

## Statement on Hate-Based Graffiti at Local School

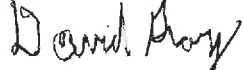
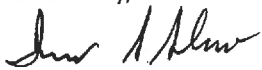
Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church, Bethesda Jewish Congregation, and the Maqaame Ibrahim Islamic Center—spiritual siblings that share sacred space at 6601 Bradley Boulevard in Bethesda—decry the recent Islamophobic and anti-Palestinian graffiti incident at nearby Walt Whitman High School. Hate-based graffiti does nothing to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Indeed, such animosity stands in contrast to the values of understanding, cooperation, and valuing differences that are hallmarks of our faith traditions and our shared experience working together.

We believe our county educational and civic leadership must continue to take the safety and well-being of Muslim students seriously, as we and others have asked leaders to support Jewish students following previous antisemitic incidents. We thank our county officials for their leadership as they continue to support Muslim students in our area, enhance a broader understanding of the value of appreciating people of different backgrounds, and elevate the importance of honoring our shared humanity.

The inter-congregational partnership amongst our three congregations is a living example that people of different faiths, backgrounds, and points of view can dwell together in peace and understanding. We do not agree on everything, but we respectfully acknowledge our differences and we celebrate our commonalities.

We pray for a better future for all who live in our county, nation, and world: one of peace, harmony, justice, and understanding amongst all peoples. May our interfaith partnership serve as a beacon of hope for all.

Sincerely,



Imad-ad-Dean Ahmad, Maqaame Ibrahim Islamic Center

Rabbi Eric Abbott, Bethesda Jewish Congregation

Rev. David Gray, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church