



Voice

SPECIAL EDITION

Voters' Guide to 2022
Oregon Ballot Measures

VOTE

The VOICE is published by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon. EMO brings together diverse communities of faith to learn, serve, and advocate for justice, peace, and the integrity of creation.

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Dear Readers,

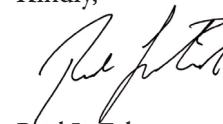
Welcome to the second edition of the new VOICE. In this issue, we're featuring our "Voters' Guide to the 2022 Oregon Ballot Measures." A lot of impressive work has gone into creating this guide, and we couldn't be more excited to share it with you.

We're especially energized by Measure 114, the Reduction of Gun Violence Act. We recently honored its chief petitioners—Rabbi Michael Cahana, Marilyn T. Keller, and The Rev. Dr. Mark Knutson—at EMO's 2022 gala event on Sept. 20. We presented them with this year's Ecumenists of Year award, which is designed to highlight people working cooperatively to solve complex problems. Measure 114 is a truly inspiring story of Oregonians coming together to get an issue important to them on the ballot. As Knutson says, "This is about democracy."

I also want to highlight our 2022 Collins Summit, which is advertised on the back page. The topic this year is Religious Trauma. In recent years, mental health professionals have been highlighting the ways trauma can be born out of the religious experience. It's important for people of faith to understand this phenomenon as we walk alongside our friends, family, neighbors, co-workers and even clergy affected by it. Our keynote speaker will be Connie A. Baker, LPC. She will be sharing insights born out of her book *Traumatized by Religious Abuse: Courage, Hope and Freedom for Survivors*.

We hope you continue to be encouraged by the new VOICE, as we strive to provide content to challenge and inspire. If you have ideas or feedback, please don't hesitate to reach out to us at voice@emoregon.org.

Kindly,



Paul LeFeber
Director of Development & Communications

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fall 2022

COMING TOGETHER ON BALLOT MEASURES

BY BRITT CONROY

EMO Director of Public Policy Advocacy

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Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon does not speak for The Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon; they release all public policy statements through the Oregon Catholic Conference.

“Our faith traditions call us to be thoughtful and active advocates for peace, social justice, human dignity and environmental stewardship. ... EMO seeks to empower people of faith and all Oregonians to fulfill their role in the democratic process.

—EMO STATEMENT OF SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

Our core mission at Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is to bring together diverse communities of faith to learn, serve and advocate for justice, peace and the integrity of creation. We ground ourselves firmly in the tradition of the Old Testament prophets who spoke truth to power and advocated for a more just society.

For nearly 50 years, we have used our voice to advocate for policies and legislation that help create an Oregon that works for everyone, not just those at the top. Releasing our biannual “Voters’ Guide to 2022 Oregon Ballot Measures” is an important part of this work. We’re privileged to provide thoughtful guidance to people of faith and goodwill and help connect current ballot initiatives to deeper values.

Today, the political and policy-making sphere can be downright off-putting. Polarization and demonization often pit us against each other. It has become increasingly difficult to engage

in the political world without being discouraged and disillusioned.

The Rev. Jim Wallis is famous for saying that the answer to bad politics isn’t *no politics*, it’s *better politics*. He defines this as “prophetic rather than partisan, broad and deep instead of narrow, and based on values as opposed to ideology.” Here at EMO, we stand for a lively and respectful body politic. This doesn’t mean we all have to agree and that we don’t have honest differences between us. Rather, we work toward the common good in light of our differences.

In the public square, EMO unapologetically stands alongside Oregonians who—because of their race, wealth or access to power—have been neglected by our society at large. We stand for the aspirations and rights of all, no exceptions.

The positions taken in this voters’ guide are endorsed through a democratic process by our board of directors after the careful recommendation of our volunteer »

Public Policy Advocacy Committee. We hope our discussion of these four ballot measures will provide valuable insights for Oregon voters.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon has adopted a Statement of Social Principles that guides our public policy work. In this statement, we identify core principles and areas of social concern, including:

- Peace and Global Justice
- Human Rights & Religious Freedom
- Environmental Stewardship
- Economic Justice

- Family and Community Well-being
- Public Witness and the Common Good

In our discussions of the individual ballot measures found in this guide, we identify which area, or areas, of social concern relates to that measure.

