



# ALLIED AGAINST HATE: A TOOLKIT FOR FAITH COMMUNITIES

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## Introduction

In September 2022, President Biden hosted the United We Stand Summit at the White House to counter the corrosive effects of hate-fueled violence on our democracy and public safety.<sup>i</sup> The gathering began with a moment of silence led by leaders of several faith communities that had suffered violent attacks. One of these leaders, Rabbi Charlie Cytron-Walker, said:

**On January 15<sup>th</sup> [2022], three of my congregants and I were held hostage during services at Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas, in an act of blatant antisemitism. During the ordeal, the Colleyville community came together—from the Catholic Church that opened its doors to our families, to our Muslim friends who brought them food and hugs. After we escaped, we were overwhelmed with love and support. We all need that love and support when tragedy strikes. We all need safety and acceptance. We all need compassion and kindness. We all need wholeness and peace.<sup>ii</sup>**

This story is a painful reminder of the challenge of hate-fueled violence. At the same time, this story demonstrates a hopeful response: the commitment of diverse faith communities to stand together against hate.

Every day across our nation, countless faith leaders from diverse traditions are working together to counter hate and promote peace with justice. Religious leaders and faith communities are well-positioned to use their moral authority to de-escalate conflict, foster respect for the inherent dignity of every human being, and point communities toward hope and healing. We are deeply grateful to these leaders for their work and for sharing their wisdom with us. This toolkit describes practical steps faith communities can take to prevent acts of hate, discrimination, and bias, and to demonstrate solidarity with targeted communities if such acts tragically do occur.

Standing together against hate is crucial not only as a moral matter, but also as a practical one, partially because various forms of hate are connected. People who express hatred towards Jews, for example, frequently hold other biases based on actual or perceived religion, race, ethnicity, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, or gender identity. Examples of these horrific connections include the massacre of three Black individuals with a swastika-emblazoned weapon at a store in Jacksonville, Florida in August 2023,<sup>iii</sup> and a Neo-Nazi march in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017 that was inspired by racism, antisemitism, and xenophobia.<sup>iv</sup> As Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt, the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, has said, “Hate cannot be fought in silos.”<sup>v</sup> We must stand together against hate in all its forms. We hope this toolkit helps more people of faith find more ways to do so.

This document fulfills one of the more than 100 commitments made by the federal government in the first-ever [U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism](#), released in May 2023. In the strategy, the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships—in cooperation with federal agency Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships and diverse faith leaders—pledged to produce a toolkit for faith communities on standing in solidarity to counter antisemitism and other forms of hate. Religious leaders and faith groups can and should lead the way, the strategy noted, but “government can play a supporting role, including by using its power to convene and connect diverse leaders and share best practices.” We look forward to continuing to work with faith leaders to counter hate in all its forms.



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## Building Relationships Across Faiths

A strong community is a significant defense against hate. It takes all of us working together to build united communities where everyone feels safe and valued. Anyone can start by getting to know their neighbors—including their neighbors of different faiths.

Simply knowing people of other backgrounds and beliefs can increase understanding and mutual respect.<sup>vi</sup> For example, the Pew Research Center found that people who personally know a Muslim are more likely to have positive feelings towards Muslims.<sup>vii</sup> Additionally, the American Jewish Committee's State of Antisemitism in America report found that 73% of people who know someone who is Jewish say antisemitism is a problem in the U.S. today, compared with 59% who do not know anyone who is Jewish.<sup>viii</sup>

Getting to know one's neighbors *before* their support is needed is vital. A strong, diverse network of relationships—fostered over time, through consistent engagement—prepares us to give and receive support from our neighbors.<sup>ix</sup>

One does not have to be a member of the clergy, a religious scholar, part of an advocacy organization, or a community-organizer to begin building bridges across faiths.<sup>x</sup> One can also be fully committed to standing together in support of the inherent and equal dignity of all people, while still maintaining distinct theological identities and differing views, including on religious convictions and practices.

The suggestions below list proactive steps anyone can take to build relationships across faiths. They are followed by examples of ways faith leaders or groups have taken action in the past, along with resources that may help guide future endeavors.

