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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 8/16/17**

**Temple Israel Statement on Charlottesville and Desecration of the New England Holocaust Memorial**  
*Temple Israel will host an Interfaith Gathering of Unity, Love, and Strength*

**Boston, MA:** This week our hearts are torn, as we each try to make sense of this spate of hateful acts, from the terrorism in Charlottesville to the desecration of the New England Holocaust Memorial. The Psalmist reminds us, *k'rov Adonai l'nishbrei lev*, "God draws near to the broken-hearted" (34:18). In a relational community such as ours, we internalize this teaching by drawing near to one another. Our clergy have received many questions and comments, by phone, email, and social media, all asking: *what can we do?*

This week, we focus our attention on the most proactive, life-affirming communal responses. In the coming days, Greater Boston will gather in a variety of ways. Based on our conversations with faith and civic leaders, including the Mayor and the Boston Commissioner of Police, we believe that it is critical for anyone planning on engaging in a counter-protest to receive thorough training beforehand. These hate groups aim to incite violence - and public conflict may rally their base and further advance their heartless agenda.

As Martin Luther King Jr. preached, "darkness does not put out darkness; only light can do that." We will fully devote ourselves to our community's mission of shining the light of righteousness wherever we go. In this spirit, **this Friday at 5:00 p.m.**, we, along with our partners across the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization, will host an **Interfaith Gathering of Unity, Love, and Strength**, here at Temple Israel of Boston. Whatever else you choose to do this weekend, we hope you will make this a high priority. We will hear inspiring words from faith leaders across Greater Boston, as we stand together against all forms of hatred, to affirm the power of love and righteousness. Then, at **6:00 p.m.**, we will welcome Shabbat together by inviting our interfaith community to join us for "**A Sabbath of Love and Light**," a worship experience open to all, devoted to the values of justice and compassion.

This is the time for us to be together with all who wish to counter messages of hatred by kindling the light of compassion and dignity for all. We invite you to extend this Shabbat invitation to your friends -

across any faith community. Temple Israel is home to all whose hearts are open and yearning for a better, more loving world.

**An Interfaith Gathering of Unity, Love, and Strength**

**Friday at 5:00 p.m. at Temple Israel of Boston**

Following this gathering, at **6:00 p.m.**, we will host "**A Sabbath of Love and Light**," a Shabbat worship experience open to all, devoted to the values of justice and compassion.

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