



Transcript

Means of Grace

Episode 87

Speaker 00:05

Welcome to Means Of Grace, a podcast produced by the Western North Carolina Conference of The United Methodist Church.

Aimee Yeager 00:20

Hi, and welcome back to the Means Of Grace Podcast. I'm Aimee Yeager Conference Director of Communications, and I am thrilled to be back behind the microphone this week. As we return to our normal schedule, releasing new episodes every other Tuesday. We have an extra special episode for our return this week. Today you get the privilege of listening in on an incredibly powerful conversation between Gloria Hughes, who is the Vitality Associate for the Appalachian District, and the Appalachian District Superintendent Lory Beth Huffman, as they talk with author, activist and speaker Shane Claiborne. This conversation is part two in a four-part series that the Appalachian District is hosting on their podcast, Stories Along the Journey. I know that you will find this episode as inspirational as I have, and you will want to follow along for parts three and four. You can find the link, follow, and subscribe to Stories Along the Journey in our show notes. And now, without further ado, Gloria Hughes, Lory Beth Huffman, and Shane Claiborne.



Gloria Hughes 01:39

Welcome back friends, we're glad you're with us. At our last episode, we made a commitment to have really hard conversations, knowing that they're vitally important about the things that are happening right now in the world. They're hard, they're hard realities, and we feel like the church needs to be a part of that. We just can't walk away and pretend it's not happening. So we here wrestled with what that meant for the church and what it means to be a prophetic voice and invited a pastor serving a local congregation who spends her week in prayer and guided by the Holy Spirit of how she can exercise her prophetic voice. As she leads her congregation. We were grateful for Elizabeth. Then we ended our last session with a short conversation around gun violence: stats that we were able to find and realities that are happening, which actually led us to this podcast today. So today, Lory Beth, Katie and I are blessed to have Shane Claiborne with us. As one who has used his voice and passion as advocacy for others in the world. Shane worked with Mother Teresa and Calcutta and founded the simple way in Philadelphia. He now heads up Red Letter Christians, a movement of folks who are committed to living as if Jesus meant the things he said; there's a thought. Shane is a champion for grace, which has led him to jail advocating for the homeless, and to places like Iraq and Afghanistan to stand against war. And now grace fuels his passion to end the death penalty and to help stop gun violence. And his most recent book with Michael Martin, *Beating Guns: Hope For People Who Are Weary of Violence* is available. And so we are grateful to have Shane with us today.

Shane Claiborne 03:52

Well, thank you so much. I'm glad to be with you.

Gloria Hughes 03:55



Wait, hey Shane you're back in Philly was the North Carolina humidity too much for you?

Shane Claiborne 04:01

Well, I'll tell you what, Katie and I were living on a school bus turned into a tiny house. I don't know if y'all know. But that's the thing. They call them schoolies. Solar panels and composting toilet. We did it for a year. Katie said we're living our best, best life now. But anyway, yeah. You know, after a year that it's nice to have a toilet that flushes.

Gloria Hughes 04:30

The little things. That's awesome. You are a passionate follower of Jesus. In fact, the DNA of Jesus is deeply rooted in your being in who you are. And so we were wondering who made that passion for Jesus come alive for you?

Shane Claiborne 04:51

Wow. Well, that's a very fun compliment, especially since we hardly know each other but I'm gonna take it and say I receive it, hallelujah. But you know, I fell in love with Jesus when I was in middle school, and I grew up in the Methodist Church and went to a little retreat in the Smoky Mountains called Resurrection. And I heard folks talking about what Jesus did on the cross and who Jesus was, you know, we did an altar call and, and you know that was really where things started for me. And I've been trying to figure out what that means ever since. And even with the contradictions, I saw in the church, I kept leaning into Jesus and, and then, you know, came up with Philly. And partly because I wanted to get outside of Tennessee, and I really loved the college here, Eastern University, where



I went felt like a real authentic spiritual space, the, you know, didn't require chapel but it was really lively and student-led. And so I kept really pursuing my faith there. And it's also where, you know, I, Carl Bart said, we need to read the Bible in one hand, but we need to read the newspaper in the other. And by that he was, you know, kind of saying, our faith shouldn't just become a ticket into heaven and a license to ignore the world we live in. I found, you know, at Eastern faith that really engages the world we live in. And that's why I study I literally studied the Bible, in one in the newspaper and the other I studied Bible and theology and also study does sociology that shaped a lot of how I think about my faith, you know, and what it means to bring the kingdom of God or the dream of God on earth, as it is in heaven, as Jesus said.