- **Serve together.** When people engage in acts of service together, they create a shared sense of purpose that often increases connection, trust, and belonging. Service projects allow various groups to see the impact of their collective efforts and inspire continued partnership. Faith communities have often launched or joined such service projects.

*Example: In Texas, a church partnered with a mosque and a synagogue to plant a community garden and work towards a shared goal of bringing fresh produce to a local food desert.*

*Example: The “Jewish and Muslim Day of Community Service” in St. Louis brought community members together in service on Christmas Day.*

*Resource: Repair The World is a nonprofit community service organization, grounded in the Jewish concepts of tikkun olam (repairing the world), and tzedek (justice). It offers resources for building cultures of service as well as opportunities to join service projects across the country.*

- **Bond over sports.** At sporting events, people come together to celebrate and support a shared interest, even if they are playing or rooting for different teams. Some groups have coordinated multi-faith sport camps or athletic tournaments for youth and others.



*Example: Multi-Faith Neighbors Network coordinated basketball camps for young people of different faiths in Philadelphia and a multi-faith kickball tournament in Houston.*

- **Offer an open house.** Between services, consider opening your house of worship to people of different religions who may be interested in learning about your faith tradition.

*Example: In New York, the “Annual Sacred Sites Open House” initiative enables people from all faiths and beliefs to “learn of the vital social services and cultural programs so many congregations provide their neighborhoods.”*

*Example: In Chicago, the Bahá’í House of Worship opened its doors to visitors, inviting them to learn how the building’s design communicates Bahá’í beliefs.*

- **Organize or participate in a “unity walk.”** Consider participating in or organizing a “unity walk” where religious leaders walk together to different houses of worship. Such a walk demonstrates a commitment of faith communities to be good neighbors, including by supporting the right of every religious community to exercise their faith freely.

*Example: The Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington, D.C. hosts an annual “Unity Walk,” during which participants of all ages walk to different houses of worship in their neighborhood.*

- **Share a meal.** Food has a special ability to bring people together, foster cultural exchange, and strengthen social bonds. Several faith and community groups have developed programs that connect people over a meal to help them get to know one another.

*Example: The “Breaking Bread, Building Bonds” initiative brings New Yorkers together around meals to learn about common bonds and to share cultures and traditions.*

*Resource: The People’s Supper, an organization that encourages sharing meals to build trust and connection among people of different identities and perspectives, offers tools and resources that anyone can apply and adapt to their own community.*

- **Attend or organize a cultural event.** Art and music are often creative expressions of spiritual and religious traditions that can foster cultural exchange and dialogue among participants and spectators. Some multi-faith groups have sponsored such cultural events.

*Example: Christian, Jewish, and Muslim neighbors in a West Virginia town joined together for a night of musical collaboration.*

- **Join or host a book club or discussion group.** Book clubs and discussion groups are outlets for meaningful conversation and intellectual exchange that can help people from different communities understand one another’s perspectives and opinions. Some faith groups have launched such initiatives.

*Example: The Daughters of Abraham Interfaith Book Club has chapters across the country that meet monthly to discuss a wide array of book selections.*



*Resource: The “Know Your Neighbor: Multifaith Encounters Campaign” offers resources for connecting with community members, including ideas for book clubs.*

- **Connect with local interfaith clergy councils or multi-faith leader networks.**

Consider whether there is a local entity that brings religious leaders together to discuss shared concerns and interests. These may be privately organized ministerial alliances, cross-faith discussion groups, or government-organized advisory councils that facilitate multi-faith engagement. If there aren’t such entities in your community, consider organizing one or asking a trusted government official to convene a meeting of diverse religious leaders.

*Example: The Mustard Seed Project establishes bridges between American Muslims and Evangelical Christians. Members of the group have noted that simply meeting people of other faiths helps to counter misconceptions, tropes, and stereotypes.*

*Example: The Kaufman Interfaith Institute, housed at Grand Valley State University, offers programming that advances belonging for persons of all religious, secular, and spiritual identities by fostering human connection and interfaith understanding on campus and in the wider West Michigan community.*

- **Make connections at work.** Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are groups of employees who come together in their workplaces around shared interests. Faith-related ERGs may present opportunities to get to know people of other religious backgrounds and beliefs. Considering joining or establishing an ERG at your workplace.

