

August 22, 2024

As leaders of diverse faith communities within Montgomery County, Maryland, we stand united against the vandalism and vile hate speech recently vexing our schools, public spaces, and houses of worship. While vibrant political discourse is a blessing of America, criminality and intimidation has no place here.

Recurring acts of vandalism in our community have been designed to intimidate the Jewish community and make children and adults feel unsafe. This is unacceptable.

The basic concept of 'loving your neighbor' is a shared value across Abrahamic faiths (Leviticus 19:18; Mark 12:31; Sahih Muslim 45a:Bk 1, Hadith 77), and many other faith traditions practiced throughout the County.

We stand together, because while today's hate-filled acts target the Jewish community, tomorrow's bile may be pointed at other religious, ethnic, or groups because of their sexuality, class, or gender identity in our community. Our diversity is our strength thus we stand together to say these loathsome acts of vandalism have no safe harbor in Montgomery County.

Rabbi Greg Harris, Senior Rabbi, Congregation Beth El, Bethesda

Rev. David Gray, Pastor, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, Bethesda

Rev. Dr. Roy W. Howard, Pastor, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Gaithersburg

Rabbi Corey Helfand, Senior Rabbi, Ohr Kodesh Congregation, Chevy Chase

Rev. Charles Booker, Pastor, Bethesda Presbyterian Church, Bethesda

Rahat Husain, Shia Muslim Foundation

Imam Refai Arefin, Islamic Community Center of Potomac, Potomac

Rabbi Deborah Megdal, Associate Rabbi, Congregation Beth El, Bethesda

Aman Shergill, Sikh Faith

Chris Mathews, Latter-day Saints, Germantown Congregation, Germantown

Rabbi Michael Safra, B'nai Israel Congregation, Rockville

Rev. Michael A. Salah, Pastor, St. Raphael Catholic Church, Rockville

Rabbi Adam J. Raskin, Senior Rabbi, Congregation Har Shalom, Potomac

Hazzan Asa Fradkin, Cantor, Congregation Beth El, Bethesda, MD

Rabbi Adam Rosenwasser, Senior Rabbi, Temple Emanuel, Kensington

Rev. Dr. Cheryl I. Tatham, Minister, North Chevy Chase Christian Church, Chevy Chase

Rev. Abhi P. Janamanchi, Senior Minister, Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Bethesda

Rabbi Fabián Werbin, Senior Rabbi, Kol Shalom, Rockville

Rev. Dr. Jill McCrory, Interim Pastor, Bethesda United Church of Christ, Bethesda

Rev. Emily Hart, Salem United Methodist Church, Brookeville

Rev. Adele Crawford, Pastor, Warner Memorial Presbyterian Church, Kensington

Rabbi Charles Arian, Kehilat Shalom, Montgomery Village

Rabbi Jesse Nagelberg, B'nai Shalom of Olney, Olney

Pastor Katie Ding, Seneca Creek Community Church, Gaithersburg

Rev. William E. Green, Senior Pastor, Silver Spring United Methodist Church, Silver Spring

Rabbi Susan N. Shankman, Senior Rabbi, Washington Hebrew Congregation, Potomac and Washington DC

Rev. Leslie Klingensmith, Pastor, St. Matthew Presbyterian Church, Silver Spring

Rabbi Stuart Weinblatt, Rabbi Emeritus, Congregation B'nai Tzedek, Potomac

Rev. Dr. Jay Moses, Senior Pastor, Saint Mark Presbyterian Church, Rockville

Rabbi Abbi Sharofsky, Director of Intergroup Relations and Rabbi in Residence, JCRC of Greater Washington

Rev. Brian Tubbs, Senior Pastor, Olney Baptist Church, Olney

Symi Rom-Rymer, Associate Director, Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington

Rev. Joey Heath-Mason, Associate Pastor, St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Kensington

Rev. Christine Kumar, Memorial First India United Methodist Church, Silver Spring

Maya Wilcox, Administrative Assistant, Ashton United Methodist Church, Ashton-Sandy Spring

Rev. Meredith Heffner, Rector, St. James' Episcopal Church, Potomac

Rev. Mark Michael, Rector, St. Francis Episcopal Church, Potomac

Rabbi Gary Pokras, Senior Rabbi, Temple Beth Ami, Rockville

Rev. Vikki Clayton, Rector, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Brookeville and St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church, Laytonsville

