

# CONGREGATION DORSHEI TZEDEK

An Affiliate of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation  
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Tevet-Shevat-Adar 5761

January-February 2001



## Working for Peace

by Rabbi Toba Spitzer



It is hard to believe that, as you read this, three months have passed since the outbreak of fighting between Israel and the Palestinians. The scenes of violence may have slipped off of the front page, but the conflict remains very real. On Yom Kippur I spoke about some of the factors that complicate our responses to this kind of situation, from our own fears based on our historical experience as Jews to our ambivalence about having Jews in positions of power. In trying to get a grasp on what is going on, we are caught between conflicting versions of history and between voices that claim that "the media" is slanted towards this side or that. All of this – combined with the fact that we are far away from the events – makes it difficult to get a clear view of all that is happening.

For some of us, the Palestinian reactions seem incomprehensible. They were offered, we are told, the most extensive peace agreement ever tendered by an Israeli leader, including sovereignty over parts of Jerusalem, and they refused? After seven years of a peace process, they are still chanting "Death to the Jews" and vowing never to concede an inch of Jerusalem? How is it possible to make peace with such a people? For others of us, it is the Israeli reaction that seems disturbing and beyond the pale. How can such a powerful military respond to rock-throwing with missiles and helicopters? Where is the Israeli peace movement in this critical moment? Why is it so difficult for Israelis to comprehend the sources of Palestinian rage?

Our challenge is to attempt to understand the experiences and world-view of each community, in the context of which their actions make sense even when they are difficult for us to accept. For many Palestinians in the occupied territories, very little in their day-to-day experience has changed for the better since the signing of the Oslo accords. As Israel has come to rely more heavily on

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## Co-Presidents' Message

by Chayim and Judy Herzig-Marx

Ask any member of Dorshei Tzedek what makes membership worthwhile, and the chances are the response will include "warmth," "relationships," or "sense of community." Those of you who attended the recent Members' Meeting know that we pay a lot of attention to community-building and to programs that bring us together to form and strengthen relationships. We often assign the responsibility for creating community to our Board and Rabbi – to our elected and appointed leadership.

This is entirely appropriate. One of the reasons we put people in positions of leadership is to empower them to help us accomplish what we mutually wish to achieve. Especially in voluntary organizations, asking someone to take a leadership role is really giving them permission to make requests of us. At the same time, there's an unspoken assumption that leaders will act for the greatest good of the greatest number.

But what's so different about being in a leadership position? After all, if we give someone else permission to make demands on us, and we expect someone else to act in our mutual benefit, we can do the same by ourselves. In some circles, this is called "leading from any chair." Each of us can give herself or himself permission to be a leader, which is to say, to step into a role of acting for the good of

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foreign workers, the Palestinian economy has suffered. Jewish settlement activity in the occupied territories has continued unabated, as have home demolitions and other painful experiences at the hands of the Israeli authorities, all of which has helped undermine Palestinian support for the peace process. If negotiations have not produced what feels like real change, then many are willing to turn to violence to realize the dream of a Palestinian state.

For Israelis, there is enormous weariness at the seemingly unending specter of violence, not only in the territories but also inside Israel. Many Israelis feel that their country has gone to great lengths to accommodate Palestinian aspirations, and the majority now accept the inevitability of a Palestinian state. The fact that an Israeli prime minister was willing to talk about some kind of shared sovereignty of Jerusalem seemed radically generous to most Jewish Israelis, given the historic centrality of Jerusalem to Jewish hopes. The new *intifadah*, and the vitriolic support given it by many Arab leaders in other countries, feels like a spit in the face to these compromises, and helps to confirm Israeli fears that their Arab neighbors have no real interest in accommodation or peaceful co-existence.

The two sides are very far apart, but the reality is that Jews and Palestinians have to learn to live alongside each other; there is no other real choice. And to do so, each must accept the fundamental aspirations and concerns, and the humanity, of the other. The speakers we hosted in November, Forsan Hussein and Michael Bavli, showed us the possibility of members of each community overcoming their prejudices and fears. The path will not be easy, but Forsan and Michael challenged us to stay engaged and not turn away. What is our role? While co-existence efforts have suffered in recent months, there are still many opportunities to help support those in both the Israeli and Palestinian communities who are working for peace and co-existence. Here are a few ways to find out more and to make a material contribution to peace efforts:

- The New Israel Fund gives financial and technical assistance to organizations within Israel that are working to rebuild ties between Israel's Jewish and Arab communities. For more information, visit their web site at [www.nif.org](http://www.nif.org); you can also write them at 1101 14th Street, NW, 6th Floor, Washington DC 20005.
- Rabbis for Human Rights promotes human rights both within Israel and in the occupied territories from a

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*(Co-Presidents' Message, continued from page 1)*

the group, and from that position to make requests of one's own self or of others.

