



Shalom to the Midway Jewish Center Family,

The unthinkable is no longer unthinkable. Whether one is Jewish, Christian, Muslim or any religion, we enter our places of worship seeking a spiritual connection with a higher being. We call it a “sanctuary” because we view it as a respite, a safe place to take a break from our everyday tasks and problems; but unfortunately, our sanctuaries are no longer that. From New Zealand to Sri Lanka to Poway, California, these past few weeks have shown that our houses of worship are the preferred, soft-targets by those with nothing but hate in their veins.

Yesterday’s attack at the Chabad synagogue in California, of course, hits close to home. The victims were doing nothing more than what so many of our own congregants were doing – attending Shabbat, Pesach, and Yizkor, services. While we are terribly saddened by the loss of Lori Kaye during this attack, we are heartened that the injured appear to be recovering well, and more importantly, that there were not more shot and killed. And, I am sure many of you are struck by the tragic irony that the youngest shooting victim, Noya Dahan, had recently moved to California from Sderot, Israel with her family in search of a safer life after enduring numerous rocket attacks from Gaza, and that her uncle, fellow victim, and reported-hero Almog Peretz, who led many children to safety during the attack, was visiting his family in California from Israel for Pesach.

Here at Midway Jewish Center, we are taking all reasonable steps to keep our facilities, our sanctuary, as well as all congregants and visitors, safe and secure. As you know, for several years we have engaged a professional security company, Global Operations, that not only provides armed guards, but also important trainings and drills with all MJC, Religious School, and Early Childhood Center staff. We have already taken steps to improve communications and the infrastructure of our facilities and will be doing much, much more in the coming months and years with security grant funds we were awarded. And, we are in constant contact with our security advisors at Global Operations, local law enforcement authorities, and all of our community partners to address these issues as they arise.

Your assistance in helping to keep us safe cannot be understated. The best locks and alarms are useless if doors are left open and unknown strangers are allowed to enter our facilities unquestioned. Our drop-off and pick-up procedures for the Religious School and Early Childhood Center are planned in conjunction with Global Operations and we ask that you honor these practices and procedures and respect the instructions of our staff and lay leaders as we work to keep us all as safe as reasonably possible.

So, while the unthinkable is no longer unthinkable, we want to assure you that Midway Jewish Center is as safe and secure as reasonably possible and open for business as usual. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any related issues, please feel free to reach out to us or our Synagogue Administrator Genea Moore at 516-938-8390.

Michael Kohler, President

Rabbi Rafi Rank

Rabbi Joel Levenson

The Executive Team of MJC