

# Notes of the meeting of the Board of Directors Rocky Mountain Region of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion

February 3, 2022, 6:00 PM

**Host:** Church of the Beloved

**Facilitator:** Alice Bradley

**Notes:** Kae Madden

## Opening Prayer/Regional Prayer

Holy One,  
Enlivening Spirit,  
In the wilderness of new,  
Root the Body of Christ  
Fully into our "Yes",  
Blooming in Your Holy Season.  
Together,  
Amen!

**Present:** CHF: Anne and Mike; MoM: Tom and Rosean; LoC: Jack and Rachel; StP: Greg and Don; CoB: Alice; Office of Bishop: Kae and Michael

## Regular Business:

1. Welcome any guests: No guests
2. Agenda approvals/additions - none
3. Review and approval of January notes

Greg motioned approval, Jack seconded. Passed

4. Personal connections: Please share something that inspired you this month.

5. Financial Report – Greg presented

Income \$1811.71 Expense \$623. \$500 charitable gift to Gun Buyback effort

6. Bishop Notes and Vicar Report (see attached)

Bishop: How to make our meetings "open" – **Jack will draft a bylaw**, Greg has provided a zoom link that will remain the same for all meetings. We will discuss how to be prepared for last minute guests. **MoM has a good example of that policy and will send to Jack.**

ECC Ethical Code of Conduct: **Kae will send COBs out.** Jack sent out the original ECC draft - we need to adopt a variation for the region.

Alternative education for MDiv: explanation of Bishop Gonia's usage of alternative formation from Lutheran seminaries. Discussion at Council of Bishops and an HOP task force.

7. Leadership Council Report

Mike: debrief discussion about meeting on Jan 29<sup>th</sup> and follow up issues. Council of Bishops to take the lead on proposing a process for addressing constitutional concerns. Presiding Bishop nominations ended Jan 31.

## Old Business:

1. Jack Wolfe 501(c)(3) filing -update

We may decide not to file because we are an organization of churches. We have a tax id number. Need to file an annual report. Still pending. Moving to new First Bank account for Apr 1 2022 start.

2. Bishop Call letter – approval with financial additions

Motion to approve: Jack Second: Rosean Passed

April 1 2022 compensation \$309 bishop \$248 vicar. Bishop appointed Fr. Michael as vicar, has delegated ecumenical engagement and the annual amount of stipend will be shared with Michael. Michael needs it designated as housing.

The bishop will receive a lump sum retroactive compensation for July 1 2021 through Mar 1 2022 - \$300/month allocated from council's reserve.

**ACTION: finalize the letter of call for bishop and vicar for signature in March**

3. Update on regional website designer? Review of Website Design options

Desired components are approved. **BEMAX** seems most reasonable/practical. Lots of prep to get it off the ground – will need each community's participation in setting up. Can support a password protected synod page for privacy. A shared calendar is possible through "community collaborators". **ACTION: We need to carefully peruse the sample websites they provided, read the contract agreement submitted and decide on engagement for next meeting. Also each community will begin to upload photos and basic info/components to Michael = Michael will send out a google doc for sharing.**

3. Dues and contributions on Michael's behalf as CCC board member

**Communities please submit their dues (\$1 per member) plus \$60 per community.** Thank you to MoM forging the way : )

5. Bishop/Vicar relationship, split stipend, education...Understood

6. Prayer for Christian Unity-Debrief: Comments, impressions, suggestions

Consider making it an annual event, especially thanking our host communities. Positive feedback from those who participated. Get the planning team going in November : )

### **New Business:**

1. New/Draft Budget Presentation by Greg

A.) initial review, questions, concerns, observations, and feedback

We have a cushion. Budget is in process as we look toward year end. Need to budget for the Website at \$313/yr plus \$500 for development. We will budget for the synod expenses for bishop through the region. We need to consider a stipend for ongoing admin of website.

