

THE IMAGINE SOCIETY

DECEMBER 22, 2020



SPECIAL ISSUE CELEBRATING *Generosity*
KIDS DECEMBER EDITION VOLUME 16!



*No one has ever
become poor by giving.*
- Anne Frank 

Tzedakah

by Foster Schrader

When I was younger, the last day of Chanukah was always the worst. My family celebrates Shabbat every Friday night. We sing the blessings over the grape juice, candles, and challah, and then we go around the table and say a rose and a thorn of the week. After each person speaks, they put a handful of change into a little porcelain house with a slit at the top, like a piggy bank. Painted onto the bottom of the house is the Hebrew word צדקה (Tzedakah), or charity. We do this every Friday for the whole year, and on the last night of Chanukah, we pick a charity together to donate the accumulated coins to.



Inspirational Artwork by Imagine Kid
Dashiell Hall (9)

...continued from page 1

I used to look forward to Chanukah all year. I loved the menorah- my parents let me light the candles, my mother's hand over mine on the match. I loved the latkes and the jelly donuts, and I loved the presents most of all. Each night, my mother handed me a package wrapped neatly in blue paper patterned with dreidels and menorahs. That is, each night except for the last, when I didn't get any presents at all. I used to view this as a chore, this break from the brightly wrapped dolls and colored pencils of the first seven nights. I didn't understand why I didn't get to unwrap a present every night. After all, Chanukah was all about gifts... wasn't it?

As I've gotten older, I've realized that there's more to Chanukah than receiving presents. Chanukah is a festival of light, a celebration of hope in the midst of darkness. In many ways, this year has been filled with darkness. Countless Americans and others have died or contracted the coronavirus, and countless more are risking their lives every day to keep the rest of us safe. Families are separated, and holiday dinners are virtual. And the same hatred and vitriol that has plagued our country since its foundation is just as prevalent, if not more so, as it ever was. Now more than ever, people need a beacon of hope and of light to see them through. If my family can use our tzedakah box to provide that beacon for even one person, that's more important than opening another colorful present.

This year, I couldn't have dinner with my extended family and friends, but I was reminded of how lucky I am to have been healthy and safe and with (some of) the people I love on Chanukah. And I looked forward to the last night of Chanukah all week, to sitting down with my family and deciding to make a donation to support essential workers. I still love getting gifts just as much as I did when I was younger, but I have learned that I love giving them, too.



Thank you
Foster for your essay and reminding
us all how important
giving can be for
people of all ages!

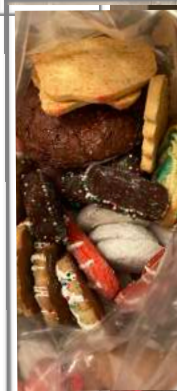
Foster Schrader (17) is a Senior at LaGuardia High School

Follow us on Instagram! @theimagesociety



This December, **The Imagine Society** decided to do things a little different with our **#FoodForFamilies** campaign - we enlisted the help of a special team of Imagine Holiday Bakers! Thank you to all our incredibly generous donors and Imagine Friends, Youth, and Families that got involved: The Browns, The Fitzpatricks, Marina Franklin, The Halls, Robin Klueber, The Palacios, The Sheelers, The Spirit Squad, The Warriors, and extraordinary donations from our friends at [Insomnia Cookies](#) and [La Newyorkina](#). All of our cookies, along with holiday themed **#MessagesOfLove** artwork, were a part of December 19th pantry service featuring these treats and healthy kitchen staples at **Ascension Food Pantry** with 56 tireless volunteers helping to feed 356 clients, 68 of which are homebound. We are overwhelmed that so many kids and families want to help make the holidays for our struggling neighbors a little more *merry* and *bright*. Check out the next 2 pages for more fun photos!





...Imagine Youth Donating!