Last night we attended a pot luck Shabbat dinner at the home of a member in our neighborhood. It happens that the Membership Committee, chaired by Nancy Gertz, took the leadership role in arranging these get-togethers. We had a marvelous time! Maybe it's just us, but we hardly ever have the chance to spend a couple of hours really getting to know other congregants, finding out where we connect and what each other is about. And it turns out that several other member households are not that far from our own, and we never even knew it! So then we got to thinking, no one really needs to wait for the Membership Committee to arrange Shabbat dinner. And if we didn't know that other members live close to us, probably others don't know that either.

So here's a suggestion. Get out the membership list and make a note of everyone who lives in the same zip code you do. Then get out a map (or use MapQuest for the computer literati!) and see who lives close by. Then pick up the phone and call two or three other member households and arrange a Friday dinner or Saturday lunch together. It doesn't have to be elaborate. If you make it low-key, then someone else will be inspired to arrange another occasion. Pretty soon you'll be connected to other members as well as to the community.

Here are a few other ideas:

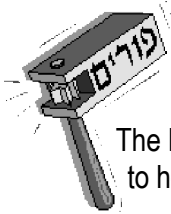
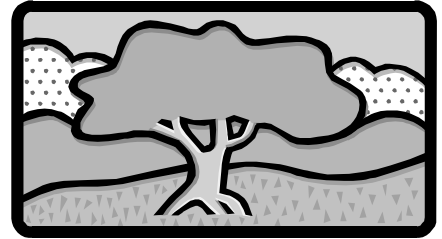
- Have coffee with another parent during Hebrew school.
- Join a committee.
- Put a short article in the newsletter announcing some initiative you are planning to undertake anyway, and see if other members want to join you.
- Find a member in your neighborhood and go for a walk on a Sunday morning.
- Invite a member of your child's Hebrew school class for a play date.

We realize these aren't earth-shaking or life-changing ideas, but isn't that really the point? We don't often change our lives, or our relationships, all at one time. Lots of little connections, built up over time, form the strongest bonds. You'll think of other ideas yourselves, and when you do, please share them with others. You'll be leading from your own chair.



## Tu Bishvat Celebration

Tubishvat is coming. We'll celebrate the Jewish environmental holiday, the "new year of the trees" at an adult Tu Bishvat "seder" on **Wednesday, February 7, at 7:30 pm**. You'll receive more details in a future mailing.



## Purim is coming!

The Dorshei Tzedek Purim celebration will be **Thursday, March 8, at 7 pm**. Mark your calendars now to hold the date, and start thinking up a costume. We'll have more details in the next newsletter.

## Shabbat Programs

*These events are at the Unitarian Universalist Society, 1326 Washington St., West Newton.*

### Tot Shabbat

**January 6, February 3, March 17, April 28, May 19**

Please join us for drop-in Tot Shabbat one Saturday a month from **10:30 to 11:15 am**. The session is a lively 45 minutes of song, story, and activity geared for the under-5 set with at least one of their parents. It's a wonderful opportunity to meet other families and introduce your preschooler to the joy of Jewish song and community. No advance sign up is required. For further information please contact Sheree Galpert at 617-558-8697. Kitah Aleph and Bet parents with younger children please take note: Tot Shabbat is scheduled to begin right after the Aleph/Bet "family time" segment of your child's class, so come on by!



### Erev Shabbat Family Services

**January 5, February 2, March 2, April 13, May 4, June 1**

Once a month, we welcome Shabbat with a musical, all-ages Erev Shabbat family service, from **6-7 pm**.

### Special Shabbat Service and Study Session

In honor of **Martin Luther King Jr.**'s birthday and the 28th yahrzeit of **Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel**, join us **January 13 at 9:45 am** for a Shabbat service that honors the lives and teachings of these two visionary leaders, followed by a pot-luck lunch where we will study texts by both men that address ongoing issues of social and racial justice and reflect on their meaning for our own lives. If you plan to attend the lunch discussion, **please bring a dairy/vegetarian dish to share**, enough for 6-8 people.

## Education News

As the weather drives our 'Community Time'/Before School Program in from the playground to the Parish Hall, as we prepare for mid-year conferences, and while Rabbi Spitzer and I come up with ridiculous and educational relay races for the yearly Maccabia games, all of the Dorshei teaching staff are struck by how quickly the year is passing! This is one of the times at the school when we check in to make sure "we're all on the same page", assess some of the newly implemented materials being used, and reflect on established school work to be sure that it is fresh and effective.