B.) thoughts on equitable community tithing: Current percentages allocated

ECC/Region: St Paul 7/3 CHF 7/2; COB 7/2.5. Mom 7/3; LoC 7/2 **Greg will send amended income projections back out; council members send any additional expenditure suggestions to Greg by Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> for finalizing budget in March.**

2. Donation toward Faithful Thursdays Opening Ceremony

There were expenses due to online opening, totaling \$1300 to be divided among the congregations participating. A copy of the service and the hope/lament list goes to every legislator hence the printing cost. Costs will vary every year. Greg: motion for **\$50 contribution to CHUM - approved**

3. Michael-charitable \$ support of a friend. – any contributions to assist, contact Michael.

4. Jan.29 ECC Zoom Meeting on the topic of process for dealing with Constitutional violations. Summary, impressions, comments, debriefing, next steps, etc.

- Stay theoretical to *develop a policy to address problems/violations to constitution or misconduct*, seems reasonable to get a policy draft, look at the statutes-still parts of the statutes that need to be re-worked, separate guidelines – renew that activity to prioritize prior to synod
- *How to handle meeting disruptions*: – stop and pray... need chaplains in those meetings to keep comments respectful – keep it clean – others act as holders/mediators - address public and social media complications and confidentiality– ongoing communications, hostile, negative, influenced by political climate, determine consequences for behavior that is out of line; set parameters at the beginning of the meeting to establish a “safe space” ; leadership council asked +Francis to address individual discordant behavior
- *larger issue: independence and communal accountability. What is relationship and accountability between local diocese and ECC?* How do we build a national organization?
- Consider sexism at work in the discourse?
- Fell short of our best angels – how can we be in communication to support those wounded
- All levels need to respond: Regions, houses, communities– look at own behavior, own constitutions/bylaws regarding process addressing violations of constitution
- What to do with a loose cannon? Up to the “chief administrator” to address persons who were out of line

#### **Closing Prayer: Alice**

**Next Meeting Host Communities:** March 3, LOC; April 7, CHF; May 5, STP

***Remember, when you host to send out the agenda, have a facilitator and scribe, bring opening and closing prayer, bring Consensus Document, and send notes in a timely fashion.***

#### **RMRC Adopted Practice of Consensus Decision Making – Final May 2, 2019**

Overall: The council definitely prefers *face to face* meetings rather than email discussion or conference calls. Zoom visual technology may help but if at all possible, we need to meet in person. Meetings begin and end with prayer.

1) Our *general practice* during meetings will be to slow down and engage each person around the table, listening, asking or responding to clarifying questions and engaging with Love, respect, emotional strength and intelligence, commitment to the common good and foregoing personal agendas.

2) Facilitators will ask if there are any opposing views *on every decision* and wait for a response, and also to *call on those not vocal* during issue discussions. If the facilitator prefers, s/he may ask for a volunteer to take the role of assuring that we are hearing from all voices during the meeting.

Members may request to abstain from a particular decision if there are unusual circumstances such as a conflict of interest.

*If the group is divided, we will: Yield. Stop. Pray. Listen. Try to identify how a problem emerged, if it is local or regional, and the source of resistance by going around the table. Honor no cross-talk as each person responds uninterrupted. After hearing from everyone, if there is not clear consensus, use the 5-finger model:*

5. I love it. I insist on it. I can't live without it.
4. I prefer it. I like it. But I can live without it. And if it is the group's decision... I will support it
3. I am neutral on the question. I have no preference. And if it is the group's decision... I will support it
2. I prefer not to do it/support it. I don't like it. But I can live with it. And if it is the group's decision... I will support it
1. I hate it. I insist against it. I can't live with it. I veto it.

3) Repeat : ) We cannot move forward if 1s or 5s are present. We listen again and amend.

4. If consensus cannot be reached, hit the pause button and postpone the decision until the next meeting. At the next meeting, if we still can't reach consensus we may resort to voting as we continue to listen to the minority voices (see below). If consensus is blocked and no new consensus can be reached, the group may stay with whatever the previous decision was on the subject, or does nothing if that is applicable.

5. Major philosophical or moral questions that will come up with each affinity group will have to be worked through as the group forms and re-forms with each new member.

