

January 2026
טבת תשפ"ו**Message from the Chief Rabbi**

In Jewish tradition, we recite berachot for almost every aspect of life: before we eat, before we learn Torah, upon experiencing something extraordinary, and even when emerging safely from danger. Yet there is one fundamental mitzvah for which no blessing is prescribed in advance – the act of chesed, loving-kindness.

Many explanations are offered, but one that has always resonated deeply with me, comes from the eighteenth-century Chassidic master, Reb Simcha Bunim of P'shischa. He taught that a beracha requires a certain intention, focus and preparation. Acts of kindness, however, demand urgency. When another human being is in need, there is no time to pause. We are called upon to respond wholeheartedly and without hesitation.

This is precisely the spirit that defines the work of US Chesed. It is an organisation that understands instinctively that kindness cannot wait – and that dignity, compassion and practical support must be delivered swiftly and sensitively.

Through an extraordinary network of over a thousand volunteers across more than fifty communities, US Chesed addresses need wherever it arises. Food insecurity, which affects the Jewish community no less than wider society, is met with quiet efficiency and care, ensuring that hundreds of individuals and families receive non-perishable goods, fresh food, and prepared meals every week. But their reach extends far beyond this: to those who are alone in hospital or isolated at home; to individuals navigating financial hardship; to those serving prison sentences; and to anyone who finds themselves vulnerable or in need of support.

What makes US Chesed truly exceptional is not only the breadth of its work, but the manner in which it is carried out – with discretion, respect, and an unwavering commitment to seeing the person behind the problem.

US Chesed exemplifies the very best of our Jewish values and stands as a powerful reminder of what can be achieved when kindness is placed at the heart of our community. Its work is a source of deep pride for me personally – and it is an enormous blessing to our community in every sense.


Chief Rabbi Sir Ephraim Mirvis KBE