

SOME THANKSGIVING THOUGHTS
FROM WESTCHESTER JEWISH COUNCIL AND OUR PARTNERS

I am thankful for the founders of the WJC and their successors in initiating and continuing an unbroken chain of extraordinary leadership for the benefit of the Westchester Jewish Community. The accomplishments of the WJC have been realized by the endless energy and initiative exhibited by the dedicated staff since the Council's inception. We are indebted to this group of individuals for their vision, service and dedication.

Irwin S. Davison, Westchester Jewish Council Past President

Let's renew our strength by taking Thanksgiving literally. Let's give thanks to the healthcare workers who have tirelessly and selflessly been our rock, developing new and better practices for treating COVID-19. Let's give thanks to the essential workers who have turned up day after day to keep our County and the world running, at great risk to their own health. Let's thank the teachers, school administrators, staff and parents who tirelessly worked to reimagine how we learn so that our next generation can keep moving forward. Let's give thanks to the organizations and volunteers who continue to work to confront the problems of food insecurity, health care access, poverty and the digital divide that the pandemic have deepened and laid bare.

Chairman of the Westchester County Board of Legislators, the Hon. Benjamin Boykin II

I am thankful for our Jewish Community.

Thankful to be able to connect, support and collaborate with each other even if simply through a virtual space.

We are alone/TOGETHER and making things happen.

Arlene Kleinberg, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

This year I feel immense gratitude for the transformation of digital technologies into holy vessels. Zoom and Google Meets, Facebook and Skype have all allowed us to maintain and grow sacred community, worship, and learning under the most difficult circumstances.

Rabbi Howard Goldsmith, President of the Westchester Board of Rabbis, Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester

It takes a village. And to each and every one of you that make up our "village," I thank you most sincerely. All of us have a finite resource of time - 24 hours a day. Your taking the time to enrich our community (including reading this newsletter) is humbling and is what makes our Westchester area so special. Happy Thanksgiving one and all.

Elliot Forchheimer, CEO, Westchester Jewish Council

My gratitude this year is tinged with humility as I meditate on the blessing of good health. As we are reminded of our own vulnerability, so may we be inspired to support all those who are hurting during this difficult season.

Rabbi Jeffrey Brown, Scarsdale Synagogue-Temples-Tremont and Emanu-El

I am grateful to live in a diverse but united community that connects with one another in times of joy and in times of need. We feel and act responsible for one another, which strengthens our ties and enriches our lives.

William H. Schrag, Westchester Jewish Council Executive Committee Member

On behalf of The Jewish Education Project, we would like to pay tribute to all of our children who have shown strength and resilience to continue their education and Jewish learning in these challenging times. We also want to thank the parents and families for all that they have done to encourage and support ongoing learning in schools, synagogues, JCCs, at home, and wherever good learning takes place. And, we especially want to pay tribute to all of the educators, who have gone above the call of duty, often sacrificing their own needs, to give our youth the very best education that they deserve. We are forever grateful to all of you for stepping up in these difficult times and we especially look forward to thanking our heroic educators in the months to come.

Martine Fleishman, President, David Bryfman, CEO, Abby Pitkowsky, Director Westchester Office, The Jewish Education Project

"I am, as always, thankful for my family -- my wife, children and grandchildren -- and for all the front line health workers and other essential workers, including the staff in my office, who have worked tirelessly this year in the face of a pandemic. We wish everyone a happy and healthy Thanksgiving."

Westchester District Attorney, the Hon. Anthony Scarpino

This year, I am particularly thankful for shared experiences (both in-person and otherwise) that create connection and community – that cultivate feelings of belonging to something bigger than oneself. I am grateful for the dedication and perseverance of medical professionals, scientists, first responders, educators, delivery drivers, grocery store workers, and everyone who gets up, shows up, and does their best each new day. And, I am most thankful for my family; near and far, I treasure their ever present love and support. All my best for a safe and happy holiday,

**Lauren Bergida-Morrison, Chief Program Officer
Harold and Elaine Shames JCC on the Hudson**

"We are tremendously thankful to our trained volunteers who work tirelessly to ensure that our communal institutions are secure. In the spirit of the Thanksgiving holiday, we are indebted to their efforts that allow congregants, staff, and community leaders to do their job of enriching our lives in a safe environment."