In my last newsletter article I introduced the goals for Tikkun Olam in the school and now would like to give you an update on our progress. It is a program that I'm particularly excited about because it helps young people make concrete connections from their studies of text to today's world. Through classroom discussion and ultimately action, the students will be more likely to see their obligation and role in all of this. We are up to the second part of this process where the teachers and I have completed a list of themes that have grown out of each grade's curriculum and from discussions between teacher and students. Rabbi Spitzer has also been quite helpful with resources and ideas for this program. Now, the Tikkun Olam Room Parents will take the list of theme(s) that have grown out of each graded curriculum and will look for organizations or projects that the students can work on as a class. Thank you to our Tikkun Olam Room Parents! It can be a challenge to find projects for the students; our "menders of the world" are so young, but there is work that can and needs to be done by young people. I will keep you posted as the projects are identified and as they progress. One of the nice benefits of working on a developing project such as this one is the continuing growth of community closeness as we work in small *hevruta* with all of the stakeholders in a project such as this one.

There is another community that I feel honored to have experienced for the first time, the international Reconstructionist community. I was fortunate to have the opportunity to attend the JRF National Convention in Philadelphia last month. Through workshops, Torah study, Educators Days, and renewing Shabbat shmoozing with other folks from all over the world I learned a great deal and acquired a better sense of the Reconstructionist movement. It also gave me a new perspective on Dorshei Tzedek's role in the movement and the role of the movement in our shul as we grow.

The convention was not only a time of learning and connecting, but also a time of pride and kvelling. Elaine Pollack, one of our founding members and Lower School Family Educator was honored as the recipient of the Master Educator's Award by the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation. It was truly a touching moment when Elaine, along with one other teacher, was recognized during Shabbat services as hundreds watched. Yes, we all know how lucky we are to have Elaine as part of Dorshei Tzedek and an integral part of the school, but this gives that new meaning. *Yasher Koach* Elaine! The convention was also a time for educators to learn from each other and a time to compare and contrast modes of teaching. I came away with many new ideas and resources, but I also came away with a fresh reminder of the strengths of the Dorshei Tzedek school and the skill of the Dorshei Tzedek staff.

As always, please call if you have any thoughts or questions. Wishing all of you some warm times during these short days of winter.

*B'Shalom*

Judith Wolfman, Ed. Director

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*(Working for Peace, continued from page 2)*

Jewish religious perspective. Involving rabbis from all four denominations, RHR has responded to the demolition of Palestinian homes, has brought food and other aid into Palestinian communities during the recent blockade, and has organized visits to both Jewish and Palestinian wounded. Mailing address: Yitzhak Elhanan 2, Jerusalem 92141, Israel; visit their web site at [www.rhr.net](http://www.rhr.net).

- The Shefa Fund is organizing large contributions (\$250+) to organizations working for peace and human rights both within Israel and in the territories, including groups supporting joint Jewish-Arab economic projects, dialogue projects, and Israeli human rights organizations. Copies of this docket are available at the Dorshei Tzedek office, or contact Sue Hoffman at The Shefa Fund: 215-483-4004, [shoffman@shefafund.org](mailto:shoffman@shefafund.org).

May all of our prayers and our efforts help make 2001 a year of new possibilities on the long, hard road to peace.

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*Rabbi Spitzer does not have regular office hours, but is available to talk about any spiritual, religious, or personal issues that you might want to discuss. Please call her directly to make an appointment, at 617-924-6242.*

# Adult Education at Dorshei Tzedek



## Telling Our Stories: A Class on Spiritual Autobiography

with Rabbi Toba Spitzer

**Wednesday evenings, 7:45-9:30 pm: January 17 and 24, February 28, March 7**  
(for Dorshei Tzedek members only)

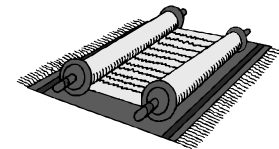
Writing a spiritual autobiography is an opportunity to reflect on that which has ultimate meaning in our lives, and to explore the experiences that have shaped our beliefs and our actions. During the first two classes we will read selections from the spiritual autobiographies of others and do some writing exercises; over the following month participants will write their own spiritual autobiography; and in the final two classes we will share our stories with one another.

**Registration is required for this class**, as the class size will be limited. Please call Rabbi Spitzer at 617-965-0330 x2 to register.

