



2024-2025



The *Year* in
Review

*Your support helps
sustain our community
of 1,300 member
households...*

...from all over the country and world
...with infinite perspectives
...giving and receiving *chesed*
...singing together, in joy and sorrow
...learning together, young and old
...praying together, for the futures we envision
...acting together, for justice and peace

**Together, we are doing
something essential: living the
Judaism of our time.**

A MESSAGE FROM CBE BOARD PRESIDENT LESLIE LEWIN

Dear Friends,

Looking back on my first year as President of the CBE Board of Trustees, there are several highlights that stand out for me — from the inspiration of the High Holy Days to our joy-filled evening with Kol B'Seder, from our important work launching the Center for New Jewish Culture to the magic and wonder of the jam-packed family Purim extravaganza.



Despite the complexities in the world around us, we came together for book talks and film screenings and themed Shabbats and so much more, oftentimes when we needed it the most. And none of it could have happened without our clergy team and staff working tirelessly, as they do every year, to engage and inspire our community.

This is just one reason I ask you to join me in supporting CBE by making a contribution to this year's Annual Appeal.

The funds we raise through the Annual Appeal allow us to continue to go above and beyond in our stellar spiritual and cultural programming, and enable us to respond to the ongoing needs of our beloved buildings. Last spring, we installed a new unit to improve air conditioning to the chapel. And just in time for the High Holy Days, we gave a much-needed refresh to the sanctuary doors, replaced all the bulbs in the chandeliers with more efficient and attractive LEDs, and refurbished all three lecterns. Looking ahead, we know there is more work on the horizon to continue improving the CBE experience for everyone.

Once again, I am deeply grateful to our Board of Trustees for their incredible dedication and leadership, and proud to share that each of them have contributed to the Annual Appeal already. Many of you have joined them, for which I thank you. Knowing that we can count on your early, consistent, and generous support is sincerely appreciated.

If you have not yet given, now is the time to do so.

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to lead this community and hope to share memorable moments with all of you in 5786.

L'Shanah Tovah,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Leslie A. Lewin". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Leslie Lewin, President



In a year that tested us at every turn, CBE met the moment by doubling down on what we do best: drawing close, lifting our voices, and welcoming friends old and new.

Lifting our Spirits



We immersed in the ocean (ahem: mikveh!) in preparation for the High Holy Days...

...and time-traveled back to summer camp with the legendary Jewish music duo, Kol B'Seder.



In the dark of winter, we lit up Hanukkah with candles, special effects, and love.

Come spring, more than 1,000 people celebrated at our Youth and Family Purim Extravaganza—and our “Wait Wait...It’s Purim!” spiel had us in game show stitches.



Living our Values

Our response to cruelty, fear-mongering, and attacks on our most basic rights? To stand firmly for justice and take action.

We were one of the first congregations in the country to step up and join an amicus brief in the civil case defending the right to free speech of every person in this country. We led two “Know Your Rights” trainings. And attorneys from CBE participated in Law Day, reaffirming their commitment to due process.

I MARCH WITH
FOR
MIGRANTS AND
INTERNATIONAL
STUDENTS

We lifted our voices to protect basic health care for trans kids and took to the streets of NYC to participate in marches for justice. A Jewish Mayoral Forum we co-sponsored gave candidates a chance to articulate their plans to combat antisemitism in NYC.



And we upheld our commitment to engage with a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and contexts, diving into difficult topics in our Shmutz conversation series and screening films that wrestle with injustice, including “All God’s Children” and “No Accident.”

Turning Toward Israel & Palestine

CBE continued to hold onto love, nuance, and hope as we worked for peace, life, dignity, equal rights, and recognition for all innocent people in Israel and Palestine.

On the first *yahrzeit* of October 7, we hosted a memorial service for mourners from across Brooklyn. We also kept our sister community K’far Aza close to our hearts by showing the Dream. Fracture exhibit, and by holding a breakfast fundraiser, including pancakes made with the recipe of returned hostage Keith Siegel.



We honored and supported Rabbis for Human Rights at our Yom Ha’atzma’ut Hope for Our Future banquet.

And we encouraged the whole community to Vote Reform in the World Zionist Congress, with many of our own team on the slate, including Cantor Breitzer and Rabbi Timoner.

In the spring, more than 300 households stepped up to help support humanitarian aid for children and their families in Gaza. And we screened and discussed “Naila and the Uprising” as part of our ongoing effort to lift up a multiplicity of voices on the history and future of Israel and Palestine.

Connecting through Judaism...



Our traditions and rituals helped us connect, find comfort, and chart a course forward in the wilderness.

We filled the streets and rooftops with song and shofar blasts on the High Holy Days, made shelter together in our sukkot, and found joy on Simchat Torah.

We kept learning. Some of us challenged ourselves to lead the daily minyan, others dove into Basic Judaism. Still others got involved in the Chevra Kadisha, a group that prepares Jewish bodies for burial. The 2024 b'nei mitzvah class gathered for a new Havdalah siyyum ritual to stay connected in high school.



Caring and Being Cared For...

With love and open hearts, we reached out to help, heal, and make sure no one feels alone. And with courage and gratitude, we opened our doors to receive support.

CBE's Chesed Team continues to be our hub of caregiving—engaging our entire membership to bring loving kindness (and often soup!) to each other in moments of joy and sorrow.



We stretched our caring in new ways, too, holding our first Disability Education and Awareness Shabbat and adding pregnancy loss as an official life cycle, filling out an important part of our communal story.

We reached out to our neighbors as well, building dressers for new immigrants and gathering coats for people in need of warm winter gear. And for the 17th year in a row, countless volunteers helped make our Respite Bed Shelter a safe, friendly place to enjoy a good meal and a good night's sleep.



Embracing Growth



Our usual spirit of abundance stretched even further to welcome more members, more neighbors, and even... more clergy!



Our brand-new Early Childhood Center in Prospect Heights opened to rave reviews and smiling faces. And in the great tradition of multi-generational CBE families, another ECC alum saw her own kiddo graduate in early June!



We welcomed 46 new babies. That's a lot of babies!

Our Yachad program continues to grow in leaps and bounds. The number of families enrolled in K-2 doubled in one year!



Celebrating Community

No matter what the year tossed our way, we embraced even the hardest moments with courage, determination, and faith in our shared mission.

For the second year in a row, we held CBE's Spring Gala at 26 Bridge in DUMBO, welcoming hundreds of guests to celebrate seven decades of membership and to honor Jules and Julianne Hirsh.



Thanks to our Host Committee and each and every person who reached deep to support our community, we raised nearly \$400,000.

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Securing the Future

Ready to leave a lasting impact on CBE?
Our V'shamru Legacy Society makes it easy.



As I got older, I realized it was important to me that CBE continue to thrive and allow future generations to enjoy the warmth of the congregation as I did. For these reasons I made CBE a beneficiary of my IRA."

- Marsha Pierson, CBE member since 1983

There are numerous ways to include
CBE in your estate plans.

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