Difficulties in reaching consensus: If a decision has been reached, or is on the verge of being reached that you cannot support, there are several ways to express your objections:

- Non-support ("I don't see the need for this, but I'll go along.")
- Reservations ("I think this may be a mistake but I can live with it.")
- Standing aside ("I personally can't do this, but I won't stop others from doing it. ")
- Blocking ("I cannot support this or allow the group to support this. It is immoral." If a final decision violates someone's fundamental moral values they are obligated to block consensus.)
- Withdrawing from the group. Obviously, if many people express non-support or reservations or stand aside or leave the group, it may not be a viable decision even if no one directly blocks it. This is what is known as a "lukewarm" consensus and it is just as desirable as a lukewarm beer or a lukewarm bath.

\*\*\*The facilitator of the meeting is responsible to bring a copy of this document to the meeting.

## **Appendix A—Bishop Notes: Month of January 2022**

submitted 2/1/2022 by Bishop Kae Madden

**General notes:** Michael as Vicar in the roles of Ecumenical Engagement: advocacy, interfaith relationships, ecumenical relationships including Colo. Council of Churches board, and communication/media.

My primary focus is 1) Listening internally, building relationships, determining the felt-needs/priorities of the region; 2) getting to know the bishops through monthly calls and the annual retreat; 3) transitioning some responsibilities at Church of the Beloved; 4) learning about the bishop role and responsibilities from Michael and the other bishops;

**General Matters that may need attention:**

- Change Rosean's preferred email to [motherrosean@gmail.com](mailto:motherrosean@gmail.com)
- Follow-up to ECC-wide meeting on Saturday Code of Ethics, value of subsidiarity
  - Questions? Next steps?
  - From our regional constitution: III. Section 5. Ethical Code of Conduct The region will adopt an Ethical Code of Conduct modeled after one currently in use by the Church of the Beloved. This Code of Conduct applies to all who work within the region, both employee and volunteers.
  - Discussion of what it means to define an issue "particular"
- Are all our meetings open? Are members aware that concerns may be brought to the council?
  - Example from Church of the Beloved Constitution: All parish council meetings are open meetings and all are encouraged to attend. For matters of a limited sensitive nature, the value of confidentiality may take precedence over the value of transparency. In these situations, council may enter into a closed executive session. These matters may include personnel action, potential disciplinary or corrective action, legal or financial matters and other matters in which confidentiality must be maintained. Council will state the general category of the issue and expected duration of deliberation before entering a closed session.

**Listening and Relationship Building:**

- Appt with Bishop Karen Oliveto (United Methodist) postponed until Feb 11
- In contact with various clergy
- I will be setting a schedule for clergy gatherings – maybe even tomorrow : )
- A zoom conversation with Bishop Gonia to discuss alternative educational resources for clergy formation, letters of faculties/rosters, and general check-in. Thankfully, they harbor no hard feelings about not occupying the office prepared for me.

**Regional Liturgies:**

- Planning and preparation for Prayer for Christian Unity on Jan 21<sup>st</sup>, included participation of 45ish zoom squares : ) Wonderful participation from our five communities. Per discussion with Fr. Michael, perhaps the beginning of an annual prayer gathering. I will reach out to the Council of Churches and suggest a date certain each year so that we could plan ahead, i.e. first Tuesday of the week of Jan 18-25.

**Planning:** Met with Fr. Michael on Jan 26

**Consultation:** Support for clergy – personal and resources

**Community Support/Visits:**

- Zoom: Presided with CHF on January 16 and led a visioning workshop on Models of Church on Jan 22; Scheduled a follow up meeting in February.
- Presided with MoM on January 30 on Zoom.
- Scheduled to preside at LOC on February 12 with discussion following;
- Scheduled to preside at St. Paul on March 12th

**OPB and Council of Bishops:** Participated in the Council of Bishops call on Jan 10, 17, 27th: Centered on ordinations in mid-America diocese and the misunderstandings and resolution. Also Bishop Peter’s consecration of Fr. Chinnappa to serve in India.

**ECC:** Participated in the Zoom gathering on January 29<sup>th</sup> of all delegates and bishops to discuss a process for addressing questions of constitutionality and/or personnel misconduct.

