

Dear Members and Guests:

With gratitude to Hashem, we are thrilled to welcome you to the 55th Annual Young Israel of New Rochelle Dinner.

We have so much to celebrate this year. The highlight, undoubtedly, is the return of so many people to shul on a regular basis. Not only have we resumed davening together, we also have revived and expanded communal Kiddush. After many months of being dispersed, we are fortunate to once again see one another—both old and new faces.

In the fall we hosted a community-wide luncheon in the park behind shul, where our longer-term members had the opportunity to meet our many newer families. In the months following, we had an enjoyable Chanukah Soirée and an incredibly fun Purim Break Fast Chagigah. Our Youth Department is thriving. We've opened up a Toddler Room as a place for our even younger members to play. We launched our initial Career Learning Series for high school and college-age youth. Ruach continues to provide engaging weekly programming for our more senior members. Our 929 Chevra recently completed its first cycle through Tanach. WIJS continues to provide us with the opportunity to hear from leading female scholars. In the past year we've had the opportunity to host amazing Scholars-in-Residence, including Rabbi Dovid Bashevkin, Leslie Ginsparg Klein, Rabbi Aryeh Lebowitz and Rabbi Shalom Rosner. Our generosity has provided significant support to the Hope Kosher Pantry in New Rochelle and enabled us to sponsor an AED Smartbox for Magen David Adom in Ness Ziona, Israel. The list goes on and on.

How fitting is it that the honorees of our first in-person dinner after the past two years are Ayala and Yo Helft and Lauren and Andrew Bochner!

Ayala served as a critical member of the Executive Board when the COVID-19 pandemic first arrived in New Rochelle. With her usual calm and thoughtful demeanor, Ayala actively participated in the many long phone calls and critical decisions that needed to be made in those challenging and novel first days, weeks and months. At the same time, Yo quietly collaborated with several community physicians to make sure that important medical advice was communicated to shul membership and that members who were feeling ill were looked after. And this power couple's efforts at getting us back on track after that initial period were just as remarkable. Without hesitation, Ayala in a matter of weeks seamlessly converted our shul dinner to a spectacular virtual experience. Yo shared his medical expertise as a member of the Return to Shul Committee, helping formulate our initial protocols for reopening shul.

Lauren and Andrew Bochner also played a critical role in the success of the shul in the shadow of COVID. As co-chair of the Welcoming Committee, Lauren oversaw the recent unprecedented growth of our community. She made sure that the forty plus new families who moved to New Rochelle since 2020 were able to integrate into the YINR family notwithstanding the lack of large-scale gatherings and davening at a single address. Andrew made sure we were always in good spirits, entertaining us over Zoom with his "cooking" skills, and served as chazzan on Rosh Hashana at one of our extra minyanim.

We have an exciting future ahead. We intend within the coming months to launch our new website. Friday night onegs will return after the fall chagim. Plans are underway for the return of Panoply this winter.

Thank you to the team principally responsible for organizing this entire dinner— Dinner Chairs Abby Glass and Sandra Weinstein, Journal Chairs Ellie Goldenberg and Teri Rosengarten, and the entertainment/cinematography team of Shmueli Kerstein, Stan Weiss and Lynda Vidomlanski.

Andrew Wurzburger, President

David Blumenthal, Executive Board Chair