What Hanukkah Teaches us about Finding Light

by Natalie Carnoy



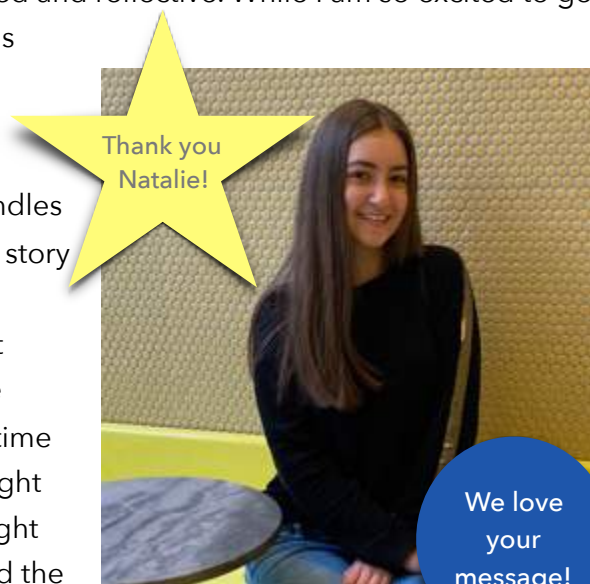
Sitting around the Hanukkiah every Hanukkah, my family's faces are my light; they are illuminated as the candles burn through the night. The chaos of my three siblings and I trying to say the prayers and sing Hanukkah songs always make me smile. My family knows Hanukkah to be eight nights devoted to coming together to create light in each of our lives. This year Hanukkah means even more. While we usually just focus on the idea of spreading light on the eight days of Hanukkah, this year, we had to find light, and create miracles every day as we endured the challenges of the pandemic. During this crazy year when we were forced to quarantine and separate from many that we love, we had to find the light.

The original story of Hanukkah is inspiring both because of the miracle of the oil lasting eight days and because it is so relevant to our lives today. Where can we find some light? Where can we extend the joy, to make the light in our lives last a bit longer? Where do our faith and tradition give us hope? As Jews, we have had many difficult experiences where we have been persecuted. In these situations, we had to find the light to survive. We can look to our Jewish history and the story of Hanukkah to understand how resilient we are. 2020 has been an intensely challenging year. Therefore it is so important that we not only create light as Jews but spread it to the rest of the world too. I am grateful to Judaism for always encouraging me to find my community in situations where I need to find my light.

Hanukkah this year, at least for my family has an even more significant meaning. Like the chaotic eight nights of Hanukkah in our home, the whole world was looking chaotic this year. But despite it all, we looked to the ones we loved. We cherished the times we had together. Even when it seemed dysfunctional, we were grateful. We read about stories of families going through hardships and we tried to send them light. Now as the last night of Hanukkah comes to a close and 2020 comes to an end, I feel relieved and reflective. While I am so excited to get 2021 started I can't help but acknowledge all that I have learned this year.

2020 has taught me that, in crisis, what is most important is joining together and having faith in the long-term. As I lit the Hanukkah candles all eight nights this year, I had hope for the world. The light and the story of Hanukkah always make me think of the light at the end of a year. While it may have been a tough year, and the COVID 19 crisis is not over, I feel grateful that there is light at the end of the tunnel. As the COVID battle continues, I hope everyone can share their light. In a time when it is easy to feel engrossed in the dark, I believe we need to fight to find our light. Even when it is hard, we need to believe that the light will come. In creating happy memories with our families, we can find the light. Each day of Hanukkah I have looked forward to lighting the candles. Hanukkah teaches us that in darkness, there is light to be found. As a Jew, I feel empowered by this idea, which is why I think Hanukkah is so incredibly special and particularly important in a year like the one we just had.

