

MEDITATION FOR CONFIRMATION PARENTS

On the Confirmation of our children, our thoughts are many. We are proud to have helped our children reach this milestone in their lives. Now, our children confront life's challenges as young adults.

Dear God,

We don't want to just listen to what our children say. We want to feel what they mean. Help us to see life through the eyes of our children. We can learn from them. Strengthen us through our love to have patience, to understand, and to build our children's self-confidence. Help us allow our children to climb to the threshold of their beliefs with the guidance of their own experiences. Growing up can be painful. Help our children realize that when their achievements are reached they will forget the pain, feeling only the reward of their labor. Let our children know that we can only give what we have discovered for ourselves.

Amen.

Candle Blessing

As these Shabbat candles give light to all who behold them, so may we, by our lives, give light to all who behold us.

As their brightness reminds us of the generations of Israel who have kindled light, so may we, in our own day, be among those who kindle light.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל שַׁבָּת.
Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Shabbat.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, who sanctifies us with mitzvot, and commands us to kindle the lights of Shabbat.

Kiddush

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא פְּרִי הַגָּפֶן.
Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, borei p'ri hagafen.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְרָצָה בָּנוּ, וְשַׁבַּת קִדְּשׁוֹ
Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'ratza vanu, v'Shabbat kod'sho
בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחִילָנוּ זְכוֹרֵן לְמַעֲשֵׂה בְּרֵאשִׁית, כִּי הוּא יוֹם תְּחִלָּה לְמִקְרָאֵי קִדְּשׁ,
b'ahavah u'v'ratzon hi'chilanu, zikaron l'ma'aseh b'reisheet. Ki hu yom t'chilah l'mikra'ei kodesh
זְכוֹר לִיצִיאַת מִצְרַיִם, כִּי בָנוּ בְּחֶרֶת וְאוֹתָנוּ קִדְּשָׁתָּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים,
Zecher li'tzi'at mitzrayim, ki vanu va'charta v'otanu ki'dashta mikol ha'amim,
וְשַׁבַּת קִדְּשָׁךְ בְּאַהֲבָה וּבְרָצוֹן הִנְחִילָתָנוּ. בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, מִקְדֵּשׁ הַשַּׁבָּת.
v'Shabbat kod'shecha b'ahavah u'v'ratzon hin'chaltanu. Baruch ata Adonai, m'kadeish haShabbat.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe: You call us to holiness with the Mitzvah of Shabbat, the sign of Your love, a reminder of Your creative work, and the liberation from Egyptian bondage: our day of days. On Shabbat especially, we hearken to Your call to serve You as a holy people. Blessed are You, Adonai, for the holiness of Shabbat.

It is written: "Three times a year shall you hold a festival before God: the feast of Matzot, in the month of Spring, the time when you came out of Egypt; the feast of the harvest of the first fruit of your labor in the field; and the feast of ingathering the harvest at summer's end."

The festivals are times to celebrate our joys and give thanks for them. We are blessed with food enough to sustain life, with beauty that delights the eye, with freedom to be ourselves, and with knowledge of the law that forms our moral being.

Let us praise Adonai,
Source of knowledge and light,
from whom we draw wisdom and insight.

Let us savor the fullness of each and every day
and fill our souls with the treasures of Shabbat.
And let us appreciate these distinctions:
sacred from profane, charity from greed, purpose from drift.

Let us affirm our covenant as God's people
Let us honor those who study Torah.
Let us uphold the truth of ongoing revelation.

Let us celebrate the glory of our tradition
and draw refreshment from the wellsprings of prayer.
Let us respect tradition and encourage creative faith.

And let us dress ourselves in the garments of God --
compassion for the needy, embrace of the stranger --
and then spread the canopy of peace over all the world. -- Mishkan T'filah

CONFIRMATION PROCESSIONAL

"Psalm 19" - Benedetto Marcello

Welcome to the Confirmation service of 2017 for the class of 5777. Throughout our year in Confirmation we have studied a variety of topics and talked about how Judaism, Jewish knowledge, and being Jewish can play a part in our daily lives, from shaping our opinions to how we look at the world. Tonight we celebrate the past eleven or so years of our Jewish education and share with you some of the things for which we are thankful and that we have come to believe and affirm about Judaism and being Jewish.

