

A HATEFUL SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL VIOLENCE AT SHAAREY TEFILLA
SYNAGOGUE IN CARMEL, INDIANA

Despicable Graffiti at the Synagogue Shocks Community

A Prayerful Reflection: Kanwal Prakash KP Singh

Dear Jerry Zehr, Charlie Wiles, Lindsey Barton Mintz, Congresswoman Susan Brooks, Mayor Jim Brainard, Governor Eric J. Holcomb, and distinguished civic, faith, interfaith leaders and extraordinary Hoosiers: Thank you for your thoughtful eloquent voices, sincere concern, and sacred promise to guide, lead, and do the right thing against hurtful hate and unwelcome assaults on our faiths, cultures, sacred articles of faith, and institutions. We witnessed an amazing display of Hoosier civic leadership, interfaith community solidarity, and strong rejection of hate crimes at the massive gathering last night at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla Synagogue! Thank you Rabbi Benjamin Sendrow for welcoming faith congregations and friends to join you and express our solidarity against this hurtful criminal assault and cultural divisive outrage at your Synagogue.

"Congregation Shaarey Tefilla, a United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism affiliate, combines full egalitarianism with a commitment to traditional Judaism."

There was one united voice and an aura of our common humanity. Going forward, we have to translate that spirit into our shared commitment to safeguard the sacred - our sacred places, sacred spaces, sacred values, sacred rights, sacred institutions, and all things that add and define dignity in our lives and to our sense of being and belonging. This is no small task, but a critical moment in the journey of civilization, life of our great Nation and our beloved State of Indiana. We have been brought together for a purpose in this blessed land at this time, from far away places, to help in building, nurturing and safeguarding " a more Perfect Union."

Indiana is our proud home, and it is our collective responsibility to create an environment of peace and mutual respect for our cherished cultural and sacred faith-mandated values and practices different from our own. We should learn about and see God's Light and awaiting friendship in each other; teach our generations the common decency and respect for ideals and rights of each other.

English poet William Blake wrote more than a century ago, "Clasp hands and know the thoughts of men in other lands." Today, all tribes of humanity and an unimagined spectrum of diversity are all around us. We need to interface, relate, and celebrate these Providential blessings. We had clasped our hands and hearts last night at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla. Would we create an environment where this kind of Hoosier warmth and enlightened spirit calls each of us to a common purpose, to civic and cultural courtyards for frequent interactions, renewing a pledge to make this and other teachable moments an integral part of our Hoosier spirit and solemn commitment? Education, Legislation, thoughtful Cultural interaction and Civil engagement need to go hand in hand for promising outcomes. The Sikh Satsang of Indianapolis joins you, as many of you have joined us in the past, in this prayerful hope for advancing ideas that matter and taking steps that assure our collective well-being!

~ Sut Siri Akal (a Sikh greeting: God's Name is Eternal Truth), KP Singh - Indianapolis, Indiana USA - July 31, 2018. (Photos: KP Singh - July 30, 2018, August 2012, 2013; Brian Shivers - July 30, 2018)