Gloria Hughes 06:37

Was that experience what really awakens your awareness of the injustices in the world and where you are?

Shane Claiborne 06:45

Yeah, my studies were instrumental. I mean, folks like Tony Campolo, who's now my partner in ministry, and dear friend, you know, he's pushing 90 these days. And he's just an incredible example. I think someone that's held together, the evangelical part of the gospel along with the social justice stuff, and so he was, you know, first my teacher, and then became a really dear friend. But you know, the other thing that happened is, in our sophomore year of college, a group of homeless families had moved into an abandoned Catholic church building on the north side of Philly. And we read about that in the newspaper. The story was heart-wrenching. It talked about how many families on the waiting list for



housing, it was like 3000 families at the time, and these families had nowhere really to go. And so they moved into this old sanctuary. But the article ended by saying that the Catholic Church considered that they were trespassing even though it was abandoned, and they had an eviction notice of 48 hours, and if they weren't out, within two days, they could be arrested. You know that that didn't feel right to us. And as good evangelicals, we held a prayer meeting. And in that prayer meeting, we sort of felt like we were throwing up our hands at God saying, God, we need you to do something. We heard God say back, I did do something I made you get down there, you know. And so, literally that night, we went down and got involved in the families that hung a banner on the front of the cathedral that said, "How can we worship a homeless man on Sunday, and ignore one on Monday?" I mean, obviously, pointing out the contradiction of the, you know, the church worshiping the baby born in the manger, because there was no room in the inn, and then showing such a lack of hospitality to these, these, these women and children. So that, you know, launched a real powerful student movement that gave birth to our local community here, The Simple Way. So you know, after that struggle resolved itself, I mean, many of those families got housing, they still became really, you know, they stayed really dear friends of ours, and we moved into that neighborhood on the north side of Philly. It's called Kensington. And that's where I've lived for the last couple of decades. And Katie, and I got married in that old abandoned church, and we got permission. You know, we thought that could you know, it could go wrong if you don't get permission to go in the abandoned church to get married.

Gloria Hughes 09:12



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So wow, thanks for sharing that, Shane. My husband has a t-shirt that he got from you that says "Jesus was homeless". And I know that you spent, even went to jail for the work that you were trying to do with the homeless and for feeding them pizza in the park or something. Am I remembering that right?

Shane Claiborne 09:31

Yeah, well, you know, not too long after the whole experience in the cathedral and starting to get The Simple Way going. Philadelphia began to pass some really terrible laws that specifically discriminated against the homeless, and that's really what they were designed to do. This happens all over our country. In some places, it's still happening. In fact, in Tennessee where I grew up, it made it a felony as my understanding to sleep in public spaces. Which just boggles the mind, you know, I mean, folks are struggling enough. And as Jesus said, "which do least of these you do, and to me when I was a stranger, did you welcome me? And when I was hungry, did you feed me?" So we read all that, you know, when these laws passed in Philly, we decided to challenge them. But we wanted to do that in a way that was consistent with our faith, you know, like, humble, and yet, unapologetic. And so we had some worship services where we serve communion, which, you know, we knew was pushing the envelope a little bit because you're not allowed to serve food. And so the communion service was a little controversial. But then, what was more controversial was when we had the post-communion service and brought in the pizzas. And all we did really was eat and then we stayed in the park after what they considered park hours, which were, you know, designed to make it hard for folks to be there. And, and so we, yeah, we ended up one night they, the police were ordered to arrest everybody. So they surrounded the park and kind of swarmed in on us. It was really in the middle of the night, we were in handcuffs