I get asked the question why am I Jewish? Why am I Jewish. I am Jewish not because I'm forced by my parents. Not because I go to religious school. Not because my whole family is. I am Jewish because I choose to be. I am Jewish because I enjoy celebrating Shabbat, enjoyed celebrating becoming Bat Mitzvah, enjoy reciting the blessings. I am Jewish because I wallow in the hardships my people faced. I celebrate the miracles; a gift from God.

Nobody's forcing me to be Jewish, nobody's whispering in the back of my mind telling me what to think I choose to be Jewish. What's your choice? Maddie Pines

I am Jewish because of my mom. Thank you, Mama G. I love spending time with my mom's side of the family but I don't get to see them often. My family usually goes to Kansas City every other year to my grandparent's house to celebrate Hanukkah and birthdays. When we all come together there are so many traditions we do, especially taking a family picture. We all know I love that. I never stop laughing when I'm with everyone, we all have our inside jokes and fun stories to tell as well. Then, on top of that, we celebrate Thanksgiving. I always look forward to this week since it's my favorite. On other holidays, we Skype everyone which turns out to be really crazy. It takes us an hour to actually do a service. If I wasn't Jewish I would never have had these moments in my life. Mom, it is all because of you. If I never went to Sunday school I wouldn't have met my friends. If you never sent me to NFTY conventions, I wouldn't be the person I am today. Jessica Goedeke

My favorite religious school moment was when in eighth grade we went to the Holocaust museum. It was cool learning about the Jewish people before us and how we take everyday for granted. It really opened my eyes and made me interested in learning more about Jewish history. Blake Kraizer

I am Jewish because it is something that I can comfortably associate myself with. Going through the confirmation process has given me a way to express who I am in a safe environment. Being Jewish has also allowed me to meet a lot of new people through youth groups like NFTY, JSU, and BBYO and they have helped me express my Judaism in my own individual way around people who want me to try my best and never give up. I am Jewish because I wouldn't want to be anything else. Brett Goodman

L'cha Dodi

לְכֵה דוּדֵי לְקִרְאֵת כְּלָהּ. פְּנֵי שַׁבַּת נִקְבְּלָהּ:

L'cha dodi likrat kalah p'nei Shabbat n' kab'lah

שָׁמֹר וְזָכוֹר בְּדַבּוּר אֶחָד, הַשְּׁמִיעֵנוּ אֵל הַמֵּיחָד.

shamor v'zachor b'dibur echad hishmi-anu el ham'yuchad

יְיָ אֶחָד וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד. לְשֵׁם וּלְתַפְאֵרֶת וּלְתִהְיֶה

Adonai echad ush'mo echad l'shem ultiferet v'lit'hilah

בּוֹאֵי בְּשָׁלוֹם עֲטֹרֶת בַּעֲלָהּ. גַּם בְּשִׂמְחָה וּבְצִהְלָהּ.

Bo'i v'shalom ateret ba'lah gam b'simcha uvtzoholah

תּוֹךְ אֲמוּנֵי עַם סְגֻלָּהּ. בּוֹאֵי כְלָהּ, בּוֹאֵי כְלָהּ:

toch emunei am s'gulah bo'i chalah, bo'i chalah

Come my Beloved to greet the bride--the Sabbath presence let us welcome!

Safeguard and Remember--in a single utterance the One and Only God made us hear. God is One and His Name is One, for renown for splendor, and for praise. Enter in peace, O crown of her husband, even in gladness, and good cheer, among the faithful of the treasured nation. Enter, O bride! Enter, O bride!

BAR'CHU

Am I awake?

Am I prepared?

Are you listening to my prayer?

Can you hear my voice?

Can you understand?

Am I awake?

Am I prepared?

בָּרְכוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ:

Praise the Eternal to whom praise is due!

בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבָרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

Praised be the Eternal to whom praise is due, now and forever!

MA'ARIV ARAVIM

Roll into dark, Roll into light

Night becomes day, Day turns to night

בּוֹרֵא יוֹם וְלַיְלָהּ, גּוֹלֵיל אוֹר מִפְּנֵי חֹשֶׁךְ

borei yom va'laïla, goleil or mipnei choshech

גּוֹלֵיל אוֹר מִפְּנֵי חֹשֶׁךְ, וְחֹשֶׁךְ מִפְּנֵי אוֹר.

goleil or mipnei choshech v'choshech mipnei or.

You are Creator of day and night, rolling light away from darkness and darkness from light.

SH'MA

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחָד:

Hear O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One!

בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מְלֻכּוֹתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.