Rev. Kara Scroggins, North Bethesda United Methodist Church, Bethesda

Darren Arnold, Stake President, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Rabbi Steven Suson, Senior Rabbi, Congregation Har Tzeon-Agudath Achim, Silver Spring

Rev. Holly R. Jackson, Pastor, United Church of Christ of Seneca Valley, Germantown

Rev. Betty E. Landis, Pastor, Saint Stephen Lutheran Church, Silver Spring

Rev. Pauline Farrington, Pastor, Trinity Lutheran Church, North Bethesda

Pastor Kim Anthony Shibley, Lead Pastor, Greater Grace Community Church, Silver Spring

Rev. Anne E. Derse, Deacon and Minister for Community Engagement, St. John's Norwood Episcopal Church, Chevy Chase

Rabbi Batya Glazer, Director of Lifelong Learning, Ohr Kodesh Congregation, Chevy Chase

Rabbi Eitan Cooper, Associate Rabbi, Beth Sholom Congregation and Talmud Torah, Potomac

Cantor Hinda Eisen Labovitz, Cantor, Ohr Kodesh Congregation, Chevy Chase

Devinder Bawa, Trustee, Washington Sikh Center, Gaithersburg

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Claire Waggoner, President, Kunzang Palyul Choling Buddhist Temple, Poolesville

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Rev. Samuel Giese, St. Jane de Chantal Church, Bethesda

Rev. Aubra Love, Christ Congregational Church, Silver Spring

Rabbi Rachel Schmelkin, Washington Hebrew Congregation, Potomac and Washington DC

Rabbi Jonah Layman, Shaare Tefila Congregation, Olney

Rev. Hugo T. Cheng, Senior Pastor, Chinese Bible Church of Maryland, Rockville

Cantor Suzanne Hamstra, Washington Hebrew Congregation, Potomac and Washington DC

Pastor Emmanuel Ojuolape, Lead Pastor, RCCG Word of Life Center, Silver Spring

Amy Costello, Secretary, Baha'is of Rockville, Rockville

Rev. Brian Lee, Senior Pastor of EC, New Covenant Fellowship Church, Germantown

Alex Barrientos, Lead Pastor, Sligo Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Takoma Park

Steven Bayar, Rabbi, B'nai Tzedek Congregation, Potomac

Rachel Lang, Executive Director, Beth Sholom Congregation and Talmud Torah, Potomac

Rev. Shelby Etheridge Harasty, Senior Pastor, Darnestown Presbyterian Church, Gaithersburg

Rev. Blake A. Collins, Associate Pastor, Darnestown Presbyterian Church, Gaithersburg

The Rev. Henry P. McQueen, Rector, St. John's Episcopal Church, Olney

Gurdwara Gur Gian Sagar, Sikh Temple, Burtonsville

The Rev. Jessica K Hitchcock, Rector, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Bethesda

Denise Diaab, Associate Pastor, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, Bethesda

Rev. HiRho Park, Lead Pastor, Bethesda United Methodist Church, Bethesda

Rev. Mansfield Kaseman, Rockville United Church, Rockville

Rabbi Alison Kobey, Congregation Or Chadash, Damascus

Romi Kaur, Guru Gobind Singh Foundation, Rockville

Rabbi Mitchell Berkowitz, B'nai Israel Congregation, Rockville

Rabbi Aderet Drucker, The Den Collective, Bethesda

Rabbi Evan J. Krame, The Jewish Studio, Rockville

Rev. Timothy B. Warner, Emory Grove United Methodist Church, Gaithersburg

Rev. Nancy Stockbridge, Deacon, St. John's Episcopal Church, Olney

Rabbi Eric Abbott, Bethesda Jewish Congregation, Bethesda

Rev. Kari Parsons, Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Montgomery Village

Rev. Timothy P. Carr, Rector, Christ Episcopal Parish, Rockville

Richa Agarwala, Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center, Silver Spring

