

For Too Long...
[The Rev. Jan Nunley, 2012]

Holy and gracious God, we stand before you today abashed and ashamed.

We are alive today in a nation that does not cry out against the violence it permits to be done against its own citizens. We are alive today, and we do not know if we will remain alive tomorrow, because we have not cried out, and we have not acted, and we do not know where or when the shadow of hate will fall on us.

For too long, we have put the Second Amendment to our Constitution in the place of your Ten Commandments, most especially the injunction not to do murder.

For too long, we have believed and acted as though signing petitions and holding candlelight vigils are enough.

For too long, we have cried "Freedom! Freedom!" when the only freedom left to our fellow citizens was the freedom of the grave.

For too long, we have made our children "pass through the fire to Molech," while the priests of our national religion of Mammon beat loudly on drums so the cries of the victims cannot be heard.

In former days we asked you for blessing, healing, and compassion. We need all those things, and we hope for them, but we do not deserve to ask for them.

For we have received them so many times from your hand, and yet have not done what ought to have been done to prevent the murder of our own.

"For the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds" (2 Cor. 10:4), and yet we sit in silence and fear.

Grant us grace, O God, but grant us backbone. Grant us comfort in our grief, but grant us also holy fierceness. Grant us deliverance, but grant us the wisdom to seek unceasingly the path that leads to it, and the courage to set our feet on that path, before another shot is fired in anger or despair.

Amen.