

MeckMIN Calls for Solidarity and Recommitment to Shared Civic Life Amid Rising Religious Hatred

CHARLOTTE, N.C., May 20, 2026 — In recent months, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg region has experienced a distressing rise in religious prejudice and targeted hostility. In January, antisemitic graffiti and Nazi imagery were discovered at Shalom Park in Charlotte, a central site of Jewish communal life and home to several Jewish organizations and institutions. Across North Carolina and the country, communities have witnessed vandalism targeting houses of worship, the distribution of extremist propaganda, threats directed at religious minorities, and increasingly dehumanizing rhetoric aimed at Jews, Muslims, and other vulnerable faith communities. Recent attacks on synagogues in Michigan and Mississippi, together with the horrific deadly shooting at the Islamic Center of San Diego, make painfully clear that this hatred is not confined to words, vandalism, or online extremism. It can escalate into direct violence against religious institutions, houses of worship, and the people gathered within them.

These developments are not isolated events. They reflect a broader pattern of religious hatred marked by intimidation, vandalism, threats, and violence targeting faith communities across the country. Although many of these acts originate beyond Mecklenburg County, their effects are felt deeply here: in how neighbors assess their safety, how communities interpret public hostility, and how individuals navigate belonging within civic and interfaith life. The consequences extend beyond any one community, weakening trust, undermining social cohesion, and straining the relationships that sustain our shared public life.

MeckMIN affirms, without qualification, that every person—of every faith or no faith—possesses inherent dignity and belongs fully in our shared civic life.

We are especially mindful that members of our Jewish and Muslim communities, along with other religious minorities, are experiencing this moment not as an abstraction, but as something deeply personal touching their sense of safety, identity, and belonging. We stand in solidarity with all who are affected by antisemitism, anti-Muslim hatred, and all forms of religious bigotry and exclusion.

As an interfaith network rooted in Mecklenburg County, MeckMIN believes that moments of tension and fear must not be allowed to fracture the relationships that sustain our common life. We reject all forms of religious hatred, dehumanization, and exclusion—whether expressed through acts of vandalism, violence, intimidation, or the spread of hateful rhetoric and materials intended to marginalize or threaten any community.

At the same time, we affirm something equally important: the strength of our region lies in its pluralism. Our religious differences are not a threat to be managed, but a source of richness, moral insight, and resilience to be cultivated.

In this moment, MeckMIN recommits itself to the work that defines our mission: strengthening relationships across lines of faith, deepening understanding, and protecting the dignity and belonging of every member of our community.

We ask religious leaders, civic institutions, congregations, and neighbors across Mecklenburg County to join us—not only in speaking clearly against religious hatred, but in the deeper and more sustained work of building relationships across difference before moments of crisis demand it of us.

That is the community Mecklenburg County is capable of becoming—and that work belongs to all of us.