*Resource: The Religious Freedom & Business Foundation offers best practices for developing and operating faith- and belief-oriented ERGs.*

- **Share stories.** Storytelling allows people to see the world through the eyes of another, and helps foster a common sense of humanity. Sharing stories can break down social barriers, promote respect, and nurture friendship. Religious and other communities have sponsored events and initiatives that invite people of different backgrounds and beliefs to share their stories.

*Example: Not in Our Town—a movement to stop hate and build safe communities for all—launched in 1995 with a film documenting the efforts of Billings, Montana citizens who stood up for their neighbors after a series of hateful acts.*

*Example: “Remember Oak Creek” is a website that tells the story of the mass shooting that ultimately took the lives of seven members of a Sikh community in Oak Creek, Wisconsin. This website describes the courage of the community both during and after this attack.*

*Example: An Arizona church hosted a multi-faith night of storytelling around the theme, “how faith brought light into a season of darkness.” The event took place at a church and included storytellers of Christian, Muslim, Native American, Bahá’í, and Sikh traditions.*





# Preventing Incidents of Hate, Discrimination, and Bias

Faith leaders can take a wide variety of steps to prevent incidents of hate, discrimination, and bias. These steps range from educational and advocacy efforts, to sharing resources that can enhance the physical security of places of worship and other community institutions. Many of these steps may be taken by multi-faith coalitions, which also present opportunities to deepen bonds across backgrounds and beliefs.

Here are a few actions that any religious community can take to help prevent targeted attacks and curb discrimination and bias:

- **Educating within a faith community about countering hate, discrimination, and bias.** Faith leaders frequently help those within their own religious communities identify, understand, and apply religious teachings that speak against hate, discrimination, and bias. Instructions to love one’s neighbor, welcome the stranger, repair the world, show mercy and compassion, protect the vulnerable, see the light in one another, and make peace are among these theological teachings. Religious leaders often emphasize that highlighting these lessons and connecting them with current challenges can help community members understand that countering hate is not an add-on or a side project to living out one’s faith, but rather an essential part of their respective religious traditions.

*Example:* A group of evangelical pastors jointly drafted a “Peace Covenant” to commit themselves to treating all people with love and grace in the face of increasing polarization in their communities.

*Resource:* Interfaith America identified some shared values across faiths—such as forgiveness and service to others—that can inspire interest in learning about other faith traditions and facilitate interfaith dialogue.

- **Educating beyond a faith community, including by partnering with unexpected allies.** Faith leaders also often play powerful roles in educating those outside their religious communities. An especially impactful way of doing so is for faith leaders of different religious traditions, ideological leanings, or geographical locations to produce joint op-eds or statements or do joint appearances, videos, or speaking tours.

*Example:* Multi-Faith Neighbors Network (MFNN) is jointly led by an evangelical pastor, an imam, and a rabbi. “When Pastors, Imams, Rabbis, and other religious leaders come together to build relationships and learn from each other,” MFNN says, “they become models for their own faith communities. By way of example, they remove fear and increase understanding within their own faith communities.”

*Example:* Following a mass shooting at an LGBTQ night club in Colorado,<sup>xi</sup> dozens of local faith leaders—from Episcopal, Methodist, Baptist, Mennonite, Unitarian Universalist, Lutheran, Jewish, Presbyterian, and Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints traditions, among others—published a joint letter condemning hate and violence. “While we walk different spiritual paths, we are united in supporting each individual’s human dignity and worth,” the letter said.



*Example: When an Islamic center was being built across the street, the pastor of Heartsong Church in Memphis preached acceptance and friendship by displaying a “welcome” sign for his Muslim neighbors. When construction fell behind on the Islamic center, Heartsong Church also offered its building to the Muslim community for prayers during Ramadan.*

- **Defend religious liberty for all.** Support the principle of religious liberty for people of all faiths and beliefs. Hold government officials accountable for protecting both the letter and spirit of this principle.

