

1 GVP5 Dan Czaplewski

2 D: Please state your name.

3 DC: I'm uh, Dan Czaplewski. I'm the pastor here at Mount Calvary Lutheran Church in  
4 Milwaukee.

5 D: And have you experienced gun violence in any form?

6 DC: We had uh, a, a member of our congregation whose sister was just in [the St. Joseph's  
7 neighborhood] and uh, she was goin' to her car and a young man of about 17 had decided he  
8 wanted that car. Uh, he ended up firing and, and hit her in the eye. She lost an eye, but survived.  
9 Uh, the young man's now, I believe incarcerated. But, a tragic story, uh, we prayed for [her], uh,  
10 and her sister... was very, was, was real active in worship here and, and uh, [she] has been to  
11 worship here. She's a member of our, our sister congregation, uh, Trinity, which is downtown  
12 that burned down. (laughter) Uh, the one, the one that burned down, so she's uh, yeah. [She] uh,  
13 had—but uh, you know, when I, when I've talked to her, and I, I don't know her real well, when  
14 I've talked to her, uh, she's just remained optimistic and positive in the face of all this. And I  
15 know what a trauma it is and how, how that can affect people long term, but, but she's uh, I, I'm  
16 optimistic because she has such a hopeful attitude. And uh, came into that, I think with a real  
17 reservoir of faith that, that, that has seen her through and then people surrounding her, praying  
18 for her, encouraging her, and just being there for her, so.

19 D: Have you uh, experienced any other forms? Uh, shots fired or anything uh, personally?

20 DC: Uh, I've not uh, not, not heard, uh, shots fired, you know, when I've been walking around  
21 the neighborhood. And we'll, we'll do neighborhood clean ups and things like that, so. We,  
22 were, we get up pretty early in the morning, so we don't do that late at night.

23 D: (laughs)

24 DC: Which I think is when most of the bad stuff happens, so uh, so yeah, I go to bed early so,  
25 yeah.

26 D: Uh, what would you say to uh, legislators uh, in reference to responsible gun legislation or  
27 responsible gun ownership?

28 DC: Well, I-I'm 62 years old. Uh, I grew up, uh, in the city, but, but uh, cousins who hunted and,  
29 and I, when I was like 12, got a hunter safety certificate. And, and you couldn't hunt without  
30 that. And I really feel that in many ways, we've kind of lost our minds over this. Uh, as a child  
31 growin' up, I had lots of family members who hunted, lots of family members who had guns, but  
32 they all had safety locks on them and they didn't carry them in their waistbands of their, their  
33 belts because that was inappropriate and perhaps illegal. That, I, I, ya know, that that just isn't,  
34 uh, it, it's an insanity. This, this is not going back uh, to some--this is new. This is uh, this is  
35 different than the way it was when I was a child. And it's not, you know, we di—we didn't have  
36 a sense for fewer gun rights, we had greater responsibility and respect for what they could do to  
37 people. Uh, you know, um, and I, you know, I under--I respect people who feel they have to be  
38 able to defend themselves and I understand that. And, and certainly hunters and, and those who  
39 are sportsman—but an AK-47 is, is not. Uh, some, there's no state in the union, you can take an  
40 automatic rifle out and, and deer hunt with, ya know.

41 D: Wow.

42 DC: You know? You know, there's no—nobody that, that's considered uh, unsportsmanlike. Uh,  
43 but we can hunt each other with 'em, you know? And it's jus—it's crazy. I mean, there's, there,  
44 ya know, there, there is no sense in how the arguments are applied. The, the principles of gun  
45 ownership and responsible gun ownership, absolutely, it's constitutionally guaranteed. But, but,

46 but the common sense has been drained from it, just, just drained from it, in a hy-hysteria. I, I  
47 can't—I don't understand it, it, it just, it, it's a mystery to me.

48 D: That was powerful.

49 DC: Thank you. Thank you. (laughter) Thank you.

50 D: Is there anything you'd like to add?

51 DC: Yeah, ya know, I, I, I, uh, I have owned guns, I have fired guns and uh, sportsman, have at  
52 it. Ya know, enjoy them, enjoy them. It's, if that's, if that's your thing, great. You feel you have  
53 to have a firearm for protection and there are cases where you probably do, understandable. But,  
54 but, just, just have a, a modest amount of common sense with this.

55 D: Thank you.

56 DC: You're welcome.

57 D: Oh, I just need your um, your uh—