

Gun Violence Prevention Awareness

Submitted by the Gun Violence Prevention Advisory Committee

Resolution calling for a Sunday Observation of “Gun Violence Prevention Awareness” in congregations within the Episcopal Diocese of Missouri; Submitted by the Gun Violence Prevention Advisory Committee.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT this 184th Convention of the Diocese of Missouri asks that the congregations of the diocese observe Sunday December 10th, 2023 (the closest Sunday preceding the anniversary of the mass shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown CT) as **Gun Violence Prevention Awareness Sunday** in support of the Diocese’s efforts to end the pandemic of gun violence in our communities.

RATIONALE

The nation was stunned with the news on December 14, 2012 that 26 people (20 of them children) had been killed at Sandy Hook Elementary School, plus two others killed and two injured, in a mass shooting in Newtown, CT. This sparked a short-lived but futile debate about the need for stricter, or more common sense, gun laws. Mass shootings in the country have alarmingly increased in the years since the federal assault weapons ban lapsed in 2004 and was not renewed.

During the 183rd Convention of this Diocese The Right Reverend Deon K. Johnson appointed a Diocesan Missioner for Gun Violence Prevention who, with a team serving as the Gun Violence Prevention Advisory Committee, is engaging in efforts to raise awareness and help bring an end to gun violence in our communities. The work centers on promoting gun safety, legislative advocacy, and education within the Diocese. The observance of a **Gun Violence Prevention Awareness Sunday** by congregations aids in sharing ways that advocacy, prayer, public witness, and pastoral care can help to end the pandemic of gun violence.

To facilitate this observance, the Gun Violence Prevention Ministry of the Diocese of MO, with the support of Bishop Deon, will be rolling out a letter writing campaign for congregations to begin on December 10th, with resources provided. The goal is to encourage Missouri’s 2024 Legislative Leaders to assign bills that are proposed for sensible gun laws to committee in a timely manner so that hearings can be held.

Other resources will also be available for congregations to use on December 10th, such as print-ready bulletin inserts, prayers and/or modified forms of the Prayers of the People.