



May 27, 2022

Three mass shootings in ten days.

A grocery store, a church, an elementary school. Places where community is formed and gathered all desecrated by violence.

I am angry, sad, frustrated, and overwhelmed, and I find myself wondering if what our faith offers in the face of such violence is too small.

How does God show up in a moment like this?

I am trying to do what I always do: return to Scripture and scour it for answers.

As I read, I am reminded of the ways God has always been at work in the world. I remember God's work in Abram, a nomadic leader who was given the promises of blessing and land. I remember God's work in Exodus. A people enslaved in a foreign land who, through journeys in the wilderness, become the People of God. I remember God's work through a ragtag group of men and women who became the first followers of Jesus and the first proclaimers of the Good News.

What Scripture tells me is: God at work in the world is God at work through us.

My doubt leads me to fear our faith is not enough for the magnitude of this moment; our collective history teaches me it is.

We are the people who meet at the table of brokenness and walk away from it, having been made whole. We are people drowned in the waters of baptism and raised up in the promises of resurrection life.

We are people called to do justice and love mercy.

We are people who have failed.

And we are people who have been, and will yet be, redeemed.

We are not a people with the luxury of looking toward others to fix the problems we abhor. And we are not a people called to spend more time thinking about ourselves than the world we are called to serve.

We are the people who are called to show up, tell the truth, and point to Christ.

Christ is the only one with the power to transform, the power to take our meager offerings and make it enough to sustain thousands, the power to take our brokenness and make us whole... not for our sake alone but so that all may know the abundance of life Jesus came to give.

We start at the table of brokenness. At that table, we are made whole. At that table, all are fed, and every need is met. And from that table, we are sent to proclaim the Good News and to live transformed lives in a way that transforms the world.

I want promises that our neighbors will not be shot in a grocery store and our children will come home from their elementary schools. I want to know the people I love are safe in the places they gather to worship.

When I scour the word of God, I find this truth: God at work in the world is God at work through us.

We are the people to whom the prophet Micah speaks: when the nations live in obedience to God, *then* we will beat swords into plowshares (Micah 4:3). We are the people called to love and serve our neighbors, knowing they are us and we are them (Mark 12:30-31). We are the people called to embody justice and mercy and kindness for the sake of God's work in the world (Micah 5:6).

God at work in the world is God at work through us. And we have work to do.

In Christ,



Bishop Regina Hassanally  
Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA

**Resources for Communities of Faith:**

[A 60 Day Journey Toward Justice in a Culture of Gun Violence](#) *this resource focuses on reflection, education and action*

[Prompts for Prayers of Intercession](#) *written for Sunday, May 29 but easily adapted for other dates*

[Gun Violence Litany](#) *a litany of lament in the aftermath of gun violence*

Also see *All Creation Sings*, a new worship supplement with resources including a lament for gun violence and lament for racism and a Service after a Violent Event

And a [Response to the School Shooting in Uvalde, Texas](#)