*Example: A coalition of faith leaders sent a letter to federal officials asking them to take action to ensure that everyone can exercise their faith without fear.*

*Resource: The U.S. Department of Justice outlines the protections of the federal Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act against discriminatory land use regulations as well as how to report alleged violations of this law. Every faith tradition should be able to gather in a community and do so without fear.*

*Resource: Since 1995, the U.S. Department of Education has produced guidance on constitutionally protected prayer and religious expression in public elementary and secondary schools.*

- **Push for policy change to prevent acts of hate, discrimination, and bias.** Consider forming or joining a coalition to call for policy changes that counter acts of hate, discrimination, and bias. Single-issue coalitions—alliances around one specific issue—may be an especially helpful approach as they allow the widest possible range of partners to work together on a matter of shared concern, and can attract special attention since they often include unusual allies.

*Example: Key legislation such as the Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act would likely not have passed without a diverse coalition of support.*

*Example: A coalition of unusual allies came together to push for the enactment of the Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act.*

*Example: The Safeguard Illinois Community Coalition was formed by 61 nonprofit cultural, civic, and religious organizations to push for \$20 million to fund the Illinois Nonprofit Security Grant Program,<sup>xiii</sup> which provides grants to organizations including houses of worship.*

*Example: The Muslim-Jewish Advisory Council is a civil society organization founded by Muslim and Jewish community partners to advocate on issues of common concern, such as countering the rise in hate and strengthening the social fabric of America.*

*Resource: Find the names and contact information of elected officials who represent you on the federal, state, and local levels.*

- **Learn about protections against discrimination.** A variety of legal protections prohibit discrimination on various bases, including on the basis of actual or perceived race, religion, and national origin. By understanding these protections, you may be able to help prevent discrimination from occurring. Educated advocates, for example, can engage



with entities that are prohibited from discriminating to explain their legal responsibilities and inform communities of their rights to be free from such discrimination.

*Example: Ten federal agencies—the Departments of [Agriculture](#), [Education](#), [Health and Human Services](#), [Homeland Security](#), [Housing and Urban Development](#), [Interior](#), [Justice](#), [Labor](#), [Transportation](#), and [Treasury](#)—have explained the ways in which Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits certain forms of antisemitic, Islamophobic, and related forms of discrimination in federally funded programs and activities.*

*Example: The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has materials on nondiscrimination and religious accommodations in the workplace, including a fact sheet to inform employees of their rights when they face antisemitism at work.*

- **Report hate crimes.** Organize or join efforts to educate your community about the importance of reporting hate crimes. Accurate and consistent reporting can support effective violence prevention measures, including appropriate response and resource allocation.<sup>xiii</sup>

*Resource: Learn how to report a hate crime.*

*Resource: The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) provides in-depth information about hate crimes and bias incidents including scenario and case examples.*

*Resource: DOJ also created a fact sheet on its efforts to combat hate crimes.*

- **Learn how bystanders can help.** A bystander is an individual who witnesses an incident of hate, discrimination, or bias and has the opportunity to take action.<sup>xiv</sup> Bystander training can help individuals know how to respond to prejudiced behavior, normalize speaking up against discrimination, and engender a safer society.

*Resource: In its Online Harassment Field Manual, Pen America offers best practices for bystanders and allies on countering online harassment.*

- **Share security resources.** Increasing security at houses of worship and other religiously affiliated institutions is not the only way to prevent attacks, but it is an important step for many faith communities. Consider whether your faith community can share security resources with others.

*Example: The Sikh Coalition created a guide for preventing attacks on gurdwaras that can be adapted for other places of worship.*

*Example: The Secure Community Network is an initiative of the Jewish community in North America that also shares safety and security resources with others.*

*Resource: The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) provide “Six Steps to Enhance Security Against Targeted Violence” for places of worship.*

*Resource: DHS offers a suite of additional resources to support security at places of worship.*



*[Resource](#): Take these four steps to apply for DHS’s Nonprofit Security Grant Program, which can provide funding support to nonprofit organizations, including houses of worship, to implement physical security enhancements.*

- **Correct stereotypes and misstatements, including those that appear in the media.** False information may fuel hate, discrimination, and bias. Correct stereotypes and misstatements about others—including ones about other religions, races, and ethnicities—whether within the media, in the workplace, or your community.