**Discernment/Ordinations:** Met with two members in discernment.

**Colorado Council of Churches:** Received the green light from Church of the Beloved to participate in the Red Rocks Sunrise Service.

**Continuing Education:** Participated in 2/3 of Deacon Joan Crawford’s anti-racism workshops on Jan 14-15.

#### **Administration:**

- Finalized the letter of call for myself : )
- Worked with Greg on the budget

#### **PENDING/PARKING LOT**

**Regional Calendar:** Are our communities offering any classes that could be opened for regional participation?

#### **Budget in development**

- Insurance
- Website design and maintenance
- ~~Office/Meeting Space: \$200/month DONATION, “normal” printing included — extra for program booklet~~
- ~~Reduced or Not necessary?~~ Turned the office space back to the Lutheran Synod with the generous understanding that we can use the small conference room or other meeting space as needed/available.
- Office supplies/printing
- ECC Bishops retreat – biannual – likely some funds in the ECC budget for travel and lodging
- Travel to synod 2022
- Synod ECC 2022
- Synod RMR 2022? 2023?
- Contract wages/Stipend (1099 or Letter of Call) for bishop and vicar(s)?

# Appendix B—Ecumenical Engagement Report for RMRC 02 03 2022

submitted 2/1/2022 by Fr. Michael Nicosia

## KEY POINTS and ACTION ITEMS

**Website design options** (*see Appendix C, below*)

**Donation request from Faithful Thursdays:** hoping to raise \$1,300—anything helps.

Diana Flahive wrote to each of the conveners regarding what they can contribute to this effort.

We are paying Zoom coordinator for her great work, under a really tight deadline.

Giving funds to Montview for the reparations program.

Paying for printing for all the information we are giving the legislators.

The checks can be written to CHUM/WHI – sent to:

c/o Diana Flahive

ED of CHUM/WHI

624 Lafayette St.

Denver, Colorado 80218

## Charitable \$ support of a friend:

Marc's "cousin" Joshua went to Colombia for 14 days for a Native American ceremony, got COVID in a sweat lodge which turned into bronchitis; now looking at almost 2 months down there to recover. Due to a past traumatic brain injury, three doctors concurred that his blood oxygen levels were too low to get on an airplane without risking brain damage. The extended stay in Bogotá was not budgeted; current cost of his Airbnb is \$100/day (a local friend did offer to put him up, but it's the same "friend" who was making counterfeit vaccine cards precipitating the outbreak at the ceremony, so that's a hard NO).

Also, the US State Department declared Colombia a Level 4/Red Zone/Do Not Travel country last week -- due to high levels of COVID in the country. This means Josh's emergency travel insurance (which was supposed to pay for it, if something like this happened) was invalidated. He is hoping that documentation from the doctor will revalidate the insurance; if not, there'll be the extra expense of flying back.

Our Regional pastor's prayer group asked if he would be open to some financial assistance. He would appreciate help from any quarter.

## REGIONAL & NATIONAL COLLABORATIONS

Met with Bp. Kae.

Participated in weekly regional pastor prayer/sharing.

Circulated advocacy updates and member churches' social media posts, including:

RMR-ECC statement on gun violence (*Appendix D, below*);

info on joining CFCU and forming Rapid Response Networks.

Presided at StP 1/8, CHF and Dignity 1/9, and MoM on 1/16.

Participated monthly Independent Catholic Happy Hour discussion 1/12.

Participated monthly OPB Ecumenical Seminar 12/22.

Participated monthly ECC Chaplains meeting 1/24.

Helped plan Faithful Thursdays Blessing and our Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Service, and prerecorded flute pieces for both.

Participated in Independent Catholic HIVE MIND on Intercommunion agreements 1/31 (with Denise Giblin).

Bottom-up ecumenism: Journeying together is the ground from which communion blooms.

General agreement clergy preparation and screening essential –inexpensive background checking service used by many: <https://www.backgroundchecks.com/products/us-oneverify> .

