

Ted Talks: Safeguarding our community

We don't need further reminders of how vulnerable we are to senseless acts of violence, especially those that are driven by antisemitism, racism and other forms of bigotry.



Pittsburg and Poway were sufficient. But since the shootings in El Paso and Dayton, members of our Jewish community have approached me about our community's security needs and concerns, especially as the High Holidays approach. Those concerns are understandable as we will come together be in community with each other. It would be awful if we allowed fear to keep us from attending services during these sacred days.



Addressing our community's safety is vital. While each synagogue must determine its own security needs, the St. Paul Jewish Federation plays a role in ensuring our community is safe. [Read more.](#)

Through our support of the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas (JCRC), one of the largest recipients of Federation funding, we address community security. Last year, JCRC hired former Plymouth Chief of Police Dan Plekkenpol as its Director of Community Security. Since accepting this position, Dan has been meeting with leadership of various Jewish institutions to discuss their security concerns.

The JCRC and Federation are also in constant contact with the Jewish Federations of North America's Secure Community Network (SCN), receiving frequent updates on relevant security information.

In preparation for the High Holidays, the JCRC is offering a special training later this month for synagogue administrators and those who are serving as ushers or greeters at their synagogue during the High Holidays. This professional training will include how to identify suspicious behavior and persons, and how to de-escalate hostile situations. Through these and other efforts, the Federation with the JCRC is working to ensure the well-being of our Jewish community.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Dan Plekkenpol'.