*[Example](#): Students at Xavier University launched “Still We R.O.S.E (Recognizing Our Shared Experience),” a project aimed at confronting stereotypes and building bridges between Black and Jewish communities.*

*[Resource](#): The Anti-Defamation League offers tools and strategies for responding to biased language and slurs.*

- **Engage effectively with media.** Consider taking media training, which can help leaders’ messages reach wider audiences; introducing reporters you know to members of other faith traditions; hosting a briefing for reporters on work that you and other faith leaders are doing to counter hate, discrimination, and bias; increasing your media literacy to ensure you are sharing accurate information from reliable sources; or sponsoring a course on media and information literacy for your faith community.

*[Resource](#): “An American’s Guide to Kicking Online Bigotry Through Media Literacy” offers tips for spotting false, exaggerated, or misleading information in the media, especially pertaining to misrepresentations of religious groups.*

- **Increase inclusion.** If you are part of a committee or board that debates or decides community issues, look around the table to see who is missing. If faith or other groups lack representation, advocate for more seats for diverse perspectives. Likewise, if you are invited to a meeting with a government leader, consider sharing the invitation with other leaders who might not have the same access.

*[Resource](#): “An American’s Guide to Allyship Through Civic Action,” developed by America Indivisible and the Shoulder to Shoulder Campaign, offers these and other examples of actions that can help increase inclusion in communities.*

- **Encourage students to get involved.** Students in K-12 schools and higher education can play an important role in preventing and addressing hate, discrimination, and bias. This may include condemning hate and bias incidents on their campuses, hosting multi-faith events, and modeling empathy and cross-cultural solidarity for other young people.

*[Resource](#): [Stopbullying.gov](http://Stopbullying.gov) provides resources for teens and others to counter bullying behavior.*

*[Resource](#): The U.S. Department of Education created a fact sheet to summarize students’ legal protections from discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics in federally funded programs and activities. The fact sheet describes how these protections cover students who are or are perceived to be Jewish, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Buddhist, or of another religious group.*



- **Increase religious literacy.** Consider taking action to increase understanding of other religious communities’ beliefs and practices. Exchanging resources and information with people of different faiths is one way to do so.

*Resource:* The University of Southern California’s Center for Religion and Civic Culture provides resources and tools for religious literacy and multi-faith engagement.

- **Recognize important dates for other communities.** Reach out to partners to acknowledge important dates, history, holidays, and anniversaries for their communities. Recognizing anniversaries of hate-fueled attacks is a way of showing solidarity and emphasizing the critical need to counter such attacks moving forward.

*Example:* On Holocaust Remembrance Day, ministers, deacons, pastors, imams, and rabbis gathered together in Kentucky to “remember, pray and show their unity.”

*Example:* University of Notre Dame Law School students jointly celebrated Ramadan, Easter, Passover, and Ridvan at an interfaith dinner.

- **Engage government officials.** Consider hosting briefings or events to inform government officials about your work to counter hate, discrimination, and bias. Similarly, consider supporting the establishment or operation of governmental caucuses—within state legislatures or city councils, for example—that bring members together across differences.

*Example:* Engage elected leaders, including caucuses such as Black-Jewish or Latino-Jewish caucuses, to encourage them to condemn acts of hate and promote solidarity.

- **Strengthen coalitions by acknowledging the potential for disagreements among partners and the reality that mistakes will happen.** Acknowledge potential sticking points among coalition members, openly discuss organizational red lines, and recognize that mistakes will happen and can be overcome.

*Resource:* An experienced bridge builder notes that mistakes are inevitable but can be constructively addressed: “A leader says something that offends the other; a house of worship invites a speaker deemed problematic; an organization tweets before it has all the facts. The long haul of...transformation demands we meet mistakes by our interlocutors directly and charitably whenever possible — and accept corrective measures when they are offered with sincerity.”



