



## A Message from Rabbi Rachel

*Invitations, Reflections, Dedications*



The word “Chanukah” means “Dedication.” Rather than being a children’s gift holiday, I think about Chanukah as a holiday for adult introspection. After all, the very name “Chanukah” asks us to think about dedication. This is the time, just before winter when spring isn’t even close, to think about

what we are dedicated to.

This year, I’d like to offer you invitations, reflections, and dedications. Best to use after you light Chanukah candles, and you can use them anytime during the holiday.

Start with the basics. Add candles to the menorah from right to left. Light the shammash candle, and then the other candles, left to right, lighting the newest candle first.

”Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, asher kid’shanu b’mitzvo tav v’tzivanu, l’had-lik ner shel Chanukah.” *Blessed are You, Ruler of the Universe, who makes us holy when we do the mitzvah of lighting Chanukah lights.*

Then, the second blessing: ”Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, she-asah nisim la-avoteinu ba-yamim ha-heim ba-z’man ha-zeh. *Blessed are You, Ruler of the Universe, who performed miracles for our ancestors in those days, at this season.*

To appreciate the newness, on the first night we added the shechianu blessing: “Baruch ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam, sheh-heh-keh-yah-nu, v’ki’y’manu, v’hig-ee-yah-nu laz-man ha-zeh.” *Blessed are You, Ruler of the Universe, Who renews us and brings us to this time.*

Take time to watch the light.

Call, or Zoom or FaceTime or connect with someone to light the candles together. Ask each other: What are you dedicated to tonight?

COVID has changed and clarified priorities for many of us. How has COVID changed and clarified yours? It’s interesting how Thanksgiving and Christmas time always

see an uptick in depression and mental health issues. Reach out to someone who might be struggling.

It’s the time when many of us think about our holiday budget, and with that, many of us give to tzedakah/charity around the close of the secular year in December. The Jewish tradition is to give a certain percentage of your income (some say 10%). See if you can calculate about how much charity/tzedakah you’ve given during the past year, and about how much you can budget to give in the year to come, and start planning where you could dedicate to make an impact.

Tonight, at 7pm, join CBTBI virtually or in person, to light candles together, and then “Ask the Rabbi” questions. Dedicate yourself to connection and learning.

On the sixth night, Friday, join CBTBI at 7pm, in person or on Facebook, to light candles and celebrate Shabbat. Dedicate yourself to some rest tonight. What can you do — or not do — this Shabbat to make your time unusually restful?

Saturday is the first day of the Jewish month called Tevet. “Tevet” is connected to the word “tov,” which means “good.” What is something good you can do today to start off your month on a good foot?

The last night of Chanukah is Sunday. Remember: Chanukah is Monday until nightfall, so make sure to eat some gelt or latkes or play dreidel before it gets dark! Mark your calendar for the next Jewish holidays: Tu B’shvat, January 17; Purim, March 16-17; Passover, April 15-23. Dedicate yourself to a good year.

L’Shalom,  
Rabbi Rachel



Light the Chanukah candles 7pm tonight with CBTBI in person or on Zoom. Click [here](#) for the Zoom link. Then, join us for “Ask the Rabbi” — a Q&A session about all things Jewish, sponsored by Sisterhood.

## From the President's Desk by Lori Samilson

### *A New Approach for a New Year*



Happy Chanukah to all and best wishes for a happy and healthy secular New Year. As you all know, Chanukah means dedication. I hope that the coming season inspires you to re-dedicate your commitment to the CBTBI community. As Jews, we are fortunate to

be able to celebrate (at least) two New Years: the religious one and the secular one. The religious New Year started out like no other, both good and bad. The coming secular New Year gives us another chance to start over and re-commit to making the CBTBI community an important part of our daily lives, especially if we continue to expand our activities and inch forward to a new normal.

We used to say that CBTBI is a huge tent: strong enough to provide a sense of belonging to our diverse membership and flexible enough to meet the needs of people who come from different backgrounds and who have different perceptions of Judaism. Little did we know that one day, this allegory would become the literal truth.

It was fitting that we began the New Year in tents. After a year and a half of virtual services, gathering together was a very important aspect of the holidays for many people. When, two weeks before the holiday, we determined that it would not be safe to hold full services indoors, we decided that gathering in tents was the fastest, easiest, least expensive, and most biblical solution to a problem we needed to address immediately. Naturally, many people questioned the decision for various reasons; others even criticized it. The same happened when we had to cancel the tents for Yom Kippur.



I learned a lot from this experience. I learned how willing people are to do something for a cause that means a great deal to them. I also learned how people can be resistant to doing things differently, even when something benefits the greatest number of people. Rabbi Mike always used to say that change in general is good, but any specific change is bad because with change comes loss.

