



Berkshire County Episcopal and Lutheran Clericus
THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS
"CELEBRATING GOD'S ABUNDANCE"

Dear Representative/Senator,

We write to express to you the deep distress we feel as hateful incidents of desecration, vandalism, and bomb threats disrupt the life of the Jewish community. The horrible graffiti on Mt. Tom last fall and the bomb threat forcing the evacuation of the Springfield Jewish Community Center on March 3 have brought it home to us that this epidemic of hatred is not far from us here in Berkshire County. There has even been a recent incident in Pittsfield in which a "Kill the Jews" piece of paper was placed on a citizen's windshield.

We know that it will take many people speaking out to provide real comfort families who witnessed the toppled gravestones of their loved ones. We can only imagine the fear that must be in the hearts of the children evacuated from Jewish community centers around the country, learning firsthand the lessons that before they had only heard about from their parents and grandparents. These wounds are difficult to heal. But we must try. We must all work together and speak together so that everyone in our society knows that that anti-Semitism and attacks on anyone for their religion are unacceptable in our country. Everyone has the right to feel safe.

We ask you, as our elected leaders to speak and act-- consistently, frequently, and forcibly-- to help end these attacks on the Jewish community and the rise in religiously motivated violence we have begun to see in our communities.

As Christians, we believe that all of us have been imprinted with an essential dignity by God, and part of that dignity is the freedom to follow God wherever God leads. In the United States, this dignity has found its form in the freedom to practice one's faith safely. This freedom is an essential part of the fabric of our country. To us, these acts represent an assault on the soul of the American nation, a profound violation of the American vision.

It is our turn to show that 'Never again' are not just words. Thank you for your help in resisting these despicable acts and supporting the Jewish community in this troubling time.

The Lutheran & Episcopal Clergy of Berkshire County, undersigned

The Rev. Marc L. Britt

The Rev. Cricket Cooper

Rector, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Pittsfield

The Rev. Mary Frances Curns

Rector, All Saints of the Berkshires, North Adams

The Rev. Tom Damrosch



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The Rev. Bruce Duncan

The Rev. Peter Elvin

The Rev. Tad Evans

Curate, St. Helena's Chapel, Lenox

The Rev. Joseph Farnes

Assistant Rector, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Stockbridge

The Rev. Jenny Gregg

Priest, Cathedral of the Beloved, Pittsfield

The Rev. Frances A. Hills

The Rev. Sam Smith

Rector, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Stockbridge

The Rev. Noreen Suriner

Pastor and Priest at St Luke's, Lanesboro

The Rev. Dr. Jane Tillman

Priest Associate, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Stockbridge

The Rev. Michael Tuck

Rector, Trinity Church/St. Helena's Chapel, Lenox

The Rev. Libby Wade

Interim Rector, St. John's Episcopal Church, Williamstown

The Rev. Timothy Weisman

Pastor, Zion Lutheran Church, Pittsfield

The Rev. Dr. Stephen L. White

The Rev. Randy Wilburn

Interim Pastor, Christ Trinity Church, Sheffield

The Rev. Dcn. Jinney Vogel-Polizzi

Assistant, Grace Episcopal Church, Great Barrington

The Rev. Dr. Janet Zimmerman

Rector, Grace Episcopal Church, Great Barrington