

In the wake of the Pittsburgh synagogue shootings I feel compelled to share with you what our clergy, staff, Leadership Team and board have been doing to ensure that Temple Sinai remains a place where everyone can feel welcomed, seen and safe. We have taken several steps to do just that while making sure that audacious hospitality remains a priority in our congregation.

First, I am pleased to share that the board has approved the formation of a Safety and Security Committee. I'd like to thank Mark Appel for agreeing to chair this important committee. The committee's primary functions will include:

- Reviewing our facility safety policies and procedures. The committee will then be making recommendations to the board on improvements made to ensure our temple remains safe and secure.
- Working closely with local law enforcement to continually make improvements to the temple's security and safety procedures.
- Consulting with the Anti-Defamation League, Union for Reform Judaism and other security advisors to ensure we are complying with protocols and best practices.
- As you may know, several years ago we engaged the Stamford Police Department to do a security assessment of our site and our protocols. We implemented all of their recommendations and have felt as safe as we can be ever since. Under Mark's leadership the Safety and Security Committee will review these protocols and specifically focus on the following:
 - The establishment of training sessions for staff and teachers.
 - Running drills periodically to ensure smooth response in the event of an emergency (not just intruder based).
 - Increased strength of relationship with local law enforcement.
 - Establishment of functional protocols for entry to the building.
 - Development of and training for staff on safe package practices.

As a reminder, immediately after Pittsburgh we secured our perimeter doors during all school-related activities. We have had, and will continue to have, staff at the entrance during the arrival and dismissal times of Sunday, Monday and Wednesday class periods. During all other school times, every person will be visually and positively identified using our new entry system. This same protocol will be in place for Shabbat Services.

We will be installing a buzzer entry system like the one at the front doors to the doors at the top of the stairs to the lower lot. This will allow us to continue to have those doors secured at all times without leaving visitors helplessly locked out with no way to call the office.

Also, Temple Sinai acquired six "panic buttons" a few years ago. These issue an immediate and direct call to the Stamford Police and are on hand at all times. We have ordered three more to

ensure that all staff and active volunteers can have one on their person at all times.

One week after the shootings, Rabbi TelRav and I attended a meeting for Jewish leaders with Stamford Mayor David Martin and Stamford city officials to receive a briefing on their municipal responses to the Pittsburgh attack. It was clear to us that training is the most important action we can and will take to ensure we are as safe as possible. The first of these trainings have taken place and others will follow in the weeks ahead.

Since the shootings in Pittsburgh, we have welcomed many new friends into our sanctuary. As we continue to welcome new and old friends into our spiritual home, their presence will fill our hearts and inspire us to continue living Jewishly – not from a place of fear, but from one of strength and love.

Marc Friedman
President