The complete statement of social principles can be found on our website at emoregon.org/socialprinciples.

As our Public Policy Advocacy Committee engages in a discussion regarding each ballot measure, we

consider arguments offered by both supporters and opponents of each measure. We also rely on the Scriptures, our social principles, past positions on similar measures, and rigorous deliberation.

We invite you to prayerfully consider the wisdom of your own tradition and engage in a thoughtful process of discernment in exercising your civic duty to vote. We are reminded by human rights activist, Loung Ung, “Voting is not only our right, it is our power.” ■

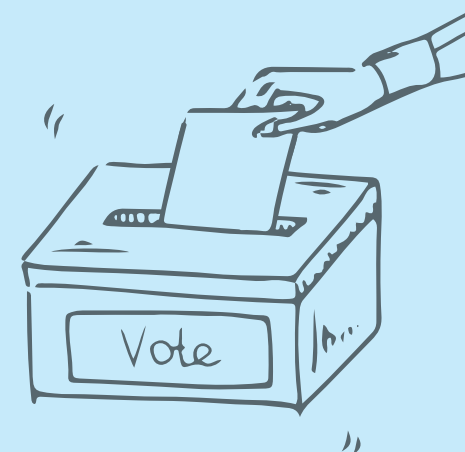
VOTE AND MAKE YOUR VOICE COUNT!

The Nov. 8, 2022, election is a statewide general election and will be vote-by-mail.

Any Oregon resident who is at least 18 years old on Election Day is eligible to vote, but voter registration is required. Register online on the Oregon Secretary of State website (below) or turn in a voter registration card to any county election office within five calendar days after signing the card. The last day to register is Oct. 18. A registered voter who has moved, changed address or changed their name must re-register.

Ballots will begin being mailed to voters on Oct. 10. Voters can use any official ballot drop site in Oregon to return their completed ballot during the 20-day voting period. Locate Oregon ballot drop boxes on the Oregon Secretary of State website (below). Ballots may also be returned in person or by mail to a county election office by 8 p.m. on Nov. 8.

Oregon Secretary of State website: sos.oregon.gov/voting



MEASURE 111

Vote yes RIGHT TO HEALTH CARE

Legislative Referral:

Amends the Oregon Constitution to add that the state will “ensure that every resident of Oregon has access to cost-effective, clinically appropriate and affordable health care as a fundamental right.”

SUMMARY

Measure 111 would amend the Constitution of Oregon by affirming “access to cost-effective, clinically appropriate and affordable health care as a fundamental right.”

Currently, the constitution has no language stating that access to health care is a basic human right for all Oregonians. Notably, this amendment is worded so that spending on health care cannot take money away from other public services, such as public school funding.

The measure started out as SJR 12, and it passed the Oregon Legislature with the vote count of 51 to 36.

SUPPORTERS

Supporters of Measure 111 argue it is a necessary step towards reducing key disparities in health care access, as well as reducing costs associated with severe health conditions. When care

is needed, those without health care require intensive and extended care, increasing the cost of health care for everyone.

Data shows that low-income Oregonians, already burdened by the rising cost of living, often lack quality health care. Furthermore, these income disparities are not shared equally across all racial groups.

In 2019, 24 percent of White households lacked adequate income, compared to 49 percent of Black households, 41 percent of Hispanic households, and 30 percent of Native American households. BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) individuals have higher rates of chronic illness, such as asthma, diabetes and high blood pressure. Black and Native Oregonians experience higher mortality rates than do White Oregonians; Native Americans in Oregon have a life expectancy 4.7 years shorter than White Oregonians.

OPPONENTS

Opponents of Measure 111 argue its ambiguous language could lead to billions in extra costs for the state in health care spending. Republicans in the Oregon »

“Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.”

