



November 4, 2016/ Shabbat Noach 5777

Dear Shir Tikvah:

I send this Shabbat message standing at the edge of Yad V'Shem, the Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem. Pastor Justin Schroeder and I are here, along with two dozen other rabbis and Christian and Unitarian Clergy as members of Interfaith Partners for Peace. We have spent the past week studying together, listening to the multiple narratives here in the Middle East, stretching the expanse of our compassion. We have learned much from one another and the Israeli and Palestinian peoples; about ourselves and our hunger for decency, justice, and peace perhaps most of all.

There are two pieces of Torah I share with you from this place of the Memorial behind me and the horizon ahead:

First, walking through the Holocaust memorial in Israel on the Friday before our American election is haunting. The rhetoric and vitriol used by Trump and his supporters on the alt-Right and his fanning the flames of white nationalism and white racist supremacy painfully echo Nazi Germany in the 1930s. Michael's parents are German refugees; I do not make such comparisons lightly. This candidacy, this campaign has exposed some of the worst moral failings in American society. And standing here in Jerusalem, it has exposed for me the consequences of when good, decent, honorable people stay silent. Trump is a singular danger to American democracy and I urge every decent person of faith to vote resolutely against his candidacy this Tuesday and relinquish it to where it belongs: the dustbin of history.

Second, we read in Torah this week of Noah and the great flood. Amidst the torrent of violent winds and raging waters, Torah reminds us that we are all in the same boat: we must rise together. While God and the scientific miracle of water and light create rainbows in the sky, it is up to us-to humanity-to create and to celebrate the beauty of humanity in earth, to reaffirm our covenant of decency, dignity, and love for all the creatures who move upon our earth.

Pastor Schroeder joins me in sending blessings for wholeness and peace.

Shabbat Shalom, Michael

Sing with robust joy, loudly, in public places.