

Resolution 2020-1: Love Your Neighbor—A Resolution Opposing Gun Violence.

1 WHEREAS, Jesus says, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all
2 your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. . . . do this and you will live” (Luke
3 10:27-28b); and
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5 WHEREAS, in 2019, the City of St. Paul suffered the worst gun death period in its history with 30 deaths,
6 double from 2018;¹ and
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8 WHEREAS the overwhelming majority of victims were men of color, most commonly Black, even
9 though St. Paul is predominantly white and 50% female;² and
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11 WHEREAS, in 2017, 465 Minnesotans lost their lives by gun violence with 365 or 79% of those being by
12 suicide; and
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14 WHEREAS, in 2019, nearly 40,000 Americans lost their lives by gun violence in the United States with
15 61% by suicide;³ and
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17 WHEREAS, the rate of gun violence in the United States is 25 times higher compared with other Western
18 Developed Nations;⁴ and
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20 WHEREAS, 2020 is an election year when we the people will elect leaders to formulate laws on gun
21 violence prevention for the common good; and
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23 WHEREAS, the ENGAGE work group has resources available for congregational study on
24 www.engageelca.org;
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26 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul Area Synod in Assembly urge
27 congregations and individuals to act upon Jesus’ injunctions to love by:

- 28 • STUDYING the reality, theological, historical and practical responses to lessening gun violence;
 - 29 • ATTENDING local, state and national candidate forums and asking candidates their positions on
30 gun violence prevention;
 - 31 • ADVOCATING Universal Background Checks for all gun sales including private sellers, and a
32 Red Flag Law (Extreme Risk Protective Order) which would temporarily remove a weapon from
33 a person who is a danger to themselves or others; and
 - 34 • UTILIZING the resources of the SPAS-ENGAGE Work Group on Gun Violence Prevention and
35 Protect Minnesota (www.protectmn.org).
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38 Submitted by: North Central Conference of the Saint Paul Area Synod at the 2020 Conference
39 Assemblies, February 22, 2020.
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42 *Because this resolution is consistent with the governing documents of the ELCA and addresses an issue of*
43 *general concern to the Saint Paul Area Synod, the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends*
44 *adoption of this resolution.*

¹ StarTribune, 15 December 2019

² Protect Minnesota-Minnesota Department of Health

³ Gifford’s Law Center

⁴ Gifford’s Law Center