



Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence (CFCU)

cfcu-co.org

"While we continue to pray for the families and friends of those who have perished, we must also support our prayers with action."

Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence, a growing multi-faith coalition of over 25 congregations and organizations to date, supports legislation and policies at the state and national level designed to reduce current levels of violence arising out of the use of firearms. We are called to this position by our diverse faith traditions:

"They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore; but they shall sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid." (Micah 4:3b-4)

"You shall not stand idly by the blood of your neighbor" (Leviticus 19:16)

"Then Jesus said unto him, 'Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword.'" (Matthew 26:52)

"Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." (Unitarian Universalism's 7th Principle)

As members of diverse faith communities, we commit to building consensus and support in our communities for steps that will turn our collective grief into shared hope. Together, let us join in the efforts to build communities of peace.

Guiding Principles

- Each congregation will continue to work on this issue in the ways that are appropriate to their members
- Decisionmaking for coalition endorsed activities will be by consensus only; if consensus cannot be reached, a proposed action will not be pursued as a coalition project, though congregations may choose to work independently.
- Coalition activities should complement existing efforts and encourage new initiatives.
- The Coalition will serve as a resource for information sharing and technical assistance among member congregations.
- The Coalition will frame its activities as promoting policies that reduce deaths and injuries in Colorado caused by the use of firearms.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of the Coalition is to help decrease the gun deaths and injuries in Colorado caused by the use of firearms by undertaking at least one unified effort per year in *each* of the following Strategic Focus Areas:

Advocacy (Legislative) – actively supporting governmental policies and officials that promote policies that reduce gun deaths and violence.

Project: The SFA's first project is focused on the November statewide elections, because the results will have a major impact on the new gun safety laws passed in 2013 in Colorado and future efforts to end gun violence. The Advocacy SFA compiled and distributed a packet of activities congregations could undertake related to voter registration and education. The group is now monitoring bills at the Legislature and forming Rapid Response Teams to communicate with legislators.

Action – pursuing strategies likely to reduce gun deaths and related violence e.g. social media campaigns, disinvestment or community organizing strategies

Project: Our goal is to reduce gun injuries and deaths (accidental, intentional and suicide) in our communities by focusing on gun safety as a means to address this growing public health problem in two ways: via (1) a prevention-oriented physician/healthcare provider outreach campaign and (2) improved public information and support for gun safety through local, county and state health department websites.

Awareness – working to reduce gun violence by focusing on two areas: developing key messaging points supported by existing research that will be used in CFCU activities, and making the image/brand of CFCU strong and communicable.

Project: The initial project of the Awareness SFA is the development and maintenance of the CFCU web presence at <http://cfcu-co.org>