**Confirmation**

**Shabbat**

**27 Iyar 5775 May 15, 2015**



“The world stands upon three things…Torah, worship and acts of loving kindness.”

-Pirkei Avot 1:2

**Order of the Service**

**Welcome**

Rabbi Benjamin J. Zeidman

**Introduction**

Missy Bell,

Program Director of Youth Learning and Engagement

**Shabbat Service**

*Union Prayer Book*, page 38

Confirmation students

**Presentation of the Confirmation Class**

Saul Kaiserman,

Director of Lifelong Learning

**Blessing of Confirmands**

Rabbi Joshua M. Davidson

**Adoration and Kaddish**

*Union Prayer Book*, page 71

Rabbi Amy B. Ehrlich

**Candle Lighting**

Natalie Baer, Bat Mitzvah

Noah Hartman, Bar Mitzvah

Rebecca Solomon, Bat Mitzvah

**Kiddush**

*Union Prayer Book*, page 93

John Sorkin, Temple Board Member

**Benediction**

Rabbi Joshua M. Davidson

**Music**

(Processional) Hodu L’Adonai Ki Tov Morton Gold

Bor’chu/Sh’ma Heinrich Schalit

Mi Chamocha Jeff Klepper

V’shamru South African Melody, arr. Werner

Yih’yu L’Ratzon Gershon Kingsley

(Anthem) L’chi Lach Debbie Friedman, arr. Simon Sargon

Adoration Julius Chajes

Oseh Shalom Nurit Hirsch, arr. Richard Neumann

Kiddush Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco

(Recessional) Halleluyah Louis Lewandowski

**Teen Community Prayer**

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ...

*Ba-ruch atah Adonai…*

Blessed are You, God, for inspiring us to celebrate our Judaism, for encouraging us to embrace our adult Jewish responsibilities everywhere we go, and for helping us to live meaningful Jewish lives with our families and with one another.

בְּיַחַד...

*B-ya-khad…*

Together, may we strive to develop our different values and skills as we make the world a better place and motivate others

to do so as well.

מוֹדִים אֲנָחְנוּ לָךְ...

*Mo-deem anakh-nu lakh…*

Thank You, God, for giving us this supportive community at Temple Emanu-El.

The Confirmation Class has chosen **Poverty** as its study-theme for the year. Throughout our worship together this evening, the students will share their thoughts and prayers on this extremely difficult subject. For many of them this is a topic they have studied for several years with us at Temple Emanu-El. However, in asking them to share with us what they “cry out” about, what makes them angry, frustrated and motivated to change society, poverty rose to the top as the singular issue provoking every member of the class.

The students studied the following texts to learn what our tradition says about our responsibilities towards others. Their reflections in this program show just how relevant our ancient tradition is to contemporary life.

**Leviticus 25:35**

If your brother becomes poor and his means fail him, then you will strengthen him, be he stranger or settler, he shall live with you.

**Babylonian Talmud, Bava Batra 8a**

[One must reside in a town] thirty days to become liable for contributing to the soup kitchen, three months for the charity box, six months for the clothing fund, nine months for the burial fund, and twelve months for the repair of the town walls!

**Palestinian Talmud, Gittin 5:9**

In a city where non-Jews and Jews live, the *tzedakah* collectors collect from Jews and non-Jews and support Jewish and non-Jewish poor; we visit Jewish and non-Jewish sick and bury Jewish and non-Jewish dead, and comfort Jewish and non-Jewish mourners, and return lost goods of non-Jews and Jews, to promote the ways of peace.

**Exodus Rabbah 31:12**

There is nothing more grievous than poverty—the most terrible of sufferings. Our teachers have said: If all the troubles of the world are assembled on one side and poverty is on the other, poverty would outweigh them all.

**Jae Bratskeir**

*[One must reside in a town] thirty days to become liable…*

Poverty is a constantly growing, worldwide problem, and I believe that as I get closer to adulthood, I should begin to address bigger situations. The words of Bava Batra inspire me to respond to poverty because as a teen, I can relate to them greatly. This text reflects the process that I am going through now, as I become an adult. As poverty continues to grow, I should contribute to the cause, and try to play my role in bringing an end to poverty. Living in New York City, I see people suffering every day on the streets and can see how they feel.

**Prayer:**

God, I thank You for life, for everyone and everything. I am grateful that You let me wake up every day and enjoy life.

I ask You for greater equality among all humans, and may they not be judged based on wealth. May we help the less fortunate, and give to them.

I thank You for human life, and for those others who will join and help our cause.

