

The Sukkah of Hope – VIP Vigil
October 7, 2025
Rabbi Jonah Pesner

Boker Tov – Good Morning.

The nightmare of October 7th began two years ago on Simhat Torah, a day of joy turned to tragic loss; this morning two years later it continues on Sukkot. We gather in our grief, pained by the empty chairs in our Sukkah. For those still in living in captivity, it is indeed a Sukkah of Hope; and for those whom we have lost, it is a Sukkah of Memory. We honor their memories by invoking ancient words of blessing, as we Jews have done throughout history, no matter what trauma we endure, nor loss we withstand.

So for all of them:

Those murdered on October 7th;

Those who fell in the defense of Israel and the Jewish people on that day, and in the two years since;

Those who have died in captivity;

And for all the innocent lives lost - family, friends, strangers – all children of the Creator of All Life – we stand in solidarity.

In praise of the lives they lived
and the blessings they gave,
we offer the words of Kaddish.