

## Message From Cantor Joshua Shron



There's just something about summer that brings out a smile in most of us.

Think about it...fun in the sun, backyard barbecues, music under the stars, festivals, fireworks, relaxation, summer camp, lemonade, pools and beaches...quite simply, it's a glorious time of year!

But, as my teachers in yeshiva would tell us every single year on the last day of school, "Judaism doesn't take a summer vacation" (we all had the speech memorized by the fifth grade). A relaxed time of year shouldn't equal an empty synagogue.

So this summer, we're doing our part by bringing SUMMER FUN to the synagogue calendar!

Backyard BBQ? Check. Join us on Friday night, July 29<sup>th</sup> for our annual "Shabbabecue" – a great summer tradition now taking place at our very own synagogue. We'll meet at 6:00 p.m. for burgers, hot dogs, etc., and then join together for a lively Kabbalat Shabbat service at 7:30 p.m. Come for the food and friends, and stay for the fun!

Fun in the sun...by the pool? Check. On Saturday evening, August 20<sup>th</sup>, we'll gather at the home of Ellen and Gordon Charlop for another L'Dor V'Dor tradition, our "Poolside Havdalah". A short Mincha service, an enjoyable *Seuda Shlishit* with friends and a moving *Havdalah* by the pool are all part of this not-to-be-missed evening. Mark your calendar!

Great music? Check. Lots to tell you about. First, if you're a Great Neck resident (or are friends with someone who can get you a guest pass), be sure not to miss SAFAM at Stepping Stone Park on Sunday, July 20<sup>th</sup>. They're a fantastic Jewish American band who have been performing together for more than 30 years. I've seen Safam several times and can promise you, you'll love them! They're talented, spirited and lots of fun. Hope to see you there!

More music! Our High Holiday choir will begin preparing for the upcoming holiday season on Tuesday, August 2<sup>nd</sup>, and we're always looking for new members! Contact me ([cantor@olnjc.org](mailto:cantor@olnjc.org)) if you'd like to sing with us this year. Finally, we're closing out the summer with a rockin' good time on Friday evening, August 26<sup>th</sup>, when we'll be significantly stepping up our game during that night's Shabbat service. Since Shabbat begins late that evening, we're inviting a few of the musicians within our congregation to lend their talents to our service. We'll be singing many of the same melodies as we do every week – accompanied by a live band! Enjoy a lively evening of singing, dancing and fun right in our sanctuary!

Relaxation? Check. Well, at least for me. With three of my five children spending various parts of the summer away from home, Mairov and I plan to take it nice and easy this season. That is, until my three-year-old wakes up from his nap. Wishing one and all a wonderful summer!

*Cantor Josh Shron*

## Conversations with the Cantor By Cantor Joshua Shron

Ladies and gentlemen, may I present to you our next generation of Israel advocates.

This past year, "Conversations with the Cantor" focused its bi-weekly discussions on the subject of Israel and anti-Semitism. From the comforts of Starbucks Coffee in Little Neck (with occasional meetings at the synagogue over pizza), our group discussed the history of the State of Israel, the nearly-miraculous innovations that have emerged from the minds of Israeli citizens, and, more importantly, the rampant anti-Semitism and anti-Israel sentiment that these teens will likely encounter once they reach universities throughout the country. We learned about how to respond to those who believe Israel should be wiped off the map, spoke via Skype to an active student advocate for Israel studying at the University of Washington, even began planning a potential web site as a resource to help young people answer Israel's critics, and much more!

### From the students:

*"This year I learned the importance of being educated about Israel. This is the country where the history of my religion lies, and the place that holds my future. This class has made me appreciate everything that Israel has to offer and made me want to get involved."*

*"Conversations with the Cantor has increased my knowledge of Israel and Judaism. It has been a wonderful experience."*

*"'Conversations' has taught me about the negative things others may say about Israel, but more importantly, taught me what to say to those haters."*

*"This year has been great...a good mixture of learning about Israel and fun."*

We completed this successful year on June 21<sup>st</sup> with a celebratory dinner at Burger Bistro in Great Neck. Yasher Koach to our dedicated "regulars": **Kyle Berlinsky, Rebecca Bressler, Eric Fidler, Jared Hodes, Ryan Hodes, Jacob Neiderman and Rachel Schneider**. It is an honor to learn with you – and from you – each and every time we get together. We look forward to welcoming even more of our community's young adults when we return in the fall!



*Conversations with the Cantor participants celebrate the end of the year at Burger Bistro in Great Neck. Pictured (l-r): Rebecca Bressler, Rachel Schneider, Jacob Neiderman, Cantor Shron*