

Statement Against antisemitism: A Community Call for Faith and Unity

We come tonight in part, to denounce and condemn the dangerous and growing anti-semitism unfolding and occurring throughout our nation and world. Since November 1st, just twenty days ago- the Anti Defamation League listed nearly 50 incidents of anti-semitism which took place in; North Providence,- Rhode Island, Bethesda- Maryland, Cobb County- Georgia, Novato- California, Columbus- Ohio, Ann Arbor- Michigan, Manhattan- New York, Washington- DC, Exeter- New Hampshire, Edison- New Jersey, Tamarac- Florida, Chattanooga- Tennessee, Newark- Delaware, Santa Fe- New Mexico, Jefferson County- Missouri, Colorado Springs- Colorado, Brookhaven- Georgia, and just up the road in Waukegan, Illinois. Other cities and towns were also cited in New York, New Jersey, Ohio, California and Florida. From the desecration of Jewish tombstones to open threats about attacking synagogues, the hateful vitriol has grown more and more dangerous. Rocks were thrown at the windows of a Jewish school, a Jewish man was attacked, an older Jewish man was riddled with garbage and water, graffiti, anti-semitic literature, hate mail and Swastikas have been left on college campuses, windshields of cars, the sign in front of a synagogue and one was carved into a tree.

Let it go on record, that such hatred is not acceptable, will not be tolerated and will be met with the full fury of righteous indignation. Let it also go on record, that a great majority of the Black community condemns every form of antisemitism and views such hatred the same as it does racism and every other form of bias against others. Let it go on record that the words of Dr. King ring ever true today, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." We also come acknowledging that there are some areas of the Black community who are not remiss in attitudes reflecting antisemitism. This has become increasingly evident with words and actions coming from young, influential African Americans like Ye and Kyrie Irving. Such discriminating attitudes and words often lead to actions that are violent and separatist. We believe that division leads to weakness and failure. But unity always moves towards strength and success.

We join with our sisters and brothers in Jewish communities here in Evanston and throughout the nation- from Reformed to Orthodox, to stand against hatred. If a person or group is given license to hate through words, then they will move towards cruelty with words. If they move towards cruelty with words, they will graduate to acts of violence. And if they move towards acts of violence, they will take no thought to physical injury and death. We are not dealing with minor episodes of a few wanton and ignorant people on the fringes of society. We are now dealing with growing masses of people who are aligning their resources and warped religion- to create a culture of antisemitism. We are dealing with a growing segment of our population right here in America- the land of the free and home of the brave- who are ready to negate the freedom of others through a cowardly notion of false superiority. Make no mistake about it, antisemitism exists because weak people have a need to believe they are strong by standing on others. Antisemitism exists because many attempt to find scapegoats to rationalize the messiness and misery of their own lives.

That is why tonight is so important my friends and neighbors in Evanston. Our unity and solidarity is a visual and powerful response to hate filled people. People of goodwill cannot be defeated. People of faith whose belief is that "from one blood God made all nations dwell together" are a force and power that our nation has not fully experienced. It is not just that we want to come together. Or even that we need to come together. If we want to build a better world for our children, we MUST come together. If we want to show that love is far greater than hate, then we MUST come together. If we want to suspend the malicious activity of antisemitics, then we MUST come together. If we want to silence the public vitriol of hate speech aimed at the Jewish community, then we MUST come together. If we want to ensure that no public official ever elected will be able to use his position as a soapbox espousing insanity, we MUST come together. If we ever want to condemn antisemitism from any and every person, every company, every corporation, every institution, every grocery store, every bakery every business that earns its dollars from the public, then we MUST come together.

Let our community, Metro-Chicago, the state of Illinois and our nation know- in a tiny hamlet along the western shores of Lake Michigan there are a people- Jewish and Black together, who are without fear- who rise to say- never and not here!