

## Service of Lament

*From Psalm 51*

Open my lips, O Lord, \*  
and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.  
Create in me a clean heart, O God, \*  
and renew a right spirit within me.  
Cast me not away from your presence \*  
and take not your holy Spirit from me.  
Give me the joy of your saving help again \*  
and sustain me with your bountiful Spirit.  
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

*A Reading from Paul to the Romans 12*

Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you are. Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads."

*A Litany for the Gun Violence Prevention, Rt. Rev. Stephen T. Lane, Episcopal Bishop of Maine*

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

For our dear ones, for our neighbors, for strangers and aliens, and those known to you alone,  
**Loving God, make us instruments of your peace.**

God of Righteousness, you have given our leaders, especially Donald, our President, and Thomas, our Governor, the members of Congress, the judges of our courts and members of our legislatures, power and responsibility to protect us and to uphold our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

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.**

God of Compassion, we give you thanks for first responders, for police officers, firefighters and EMTs, and all those whose duties bring them to the streets, the lobbies, the malls and the homes

where the carnage of gun violence takes place day after day. Give them courage and sound judgment in the heat of the moment and grant them compassion for the victims.

For our brothers and sisters who risk their lives and their serenity as they rush to our aid, **Loving God make us instruments of your peace.**

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 marked by the scourge of gun violence, **Loving God make us instruments of your peace.**

God Who Remembers, may we not forget those who have died 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.**

*Litany of Gun Violence Victims*

God of Justice, help us, your church, find our voice. Empower us to change this broken world and to protest the needless deaths caused by gun violence. Give us power to rise above our fear that nothing can be done and grant us the conviction to advocate for change.

For your dream of love and harmony, **Loving God make us instruments of your peace.**

*A period of silence is kept. All pray.*

*The Lord's Prayer*

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.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

*Sending*

*Leader:* Let us remember all who have been harmed by violence. We acknowledge the strength of those who survived and of those still struggling to heal. For their sake and for ours, we commit ourselves to building each other up and to healing—together.

***All:* Let us remember the families and loved ones of those who have died from gun violence. We acknowledge their pain and their deep grief. They, too, are part of our community and need our love and help toward healing.**

*Leader:* Let us remember the families of those who commit violence and the perpetrators. We acknowledge that their lives, too, are devastated and their hopes dashed. For their sake and for ours, we remember that pain goes in many directions from each act of violence.

***All:* We will stand up to violence. We stand together expressing our unity, our connection to each other and to the divine; our hope for healing and for transformation. Let the Spirit of our Creator move through us. Help us to transform and heal our communities. And let us begin by transforming ourselves. Amen.**

*The Collect*

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father, you have brought us in safety to this new day: Preserve us with your mighty power, that we may not fall into sin, nor be overcome by adversity; and in all we do, direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*<sup>i</sup>

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<sup>i</sup>Reference: <http://bishopsagainstgunviolence.org/liturgical-resources/>