiritual about owning a gun or knowing how to use one. There is nothing wrong with protecting oneself or loved ones. We need not to pretend there is never a need for guns but using a gun should always be a last resort.

Islam Faith Expression

We are the pinnacle of the creation of Allah to the best mold and example to have influence on this world to spread the goodness of the message of Allah. To hold this status, our responsibilities are not simply individuals praying in isolation to establish a spiritual connection; it spreads to the whole humanity.

“Surely We created men of the best stature. Then We reduced him to the lowest of the low. Save those who believe and do good works, and theirs is a reward unfailing.” (Quran: Chapter 95 (At-Tin), versus 4-7).

Muslims are required to maintain their spirituality by individual supplication and aligning their acts with the guidance of Allah and His messenger. Our significant responsibility is towards life and that brings us together to work on addressing the continuous rise of gun violence in our community.

Life of every human is sacred: “Whoever saves a life of an innocent, it is as though he had saved the lives of all men.” (Quran, Chapter 5 (Al-Maidah), verse 32). When it comes to social justice, a faithful Muslim is required to stand up and side with what is right; else he/she is at a loss. “Lo! Man is a state of loss. Save those who believe and do good works, and exhort one another to truth and exhort one another to endurance.” (Quran: Chapter 103 (Al-Asr), versus 2 and 3).

The Prophet, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, said: “Whoever among you sees an evil action, let him change it with his hand; and if he cannot, then with his tongue; and if he cannot, then with his heart-and that is the weakest of faith.” (Narrated by Muslim, 49).

Jewish Faith Expression

Jewish tradition emphasizes the sanctity and primary value of human life. The Bible commands us, "*Thou shalt not murder*". The Talmud teaches us that "*He who takes one life, it is as though he has destroyed the universe and he who saves one life, it is as though he has saved the universe*" (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:1). In an increasingly impersonal and alienating society, the dehumanizing of the human being and the carelessness with which human life is taken stand in direct violation of these affirmations of our tradition. (From the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism)

Scripture encourages peaceful pursuit of our mutual welfare. Isaiah exhorts the people of the earth: "...beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks." (Isaiah 2:4) We are commanded to turn weapons of destruction into tools for the greater good of society. (RAC of Reform Judaism) We are called upon to take action to prevent the loss of lives and end gun violence. In Pirkei Avot, "It is not your duty (obligation) to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it." (Rabbi Tarfon) Rabbi Tarfon generously allows for the difficulties of our lives and the task that is before us and he says: "It is permissible to come up short, so long as we have done and are doing the hard work."

Rabbi Tarfon encourages us to behave within certain broad but clearly limited boundaries in those areas of life in which we have agency. Because the issue of gun safety is our life issue, we must be committed to continuing the process of preventing gun violence—moving forward toward the goal of saving lives and of safer communities.

Shared Values Activity

Keeping your faith in mind, answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Write your answer below each question.

1) What are our faith's teachings and scriptures?

2) What do they say about our responsibility to prevent gun violence?


3) What are my faith leaders' official positions on this issue?

4) How does gun violence prevention relate to our faith community's mission, vision, and values?


Minnesota's Current Gun Laws - 2023


Having a basic grasp of what is and is not legal concerning firearms in Minnesota is an important part of working on gun violence prevention.


This section will provide a top-down view of Minnesota's current laws concerning firearms.


State Permits Required for Purchase?  Yes, but only for handguns


Firearm Registration?  No

Magazine Capacity Restrictions?  No

Permit needed to carry?  Yes

Background checks on ALL gun sales?  Yes

Can domestic abusers own firearms?  No

Extreme Risk Protection Orders?  Yes

America's Founding Documents, and How They Apply Today

The United States was founded on documents that are largely considered to be landmarks in history. As imperfect as they are, they continue to be the driving reasons behind current gun laws and discussions between those who own guns and those who do not.

First, you will see some of the texts themselves. Have you ever read them? This is a great chance to see the true words on the page, so you can best form your own opinions about them.

Then, you will find suggestions as to how to approach these documents through the lens of gun violence prevention and gun safety, interlaced with relevant quotes from many of the Founding Fathers, along with academic analysis of these important texts that show they can easily co-exist and even support gun violence prevention across our country.

Compiled by our core IFA members, the following commentaries provide a nuanced look at these documents with both modern and original contexts.