and taken to the jails before we could hardly wake up and when that happened, you know, we kept challenging those laws. And we accumulated a lot of fines and citations. And we went to court. And it was really powerful because I had that shirt on in court that said "Jesus was homeless". And the judge said, "Tell me about that." And I said, "Well, Your Honor. And in the Scripture, Jesus says foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head." And the judge said, "You guys might stand a chance." We did, we argued our case. And in the end that that same judge said, "you know, if it weren't for people who broke the bad laws, we wouldn't have the freedom that we have. That's what this country is built on from the Boston Tea Party to the Civil Rights Movement. You think of the Underground Railroad, you know, so many of these, these things that have shaped our country." And he said, "These guys are not criminals, they're freedom fighters. And I'm dropping all the charges." You know, he found us not guilty on all those. So you know, when those same laws surfaced again, there was a little bit of a precedent. But we still had our shirts, we had one shirt that said, "If Jesus had done the fish and loaves thing in Philly, he would have gone to jail". But you know, what, in one instance, that went all the way to a federal court that ruled, we argued that it was a violation of our religious freedom to say that we cannot feed the homeless is to say we cannot feed Christ and violates one of the central practices of our faith. And, and they ruled again in our favor on that. So we got to keep challenging those laws. And I'm thankful for the courage of other folks around the country that have been doing that even folks that we met on the border between the US and Mexico that have been putting emergency water posts in the desert for folks that might need it. And they also had faced very serious charges. And they might understand these, I made that same argument. Jesus said, "When I was thirsty, did you give me something to



drink?" And, you know, I think we don't need to be ashamed of our faith, but really allow it to be a part of our fuel for justice in the world. So we've "done the good trouble", as John Lewis says, and we've seen the power of, you know, also bearing witness as Christians in the midst of some really terrible policies.

Gloria Hughes 13:16

And now you are using that fuel that you talked about in advocacy for eradicating the death penalty, and now gun violence. And I saw a documentary that you had done, Shane, and in it, you talked about how your advocacy for gun violence got personal. Would you be willing to share that with us?

Shane Claiborne 13:40

Yeah, absolutely. And on many of these things, I've come to really see that proximity makes all the difference in the world, being near to those who are impacted. And I mean, honestly, I think some of that comes from my theology, too, is I think, exactly what Jesus did for us is God became proximate, you know, the Word became flesh. And Jesus was born into skin, you know, and not just anybody but brown skin, Palestinian Jewish baby refugees body, like kind of moving into the margins, and this incredible sign of God's solidarity with those who are suffering. So for me, you know, visiting death row, living in a neighborhood that's impacted all the time by gun violence, puts the real fire in our bones for change, you know, and I think part of the problem in the church is not that it is not just a compassion problem, but its proximity problem. We need to be a little closer to those who are suffering and impacted by injustice. So, you know, living here in Kensington, we see that all the time that yeah, I grew up with guns for hunting. You know, I grew up squirrel hunting with my grandfather and



my 4-10. You know, Most of my family still are gun owners, but as we move into Philadelphia, so you know, the real impact of gun violence is very regular that we hear gunshots, we got a gunshot bullet or in front of our house, in our, in our car, you know, I mean, it's just everywhere, almost every corner of our neighborhood has memorials to the lives lost. But that really became real to me several years ago, but we heard the gunshots that came out. And the young man that had been hit by those fell on my steps, and he was 19. And his name was Poquito. And he was still alive. So I was holding his hand, I was praying for him, and the ambulance came, and we found out the next morning he had died. And for me, that was a moment where Martin Luther King said, "We're all called to be the Good Samaritan", you know, that story in the Gospel, and we're called to lift our neighbor out of the ditch. But Dr. King said, "after you've left so many people out of the ditch, you start to say, we need to do something about the road to Jericho." And so we really became more active, I became more active in trying to address some of the root causes of gun violence and, you know, ask questions like, "Where are the kids getting the guns?", and "Can't we do a little better in our gun policies to save lives?" And also, you know, like, let's learn nonviolence, let's discipline ourselves in the fruits of the Spirit. And so that became, you know, not just a part of our prayer life, but our kind of philosophy and really the DNA of our community here, The Simple Way. And, you know, we've rejoined folks all over the country that want to see change, I mean, now it's even I think about the highest it's ever been some 90% of Americans want to see us make some changes on gun policies that would save lives. And here's the interesting thing is, overwhelmingly gun owners want to see the same thing. So depending on which policy we're talking about 70 to 80% of gun owners want to see some changes.



