



Southeastern Iowa Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

The mass shootings in Orlando, Florida have stirred up a complex array of emotions and reactions precisely because of the state of the world. This world - our world - is too often marked by an epidemic of violence, especially gun violence, and by political discourse that allows for the demonization of the other because of race, gender, sexual orientation, faith tradition, class, country of origin, or for almost any discernible characteristics that suggest difference. The violence and the discourse that undergirds it did not suddenly appear, but has been cultivated over time.

In the aftermath of these shootings, prayer is necessary, anger and sadness are understandable, but feelings of helplessness need not overwhelm.

Years ago, the Rev. William Sloane Coffin described “hope” as a state of mind independent of the state of the world. Like nothing else in the world, he writes, “hope arouses a passion for the possible.”

Our hope is in Jesus Christ, and this Christ has taken up residence in and among us. We are called to be peacemakers, to speak out and stand up against all the –isms and fears that do violence to the humanity of others and more than that, to repent of the ways that we ourselves have been complicit in cultivating the current state of our world.

Let us pray.

Let us act.

Let us embody a passion for the possible.

In the name of Jesus, let us change the state of our world.

Bishop Michael Burk