



January 7, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On Sunday thousands of New Yorkers came out and into the streets to walk in solidarity with and loyalty to the one and a half million Jews of the New York City metropolitan region, in outrage and sorrow for the rapidly escalating pattern of anti-Semitic violence across America and in this our own New York. Episcopalians from our diocese participated in the March, and our whole church joins in condemning the rise in incidents of anti-Semitic violence in America. We offer and express to the Jewish Community whom we count as our dear neighbors and friends our love and sorrow, and our promise to stand with them against these rising forces of hate and destruction.

The shootings on a Shabbat morning in October 2018 at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh electrified this country with horror, and with alarm at the evidence of the spreading poison of anti-Semitism in our midst. This past year saw the Passover shootings at a Poway, California synagogue in April, a rising tide of harassment, intimidation and violence against Jews on the sidewalks and streets of Brooklyn, the ubiquity of swastikas and nazi-themed graffiti and hate speech, the murder of five shoppers at a kosher grocery store in Jersey City, and then in the last days of the year the multiple stabbings of people at a Hanukkah celebration at the home of their rabbi in Monsey, a community within the Diocese of New York. Jewish leaders have for some time been raising the alarm about the increase in anti-Semitic rhetoric and violence in America, but it is no longer possible for anyone to ignore or fail to see the evidence and proof of that anti-Semitism right before our eyes. We are witnesses to evil, and that calls us to responsibility and advocacy.

The gospel we profess teaches us the love of neighbor, care and protection of the oppressed, and abhorrence of violence. Prejudice and bigotry against anyone based on religion, race, gender, ethnicity, culture or sexual orientation, is always an eruption of human sin. It is a refutation of Christ, the tenets of our faith, and a betrayal of our common humanity.

The Year of Reparation for the Sin of Slavery in which this diocese is now engaged teaches us and reminds us that evil is never passive, and must be positively faced and challenged, and that the overcoming of evil demands of all the faithful deliberate, intentional action. We your bishops call on every parish in the Diocese of New York to make a public declaration and witness to your community of the conviction of the Episcopal Church that God loves everyone, that we Christians know that love through our lord Jesus Christ, and that we claim all people as our own brothers and sisters. Declare in the things you do and the things you say that an attack on the Jewish community is an attack on our own community, and violence against Jews is violence against our own family. Take the time to express to the Jewish organizations and synagogues in your community your love for them, your loyalty to them, and our common rejection of acts of violence and expressions of hate. Let us stand together across our faiths and present before a broken world the faith and strength and courage of one people, all together, brothers and sisters under God.

The Right Reverend Andrew ML Dietsche
Bishop of New York

A handwritten signature in cursive script, preceded by a plus sign (+). The signature appears to read "Allen".

The Right Reverend Allen K Shin
Bishop Suffragan of New York

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Mary".

The Right Reverend Mary D Glasspool
Bishop Assistant of New York