Lory Beth 16:53

Same. And we're going to go a little bit deeper with specifically around gun violence in a second. But I wanted to shift gears a little bit and talk about your recent book written with Michael Martin, that Gloria referenced called "Beating Guns". And it essentially is for people who believe that the world doesn't have to be this way. And the inspiration to it is the biblical prophetic image of beating swords into plows. But it really does focus and look at AT gun violence in America and offers this clarion call to change our hearts, right regarding one of these, what we would call a significant moral issue of our time. I just want to ask, give an example of what just recently happened to me and how you handle when folks try and shift the narrative on you. So obviously, recently, over July 4, we all experienced a high number of mass shootings across the country. And in trying to figure out how to respond to this, I wrote an article that goes out to our folks in our district that called for us to lament and reminded us that, you know, God has given us this biblical language, the practice of lament as a way of dealing with not only just being sad or upset or angry over something, but to take all of those emotions and express them and ask God, you know, "where are you in the midst of this?", ultimately leading us to trust God, to continue the work of mending this world, this creation back together. Just for some of us, it's frustrating, because it's not as fast as we'd want it to be. Anyway, you know, I write this article, this invitation to lament and I get a pretty immediate response back. "That was political, and you shouldn't be political, please, you know, take me off of your email list." And, you know, thinking about what I wrote, I was like, "No, it really was theological. It was based on my faith as a Christian that life is, you know, a gift from God." And so I wonder, how do you handle it when people hear what you have to say, see what you're doing and like, oh, that's political as if you're on the



other side of the aisle from me and wants to dismiss the conversation or the work, when it really is theological at its core?

Shane Claiborne 19:28

This is really so important to talk about, because I think most of us have a kind of distaste in our mouth when we say and think about politics, and I think we need to, we need to dissect that a little bit because I think, you know, loving our neighbor as ourself requires thinking about policies that affect their lives, you know, whether it's immigration or gun violence or abortion or you know, medical care or whatever. I think those loving our neighbor includes like trying to find policies that help people flourish. But I also want to say that what became very clear to me is that gun violence is not just a political issue, it is a deeply spiritual issue. And you know, I would point back all the way to the inaugural murder, you know, in Scripture, the first thing that happens outside the Garden of Eden, is Cain killing Abel. And it's actually like, I don't need to tell, you know, pastors in the district superintendent, this, but it's the first time that the word "sin" is used, is actually not in the Garden of Eden. But it's used in the murder of Cain and Abel, Cain killing his brother. And it says in that, as it kind of names it, as soon as it says that "the blood cries out to God from the ground". I mean, this is so powerful, I get chills every time I say that, and my Jewish friends really helped me unpack that text a little bit and said, one thing that sometimes we Christians don't notice, if we're not reading the Hebrew is that the word for blood is plural. And so it wasn't just Abel's blood, but it's all the blood that has been poured out. And, and it's also the verb is not in the past tense, it's, it's in the present tense, it's not that the blood cried out when the murder happened, but it continues to cry out. And boy, that just helps us understand why lament is so important and how important your