Blessed is God's glorious majesty, forever and ever.

V'AHAVTA – And You Shall Love

And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart

With all your soul and with all your might

And these words which I command you on this day
shall be in your heart

And you shall teach them diligently unto your children

You shall speak of them when you sit in your house

When you walk by the way and when you rise up,
and when you lie down

And you shall bind them for a sign upon your hand

And they shall be for frontlets between your eyes

And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house, and upon your gates

That you may remember and do all of My commandments,

And be holy unto your God

I'm thankful to God for the countless opportunities every day to make my life and others' fulfilling and joyous. The first time around I'm never sure what I want or what others need. I let my chances slip away because I'm held back by uncertainty and fear. If it weren't for the second, third and fourth chances that God supplies, I would be much emptier and unsatisfied. My parents, too, contribute greatly to my happiness and fulfillment in life. They encourage me to be brave and step outside my comfort zone, and they support me the whole way through. Most of my proudest moments could not have happened without the influence of my parents.

Eliana Liebman

When I was younger, I did not appreciate going to religious school every week. I didn't understand how important it was for me to learn all the Jewish values and history we studied. Looking back, I realize how thankful I should be for getting the chance to learn so much. Being Jewish is very important to me, and impacts my daily life. Without learning this information, I probably wouldn't be so involved. In 20 years from now, I may not remember each fact, but I know I will always remember the memories I have with my friends and family because I am Jewish.

Marni Frischer

Being Jewish for me is kind of hard to explain, it's more of a feeling. A feeling of wanting to know who we are and what we are, however, this is a good feeling and also a good responsibility. I mean we've all grown up together, but here we are graduating Sunday school. As young Jewish teens it's about our own responsibilities. It's more than religion that keeps us together. It's this lasting friendship that we all have made.

Jordan Waldman

Being confirmed is the next stepping stone in my Jewish faith. I have learned a lot of life changing lessons and how to be a better Jew. Confirmation class has helped me discover my love for my Jewish identity. I am proud to be a Jew. I have learned to be a more ethical and moral person when making my decisions and Confirmation class is something I can look back on in the future. I have learned to appreciate my Jewish identity. And carry on my Jewish faith as my life goes on. Alec Bleyer

MI CHAMOCHAH - Redemption

מִי־כְמוֹכָה בְּאֱלֹמִים יְהוָה מִי כְמוֹכָה נִאֲדָר בְּקֹדֶשׁ נֹרָא תְהִלָּת עֲשֵׂה פְלֵא:

Mi Chamocha ba'elim Adonai, Mi Kamocho ne'dar bakodesh, Nora tehilot oseh feleh

מְלֻכּוֹתֶיךָ רָאוּ בְנֵיךָ, בּוֹקֵעַ יָם לְפָנָי מִשָּׁה, זֶה אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאָמְרוּ: יְהוָה | מֶלֶךְ לְעַלְמִים וְעַד:

Malchutcha ra'u vanecha, bokei'yam lifnei Mosheh; "Zeh eili!" anu v'am'ru: "Adonai yim'loch l'olam va'ed!"

Who is like You, Eternal One, among the gods that are worshipped? Who is like You, majestic in holiness, awesome in splendor, doing wonders? (*Exodus 15:11*)

Your children saw Your sovereign might displayed as you split the sea before Moses. "This is my God!" they cried. "The Eternal will reign for ever and ever!" (*Exodus 15:2,18*)

HASHKIVEINU – God’s Shelter

הַשְׁכִּיבֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם, וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ שׁוֹמְרֵינוּ לְחַיִּים.

Hashkiveinu Adonai Eloheinu, l'shalom, v'ha-amideinu, shomreinu, l'chayim.

Spread the shelter of Your peace over us, guide us in wisdom, compassion, and trust

הַשְׁכִּיבֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם, וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ שׁוֹמְרֵינוּ לְחַיִּים.

Hashkiveinu Adonai Eloheinu, l'shalom, v'ha-amideinu, shomreinu, l'chayim.

Save us for the sake of Your name, shield us from hatred sorrow and pain

הַשְׁכִּיבֵנוּ יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ לְשָׁלוֹם, וְהַעֲמִידֵנוּ שׁוֹמְרֵינוּ לְחַיִּים.

Hashkiveinu Adonai Eloheinu, l'shalom, v'ha-amideinu, shomreinu, l'chayim.