# Responding to Acts of Hate, Discrimination, and Bias

In the wake of hate-fueled violence and discrimination, it can be difficult to know how best to support one another. However, community members and leaders stress the importance of simply showing up.

A key step is to ask communities and individuals that have suffered threats, attacks, or discrimination what kind of assistance they want and need. For example, prayer vigils may comfort some groups but may not be the right fit for others; some groups may appreciate external fundraisers, while others may not. Instead of assuming what kind of assistance is welcome, ask members of the affected community what would be helpful.

Here are some additional steps:

- **Consider a variety of ways to convey your support.** A compassionate conversation, phone call, letter, or card can let victims know that their neighbors care and that they are not alone. Leaders of communities that have experienced hate-fueled attacks or discrimination stress that swift expressions of concern and support from community members matter greatly to affected individuals and families.

*[Resource:](#) The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) offers resources to help communities and individuals cope during and after emergencies, including tips for communicating compassionately with victims.*

- **Inform individuals about how to file discrimination complaints.** Individuals often do not know how to file complaints about discrimination. You can help inform them of their rights to do so.

*[Example:](#) Various federal agencies (the Departments of [Agriculture](#), [Education](#), [Health and Human Services](#), [Homeland Security](#), [Housing and Urban Development](#), [Interior](#), [Justice](#), [Labor](#), [Transportation](#), and [Treasury](#)) instruct individuals how to file a complaint if they believe they have been discriminated against based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics—including certain forms of antisemitic, Islamophobic, and related forms of discrimination—in federally funded programs and activities.*

*[Example:](#) The federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has explained how to file a charge of employment discrimination.*

- **Center the voices and stories of impacted communities.** Leaders who speak out during and after acts of hate and discrimination should focus their messages on impacted individuals and communities. Remember to get permission from individuals before sharing their names or personal stories. Recognize also that communities may differ in their responses to hate-fueled attacks, with some wishing to continue routine activities, and others choosing to pause them.

*[Resource:](#) The National Center for Victims of Crime offers best practices for protecting victims' privacy and dignity when speaking publicly or engaging with media.*



- **Raise awareness within your congregation or community and offer a swift and strong response.** Whether during a service or gathering, in a bulletin, or online, leaders can and should speak specifically about the act that occurred in the community to send a message that such actions are unacceptable.

*Example:* As Pastor Bob Roberts has said, “it takes more than sermons to confront hate,” but religious leaders must quickly and forcefully challenge acts of hate. “Failing to do so lets the weed grow,” he notes.

*Resource:* The Union for Reform Judaism and the Anti-Defamation League developed “Responding to Antisemitic Incidents,” a guide that includes tips for communicating quickly and clearly.

- **Provide a swift and strong response beyond your congregation or community.** Faith leaders often take symbolic acts, speak to the press individually, or issue joint statements with leaders of others faiths condemning acts of hate, discrimination, and bias, and calling for understanding and healing. They also write letters to the editor, buy print advertisements, distribute fliers, or utilize social media. In addition, faith communities frequently offer a variety of resources and services to meet victims’ needs in the wake of an attack, including by activating their personal networks to pool helpful resources and services for affected individuals and families.

*Example:* One week after an attack at a synagogue in Pittsburgh—the deadliest attack on the Jewish community in U.S. history<sup>iv</sup>—community members gathered outside the synagogue for what a former rabbi called a healing service. “This is not a Jewish problem, although Jews were targeted. This is a human problem,” said a retired Presbyterian pastor who took part in the service. “The only way to confront hate is to face it with love...”

*Example:* When the only mosque in Victoria, Texas, was burned to the ground in a 2017 hate crime, the leaders of the city’s only synagogue gave their Muslim neighbors keys to the synagogue so they would have a place to worship while their mosque was being rebuilt.

*Example:* In response to a series of bomb threats at Jewish Community Centers across the country in 2017, a coalition of 34 religious denominations and organizations released a joint statement to condemn these acts and promote religious freedom and pluralism.

- **Participate in or organize a memorial service or other remembrance.** Vigils and memorial services may provide important opportunities for grieving community members to come together, reflect, and create pathways for recovery and healing. Faith leaders often help organize these events, including by inviting government officials and other religious and community leaders to participate. When lives have been lost, carefully consider how best to remember and honor each individual, including by consulting with targeted communities before planning any such event or remembrance.

