



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **True Joy Through Water: Appreciating Nature in the Festival Holidays**

NEW YORK, NY—Canfei Nesharim (“the Wings of Eagles”) is partnering with Orthodox synagogues across the United States to include environmental teachings in the Jewish festival holidays of *Sukkot* and *Shemini Atzeret*.

Canfei Nesharim is an organization that provides traditional Jewish resources about the importance of protecting the environment. On Sukkot, Jews celebrate water through the *Simchat Beit Hashoeva* (Celebration of the Water Drawing Ceremony). On Shemini Atzeret, the theme of the value of water continues through *tefilat geshem*, the beginning of Jewish prayers for rain.

“These environmental themes provide a beautiful entry into conversation about the Torah’s approach to protecting the environment,” explained Evonne Marzouk, executive director.

The Orthodox synagogues are a part of Canfei Nesharim’s “Daled Amot” pilot, which is engaging synagogues across the United States in a comprehensive, year-long Torah-environment education program to recognize that the environment is part of our immediate responsibilities as Torah Jews. The Sukkot program includes activities, teachings, holiday decorations, and other exciting new resources for families and communities to organize environmentally-themed celebrations the festival holidays. Canfei Nesharim’s program also features a focus on the environmental impacts of bottled water, including a beautiful downloadable fact sheet available for all.

Some communities that are participating include: Congregation Emek Beracha in Palo Alto; Keshet Israel in Washington, DC; Beth Shalom Talmud Torah in Potomac, MD; Riverdale Jewish Center in Riverdale, NY; Keshet Synagogue in Englewood, NJ.

For example, at Congregation Emek Beracha in Palo Alto, the Rabbi will communicate the connection between water and the Sukkot holiday, and the obligation to support preservation of clean water in our everyday practices. To help congregants know what specific actions they can take to preserve water, water wheels supplied by Canfei Nesharim will be made available as a take-home tool.

“We are very grateful to Canfei Nesharim for their ideas and educational items, which are an inspiration and enhancement for these kinds of environmental initiatives,” said Vivian Deutsch, lay leader at Emek Beracha.

At Keshet Israel in Washington, DC, the “Green Group” will host its 3rd Annual Simchat Beit Hashoeva Party on October 19, featuring light dinner, desserts, and learning about the ancient ritual and the importance of water, as well as resources provided by Canfei Nesharim.

Also as part of the “Daled Amot” program, at Beth Sholom Talmud Torah in Potomac, MD, the Going Green Committee sponsored a “Nature Walk and Tashlich” along the Potomac River on October 5. More than sixty people enjoyed the beautiful morning walk along the C & O Canal and participated in a musical tashlich on the banks of the Potomac River. The hike was guided by Reuven Walder, Marine Biologist and Naturalist, and tashlich was introduced by Assistant Rabbi Nissan Antine. Beth Sholom will also be providing Canfei Nesharim’s water resources for the holiday of Shemini Atzeret.

For families and synagogues across the Jewish community, Canfei Nesharim has great Sukkot resources, including beautiful free teaching/fact sheets on bottled water and the blessing of rain, available for download at [www.canfeinesharim.org/community/sukkos.php](http://www.canfeinesharim.org/community/sukkos.php). Celebration of the Sukkot holiday begins October 14.

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