

April 25, 2025

Dear Retreat Community,

Welcome to the 2025 CBST Retreat, our theme this year is *Finding Joy in Hard Times*. With so much despicableness and hate in the news swirling around us every day, it feels extra important to lean into places where we can find joy and delight, and reclaim a piece of the world as a place for queer joy especially! We are focusing on joy this year through song, and music, and dancing and movement, and remembering what it felt like to be a kid going to summer camp (or creating what it might have been like).

Come and learn how to salsa, play poker, play kickball, sing Broadway songs, pray outdoors, deepen your Jewish learning, or go on a nature hike. We will have opportunities for all of that and more, and we are looking forward to seeing you there and having an opportunity to slow down and enjoy. To continue with the theme, you are encouraged to bring games, puzzles, coloring, drinks (alcoholic and non), and snacks to share—eating and drinking and playing together is always one of the highlights of the retreat! Please just make sure your snacks are hekshered kosher in order to be able to share them in Isabella Freedman's space.

We are so excited to spend Shabbat together, and just wanted to share a few ground-rules set out by Isabella Freedman in conjunction with CBST, to ensure a safe and fun time for everyone:

- **Children 10 and under** either must be in visual sight of a parent or designated adult or must be participating in supervised programming. During scheduled "free time," **children who are currently in 4<sup>th</sup> grade or above** may be unsupervised as long as they check in with an adult. **Everyone of all ages** is invited to participate in our music-filled Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat service, and if your child would like to bring a book or a quiet, non-electronic toy, you are very much invited to bring one for them. There will be teen and tween programming Shabbat morning.
- **Animals** Everyone is welcome to visit the chickens but must bring a designated adult (18+) and stay outside the fence. Entering the chicken yard can only be done under the supervision of Isabella Freedman staff. Please do not feed the chickens, as they are on a special diet.
- **Dock/Lake** The Lake will be open for boating, canoeing, and kayaking ONLY during free time on Shabbat. **Isabella Freedman policy states that everyone, regardless of age, must wear a lifejacket when in the water and when on the dock.** No one 13 and under may be on the dock unless supervised by an adult. Please take this seriously. We encourage you to bring your own lifejackets if you own them.
- **Screens** One of the highlights of the retreat is having the ability to power down. With the combined relaxing nature of Shabbat and our camp location, we ask you to refrain from using any and all electronic devices in any of our public spaces over the weekend—especially on Shabbat. We hope that you'll take advantage of every moment to spend time with friends, family, and yourself in the wonderful, once-a-year community space that we create together.

We look forward to a safe, fun, and spiritually renewing retreat for everyone. Please feel free to speak with any of us should you have any questions or concerns.

*Bivracha,*

Rabbi Yael Werber (RYW)

Shelli Aderman, Naomi Blakeman, Gerry Goldhaber (Retreat Committee)