



It is a pleasure to join the Young Israel of New Rochelle community in celebrating our 52nd Annual Dinner. The number 52, is symbolic of the word "Bakol", in Hebrew spelled Bet-Chaf-Lamed. This special word, translated as "with all", is used by the Torah to describe how Hashem blessed Avraham Avinu with everything. Our Shul and community have truly been blessed by Hashem "Bakol", with all. We are all part of a growing and vibrant community, with a Shul that offers opportunities in Torah, Tefillah, and Chessed for the entire Jewish family. May Hashem continue to shower all of His blessings upon us, and may our Shul continue to help all of us to grow and accomplish in our journey of life.

Mazel Tov to Simone and Mark Semer, our dear Guests of Honor. This year's dinner is a great opportunity to offer our communal thanks to an amazing couple. I first met Mark during the interview process for the assistant Rabbi position. He was most gracious during that process, and so warm and caring in helping us transition to life in New Rochelle. I am forever grateful for the support and friendship that I have received from the Semers. I did not know Simone before our move, but I did know of her father's invaluable involvement and commitment to the Jewish community. It is no surprise that the daughter and son-in-law of Rabbi Sheldon Rudoff have chosen lives of full engagement and involvement with the Jewish community. The Semers and the Axelrods have, over our few years in the community, built a wonderful connection. There is a special bond between our boys and Mark that both he and they cherish. We offer our sincere Hakarat Hatov to Simone and Mark for all they have invested in the continued growth of our Shul and community. May Hashem continue to bless this special couple with health and happiness, with many more years of contribution to our community, and of course with lots of nachat from their amazing children, Eli, Yamin, Yonina, and Shaina.

Mazel Tov to Michelle and Rafi Halpert, our worthy recipients of the Young Leadership Award. This is truly a most fitting couple to receive this honor. They did not wait to be fully acclimated and settled in a new community before getting involved and making an impact. Each in their own way, the Halperts try to enhance our communal life, and make it more impactful and enjoyable. They put a great deal of focus on youth programs, and we are so thankful for all the work they put into our youth of all ages. There is an old adage, if you want to get something done, ask a busy person. I think in New Rochelle, we could say that if you want to get something done, you should ask the Halperts. They really put their all into helping and assisting others, with a special sensitivity towards those less fortunate. We thank them for all they have done, and will do B'ezrat Hashem in the future, for our community. We also, thank them and their kids for their friendship with us and our kids. May Hashem bless Michelle and Rafi with health and happiness, with many more years of contribution to our community, and of course with lots of nachat from their amazing children, Ari, Alyssa, Ben, and Josh.

It has now been close to two and a half years since my family and I joined the YINR community. The annual Dinner is a perfect occasion to offer thanks for allowing my family to become part of yours. I thank Rabbi and Rebbetzin Fink for continuing to enable our collaborative efforts to enhance the Shul, as well as providing mentoring and guidance with a sincere care for our well-being. I thank Michael Raskas and Judy Friedman, as well as the members of the Executive Board and Board of Trustees, for their constant support and guidance. I thank Barbara and Rhetta for doing all the heavy lifting in the office, and for smoothly managing the day to day activities of the Shul. I thank the members of the YINR family for continuing to open up your Shul and community to me and my family. I thank Hashem for giving me the opportunity to be part of an wonderful congregation, and for allowing me to help play a role in furthering the success of the New Rochelle Jewish community.

I look forward to celebrating with you all at the Dinner!

Rabbi Chaim Axelrod