

Dear friends of Hillcrest Jewish Center:

As I write these lines (November 11<sup>th</sup>), the 2020 election process is not over yet.

While President-elect Biden is working on a transition team, President Trump is challenging the results, at least in some states. Manual recount of votes is taking place in Georgia, and North Carolina is waiting for absentee ballots to be counted. I really hope that by the time you read this message (December 1<sup>st</sup>) the picture is clearer.

Our country, our community, and our congregation didn't vote with one voice. If one lesson can be learned from this last election, and from these past years in general, it is that American Jews and Hillcrest Jewish Center members among them, agree to disagree when it comes to politics.

What everybody seems to agree on, is that we can all use some sense of peace, tranquility, and normalcy.

The truth is that we are all tired. This past secular year, 2020, has been a very challenging one (I am afraid it is not over yet) in more ways than one, and we can all use some respite. While a big task lays ahead of the elected officials, we are all responsible for contributing to a feeling of care and empathy, for spreading faith, love, respect and harmony.

President-elect Biden was heavy-handed with talk of faith for about the last 60 seconds of his speech, telling a story about how his grandpa used to say "keep the faith" and his grandma would follow with "No, Joey, spread it."

The truth is that we are all charged with spreading the faith, not only clergy and elected presidents. It is in this spirit that I would like to conclude this message with a *Prayer for Our Country After the Election*, by [Rabbi Naomi Levy](#). As you will read, the prayer assumes that a president has been effectively elected (and sooner or later it will), and invites all of us to move on, to rise above conflict, above our differences, and welcome in a new time of understanding, care and empathy.

Rabbi Manes Kogan

**A Prayer for Our Country After the Election**  
**by Rabbi Naomi Levy**

Our nation has chosen a new leader  
To guide us forward in this challenging time.  
Help us, God, to unite our great country  
In the wake of a contentious election.  
Teach us to listen to one another,  
To heal our divisions and to restore hope.  
The days that lie before us will not be easy,  
But they are ours to shape.

Let them be days of repair,  
Days when we will stem the tide of this horrific pandemic,  
Days when we will join together  
To build a new future.

For some of us the results of this election are a cause for great celebration,  
For others the results are a deep disappointment.

Our charge today must be to rise above conflict,  
To rise above our differences,  
And welcome in a new time of understanding,  
A new time of caring and empathy,  
Decency and support.

Bless us God, with ears to hear,  
Hearts to love,  
And hands to reach across party lines,  
So that we can ensure liberty and dignity for all.

Land of opportunity and dreams  
We vow to protect our blessed democracy  
And to safeguard the freedom that is our birthright.  
We pledge our allegiance  
To every soul in need  
And every child praying for a better tomorrow.  
Bless America, God,  
With peace, prosperity, and with justice for all, Amen.