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Hanukkah celebrated at the Plaza

By Pippa Fisher



A crowd of over 200 gather to light the giant menorah on the first night of Hanukkah. Photo provided

corruption and crime," said Rabbi Mendel Weinfeld, a rabbinical student who came in from Brooklyn to help organize the event.

"There is so much darkness all around us, there are so many bad things around the world," Weinfeld said. "But if you bring even a little bit of light, just a tiny bit, the darkness is pushed away."

Families enjoyed songs and music as well as traditional Hanukkah food - potato latkes and jelly doughnuts.

The Lafayette Plaza was packed on the first night of Hanukkah as crowds gathered to light the menorah on the Jewish holiday that celebrates perseverance, faith and the power of light over darkness.

The annual event is sponsored by the Chabad Jewish Center of Lamorinda. The eight-day festival commemorates the Jews' victory over Greek rule more than 2,000 years ago. After driving out the powerful military, the Jews were able to rekindle the menorah in the Jerusalem temple - one day's worth of oil burned for eight nights.

Rabbi Israel Labkowsky, regional director of Chabad Lubavitch of Lamorinda, encouraged the families who gathered around the giant menorah to bring their own light by being kind and helping others.

"The ancient story has a modern message, especially for those weary of a seemingly endless stream of violence,

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