#### GUN BUYBACK

- 1/16: Rev. Chris Gilmore of 6thAveUCC relayed that “Gun buy back was a great success! 75 guns taken off the streets...50 of them were semiautomatic...6 assault type guns, we had to go out and buy more gift cards...please thank everyone for their contribution and support...let me know if you need a picture or an official letter of thanks”
- Denver and Aurora City Councils working with RAWtools to schedule several more events in March.

Shared info re Nonprofit Security Grant Program with our Council members to determine CCC support; relayed Board’s concerns about federal prerequisites; general consensus among CCC Board, assume it will go to Judicators for their discernment.

#### **COLORADO COUNCIL OF CHURCHES** Board Meeting 1/19/2022

##### ADVOCACY UPDATE BY HALEY ANDERSON:

- Gov. Polis tending toward middle; focusing on economics and cutting taxes which runs counter to underfunded government services; mentioned affordable housing but focused more on lifting middle class; will keep an eye on public safety and criminal justice initiatives; environmental justice focus may not go anywhere if he stays in the middle
- Still need watchdogs for several legislation areas
- Governor’s Clergy Council Feb.3 virtual 11-1pm

CASTE BOOK STUDY PILOT UPDATE: going forward, desire to build relationships as action step

FAITHFUL THURSDAYS EVENT ON JANUARY 20: <https://cochurches.org/public-policy-voicewitness/>

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE UPDATE: working on major speaker line up and music groups; no COVID restrictions at Red Rocks; event night before and one that afternoon, may be able to bootstrap sound system costs; charging for parking not an option; charging admission resisted; maybe collection as people leave (from car windows); premium seating charge; QR code for donations

ADVANCE DIRECTIVES GRANT: still waiting to hear, usually announced in May

Adrian went to gathering of State Council of Churches presidents in Florida: most are focused on VOTING RIGHTS; bringing possibility of collaborative effort to Judicators

Adrian approached by Interfaith leaders to be guide for PILGRIMAGE TO MONTGOMERY LEGACY MUSEUM, May 3-5; alternate late October



## Appendix C—RMR Website Design and Pricing

research by Michael

### DESIRED COMPONENTS

Some of these components could be combined to reduce the menu options, if that is advisable.

- More engaging and user-friendly site.
- I have worked with the WIX platform before, and believe it would be easy for us to manage once it's designed.
- Dynamic home page, possibly with videos, definitely with photo slide shows, and links to any current hot button issues or statements.
- "About us" page with links to various documents like a history outline, our Constitution, et al; and a link to the national ECC page.
- "Our communities" page with photos, worship schedules, and links to our respective websites.
- "Bishop's Office" with +Kae's bio, details of how she was elected, photos of her consecration, and any pastoral letters.
- "Regional Council" page with meeting agendas and minutes; list of current officers and board members with their contact info.
- "News" page with photos and blurbs about ordinations, special celebrations and outreach programs (local and national).
- "Advocacy and Ecumenical Engagement" - Media releases and public policy statements, upcoming outreach and lobbying opportunities, and links to our Ecumenical partners.
- "Calendar of events" that individual communities can populate.
- An interactive "Synod" page, password protected for local and national delegate discussions; links to relevant Google Docs; a message board for discussions if possible.
- Photo/video gallery.
- "Contact Us" page.
- Donate button.

### EKKLESIA360 <https://www.ekkleisia360.com>

Our websites are created specifically for churches to be engaging and user-friendly. I do want to clarify that **Ekklesia360 is not a WIX platform**, and we can absolutely share some of the differences and advantages of working with us vs. WIX.

In terms of accommodating the components in your email, we can certainly do so, except for the messaging board in a traditional sense. We may have other ways of accomplishing that for you.

The next step for getting you the information you need, is to schedule a conversation with one of our website specialists to go through how our platform works; how we would be able to accommodate your needs; advising on setup and design; and what the price, timeline, process, etc. would be.

Gracie Haberly [gracie.long@ministrybrands.com](mailto:gracie.long@ministrybrands.com)

### JUNIPER WORKSHOP <https://www.juniperworkshop.com/>

no response to inquiry

## **ELIZABETH SIMPSON \$3000!!!**

First you should know my work with Churches is mainly a side freelance job at this point, though I'd like it to be full-time eventually. That being the case I work a full-time job from 9-5 CST, so I am able to take meetings generally on the weekends and evenings.

