

Prayer Vigil

10/26/2023

In the wake of the mass shooting in Lewiston

We begin in silence

Candle lighting

The Rev. Suzanne Roberts (PIN)

All are encouraged to find and light a candle as we keep vigil together for the dead and dying, for those who grieve, for the first responders, and for those in fear.

Words of Welcome and Introduction

The Rt. Rev. Thomas James Brown, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Maine

Bishop Brown introduce guests:

- Bishop Peggy Johnson, Interim Bishop of the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (PIN) (sign language)]
- The Rev. Marissa Laviola, Conference Minister of the Maine conference of the United Church of Christ
- Bishop Shannon McVean-Brown, Bishop of Vermont
- Bishop A. Robert Hirschfeld, Bishop of New Hampshire
- The Rev. Jane Field, Executive Director of the Maine Council of Churches

Opening Prayer

The Reverend George Sheats, rector, St. Michael Church in Auburn

Holy God, we stand together in hope. We stand together in faith. We stand together in love. We stand individually as ambassadors of hope, vessels of faith, and sentinels of love. We stand as a community committed to making no peace with gun violence. We pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to inflame and enkindle our lives, our churches, our communities, our cities, and our nation with a passion for lasting peace; through Jesus Christ the Author of Peace. Amen.

A Litany in the Aftermath of Gun Violence (adapted from the 2018 work of Bishop Stephen T. Lane, 9th Bishop of Maine)

[The Rev. Marissa Laviola]

Giver of Life and Love, you created all people as one family and called us to live together in peace. Surround us with your love as we face again the tragedy of gun violence.

For the people who were killed in Lewiston last night whose names we know: Bill, Tricia, Bob, Steven, Joseph, and those whose names are not yet publicly known, the many who were wounded and hospitalized, the traumatized, grieving survivors, and those known to you alone, Loving God

Make us instruments of your peace.

[The Rev. Jane Field]

God of Righteousness, you have granted our leaders, especially Janet, our Governor, Mike, our State Public Safety Commissioner, and Carl, the mayor of Lewiston, power and responsibility to protect us, and to uphold our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Strengthen their devotion to our common life and give them clarity of purpose.

For all who bear such responsibility, for all who struggle to discern what is right in the face of powerful political forces, Loving God

Make us instruments of your peace.

[Bishop A. Robert Hirschfeld]

God of Compassion, we give you thanks for first responders: police officers, firefighters, EMTs, chaplains and all those whose duties bring them to the streets, the schools, the malls and the homes where the carnage of gun violence takes place every day. Give them courage and sound judgment in the heat of the moment and grant them compassion for those involved.

For our brothers, sisters and siblings who risk their lives and serenity as they rush to our aid, Loving God

Make us instruments of your peace.

[Bishop Shannon McVean Brown]

Merciful God, bind up the wounds of all who suffer from gun violence, those maimed and disfigured, those left alone and grieving, and those who struggle to get through one more day. Bless them with your presence and help them find hope.

For all whose lives are forever changed and broken by the scourge of gun violence, Loving God

Make us instruments of your peace.

[The Rev. Marissa Laviola]

God of Repentance and Forgiveness, we hold before you Robert Card, the one who fired the weapon, and we seek your grace for transformation. We cannot forgive - not yet - but we trust in your power to make all things new.

For those who from malice or illness are the instruments of violence and death, Loving God

Make us instruments of your peace.

[Bishop Shannon McVean Brown]

God Who Remembers, may we not forget those who have died, more than 35,000 Americans in the past year, in the gun violence that we have allowed to become routine. Receive them into your heart and comfort us with your promise of eternal love and care.

For all who have died, those who die today, and those who will die tomorrow, Loving God

Make us instruments of your peace.

[The Rev. Jane Field]

God of Tender Mercy, be with those who are overwhelmed, enraged, frustrated and demoralized by the plague of gun violence. Be especially with those in lockdown tonight, who are afraid, who may be alone. Give them a sense of your presence and plant in them the seed of hope.

For those whose hope for life in this world is shattered and broken, Loving God

Make us instruments of your peace.

[Bishop A. Robert Hirschfeld]

God of Justice, help us, your church, find our voice. Turn us from the worship of power. Give us courage to confront our false gods and to protest the needless deaths caused by gun violence, lack of access to adequate mental healthcare, and the disproportionate impact of violence on marginalized communities. Help us rise above our dread that nothing can be done and grant us the conviction to advocate for change.

For your dream of a world where all Your people are safe and all of us live together without fear, Loving God

Make us instruments of your peace.

[Bishop Thomas Brown]

- Erin Reed, Executive Director, Trinity Jubilee Center, spending reserves of money to meet heightened needs due to the lockdown. There will be a link to donate in the chat.
- Jonathan Radkte, member of the cathedral and a postulant for holy orders who is Principal of Lewiston High School.
- The several faith communities in the Androscoggin Valley who will help bear the load.

All this we pray in the name of the One who offered his life so that we might live, Jesus the Christ.
Amen.

Hymn: There is a Balm in Gilead

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Lord, hear our prayer;

And let our cry come to you.

Let us pray.

[Canon Tina Pickering]

A closing prayer from John Wesley

We are no longer our own, but yours. Put us to what you will, place us with whom you will. Put us to doing, put us to suffering. Let us be put to work for you or set aside for you, praised for you or criticized for you. Let us be full, let us be empty. Let us have all things, let us have nothing. We freely and fully surrender all things. To your glory and service, and now, O wonderful and Holy God, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. We are yours. So be it. Amen.

Dismissal

Let us bless the Lord

Thanks be to God