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ON THE GREEN: JEWS MOURN & STAND FIRM



Rabbi Dov Goldberg addressing the at Congregation B'Nai Israel Monday night. (Photos by John T. Ward. [Click to enlarge.](#))

By JOHN T. WARD

Pain and insecurity were in the air as hundreds of Jews and non-Jewish supporters packed temples in Rumson and Tinton Falls Monday night to mourn the [killing of 11 worshippers](#) in a Pittsburgh synagogue two days earlier.



Rabbi Marc Kline, below, addressed an overflow crowd at Monmouth Reform Temple. (Photos by John T. Ward. [Click to enlarge.](#))

At [Monmouth Reform Temple](#) in Tinton Falls, a standing-room crowd filled the worship space and a large community room in what a temple spokesperson said was among the largest gatherings in its history.




In Rumson, a series of speakers addressed members of [Congregation B'Nai Israel](#) and guests, including a half-dozen uniformed Rumson and Fair Haven police officers wearing traditional yarmulkes in a show of respect.


"The hate is rampant, [Rabbi Marc Kline](#) told the Monmouth Reform audience. "These are horrific times, and they're being tolerated, and in fact one of the most horrific things about what's going on right now is that we have come to expect the next one, and we're praying that it's not in our backyard.


"It's as if it's part of our American being," he said. "It's not."

Kline, a member of the Red Bank Union Reform Synagogue's Advisory Committee, led



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Kline, a member of the Red Bank Human Relations Advisory Committee, led the audience in the recitation of a "Stand Up Pledge," promulgated by the New Jersey Interfaith Coalition:

While interacting with members of my own faith, or ethnic, or gender community, or with others, if I hear hateful comments from anyone about members of any other community, I pledge to stand up to the other and speak up to challenge bigotry in any form.

An hour later, in Rumson, Rabbi Dov Goldberg spoke with uncloaked "anger" about the murders of 11 innocents at the Tree of Life synagogue.

"I'm angry right now," Goldberg nearly shouted. "I'm not naive. It's not that I thought bigotry and hate were gone from America. But for God's sake, it's 2018."

Goldberg said that while the Rumson congregation worshipped on Saturday, his friend of 30 years, Rabbi Jon Perlman, of Pittsburgh's New Life congregation, which shares space in with Tree of Life, was pulling members into a storage closet in the hopes of avoiding gunfire, "only to emerge to find three of their fellow congregants dead."

But while anger may be justified, Goldberg said, "miraculously, somehow, I also feel hope," buoyed by reports of Pittsburgh high school students organizing an immediate vigil, and Muslims in that city quickly raising tens of thousands of dollars to help affected families.

Dale Daniels, a past president of the congregation who serves as executive director of the Center for Holocaust, Human Rights & Genocide Education (Change) at Brookdale Community College, said the Pittsburgh attack was "the most violent incident against Jews in the history of the United States.

"Where we are today is horrifying," she said, citing statistics showing a "clear" increase in anti-Semitic incidents since 2015, following years of steady decline. She, too, said Jews and non-Jews alike must "stand up to" disparaging remarks and hateful rhetoric.

"Our Holocaust survivors would ask this of us, and we should do no less," she said.

Amy Mallet, a former Monmouth County Freeholder who serves as an officer with the Jewish Federation of the Heart of New Jersey, spoke at both events about efforts to "harden" Jewish meeting places against violence. In recent years, she said, the organization has raised some \$3 million in grants for securing facilities in Monmouth and Middlesex counties.

"While we're grieving, we also need to show our resilience and our determination in the face of those who hate and are trying to shut us down," said Mallet, a Fair Haven resident. The federation, she said, is "uniquely positioned to convene and respond at times of crisis. We know that anti-Semitism today is a crisis. We make a critical difference in security preparedness, as well as countering incidents of hate locally when they occur, and believe me, they do occur."

Though comparisons between the current climate and the early Nazi era in Germany abound, Congregation B'nai Israel president Al Zager told the audience there's an important difference.

"When the hooligans ran wild, the police let them, and the government encouraged them," he said. "We have police today who are here and on our side."

Rumson police Lieutenant Christopher York told redbankgreen that the department activated measures Saturday to provide additional security at the temple on Saturday shortly after news of the Pittsburgh shootings broke.



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