I am thankful and happy to be Jewish because it makes me another small part of a very close religion. Every time I meet another Jewish person, there is always a connection made. To be Jewish is something that I am extremely proud of and it will always be a part of who I am. I feel, as a part of the Jewish community, that it is very important to carry on the tradition of Judaism that my parents gave to me.

Hannah Spielberg

I am thankful to my parents for being my best friends. They have taught me that no matter what bumps life throws at us we can always come out stronger. I hope I can be half the parents mine are. They have reminded me that God is always in our heart. I am so lucky to have such a close relationship with God and my parents. I can't wait to one day raise my own Jewish family. This year in Confirmation I truly found God. I realized there is a little God in everyone and it's our job to make God proud. One day I was sitting in Confirmation and it clicked with me. All these years of religious school finally made sense. That was the moment that I decided to make one of my goals in life to raise a Jewish family like mine. If it weren't for my parents I don't think I would be as close to God as I am. They have truly made me the proud Jew I am today. I am thankful to my parents for being my rock. They have taught me that God is always with us in our hearts.

Mollie Weinberg

I feel Jewish when I am in the temple, whether I am teaching younger kids or in a Confirmation discussion. I feel this way because I feel like the temple is a place where my thoughts are concealed and it feels sacred and holy, especially during a Friday night Shabbat service or at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. I feel Jewish when I am celebrating a holiday such as Hanukkah or Passover because I am surrounded by the people I love and I am embracing the meaning of the holiday.

Olivia Siegel

I am thankful to my parents for supporting me endlessly with all of my decisions and enabling me to do things that many kids don't have the chance to. I thank my mom because it can't be easy being the only non-Jew in our house, yet she still devotes her time to making sure my sisters and I have the best opportunity to extend our faith. Signing us up for religious school at a very young age, getting us involved with GUCI, getting us to many Hebrew tutoring lessons, planning our b'not mitzvah, joining us at services, and much more. I also owe it to my dad for allowing me to continue the beliefs of Judaism, as he and his family did growing up. Pushing us to get more and more involved with practicing our religion has really caused all of us come to a realization that although we are looked at as a minority, this religion has so much more to offer than any other possibly could.

Emma Holt

I'm thankful to G-d for giving me such an amazing opportunity to come here almost every Sunday for the past eleven years of my life. Sunday school has been a place for me to reflect, relax, and reconnect with G-d as I sometimes forget to do so during my week. These past two years of Chai School have opened my eyes not only to what is going on in my world, but also what is going on in the world around me. I took classes that really interested me such as a human rights class and how to paint biblical stories on my finger nails using nail polish. I was able to use what I learned in Chai School, in real school and vice versa. I am so thankful for every moment in my life that has lead up to this one and I am so thankful that I have felt such a strong connection with G-d throughout all of it. "Do good, O Tree of Life, to the good, and to the upright in heart" *Psalm 122*.

Lily Rudman

A thought has blown the marketplace away
There is a song in the wind, a joy in the trees
Shabbat arrives in the world
Scattering a song in the silence of the night
And eternity utters a day
Eternity utters a day

אֲדֹנָי שְׁפֹתַי תִּפְתָּח וּפִי יִגִּיד תְּהִלָּתֶךָ:

Adonai, s'fatai tiftach, ufi yagid t'hilatecha.

Eternal God, open up my lips, that my mouth may declare your glory.

AVOT V'IMAHOT – Our Ancestors

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֱלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתֵינוּ וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ, אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק,
Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu v'Elohei avoteinu v'imoteinu. Elohei Avraham, Elohei Yitzchak,
וְאֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב, אֱלֹהֵי שָׂרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה, אֱלֹהֵי רָחֵל, וְאֱלֹהֵי לֵאָה.
v'Elohei Ya'akov. Elohei Sarah, Elohei Rivka, Elohei Rachel, v'Elohei Leah.
הָאֵל הַגָּדוֹל הַגִּבּוֹר וְהַנּוֹרָא, אֵל עֲלִיּוֹן, גּוֹמֵל חַסְדִּים טוֹבִים, וְקוֹנֵה הַכֹּל,
Ha'eil hagadol hagibor vehanora. Eil elyon. Gomeil chasadim tovim. V'konei hakol.
זוֹכֵר חַסְדֵי אֲבוֹת וְאִמּוֹת, וּמֵבִיא גְאוּלָּה לְבָנֵי בְנֵיהֶם לְמַעַן שְׁמוֹ בְּאַהֲבָה:
V'zocheir chas'dei avot v'imahot. Umeivi g'ula liv'nei v'neihem, l'ma'an sh'mo b'ahava:
מִלֶּךְ עוֹזֵר וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וּמַגֵּן: בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, מִגֵּן אַבְרָהָם וְאֶזְרַת שָׂרָה:
Melech ozeir u'moshia u'magein. Baruch atah Adonai magein Avraham v'ezrat Sarah.

