



MJCS PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

November 2017

Dear Friends,

One of the great Jewish practices that has evolved over time is Mussar – the practice of bringing into balance the 18 traits of the soul which once aligned are said to make us holy, a Torah commandment, by making us “whole.” It is said that when all of us come into this soul trait balance, human kind will enter a better, more enlightened, more joyful state.

One of these soul traits is “gratitude.” Interestingly, the word “Jew” derives from the name “Yehuda” which means “I am grateful.” Thus, we are the Yehudi, the people of Yehuda, the grateful people.

Thanksgiving, a time for giving thanks, is a time for each of us to internally define and externally share those things for which we are grateful and for which we give thanks. It is a perfect time to come into alignment with whatever supports us spiritually and to spread the light with those we love and are less fortunate.

Central to our mission at MJCS is expressing our gratitude by reaching out to people who are struggling – emotionally, financially, spiritually or with challenging health. We have a Feed the Homeless program. We provide food and other necessities to the Malibu Labor Exchange. Every Thanksgiving, we participate in a program at Malibu Methodist feeding the homeless, migrant workers, financially strained elderly and incarcerated young people. Throughout the year we support Jewish individuals and families who are homeless, who are lost, in pain, or are alone. Because we truly believe that if you show up at MJCS we will make it work, we find ways to financially support people who want to be members but can't afford it. We gather as a community to be there for our friends who are suffering the loss of a loved one. We have free programs where we share our experiences and take comfort in being with others who are present with and for each other. And our clergy always have and always will be there for anyone who needs emotional and spiritual support. In fact, for a number of people, we are the only real “home” they have.

So as we head into the Thanksgiving holiday, I would ask that you think of it as a holy day – a day to be grateful and to share your experience with others. Participate in activities that benefit someone in need, and help to fulfill the destiny that is part of our Jewish DNA – chesed and tzedakah. If you know someone who has no place to be on this holiday, invite them to share in the warmth of your home. Or bring them dinner if they can't come to you. There's no greater joy than the warmth of a loving smile.

And if you have been lucky enough to need to shed some securities before year end, think about donating them to MJCS so we can continue to provide the programs and support I have described. It would truly be a mitzvah. Please contact our office if you are interested. And my thanks on behalf of all of us to those of you who already have made this important contribution.

On behalf of Cantor Marcelo, our MJCS staff and the Board, we wish you a very joyful Thanksgiving.

As always, thanks for listening.

Steven Weinberg, President