Natalie Carnoy (16) is in the 11th grade at Dwight-Englewood School



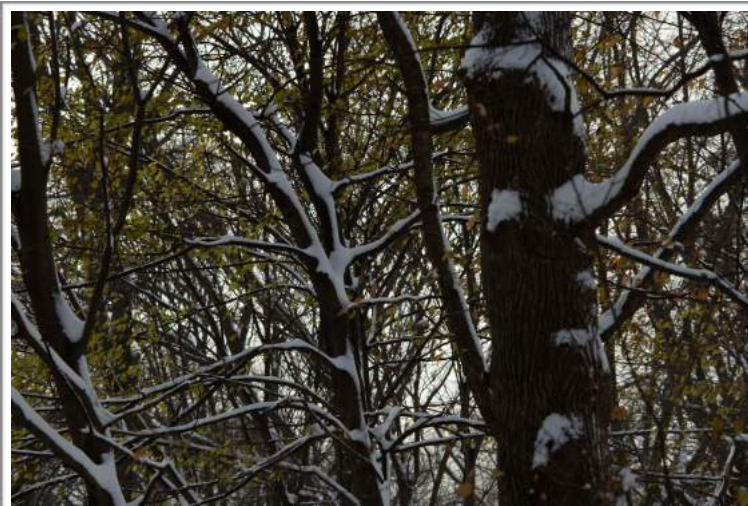
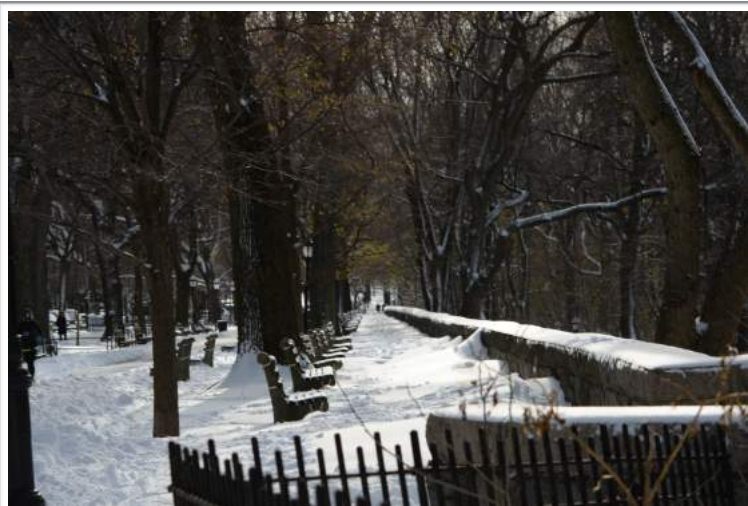
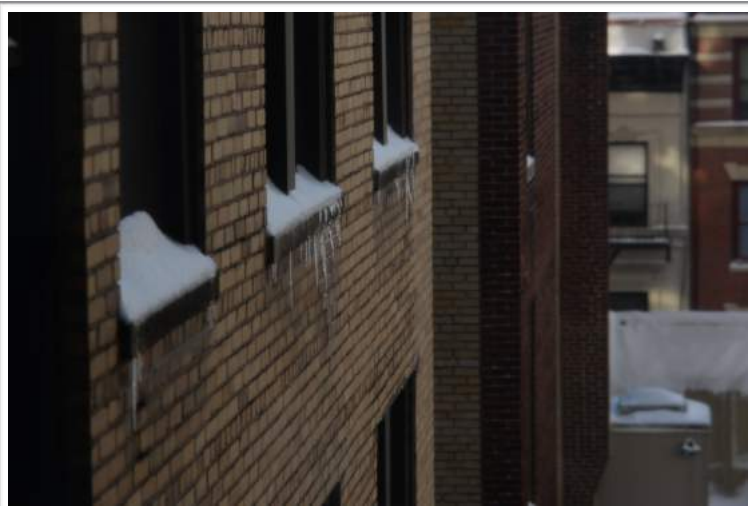
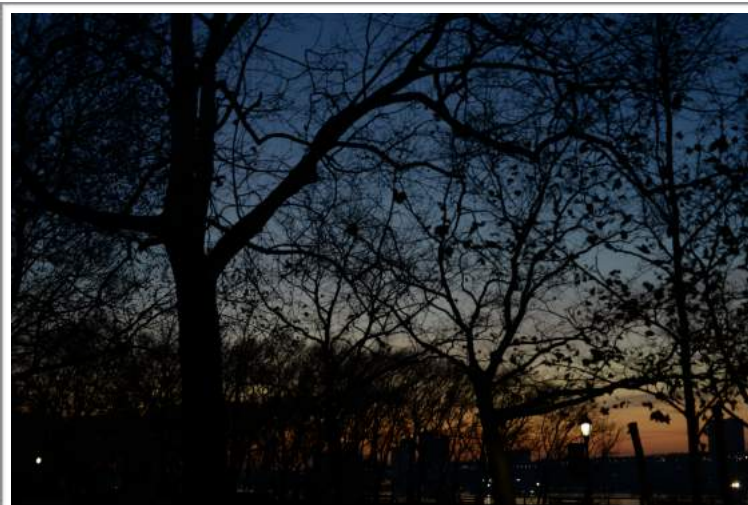
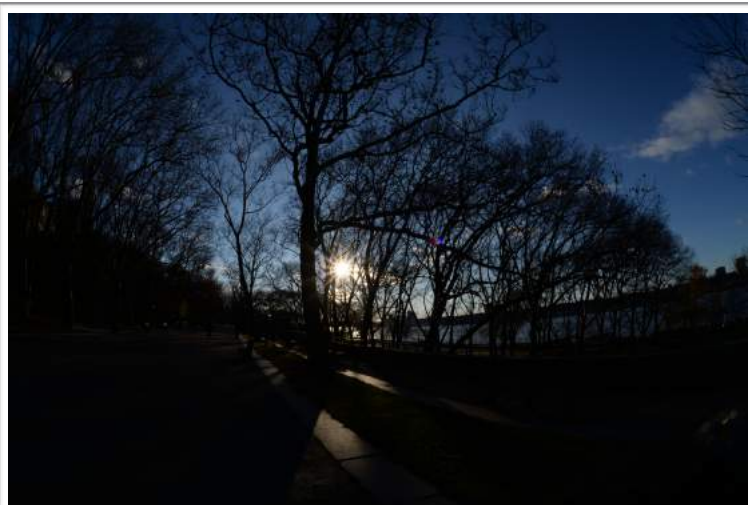
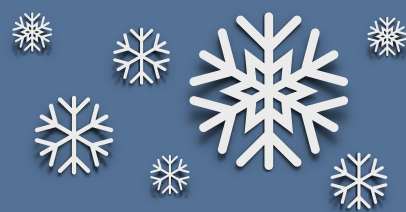
Thank you
Natalie!

