

Carolyn Winfrey Gillette wrote the following new hymn in response to the worst mass shootings in USA history that took place early Sunday morning in Orlando, Florida. She gives permission for free use of the hymn by local congregation and ecumenical services. Please email her at bcgillette@comcast.net if you would like the hymn in MS Word for a worship bulletin insert and/or as a PDF with the hymn text and music. Please share this new hymn with others who might want it for a mid-week vigil and/or Sunday morning worship service.

To a Place of Celebration

EBENEZER 8.7.8.7 D ("Why Do Nations Rage Together")

To a place of celebration filled with laughter, dancing, joy,
Came such violent devastation— one man's efforts to destroy.
God, we grieve for loved ones taken; we lament, "What can we do?"
Now, we're feeling lost and shaken; heal our nation! Make us new!

Weapons kill— and so does silence; hear our prayer as we confess:
We have given in to violence, we have bowed to hopelessness.
God, we've lost our sense of vision of a world where there will be
Plowshares made from violent weapons, justice in society.

Give our leaders strength for action, give them minds to mend our
flaws,
Give them courage and compassion and the will to change our laws.
May we work for legislation that will curb guns' awful toll.
God, renew our dedication to a world that's just and whole.

Give us love to change our vision; give us love to cast out fear.
Give us love to speak with wisdom— love to work for justice here.
Give us love to welcome difference— love no hatred can destroy.
Only love can stop the violence; only love will bring back joy.

Biblical References: Isaiah 4:2; 1 John 4:18; James 3:1-12; Micah 6:8; Matthew 25:35

Tune: Thomas John Williams, 1890.

Alternative Tune: BEACH SPRING

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Here is a link to [this hymn online along with Carolyn's other hymns on gun violence](#) for easy sharing.