



**Jewish Secular Community  
of Cleveland**

**SHABBAT CELEBRATION**  
**AND**  
**CHANUKAH CELEBRATION**

Zoom Edition

(12/1/20)

**Everyone:**

Hiney ma tov u'manayim,  
Shevet ach-im gam ya-chad

How good and pleasant  
it is when brothers and  
sisters dwell together in  
unity

Hiney ma tov u'manayim,  
Shevet ach-im gam ya-chad

Hiney ma tov,  
Shevet ach-im gam yah-chad

Hiney ma tov,  
Shevet ach-im gam ya-chad.

**The Joys of Light**

*By Rabbi Binyamin Biber*

**LEADER:** The rays of sun bring life to this world;  
Its light feeds the globe, its warmth sustains all.

**READER:** The moon and the stars inspire poetry;  
They fuel passions and visions and dreams.

**LEADER:** Our ancestors' fires cooked suppers and lore;  
Their torches dispelled threat, fear, and darkness.

**READER:** Flames burned through each night, winter, and ice age;  
shaped clay, then metals; became signs of hope.

**LEADER:** Our ritual fires link us to these lights;  
As we reach beyond, toward the future.

**READER:** Our love and reason blaze and bring wholeness,  
Enlightening us to care and to strive.

**LEADER:** Sparks of compassion ignite our spirits;  
We burn for justice, yet are not consumed.

**READER:** This spectrum of light from that heavens and earth  
empower us all to improve our world.

## **CANDLES**

**READER:** We rejoice in our heritage that has given us the tradition  
of lighting the shabbes / shabbat candles.

## **LIGHT CANDLES**

**LEADER:** As we focus on the light of these candles, we take time  
to rest and reflect on our own light and the light of  
others. We honor the good, the just and the caring. We  
praise the healers, the builders and the dreamers. We  
celebrate the peacemakers, those who teach, those who  
nurture, those who love, those who share and those who  
create for humanity. Shabbat is a time for regeneration,  
a chance to restore our tranquility and to regain our  
strength.

**READER:** We come together to discover common ground and  
open space, create ideas that we share and make time  
to find ourselves. We end and begin our week with a  
moment of pause, a moment of rest and reflection.  
Together we find the peace and the convictions that  
make life worth living. When we leave this restful time,  
we must use our energies not just for ourselves, but for  
our community and for the world. That is the heart of a  
life of meaning, the life we seek.

**LEADER:** On Shabbat we pause to reflect upon our yesterdays  
and tomorrows, to renew our ties with our families and  
friends, to restore our energies, to refresh our spirits.

**READER:** On Shabbat we create our own moment in time. On Shabbat we rejoice in the strength to win our daily bread; and in our homes we find refuge from the cold and the storm.

**LEADER:** On Shabbat we treasure the bountiful earth whose fruits nourish us and sustain us in life. On Shabbat we commemorate the first labor law ever written to guarantee workers and even animals a break from their toils.

**READER:** On Shabbat we celebrate together the end of another week and the restorative power of leisure in the company of friends. On Shabbat we proclaim the day a delight, we rejoice in its rest, and we treasure its tranquility.

**SONG: HEVENU SHALOM ALEICHEM**

Hevenu Shalom Aleichem (Repeat 3 times)  
Hevenu Shalom Shalom  
Shalom Aleichem (Repeat entire song)

**READER:** As Secular Jews, we take responsibility for our lives and our choices. We rejoice because in one week we have found the answer to a question, the solution to a problem, found one new strength in ourselves, found restraint from anger, resolved one conflict. In one week's time we have made a difference in our personal lives, within our families, our communities, and so within our world.

## WINE

**LEADER:** Wine is a symbol of life's pleasures and the joys of community. Shabbat is the time every week when we savor life's sweetness. Let us raise our cups to the fullness of life.

**READER:** We rejoice in our heritage which has given us the cup of wine as a symbol of our happiness.

## DRINK WINE

**LEADER:** Let the Shabbat be a time for believing in what could be, and seeing with new eyes.

**READER:** In this serious world, let us take ourselves less seriously.

**LEADER:** While the world around us unfolds in an instant, let us judge each other a little more slowly.

**READER:** Let the Shabbat shine a light into a corner of ourselves where hope is renewed. Let us remember a reason to be joyful, a way to be gentle. Let the Shabbat be a time for opening up. Let us find strength in our dreams and trust in our strength.

