



Sowing a Nonviolent City Conference

**Friday, September 25th
6:00 PM-9:00 PM
Youth Focus**

**South Louisville Community Center
2911 Taylor Blvd
Louisville, KY 40208**

**Saturday, September 26,
2015 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM
Christ Church Cathedral
421 S. Second Street
Louisville, KY**

**What if people of faith and people
of goodwill transform our city into a
community of Nonviolence,
Compassion, and Peace?**

Reflect. Unite. Act.



Sowers of Justice Network
Louisville, Kentucky

sowersofjusticenetwork.org
sowersofjusticenetwork@gmail.com

**Shaped in the light of the Gospel
teachings of Jesus, we are a broad
coalition of churches and individuals
working for social justice through
Nonviolent Action.**

**We seek to engage local, national, and
global issues of Economic Justice, Human
Rights for All, Racial Justice,
Environmental Integrity, and Peace
through Networking, Organizing,
Education, and Advocacy , Building
Community, and Spiritual Practice.**

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Convening Power—The ability of faith communities and others to gather, connect and mobilize people and call them to action, study and to sustained effort over time through projects and nonviolent attention-getting activities —is critical to help the community to change the permeating belief that the power of violence will save us.

Use front lawn space and common areas to make a visual appeal to dramatize the impact of gun violence and spark conversation with neighbors about action steps

Faith communities can inspire sustained action with art



Deliver a sermon series calling for faith inspired action to change the culture of violence

Declare you will teach the community the ways of nonviolence, compassion, and peace and teach the spiritual and faith-community practices that sustain these values.

Use Peace Sunday at Advent or other holy days and gatherings to declare values of nonviolence, peace, and compassion and name simple ways to make these values a part of every day practice.

Declare your faith community and its property a gun free zone, and a zone of ultimate sanctuary.

Go where the gun violence occurs to mourn, pray, and bear public witness to its effects and causes.

Creating nonviolent, peaceful, and compassionate leaders versed in alternatives to violence and conflict is a spiritual practice key to transformation of our selves, our communities, and our world. Name stewards of these practices for your faith community or group and uphold and promote their work as the teachers and intention holders of these values.

Violence is not episodic or capricious, but the result of a violent belief system. To change gun violence requires us to change what we believe as well as what we think, and to change how we feel, as much as what we do.

Provide daily or weekly mediations and other rituals for naming and dealing with violence. Paired with sacred texts and inspirational words and images, daily practices and a common language help people build an interior reservoir of nonviolence, peace, and compassion. A network of cohorts who rely on each other based on a common bond only enhances this.

Sacred texts that speak to taming violence, goading, gloating, and retaliation through transformation and spiritual discipline can help underscore the basic values of nonviolence, peace and compassion. But taking time to answer questions about how individuals actually live this out is crucial to faith leaders who want to make this a reality rather than an ideal. Faith leaders committed to address gun violence must prepare to deal with and speak to faith's ability to transform people yet also deal frankly with the sexual abuse, child abuse, poor choices, intimate partner abuse, power abuse, rage and anger, as well as jealousy and control that fuel the culture of violence



Plan a study group series connecting gun violence to moral teachings such as reconciliation & forgiveness over retaliation, abundance over scarcity, service to others over self-service, and self-control over self-indulgence.

Define nonviolence for your faith community and post the definition in visible places. Nonviolence is not weakness or passive submission but rather a kind of persistent, disciplined, and often courageous good will. It is active confrontation with conflict or evil that respects the humanity of the opponent and seeks both to end a threat or injury and to reconcile the adversary.

Changing gun violence means resisting violence, but not with retaliatory violence. It requires making lasting peace with our adversaries.

Transformational nonviolence seeks to end the oppression or threat of violence and to reconcile the adversary. The violence we loathe is intimately connected to economic disparity, power inequity, and racial injustice.

Inspiring and regularly reporting random acts of kindness can bring a playful creative and engaging way to connect people in your community of faith to transform each other and the culture of violence.



Using and teaching mantra or short repetitive meditational phrases can help bring clarity and resolve to the work of nonviolence.

Nonviolence means avoiding not only external physical violence but also internal violence of spirit. Faith communities' focus on the interior state and build qualities of inner peace, empathy self control and transformation is key to addressing epidemic gun violence.

Non-violence, which is the quality of the heart, cannot come by an appeal to the brain. Faith communities have the unique opportunity to connect the heart and spirit to the thought and action that will change the conditions of gun violence.

Connecting gun violence— particularly gun violence connected to drug dealing and gangs — to structural racism and economic and environmental injustice is a key moral voice for faith leaders voice to speak to power about gun culture.

Active, disciplined nonviolence requires the focused energy of faith communities who reflect, unite—and act *together*.

Skill One: The Inner Life

Personal & Communal

*Spiritual Practice and
Application*

How do the skills of peace, nonviolence, and compassion grow in our lives, take hold in our homes and spill into the streets? How shall we gather to let these values take hold among us?

Skill Two: The Public Life

*Advocacy, Works of
Mercy & Direct Action*

How do we change the conditions that cause gun violence for those most affected by it? How does the right to peace find its true weight in the law and its administration?

**Skill Three: The Communal
Life**

*Community Building &
Connection*

How do we attract, inspire, support and connect with each other in community as we pursue living out the ideals of peace, nonviolence, and compassion?

Violence is immoral. But simply telling what is or is not moral is not enough to inspire transformation.

Skills building in community makes the difference.

Skills building, paired with moral and spiritual education, offers faith leaders the opportunity to help congregants and faith communities to match practice to belief. Asking the right questions within a spirited conversation, helps others weigh and find the right answers and put spiritual ideals into practice.

Active, disciplined compassion requires the focused creativity and empathy of faith communities who listen to learn—and care.

Offer or buy a book-kit study on gun violence

For information: sowersimpact@gmail.com



What some call ‘social justice’ is actually a form of sustained empathy & unrelenting compassion. Call it what your faith community can hear.

Facilitate conversations with young people about television, video games, movies, anime, and our culture of violence.

Connect with at least ONE organization working on gun violence as a source of ongoing factual and practical skills information, such as Moms Demand Action, the Brady Campaign or Heeding Gods’ Call.

Shalom fully includes our concepts of justice, inclusive community, wholeness, and healing. Let us be the people of Shalom!