

## From The Rabbi



This month there will be a three day holiday weekend. Schools will be closed and many will be off from work. What a great time to go skiing, avail ourselves of holiday sales or catch up on some of those things for which there never seems to be time. Right?! Maybe, but I do not think that this is what the leaders of our nation had in mind when they established Martin Luther King Jr. Day as an official American holiday in 1983. I believe that this should be a day on which we should set aside some time to think about, promote and actualize the ideals and the values for which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lived and died. This could be a weekend to attend an interfaith/interracial service and take some time to get to know someone who is of a different race. A weekend to rededicate ourselves to the pursuit of freedom and equality for all, to the eradication of hatred and prejudice within our society and to the breaking down of the barriers that divide people of different races and religions.

On Friday night, January 13, I have invited the Rev. Dr. William Watson, Founder and Co-President of the Black Jewish Coalition for Justice, to be a guest speaker as part of our Shabbat Evening service that will begin at 8:00 pm.

On Sunday, January 15, at 7:00 p.m., I will be attending the Nassau Community Interfaith service in honor of the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at the Antioch Baptist Church in Hempstead. I am hoping that members of our congregation will join me in this opportunity to participate in this important community event. If you are interested, please send me an email at [rebyaffe@gmail.com](mailto:rebyaffe@gmail.com).

Our celebration of Chanukah has just ended. During this holiday we rejoiced in the miraculous victory of the Maccabees for religious and political freedom. We lit candles to bring light to the darkness of the world. As we anticipate the Dr. Martin Luther King holiday, I am struck by the similarities of the battles fought by Dr. King and the battles of the Maccabees. There was a time when the American Jewish Community and the American Black Community worked together and shared the common cause of pursuing peace and justice for all. In recent times, the relationship between our two communities has unraveled and it is time to once again come together and pursue our common goals.

Dr. King was a great leader who brought the light of hope and goodness to our world through his words and his deeds. Here are just a few of his words that I pray can continue to serve as motivation for us to help keep his dreams alive. May the observance of this month's holiday weekend be a meaningful one for all of us.

*Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.  
Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.*

*The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in  
moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands  
at times of challenge and controversy.*

*Faith is taking the first step even when you  
don't see the whole staircase.*

*Our lives begin to end the day we become  
silent about things that matter.*

*Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.*

*I have decided to stick with love.  
Hate is too great a burden to bear.*

*Life's most persistent and urgent question is:  
'What are you doing for others?'*

*The time is always right to do what is right.*

*We must learn to live together as brothers  
or perish together as fools.*

*Rabbi Gordon Yaffe*