MATTHEW 25:40

Legislature expressed concerns that the measure would either represent an empty promise, given the language prohibiting the use of funds from other public services, or would create an overwhelming fiscal burden for the state.

Other groups have echoed the concern regarding a loophole for the state to avoid an obligation to provide money for health care access. The Oregon Progressive Party, while supporting the measure, noted that Measure 111 does not create a legally enforceable obligation for the state to provide health care to those who do not have it. Legislative attorneys agree, saying that courts are unlikely to enforce the state’s requirement to guarantee health care given the provision regarding public services spending.

EMO RECOMMENDATION: Vote YES on Measure 111.

A YES vote conveys broad, state-wide approval of health care as a basic human right, while recognizing that more work needs to be done. In addition to supporting Measure 111, EMO urges

further action to legally guarantee health care access for all Oregonians. As people of faith, we are called to support “both ethical and legal regulation to safeguard ... public health and protect the health and well-being of ... the general public” (EMO Statement of Social Principles).

Further, given that lack of health care disproportionately affects low-income Oregonians, EMO recognizes health care for all to be an issue of economic justice. In a time where the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of all Oregonians and exacerbated the disparities in health outcomes faced by communities of color, EMO shares in the belief that providing health care for those who do not have coverage contributes to the health of our whole society.

EMO SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

This recommendation is based on EMO social principles of **Human Rights and Religious Freedom, Economic Justice, and Family and Community Well-being**. See emoregon.org/socialprinciples for more details. ■

EMO RECOMMENDS
**VOTE YES ON
MEASURE 111**

STATISTICS

Percent of households that lacked adequate income (in 2019):

24% White
30% Native American
41% Hispanic
49% Black

MEASURE 112

Vote yes REMOVE SLAVERY AS PUNISHMENT

Legislative Referral:

Repeals language in the Oregon Constitution allowing slavery or involuntary servitude as criminal punishments and authorizes an Oregon court or a probation or parole agency to order alternatives to incarceration for a convicted individual.

Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation.

ROMANS 4:4

SUMMARY

Measure 112 changes language in the Oregon Constitution to remove any loopholes allowing for the use of slavery or involuntary servitude. Section 34 of Oregon's Constitution currently permits the use of slavery or involuntary servitude "as a punishment for crime, whereof the party shall have been duly convicted." This measure would change the language in Section 34 to simply read: "There shall be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in this state."

Additionally, a new article would be added to Section 34. This article puts in writing the ability of courts, probation agencies, and parole agencies to order education, counseling, community service, and other alternatives to incarceration for people convicted of a crime.

The measure started out as SJR 10, and it passed the Oregon Legislature with bipartisan support with the vote count being 76 to 11.

SUPPORTERS

Supporters of Measure 112 argue it is a crucial step towards racial justice and equity in Oregon. Oregonians of color

are disproportionately represented in Oregon's prison population; Black Oregonians make up 10 percent of the prison population, despite being just 2 percent of the state population. In the past, imprisonment of Black Americans has been used to limit freedom and ensure that Black Americans could be taken advantage of as a cheap source of labor.

Supporters also note that Measure 112 will remove language that serves as a reminder of Oregon's racist legacy.

OPPONENTS

There is no formal campaign opposing Measure 112. The Oregon Department of Corrections remains neutral on this measure but raised concerns about the potential conflict with Measure 17—a previously approved ballot initiative in 1994 (now codified in Article I, Section 41 of the Oregon Constitution)—which obligates AICs (adults in custody) to participate in meaningful work training programs. They express concern that future lawsuits might require AICs to earn a wage for participation in this program. »

EMO RECOMMENDATION

Vote "YES" on Measure 112.

As currently written, the constitution's use of language regarding slavery and involuntary servitude is incompatible with the fight for racial justice and fair treatment of Oregonians in custody. Using slavery, a word and practice that has painful historical and present-day implications, is unjust and steeped in racism.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon also supports the right to honorable employment. We strongly believe in a system that affirms the rights of workers, and adults in custody are no exception. While Measure 17

may provide important job training for AICs, forcing them to work for no pay is not only unfair but echoes back to historical practices of slavery, particularly given the overrepresentation of Black Oregonians in the prison population.

