

Dear Mayor Bloomberg:

As members of Mennonite Church USA we join with the New York City Council of Mennonite Churches in supporting a just and peaceable response to the shootings of Sean Bell, Joshua Guzman, and Trent Benefield.

Our hearts go out to the victims and their families, as well as to the police officers involved in the shootings. We believe that all who participate in violent action are deeply impacted by it, and we pray that healing and hope may flow throughout the ripples of this tragedy.

As an “historic peace church” which has developed peace and justice initiatives both in the United States and in many countries around the world, we are prepared to offer you any of our program resources that might support a just and peaceable response in this situation.

While it is clear that you are working within the usual structures to investigate the shootings in Queens, we strongly encourage you to utilize investigators from outside the New York City Police Department. We believe that the truth which emerges from an independent investigation has more integrity than a self-study, and that integrity from leaders can most effectively repair relationships between a community and those who serve it.

Our brothers and sisters in New York City, like human beings everywhere, affirm again and again the deep desire for shalom – for peace and prosperity. In the book of Jeremiah, the people and their leaders are called to seek the peace and prosperity of the city. Our prayers are with you and all New Yorkers in your pursuit of shalom in your great city.

Sincerely,