Blessed are You, Adonai, our God and the God of our fathers and mothers, God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob, God of Sarah, God of Rebecca, God of Rachel, and God of Leah; the great, mighty, and awesome God, transcendent God, who bestows loving kindness, creates everything out of love, remembers the love of our fathers and mothers, and brings redemption to their children's children for the sake of the Divine Name. Sovereign, Deliverer, Helper, and Shield, Blessed are You, Adonai, Sarah's Helper, Abraham's Shield.

G'VUROT

אַתָּה גִּבּוֹר לְעוֹלָם אֲדוֹנֵי, מְחַיֶּה הַכֹּל אַתָּה, רַב לְהוֹשִׁיעַ: מְכַלְפֵּל חַיִּים בְּחֶסֶד,
Atah gibor l'olam, Adonai, m'chayei hakol ata rav l'hoshia. M'chalkeil chayim b'chesed,
מְחַיֶּה הַכֹּל בְּרַחֲמִים רַבִּים, סוֹמֵךְ נוֹפְלִים, וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים, וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,
m'chayei hakol b'rachamim rabim. Someich nof'lim, v'rofei cholim, u'matir asurim,
וּמְקַיֵּם אֱמוּנָתוֹ לִישְׁנֵי עֶפֶר, מִי כְמוֹךָ בְּעַל גְּבוּרוֹת וּמִי דוֹמֵה לָךְ,
um'kayeim emunato lisheinei afar. Mi chamocha ba'al g'vurot, umi domeh lach.
מִלֶּךְ מֵמִית וּמְחַיֶּה וּמַצְמִיחַ יְשׁוּעָה: וְנֹאמֵן אַתָּה לְהַחְיֹת הַכֹּל.
melech meimeet u'm'cha'yeh u'matzmiach y'shua V'ne'ehman ata l'hachayot hakol.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, מְחַיֶּה הַכֹּל:
Baruch atah Adonai, m'chayei hakol.

You are forever mighty, Adonai; You give life to all. You sustain life through love, giving life to all through great compassion, supporting the fallen, healing the sick, freeing the captive, keeping faith with those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, Source of might acts? Who resembles You, a Sovereign who takes and gives life, causing deliverance to spring up and faithfully giving life to all? Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives life to all.

K'DUSHAH

אַתָּה קָדוֹשׁ וְשִׁמְךָ קָדוֹשׁ וּקְדוּשֵׁים בְּכָל יוֹם יְהִלְלוּךָ, סְלָה.
Ata kadosh v'shimcha kadosh, u'kdoshim b'chol yom y'hal'lucha sela.
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי, הָאֵל הַקָּדוֹשׁ.
Baruch ata Adonai ha'El ha'Kadosh.

You are holy and Your Name is holy, and those who are holy praise You every day. Blessed are You, Adonai, the Holy God.

My favorite memory of religious school was the Memphis trip. This is my favorite memory because this was the first time I became friends with everyone in my religious school class. I have been going to religious school with these kids since the third grade and it wasn't until eighth grade that I became friends with them. I always lived really far away and was too shy to really introduce myself to anyone because I thought they wouldn't like me. Now I have the best, best friends anyone could ask for. I never met people that were just so happy and positive and uplifting about everything. These kids have the most beautiful personalities and hearts. They're always there for me through everything and support me through any decision I make. I am so happy to have been able to create a relationship with them. Just from this trip we made so many inside jokes like popcorn, the naked juice, how much you tip a waiter, and Josh being the Messiah. I really opened up to these kids and they accepted me for me. I love them more than anything.

Lexie Waldman

When I was younger, I used to not like to come to religious school in the morning. I dreaded waking up Sunday morning and did not look forward to it. As my religious school experience nears its end, I realize I will miss it. This year, I looked forward to seeing everyone and talking with them on Sunday. Without religious school, I would have missed making memories like the Memphis trip or retreat, which I will remember forever. Most times you don't realize what you have until it's gone. I don't think I have realized how much confirmation and religious school have meant to me until now because I will miss it.