Furthermore, it is unlikely this change will have the wide-ranging effects raised by opponents of this measure.

EMO SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

This recommendation is based on the EMO social principles of **Human Rights and Religious Freedom** and **Economic Justice**. See emoregon.org/socialprinciples for more details. ■

EMO RECOMMENDS

**VOTE YES ON
MEASURE 112**

STATISTICS

Black Oregonians make up 10 percent of the prison population, despite being just 2 percent of the state population.

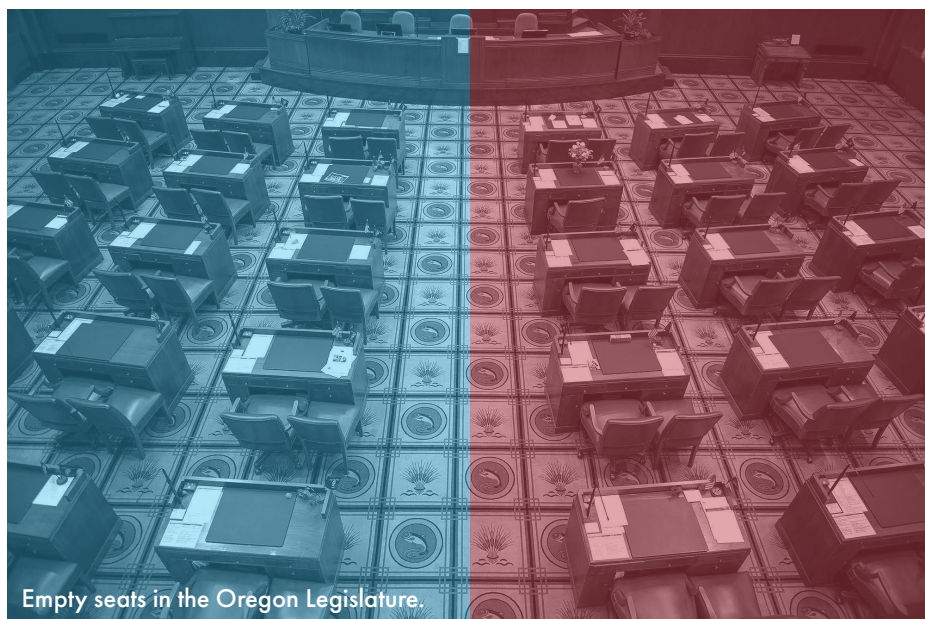


MEASURE 113

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Initiated Constitutional Amendment:

Excludes state legislators from re-election for unexcused legislative absenteeism.



Empty seats in the Oregon Legislature.

SUMMARY

Measure 113 disincentivizes state lawmakers from being absent from the House or Senate floor during legislative sessions. It will prevent legislators from running for reelection at the conclusion of their term if they miss 10 or more legislative sessions without a valid excuse or permission.

Currently, Oregon requires two-thirds of either the House or Senate to be present at a session to constitute a quorum. As a result of the quorum requirement, Republicans and Democrats have both utilized walkouts in order to stall legislation they are opposed to.

Although Democrats currently hold the majority in both chambers, they have used the walkout in the past, such as in 2001, when House Democrats held a walkout to protest a Republican redistricting proposal. Republicans held walkouts in 2019 and 2020 to protest a cap-and-trade bill.

SUPPORTERS

Supporters argue Measure 113 will increase accountability for politicians. The Vote Yes on 113 campaign says that lawmakers should be held to their oath of office, which requires them to be present in order to represent Oregonians. They argue that, in any other job, workers are held accountable for being absent, or for taking action »

that prevents others from doing their job.

OPPONENTS

There is no organized opposition to Measure 113 at present.

EMO RECOMMENDATION

Vote “YES” on Measure 113.

