



# ***Heeding God's Call***

## ***to End Gun Violence***

No Surprise: Philly Suffers 300th Homicide in 2020,  
Mayor and Police Decry Easy Availability of Illegal Guns

The Philadelphia Inquirer reported both that Sunday witnessed the gun deaths of two men and that the number of homicides in the city reached the incomprehensible total of 300, with four months to go (<https://www.inquirer.com/crime/philadelphia-shootings-homicides-300-ongoing-gun-violence-20200830.html>). The sum is a shocking 37% above the total at the same time last year.

Also, KYW Radio reported on Sunday that Philadelphia police have seized nearly 3,000 guns since the beginning of the year (<https://kywnewsradio.radio.com/articles/news/gun-violence-continues-to-surge-as-officials-seize-more-guns>). Officials correctly identified the ease of availability of firearms, overwhelmingly illegal handguns, as the cause of these two frightening totals and decried these connected facts.

However, KYW further reported city officials "are pressing federal authorities to learn how shooters are getting guns so easily," as if they don't know. They and we know. Guns are so available because absurdly weak Pennsylvania laws enable straw purchasers, stand-ins for illegal gun traffickers, to buy guns in quantity from rogue or irresponsible gun retailers. Straw purchasers turn the guns over to traffickers who sell them to those who can't pass background checks - including felons and teens.

There are state legislative solutions, such as licensing all gun purchasers and/or limiting individuals to the purchase of no more than a single handgun in any thirty day period (One Handgun a Month), but gaining them will require commitment of resources, energy and time on the part of officials, politicians and the public. These have been sadly and damagingly lacking. Heeding will detail our knowledge and views of how to get there in a series of posts over the next week. Please watch for it.

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*Heeding God's Call to End Gun Violence (Heeding)* is a faith-based and grassroots organization devoted solely to saving lives from the uniquely American scourge of gun violence. *Heeding* is headquartered in Philadelphia, with volunteer chapters in the Mid-Atlantic. *Heeding's* activities include using faithful public pressure to persuade gun retailers to eschew sales to those who would resell guns on the street, public interfaith Murder Site Witnesses in effected neighborhoods, installations of Memorials to the Lost™, portable tee-shirt memorials honoring local victims of gun violence and more.

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