Zach Poscover

One of my most memorable moments in religious school was when I threw a card and cut Marni's nose open. In spite of this, I ended up being friends with her. Throughout my time in religious school I met a lot of friends that will be with me forever. I have always enjoyed seeing them on Sundays, even when I begged my parents not to make me go. I have never enjoyed going to religious school, but I could always count on my close friends being there and cheering me up. To me, being Jewish means that I am part of a community that is nice, kind and caring, which I feel is true about all the friends I have made.

Josh Sartori

I'm really thankful for all the opportunities I've had to enrich my Jewish identity. From attending a Jewish summer camp for eight years, leading a service at my Bat Mitzvah, to developing friendships that have lasted from preschool to confirmation class. Also, I'm extremely lucky to be going on a trip to Israel next month to further my connection to Judaism. I want to thank my family for the constant support, and to the people who have helped me love my Jewish identity along the way.

Ashley Herman

A lot of people have their own vision of what God looks like. For me, I'm not sure. If God knocked on my door I wouldn't know what to expect. I wouldn't know what to ask. I wouldn't know how to react to God standing in my doorway. I probably wouldn't even realize it was God. I guess I would thank God for all the amazing people in my life. I would thank God for the good things that have happened to me and the bad. Without the bad things, I wouldn't be as strong as I am today. I wouldn't understand how to deal with certain situations. I wouldn't be as social and I wouldn't have made most of the friends I have today. I also like to think that as I become older and more mature, it's not all God's doing. I want to think that I'm strong because I want to be and I am me because I create my own self confidence. I like being Jewish. Being Jewish has brought me to be close with the people I have known since I was in preschool. People I have met from Sunday school and NFTY have truly become some of my best friends. I'm thankful that I was raised Jewish because I truly believe that if I wasn't, I wouldn't be the person that I am today.

Abbie Pines

Mi Sheberach *Music by Debbie Friedman/Liturgy*

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ אַבּוֹתֵינוּ

Mi sheberach avoteinu

מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאַמּוֹתֵינוּ

M'kor habracha l'imoteinu

May the Source of strength who blessed the ones
before us
Help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing
And let us say – amen.

מִי שֶׁבֵרַךְ אַמּוֹתֵינוּ

Mi sheberach imoteinu

מְקוֹר הַבְּרָכָה לְאַבּוֹתֵינוּ

M'kor habracha l'avoteinu

Bless those in need of healing with r'fuah sh'lema
The renewal of body
The renewal of spirit
And let us say – amen

SILENT MEDITATION

יְהִי לְרָצוֹן אֱמֹרֵי פִי וְהִגִּיזוֹן לְבִי לְפָנֶיךָ, יְיָ צוּרִי וְגֹאֲלִי.

Yih'yu l'ratzon imrei fi v'hegyon libi l'fanecha, Adonai tzuri v'goali.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable to You, God, my rock and my redeemer.

If God knocked on my door I'd check for a beard. But then I'd let him in because I want to pick the guy's brain. I mean this is God, He's already an all-knowing guy. I'd ask him the important stuff. What's his favorite movie? What shows does the Almighty ruler of the universe like? How does He feel about being depicted by Morgan Freeman? Is this how He intended us to be?

I'd also ask him why the Creator of the universe is hanging out in Maryland Heights, and then I'd ask him about what's right. What does He really wish for man-kind? I'd ask if He meant for wars to be fought in his name? I'd ask if He really did make men equal? I'd ask Him "why?" - because I've never really received an answer to that question and I think He'd know exactly how to answer. But God isn't going to knock on my door so we have to do our best to be the people He intends us to be. Sam Thomas

I am thankful to be taking the next step in my Jewish journey by becoming confirmed. I am also thankful to my parents for pushing me to continue with religious school after my Bat Mitzvah. I wouldn't be standing here today without them. Lastly, in third grade we took a mock trip to Israel. I was so excited to learn about a new country. It made me so happy to know there was more out there in the world to learn about that tied in closely to my religion. Now, I cannot wait to continue my studies of Israel as I travel there this summer. Haley Myers