*Example:* One year after the attack at Pulse nightclub in Florida, a variety of faith communities held memorial services across the country.



- **Organize or join clean-up efforts.** If a house of worship or religiously-affiliated institution has been vandalized or attacked in other ways, join or organize a clean-up effort, or donate supplies for such initiatives.

*Example:* When the Islamic Center of Louisville, Kentucky was vandalized with threatening graffiti, local civic and faith leaders called a press conference to denounce the hateful act and promote a community-wide, multi-faith clean-up day. Nearly 1,000 locals attended the clean-up or donated paint and other supplies.

- **Share information to support response and recovery.** Take steps to ensure targeted communities have access to relevant resources such as contacts for local law enforcement and information about governmental assistance.

*Resource:* The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services offers mental health resources, including the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline to support people in distress.

*Resource:* After the 2022 massacres at Tops supermarket in East Buffalo, New York<sup>xvi</sup> and Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas,<sup>xvii</sup> the White House summarized key federal resources for victims of crime and communities targeted by violence.

- **Ensure that communities do not feel forgotten.** In the immediate aftermath of an attack, media and other outsiders often flood targeted communities. However, they frequently leave as quickly as they came. This exodus can make a community feel forgotten. The Rev. Eric Manning, Pastor of Mother Emanuel AME Church in Charleston, South Carolina—where a mass shooting took the lives of nine congregants and wounded another on June 17, 2015—has emphasized how important it is to ensure that a community continues to receive support long after an incident has occurred. Simply staying in regular contact with a community in the weeks and months following an attack is one important way to do so, as is remembering annual anniversaries of such attacks.

*Example:* The National Council of Churches issued a public statement against antisemitism to commemorate the one-year anniversary of the Tree of Life Synagogue shooting,<sup>xviii</sup> and to mourn the victims of that tragedy.





## Conclusion

In his *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King wrote: “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”<sup>xix</sup> The voices and examples of religious leaders are among the most powerful in helping more people see these connections and inspiring them to make common cause. At a critical time in our nation’s history, we hope that this toolkit will be a useful resource as faith communities seek to help lead the way.

This toolkit is certainly not exhaustive of the best practices and resources for religious communities on standing in solidarity with others to counter hate, discrimination, and bias. Please contact us with additional suggestions. We look forward to continuing to work with you to care for one another and strengthen communities.



# About the White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships

The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships is a bipartisan tradition. President George W. Bush originally established the office in 2001 to “welcome religious and other community organizations as partners” with government to help serve communities in need. President Barack Obama continued this tradition in 2009, and President Joe Biden reestablished the office in 2021, noting the critical importance of respecting our cherished guarantees of church-state separation and religious freedom for people of all faiths and beliefs.<sup>xx</sup> The White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships (Partnerships Office) is an essential part of the Biden-Harris administration’s plan to bring people of all backgrounds and beliefs together to meet our challenges, perfect our union, and restore the soul of our nation.

To advance its mission, the Partnerships Office works closely with agency Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, and Veterans Affairs; the United States Agency for International Development; and the Small Business Administration; as well as staff at AmeriCorps, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Department of Labor.

To contact the Partnerships Office, please e-mail: [partnerships@who.eop.gov](mailto:partnerships@who.eop.gov). Learn more about the Centers for Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships at the links below.

- [U.S. Agency for International Development](#)  
Contact: [cfbnp@usaid.gov](mailto:cfbnp@usaid.gov)
- [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)  
Contact: [center@usda.gov](mailto:center@usda.gov)
- [U.S. Department of Commerce](#)  
Contact: [commercefbnp@doc.gov](mailto:commercefbnp@doc.gov)
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- [AmeriCorps](#)  
Contact: [partnerships@cns.gov](mailto:partnerships@cns.gov)
- [Environmental Protection Agency](#)  
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Contact: [barnes.taylor.a@dol.gov](mailto:barnes.taylor.a@dol.gov)



## Endnotes

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