

# From the Rabbi's Desk

December 2021

Friends,

When you receive this bulletin, the lights of Chanukah will be shining brightly in windows all across Eastern Connecticut – from the Shore to Willimantic and from Old Saybrook to Rhode Island. For the second year, Temple Emanu-El will participate in a community program each night of Chanukah. We will host the last night's celebration, Sunday, December 5<sup>th</sup>, at 6 PM. Weather permitting, we'll have music (thanks band members and Sherry!), donuts, cider, and hot chocolate, the Travel Raffle drawing. Most importantly, we will be sending our light of hope, love, righteousness, and justice out into a world that desperately needs it. To help us send out light, we will be unveiling a historic Chanukiah. We will officially unveil a seven-foot-tall bronze Chanukiah that we inherited from Temple B'nai Abraham in Meriden. The Temple closed some years ago, and the Chanukiah has been in storage since. B'nai Abraham dedicated the Chanukiah to Larry Roden, a beloved youth of that community who died of Leukemia in 1961. Ms. Ellie Roden, his sister, will be writing a statement that I will read at this community unveiling. Special thanks to Sean Bendick for his repair and electric upgrade of the

Chanukiah. Thanks also to Michael Price, Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek, and the URJ Board of Trustees who facilitated Temple Emanu-El becoming its new home. The Chanukiah is a beautiful and meaningful addition to our sacred space. Ms. Roden has expressed how grateful she is for our stewardship of her brother's legacy.

Slowly but surely, Temple Emanu-El is ramping up in-person activities. It was a primary objective to bring the Religious School back in person this year. Thanks to the hard work of Rachel O'Brien, Amy Orce, all of the teachers, and the Religious School Committee, the kids are back! Whether it is hybrid services, Sisterhood events, other programs, we are coming back in person. It is so lovely to see everyone in person, even if we must wear masks indoors. Surprisingly, just a handful of people are joining us for in-person services, classes, and programs outside the Religious School. It seems that it's a bit more complicated to come back than we thought. Let us know what we can do to make you feel more comfortable, to help you reenter the building.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Marc