

# Statement on the Texas School Shooting



Beloved in Christ,

As you may have heard, at least eighteen students (in the second, third, and fourth grades) and three adults were killed Tuesday in a mass shooting at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas. Words are inadequate to express my outrage at the cold-blooded killing of these students and adults. The shooting today stole the futures of these students -- their opportunities to graduate from school, to choose the career of their dream, to have families of their own -- and the dreams of their families who loved them.

As our nation confronts the latest heinous atrocity in a country besieged by gun violence, and specifically another horrific school shooting, it is critical that we do not become immune to the gravity of these senseless tragedies. We must act as a society to make our schools safe and to ensure that students and teachers in America do not live in anxiety that they could be next. Some say that it is too soon to call for action, but as Christians, we have committed ourselves to follow Christ, who served the marginalized and oppressed. While it may be too late to save the victims in Uvalde, it is not too late to save countless other children across our country who deserve to be safe in school, at their homes, and wherever else they go.

What will it take to put a stop to these hateful, sickening acts of violence? My brothers and sisters in Christ, Jesus gave us the answer: **love**. Love one another. Love without being loved. People are hungry to belong and to be loved. Let your love flow without expecting anything in return, and let your love show others what it feels like to be loved. Love doesn't always fit into our plans, and love isn't always convenient, but Jesus also tells us that true love is laying down one's life for one's friends (John 15:12-13).

If there is any hope that I can impart in the wake of another incident of senseless violence, it is best summed up in the words of Paul in the thirteenth chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians: **"Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."** (vv. 7-8)

Almighty and most merciful God, we come to you with heavy hearts and troubled minds. We pray for the victims of this shooting in Uvalde, Texas, and for all of the countless mass shootings in the past. We bring before you all the men, women and children who were innocent victims of these senseless and malicious humans who embraced evil. May the souls of all these innocent victims, through God's mercy, find eternal safety and rest. We pray for all who are hospitalized. We lift all families who are facing ordeal and turmoil, and we place them into your loving arms.

For your dream of a world where children are safe and all of us live together without fear, Loving God, make us instruments of your peace.

May God grant us all the peace that surpasses understanding.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jason Miller".

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