



# An Open Letter from The Ecumenical and Interfaith Community concerning the Michigan State University Tragedy

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DETROIT, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES, February 20, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Together, we as faith-based leaders from Metropolitan Detroit representing over 200,000 parishioners throughout the State of

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*Bishop Edgar L. Vann, II*

Michigan extend our deepest and sincerest condolences and compassionate concern to the families of the fallen victims of the Michigan State University tragedy. May God also grant grace and healing to the other victims currently recuperating along with the students and staff of MSU.

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Today, and from our pulpits this coming Sunday, we as men and women of God, speak with one voice. We collectively denounce the inhumanity of senseless violence that occurred at Michigan State but also has occurred throughout our nation and world. The culture and spirit of senseless death and destruction that prevails is something we must all come together to eradicate.

We represent a multiplicity of people, denominations, reformations, and organizations, but we stand together lifting our voice in a clarion call for peace. According to recent studies, we have more guns than we do people and there are 120.5 firearms per one hundred residents. Our “safe havens” are no longer safe. Unfortunately, heinous acts of violence and mass shootings have become every day, common-place occurrences.

At the writing of this letter, it is Day 48 in 2023, and there have already been at least 71 mass shootings in the United States this year. We can no longer sit idly by in churches, synagogues,

mosques and houses of worship merely lifting up gratuitous prayers and canned phrases. We can no longer justify building “teddy bear” shrines to these acts of violence. Let us not just lift up prayers for the dead, let us lift up the cause of policy change for the living.

As faith leaders, we stand united and strong. We know beyond the shadow of doubt, that “faith without works is dead”—James 2:17. This is a clarion call to our political leaders that this time there would be no delays; this time the strongholds of partisanship and indifference will be shattered and systemic change will take place.

We will observe and hold accountable those officials who seem to prefer guns over human life. We absolutely must pass gun reform legislation, background checks, support for mental health and more training and evaluation measures for law enforcement. These and other policy changes are desperately needed, and each mass violence incident repeatedly is evidence of that urgency.

As we share this message this weekend to our constituencies and the public, may God’s power and presence be with us all as we navigate through a grievous season toward a peaceful future.

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