

CONSENT IS A JEWISH VALUE

Clergy: Reflecting on this past year we realize the need to shine a light on physical safety when it comes to intimacy in our community, something the ancient rabbis also considered.

Congregation: *When one person strays, when one person misses the mark, we all miss the mark. We are only as high as our lowest rung. Together we speak to raise awareness of these vital community standards.*

Clergy: We stand today to set a standard together for the future, not to absolve the past.

Together:

- *Forgive us for the times we did not ask permission before touching another person's body.*
- *Forgive us for the times we sensed someone's fear and persisted with our own pleasure anyway.*
- *Forgive us for the times we heard a "no," and ignored it, persisting with our own pleasure anyway.*
- *Forgive us for the times we reached to touch another when we were filled with hatred.*
- *Forgive us for the times we were so inebriated we could not decipher whether the person we touched was saying "yes" or "no."*
- *Forgive us for the times we turned a blind eye when we knew boundaries and bodies were being violated.*
- *Forgive us for not teaching these boundaries to our children sooner.*
- *And forgive us for not believing those that spoke up, their stories echoing ancient tales of transgression.*

(Derived from "Mishneh Torah, Forbidden Intercourse (Issurei Biah), Chapter 21.")

Congregation: (Optional) *For all the times we missed the mark, God of forgiveness, forgive us, pardon us, give us atonement.*

וְעַל כָּלֵם, אֱלֹהֵי סְלִיחוֹת, סְלַח לָנוּ, מְחַל לָנוּ, כַּפֵּר לָנוּ.

V'al Kulam, Eloha Selichot, Selach lanu, M'chal lanu, Kaper Lanu

Clergy: This is not an act of pardon. It is a call to highlight our communal expectations of one another.

Congregation: *Together we strive for all to be safe, and to help others to be safe in their bodies. This year may we all be written in the book of life. Amen.*