**My experience in Confirmation teaches me that to be a Jew means** to be part of one community, and to support the members of it. Throughout my time as part of the community I will have different responsibilities, and they will become greater as I get older.

**Gabriella Hetu**

*“In a city where non-Jews and Jews live…*

This text inspires me as a Jewish teen to respond to poverty because its message is that no matter one’s religion (or looking even broader to race, social status, etc.), we should always help people if they need it. There are many instances going on today, and that have gone on in the past for certain religions/groups, of people being prejudiced against because of something they can’t control. If someone is impoverished and therefore lacks the means to help themselves regardless of what their background is, they deserve help. Especially looking to what the last part of the quote is, “to promote the ways of peace.” If we can show that we will help whoever needs it, that sets a good example for others and so hopefully they will too.

**Prayer:**

Blessed are You, God, for giving humanity the ability to fight against poverty, for giving us the tools to do so, and for the success we see every day in alleviating it.

Together, may we strive to help those who lack the means to help themselves. May You instill the strength in every one of us to aid our peers, and may we all act towards an improved world.

Thank You, God, for showing us how people improve, for showing us what it is to live comfortably, and for allowing us to assist those who do not.

**My experience in Confirmation teaches me that to be a Jew means** that we need to be tolerant of others while retaining what we believe in.

**Liana Plotch**

*In a city where non-Jews and Jews live…*

As a Jew I am inspired to help everyone. You shouldn’t just help people who are the same religion, race, or economic status as you. There are billions of people in the world, and it is our job as Jewish teenagers to do everything in our power to help. To us, giving someone $5 doesn’t seem like a big deal: however, to the impoverished person we’re giving it to – it makes a large impact. These little things are the things that can truly make a difference to our overall society.

**Prayer:**

Blessed are You, God for giving me a wonderful life with friends and family who respect and love me, and thank You for giving me everything I need and more.

Together, we can strive to make everyone have what they need to make themselves happy, and I hope I can help to make the world a better place where everyone has a place to sleep at night. I hope that I find the strength to help people fight for what they believe in.

Thank You God for making me able to help others, and thank You for giving me the privilege to make a difference and help all those who are in need of help.

**My experience in Confirmation teaches me that to be a Jew means** to not only think of myself, but to think about how I can help others.

**Joelle Ramson**

*In a city where non-Jews and Jews live…*

Our tradition’s text articulates that our Jewish community should not be segregated from (other) groups of people/religions, nor should we be prohibited from either providing or benefiting from them. We should not be biased in our service and we should be universal while helping. This inspires me, as a Jewish teen, to have an open mind about how I should be using my abilities and resources to provide for others. We all should work together as a Jewish community and globally through community service to impede poverty rates.

**Prayer:**

God made people who are capable of performing the act of supplying aid to those who require it.

May we work together to solve the issues in this world as one. May we find the source of poverty and work together to create responses and solutions.

Thank You God for supporting our ideals, our perspectives and our work throughout the process of solving this problem.

**My experience in Confirmation teaches me that to be a Jew means** to utilize our religion’s texts and stories to create an improved, more equal community.

**Caleigh Leyton**

*In a city where non-Jews and Jews live…*

Our text and tradition teaches us that no matter what religion a person is or who they are we still should help them and work together. This quote helps me respond to poverty by showing me that although I am a Jewish teenager and would love to help other Jewish citizens, there are so many other people that don’t have the same religious beliefs as I do that need help. This quote encourages me to help everyone no matter what religion they identify with. The quote ends by saying that this “promotes the ways of peace,” which helps me to respond to poverty by thinking about how much better the world would be if everyone was happy, healthy, and able to provide themselves with the resources they need.

**Prayer:**

Blessed are You, God, for allowing people to fight for what they believe in, feel confident with their beliefs, and know that there are opportunities for them to find success.

Together, may we strive to aid those who need a helping hand (and those who don’t). May we support people through their struggles and let them know that we are there for them.

Thank You, God, for giving us a world where we are able to go forward to improve our society and alleviate poverty.

**My experience in Confirmation teaches me that to be a Jew means** standing up for my beliefs through prayer.

**Emily Janover**

*In a city where non-Jews and Jews live…*

The text about how Jews and non-Jews should live together is meaningful to me. It inspires me, as a Jewish teen, because it shows how problems in the world relate to everyone. Although we are taught in Judaism that it is our responsibility to do mitzvahs, this does not mean it has to be confined to our Jewish community. This quote not only tells us that we, as a world, can do good and receive good, but that “promoting the way of peace” is a type of mitzvah. Our Confirmation class is examining poverty. If we come together as a community we will be more effective, and we can also solve problems within our community along the way.