The Declaration of Independence

“The Declaration of Independence is the greatest statement of democratic values” says Professor Matthew Filner (Metro State University). It is an “aspirational vision,” where all have natural rights, a fundamental equality, and which is limited by your consent. “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men (people) are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men (people), deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

It is important to be truthful. In early American history, white men held the social and political power. This meant the exclusion of slaves and free Black people, Native Americans, and women. Though our nation has evolved to be more inclusive of all races and genders, these changes are not without strain and limit.

Therefore, let us begin with “we.” “We” means everyone is given the inclusive life, liberty, and happiness. This means gun owners and non-gun owners alike. The rights of both are both granted and limited by that right to life, liberty, and happiness.

Both have a national and community responsibility for each other. Both gift consent. Both are the governed. Liberty is not everyone doing whatever they choose, whenever they choose, however, they choose.

John Locke says, liberty is not license. George Washington declares: “Natural liberty has to be balanced with everyone else’s.” Gun ownership is not a blank check. We are accountable to each other, for each other’s well-being.

Government provides the rights and means to make us accountable to each other for the sake of each other. All people give consent so that all people can live equally, with the right of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

The Preamble

The Constitution is an attempt to put a fence around freedom, says Professor Filner from Metro State University. Social freedom is ensured by constraining individual freedoms. The Preamble puts limits on rights in order to balance the individual with the collective. The Preamble focuses on the purpose of the United States Constitution and provides an overview of our nation's character in succinct language. The Constitution which follows is a reflection of this Preamble.

“We the People” defines our character. Note the pronoun “We.” The United States is one people in all our diversity, although, at the time, women, slaves, and Native Americans held lesser stature. “We the people” is a visionary call. This includes gun owners and non-gun owners alike. All have rights. Together we are called to “insure domestic tranquility.” All people have a right to peaceful lives.

The Preamble calls for the “promotion of the general welfare.” All people are to be valued and nurtured. The Preamble calls the nation to “secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves” and to those who follow. It commits our nation to ensuring equal rights for all citizens.

The Second Amendment

The Second Amendment states, “A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.” According to columnist Jack Anderson, the militia “was a body of citizens enrolled for discipline as a militia force to act in emergencies.” Militia members were required to attend periodic drills and training. A record was kept of the number and ownership of guns. Anderson concludes, “Our Founding Fathers were hardened by the fires of revolution, and they knew the dangers of concentrating guns in the hands of a federal army. So states were given the right to form militias.

Yet, individuals do have the right to own guns. In 2008, in the District of Columbia v. Heller decision, the Supreme Court said an individual had the right to own a firearm in their house for protection. Still, there were limitations. Writing for the majority, Justice Antonin Scalia stated that individual firearm ownership “was not an absolute right, that the government can constitutionally ban certain individuals from possessing firearms. It can prohibit the carrying of firearms in schools or government buildings, impose restrictions on their sale, and prohibit the availability of particularly dangerous and unusual weapons.” In addition, the right to own and carry a weapon “is not unlimited...not a right to keep and carry any weapon whatsoever in any manner whatsoever and for whatever purpose.” It is clear that Anderson, Burger, and Scalia agree on the validity of rights with restrictions and responsibilities.

“Liberty” and “Freedom” are words frequently shouted to defend the individual right to own firearms. But these words need a deeper dive and tempering. One of the Founding Fathers and early President James Madison wrote “Liberty may be endangered by the abuse of liberty, as well as by the abuses of power.” Too often, guns are used as a way of preventing others from exercising their rights.

I've Completed the Toolkit!

What's Next?

By completing this material, you have taken your first steps in becoming a gun violence prevention advocate in your faith community!

You can now reach out to other members of your faith community and offer to lead them through this material!

How do you do that, exactly?
We have just the material for you!

Our Congregational Toolkit Facilitator's Guide!

Just like this toolkit, the Facilitator's Guide is available to you for free on our website or upon request to info@protectmn.org.

The Facilitator's Guide will provide guidance for leading a productive discussion, offer centering questions you can use to guide discussion and progress through the toolkit, and a proven format you can use when hosting your group!

Thank you for participating in this program. We invite you to join us in future gun violence prevention actions.

Contact Information

To learn more about gun violence prevention in Minnesota, or to reach out to us in order to work together, please contact:

Protect Minnesota
info@protectmn.org

**ENGANGE Lutherans for
Gun Violence Prevention**
letnesron@gmail.com

**Mothers Against
Community Gun Violence**
dorisallison007@gmail.com

**National Council of
Jewish Women MN**
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To join or partner with the Interfaith Alliance, please contact:

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