**LEADER:** Shabbat contains in it the values and principles of true social justice. Not only the master may enjoy rest and freedom; Shabbat extends to the whole household. All who work should be allowed to enjoy the freedom to devote themselves to their own thoughts, and to spend free time as they wish. A person who tastes freedom will appreciate it and will struggle to keep it. This is one of the greatest values that Jewish people have given to the world.

**READER:** In tasting bread on Shabbat, we remember the hungry. In learning on Shabbat, we combat ignorance. In celebrating Shabbat, we affirm our Jewish identity and cherish our Jewish heritage. Let us eat the challah and share the product of earth's bounty and people's efforts.

## **CHALLAH**

**LEADER:** We rejoice in our heritage, which teaches us to love our earth, which gives us wheat, and to honor the farmers who grow it and the workers who make it into bread.

**READER:** As the strands of the challah intertwine, so do our lives connect with one another. May the sharing of the challah strengthen our bonds with our community and with all humanity. May there come a day when no human being suffers the pangs of hunger, or the desolation of loneliness and homelessness.

## **EAT CHALLAH**

## **REMEMBRANCE**

**LEADER:** If you have a friend or loved one who is ill or injured or who is recovering from an illness or injury, please submit their name now to Mark Weber via the zoom chat box below if you have not already done so via email prior to tonight's Shabbat program.

**LEADER:** We pause to remember friends or loved ones who have died recently or who died during this season in years past. If there is someone whom you would like to remember, please submit their name now to Mark Weber via the zoom chat box below if you have not already done so via email prior to tonight's Shabbat program.

**READER:** In the rising of the sun and in its going down,  
we remember them.

**LEADER:** In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,  
we remember them.

**READER:** In the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring,  
we remember them.

**LEADER:** In the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer,  
we remember them.

**READER:** In the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn,  
we remember them.

**LEADER:** In the beginning of the year and when it ends,  
we remember them.

**READER:** When we are weary and in need of strength,  
we remember them.

**LEADER:** When we are lost and sick at heart,  
we remember them.

**READER:** When we have joys we yearn to share,  
we remember them.

So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a  
part of us, as we remember them.

**SONG: NA-A-SEH SHALOM**

Na-a-seh shalom be-olam  
Na-a-seh shalom ah-ley-nu  
V' al kol ha-olam  
V'imru, imru shalom.

Na a seh shalom  
Na a seh shalom  
Shalom ah ley nu  
V' al kol ha-olam

Na-a-seh shalom be-olam  
Na-a-seh shalom ah-ley-nu  
V' al kol ha-olam  
V'imru, imru shalom.

Translation:

Let us make peace for ourselves and for the whole world.

***Let there be peace. Shabbat Shalom. Gut Shabbes!***

# CHANUKAH PROGRAM

## A Brief History of Chanukah

- LEADER:** The roots of Chanukah may lie even before the Maccabees - the ancient Jewish historian Josephus refers to a Jewish winter holiday called “Lights” when he writes about the Maccabees, and the Jews are hardly the only people to light lights as the days get shorter and colder. At the same time, Chanukah is the only traditional Jewish holiday based on solid historical events, which took place around 165 BCE (before the Common Era).
- READER 1:** When the Greek king Antiochus IV imposed Hellenism on Judea, some Jews were attracted to Greek culture, while others violently rejected Greek religious practices. A religious rebellion, led by a family called *Khashmonim* (today known as “Maccabees” after the famous Judah Maccabee [“hammer”]) fought off the Greeks, made an independent state, and held a celebration on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev to rededicate the Jerusalem Temple (*Chanukah* means “dedication”). Their festival was eight days long because they had been unable to celebrate *Sukkot* while the Temple was defiled, and because Solomon’s original dedication of the First Temple in II Kings 8 supposedly lasted for 8 days.
- READER 2:** Several hundred years later, the legend of the oil lasting miraculously for 8 days first appears in the Talmud - there’s nothing about it in Josephus or the Maccabees’ own histories. Evidently, despite rabbinic antipathy to the Maccabees for their eventual hellenization and their claims to be both High Priests and Kings, a story to sanctify the holiday by de-emphasizing human agency was needed, since people kept celebrating it.