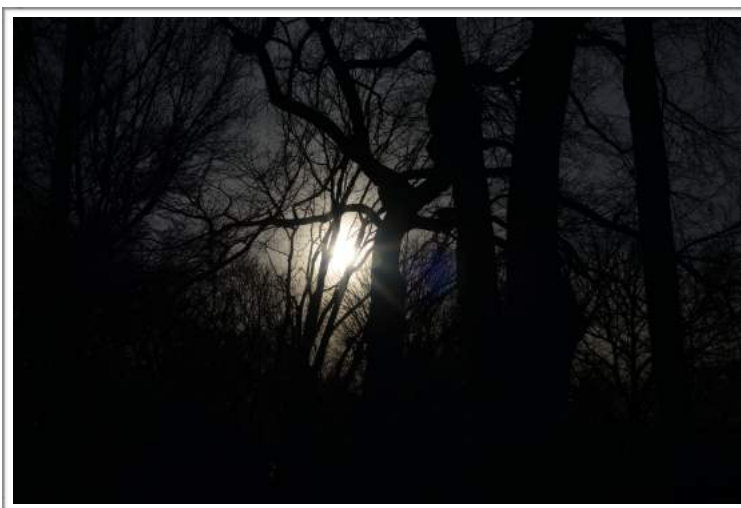
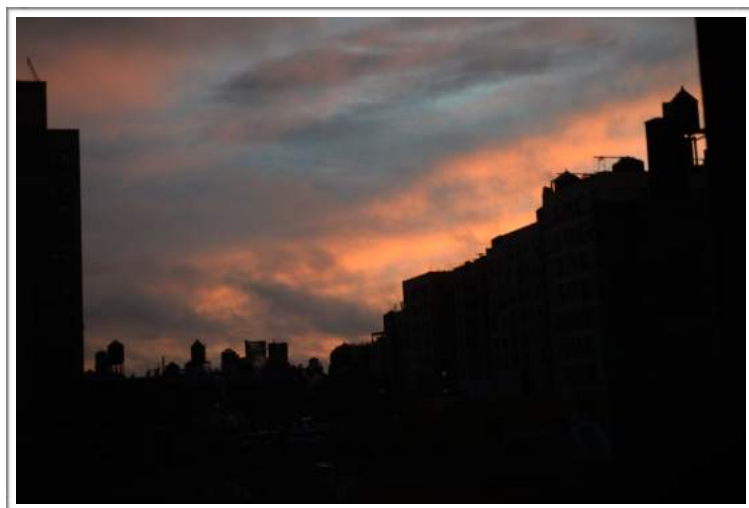
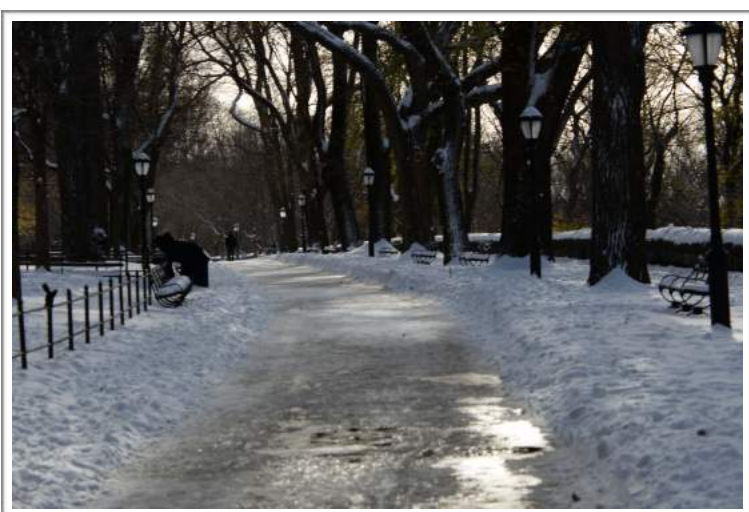
We love
your
message!



