



## Heeding God's Call

*Inspiring Hope, Raising Voices, Taking Action to End Gun Violence*

### Press Release

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### **ANOTHER DAY, ANOTHER PREDICTABLE GUN MASSACRE – THIS TIME IN A HOUSE OF WORSHIP**

#### **Faith-based Gun Violence Prevention Organization Calls on Religious Institutions to Act to Halt the American Epidemic of Gun Violence**

**Philadelphia:** The most recent reports of another gun massacre, this time at a Sikh Gurdwara (house of worship) near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, speak of 7 dead and several wounded. This predictable event, follows close on the heels of the killing and wounding of dozens at a movie premier in Aurora, Colorado.

The Reverend Belita Mitchell, Coordinator of *Heeding God's Call's* active chapter in Harrisburg, PA said: "We at *Heeding God's Call* grieve for those killed and injured and their families, friends, neighbors and co-religionists. Americans believe that houses of worship should be places of safety and refuge, not places of carnage and terror. But, as long as we allow people intent on mayhem to gain guns with ease, often illegally, houses of worship will be as dangerous as so many neighborhoods and communities are now in our country."

The Reverend James McIntire, Board Chair of *Heeding God's Call*, said: "These predictable mass shootings keep coming and will continue to do so. We've barely begun grieving for those lost and wounded in Aurora and now more of the same. The response of our country's leaders has, once again, been weak and limited to platitudes, while gun advocates tell us to be silent in the aftermath of such grievous acts. The faith community has, largely, eschewed moral leadership, speaking only of prayer, grief and solidarity with the damaged community. This is far from enough. In addition to our grieving and our prayers, this country needs the faith community to be prophetic in its call for justice and to act for change in American attitudes and measures."

Bob Fles, Co-Coordinator of Neighborhood Partners to End Gun Violence, a chapter of *Heeding God's Call*, in Philadelphia, said: "We at *Heeding God's Call* and NPEG say unequivocally that enough is enough. When the easy availability of guns results in places of worship and those within them being shot up, it is time for all faithful to get off their couches and get active in seeking an end to the violence. We call on all faith traditions in this country to show courageous religious leadership and work unrelentingly to end the bloodletting."

Bryan Miller, Executive Director of Heeding God's Call closed with: "We also call on people of faith who are concerned about the rising tide of gun violence to join with us as *Heeding God's Call* works in neighborhoods and communities to make guns less available to those all agree shouldn't have them. We seek, as well, to be the spark that ignites the faith community to activism to halt the American epidemic of gun violence."

*Heeding God's Call is the rapidly growing faith-based and grassroots movement to prevent gun violence and has active chapters in Northwest and Northeast Philadelphia, on the Main Line, in Harrisburg, Baltimore and Washington, DC. Heeding seeks to bring faithful and public pressure to bear on gun shops to persuade them to avoid selling to those who would put guns on the street. Heeding was instrumental in bringing federal authorities to shutter notorious Colosimo's Gun Center in late '09.*

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