I have a feeling that in the coming year, with the ups and downs presented by COVID, we will have to make more than one spur-of-the-moment decision. For the next few months, I will have the added challenge of preparing the synagogue for a new administration to take over. Since we are about to start a new year, I think we should try a new approach.

1. If you disagree with a decision of the board, ask questions, make suggestions, but do not criticize without providing an alternate solution.
2. Do not automatically dismiss new ideas as wrong. Sometimes we have to think outside of the box. Sometimes there is no box and we have to invent something new. Just because we have not done something before does not mean that it is a bad idea. If it does not work, we will not try it next year.
3. If you are afraid that something is not going to work, offer to help. You might have solutions to problems we do not see. As it turned out, some of the people who helped the most with the tents were people who were very much against the idea in the beginning. I'm sure that would apply in various other situations.
4. Try to come out and participate in an activity that is new to you.

I will always be thankful for my CBTBI family and how they pull together in the end. With your help we will make this a great year!

## A Message from Wendy Marder, Educational Director



Chanukah is here!  
Chanukah means dedication, as the Holy Temple that was desecrated needed to be cleaned and repaired and sanctified prior to use. Hard work, even just to get started, is part of Chanukah's legacy.

We have all gone through a rough year or two, each in his/her own way. Whether it was Covid related, other health issues, personally or globally, or actual destruction like the hurricanes and tornadoes brought to our communities here or far away.

How have you survived? How have you picked yourself up and moved forward? How have you helped others?

I want to take this space to thank not only those who have helped me, but all of you who made a difference past and present, and are still doing so to ensure our future — our future as a synagogue, school, community, and as individuals.

Chanukah means dedication but also comes from the root word, “חנך” (cheenuch), which means education. Special thanks to our CBTBI teachers, assistants, volunteers, and support staff for being dedicated, supportive, creative, innovative, hard working, and caring. They have worked with me and our students and parents to keep our school open, from Zoom to classroom!

Thank you teachers past and present since our Zoom days: Charlotte Silver-Cohen, Ellyce Eisenberg, Leora Rothschild, Rebecca Klavens, Renee Klavens,

Jennifer Klavens, Iris Nadel, Erica Mulloy, Jake Klavens, Lisa Parker, Jana Schachter.

Thank you to our assistants: Jeremy Engber, Adam Wax, and Rebekah Wilen, and our volunteers: Gail Chaskes and Mina Newstadt.

Special shout out to Rabbi Rachel and to all our synagogue leaders and support staff and board and committee members, in particular those who work closely with me: Judy Finneran, Steve Blocher, Herb Horowitz, President Lori Samilson, Elise Engber, Chuck Nappen, and Allison Harris. Your time and support and direction help us keep CBTBI Hebrew School moving forward and in good shape!

Remember: concerning school policies: (Facebook quote): “You help determine your child’s attitude. Be angry or sad in private. Discuss your frustrations away from the kids. Set them up for success by teaching them to make the best of it. Be a sounding board for their worries and disappointments. Stay positive and model perseverance and respect.”

Remember, it is a blessing, Vazot Habracha, to be here, regardless of how difficult life is at times and we need to help each other whenever and however possible. Before you vent to each other and pass the stress on, please come to me and/or our teachers directly, and let us understand your needs. We, too, are learning our way back from the pandemic into a still unknown world and trying to make the safest and friendliest and most educationally sound decisions for all.

Thank you everyone and please be well.

Happy Chanukah!

Wendy

### *The Shofar*

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### Upcoming School Events

- Saturday, December 18 and January 22: Shabbat B'Yachad on Zoom and CBTBI's public Facebook page. No services in the building on those day.
- Sunday, January 16: Seventh grade presents their B'nai Mitzvah projects to the school.
- Friday, January 28: Seventh grade leads Shabbat services in the building.



## Salon Concert Series

*Join us for a memorable afternoon of music, wine and food*

**Sunday, December 12, 2021**

**2:00 p.m.**

Enjoy the music of  
**Bach, Mendelssohn, Schumann, Fauré,  
St. Saens, and Morris**

**Norma strikes again! With very special guest oboist  
Emily Meyer!**

*For this concert, we can accommodate  
20 guests. Seats fill up fast. Save yours now!*

Access to Registration form:

**[www.CBTBI.org/events/salon](http://www.CBTBI.org/events/salon)**

**Registration Closes:  
4:00 p.m., Dec. 10, 2021**



Live performance  
at the home of  
Norma & Joshua Meyer

40 Bells Lake Drive  
Turnersville, NJ 08012

**Vaccinated Guests ONLY  
Masks REQUIRED**



*May your holiday be filled  
with love, joy, and light.  
Happy Chanukah to the  
CBTBI family!*

