

וְדַרְשׁוּ אֶת-שְׁלוֹם הָעִיר, אֲשֶׁר הִגַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם שָׁמָּה  
And seek the peace of the city whither I have caused you to be carried  
וְהִתְפַּלְלוּ בָעֵדָה  
and pray for it;  
כִּי בְשְׁלוֹמָהּ, יִהְיֶה לָכֶם שְׁלוֹם  
for in her peace shall you have peace.  
--Jeremiah 29:7

***Guardian of life, liberty, and the promise of peace, may our nation always merit Your protection.***

We recognize that gun freedoms in our nation have resulted in too many losing the freedom to full lives  
We know that peace anywhere might be shattered in a moment,  
but we know, too, that many in this nation rarely experience the safety some of us take for granted

***Help us to recall, as the prophet Jeremiah taught, that we must “seek the peace of the city,”  
recognizing how our own peace is tied up in that of the city where we find ourselves.***

The words of Isaiah remind us to share our bread, clothe the naked, unlock the fetters of wickedness  
in this community and in our nation. [Isa 58:6-10] Today, we focus on one common affliction of the soul

Among us are those for whom gun violence is a policy issue

***Grant our advocates light and wisdom, and help us all to support their efforts***

Among us are those for whom gun violence is a real and present, if occasional, danger

***Grant the fearful Your sheltering presence, and help us all to understand and address this burden***

Among us are those who mourn victims of gun violence

***Grant the mourners comfort, and help us all to better support them in their grief and cries for justice***

Among us are those who have experienced gun violence

***Grant the shattered healing, and help us all to recognize this trauma and its cost***

Keep us ever aware of the wonder of humanity and of threats to the sanctity of human life

Teach us to recognize the affect of gun violence on so many of our nation's children

***May we never be lazy in the work of peace or complacent in our relative safety***

May we honor those who have died in defense of our ideals

***And may we acknowledge threats, some of our own making, to those ideals***

***Grant our leaders wisdom and forbearance***

May they govern with justice, compassion and clear knowledge of the cost of gun violence

***Help us all to appreciate one another, and the variety of viewpoints in this community and beyond,  
and teach us to respect the many ways we may serve You***

Then, we've been taught, shall our light rise in darkness, and this gloom be as the noon-day. [Isa 58:10]

***Shine Your light through the gloom. Heal us and our local , national, and global communities.***

***Lead us toward homes free of affliction and strife, bodies and spirits untrammelled by gun violence.***

***Help us to be the change we hope to see. Soon and in our lifetimes. – Amen.***