Evan Bernstein, CEO of Community Security Service (CSS)

I am thankful that the seasons change and the sun rises each morning, regardless of how thick the darkness is. I am thankful for fireplaces and WiFi. I am thankful for the goodness that flows from the hearts of so many regular people. Kol Tuv,
David A. Schuck, Rabbi, Beth El Synagogue Center

I am thankful that my family has managed to stay healthy throughout these unusually difficult times. I am also grateful for all the volunteers and staff people at numerous organizations that have managed to provide online programming, ranging from religious services to travel, from theater to speakers that have enabled us to have some sense of normalcy.

Happy Thanksgiving,
Marc Klee, Westchester Jewish Council Executive Committee Member

I am grateful for my "zoomyard". I can zoom with my children in faraway cities and visit with my friends in my backyard (msd-masked and socially distant).

Julie Rockowitz, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

For this unprecedented year 2020 I am thankful for the labor of love from all First Responders and Medical Professionals, but specially and thankful for the silent heroes at the grocery stores, supermarkets, taxi companies, transportation and construction companies, home care agencies etc. I also thank God for having shared with us the love and teachings of all those wonderful seniors lost to Covid-19, and I pray that once the dust settles after this pandemic, that God may give us the understanding as to why it happened. I pray that he makes us better people that will, moving forward, really care for one another.

The Hon. José Alvarado, Westchester County Legislator D-17

This year I am thankful for good health, family and friends, the soothing effects of nature and the welcome escape of a great novel. I am grateful for meaningful work and the ability to do so much of it remotely and safely. I appreciate more than ever the blessings of community and ways both large and small that we are still able to touch one another's lives even in this time of so much separation. Thanks and Happy Thanksgiving,

Annie Tucker, Rabbi, Temple Israel Center of White Plains

Amy and I are so thankful for the Westchester Jewish Community. We have no idea what we did to deserve finding such an amazing community; we weren't even looking, but Hashem brought us here and showed us what it's like to be part of a community where judgement doesn't exist. A community where everyone accepts each other as fellow Jews regardless of how we all practice. A community that comes together to hold each other during hard time and celebrates the simchas together during good times. We're thankful for being part of a community that mobilized efficiently and effectively when there's a need. We're thankful to be able to raise our children in this community so they get to grow up seeing *Menschlichkeit* in practice daily.

Jeremy Abramson – Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

I am thankful for the health and love of family and friends. I am thankful for the spirit of common purpose that has guided our community and region through the difficult days of 2020. And I am thankful for the hope and expectation of better days in 2021.

The Hon. Noam Bramson, Mayor of New Rochelle

I am so thankful for good health and that of my family and friends.
I am grateful that I can go to work every day and enjoy a sense of normalcy in a not so normal world and be able to be there for my clients in turbulent times.
I am thankful for my wonderful, big extended family who I miss seeing in person but who are always ready to get on a zoom call so we can "see" each other and chat!

Debra Abrahams Weiner, Westchester Jewish Council, Past President

"I would like to offer a special thanks to the unseen but essential State and County Health Department employees who day in day out work to keep our communities safe, and have been on the front lines against the coronavirus since this past March." – State NYS Assembly Member the Hon. David Buchwald

This year, I am actually thankful for not being able to go anywhere. As sad as it will be to not be with extended family, this Thanksgiving is giving me an opportunity to just be, to be and to be grateful for all I have. By showing and communicating gratitude we can spread blessings and goodness to our world. L'Shalom

Rabbi Daniel Gropper, Community Synagogue of Rye

Thankful for golf, Peloton and my amazing and loving family (not necessarily in that order)!