article is, you know that to say, if we cannot start by grieving with God, that a life that's lost matters to God, every single person is made in the image of God. And so this is such a deeply spiritual thing, you know, that, that. And I think there are folks that also, you know, kind of amassed all this in my own life, and in my own politics is that we, it was easy for us to say some things are political, and others aren't like, you know, I had no problem being an activist on abortion. I was very, you know, actively pro-life and doing that, you know, work in high school. But then we kind of said, that's, that's where life stops for us. You know, one of my friends said, it's almost like, life began at conception and ended at birth. And yet, like, when we really think about what it means to be "for life", it's not just like before birth, but life after birth, you know, and right now, gun violence is the number one cause of death of our children. Now, that became true in the pandemic. For years, it's been the number one cause of death of African American children, who are 10 times more likely to die than white kids, and are just as much made the image of God of course. But you know, now it's the number one cause of death of all of our children. So it's impossible to say that we're pro-life and not be deeply concerned about gun violence. And these are not mutually exclusive. You can care about reducing and eradicating abortion, we can, I think we need to, you know, it's part of what fuels my passion on the death penalty is, I believe this, too, is a spiritual crisis in the church, because Christians have been the biggest defenders of the death penalty. And yet, I think it raises one of the most important questions of our faith, which is, "is anybody beyond redemption?", and of course, the Methodist Church, you know, as one of the best statements on the death penalty is that capital punishment denies the power of Jesus to really restore and redeem and transform every person. So these things can be seen as political issues, but my central lens for thinking about so many of the things like the death



penalty and gun violence is that this goes very heart at my faith. Same with immigration. You know, Jesus said, "When you welcome the stranger, you welcome me". So I want to ensure to be a country that's known for the kind of compassion and hospitality that will be judged by.

Gloria Hughes 23:58

Thanks Shane. Yeah, that whole image of grieving with God, I thank you for that. And you've y'all talked about this, like, some people say that gun violence is a it's a heart problem. Others say it's a gun problem. And you all really believe it's both right?

Shane Claiborne 24:16

Absolutely, yeah, absolutely. Sometimes we create these kinds of false dichotomies, you know, and I like how Martin Luther King kind of navigated this. I take a lot of cues from Dr. King and Coretta Scott King, and one of the things that Dr. King's because they said this all the time to Martin Luther King is oh, you know, "don't talk about this from the pulpit. That's political, you know, stick to the, you know, spiritual stuff." Dr. King really differentiated between the heart change and the policy and social change. And they're kind of like, actually, I just had his press secretary visiting our house. He's almost nine years old. And he was telling me stories. He said, "Yeah, so like, oars of the boat, you know, they gotta go together." Like the individual chains in this social change. And that's how Dr. King saw it. And, you know, as you think of the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. King said, "a law cannot make you love me. But it can make it harder for you to kill me." It's such a powerful line, right? And, and so yes, no law can change a racist heart. But we can do a better job at making sure I mean, the Civil Rights Movement, that



black folks were being recognized as fully human, and that they can vote and that they can swim in the same swimming pools and go to the same school. So policies needed to change. But that doesn't negate the fact that you can't legislate love or make hatred illegal, you know, we really needed God, to heal hearts. And it's similar with guns, you know, people say, if you get rid of all the guns, then, you know, people are still going to find ways to kill folks. And they're right, you know, you can turn a car into a weapon, you can turn a pressure cooker into a bomb. That's what happened in the Boston Marathon, right? But the fact is that some things are designed to kill. And like an AR 15 is designed for one purpose to kill as many people as possible as quickly as possible. It's a weapon of war. And that's exactly what it keeps getting used for. So I often say, you know, when people say guns don't kill, people kill. I say, that's true. People with guns also can kill a lot of people and people with an AR 15 can kill a whole lot of people. So everywhere you look in the world, we have heart problem. Sin affects every nation, and every person. Even, you know, racism, violent folks that are violent, violent video games, songs. That's true everywhere. And yet, what is unique about America is allowing people easy access to guns, where right now, we have more guns than people, more guns than people in our country. And that inevitably means that there are more lives lost to suicide, which accounts for over half of our gun deaths. It also means that there are more accidental deaths, there are more police killed, there are more homicides. We can make it harder for people to kill. And right now we're making it really, really easy.

Gloria Hughes 27:16

Wow, Shane. I'd love the Healing Hearts piece, which is what my understanding is of *Beating Guns*. That you are offering a space for parents who have lost a child to



gun violence to a place for healing. And would you speak a little bit about that? Because I'm just so intrigued, and by that whole concept of turning a weapon into something in a space for healing?

