

From the Jewish Community at Western Correctional Institution

We, members of Western Correctional Institution, would like to honor Rabbi David Balto, along with Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington.

Rabbi David Balto has dedicated his time and effort to the encouragement and enlightenment of the Jewish community in Western Correctional Institution. For 6 years, he has sponsored our community by providing educational materials, spiritual counseling, matza, and grape juice, Tzitzit, Tefillin, and Kippahs. Rabbi Balto has invested thousands of dollars into our community and has not one time asked for a dime in return. He is a beautiful soul that deserves the highest honor one could bestow on a human being.

May Hashem bless his ministry in bringing those trapped in darkness into the light. May Adonai bless the Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington and continue the great work they are doing. May Hashem grant success to the IDF and bring peace to Israel. Amen.

November 6, 2023

From the Leader of the Jewish Community at Western
Correctional Institution

To: Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington
Greater Washington

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Eight years ago I found myself in the Baltimore City Jail facing the life in prison, rejected by family and friends. I had no faith, no prayer life. I was hopeless. I found a prayer that is also found in the Siddur as part of the bedtime Shema. The prayer is called "The Invocation of the Angels" and I was brought to strength by Hashem and the four archangels.

At Western Correctional Institution, I joined the Jewish community. At that time, we had no affiliation with a synagogue. I wrote 20 letters to synagogues throughout Maryland. Only one responded, Rabbi Shmuel Herzfeld from Ohev Shalom. Rabbi Herzfeld dispatched David Balto to visit the community. From that time to 6 years later, Rabbi Balto has written over 400 letters, spent thousands of dollars, and visited the Jewish community over 100 times. I have never in my life experienced such love and kindness from a stranger. Based upon Rabbi David's example, my life has been transformed. I pray regularly and study extensively and Rabbi Balto guides me in my studies. Rabbi Balto is a spiritual role model and guide. He deserves the highest honor a man could bestow. I'm his disciple and love him very much.

In closing, may Hashem guide the IDF and bring peace to Israel and may the Bikur Cholim of Greater Washington continue to do great work in the community. Amen.