## Shabbat Morning Study

**Saturday mornings, 8:45-9:40 am**

**January 6, February 3, March 3, April 21, May 12, June 23**



We continue to explore the weekly Torah portion, *parashat hashavua*, with the help of the great Israeli scholar, Nehama Leibowitz. We will do close reading of selected verses through the lens of the rabbinic texts and incisive questions provided by Leibowitz in her study guides to each book of the Torah. All texts will be provided in English translation; no previous experience in text study necessary. Bring your own coffee and join us for this early morning prelude to the Shabbat service! (no fee)

*These events are at the Unitarian Universalist Society, 1326 Washington St., West Newton.*

## Thanks for the New Brochure

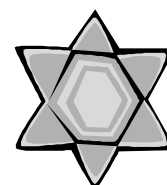
The Board and Membership wish to thank Debra Rattet and Ellen Pashall for the hard work and long hours that went into writing and producing Dorshei Tzedek's new brochure. Yes folks, we now have a beautiful brochure describing our congregation! We'll put them out at services and feel free to pass them on to friends who inquire about us. *Yasher Koach* and *Todah Raba* Debra and Ellen!!

## Palestinians & Jews: A Coexistence Dialogue

If you missed Forsan Hussein and Michael Bavly when they spoke to Dorshei Tzedek, here's another chance to hear them - they will be at Temple Beth Shalom in Needham (670 Highland Avenue) on Wednesday, Jan. 17th, at 7:30 pm. RSVP by Jan. 12th to the American Jewish Committee at 457-8700 or [Boston@ajc.org](mailto:Boston@ajc.org). \$5 contribution requested; under 18 free.

## Thank You from Wendy Gedanken

To all our friends at Dorshei Tzedek: On November 11, we celebrated Mia becoming Bat Mitzvah. Thanks are due to many individuals who helped us and supported us, and I hope that we haven't neglected anyone. This, however, is a thank you to the community. Mia's bat mitzvah was such a warm, wonderful, meaningful ceremony in large part because of the community within which it took place. And that community exists only because of the hard work that many put into it. So, on behalf of my family, thanks to all of you who help make Dorshei Tzedek continually.





## Contributions



*We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions:*

### General Fund

#### **Terry and Phyllis Denny**

*In honor of Bat Mitzvah of Karen Arnold –  
Congratulations to the congregation and to Karen and her  
family on this magnificent occasion*

#### **Etta Epstein**

*In honor of my children, Louise, Alan and Hannah Epstein*

#### **Carolyn Fine and Jeremiah Friedman**

*In honor of the Women's Bat Mitzvah  
of November 19, 2000*

#### **Natalie and Manuel Forman**

*In honor of our granddaughters,  
Rachel, Sarah, and Rebecca*

#### **Wendy Gedanken and Joaquim Branco**

*In honor of Mia's Bat Mitzvah  
In honor of Elaine Pollack's hard work*

#### **Ora Gladstone, Mitchell, Isaac and Hadass Silver**

*In honor of the three recent Simchas  
in our wonderful community:*

*Rachel Hemley Bronstein's Bat Mitzvah*

*Mia Branco's Bat Mitzvah*

*The six sisters' Bat Mitzvah – Cheryl, Linette, Sherry,  
Karen, Lisa, and Dinah*

#### **Ellie and Efrem Goldberg**

*In honor of the B'not Mitzvah of Cheryl, Sherry, Lisa,  
Dinah, Karen, and Linette*

*In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Mia Branco*

#### **Francis Greenberg**

#### **Linda Hartman**

*In honor of Sherry Katz' Bat Mitzvah*

#### **Allison and Ezra Hausman**

*In honor of the B'not Mitzvah of Six Scholarly Women*

#### **Meryl Kahn**

#### **Kelli Kirshtein**

*In honor of the B'not Mitzvah of Rachel Hemley Bronstein,  
Mia Branco, Amy Goldsmith,  
and Cheryl, Linette, Dinah, Sherry, Lisa, and Karen*

#### **Yola Lev**

#### **Dinah Moeller**

#### **Ellen Pashall**

*In honor of the B'not Mitzvah of: Rachel Hemley Bronstein,  
Mia Branco, Linette Liebling, Cheryl Sacks, Sherry Katz,  
Karen Arnold, Lisa Port White, and Dinah Moeller*

*In honor of Cindy Rome's birthday*

#### **Lisa Port White**

*In honor and gratitude of Wendy Gendaken's time,  
patience, and talents in helping to make my beautiful tallis*

*In honor of Rachel Hemley Bronstein's Bat Mitzvah*

*In honor of Mia Branco's Bat Mitzvah*

*In honor, appreciation, and love of Cheryl Sacks, Karen  
Arnold, Linette Liebling, Dinah Moeller and Sherry Katz*

#### **Larry Port and Sue Port Simon**

*In honor of Lisa Dee Port White  
on the celebration of her recent Bat Mitzvah*

#### **Marilyn and Neil Port**

*In honor of our daughter, Lisa Port White,  
who was called to the Torah on November 18, 2000*