Ron Burton, Westchester Jewish Council Past President

As the new AJC Westchester/Fairfield regional director, I have so much gratitude. I am grateful that over 500 community leaders representing multiple faiths and ethnicities joined together for a record-breaking Thanksgiving Diversity Breakfast. The event was supported by 80+ organizational community partners joining together in a powerful statement of unity. As we virtually honored individuals who dedicate themselves to countering discrimination, and breaking down barriers and prejudices in pursuit of "And Justice for All", I am grateful that we can celebrate community, build bridges of understanding, and find commonality and pride in our diversity in such a powerful manner. It's up to us, and I am proud that so many have answered this clarion call.

Myra Clark-Siegel, Regional Director AJC Westchester/Fairfield

The Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester community is thankful for our dedicated and talented clergy and staff who have worked creatively and impressively to adapt and expand our worship services, programs, religious school and daily operations during the pandemic. Although we are physically separate, we remain always together as we continue to support and care for one another.

Emily Cohen, Congregation Emanu-El of Westchester, President

I am thankful for Zoom (no, really). My cousins and I get together regularly, which we didn't do before the pandemic, and I really enjoy reconnecting with them. I am thankful that my children are taking all their classes online, so they are sheltering in place with us. (I am not sure they would agree, however). I also enjoy cooking for the whole family again, sharing our meals and spending our free time together.

Melissa Baer, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

This year I am thankful for the interconnectedness of the world. Even though we have been far apart, I have virtually seen friends and family more than I normally do. For that, even amidst all the sadness, I am grateful.

Adir Yolkut, Rabbi in Residence, Temple Israel Center of White Plains

With Thanksgiving approaching, there's really only one prayer that matters to me: God, help me to grow a bigger heart, to feel more deeply the love, the hurt, and the hope of my fellow creatures. I'm grateful for good people, good food, and good Wifi.

Rabbi Jonathan Blake, Westchester Reform Temple

I am incredibly thankful for the great staff at Westchester Jewish Community Services who rushed into the crisis we have all been living through to help our clients. They had their own family struggles to balance, health concerns to manage and worries to contend with but they always put our clients first. People throughout Westchester are having a better holiday because of their work.

Seth Diamond, Westchester Jewish Community Services (WJCS), CEO

I am grateful to be part of a dynamic community that came together over these many months virtually to make a difference in countless lives. I am grateful for the exceptional work of UJA Federation in Westchester and to be part of a dedicated, energetic, and mission-driven team. And during this pandemic, I am extraordinarily grateful for our collective resilience and hope in the face of unprecedented times.

Audrey Stein, Regional Director Westchester, UJA-Federation of New York

I am thankful to see Israel and Arab neighbors, with our common ancestor Abraham in mind, beginning a process of truly laying aside differences and forging meaningful ties. I am also amazed by and thankful for the many ways in which our Westchester community has – in so many creative ways – maintained and even enhanced prayer and learning experiences during COVID.

Jonathan L. Flaxer, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

There is a lot of research out that there correlating conscious gratitude with increased happiness and well-being, and my personal experience is anecdotal proof. In the face of COVID isolation, stress, and the sadness of having cancelled our biannual extended family Thanksgiving celebration in the mountains of Tennessee, I find my days brightened by 2 physical activities: 1) Smiling - just lifting the corners of my mouth brings an instantaneous sense of calm and optimism; 2) Expressing gratitude out loud - I repeat my mantra often...I am grateful for having a family to love and who loves me, having a home and enough food to shelter in place comfortably and ride out the coronavirus "storm", and having a community of friends and colleagues, and enough literal bandwidth, to stay connected to the greater world which brings me joy.

Karen Everett, WJC Board Member

I'm thankful for all the things I took for granted....

Stephanie Garry

Chief Administrative Officer, Plaza Jewish Community Chapel, Inc.

I'm thankful we are the sons and daughters of GIANTS and Thanksgiving Is part of our legacy of Tikkum Olam to make the world a better place.

David A. Alpert – Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

So much of what makes life enjoyable—travel, celebrating special occasions with family and friends, even going out to dinner or the movies—has not been possible or simple this year. Meanwhile, the things that make life hard remain, and many have gotten even harder. So this year, I am thankful for the small sources of joy that remain and are holding me through this challenging period.

Rabbi Ben Goldberg, Congregation KTI

I am sure that my feelings are similar to many others but I am thankful for:

1. The time my children have spent together at home to truly reconnect as young adults.
2. The weather remaining nice enough to spend more time outside with family and friends.
3. Modern technology enabling us to remain connected both professionally and personally, near and far.

Michelle Beinhacker, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

Happy Thanksgiving to all!

Although this is a different Thanksgiving, we should take time to appreciate all of the good things in our lives.

Sometimes we forget how much we have and how blessed we are to live in the United States at this time. Enjoy!

The Hon. Justin C. Brasch, Council Member, City of White Plains

I am thankful for the good health that my family and I know. I am thankful for the many good and kind people in my life, and for having been born and raised in this land of freedom and opportunity.

Rabbi David Greenberg, Temple Shaaray Tefila of Westchester-Bedford Corners

I am grateful that my family remains healthy and that Zoom exists, so I can stay in touch with the outside world and “see” people. I am also grateful for those first line workers who put others before themselves, which is such a Jewish tenet.

Michele Gregson, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

We are truly thankful for the good health and well-being of our community. We are so very appreciative of our lay leaders who have worked tirelessly for the good of the congregation

We are grateful to our professional staff and clergy whose caring concern, support and dedication, inspire us all. TODAH RABAH

Naomi Feinkind, Greenburgh Hebrew Center, President

We had an all staff meeting today and we have breakout rooms on Zoom and today the suggestion was to share what we feel grateful for as Thanksgiving is next week. I am very grateful to DOROT for very meaningful work and for the privilege of addressing issues of social isolation for older adults in Westchester. So many people have a deeper understanding of social isolation today than before the pandemic which has helped our mission and efforts to make meaningful connections for older adults. In addition, I am very thankful to DOROT for maintaining the whole staff and allowing every staff person to have meaningful work in a range of departments.

Cippi (Patricia Cipora) Harte, DOROT Westchester, Director

I am thankful that my grandparents had the foresight, wisdom and courage to gather their young families and leave Russia for the US. I am thankful that Israel is strong and successful, its leadership smart and resilient, so that they can manage any changes in the US political landscape. I am grateful that we have allies who understand anti-Semitism and the importance of Israel, who work with us for both.

Betty Berenson, Westchester Jewish Council Board member

There are so many things for which I am grateful. I share three with you. I am grateful for the gentle light of winter, for the embrace of sacred community, and for the power of goodness and love.

Rabbi Jennifer Jaech, Temple Israel of Northern Westchester

The pandemic brought out the very best in our historically kind and supportive congregation. It's been like a mikvah of concern, cooperation and creativity.

Ellen Johnson, Congregation Sons of Israel

For me that is an easy question. What I am personally thankful for over the past year is all the times I was able to say a Shehecheyanu blessing. For my family I am thankful that we have all so far been spared from the devastating affects of the COVID pandemic. For my congregation I am thankful that we were able to hold meaningful High Holyday services.

Michael Karnes, Westchester Jewish Council Executive Committee Member

We are grateful for our extraordinary faculty and staff, who have re-conceptualized lessons and pedagogic strategies, embraced new technologies, navigated the challenges of working with on-campus students and remote students at the same time, and adjusted to demanding new schedules and new supervisory responsibilities--all in the interest of supporting the academic, social, and emotional needs of our community. We are also thankful to our generous donors, who have provided the support necessary to enable us to operate our campuses safely during the pandemic and ensure that families who have encountered financial hardship are able to continue in our school

Michael A. Kay, PhD, Head of School, The Leffell School

I have been surfing waves of anxiety and gratitude since March. As we approach the (other) holiday season, I am grateful for the anxiety brought on by the uncertain nature of 2020. In hindsight, the troughs of emotional waves heightened my creativity and forced me to live in the present with more attention and *intention* than any time in recent memory. For that, I am grateful.

Rachel E. Klein, MSW, Executive Director, Hillels of Westchester

2020 has been a tumultuous year with a global pandemic, Hurricane Isaias and the nationwide calls for racial justice. I am grateful to be a County legislator with a voice and a vote, working for better health, safety and justice. I am grateful for my own health as well as my family and my friends. I am grateful for a new administration who will lead us to become a better nation.

The Hon. Ruth Walter, Westchester County Legislator, District 15

So thankful that technology has allowed us to keep in contact with our friends/family/congregants during this pandemic. It certainly is not perfect, and not without its own challenges, but to be able to have successfully pre-recorded HHD services and deliver them as a video production interspersed with live content and sermon by our clergy was amazing.

Grateful to be able to keep our community connected at this time.

So grateful for our first responders, essential workers (especially in the medical fields), and restaurateur's/food service/grocery and transportation teams. We owe you so much for your work.

David Eppinger, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

As we approach Thanksgiving I am grateful for all of our blessings. Professionally I am so appreciative of our teachers, lifeguards and coaches, and the rest of the wonderful JCCMW staff who come to work each day so that we may continue to serve the community. Personally, I am blessed with family and friends who continue to check-ins on me and make sure all is well. As the sun continues to shine I have hope in a better tomorrow. Wishing everyone a happy Thanksgiving and a season of gratitude.

Karen Kolodny, Chief Executive Officer, JCC of Mid-Westchester

I am thankful for my health, my family, my husband, my pets and the additional time I have discovered to read books, practice yoga and foster more dogs.

The Hon. Margaret A. Cunzio, Westchester County Legislator, District 3

On Gratitude: Pirkei Avot, Ethics of the Fathers, helps to ground us in gratitude: **בְּחִילָקָה ? שָׁמָם אַיִלָה** “**עָשִׂיר ?**” Ben Zoma taught:... Who is rich? Those who rejoice in their portion.” This year, so much has been taken from us and from others. Our difficult mission, particularly this year, is to focus on our blessings, our “haves.” May we all have success in meeting that challenge – Amen.

Rabbi Eytan Hammerman, Jewish Community Center of Harrison

I am thankful for good health and family. We take so much for granted and 2020 has shown us that we must be thankful and cherish all the wonderful things we have.

Margo Lampert, Westchester Jewish Council Staff

This year has been a roller coaster of events: Political turmoil, climate change writ large, and the ongoing global pandemic. I am grateful for all those in our community who use lessons learned from those daunting experiences to make our communities stronger, smarter, and more humane. I am grateful to all our leaders, unions, first responders, residents, businesses, employers who continue moving forward and capitalizing on new opportunities, while preserving the charm and small town feel that we all love in communities like Ossining. I pray that we confront with humility, optimism and ingenuity, the political, societal and environmental issues that lie ahead and challenge us daily -- in a place we proudly call home. May this Thanksgiving bring you joy.

The Hon. Rika Levin, Mayor Elect, Village of Ossining

I am grateful for the efforts of my fellow congregants in maintaining the continuity of our communal religious practices through the pandemic. I am grateful for having been being able to pray and learn with Rabbi Seth Sternstein who will be retiring from the pulpit later this year, after being our spiritual leader for the past 14 years. And, I am most grateful for having known Rabbi Stanley Urbas, sharing Torah and bad jokes with him for more than 4 decades, before he succumbed to COVID last Shabbat.

Marvin Medow, Co-President, Yorktown Jewish Center

I am thankful that despite these unprecedented times my community has maintained its strength. I appreciate everyone who worked so hard to keep our community engaged, connected, and cared for - our congregants, clergy, and professional staff. I am thankful to my wider Jewish community who supports, teaches, and keeps us stronger together.

Irene J Metz, President, Community Synagogue of Rye

I am thankful to be blessed with the resources to help others - regularly bringing fresh produce to food pantries, supplying families living on the edge who have now lost their income with warm coats and boots, household goods, tablet for remote school, etc.

Marti Michael, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

I am thankful for my family, my home, and having a full pantry. I am also thankful for simple pleasures like the feeling of the autumn wind as it gently caresses my skin while walking through the woods and then seeing a ray of sunlight peeking through the red orange and yellow trees.

Rabbi Ben Newman, Shames JCC on the Hudson

As the President of the Hebrew Congregation of Somers, I am very grateful for being able to keep our congregants connected with phone calls, emails and all our Zoom services, programs, activities and Hebrew School. I am thankful no one in our congregation is currently suffering with Covid. I am thankful that we are a community that cares about Tikkun Olam and is planning various outreach projects to address systemic racism, climate issues , poverty and immigration. I am thankful for our dynamic Rabbi Shoshana Leis who always works towards the future.

Thank you,

Vicki Prusnofsky, President, Hebrew Congregation of Somers

As a New York State Senator representing much of Westchester County, I am thankful for the humbling opportunity and responsibility to serve and respond to the needs of the more than 300,000 residents of the 37th Senate District. These are incredibly challenging times, and I appreciate all the work our neighbors and non-profits have done to sustain our community through the pandemic. My Jewish faith provides guidance for handling such difficult challenges, and I rely on that guidance to keep a long-term view that we will get through this pandemic and its implications. I am also incredibly thankful to my family, my community of friends and our good health. I wish all a loving, patient and safe Thanksgiving holiday.

The Hon. NYS Senator Shelley Mayer

I am thankful for family, health, the State of Israel and meaningful work –
Niti Minkove, Bronx Jewish Community Council

I'm grateful for existence. Difficult as life is for so many right now, it remains a stunning fact for me that we are part of the universe. Along with that basic, spectacular truth, I am grateful for the magic of the human body, that we have minds and hearts brilliant and creative and resilient to search out ways to make life better for all.

Rabbi Billy Dreskin, Woodlands Community Temple

“This is not the year to get everything you want. This is the year to appreciate everything you have.”

As President of the Council, I am thankful to be a part of this community. We have mourned our losses, but we have stayed strong and engaged. We have helped our neighbors. We have fought for the rights of immigrants and against racial inequality. We have rallied against anti-Semitism. We have shown our resilience. And we will remain committed to working together to strengthen our community and to protect the rights of all.

Lisa Roberts, President Westchester Jewish Council

This year, I'm so much more aware and grateful for my health and the health of my loved ones and community members. I'm grateful for resilience, flexibility, and community.

Rabbi Sarah Freidson, Temple Beth Shalom-Mahopac

I am grateful for the ability to go to work every day. I do not take for granted the fact that a) I have a job to go to, and b) I am able to be somewhere other than my home. Living through COVID has helped me see what a blessing it is to have a job that I love and affords me the ability to support my family. I hold in my thoughts the millions of Americans struggling to find work right now.

Rabbi Zachary Sitkin, Assistant Rabbi – Beth El Synagogue Center

To the wonderful, giving members of the WJC and your families; Wishing you a Happy and Safe Thanksgiving. How grateful and blessed I am to be a part of our incredible WJC, the many friendships I have made with the many opportunities to Do-good.

Gigi Zeller, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

This holiday season I am so thankful for the many blessings I have. Along with my family & loved ones I am so grateful for the many friends & fans I have met along the way who have made my life better. To everyone I wish a safe & healthy holiday season

Art Shamsky, (WSC) NY Miracle Mets 1969

Westchester Reform Temple is thankful (and proud) that, since the beginning of the pandemic, our generous members have supported our Hungry & Homeless Fund and volunteers who have so far supplied over 8,000 lunch bags, 7 catered monthly hot meals for 125 people, and about 100 Thanksgiving food bags to HOPE Community Services and our neighbors in New Rochelle.