Shane Claiborne 27:47

Well, sure, I love it. I mean, we're doing it all the time. And it's such redemptive work, scripture that inspires us for this comes from both the prophets, Mike and Isaiah as they talk about God's people beating swords into plows and spears into pruning hooks. And it's been over 10 years since we kind of caught this vision and said, Well, we you know, we don't have a lot of swords in America, but we've got a whole lot of guns. So what would it look like if we invited people to donate them and begin to transform them and I did my the first weapon conversion I did with my friend Ben Cohen from he's the Ben of Ben and Jerry's ice cream and a good friend to have. But we kind of did this event in Philly called Jesus bombs and ice cream, imagining a world with more ice cream and less violence, and we took an AK 47, that was our first gun. And we transformed it. And it was so powerful and so moving, that we've been doing it, you know, ever since in different ways, and I then heard about other folks in the country that we're doing it so we've got this whole national network now called Raw Tools, which comes from flipping war backward. That's how we get the "raw" part: Raw Tools. But here's what happened was, you know, there's always been the symbolic, the poetic, kind of creative side of it, artistic side of it, but it was in Philly, we found a handgun in an abandoned house. I mean, one more reminder of how just saturated we are with guns and we took this handgun, and we decided, you know, we'll do a public demonstration of it. And as we were heating up the forge and began to heat up the metal, we really felt moved. I think that by the Holy Spirit, you know, to invite the moms and dads



to take the hammer. We weren't sure if anybody would want to you know, they absolutely like lined up and these moms and dads who had lost their kids began to hammer on this gun. And one in particular Miss Ryan's as she's beating on it. She's got a picture of her son on her shirt. When she said, "This is for my boy" and I mean, it was emotional, you know. And I think that's where we realized that what we're doing is more than symbolic or poetic, it really is to use a church word, sacramental, you know that there's a, there's a holy mystery as well. You know what sacrament means insert, there's something that happens at the forge, especially now, that's our regular practice is to say, if anybody has been impacted by gun violence, and you want to take the hammer, you know, there's no pressure, but there is an invitation, and you're welcome to, and people will just start telling their stories. And one guy you beat 18 times he counted out loud 123. Afterward, he said he had, he had killed an 18-year-old. And so this was a part of his own healing, you know, and so we've had, you know, police chiefs and police officers, we've had veterans that have lost their friends' lives to suicide, or in combat. I mean, we've just seen so many pieces of it. And I think of my friend, Sharon Risher, who's become a partner in all this work, her mother and her family was killed, and Emanuel AME Church, you know, that terrible act of hatred and historic black church there. And she named all nine of her family members that she beat on that, and then collapsed, you know, in my arms, and we're, we're crying together. And she's like, this is one of the most powerful things she's like, is healing stuff inside of me. And she's all that anger. You know, I just took it all out on that guy.

Lory Beth 31:31

So therapeutic. Well, Shane, as we wrap up this conversation, very important conversation, I wondered if you had any thoughts or suggestions for ways that



any of us, all of us, any of us can get involved in eradicating gun violence? What are some practical things that you can suggest that we might do?

Shane Claiborne 31:56

Awesome, I love being really practical. And I think, you know, there's a spiritual side of this, that I think we've got to allow the Holy Spirit to heal the wounds of violence that are in our own hearts. And one of the things that we do at the forge is we invite people to write the kind of triggers in the hostilities, the fears that are in their hearts, we burn them at the forge. So there's that internal work. And then I think we've also got to start with that deep grieving, you know, that you invited us into to lament that. One of the things that we did in Philadelphia is, we just walked through the streets of Philly downtown, with the names and the ages of the over 500 people who were killed. Last year, just in Philadelphia, it's the most we've ever had in the history of our city. And we carry those on T-shirts through the streets, there are congregations that are putting installations outside of them, often with those T-shirts, whereas people are coming into worship, they're remembering all the lives lost in their city or in their state, we've got to create ways of kind of making it visible and public that we have a crisis on our hands. And I think we got to have better conversations about the kinds of policies that would save lives. And again, for many of these, you've got up to 80% of gun owners that want to see changes. So let's find some common ground, we've had an assault, this one group of they were hunters against assault weapons. And on the back of their shirt, it said, "you don't need 10 rounds to shoot a deer", you know, and then there were gun owners concerned about gun violence. So things like we're just talking and when people say common sense gun laws, things like, Should we have a limit to how much a gun could shoot before reloading, maybe



