

Personal Prayer High Holidays 5778  
Arturo Falck

Hello everybody,

I am the grandson of Auschwitz survivors who moved to South America in the 1940s to start a new life. My grandparents suffered. They lost their families. They lost their youth. They lost their homes. But they were survivors in every sense - they did not lose their spirits.

When the war ended, they never looked back. They were grateful to be alive and learned how to make the most of their second chance at life.

I'm also an immigrant myself. I moved to the United States from Ecuador when I was 18. I love this country and its values of individual freedom and equal opportunity, of solidarity and social mobility. I have studied and worked here and lived in the United States for more than half of my life.

And now I am the proud father of two wonderful children who remind me of my grandmother and her passion for life. They take on every challenge and embrace it fully. They care about the people around them and do what they can to help. They laugh often and hard!

All of this brings me to my concerns about the current political environment in our country. Like many of you, I am deeply concerned about the situation, and particularly the large segment of Americans that do not share the values that we, in this community, hold dear.

I am committed to resisting the degradation of our national values. I do this to honor my grandparents and my relatives who were not fortunate enough to survive the Nazis. And, I do this for my children, to stand up for the future they deserve.

...with all this in mind:

- May it be your will...(family)
  - that we continue to learn and work towards a better life for ourselves and everybody around us
  - that we help our children keep growing up into becoming good, decent people who care about the world
  - that we recognize how blessed we are with what we have.
  - that we not despair or give up on the task of making the world a better place.
- May it be your will...(personal)
  - that we be inspired to recognize problems in our world that we can fix
  - and moved to action so we don't leave them broken.
  - that we listen to each other.
  - that we recognize the generosity in others and be able to repay it.
- May it be your will...(political)
  - that we again put progressive values ahead of oligarchy in this country
  - that we never again see authoritarians gain unchecked power.
  - that our children should never witness the horrors that my grandparents did.