



In Response to Charlottesville

The past week has left our people and our country feeling broken.

The protest at Charlottesville last Friday, and the subsequent responses have brought feelings of shock, anger, disappointment and even fear. As Jews, we know too well what hatred and antisemitism can lead to, and we must not be silent.

White supremacy groups, including Neo-Nazis and the KKK, marched with torches, chanting, "Jews will not replace us." The naming of our people makes this event even more gut wrenching, as it echoes the dark days of our people's past when others sought to persecute and destroy us.

We are deeply troubled by the statements of our president and by the moral equivalency and equivocation he has offered in his response to these acts of violence, hatred and bigotry. In a country that has long been looked to and admired for being a beacon and shining light of virtue and integrity in our world, we are especially saddened by the lack of moral clarity and leadership from our president and the subsequent silence by many of our nation's leaders.

As Elie Wiesel wrote: "We must take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented. Sometimes we must interfere. When human lives are endangered, when human dignity is in jeopardy, national borders and sensitivities become irrelevant. Wherever men and women are persecuted because of their race, religion, or political views, that place must - at that moment - become the center of the universe."

So what can we do?

- **JOIN** us on Monday, August 21st at 8:00 PM for an Interfaith Candlelight Vigil at Sanborn Square (Downtown Boca Raton).
- **HOST** a meal and break bread with those of a different faith or race.
- **WRITE** a response for the *Jewish Journal*.
- **PRAY** in solidarity with our community.
- **SPEAK** with your family to foster values of love, respect and diversity.

"In a world torn by violence and pain, a world far from wholeness and peace, a world waiting still to be redeemed..." God commands us to "keep alive in dark ages the vision of a world redeemed." "May this vision never fade; let us continue to work for the day when the nations will be one and at peace." - (Chaim Stern, *Gates of Prayer*)

Please know your clergy team is always here for you.

Sending strength and shalom,
Rabbi Silvers, Rabbi Keller and Rabbi Cohen