#### **The Marty Port Family**

*In honor of the B'nai Mitzvah of Lisa Port White*

#### **Nannette and Gary Schwartz**

#### **Cindy Shulak-Rome and Dan Rome**

*In honor of Rachel Hemley Bronstein's Bat Mitzvah*

*In honor of Mia Branco's Bat Mitzvah*

#### **Nessa and Bill Spitzer**

#### **Jill Volk and Steve Lewis**

*In honor of the 40th wedding anniversary of  
Marvin and Charlene Brotman*

*In honor of Elaine Pollack, Master Teacher*

#### **Solomon Volk**

*In honor of Jill Volk*

#### **Debbie Waber and Stephen Leonard**

*In honor of the Adult Bat Mitzvah Group*

#### **Carolyn and Edwin Weiner**

*In honor of the recent Bat Mitzvah of Cheryl Sacks –  
we were thankful to participate in this special occasion*

#### **Ralph and Margalit Wertheimer**

## Holy Book Fund

**Charlotte Skoler**

*In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Cheryl Sacks*

**Jeff and Cheryl Sacks**

*In honor of Cheryl's Adult Bat Mitzvah group colleagues*

**Elaine and Irving Gedanken**

*In honor of Mia Branco's Bat Mitzvah*

**Cindy Shulak-Rome and Dan Rome**

*In honor of Linette Liebling, Sherry Katz, Cheryl Sacks,  
Karen Arnold, Lisa Port White and Dinah Moeller  
on the occasion of their B'not Mitzvah*

**Steffi and Eric Karp**

*In honor of Mia Branco's Bat Mitzvah*

**Phyllis and David Farber**

*In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Sherry Katz*

**Wendy Gedanken and Joa Branco**

*In honor of Mia's Bat Mitzvah*

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## Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

**Marcia Wasserman**

**Allen and Sheila Liberman**

**Barbara Nicholson**

**Wendy Gedanken and Joa Branco**

*In honor of Mia's Bat Mitzvah*

**Cindy Shulak-Rome and Dan Rome**

*In honor of Toba's birthday*

**Lisa Port White**

*In thanks and appreciation for Toba's time and help*

**Michael Luckens**

*With hopes for peace*

**Sally Kolodkin**

*With thanks for the support for Joseph Schwarz*

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## Religious School Fund

**Barbara and Sheldon Magaliff**

*On the occasion of  
Rachel Hemley Bronstein's Bat Mitzvah*

**Barbara and Shelly Isaacs**

**Donna Webber and Daniel Shi**

**Leeann Simons and David Huenemoerder**

**Barbara Shatkin and Andrew Litman**

*In honor of the High Holy Day Children's Programming  
Committee*

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## JRF Matching Donation

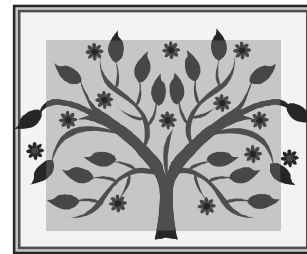
**Debbie Waber and Stephen Leonard**

*Honor someone or an event with a contribution to support  
our community. Contributions are welcome in any amount  
at any time. Please make checks payable to Congregation  
Dorshei Tzedek and mail them to 1326 Washington Street,  
West Newton MA, 02465. Thank you!*

### Condolences



We extend condolences to Matilda Bruckner and her family on the death of her mother, Mary Tomaryn, and to Hope Kellman and her family on the death of her father, Arthur Kellman. May you be comforted among all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and may your parents' memories be for a blessing.



### Thank You from the Women's Adult Bat Mitzvah Group

We would like to thank all of you who helped to make our bat mitzvah and the celebration a joyful community event. We are warmly touched by the outpouring of love and support of so many of you. Our bat mitzvah experience held deep meaning for all of us, and we encourage the formation of other groups. If any Dorshei Tzedek member would like to discuss this further, please feel free to call any of us. —Karen Arnold, Sherry Katz, Linette Liebling, Dinah Moeller, Lisa Port White, Cheryl Sacks



## Membership

### Welcome to These New Members!

The Zolit family includes Barbara, Jerry, Ethan and Charlotte. They live in Newton where Ethan is in third grade and Charlotte is in kindergarten. Barbara works at Family Table (Jewish food pantry) and Jerry is a product marketer at Agilent Technologies. The Zolit's joined Dorshei Tzedek because as a family they felt they could build a community with other members. They look forward to learning more about Reconstructionist philosophy and participating in child and adult education programs.

Karla Hailer-Fidelman and her two sons, James and Micah Shapiro, joined Dorshei Tzedek just before the High Holy Days. Karla is a slightly acerbic social critic for the Newton TAB and doing her best to manage an eclectic household that not only includes the boys but her husband Miles and his two children, Tracy and Russell. James, a sixth grader at Day, claims he is not a morning person. Micah, a third grader at Horace Mann, has been known to lip sync and dance in public. Miles works with local governments on telecommunications policy and runs a web hosting company. He belongs to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Medford, but has a commitment to the Boston Jewish community and recently assisted in the development of *ShalomBoston.com*.

