finding our strength in connection

It was a long night for many of us as we stayed up to hear the numbers rolling in from across our deeply divided country. The result was not what the media and conventional wisdom had predicted and speaks to the unpredictable power of democracy, a system of government under which we are blessed to all have a say in choosing our leaders. I have already made my feelings very clear about the man who is going to be our country's next president and the way his character flaunts some of our most deeply held Jewish values and ethical principles. At the same time, I also spoke about the need to find ways to bring our profoundly polarized country together after this intensively divisive election and that sentiment is only deepened by the results of this election and the divides it reveals in our society.

We begin that process this evening with a brief service of reflection at 7:00 in my study. This will be an opportunity to come together to acknowledge the sense of disorientation so many of us feel and to strengthen our will to work for the good of this country we all love. It is a chance to share a sense of community and closeness in the face of the various responses we may be holding today and to create an opportunity for clarity and connection.

As a community, we pray to find the courage and insight to overcome the divisions in our society, to seek to understand those with whom we disagree and to find common ground, to find hope and resolve in the face of challenges, to work to raise up the highest ideals of our great country, and to work for goodness, compassion, and justice in our communities. In the words of our prayerbook: "Sovereign of the universe... let your blessing pour out on this land and on all officials of this country who are occupied, in good faith, with the public needs... Fulfill the yearning of all the people of our country to speak proudly in its honor. Fulfill their desire to see it become a light to all nations." Ken yehi ratzon, may it be God's will.