**Prayer:**

Thank You God for giving us life and humanity. Thank You for allowing us to conquer our broken world with Your guidance.

May You be present and guide us as we conquer this world, and may we always be connected to this world. Help us to improve our community for the benefit of all creatures

May we continue to be prosperous. Thank You for putting us on this majestic earth.

**My experience in Confirmation teaches me that to be a Jew means** having the obligation to repair this world and being a leader while doing so.

**Will Cramer**

*In a city where non-Jews and Jews live…*

I find this text to be the most meaningful because it displays that we should help everyone in poverty, no matter who they are. This text tells us to disregard someone’s past, and to focus on helping them now. It states that everyone deserves our help, whether or not they are Jewish. This applies no matter the color of their skin or even their sexuality. We must help all in need.

**Prayer:**

Dear God, Thank You for giving me a loving family that supports me, and for providing opportunities for me to learn and grow.

May we strive to stand up and help those who don’t have the opportunity to succeed. May we provide them with a stable platform so that one day they can support themselves.

Thank You God, for inspiring us to help those in need, for providing us with tremendous opportunity to succeed, and for maintaining a peaceful, productive society.

**My experience in Confirmation teaches me that to be a Jew means** to care for others and to be my best self. Confirmation has taught me that my Jewish peers and I can work more efficiently if we work together. This does not necessarily mean agreeing on everything, in fact, I have learned how important it is to always hear two sides to every story.

**Daniel Marsala**

*In a city where non-Jews and Jews live…*

This is most meaningful to me because it pertains to everyone no matter their religion. It shows that poverty is an issue for everyone both rich and poor, and all religions. It shows that no matter who you are, it is necessary to fight poverty.

**Prayer:**

Thank You for giving happiness and prosperity to the kind and the deserving.

In a more perfect world there would be no sadness or poverty, just prosperity and happiness.

Thank You for every blessing put upon us, our friends and our families.

**My experience in Confirmation teaches me that to be a Jew means** that it is my responsibility to care for everyone.

**Blessing the Confirmands**

May God bless you and keep you.

May God smile upon you and be gracious to you.

May you feel God’s presence within you always, and may you know peace.

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לְכִי לָךְ

(L’chi lach), to a land that I will show you,

לֶךְ-לְךָ

(Lech l’cha), to a place you do not know.

לְכִי לָךְ

(L’chi lach), on your journey I will bless you, and you shall be a blessing [x3], l’chi lach.

לְכִי לָךְ

(L’chi lach), and I shall make your name great,

לֶךְ-לְךָ

(Lech l’cha), and all shall praise your name.

לְכִי לָךְ

(L’chi lach), to the place that I will show you,

לְשִׂמְחַת חַיִיּם, לְכִי לָךְ

(L’simchat chayim [x3], l’chi lach)

and you shall be a blessing [x3], l’chi lach.

High School

Confirmation Program

2014-2015/5775

**Congregation Emanu-El**

**of the City of New York**

Confirmands

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| --- | --- |
| Jae Bratskeirאליעזר בן ראובן ושרה | Caleigh Leytonפייגלע בת זאב ולאה רבקה |
| William Cramerברוך בן אברהם ודינה | Daniel Marsalaשמואל רחמיאל בן יונה ושולמית |
| Gabriella Hetuגבריאלה בת ברוך ופנינה | Liana Plotchשרה ליאת בת זאב ושרה |
| Emily Janoverפנינה פייגא בת אהרן ושרה | Joelle Ramsonיואלה ברוכה בת גאמיל וחנה |

**Congregation Emanu-El of the City of New York**

Joshua M. Davidson, Senior Rabbi

Amy B. Ehrlich, Rabbi

Benjamin J. Zeidman, Associate Rabbi

Rabbi Alexis Pinsky, Intern

Rabbi Carlie Daniels, Intern

Richard Newman, Cantorial Intern

Dr. Ronald B. Sobel, Senior Rabbi Emeritus

Dr. David M. Posner, Senior Rabbi Emeritus

Lori A. Corrsin, Cantor Emerita

**Department of Lifelong Learning 2014-15 (5775)**

Saul Kaiserman, Director

Rachel Brumberg, Associate Director

Missy Bell, Program Director of Youth Learning and Engagement

Rabbi Rena Rifkin, Coordinator of Faculty and Family Engagement

Catherine Caceres, Department Administrator

One East 65th Street, New York, NY 10065

 (212) 744-1400

www.emanuelnyc.org