The Green's are a family of five: Jeff, Beth, Elana, Eitan, and Liza (our trusty English Springer). Eitan is a freshman at Needham High. He's an accomplished drummer, skateboarder and holds a 2nd degree black belt in Kempo Karate. Elana is a freshman at Northwestern University. Both children are graduates of Solomon Schechter. Beth is the technology director and computer teacher at Ten Acre Country Day School and Jeff is in investment management sales. "We are dual citizens ... of Massachusetts and Maine, having lived in Needham for 16 years and in Kents Hill, Maine for 4 years. We're hard to find from May to November each year. We love the outdoors: skiing and snowboarding, sailing and paddling as well as fishing (well, at least Jeff loves fishing). We joined Dorshei Tzedek because last year's High Holy Day services were the most spiritual experience we've had indoors in a long time. We look forward to a long association with the Dorshei Tzedek community."

### New Member Orientation

If you missed the new member orientation in December, you're in luck. We will hold another orientation on **Tuesday, January 9 at 7:30 pm** at the Unitarian Society. This soup-to-nuts introduction to the congregation is intended for anyone who has joined the congregation in the last six months.

## Looking for a Fun Jewish Camp Experience for Your Kids Next Summer?

### Open House to Learn More About Camp Naaleh

Habonim-Dror is a Labor Zionist youth movement with summer camps and local chapters throughout the United States and



Canada; Camp Naaleh is the New York state camp, located in the Hudson Valley 90 minutes from NYC and 3.5 hours from Boston. It's open to kids ages 8 and up; the programs are 4 and 6 weeks. (It's also less expensive than most private camps.)

My 2 kids went there this past summer – and loved it. As a parent, I liked the fact that the camp is small, friendly, just-active enough, uses Hebrew as part of everyday life, and instills a positive sense of Judaism the same way. Because it's Kibbutz-like, it also avoids the materialism that can creep into some summer camps.

They're trying to expand their Boston presence, so we'll have an open house for kids and parents at 11 am Sunday, January 28, at our house: 90 Washington Street, Newton, 617-969-4036. On tap: A speaker from the camp, along with a video, slides and real-life testimonials from the Donnini kids. Bagels, kid-food and coffee, too. (Everyone will be home for the Super Bowl.)

You can get directions at [www.corporateink.com](http://www.corporateink.com), or email me at [abermar@corporateink.com](mailto:abermar@corporateink.com). Please RSVP. Habonim-Dror's URL is [www.habonimdror.org](http://www.habonimdror.org)

—Amy Bermar





## Tikkun Olam Opportunities

**COEJL:** The Jewish Environmental Leadership Institute of the Coalition on Environment and Jewish Life is happening in Washington, DC on February 25-27, and is a wonderful opportunity to meet Jewish environmental activists from around the country, to learn about environmental issues and Jewish approaches to environmental activism. Brochures are available in the Dorshei Tzedek office and at Shabbat morning services, or visit the COEJL web site at [www.coejl.org](http://www.coejl.org). Registration deadline is January 23. (Note: DT member Jodi Sugerman-Brozan is on the COEJL board and can tell you more about the conference!)

**Tutoring Opportunity:** The Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy is looking for volunteers to tutor in schools in Boston, Cambridge, Framingham, and Brockton; training is provided. Call 617-457-8661 for more information, or visit the web site at [www.jrcrboston.org/literacy.htm](http://www.jrcrboston.org/literacy.htm).

**Family Table volunteers needed:** Please contact Barbara Shatkin (617-964-3121) if you want to sign up for Family Table, Greater Boston's Jewish Food Pantry. Volunteers bag groceries at Kehillath Israel on Harvard St. in Brookline and then deliver them to a Jewish family in need in the greater Boston area. Dorshei Tzedek members are scheduled to do volunteer deliveries on Sunday, February 11, with a start time of 12:45 pm.

**Sunday's Bread:** Thank you to Ira Krotick who coordinated DT's involvement with Sunday's Bread for many years; and welcome to Willa Kuh who has agreed to continue coordination of this important DT activity.

**Let's talk about garbage!** Did you know that Americans make up only 5% of the world's population, yet we consume a third of the planet's resources? And did you know that there's something *you* can do to cut down on how much you consume and waste?

*Dorshei Tzedek households have the opportunity to join an "EcoTeam" that translates your desire to "do the right thing" into a program of environmental action that will make a difference.* Five or six households form an EcoTeam and meet seven times over a four-month period. Team members use a step-by-step workbook to create more resource-efficient lifestyle practices. They support one another in using less water and energy, buying "eco-wise" products and encouraging others to get involved. Team members create a strong sense of community often sharing their knowledge, tools and other resources. This is a great experience for kids as well as adults!

