



BETH MENACHEM CHABAD *of* NEWTON

September 2019

Elul 5779

Dear Friends,

Each January, the President of the United States delivers his “State of the Union Address” to Congress and the American people. I have the honor of doing the same in the form of this letter to the members of the Beth Menachem Chabad community and I’m pleased to report the state of our Jewish Center is the best it has ever been – Baruch Hashem!

We have come a very long way since our formation 18 years ago and can take pride in our great accomplishments. Bucking the national trend of declining synagogue attendance, we have grown year after year and continue to enhance our adult education, social and school related programs. This has been no small or easy accomplishment, but with the hard work of our rabbinic and lay leadership in concert with some generous financial support, we have succeeded.

Having said that, we will never be satisfied with the status quo. The Lubavitcher Rebbe taught us “as Jews, we must continue to grow personally, Jewishly and community-wise. Our Rabbis and their wives certainly ascribe to this philosophy and work tirelessly toward that end. We must and will continue to enhance our Chabad Center, to fulfill the Rebbe’s challenge and to meet the needs of our Jewish community.

Listed below is a brief review of the current status of each aspect of our Jewish Center:

Synagogue/Shul

We are now just days away from the High Holidays. Last year we hosted nearly 300 men, women and children. I am elated to report that this year we have retained a new professional well known Chazzan with a beautiful and powerful voice who will lead us joyfully through the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur holidays. We were fortunate to have been able to convince him to leave the Hamptons and to retain his services with an extremely generous grant from two members. I’m certain you will enjoy his rendition of the traditional Jewish songs and prayers. We continue to offer daily Minyan for all three services, Shabbos attendance keeps growing and our Kiddush luncheons are more elaborate and delicious than ever. Our Mikvah utilization is extremely high by both men & women and enhancements have been made to improve the experience.

Preschool

In the next few weeks we will be submitting our application to the City of Newton for a comprehensive expansion of our Early Childhood Education Program classrooms and other facilities on our lower floor to support an enrollment of 48 children; it will also increase our outdoor parking capacity to support additional parking spaces. This will be no small accomplishment both in effort and cost, and upon its

completion I believe we will have first rate facilities which will attract young Jewish families to our warm, friendly and accepting Jewish environment.

Adult Education

Our newly installed Rabbi and Director Shalom Ber Prus continues to teach a stimulating and informative series of courses through the Jewish Learning Institute with dozens in attendance. In addition, Rabbi Chaim and Nechama Prus offer adult education classes for both men & women in the weekly Torah portion, Talmud and other classical writings.

Teen and Child Education

Rabbi Shalom Ber and Itty Prus continue to be busy and have great success with the “CTeen” program, attracting many area public high school students to expose them to Jewish culture. Activities include Jewish Holiday related social gatherings and exciting trips with the national CTeen organization.

Social

I'm certain all would agree that nothing can rival our themed Jewish Holiday social gatherings. This past year's Chanukah and Purim extravaganzas were heavily oversold with over 300 attending each one to enjoy the ambiance, delicious and extravagant catered buffets and musical programs. More surprises are planned this year. Our Holiday Community Dinners for Rosh Hashanah, Succot, Simchat Torah and Pesach have also enjoyed large attendance and have received much praise from participants. Our Speaker Series drew large sellout crowds and several interesting speaker and movie nights are planned for the coming year.

Security

Given the domestic terrorist attacks on Jewish and other religious facilities, we found it prudent and necessary to enhance our security protocol. After much study and consultation with local law enforcement and Jewish security professionals, we made the decision to hire outside armed security professionals to screen members and guests and guard our entrance during all Shabbos and Holiday services. These security measures do not come without SUBSTANTIAL expense. Our recent solicitation of a member security fee made these security measures possible and we thank those that contributed.

I would be remiss if I left out the other “ingredient” that was necessary in our evolution from a traveling minyan to the original small house to our current large and modern beautiful home. Nothing can be done without the financial contributions of our members and other generous individuals who have recognized the need and importance of our existence as a leading Chabad Center in New England. Beth Menachem Chabad now supports the religious, educational and life cycle needs of hundreds of Jewish individuals, families and the Jewish community at large throughout Newton and surrounding communities.

Our ability to support the needs of the community can only be maintained by the contributions of our members and supporters. We do not receive financial support from outside organizations, and we must raise money to cover our operating deficit. This is the time of year that we turn to YOU - whether you come every Shabbat or just for the High Holidays - for your support so we can continue to offer a welcoming Center for every Jew, regardless of background or affiliation. As you know, we do not require “tickets” and we turn no one away based on financial hardship. The financial viability of our Center depends on you.

The Board of Trustees has instituted a Supporting Membership at Beth Menachem Chabad in the amount of \$1500 per family or individual. If you have not been a Supporting Member, we urge you to do so this year. Many of you have given more than this in the past and we hope you will continue to do so by becoming a Benefactor with a \$2000 donation or a Guardian with a \$3600 donation. Enclosed

please find a membership card which outlines the different donor designations. Your donation is 100% tax deductible and we truly appreciate your generosity.

In closing, I hope to greet you in shul and we all here at BMC offer you our best wishes for a Happy, Healthy and “Zeesah” (Sweet) New Year. Shana Tovah Oometukah!

Fred Chanowski, President

Alex Smolyar

Esther Dezube

Martin Levitan

Ben Saada

Boris Belopolsky

Mark Friedman

Marty Lurie

Dmitry Berdichevskiy

Rami Hascal

Zev Monisov

Bruce Dezube

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