Based on your desire to have a password protected page and a fair amount of video/photo storage I **would suggest WordPress over Wix [though that would require a learning curve on our end]**. In addition to this WordPress is much more versatile for any additions or future redesigns. As part of setting up the website I am happy to do a walkthrough of WordPress for whoever will be doing the day to day updates for you. If you would like a comparison of WordPress to Wix for your site I can set up a meeting for that and it will be charged at an hourly rate of \$30/hr.

My fee for creating the design for the webpages you outlined (12 pages by my count) will be \$3,000, if you provide all the copy and images up-front or input them yourselves afterwards. The \$3,000 can be split up into \$500 payments over 6 months or shorter as needed. It will take approx 3 months to do the original build and an extra month for any edits and training. The church will need to purchase the following before I begin: WordPress and Divi theme, which is the best on the market and you can use to do a complete redesign the website in another 5-7 years or as you desire. I can advise you on which version and where to purchase both. If this is all to your liking let me know and we can move forward with setting up a zoom meeting. This meeting will be use to get to know each other, discuss further what you need, and draft a formal contract which will included a payment and product delivery schedule and is to be signed by both parties before work begins.

Elizabeth Simpson [e.digital.development@gmail.com](mailto:e.digital.development@gmail.com)

## **BEMAX GROUP <https://bemaxgroup.com/> \$500**

Monica Yokogawa, (469) 288-3915, [monica@bemaxgroup.com](mailto:monica@bemaxgroup.com)

All of the items listed are totally possible and doable through the platform!

Our **Wix Website creation fee is \$500**, given that all content is organized and shared with us including things such as photos and the necessary accesses to execute the development.

**One important item** is about the "Donate" - what is your organization currently using as its Donation Module?

... full proposal (below) that is included in this pricing, a draft of the contract, and the initial checklist we share with clients on the items we need from them.

Here are some of the recent websites we created on Wix:

<https://www.holynativity.org/>

<https://www.stmatthiasathens.com/>

<https://www.stmarksmtpleasant.com/>

<https://www.gatewayofgrace.org/>

## **BEMAX GROUP SERVICES BEING OFFERED:**

Fr. Michael is looking to redesign Rocky Mountain Region of Ecumenical Catholic Communion's website on Wix. While creating a new modern design, easier navigation for its users and exposing the church to better organic ranking in search engines, the new website will also be an easy tool for the church to maintain after it is developed.

WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT (Performed on Wix) - \$500.00

\*\*\* Client will be responsible for monthly hosting fee and domain purchase with Wix.

Estimated cost for hosting monthly is \$25. Domains can cost up to \$13/year. Given client

provides all information needed, a website draft will be shared with client between 7 to 14 business days.

**PROJECT WILL INCLUDE:**

- Design and development of a functional website
- Search Engine Optimization
- Adaptation for mobile-devices
- Hosting and Domain Management (inside Wix)
- Guidance on features industry uses
- Donation Integration as Wix allows (depending on client's requirements)
- Admin portal backend SSL Certification
- Google Analytics Tracking
- A User Guide on how to edit main functions

**PROPOSED STRUCTURE:**

- Home Page:
  - Include rolling banner with photos and important, Video Gallery, Mission Statement, Fixed donate button on the screen
- About Us
  - Subpages: Our Constitution, Our History, Regional Council, Bishop's Office
- Our Community
  - Subpages: Our Communities, News, Advocacy & Ecumenical Engagement
- Calendar of Events
  - For individual communities to populate the calendar, they will need to be invited as a collaborator of your website.
- Synod (Password protected with Wix Forum)
  - Control of members that share information on there.
- Ways to Give
  - Subpages: Donate, Ways to Give
- Contact Us

CONTRACT AGREEMENT (separate attachment)

**★ MAJOR PART OF THE PROJECT: Our supplying all the text, photos, videos and documents to be posted at the beginning of the design phase.**

