

# IN REMEMBRANCE ON THE 5TH YEAR...

Of Those Who Died in the King Soopers Tragedy on 3/22/21 and All Victims of Gun Violence



In 2021, the Gun Violence Prevention Ministry and the McMane Arts Ministry of First Congregational Church UCC Boulder joined together to create a visual memorial honoring our neighbors who died or were impacted by the tragedy at King Soopers on March 22, 2021. We chose to participate in an ongoing national effort, The Soul Box Project, as it uses the power of art to represent the daily loss of human lives in our country due to firearms, including mass shootings, homicides, accidents, and suicides.

Many caring individuals in our community contributed to this intergenerational project and made a box or two; some decorated the boxes. Others made hundreds! Each box in this exhibit represents a victim, a life – a person, loved by friends and families and loved by God. Each panel holds 108 boxes – an approximation of the number of gun deaths each day in the United States. The display at FCC includes 7 panels with a total of 756 boxes – which approximates the number of lives lost in one week to gun violence in throughout the US.

We invite you to view this powerful display, to honor and remember friends and loved ones. You are welcome to walk around the Sanctuary and reflect on the ten lives that were lost in the King Soopers tragedy (represented in the 10 larger boxes) as well as victims from other Colorado shootings and gun tragedies throughout our country.

You may wish to sit peacefully, pray, or meditate, a prayer is provided on the back to guide you. Our hope is that this memorial may bring healing to those in pain and encourage us to become part of a stronger voice that is inspired to work together to understand and end this multifaceted, complicated public health crisis.

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FIRST CONGREGATIONAL  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST · BOULDER



Loving God,

We come before you today admitting that we are frustrated, numb, angry and deeply sad due to the plague of gun violence in our land. In our confusion, we lean on you.

As we look around this room we see over 800 boxes, each a symbol of one of your precious children taken from this earth too soon through violence by firearms. Why does this continue to happen? We come to you with more questions than answers. In our weariness, we lean on you.

We pause to remember and honor our Boulder neighbors, who lost their lives five years ago at King Soopers on March 22, 2021. We pray for their loved ones as they continue to grieve. Forever they will be held in our hearts. In our grief, we lean on you.

As we go beyond our community into the world, we remember all who are impacted by gun violence. For all the families of those who have been killed, we pray. For students who fear going to school because of intruders. For the shooters—help us to pray, Lord. For the communities that have lost members, we pray. For the churches striving to promote love and prevent violence, we pray. In our humanity, we lean on you.

In the face of hatred, may we claim love, O God. May we love those far off and those near. May we love those who are strangers and those who are friends. May we love those who we agree with and understand, and even more so with those who we consider to be our enemies. Heal our land and our hearts, make our wounds whole. In our despair, we lean on you.

God of all,  
Help us to work for a peaceful society,  
to advocate for justice, health care, education for all,  
to learn to talk through fears and communicate across boundaries  
to work to establish a "Just world for all"  
In our world, we lean on you.  
Amen