

HANUKKAH WRITING SAMPLES

The Writer's Beit Midrash

North Suburban Synagogue Beth El, Highland Park, IL

Kislev 5773/2012

The Writer's Beit Midrash meets in the Maxwell Abbell Library every other Wednesday morning, 10:00-11:30 am. All fiction, non-fiction, poetry, memoir, and essay writers (published or not yet published) are welcome for discussions, exercises, camaraderie, and critique. Contact Rachel Kamin at rkamin@nssbethel.org or 847/432-8903 x 242 for meeting dates and to be added to the mailing list.

Glowing
By Judith Bernstein

Looking deep
into the light of
the menorah today
I see years back
to the wavy auburn
of my father's hair.
It glows with an inner light
like a copper halo
as he lights the shamos,

Then his strong hands,
grasp the waist of
my three year old son
and lift him up to the menorah.
The light glints off
the boy's golden curls,
curls inherited from his Zaidy

My father guides
my son's hand
to light each candle
as they chant together
the ancient words.
My eyes fill with tears as
the dancing lights highlight
their glowing hair.

Let There Be Light
By Betsy Dolgin Katz

There are times of darkness,
There are times of light.

Nothing is as desolate as standing in darkness,
Nothing as joyful as sharing the light.

When shadows assail us, find light in loving hearts,
When radiance blesses us, diminish night in anxious souls.

God separated light from darkness, created the universe,
And it was good;
Bring light into darkness, repair our world,
And it is better.

Silent Prayer
By Merle Tovia

The flame is bright and then it gutters
Blue based, with yellows and reds dancing within
A reflection of my soul and its yearning.

The spark of the flame echoes in my heart
As I yearn to be one with my people in this holiday
Of freedom, in this holiday of service.

Will this candle flame bring hope in the dark winter night?
Will our people find peace and the freedom to be our own nation?
Will the flame reflect strife and angry rocket fires
Or will it reflect the warmth and peace of a home hearth?

May the prayers of the Israelite people be heard,
May we choose to be a unified and inclusive nation
May we have the freedom to live with our neighbors
In peace within my lifetime. Amen, Selah.