A “YES” vote on Measure 113 sends a strong message to Oregon’s politicians that their role in the democratic process should not be taken lightly. EMO’s social principles require us “to empower people of faith and all Oregonians to fulfill their role in the democratic process.” This process cannot work without legislators who are committed to showing up for their constituents.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon firmly believes in a responsive government that prioritizes the needs of Oregon’s residents and advances the common good. When legislators choose to impede a quorum, important issues—particularly those that impact marginalized Oregonians—are neglected.

Additionally, we urge legislators and our faith partners to support even stronger deterrents from legislative obstruction. A cap of 10 unexcused absences is a first step towards preventing walkouts, but does little to stop gridlock in Salem—particularly in the five-week short session, where

a 10-day walkout can derail the entire session.

EMO SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

This recommendation is based on the EMO social principle of **Public Witness and the Common Good**.

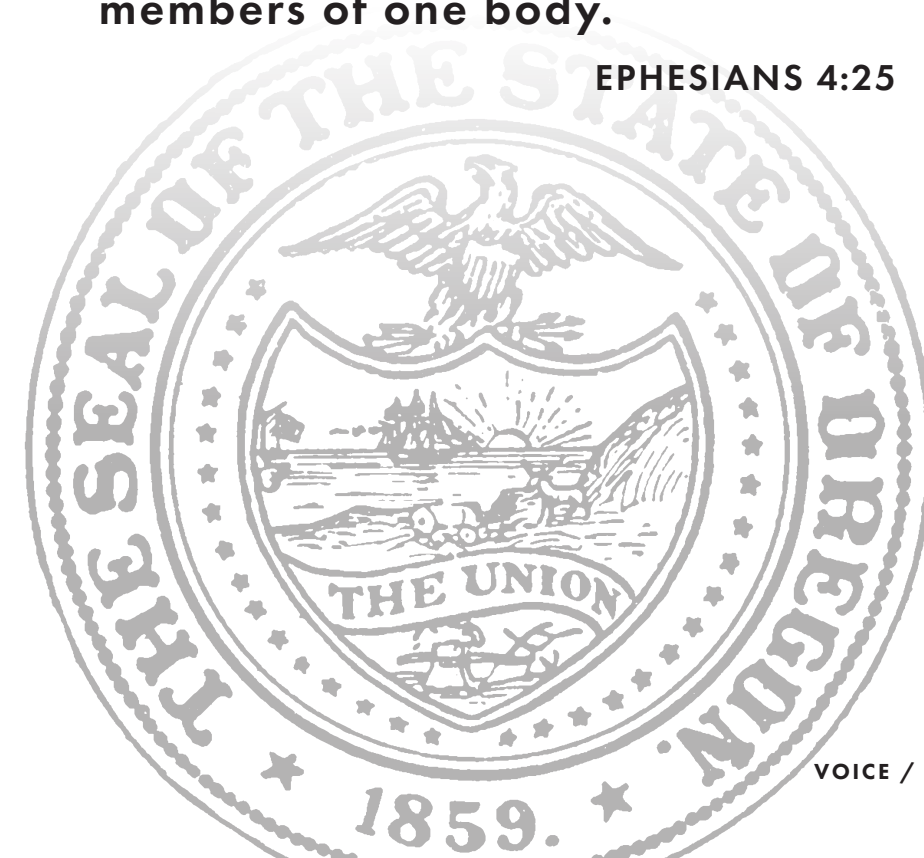
See emoregon.org/socialprinciples for more details. ■

EMO RECOMMENDS

**VOTE YES ON
MEASURE 113**

“Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

EPHESIANS 4:25



MEASURE 114

Vote yes REDUCTION OF GUN VIOLENCE

Statutory Initiative:

Enacts a law outlining a procedure to apply for a permit-to-purchase a firearm and prohibits ammunition magazines capable of holding more than 10 rounds.