*Why join an EcoTeam?* • You want to be more environmentally friendly, but beyond recycling, you're not sure what else to do or how to do it. • You are well informed, but need motivation to translate your knowledge into action. • You have adapted many sustainable lifestyle practices, but need help to be more consistent. • You are consistently practicing a sustainable lifestyle, but wish to go to the next level.

We are hoping to form 2-4 Dorshei Tzedek EcoTeams in different neighborhoods. To sign up, or for more information, please call Ellie Goldberg at 617-965-9637.

## Social Action at Dorshei Tzedek

What is Social Action at Dorshei Tzedek? The committee is at work trying to answer this very question. About one year ago, the Social Action Committee recruited congregants with personal and/or professional experience in Social Action/Social Justice work to begin the work of self-definition. Over several meetings we identified "Goals for Social Action at Dorshei Tzedek," which remain in draft form (see below). Based upon these goals, we asked Toba to teach a class in Judaism and Social Action, which took place this fall. We also began exploring the use of a community building and organizing strategy that involves intentional conversations between congregants about interests and concerns, and from which a member-driven, social action agenda might evolve. This strategy is called "one-to-ones," and you will be hearing more about one-to-ones in the future.

### Social Action Draft Goals (March, 2000)

1. Dorshei Tzedek (DT) should be engaged in meaningful social justice/social change work, addressing social issues at the level of causes, not just symptoms, and in connection with other groups working for social justice.
2. Social Action at DT should provide meaningful, direct service opportunities for adults and children.
3. Social justice work at DT should be grounded in Jewish values and Jewish learning.
4. Awareness of social justice issues should infuse the life of DT, e.g., in the school, in our religious life, etc..
5. Social justice work at DT should provide transformative experiences and critical thinking about social justice issues for our children.

The Social Action Committee will next meet on **Thursday, January 18** in the evening. We welcome new members. Questions, thoughts, suggestions: Please contact Betsy Hinden, 617-325-9775, [betsy.hinden@umassmed.edu](mailto:betsy.hinden@umassmed.edu).

## Notes from the November-December Board Meetings

by Lisa Port White

The Board heard reports from the Finance and Fundraising Committees. The congregation is on-target for expected revenues from dues and other sources, and a fundraising campaign will be kicked off in January 2001 with a mandate to raise \$18,000 for this fiscal year. The Fundraising Committee's objectives are to go beyond bringing in money, including creating a culture of giving within the community and developing a fundraising process that can be implemented from year to year. They plan to coordinate a multi-year fundraising plan to bring in money for budgetary needs as well as to begin building up some cash reserves.

The Membership Committee reported a successful pot-luck Shabbat program in December, as well as a successful new-member orientation for 11 new households. Membership development is on-track with the net gain of 10-12 new households this fall, and new in-reach efforts to greet and integrate new members.

The Board has begun a discussion of funding priorities for the coming year (5762), and will be reviewing proposals from the Space Committee and the Education Committee regarding staffing.

The next Board meeting will be held on **Sunday, January 21 at 7:30 pm** at the home of Clifford and Tessa Goldsmith. The Executive Committee will meet on **Sunday, January 7 at 10 am** at the home of Dan and Cindy Shulak-Rome.

### Book Discussion



The next meeting of the Dorshei Tzedek book discussion group will be on **Tuesday, February 13 from 7-9 pm** at the Unitarian Society. We will be reading a book of short stories, *For the Relief of Unbearable Urges* by Nathan Englander (paperback edition published by Vintage). Englander's stories have been called "brilliant" and "extraordinary," and his voice has been described, in a review in the *New York Times*, as "daring, funny and exuberant, keenly attuned to both the absurdities of life and its undertow of sadness and disappointment."

We hope you can join us! For more information, contact Susannah Zisk (617-332-0977, [szisk@concentric.net](mailto:szisk@concentric.net)) or Carole Slipowitz (617-964-6572, [cwithany@aol.com](mailto:cwithany@aol.com)).

## Fall Members' Meeting

by Lisa Port White

Congregation Dorshei Tzedek's Fall Members' Meeting was held on November 19, 2000 at the Second Church in West Newton. Fifty-two people, representing 47 households, participated. Co-president Chayim Herzig-Marx presented a State-of-the-Shul address, followed up by Paul Hattis, Nancy Gertz, and Debbie Waber.

In his financial report, Paul Hattis described the successful implementation of the new, self-assessment dues structure. The congregation is currently \$2000 above the target goal for this time of year. The new structure is seemingly financially secure and has not led to loss of members above normal attrition.

