



Anguished Hearts After Another Synagogue Attack
Rabbis Brous, Tsadok, Kasher, Lebell and Melissa Balaban
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We are reeling from the news of yesterday's terrorist attack at the Chabad in Poway, just north of San Diego. We send our deepest condolences to the loved ones of Lori Gilbert Kaye, who died heroically saving the life of another. And we pray for the healing of 8-year-old Noya Dahan, Alon Peretz, and Rabbi Mendel Goldstein. Many of us have been welcomed to Chabad Shabbat services and sederim around the world, and have experienced their characteristic warmth and radical welcoming. We send our condolences and love to the whole Chabad family and our broader Jewish community.

This shooting came exactly six months after the devastating attack at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, and reflects a terrifying new reality—the sharp and dangerous rise in antisemitism in the United States, a place that had for many years felt like an oasis from the virulent antisemitism surfacing around the world. These synagogue attacks also come amidst a series of attacks on churches, mosques and temples in this country around the world. No person should fear violence when entering a house of worship to open their hearts to the Holy One. We pray for an end to this violence and the hatred that fuels it.

We also know that we must do more than offer prayers for safety and consolation.

Yesterday's attack was horrifying, but not surprising.

Our country is spiraling in a gun violence epidemic, paired with the alarming rise over the past several years of violent white nationalism. The Southern Poverty Law Center reports that there are more than 1,000 active hate groups currently operating in the US, most of them white nationalist. Hate fueled violent extremists are networking globally and are granted—in this country—easy access to assault weapons. And yet efforts to combat both gun violence and violent extremism have been systematically defunded by the federal government, in cynical political maneuvering that makes us ever more vulnerable to the kind of violent attack that took place yesterday.

We grieve. And we demand action. This spate of attacks calls for unequivocal condemnation from the highest offices. Funding for efforts to counter domestic terrorism must be a top priority for this administration. We need and deserve the country's attention to the violent antisemitism at the heart of White Nationalism, which threatens to undermine the social fabric of this country. Universal background checks on all gun sales and an assault weapons ban must top the legislative agenda—it's literally our lives on the line.

In the meantime, we continue to work with our own security team to ensure the safety of our community. We know these are hard times, and send you all blessings for renewed strength and healing.

Adonai oz l'amo yiten, Adonai yivarekh et amo ba'shalom—May God bless us with strength; May God bless us with peace.

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Rabbi Ronit Tsadok

Rabbi David Kasher

Rabbi Keilah Lebell

Listen to Rabbi Sharon Brous interviewed on [KCRW's Press Play](#) and on [KPCC's Air Talk](#) where she discusses how our community responds to the tragic Poway synagogue shooting.