

I am Rev. Alida Ward, pastor of Greenfield Hill Congregational Church in Fairfield. Along with many other clergy from across Connecticut, I write to today to urge passage of the legislative proposals submitted by Connecticut Against Gun Violence, and to ask you to take bold and brave steps to rid our state of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines.

On the weekend following December 14, my church, like every other church, synagogue, and mosque, was filled with people whose hearts were broken. I led prayer services at which I looked out upon the faces of young children, lighting candles for children just like them, their faces clouded with hurt and confusion, held tight by parents who were themselves overcome with grief and fear. What our children have had to live through will be with them forever, shaping their understanding of the world they live in. Our assurance to them must be that *their* children will not live through the same. Our assurance to them must be that we, the people who love them, will work to create a world of greater safety.

As a pastor, I believe that working to end gun violence is a moral imperative, perhaps the moral imperative of our time. Every religion, every faith tradition, calls on its followers to cherish life and to seek peace. Every faith tradition calls on its adherents to work courageously and hopefully for a world free from fear. Therefore, no matter what our religious background, each one of us is called by the same God to do all that we can to rid our communities of that which brings death into our midst so easily. To do so is an act of hope, an act of courage, and an act of faith. I urge you to such action. Thank you.

Rev. Dr. Alida Ward
Greenfield Hill Congregational Church
1045 Old Academy Road
Fairfield CT 06824
203-259-5596 ext. 1210
cell: 203-521-3139
www.greenfieldhillchurch.com