



Lech Lecha

By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

This past Shabbat we read Lech Lecha. In English, this translates into “go forth.” Chabad.org explains it this way: *"Go forth from your land and from your birthplace and from your father's house, to the land that I will show you. And I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will aggrandize your name, and [you shall] be a blessing."*

When I left for college, from the safety of my home and all that I knew, it was scary. Now as an adult, I still tend to do the same things out of comfort. I park in the same space at work, out of habit. Even at the grocery store, I park in the same general area, when I can. The meals I make for my family all are from a small list that I rotate each week. My children even made a cookbook of the meals, since I tend to do the same ones over again. They enjoy them, but I am sure that the repetition might get a little boring now and then. Of course, my response is, **give me new ideas!**, but I digress.

As my rabbi explained it, Avram was sent from what he knew, out into the unknown. He likened it to how we see many people in our community who go the extra mile to do what might not be expected from them, but is definitely to the benefit of others. These individuals break out of their comfort zone to make positive changes, not only in their small circle but also for those around them.

Lech Lecha. Every week, I sit down and write my WOW. It is a way for me to make sense of what I see, hear and experience. I share it as I believe that I am not special and therefore am not the only one who needs to make sense of all that is happening.

And so, today I ask the questions, “Is it 2024? Does the statement, Never Again, have validity?” Since Oct. 7, it has been a daily barrage of ‘What is being thrown at the Jewish people now?’ How must we fight for our safety, our security, our lives? This past weekend, a soccer match was played between Ajax (of the Netherlands) and Maccabi



(Israel). After Israel lost 5-0, the fans of Maccabi were attacked. Some witnesses say that even the Dutch police participated in the violence.

In 1942, Anne Frank, her entire family (her sister Margot, her mother Edith and her father Otto), the Van Pels Family (Herman, his wife Auguste & Peter) and Fritz Pfeffer all hid in the attic in Amsterdam. That was a little over 82 years ago. In 1945, the Holocaust ended and in 1948, Israel became the Jewish state. In my opinion, Resolution 181 from the United Nations, to declare a Jewish state, happened in direct response to the Holocaust. It was out of guilt that the countries did this. Just my opinion.

So what is different now than at the end of the Holocaust for the people in displaced persons camps? Israel. Many say that with the antisemitic attacks across the globe, on college campuses, the BDS movement on college campuses, on social media, we are in the middle of what was threatened soon after Oct. 7 - a Global Intifada.

Lech Lecha. I can't sit in my comfort zone and not speak out.

*And "Then they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Jew
Then they came for me
And there was no one left
To speak out for me."*

It's 2024 and we need to not be silent.

Shabbat Shalom.