

(Rabbi Michele Lenke Ordination Benediction 2024 )

"As we conclude our ordination and after the conclusion of this benediction, please wait for those of us on the bimah and the front rows to recess from the front of the sanctuary, before joining us in the courtyard for photos and well deserved congratulations"

Eloheinu, v'Elohei Avoteinu v'Imoteinu, our G-d, G-d of our Mothers and Fathers...we ask for your blessings on this day.

For our newest rabbinic colleagues,

They are podcasters, painters and potters and we pray that their creative minds, hearts and hands will continue to create works of beauty and meaning with deep intention.

They seek to include and expand who may learn and how to teach those previously ignored through inclusive language, nondiscriminatory modalities and new rituals.

They see the blessings of diversity, the expansiveness of possibility, and the potential experiences from which we can all benefit.

They want to engage in deep dialogue with those who think differently and are not afraid of arguing with concepts long held as sacred. They value dissenting opinions and encourage the active choosing of Judaism.

They value deep study of the Talmud and Tanach, crave to share that passion with others, and ways of accessing these texts through study and prayer.

May they never forget why they chose to become rabbis.

May they never lose their love of learning.

May they always have each other's backs.

May they learn that asking for help is a sign of strength.

May they always pursue justice, love kindness and walk humbly with You.

May they never lose faith, even when times are tough.

So, we ask that You bless their support systems as well: their parents and siblings, their partners and their future children, their close friends and their mentors, their spiritual directors, therapists and confidantes.

Remind them that sometimes it is enough just to listen. Bless these supporters with patience and confidence, and the ability to remind these newly ordained rabbis of the importance of balance, humility, and a home cooked meal.

I close with these words from Psalm 118. Zeh HaYom Asa Adonai, Nagilah v'nism'cha vo. This is the day that G-d has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it! It truly is with this joy that we celebrate you, the ordination class of 2024! Mazal tov!