Snow Day

Photography by Paul Bloom (16)





Paul Bloom (16) is a Senior at Bard High School Early College Manhattan



Generosity

by Marre Gaffigan

Nothing, I don't think, should be subject to one day or occasion
Especially generosity
Especially those moments where I let my overflowing heart fill the cups of others.
When I help not for the sake of my repute, but for the sake of helping.
It's astounding what it can do
To you
To your life
To their lives.
That feeling I subject to each and every day.

Marre Gaffigan (16) is a Junior at Marymount School of New York



Imagine Teen Cooking Series!



Each month, **The Imagine Society** provides a custom bag of groceries for a family in need. Each bag contains a recipe card translated into three languages and all of the healthy ingredients to create a restaurant quality family meal. Our teens make each meal in their own kitchens and produce a video to show how easy it is to create these delicacies and share the results with all the recipients of the grocery bags. We are not just providing food, we are giving a beautiful community experience!

Our Imagine Teen Cooking Series is going on 5 months and 5 episodes strong! So proud of all the hard work our Imagine Youth Leaders have put into getting our **#FoodForFamilies** recipes camera ready! From food prep, rehearsal, cooking and translation, with the help of Adult Leaders **Chris Chen** and **Ran Liu**, our incredible teens **Dayelin De La Cruz** (17), **Jack Gaffigan** (14), **Jesus Tiburcio-Zane** (14), **Isabella Frias** (16), **Marre Gaffigan** (16), **Sabrina Turner** (17), and **Zaylen Palacios** (13) have worked together to produce five multi-lingual cooking videos featuring the following multi-cultural and healthy recipes: *Peruvian Arroz con Pollo, Pasta a la Bolognese, Broccoli Pasta with Spicy 'Arrabbiata' Tomato Sauce, Cold Sesame Noodles, Stir-Fried Green Beans with Garlic & Ginger, Cauliflower with Peppercorn Salt, and Healthy Rice and Beans with Chicken.* Thank you to all the generous top chefs that donated these recipes!

Check out all 5 videos online on our website: theimagesociety.org/service/ Just don't watch on an empty stomach :)





SPO

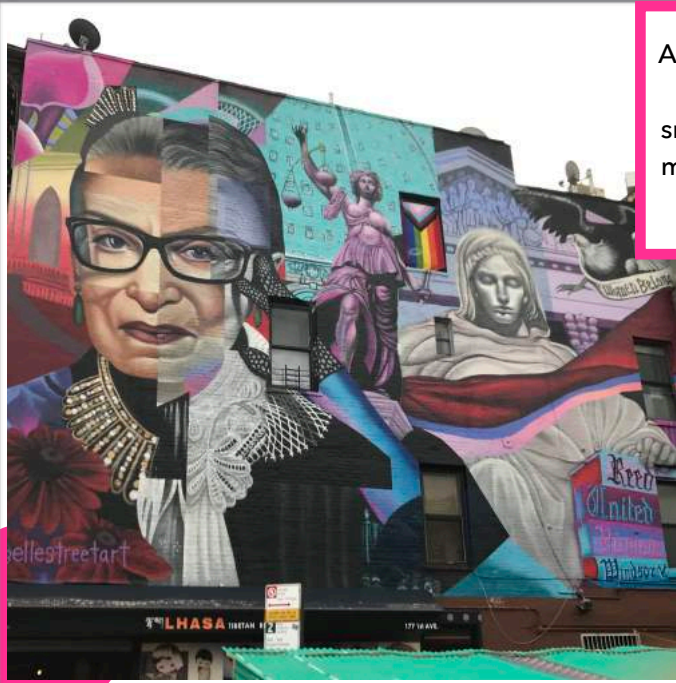
TTED

ON

THE

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EET!