Nancy Gertz's membership update reported that we currently have 110 households – a net growth of 10-12 households. Now that we are growing and there are many new faces at our services and events, it is up to us to make Dorshei Tzedek continue to be a warm, welcoming place. In addition to the 89 kids enrolled in the school (K – 7) and seven staff, there is a program for post-b'nai mitzvah kids in the works. There was a meeting to discuss this on December 14.

Debbie Waber presented the Growth Committee report. She described how a survey of other congregations highlighted the need to pay attention to clarity of mission, the needs of the community, increased staff capacity requirements, and formalized governance. We must pay attention to the systemic nature of process, the tension of cohesion and fragmentation, and resource management, including space and staff. Judy Herzig-Marx described actions that have been subsequently initiated: a Space Committee, a Personnel Committee, and a new committee to re-examine the Mission Statement.

Elizabeth Ross was nominated, seconded, and unanimously voted in as the congregation's at-large member of the Board of Directors. Congratulations Elizabeth!

The final part of the Members' Meeting was a re-visioning project, in which small group discussions reported on how core values might be incorporated into weekly congregational life and the mission statement.





## January Calendar



Date	Time	Event	Setup/Cleanup and Notes
Jan 2, Tue	3:30-5:30 pm	<i>No School - Teacher In-service</i>	
Jan 5, Fri	6 - 7 pm	<b>Family Shabbat Service</b>	Sally Kolodkin, Tom Kuh
Jan 6, Sat	8:45 am	<b>Adult Education: Torah Study</b>	<i>see page 5</i>
Jan 6, Sat	9:45 am 10:30 am	Shabbat Service Tot Shabbat	Sarah Kuhn, Jill Volk, Steve Leonard
Jan 6, Sat	10 am - 12 pm	Alef and Bet Classes	
Jan 7, Sun	2 - 4 pm	Vav Family Ed	
Jan 9, Tue	7:30 pm	<b>New Member Orientation</b>	
Jan 9, Tue	8 pm	Men's Group	
Jan 13, Sat	9:45 am - 4 pm	<b>Martin Luther King and Joshua Heschel Shabbat Service, Lunch, and Study</b> ( <i>see page 3</i> )	Jonathan Kahn-Leavitt, Arthur Brown, Meryl Kahn, Hope Kellman
Jan 17, Wed	7:45 - 9:30 pm	<b>Adult Education: Spiritual Autobiography (1)</b>	<i>see page 5</i>
*Jan 20, Sat	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Linette Liebling, Andrew Littman, Gail Leicher
Jan 20, Sat	10 am - 12 pm	Alef and Bet Classes	
Jan 21, Sun	2 pm - 4 pm	Gan Program	
Jan 24, Wed	7:45-9:30 pm	<b>Adult Education: Spiritual Autobiography (2)</b>	<i>see page 5</i>
Jan 27, Sat	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Lissy Medvedow, Brian Nadler, Elaine Fanwick



## February Calendar



Date	Time	Event	Setup/Cleanup and Notes
Feb 2, Fri	6 - 7 pm	Family Shabbat Service	Elizabeth Miller, Hankus Netsky
Feb 3, Sat	8:45 am	<b>Adult Education: Torah Study</b>	<i>see page 5</i>
Feb 3, Sat	9:45 am 10:30 am	Shabbat Service Tot Shabbat	Ellen Pashall, Elaine Pollack, Peter Roberts
Feb 3, Sat	10 am - 12 pm	Alef and Bet Classes	
Feb 4, Sun	2 - 4 pm	Kita Dalet Family Education Program	
Feb 7, Wed	7:30 pm	<b>Tu Bishvat Seder</b> ( <i>see page 3</i> )	Willa Kuh, Stuart Snyder, Cindy Shulak-Rome
Feb 9, Fri	6 pm - 8 pm	Kitah Gan Shabbat Seder	
Feb 10, Sat	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Ilene Spiro, Judith Wine, Steve Strassberg
*Feb 17, Sat	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Steven Siegel, Tania Mireles
Feb 20, Tue		<i>No School</i>	
Feb 22, Thu		<i>No School</i>	
Feb 24, Sat	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Dinah Moeller, Hal Lichtin
Feb 28, Wed		<b>Adult Education: Spiritual Autobiography (3)</b>	<i>see page 5</i>

All events and services are held at the Unitarian Universalist Society, 1326 Washington St., West Newton, unless otherwise noted. Check the signs when you arrive for the exact location. All K-1 through Grade 5 classes meet in the lower level classrooms, except for special programs. An asterisk (\*) denotes Rabbi Spitzer's weekend off. **Free child care is available during Shabbat morning services in the large classroom near the office on the first floor.**

Congregation Dorshei Tzedek  
1326 Washington St.  
West Newton, MA 02465