



# CHRIST CHURCH

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*The Rev. Matthew Hoxsie Mead, Rector*

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Dear Members and Friends of Christ Church,

The Pelham Schools sent a letter yesterday to parents in our school system informing us that three swastikas had been found in the Middle School. The letter from Superintendent Cheryl H. Champ and PMS Principal Lynn M. Sabia stated: "These symbols of hate have no place in our society and especially within our schools," and "this behavior is deeply offensive and will not be tolerated." The letter in its entirety can be found online here:

<http://pelhamexaminer.com/17833/schools/three-swastikas-found-pelham-middle-school/>

I concur with the words of the superintendent and the principal. This is disturbing and heinous news, and such offensive symbols of hate have no place in our society. Sadly, I note that this is not the first time this has happened in Pelham: a similar incident occurred in 2014. I am sure it is causing great pain and worry to our Jewish sisters and brothers in Pelham. I have reached out to Rabbi Salzberg at the Pelham Jewish Center to offer my prayers and any support he may request or need from me or Christ Church. I am sending a copy of this letter to Rabbi Salzberg so that he may share it with his congregation, and they may know that we have offered our support.

I ask you to keep Rabbi Salzberg, the congregation at the Pelham Jewish Center, and our Jewish brothers and sisters in this community in your prayers. I also ask you to keep all of Pelham Schools' students, teachers, and administrative/educational staff in your prayers. Please reach out to your neighbors, friends, and family who are Jewish and offer your prayers, love, and support. I urge every parent or guardian in our congregation and community to speak directly with your children about anti-Semitism and about the pain and fear caused by symbols of hate and language of hate. These are topics that we cover every year in Confirmation Class, but they are also things that must be addressed at home.

Merciful and loving God, you have made us in your own image: Look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the arrogance and hatred which infect our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; unite us in bonds of love; and make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love, for God is love and those who love God must love their brothers and sisters also. Amen.

May God bless you and keep you,

The Reverend Matthew Hoxsie Mead, Rector