

ADVOCATES FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

UNION CHURCH IN WABAN

14 Collins Road

Waban, MA 02468

April 23, 2023

The Honorable Gloria Johnson
425 Rep. John Lewis Way N.
Suite 434 Cordell Hull Bldg.
Nashville TN 37243

Dear Representative Johnson,

Jesus undersigned members of the Union Church in Waban, affirming the inclusive love of Jesus, are moved to bear witness to the tragic school shootings in Nashville, to the state house demonstrations and protests by the people of Tennessee, and to the senseless retaliation by the majority of the Tennessee House of Representatives voting to silence the people by expelling Rep Justin Pearson and Rep. Justin Jones and punishing you for standing with them. Instead of addressing measures to prevent more gun violence, the rulers of the House chose to defend their decorum, thereby trivializing the loss of life and ignoring the grief and the outcries of communities traumatized by endless gun violence. They chose love for guns over love for children.

We fully support your vigorous, inspiring protest and steadfast refusal to allow the voices for justice in the House chamber to be silenced. We are heartened by the quick action of the constituents of Reps Jones and Pearson that will enable the Tennessee Three to continue to be even stronger now to give voice to the countless victims of gun violence in this country. Most importantly, your presence on the front line with Reps. Pearson and Jones in direct action and agitation for racial justice fortify our understanding that the incidents of gun violence that move us to pray and protest are but one of many inhumane manifestations of racial injustice that we can no longer tolerate in any part of this country.

We are most grateful for courage of the Tennessee Three and for your clarity of purpose in harmony with the truth-telling of Dr. King and Frederick Douglass - the truth that those in power concede nothing without a demand; freedom must be demanded by the oppressed.

Your demands are our demands. May you, an instrument of peace, prevail over the instruments of war that tear at the heart of our country.

With gratitude,

The undersigned members of Union Church in Waban and its Advocates for Racial Justice