SUMMARY

Measure 114, the Reduction of Gun Violence Act, makes several changes to Oregon law. First, it closes the “Charleston loophole”: under current law, guns can be bought and sold without a completed background check, should the check take more than three business days. Measure 114 requires anyone wanting to purchase a gun to have a purchasing permit; obtaining that permit will require a fully completed background check, as well as classroom and live-fire gun training.

Measure 114 also limits the sale and manufacture of magazines to 10 or fewer rounds. The only exceptions to this law are for military and law enforcement, as well as magazines exceeding the 10-round limit that are already owned on the date the act goes into effect. Further, previously purchased magazines cannot be resold or transferred to another owner, and their use is restricted.

SUPPORTERS

Supporters contend that closing the “Charleston loophole” and reducing »

magazine capacity are common sense steps that will help reduce gun violence in Oregon. Lift Every Voice Oregon, the chief sponsor of Measure 114, argues that passage of this measure will make Oregon safer by ensuring responsible gun ownership. They argue that guns, just like cars or boats, should be required to be registered with the state. Similarly, obtaining a permit and completing safety training is no different to obtaining a driver’s license before being able to drive a car.

OPPONENTS

The National Rifle Association has opposed this measure, calling it an attack on Oregonians’ gun rights. They argue that data shows the rise in crime rates in Portland stems from illegal gun purchases, not the legal avenues that this measure would impact. Additionally, they express concerns about forcing citizens to pay for gun permits, as well as the wait time between applying for and being issued a permit.

EMO RECOMMENDATION

Vote “YES” on Measure 114.

Far too many lives in the United States are lost to gun violence. Recent shootings, such as the school shooting in Uvalde, Texas, serve as examples of the prevalence of firearm-related injuries and deaths in our country.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s social principles call us to stand in opposition to “any inhumane treatment that erodes human dignity,” as well as to support a “social order founded on principles of human dignity” that “furthers ... the common good.” Every act of gun violence is an affront to these principles, tearing at the fabric of social order and corroding human flourishing and dignity.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon affirms the right of all Oregonians to reside in a state free from gun violence. Ensuring responsible and well-trained gun ownership and eliminating high-capacity magazines is vital to decreasing gun violence in Oregon. High-capacity magazines are used to commit the majority of mass shootings in the United States.

The concrete, common sense steps laid out in Measure 114 are much needed and long overdue. Contrary to opposition, this measure does not attack gun ownership. Rather, it implements reasonable restrictions that promote safety and training.

EMO SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

This recommendation is based on the EMO social principles of **Human Rights and Religious Freedom** and **Public Witness and the Common Good**. See emoregon.org/socialprinciples for more details. ■

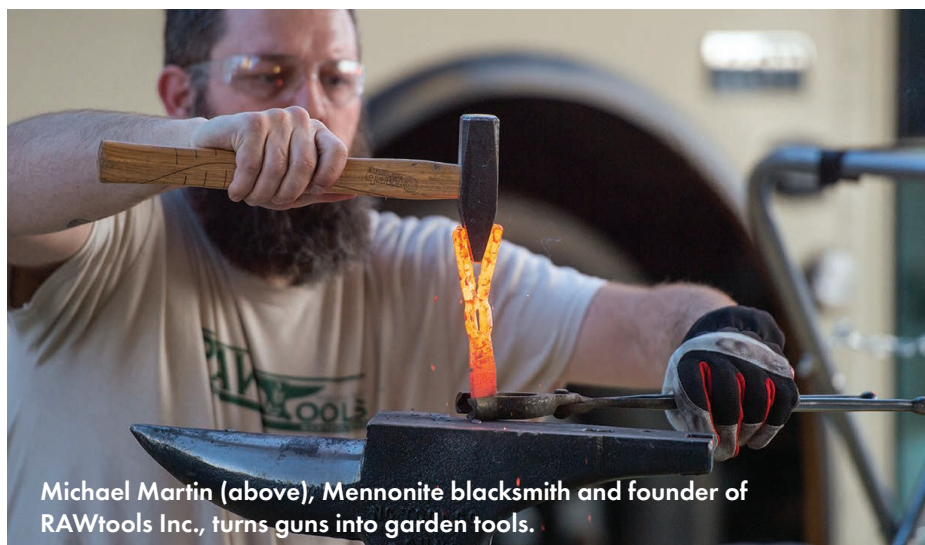
EMO RECOMMENDS
**VOTE YES ON
MEASURE 114**

