

**United Church of Christ
Central Atlantic Conference**

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**An open letter to the Associations and Churches of the Central
Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ**

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Peace, peace, to the far and the near, says the Lord; and I will heal them.
Isaiah 57:19

Recent weeks have seen multiple acts of vandalism and threats of violence directed against the Jewish Community in our nation. These include destruction of monuments, graffiti sprayed on houses of worship, bomb threats, and threats of violence against individuals.

These threats and the violent attitudes they represent are a horrific reflection of the hatred that is all too present today. Violence is never an acceptable response to either cultural differences or political disagreements. Threats of violence destroy the fabric that holds our society together.

We denounce these threats for what they are: acts of bigotry, religious discrimination, and fear-mongering.

In solidarity with our Jewish colleagues and friends and in the hope of countering such divisions, we call on the Associations and churches that constitute the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ to take concrete actions that demonstrate our solidarity with and concern for our Jewish brothers and sisters.

Activities we commend to our members include:

- **SPEAKING OUT** – In your own faith community, educate about the causes of the threats toward the Jewish community. Organize study sessions and talk about ways to condemn threats and acts of violence. Write letters of support to the editors of local print media. Use social media. Be clear about your condemnation of violence and threats of violence. Identify yourself at all times as a member of the United Church of Christ.

- REACHING OUT – Contact your local Jewish faith community. Ask its members how you can best show your support and solidarity at this time. As a sign of that support and solidarity, ask for permission to attend one of their worship services. Build bridges of understanding and solidarity.
- ACTING OUT – Participate in non-violent resistant activities directed against intolerance, bigotry, and anti-Semitism. Seek membership in organizations and coalitions advocating for peace, justice, and interreligious cooperation and understanding.
- JOINING UP – Join local Jewish organizations that are open to your membership. Become a member of the Jewish Community Center and lend your support to its endeavors. Donate to B’nai B’rith, the anti-defamation league.

We, the members of the Board of Directors and the leadership of the Central Atlantic Conference of the United Church of Christ, decry all threats of violence. We pray for that day of peace and religious understanding, and we long for a culture of shared caring and concern for the freedom and well-being of all people. We call on everyone to act in practical, pragmatic ways to achieve those goals.

With a firm belief in the inherent worth and dignity of people of varying faith traditions, and with equally firm belief that we are called to do the will of the Divine in fostering communities of love, we join with our Jewish sisters and brothers in this time of trial. We commend to our members these recommendations for building bridges and connecting in love and solidarity.

Rev. Denise Mason Bullitt
Interim Conference Minister

Lois Carrigan
President, Board of Directors