As a child, I was never truly appreciative of my ability to receive a Jewish education. I was always proud to be Jewish, but attending religious school seemed like a chore. High Holiday services were just another service that I had to sit through and Passover was me having to sit in a group of people having to read a long book before we were able to eat food, which I didn't even like. When I entered high school, I signed up to be a teaching assistant during religious school. I had the opportunity to work with Mrs. Tozer and her amazing third grade class. That year I became truly interested in learning about Judaism. All of a sudden, I was able to be engaged in not only religious school, but also services, and even family dinners for Jewish holidays. I really do feel that being a teaching assistant has helped me in so many ways and it has helped me to really love and embrace Judaism, all of the holidays, traditions, and fun words that Jewish people get to say. Even though I haven't always appreciated my time here, I am fully appreciative of this amazing group of people with whom I have shared my Jewish education. I am also extremely thankful for all of the time that I have spent singing and leading Shir Atid, Youth Choir, with Cantor Eichaker and my amazing cousin, Zach. I believe that God surrounds us in order to watch humanity, but not to control it. I believe that God would feel proud of the extremely proud Jewish person that I have become and will always be.

Megan Baris

“If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am not for others, what am I? And if not now, when?” This quote by Rabbi Hillel has stuck with me over the past sixteen years. To me, this quote speaks of the relationship's that you partake in throughout your life.

If I am not for myself? Who will be for me? Every minute of every hour of every day, from birth to death, you are with yourself. Let's just say I have gotten to know myself pretty well. I am strong, I am caring, and I am passionate for what I love. I embrace who I am, so others embrace me.

If I am not for others, what am I? Tikkun Olam, repair the world. There are billions of people in this world. Those who need my help; those who need my love; those who need my strength. Along with that, there are things I need from them. If we are not for each other, what are we? And if not now, when?

Dani Gottlieb

PARENTS' BLESSING

We give thanks for this day, and for the years of growth and learning that have preceded it. Now, as our children step forth to affirm their commitment to the ideals and Mitzvot of our faith, our souls are joyful and our minds are at peace.

We pray that this day's service may long echo in our children's memory. May it engrave on their hearts the understanding that this day initiates a life more firmly dedicated to the study of Torah and the fulfillment of Mitzvot, to deeds of justice and kindness, to faithful membership in the Household of Israel.

O God, make us worthy examples for our children. Let nothing estrange us from them and from You. Help us, too, again and again to renew our attachment to the Covenant of Israel, to walk hand in hand with our children in the ways of righteousness and truth. Amen.

Charge. Leslie Yoffie, President, United Hebrew Congregation
Rabbi Brigitte Rosenberg

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES and BLESSING OF CLASS

Please Rise.

SEFIRAT HA'OMER - COUNTING THE OMER

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ עַל סְפִירַת הָעֹמֶר.
Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech haolam asher kidshavnu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu al s'firat haomer.

Our praise to You, Adonai, Sovereign of all, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to count the Omer.

הַיּוֹם שִׁשָּׁה וָאַרְבָּעִים יוֹם שֶׁהֵם שִׁשָּׁה שָׁבוּעוֹת וָאַרְבָּעָה יָמִים לְעֹמֶר.
Hayom tisha v'arba'im yom shehem arba'ah shavuot l'omer.

Today is the forty-sixth day, which is six weeks and four days of the Omer.

Passover and Shavuot are the times of harvesting barley and wheat. "Omer" is a measure of grain being offered. Traditionally an offering was brought, but today we symbolically count the days between Passover and Shavuot, as a way to remind us of the link between Passover, which commemorates the Exodus, and Shavu'ot, which commemorates the giving of the Torah. It reminds us that the redemption from slavery was not complete until we received the Torah.

ALEINU

עֲלִינוּ לְשַׁבַּח לְאֲדוֹן הַכֹּל, לְתַת גְּדֻלָּה לְיוֹצֵר בְּרֵאשִׁית, שֶׁלֹּא עָשָׂנוּ כְּגוֹיֵי הָאֲרָצוֹת, וְלֹא שָׁמְנוּ
Aleinu l'shabeiach la'adon hakol, lateit g'dula l'yotzer b'reishit, shelo asanu k'goyei ha'aratzot, v'lo samanu
כְּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת הָאָדָמָה, שֶׁלֹּא שָׁם חִלְקָנוּ כְּהֵם, וְגִרְלָנוּ כְּכֹל הַמוֹנָם. וְאַנְחָנוּ כּוֹרְעִים וּמִשְׁתַּחֲוִים
k'mishp'chot ha'adamah; shelo sam chelkeinu kahem, v'goraleinu k'chol hamonam. Va'anachnu kor'im umishtachavim
וּמוֹדִים, לְפָנֵי מֶלֶךְ, מַלְכֵי הַמַּלְכִּים, הַקָּדוֹשׁ בְּרוּךְ הוּא.
u'modim lif'nei Melech mal'chei ham'lachim haKadosh Baruch Hu.