STATISTICS

- 21 mass shootings in Oregon since 2014
- 13 of those 21 shootings occurred between Dec. 31, 2020, and July 31, 2022
- 164 firearm-related homicides in Oregon last year (49 percent increase over 2019)
- 294 non-fatal gunshot wounds in 2021 (95 percent increase over 2019)

Statistics from Ceasefire Oregon

“They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. ISAIAH 2:4



Michael Martin (above), Mennonite blacksmith and founder of RAWtools Inc., turns guns into garden tools.



"Christ Breaks the Rifle" by iconographer Kelly Latimore.

Breaking IDOLS

BY PAUL LEFEBER

I grew up in rural Nebraska where guns are a part of everyday life. I come from a family of farmers, preachers and military folks. I'm not exactly starry eyed when it comes to guns. I understand their purpose and why people get nervous about losing their rights. Still, like most Americans, I think we may have lost the plot when it comes to guns.

There's a word when a good thing balloons into an ultimate thing, when something intended to be a tool with a specific purpose becomes much more, something deeply cherished and revered. That word is idol.

An idol is anything that grips our imaginations more than the Divine, anything that replaces the Spirit in our hearts. Idols demand our attention, devotion and affection. We often ask them to give us things they can't actually give: acceptance, peace, belonging, purpose, strength, security.

For many, guns have become an idol.

Gun rights advocates often point out that it's not the gun's fault, it's the person behind the gun. True enough, guns don't fire without someone to pull the trigger. It's also true that guns don't have meaning unless we give it to them. Things don't become idols unless we make them so.

Former NRA President Charlton Heston famously defended his gun rights saying, "From my cold, dead hands." Sheesh. Really? Does that sound like idolatry to anyone else? When you start talking about clinging to your possessions even into death, it might be time to take a beat.

"An idol is anything that grips our imaginations more than the Divine, anything that replaces the Spirit in our hearts. Idols demand our attention, devotion and affection. ... For many, guns have become an idol."

For a person of faith, anytime something so consumes us, we have to get curious. Why is this thing so important to me? Always a helpful question.

Idols are mentioned all over the ancient scriptures. This passage from Leviticus 19:4 seems an especially poignant reminder, "Do not turn to idols or make metal gods for yourselves. I am the LORD your God." Jesus reminds us repeatedly that the preoccupations of our hearts rule our lives. He also said, "Those who live by the sword will die by the sword." Does anyone really deny that we are a nation obsessed with our "swords"?

People of faith are asked to break their idols, not double down on them. This isn't to suggest everyone needs to think the same, but we should at the very least be willing to ask, "Why is this thing so important to me?"

I think many of us have grown tired of healthy debate becoming culture war gobbledygook, when thinking becomes so binary and entrenched that people would sooner die than admit the other side has a point. We need common sense gun regulation that makes room for people with different views. That is

what Measure 114 allows, and Oregon has the chance to pass a historic piece of legislation this fall.

My great grandfather, a Swedish immigrant, died a young man in a hunting accident in western Nebraska. He accidentally shot himself climbing over a fence. If he had been better educated and had taken some basic precautions, that accident might never have happened.

It's true what the NRA says, "Guns don't kill people, people kill people." But also ... lack of education and unsafe equipment kill people. It certainly did with my great grandfather. The education is only getting worse, and the equipment only getting more lethal. These are two important issues addressed by Measure 114, the Reduction of Gun Violence Act.

Is it so wrong to suggest there is room for improvement? If you're not willing even to have the conversation, you might have an idol on your hands. And in the end, guns don't kill people, idols kill people. ■

Paul LeFever is the director of Development and Communications for Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

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