

CONGREGATION DORSHEI TZEDEK

An Affiliate of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation
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Acts of Caring

by Rabbi Toba Spitzer

in memory of Marty Bresnick, z"l



Two millennia ago, in 70 C.E., the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans, ending almost 1,000 years of a priestly sacrificial system of religion. Facing this religious as well as socio-political catastrophe, the early rabbis were faced with this critical question: How do we relate to God now, in the absence of the priests and the sacrifices? Where is God's presence now that the Temple is gone? My favorite answer to this question is found in a story told about Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai, the founder of the first *yeshivah* (rabbinic study center) in the land of Israel after the destruction.

"Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai once was walking with his disciple Rabbi Joshua near Jerusalem after the destruction of the Temple. Rabbi Joshua looked at the Temple ruins and said: 'Alas for us! The place which atoned for the sins of the people Israel through the ritual of animal sacrifice lies in ruins!' Then Rabban Yochanan ben Zakkai spoke to him these words of comfort: 'Be not grieved, my son. There is another way of gaining atonement even though the Temple is destroyed. We must now gain atonement through *gemilut chasadim* (acts of loving-kindness).'"

Rabbi Yochanan teaches here that in place of direct ritual access to God, connection is now found in the relationships among members of the community. Our "offering" is no longer an animal, but an action that exhibits a particular kind of responsibility for one another. *Gemilut chasadim* encompasses those acts of loving obligation which bind a community together; acts which anyone can give and anyone can receive. Traditionally they include visiting the sick, attending to the dead, comforting mourners, providing an orphaned bride with the means to get married, and offering an interest-free loan to one in need.

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Co-Presidents' Message

by Judy and Chayim Herzig-Marx

So much goes on within Dorshei Tzedek that one can forget we exist within a larger Jewish community – in fact, within more than one larger community. In this month's column, we'd like to note the evolving role of our congregation in the broader Jewish world.

As most of you know, Dorshei Tzedek is affiliated with the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, which is the lay arm of the Reconstructionist movement. Actually, we've been active in JRF right from the start.

It was at the last meeting of Judy's nine-year tenure on the JRF national Board that Dorshei Tzedek was accepted as an affiliate, and Chayim then began an eight-year stint. Cindy Shulak-Rome is currently in her third year as a national Board member. We've also been associated with the Cooperating Schools Network, primarily through the work of Elaine Pollack and Jill Volk. You should all recall that Elaine was recently honored as a Master Teacher by

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I was reminded of the importance of *gemilut chasadim* this past January, when Dorshei Tzedek member Marty Bresnick passed away. Marty was a wonderful man with a large network of family and friends who came together to pay honor to his memory and to comfort those closest to him. Marty's own acts of *chesed*, of caring, reaped the wonderful harvest of this outpouring of love as he was laid to rest. And it was also important that, along with the friends and family, there were many Dorshei Tzedek members who showed up for the funeral or the *shivah*, or who helped provide a meal. Some of these congregants knew Marty well, some have children in Marty's daughter Anna's religious school class, others barely knew Marty yet came out of a desire to honor his memory and to make sure there was a *minyan* (prayer quorum) for the mourners. This was a powerful example of *gemilut chasadim* in practice.

Yet as important as *gemilut chasadim* is, the reality is that these traditional practices often seem to run counter to American norms of privacy and self-sufficiency. Visit someone in the hospital that I barely know? Let people who are not close to me into my house at my time of deepest grief? These are normal and not uncommon reactions. It's to counter this awkwardness and to break down artificial barriers that traditional Judaism has developed structured practices and norms for *gemilut chasadim*. One is not "invited" to a *shivah* house, but all in the community share the obligation to comfort the mourners and to make a *minyan* for the recital of the mourner's *kaddish*—and there are traditional guidelines for how to make such a visit, to minimize discomfort on all sides. Similarly, it is expected that community members will consider it a loving obligation to visit and help support someone who is ill, in accordance with their needs.

I have been impressed with the care and concern I have seen Dorshei Tzedek members show for one another. Yet at the same time it is becoming apparent that, as the congregation grows, we need to bolster and expand our structure for providing *gemilut chasadim*. The Mitzvah Committee has in the past taken on time-limited acts of caring—usually a meal prepared for someone in need, sometimes more extensive support in special cases. In practice these efforts have fallen on the shoulders of just one or two people to organize, and as our needs grow the current system has become inadequate. We now have an opportunity to think more deeply and creatively about how to implement Dorshei Tzedek's commitment to being a

caring community. How do we as a congregation fulfill the mitzvah of *bikkur holim*, visiting those who are ill? How do we—or should we—support members in more extended life crises or illnesses? How do we create a system where as many members as possible are involved, and not just a small group of activists?

If you are interested in further discussing these issues and helping to expand our *gemilut chasadim* system at Dorshei Tzedek, please join myself, Karen Wasserman, and Jill Volk at an open meeting on **Thursday, March 15, at 7:45 pm**. The meeting will be held at the home Linette Liebling in Newton Center (call for directions, 617-244-7248). If you have any questions, or are interested but unable to make the meeting, please call Karen at 617-325-9775. May we together continue to fulfill Rabbi Yochanan's teaching that Godliness is experienced most fully in the care that we give and that we receive.

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.

Jewish Community Advocacy Day at the State House

Wednesday, March 21, 8:45 am – 11:00 am

Make your voice heard at the State House! Following a briefing on issues of concern to the Jewish Community, participants will meet with their state Senator and state Representative. This is a great opportunity to make a difference on important issues, including care for seniors; immigrant and refugee issues; services for the mentally ill; affordable housing; environmental justice. For more information, contact Amy Dain at 617-457-8669 or adain@jrcrboston.org.

