

CFL INSTALATION CEREMONY for HANUKKAH 5767
A LIGHT AMONG THE NATIONS
How Many Jews Does it Take to Change a Light Bulb?
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Introduction:

This ceremony has been written to connect our environmental actions with the traditions of Hanukkah. As Jews, nothing we do occurs in a vacuum. We are a people with a community and as such we hope to bring the community together as we rededicate ourselves to a year of global environmental responsibility.

This ceremony was created using the blessings and story of Hanukkah as a basis to rededicate ourselves to the Jewish tradition of being stewards of the planet. Each congregation has its own needs; as such, please adapt this ceremony to fit your community. There are more recommendations and materials at the end.

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A LIGHT AMONG THE NATIONS
How Many Jews Does it Take to Change a Light Bulb?

Hanukkah, translated into English, means “dedication,” in honor of the Maccabees’ rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem in 163 BCE. In the Talmudic telling of that event, one small jug of oil was all that remained after the Seleucids (Hellenic Syrians) had defiled the Holy of Holies – seemingly enough for just one day, when new supplies were over a week away. Miraculously, the oil sufficed -- that little bit of fuel stretched eight times further than anticipated. And the light from that one jug of oil not only lit the rededication *bayamim haheim*, in those days, but continues to shine and inspire us *lazman hazeh*, to this very day.

Tonight, we symbolically dedicate our own energy-stretching light, our own “Maccabean menorah” of sorts. At this simple short ceremony, we replace one old, ‘standard’ incandescent bulb with a compact fluorescent bulb that is *four times more efficient*, and that, too, lasts approximately *eight times longer*. This bulb will pay for itself in energy savings within months, and then keep saving money that we can “rededicate” to education and other sacred uses. And just as importantly, this bulb will cut by *three-quarters* the amount of dangerous, global warming gases that go into the atmosphere every time we turn the switch to light this holy place.

Tonight, we rededicate ourselves *to bal tashchit*, the mitzvah (commandment) of not wasting anything, of limiting our consumption of energy and of things.

Tonight, we rededicate ourselves to stewardship, to the primordial call to the first humans in the first ecosystem (Genesis 2:15) *l’ovdah ul’shomrah*, to serve and to guard Creation.

Tonight, we rededicate ourselves to *ruach*, to spirit (also meaning wind, as in renewable zero-pollution wind power!), to sustainability – as the prophet Zachariah says (in the Haftarah reading for Shabbat Hanukkah), *lo b’chayil v’lo b’koach, ki im b’Ruchi, amar Adonai Tzeva’ot* – “not by might and not by power, but by My Spirit, says the God of Hosts.”

This Hanukkah, as we kindle the lights, we kindle our own light of sustainability, the first of many. During the first blessing we light the Hanukkah menorah. Tonight, we will install the low-energy bulb in the same motion; we will then continue with the remaining prayer/s (optional to say prayer and/or light the menorah):

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה.

Barukh Ata Adonai,
Eloheinu Melekh HaOlam -

asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu
l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the
Universe, who has sanctified us with the
Divine

commandments, and has instructed us
to kindle the light of Hanukkah.

*[Light the Hanukkah menorah (optional), and install the Compact Fluorescent Bulb, in silence.
Then continue with the second Hanukkah blessing - optional:]*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ
בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בְּזַמַּן הַזֶּה.

Barukh Ata Adonai,
Eloheinu Melekh HaOlam -
sh'asah nisim la'avoteinu (la'horeinu)
bayimim hahem, bazman hazeh.

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the
Universe, who has made miracles for our
ancestors, in those days, at this time.

Tonight, we rededicate ourselves to passing the miracle of Creation, undimmed,
to those who come after us.

Tonight, we rededicate ourselves to being mindful of all that we consume, and of
the waste and pollution we generate.

Tonight, we rededicate ourselves to making sure that *midor l'dor*, from generation
to generation, those who come after us will be able to enjoy and marvel at and bless the
miracles of Creation, as we have.

Tonight, we rededicate ourselves to doing our part *l'takein olam*, to repair the
world.

*[In most synagogues, this will be the first compact fluorescent light (CFL) installation ceremony,
which allows us to recite this prayer that is said in honor of new events]*

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְהוָה
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁהַחַיָּנוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ
וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה.

Barukh Ata Adonai,
Eloheinu Melekh HaOlam –
sheh'heh'chianu, v'key'e'manu,
v'hih'giyanu lazman hazeh..

Blessed are You, Eternal our God, Ruler of the
Universe, who has given us life, and sustained
us, and enabled us to reach this moment.

As we take in the glow and warmth and peace of these Hanukkah candles – and as our way is illuminated by the steady sustainable light of our new low-energy bulb, let us commit to becoming the Maccabees of our day. Let us replace more bulbs, install more insulation, adjust more thermostats, and become more conscious of all the small, simple, effective ways that we can help protect God's good Creation.

Chag urim sameach – a joyous, and sustainable, Festival of Lights!

Some potential additions to this ceremony:

- Congregations that know Debbie Friedman's classic "Not by Might, Not by Power" might include that song as part of the ceremony.
- For traditional congregations, you may prefer to put all the ceremonial words at the beginning, and even install the light bulb first, so it's clear that the CFL installation itself is not being blessed per se.
- For a fuller and more participatory ceremony and programming ideas for an eco observance of Hanukkah, go to www.coejl.org/Hanukkah.
- When the ceremony is a public event, having take-home handouts at the ready -- with information on CFL's and on ten more energy-saving steps we can take to be "modern Maccabees" -- would be great. A sample has been included below.

Ten Simple Steps to be a “Modern Maccabee” and Reduce Your Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) Emissions

Change a Light

Replacing one regular bulb with a compact fluorescent light bulb (CFL) will save 150 pounds of CO₂ each year (and will save you money, too!)

Drive Less

Walk, bike, carpool or take mass transit more often. You'll save one pound of CO₂ for every mile you don't drive!

Recycle more

You can save 2,400 pounds of CO₂ per year by recycling just half of your household waste

Check your tires

Keeping your tires inflated properly can improve gas mileage by more than 3%. Every gallon of gasoline saved keeps 20 pounds of CO₂ out of the atmosphere!



Use less hot water

It takes a lot of energy to heat water. Use less hot water by installing a low flow showerhead (350 pounds of CO₂ saved per year) and washing clothes in cold or warm water (500 pounds of CO₂ saved per year)

Avoid products with a lot of packaging

You can save 1,200 pounds of CO₂ if you cut down your garbage consumption by 10%

Adjust your thermostat

By moving your thermostat just 2 degrees Fahrenheit in winter and up 2 degrees in summer you could save about 2,000 pounds of CO₂ a year

Plant a tree

A single tree will absorb one ton (2,000 pounds) of CO₂ over its lifetime

Turn off electronic devices

Simply turning off your television, DVD player, stereo and computer when you're not using them will save you thousands of pounds of CO₂ a year.

Source: www.climatecrisis.net

To calculate your carbon footprint, go to: www.carbonfund.org/site/pages/calculator/

Brought to you by the Coalition on Environment and Jewish Life (COEJL)

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