**READER 3:** Between then and now, Chanukah was largely a minor holiday. A nine-light candelabra (*menorah* or *hanukiah*) would be lit and displayed - one “helper” candle (*shames*) and one additional candle for each night. A four-sided top game (*dreidel*), also played in medieval Germany, joined the party, as did the giving of small coins (*gelt*), which became chocolate coins in America. Foods cooked in oil, like potato latkes or doughnuts (*sufganiyot*), were also added. In competition with Christmas and because of stronger Jewish national / ethnic feelings, Chanukah has become more important in the last 150 years than it has been since the days of the Maccabees.

## Lighting of the Candles

### LEADER

And now we light the candles.

### For the First Candle

We dedicate this candle to **Life**. Its light will shed its beauty upon all other lights, just as life makes possible all other values. The earth may exist without life, but existence will have no meaning. Life is the wellspring of value. Life is the foundation of light.

### For the Second Candle

This candle reminds us of the bright light of **Reason**. It is our power to think that sets us apart from all other creatures. When we choose to think, we become masters of all we survey. We build tall structures of steel and glass, we send our voices and images across the wide spaces, we transform ugliness into beauty and erase the pain of disease. May reason be the guiding light in the lives of all people.

## For the Third Candle

We dedicate this third candle to **Truth**, the splendid reward of reason. Truth makes us free, and freedom nourishes happiness. Without truth, we stumble about as if blind. Truth opens our eyes to the beauty of life and shows us the way to fulfillment.

## For the Fourth Candle

The universe, earth and humanity overflow with **Beauty**. The silent stretches of stars and planets, the lush abundance of field and wood, the birth of new life - all are beautiful. Yet, the beauty that we see is not so thrilling as the beauty that fires the mind and inspires the heart. When the vast universe beckons to us to seek its truths, when we plant and harvest and build from the resources of the land, when we search out the secrets of life, we discover a beauty that surpasses even the most brilliant sunset. May the glow of this candle inspire in us the spark of imagination, that we may find new beauty in life and in the world.

## For the Fifth Candle

The warmest light is that of **Love**. We love people, we love ideals, we love the principles that make life and beauty possible. Love is the feeling that we hold toward all that we value. And it is the warmth that we receive from those who value us. To earn another's love is to know the richest reward of life. To bestow our love is the highest tribute we can pay to those dear to us. May the light of love burn brightly in our lives.

## For the Sixth Candle

“**Justice**, justice shall you pursue.” These ancient words have carried their challenge to every age. The just society is the ideal society. A person can seek truth, discover beauty, feel love. But only when all people act with honesty and courage is there justice among them. Justice is truth in action.

## For the Seventh Candle

“On three things the world rests: justice, truth and **Peace**.” A peaceful world, however, is not our primary goal. It is the reward for achieving our goals; it is the consequence when we live together in truth and justice. A Chinese proverb advises:

*If there is righteousness in the heart, there will be beauty in the character. If there be beauty in the character, there is harmony in the home. If there is harmony in the home, there will be order in the nation. When there is order in the nation, there will be peace in the world.*

The lights of this holiday encourage us to hasten the day when every man and woman, boy and girl, will be pursuers and lovers of peace.

## For the Eighth Candle

This final candle we dedicate to the **Future**, with all its priceless possibilities. The flames of the *menorah* will soon flicker and die; but the heroism of the Maccabees, the truth they defended, the freedom for which they fought - these are lights that cannot be extinguished so long as we hold them dear. We have rededicated ourselves to Life and Reason, Truth and Beauty, Love, Justice and Peace. May their precious light guide our way in all the days to come.

## SONG: O CHANUKAH

O Chanukah, O Chanukah, come light the menorah  
Let's have a party, we'll all dance the hora  
Gather 'round the table, we'll give you a treat  
S'vivon to play with and latkes to eat.  
And while we are playing, the candles are burning low.  
One for each night,  
They shed a sweet light  
To remind us of days long ago.

***Happy Chanukah!***