it's 10 rounds, right? High capacity magazines, background checks, things like in Philadelphia, one of the things that we're trying to do is, so much of this is about handguns. So we've got a law that we would like to see, which is one handgun a month, it would allow one person simply to be limited to 12 handguns a year, handguns, right? And there are still people that want to block those policies and go, who needs more than 12 handguns in a year? And I'll tell you, someone that's making a lot of money off here and guns and making our streets safer. So let's have those reasonable conversations that say, you know, this, this false dualism between you know, if they come for our AR 15, they're going to take all of our guns away. Let's just go, let's start with grieving. And let's say we're not going to save every life. But what are some policies that might make it less than 100 lives a day that are being lost to guns, and there's also technology you know, like their fingerprint technology that could make guns with a fingerprint smart guns so it makes it harder if a kid finds one the house or if a gun is stolen. doesn't solve everything, but like, think of everything we've done with cars, right? Cars aren't designed to kill but they can be deadly. So we did so much to try to save lives, we've got seatbelts and airbags and you know, there's a technology piece, there's a policy piece that you've got to pass a test. And if you abuse your right to drive a car, you can lose your license, you know, speed limits, all these things. So those things, you know, we need some of those same regulations when it comes to guns, which actually can be much more deadly than cars, of course. And there's research, you know, the gun lobby has been very powerful in stopping any research or accountability when it comes to guns. So in the same way that tobacco companies blocked all research on cancer. They knew it might show some things, you know, I think in the same way, we need to know the things that can save lives and to see the research on that we need to know which gun shops



are the most irresponsible, and when we know that it helps us mobilize to hold people accountable.

Gloria Hughes 35:58

Nice, Shane, we cannot thank you enough. I feel like I've been to church today. Seriously, thank you. And thank you for your passion, your activism and all you are doing and friends, Shane's most recent book, *Beating Guns* is available on Amazon and all places you get books. So I encourage you, I downloaded it on Kindle. So I encourage you to give that a read. And Shane, we thank you. Thanks for joining us and giving us this time this morning.

Shane Claiborne 36:30

Absolutely. Let's do it again.

Gloria Hughes 36:33

So much so great. And friends, as always, on behalf of the Appalachian District Ministries Team, we invite you to think about ways God is calling you to be an advocate and to go into places that maybe are hard for us to go, but to go and make a difference in our world.

Aimee Yeager 37:01

It feels like it's getting harder and harder to have difficult conversations in these increasingly polarizing times. Which is why I am so grateful to the Appalachian District for hosting these podcast episodes to help us have these hard



conversations. I know I will be following along for episodes three and four and I'm sure you will too. Remember, you can find the link to follow Stories Along the Journey of podcasts by the Appalachian District in our show notes. We'll be back in two weeks with a conversation between Kim Ingram, Jesse Ennis, and Reverend Joel Simpson right here on the Means Of Grace podcast. In the meantime, find the links to follow Shane Claiborne and Stories Along the Journey in our show notes. You can go back and listen to the first episode in their Hard Conversations series now and we'll see you back here on Means Of Grace in two weeks. Thanks for listening.

Speaker: Thank you for listening to [Means of Grace](#), a podcast produced by the [Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church](#). We hope you enjoyed listening to these podcast and use them as a way to stay connected to our community. Remember to subscribe to Means of Grace for free on [Apple Podcast](#), [Spotify](#) or wherever you get your podcasts. Please leave us an honest rating and a review. It helps others find this podcast. Follow the WNCC on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) @WNCCUMC. Once again, that's @WNCCUMC. Means of Grace is produced by the Western North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church and Andy Goh of [GohJo Studios](#).