## **Appendix D—Gun Violence Statement**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 01/10/2022

Fr. Michael J. Nicosia, Vicar of Ecumenical Engagement  
The Rocky Mountain Region of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion  
720-218-1081; nicosia410@yahoo.com

### **THE GUN VIOLENCE SITUATION**

**The Ecumenical Catholic Communion Challenges our Culture of Violence**

*Northglenn, CO:* As people of faith in this holy season, we light candles, longing to illuminate our path to peace. We follow the Star that leads all people to be valued as Beloved of God. In any given week there is a shooting, or perhaps several across these often violent United States. In the hours following Christmas Day, innocent lives were taken and wounded by gunshot in Lakewood, while more recently Boulder County firefighters were threatened by a man brandishing an AR-15.

We all know, courtesy of the up-to-the-minute media blasts, the stories of guns, bullets, anger, blood. Some of our families have directly experienced the trauma, the police, the shelter-in-place orders, the crying mothers and fathers and children. If we are fortunate, the shooter is arrested. Sometimes not. Families broken, children orphaned, tears, lives changed.

The Rocky Mountain Region of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion (ECC) is a diverse communion of communities which values inclusivity and honors every voice in the holy conversations that direct us on the path of truth, justice, freedom and peace. We share consensus around the challenges that must be made to address gun violence, personally and collectively. Rather than throw up our hands in despair, there are actions that each of us may take to be part of the solution.

We challenge ourselves personally. Are we willing to change our viewing habits, our language, the images we use and the video games we play, glorifying violence? As decision points arise, we challenge each other and our fellow citizens to be more willing to prayerfully consider a sacrifice of particular individual rights and privileges for the sake of the common good, deeply embedded in Catholic social teaching.

We are grateful for responsible owners of firearms. Are we each willing to reach out to those in our circle of influence and ask them directly to safeguard their firearms? We particularly hold accountable parents, understanding that they hold ultimate responsibility for the safety and actions of their children.

We support our youth, acknowledging the stressors and disruptions the current pandemic has placed on their education, their relationships and their own sense of well-being. Are we willing to personally contact the kids we know, offering them our support and encourage to come forward if there is disturbing behavior among their friends and classmates?

Collectively, we challenge our respective legislators, City Councils and school board members to fund more mental health resources especially for our youth, veterans and mentally ill. "A few months ago, two members of our region were shot by a neighbor, a veteran who suffered mental illness," lamented Bishop Kae Madden. "Thankfully, the members lived and are now facing the long road of healing: body, mind, heart and soul. The ripple effect of this trauma is ongoing and pervasive. The availability of guns intersects the mental health of gun owners. How might we address both in order to protect the sacred life of all?"

Our faith communities can partner with Colorado Faith Communities United to End Gun Violence and support the advocacy work of Colorado Ceasefire. May we pray peace and hope in our congregation, in our family, In our world. May we BE peace, hope and love for all around us.

We can make a difference. What have you, yourself, done with your family, your congregation, your community? How have you taken up the challenge to put violence aside as we try to live peaceably? May we celebrate the continual coming of the Prince of Peace by our thoughts and actions.

In peace, hope, love and challenge,

The Communities of the Rocky Mountain Region of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion (ECC)

*About Us:* Part of a growing independent catholic movement, the faith communities of the Rocky Mountain Region of the Ecumenical Catholic Communion (ECC) foster growth in faith and love, extending radical hospitality to one and all. Our elected Bishop Kae Madden shepherds Church of the Beloved in Northglenn, Church of the Holy Family in Denver, Light of Christ Ecumenical Catholic Community in Longmont, Mary of Magdala Ecumenical Catholic Community in Fort Collins, and St. Paul Denver ECC. Collectively, the Region is a member of the Colorado Council of Churches. In our Eucharistic celebrations we affirm that “we are the Body of Christ incarnate, the Blood of Christ poured out for the life of the world.”

#ColoradoECC #EcumenicalCatholicCommunion #ColoradoFaithCommunitiesUnited  
#SensibleGunRegulations #EndGunViolence #SchoolShootings

+++