



Dear Park Avenue Synagogue Family,

On this final day of the festival season, and almost exactly fifty years since the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, the sukkah of peace has been torn from the State of Israel. Hamas' coordinated terrorist assault on southern Israel has resulted in over 250 Israelis murdered, over 1500 injured and an untold number kidnapped. Horrific as the news coming out of Israel, our sorrow is compounded knowing that the extent of the anguish is not yet fully known. Terrible as today has been, we know that painful days still yet lie ahead. Our thoughts, prayers and concern are with our brothers and sisters in Israel.

As a community we will find a way to navigate this hour of crisis. This evening, our community gathered in our sanctuary to march with Torah scrolls and Israeli flags as we affirmed our commitment to Torah and Israel. Tomorrow morning, we will gather again at 9:45 am to honor both **Simchat Torah** and our two altogether deserving honorees – Amy Steiner and Jordan Solomon.

Tradition instructs us to circle the sanctuary seven times to bring about God's saving presence. In Israel's hour of need, I call on you to consider seven things you can do at this time:

1. **Stay informed:** Now is the time to stay engaged with the unfolding events in Israel. Find a trustworthy news site to keep abreast of the news. Our

programming department will keep the community updated on this front in the days ahead.

2. **Be an advocate:** Write an email, send a text, or make a phone call to your elected representatives. In your community, classroom, or social media platform – let the world know that you stand with Israel.
3. **Show Up:** In the days ahead there will be rallies and demonstrations of support on behalf of Israel. We will let you know details as soon as we know. Show up. Let Israelis know that they are not alone in their hour of need.
4. **Give:** UJAFEDNY has already established an **Israel Emergency Fund** to allocate resources to an array of relief agencies. Your support is both substantively and symbolically critical. Please give at the level you are able.
5. **Put politics aside:** Our community is constituted by a membership with a range of political views both in America and Israel. Now is the time to set our differences aside and stand united in support of Israel's safety and security.
6. **Reach out:** Many of us have family and friends in Israel. (or friends with family in Israel). While we cannot remove someone's pain, the act of letting someone know that they are not alone is an important gesture. Send a text or email letting them know they are in our hearts.
7. **Pray:** Prayer is how we give expression to our hopes for our world and tilt God's will towards making those hopes a reality. The shattered soul of Israel needs our prayers now more than ever. At home, in the synagogue, wherever you are – now is the time to pray.

Seven things you can do right now. In the days ahead, I am sure the list will grow – we will keep you informed.

Today the IDF initiated a massive call up of soldiers – calls that included immediate and extended family members of the PAS community. Israel is family to us all. In crisis - family steps up. May we all step up to the call up of this dark hour.

B'Shalom,



Rabbi Elliot J. Cosgrove, Ph.D.

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