

It is a pleasure to join the Young Israel of New Rochelle community in celebrating our 55th Annual Dinner. We are so thrilled to be back together in person for the Dinner this year! Coming together to celebrate our Shul is something that, in truth, we should not ever take for granted. We are all part of a very special community, and the continued growth and prosperity of our Shul is truly a cause for celebration. There has been such tremendous growth in terms of new families since the last time we had an in-person dinner. Each family joining our Shul causes us to become stronger as a unit. Each family with its own unique story adds character to the great big tapestry that is our YINR family. May Hashem continue to shower us with His blessing as we continue to be the warm and special Shul we all know and love.

Mazel tov to Ayala and Yosef Helft, our dear guests of honor. Ayala and Yo are a couple who help make up the bedrock of our Shul community. During the years they have lived in New Rochelle they have been involved in so many aspects of our Shul, both formally and informally. My family and I have so much gratitude for the way that Ayala and Yo welcomed us to the community. Additionally, Ayala was part of the Executive Board that was responsible for creating and guiding the Assistant Rabbi role at our Shul. Yo is someone who I know I can turn to as a sounding board on issues relating to any aspect of communal life. I have been inspired by Yo's increased attendance to our Minyanim over the past few years. His medical knowledge and willingness to give advice have helped so many in our community, especially during Covid. I offer my sincere Hakarat Hatov to Ayala and Yo 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, Millie, Andrew, and Elizabeth.

Mazel tov to Lauren and Andrew Bochner, our worthy recipients of the Young Leadership Award. Lauren and Andrew have become such an integral part of our Shul community in such a relatively short time. From the very beginning they both had a desire to help, and give of themselves in any way that they could. Lauren is constantly lending her talents in graphic design and organizing to countless shul events. As a couple they also strive to ensure that New Rochelle is a warm and welcoming place for all visitors and new arrivals. Andrew is someone who I know I can call on to get things done, and he is ready to help without wanting any accolades or recognition. This powerhouse of a couple has only begun to leave their mark on YINR, and I can't wait to see the many ways that they will contribute to our continuous communal growth and development. May Hashem bless Lauren and Andrew with health and happiness, with many more years of contribution to our community, and of course with lots of nachat from their wonderful children, Naftali, Hannah, Dovi, Coby, and Benny.

It has now been five 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 Andrew Wurzburger and David Blumenthal, as well as the members of the Executive Board and Board of Trustees, for their constant support and guidance. I thank Amy and Isio 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. The entire Axelrod family is so excited to continue

to work for this Shul in the years ahead. I thank Hashem for giving me the opportunity to be part of a 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, IN PERSON, at the Dinner!

Chaim Axelrod