A work of HEART! Thank you Imagine Teen Zaylen Palacios (13) for snapping this pic of the finished RBG mural in the East Village. Welcome to the neighborhood Justice Ruth!



Chloe Castles (19) and doggo Roxy get into the Christmas spirit!

Hola from Brooklyn Bridge Park! Thank you to Chris Chen, November's Imagine Shining Star leader for sharing this beautiful photo with us!

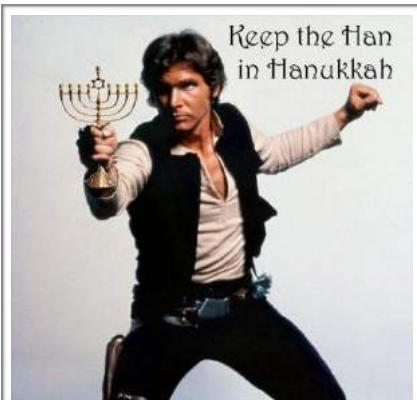


"Spotted beneath the border bridge in Juárez, Mexico. Just one mile north of this arbitrary line, close enough that you can see it from this very spot, is a country with support systems for mothers and children. Here however, children just as vulnerable, can often be found sleeping on the streets and dodging violence at every turn." - Destiny Herndon-DeLaRosa, Activist

Send in your "Spotted on the Street" photos to: outreach@theimagesociety.org

FUN PAGES

If 2020 was a math word-problem: If you're going down a river at 2 MPH and your canoe loses a wheel, how much pancake mix would you need to re-shingle your roof?



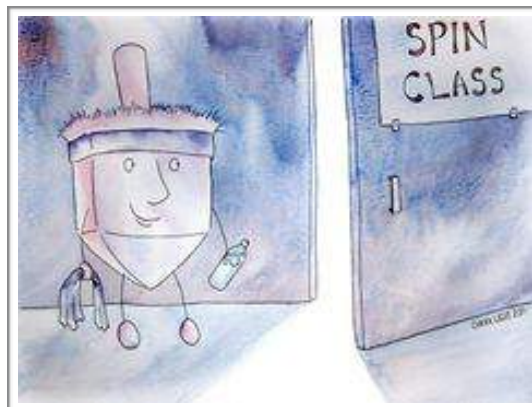
Edited by
Junior Member
Katie Gaffigan
(11)

**JEWISH MOM
CATHOLIC DAD**



Katie's
Fave
Memes
:)

Lol!



MY VERY
OWN
CHRISTMAS
TREE!



HE SEES YOU

WHEN YOU'RE SLEEPING





WORD PLAY



Thank you everyone for enjoying the fun pages! Wishing you joy, love, peace, and the happiest of holidays!
xo Katie Gaffigan

Holiday Word Search GENEROSITY



H Z Y W H N S L S E N S N C W
P O O Y S Q C H R I S T M A S
E G P R F J A B N E C F X J R
A V I E Z R X C C L O P K R W
C S M V E T I H Q O M J O Y P
E K M T I W M E M V P D X U Y
D J W E F N F E N E A V E I V
S L H A D A G R G D S F G Z Z
X O F A N R M Y N P S V S R T
B V X E N Z E I H R I H T E I
Z E M H M U A I L E O P I M D
S A N T A R K A D Y N Q J P I
Z D W O R M T K R E A M R S N
H K K X W X T Z A L L R B S G
G G N I D C W X F H D Y X K S



Edited by
Junior Member
Katie Gaffigan
(11)



Friendship
Kwanzaa
Santa
Cheer

Compassion
Dreidel
Hope
Peace

Christmas
Family
Joy
Love

Hanukkah
Giving
Tidings
Love

