

# Thoughts and Prayers are NOT enough!



Many of us are wondering what we can do in the wake of the tragedy in Orlando. We may be far away, but we share a connection with our LGBTQI brothers and sisters in Florida. Here are some ideas:

- **Donate blood:** The Central Illinois chapter of the American Red Cross will be hosting blood drives this week and next at the following locations:
  - \* Tuesday, June 14 at the Double Tree Hotel from 7-11 a.m.
  - \* Wednesday, June 23 at OSF St. Joseph Medical Center from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
  - \* Friday, June 24 at the Marriott Hotel in Uptown Normal from 12:30-4:30 p.m.
  - \* Blood donations may also be given by appointment at the Red Cross Bloomington location: 1 Westport Court, Bloomington—309-662-0500
  - \* Alternately, you can also give voice to ending the discriminatory and outdated ban on gay men donating blood by the FDA. Sign the petition here: <https://petitions.whitehouse.gov/petition/lift-blood-donation-ban-gay-and-bisexual-us-citizens>
- **Donate money:**
  - \* The official Pulse victims donations spot sponsored by Equality Florida, Florida's LGBT civil rights and advocacy group: <https://www.gofundme.com/PulseVictimsFund>. Every penny raised in this account will go directly to victims of the shooting as well as their families.
  - \* Planting Peace is a global nonprofit organization founded for the purpose of spreading peace in a hurting world. They opened a CrowdRise fund to cover medical and funeral costs for the victims of the Pulse shooting. <https://www.crowdrise.com/we-stand-with-pulse-fund>
- **Contact your legislator to share your thoughts about gun control:** The Huffington Post recently published an article giving very quick and easy links for anyone to find their state representatives, senators and congresspeople, and e-mail or phone them directly. [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nicole-silverberg/guide-elected-representatives-gun-control\\_b\\_8708154.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/nicole-silverberg/guide-elected-representatives-gun-control_b_8708154.html)
- **Strive to understand and love our Muslim bretheren.** They are not responsible for the actions of one.
  - \* <http://time.com/4365689/orlando-shooting-muslim-nightclub/>
  - \* Learn about Bloomington's Muslim population: <http://www.bloomingtonmosque.com/icbn/index.php>
  - \* Consider attending the LGBT Spirituality Panel Discussion taking place on Monday, June 27 at 7 p.m. at Heartland Bank and Trust Co., sponsored by Not in Our Town: Bloomington
- **Be safe, love one another, be OUT and be PROUD!!**