Anil Kishore, Chinmaya Mission Washington Regional Center, Silver Spring

Rabbi Noah Diamondstein, Temple Sinai, Washington DC

Rev. Msgr. Robert G. Amey, Pastor, Saint Mary Catholic Church, Rockville

Daisy Thompson, Faith Community Baptist Church, Silver Spring

Pastor John Patrick Wenck, Jr., Montgomery Faith Fellowship, Gaithersburg

Bhikku Sagaranda Tien, Amata Meditation Center, U.S. Zen Institute, Boyds

Jonathon Glass, Sandy Spring Monthly Meeting (Quakers), Sandy Spring

Rev. Emily Berkowitz, Ashton United Methodist Church, Ashton

Rev. Michael Vanacore, Pilgrim United Church of Christ, Wheaton

Rev. Dwight O. Peace, Pastor, New Hope Presbyterian Church, Derwood

James Lehman, Jr., Scout Chaplain, Friends Committee on Scouting, Sandy Spring
Monthly Meeting of Friends, Sandy Spring

Rabbi Sid Schwarz, Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation, Bethesda

Saba Rashid, President, Montgomery County Muslim Foundation

Rev. Mark Harper, Takoma Park Presbyterian Church, Takoma Park

Pastor Gayle Clifton, Christ Community Church, Ashton

Rabbi Emeritus Mark Raphael, Kehilat Shalom, Gaithersburg

Rev. Emily Guthrie, Christ Episcopal Church, Kensington

Rev. Alyce R. Walker Johnson, Clinton African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church,
Rockville

Rev. Terri M. Murphy, Episcopal Church of the ascension, Silver Spring

Rev. Dr. Sherri E. Wood-Powe, Covenant United Methodist Church, Montgomery Village

Rabbi Fred Scherlinder Dobb, Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation, Bethesda

Loydell Jones, Society of Friends (Quakers), Sandy Spring

Rev. Laura Batten-Carbaugh, Pastor, Colesville Presbyterian Church, Silver Spring

Rev. Sara Thorne, Deacon, Christ Episcopal Church, Kensington

Rabbi Marc D. Israel, Tikvat Israel Congregation, Rockville

Rev. Edgar S. Bankhead St. Pastor, First Agape AME Zion Church at Historical Gibson
Grove AME Zion, Bethesda

Rev. Dr. Michael W. Armstrong, Colesville United methodist Church, Silver Spring

Richard Price, Christian Science Group, Germantown

Pastor James A. Williams, Silver Spring Assembly, Silver Spring

Rev. Dr. Joan E. Beilstein, The Episopal Church of the Ascension, Silver Spring

Bhante Katugastota Uparatana, Maryland Buddhist Vihara, Wheaton

Phramaha Thanat Inthisan, Ph.D., President, Wat Thai Washington DC, Silver Spring

Subhas Malghan, Chairman, JSS Spiritual Mission, Gaithersburg

Rev. Mark Trinkl, Lead Pastor, Neighborhood Church, Derwood

Rev. Andrew McClain, Montgomery United Methodist Church, Damascus

Rev. Hope A.J. Christensen, Christ Episcopal Church, Kensington

Sultan Chowdhury, Islamic Community Center of Potomac, Potomac

Rev. Gerard A. Green, Jr., Pleasant View Historical Site, North Potomac

Rabbi Baht Yameem Weiss, Temple Beth Ami, Rockville

Ann Enkiri, Christ Episcopal Church, Kensington

Susan Johnson, First Church of Christ, Scientist, Rockville

Rev. Megan Blanchard, Deacon, Fairhaven United Methodist Church, Darnestown

Rabbi Scott Perlo, Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation, Bethesda

Ranvir Singh, Guru Nanak Foundation of America, Silver Spring

Rev. Dr. Evalina Huggins, Scotland AME Zion Church, Potomac

Rev. Jennifer R. Knutsen, Senior Pastor, Rockville United Church, Rockville

Carolyn Deibel, St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, Darnestown

Rev. Dr. Rebekah A. Savage, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Rockville, Rockville

Rev. Beth O'Callaghan, St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, Germantown

Rabbi Rachel Hersh, JSSA, Rockville

Rabbi Deborah Reichmann, Interfaith Families Project, Rockville

Rabbi Mitchel Malkus, Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, Rockville

Rabbi Avis Miller, Open Dor Foundation, Chevy Chase

Rabbi Alana Suskin, Pomegranate Initiative, Rockville

Rabbi Rachel Hersh, JSSA, Rockville

Christine King, New Neighbors Interfaith Alliance, Rockville

Spiritual Assembly, Baha'is of Montgomery County South, Bethesda

Rev. Kenneth B. Hawes, Fairhaven United Methodist Church, Gaithersburg

[Click here if you are a Montgomery County, Maryland faith leader and would like to add your name in support of this statement.](#)