

SECURITY IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN THIS CHALLENGING TIME

There is a need to balance between the Jewish value of faith/emunah with reasonable action to protect individual and communal safety and security in this challenging era of anti-Semitism and divisive hate speech. Here is a short list of suggested actions you can consider:

1. Deep security and well-being is founded on a basis of knowing your neighbors and bridging differences. Create strong relations with your interfaith groups, e.g. Christian and Muslim organizations. Together, show up for these events in your community. Create monthly cousins clubs with your Muslim neighbors. Bring Ramadan meals. Invite others to visit the synagogue with you. Open your home to guests. Develop an email list of individuals willing to respond to each other's communal challenges and tragedies. Use technology.
2. Teach your children well. Ensure programs in schools for sharing diversity, teaching to embrace differences. Start interfaith kids' camps, after school youth for justice groups, etc.
3. Develop a welcoming /greeter/security team for your organization and events. Train security awareness protocol in your building. Get to know some of the Jewish police officers and ask them to help set this up, and maybe even become Board members. Also review your current building for safety and improvements needed, including locked doors, security cameras, clear exit signs, paid security staff on major holidays and events.
4. Put pressure to stop allowing the sale of automatic weapons and develop gun security in your area. Visit local stores and ask them to stop selling these kinds of weapons. Write letters to your local and state representatives to enact gun legislation, etc. Acknowledge and publicize those stores who have eliminated automatic weapons.
5. Find out about lawsuits against white nationalist organizations and how to report incidents. Take photos and videos on your cell phone of questionable and offensive cars, flags, events and email them to appropriate organizations who are tracking these like Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) and Western States Center (WSC) in Portland, OR, Anti-Defamation League (ADL), and other organizations.
6. Educate yourself on roots of anti-Semitism and current white nationalist groups in your area. Familiarize yourself with logos, insignias, etc. and report it to your regional ADL representative.
7. Rise Up, Stand Up, Speak Up, network, and empower yourselves. Share your concerns and network with Chevra. DO SOMETHING!!!

SOME REFERENCES:

Read Rabbi Google on security resources

Anti Defamation League (ADL): Protecting Your Jewish Institute

ADL Guide to Protecting Your Religious or Communal Institution

<https://Jewishpgh.org>

Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh: reporting Suspicious Activity in the Jewish Community

Guide for Developing High Quality Emergency Operations: Plans for Houses of Worship

Jews for Racial and Economic Justice: Understanding Anti-Semitism <http://jfrej.org>

See Eric Ward, Executive Director, Western State Center of Portland, *Skin in The Game: How Anti-Semitism Animates White Nationalism* (article in summer 2017 of *The Public Eye* magazine).