Let us adore the ever-living God! We render praise unto You, who spread out the heavens and established the earth, whose glory is revealed in the heavens above and whose greatness is manifest throughout the world. You are our God; there is none else. We therefore bow in awe and thanksgiving before the One who is Sovereign over all, the Holy and Blessed One.

וּנְאָמַר, וְהָיָה יְיָ לְמֶלֶךְ עַל כָּל הָאָרֶץ, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא יְהִיָּה יְיָ אֶחָד, וְשִׁמוֹ אֶחָד:
V'ne'amar v'haya Adonai l'melech al kol ha'arets, bayom hahu yihyeh Adonai echad, u'shmo echad.
On that day, God will be One, and God's name will be one.

Please be seated.

We recall the loved ones whom death has recently taken from us...

יִתְגַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֵלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כְרַעוּתֵיהּ,
Yitkadal v'yitkadash sh'mei raba b'alma di v'ra chirutei
וְיִמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתֵיהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן
v'yamlich malchutei b'chayeichon u'v'yomeichon
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. בְּעֵגְלָא וּבְזִמְן קָרִיב וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
u'v'chayei d'chol beit yisrael. Ba'agala u'vizman kariv v'imru amen.
יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וְלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא: יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח, וְיִתְפָּאֵר וְיִתְרוֹמֵם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא
Y'hei sh'mei raba m'vorach l'olam u'l'almei al'maya. Yitbarach v'yishtabach v'yitpa'ar v'yitromam v'yitnaseh
וְיִתְהַדָּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵהּ דְקֻדְשָׁא בְרִיךְ הוּא
v'yithadar v'yitaleh v'yithalal sh'mei d'kudsha b'rich hu
לְעֵלְא מִן כָּל בְּרַחְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא, תְּשֻׁבְחָתָא וְנַחֲמָתָא, דְאִמְרִין בְּעֵלְמָא, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
l'ela min kol birchata v'shirata, tushb'chata v'nechemata, da'amiran b'alma, v'imru amen.
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
Y'hei shlama raba min shamaya v'chayim aleinu v'al kol Yisrael, v'imru amen.
עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
Oseh shalom bimromav hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu v'al kol Yisrael, v'imru amen.

Let the glory of God be extolled, let God's great name be hallowed in the world whose creation God willed. May God rule in our own lives, and in the life of all Israel, and let us say: *Amen. Let God's great name be praised for ever and ever.* Beyond all praises, songs, and adorations that we can utter is the Holy One, the Blessed One, whom yet we glorify, honor and exalt. And let us say: *Amen.* For us and for all Israel, may the blessing of peace and the promise of life come true, and let us say: *Amen.* May the One who causes peace to reign in the high heavens, let peace descend on us, on all Israel, and all the world and let us say: *Amen*

Rivers and Roads

by The Head and the Heart

A year from now we'll all be gone
All our friends will move away
And they're going to better places
But our friends will be gone away

Nothing is as it has been
And I miss your face like Hell
And I guess it's just as well
But I miss your face like Hell

Been talking 'bout the way things change
And my family lives in a different state
And if you don't know what to make of this
Then we will not relate
So if you don't know what to make of this
Then we will not relate

Rivers and roads
Rivers and roads
Rivers 'til I reach you (x4)

SHEHECHEYANU - OUR THANKS TO GOD

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהִחַיְנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמֶן הַזֶּה:
Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, she'he'cheyanu v'ki'y'manu v'higiyanu lazman hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the Universe, Who has preserved us, sustained us, and permitted us to reach this joyous occasion. May we be ever worthy of the blessing we receive this day.

Recessional of Confirmation Class

"March of the Priests" - Felix Mendelssohn

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A great part of this service consists of readings written by the members of the Confirmation Class of 2017. These readings are marked with their names and reflect the ideas and beliefs which the members of the Confirmation Class of 5777/2017 are “confirming” for themselves this evening.

The Hebrew text for this worship service was taken from Davka Dimensions.

There are two different Hebrew fonts in this service. We have utilized the Stam font (Torah font) in the first line of the Shema and for all subsequent Hebrew passages that come from the Torah.

Eternity Utters a Day, pg. 7 by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel.