

Giving Our Blessings – the Best Chanukah Gift

No matter that Purim is Judaism's traditional time for bestowing presents, gift giving has become part and parcel of the Chanukah experience. But we don't have to limit our gift giving to the exchange of material things, and when it comes to community, it's more important for us to share our affection and connection with one another.

At Temple Or Olam, everyone who walks into our Chanukah party will be stopping at a small table first. On the table will be strips of paper, pens and pencils beside them. A large bowl will stand at the ready. Each congregant – young or old – will write a blessing on his or her strip of paper, fold it up and drop it in the bowl. Later that evening, each congregant – young or old – will have the chance to pick a blessing out of the bowl.

May your home be filled with

light this holiday season.

May you be blessed with crispy latkes, lots of applesauce and sour cream and a generous heap of laughter.

May you feel God's loving presence fill the room as you light the candles of the chanukiah.

Our congregants can bless each other with health, joy, and abundance. Perhaps they will write about the blessings they themselves most wish to receive. When we write blessings for others, we learn what we need. To give a blessing is to receive one.

Of course, this year's Chanukah party will feature our annual talent show, the crispiest latkes in five counties, songs, and games. But we also want to take the time to deepen our connections with each other, to strengthen our community and to confirm



Jessica at Chanukah.

our purpose. We are together because we want to be. We bless each other because we care. We celebrate together to make memo-

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Giant Menorah Lighting at SouthPark Mall

This Chanukah, Lubavitch of North Carolina and Congregation Ohr HaTorah invite the entire Jewish community, once again, to usher in the Chanukah holiday with a spectacular Menorah lighting at SouthPark Mall in the Center Court between Belk, Nordstrom, and Neiman Marcus. This exciting event will take place on Tuesday, December 20, which is the first night of Chanukah.

The Chanukah Extravaganza begins at 5 PM and will feature Chanukah crafts and many other entertaining activities for children. Traditional doughnuts and chocolate gelt will be served free of charge, along with lively Jewish music. The Giant Menorah will be lit at 6 PM with lots of fanfare. The blessings and other traditional Chanukah songs will be sung.

This celebration is the perfect event to open the Jewish holiday season, as it allows the Jewish community to express pride and joy in our faith in a public venue, during a time when many in our country are celebrating their holidays.

The public venue for the Menorah lighting is considered an important aspect of Chanukah. One of the primary reasons for lighting the menorah is to publicize the miracles of Chanukah - the miracle of the limited supply of olive oil which lasted for eight days in the Holy Temple and the miracle of the great victory of the Maccabees over their oppressors.

Chanukah Menorahs and candles will be available for purchase at the event. For more information, please contact Lubavitch of North Carolina at 704-366-3984, visit chabadnc.org, or e-mail: info@chabadnc.org. ✨



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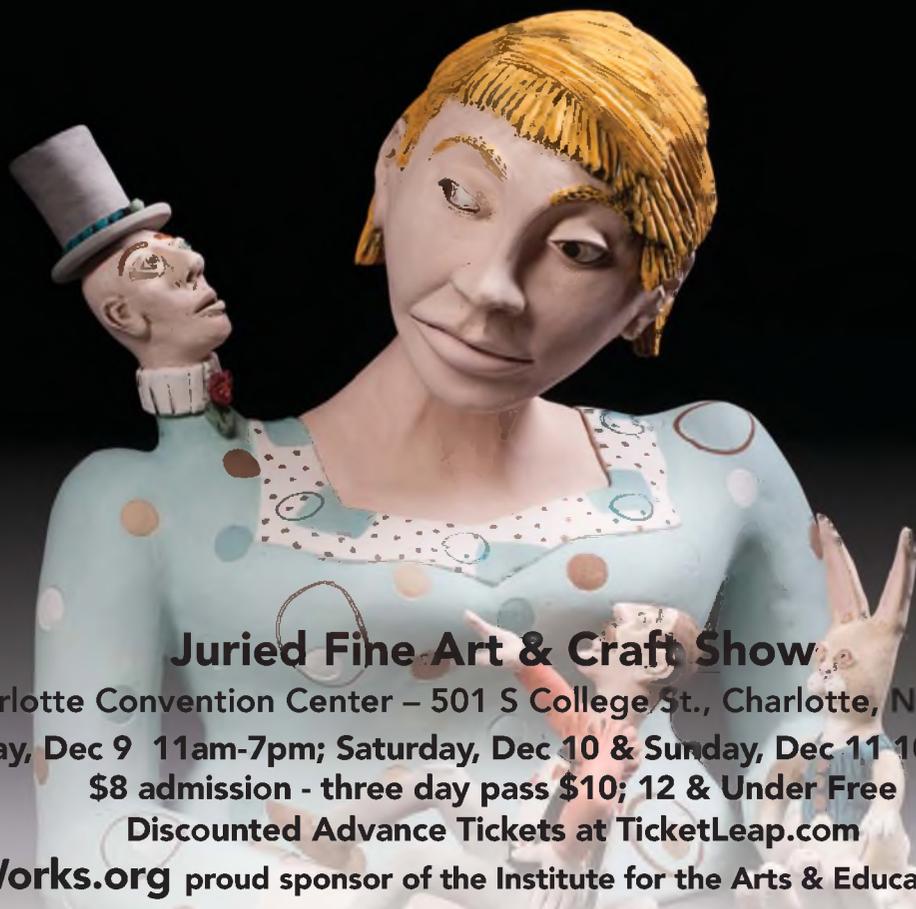
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