Rabbi Daniel Reiser, Westchester Reform Temple

I am thankful to all of those who took the lemons and made lemonade, devising innovative ways to keep us connected, educated, and entertained, and providing meaningful ways to help us help others. I am also thankful for the progress made in securing a peaceful future for Israel.

Lori Sloane, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

I am thankful for the gift of my life, for the lives of my family and loved ones, and for the gifts of God's creation. I am grateful for health and for healthcare systems, for the front-line and essential workers who are the backbone of our communities, no matter where we may be. I am thankful for leaders who are striving to protect and serve the needs of everyone in our nation and world. And I am thankful for the food I am blessed to have in my life, thankful that I don't have to worry about where my next meal is coming from, like millions of people on our planet.

Rabbi Josh Strom, Congregation B'nai Yisrael, Armonk

There is so much to be thankful for. But if I have to prioritize, I am so thankful for my wife, my children, and my grandchildren. They have been my sunshine during these dark days.

Aaron Fleishaker, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

The Justice Brandeis Law Society 9th is grateful for the dedication of its members and being part of a strong Jewish community. While we may need to spend time physically apart, we are thankful that this community remains strong together.

Michelle Tarson, Justice Brandeis Law Society

"I am thankful the Westchester Jewish Council serves as a community anchor during this unprecedented time of uncertainty and separation."

Paul Warhit, Westchester Jewish Council Past President

To counteract the anxiety and worry of these uncertain times, I have re-learned the art of walking everywhere, something I haven't done since my days of living in Manhattan. And with the pandemic eliminating many of my usual night-time events, I've been able to catch up on some movies – a real treat! But I'm most thankful that I have been given the gift of quality time with my adult children.

NYS Assemblywoman Amy Paulin

Despite the pandemic, there is so much to be grateful for this year. I start with all our supporters and their continued financial support and involvement in our important efforts to build relationships based on shared values with diplomats, representatives and leaders of other faiths, ethnic and racial groups. This year's technological advancements brought us closer together locally and across the globe, while extending our outreach in a never before imagined way and helping us achieve our important goals. And, within Westchester, we welcomed a new Regional Director Myra Clark-Siegel, and new strategic initiatives that will strengthen our work in the region.

Stephne Behrend, President, AJC Westchester Fairfield

I am thankful for the essential workers, health care professionals, and resilience and unity of our community. In the worst of times, we have come together to help save lives and stop the spread of COVID-19. Our nonprofits, religious institutions, and groups of all kinds have stepped up in extraordinary ways to support families and residents in need due to this pandemic or otherwise. We could not get through this without every community partner so thank you. I'm also thankful for my family, friends, staff and for the honor of serving my constituents as their Senator for another term. Wishing everyone a safe and Happy Thanksgiving.

The Hon Andrea Stewart-Cousins, NYS Senator, President Pro Tempore & Majority Leader

It's been a truly crazy year but I am always grateful for my and my families HEALTH- grateful for my growing family!! And grateful that I have lived during this very creative and prosperous time for Jewish life in America with Israel as a strong and secure independent country! Amen.

Nancy Zaro, Westchester Jewish Council Board Member

I am grateful for being part of a community that truly cares for each and every soul. I continue to be amazed by the kindness of simple gestures of life that come unsolicited from friends sometimes in a call or a challah left at the front door. However, I am still most grateful for the health of my family. We have seen so much loss and suffering, both in health and economics. I thank God I have a roof over my head, a bed to sleep in, food on my table and clothes on my back. I thank God for continuing to give me the ability to do the holy work of helping others.

Jay M. Stein, Rabbi, Greenburgh Hebrew Center

As we celebrate this Thanksgiving holiday in the midst of a global pandemic, instead of by gathering as we normally would, we can demonstrate our care and gratitude for our loved ones and neighbors by taking the necessary steps to keep them safe. I urge you to keep your Thanksgiving celebrations limited to those in your household. As difficult as it is, this is the best and safest way to express our thanks for the ones we love.

The Hon. Assemblywoman Sandy Galef

