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To the Jewish Community of Charlottesville, VA:

As we usher in this Shabbat just one week after the violent and deadly racist and anti-Semitic events in your city, the members of the Rabbinical Council of America reach out to you in solidarity, support, and friendship. Elie Wiesel once said, "Jews alone are vulnerable...but Jews must not be alone." Know that you are not alone.

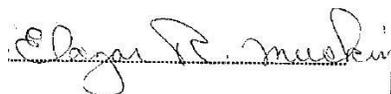
While you were on the frontline of ugly manifestations of hatred and bigotry that led to death, intimidation, and fear; while there were calls to burn down your synagogue; and while you were eyewitnesses to the worst expressions of intolerance in our society, we were all under attack. When you are threatened, we are all threatened. When you are hurt, we all hurt. Know that you are not alone.

We add our voices to yours in condemning these manifestations, supporting those in political and religious leadership denouncing them, and call on all leaders and people of good will and faith to name and reject unequivocally and without qualification the views and actions of White Supremacists, neo-Nazis, the alt-right, and their supporters. We mourn with you the victims of this domestic terrorism: Heather Heyer, Lt. H. Jay Cullen, and trooper-pilot Berke M.M. Bates.

In fighting these prejudices we must learn an important lesson from the Jewish Shabbat herself:

Shabbat begins with the recitation of Kiddush, the blessing which sanctifies the holy day, and ends with Havdalah, the blessing which distinguishes the holy day that has passed from the weekday ahead. In both cases we are asked to make distinctions, distinctions between the holy and the profane, between light and darkness, and, ultimately, between good and evil. As the beauty and restfulness of this Shabbat descends on your community, we are all asked to raise our voices to distinguish between good and evil, and in so doing make our country more holy, more peaceful, and more godly for all of its people.

Shabbat Shalom.



Rabbi Elazar Muskin
President



Rabbi Mark Dratch
Executive Vice President