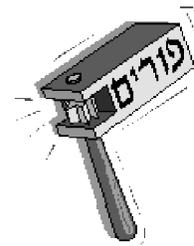


Purim Celebration

Thursday night, March 8 at 7 pm

In the Parish Hall at the Unitarian Society

Come join us for an evening of unrestrained fun. We'll have our traditional Purim spiel, a costume parade with prizes, the much, much larger than life "First Night" puppets (back by popular demand!), Purim Davvening, Megillah Reading (swing those groggers!), Music and Dancing, Hamentaschen, snacks and drinks! **All ages are encouraged to dress up in costumes!** In keeping with the Purim tradition of *Mishloach Manot* ("sending gifts") we ask you **please to bring one plate of goodies** (fruit, nuts, hamentaschen, candy, etc.) to exchange with another household. Please also bring a donation of a non-perishable food item (e.g., canned goods) for the Newton Food Pantry.



Passover Is Coming!

The first seder falls this year on **Saturday evening, April 7**. We will celebrate the seventh day of Passover at Shabbat morning services on **April 14**. As we celebrate the bar mitzvah of Alex O'Connell (see page 7), we will also close the Pesach holiday with a special service that includes the Yizkor memorial service.

Seder Match

It's a mitzvah to attend a Passover seder, and a mitzvah to invite guests to a seder! So do a mitzvah – if you need a seder to attend, first or second night, or if you are able to accommodate Dorshei Tzedek guest(s) at your seder, please call our Seder Match coordinator, Linette Liebling, at 617-244-7248. Please call by March 26 if possible.

Pre-Pesach Food Drive

Time to get rid of that chametz ... you can clean your cabinets of non-Passover foods (or anything else you'd like to contribute!) by bringing non-perishable items to the Dorshei Tzedek Food Drive. The collection begins Thursday evening, March 8, at the Purim celebration, and continues through March 29. Our third grade class will be delivering the food to the Newton Food Pantry. Collection boxes will be out in the hall during school hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:15 – 5:45 pm.



Yom Hashoah Event

On **Thursday, April 19 at 8 pm**, Dorshei Tzedek will be hosting a dramatic reading for Yom Hashoah. The performance will be at the Unitarian Society, in the Headstart room. We hope you can join us. Please mark your calendars and tell your friends. You'll be hearing more from us as the date approaches. Readers wanted! We will be meeting for rehearsals at the Unitarian Society on **April 4** and **April 11**. If you are interested in being a reader for this event, please contact Sheree Galpert at 617-558-8697. No dramatic experience necessary.

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

the movement; and, as many of you know, Lesley Chapman, one of our teachers, has written curriculum adopted by the movement. Recently, several of our members – Nancy Gertz, Lisa Port White, Elizabeth Ross, and Cindy – attended a JRF weekend symposium on governance and came back with a huge resource book and dozens of ideas for improving the way we function. You'll hear more about some of these ideas as the Board takes them up. Rabbi Spitzer is a member of the Executive Committee of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association. So we're a well-connected group within the movement, and we make significant contributions as well as benefit from the movement's resources.

Locally, we're becoming better established. We are members of the Synagogue Council of Massachusetts and annually play an important role in its Unity Mission program. The objective of the Unity Mission is to make the Boston Jewish Community stronger by bringing members of the four Jewish movements together, to learn about each other, to emphasize our commonalities, and to explore the areas where our beliefs or practices differ. The mission spends a weekend in New York City, visiting Hebrew Union College (Reform), the Jewish Theological Seminary (Conservative), and Yeshiva University (an Orthodox seminary). Because the Reconstructionist movement does not have a seminary in New York, participants spend extra time in Boston learning about Reconstructionism. For the past few years, Rabbi Spitzer and Chayim have made that presentation.

Our religious school has also attracted considerable attention, most recently from the Bureau of Jewish Education. A few years ago the BJE started a grant program to help make it financially feasible for smaller congregations to hire full-time school principals and has been hoping that we would apply! Now that the congregation is at an appropriate size to sustain such a commitment, we are applying this year for a Full-Time Educator's grant, and we look forward to BJE's positive response to our application. Elaine and Cindy, along with Judith Wolfman, our principal, are quite well known by BJE staff, which regards Dorshei Tzedek as offering a creative and exciting approach to Jewish education.

This will not be the first time the Boston Jewish community has provided financial support to Dorshei Tzedek. We have received program grants from Combined Jewish Philanthropies (CJP) for adult education and for an outreach program on celebrating Jewish holidays, and the launching

of our religious school was aided by an earlier BJE grant. We acknowledge the ongoing support we receive from the community by making sure our holiday and educational programs are open to non-members insofar as possible.

Finally, the Torah of Money study, of which we are justifiably proud and which was led and largely designed by Rabbi Spitzer, contributed directly to the JRF program of the same name. Rabbi Spitzer consulted extensively with JRF central staff, sharing the benefits of our experience with them.

Dorshei Tzedek occupies a distinctive place within the Boston Jewish community and a noteworthy place within the Reconstructionist community. It's important that we appreciate the support we've been given by both communities, as well as the contributions we make. What's true for the individual within a community is also true for institutions within their communities: the community makes demands upon the individual, and the individual makes demands upon the community. That Dorshei Tzedek is so firmly embedded in the fabric of Jewish communities is most gratifying!

Notes from Our Board

by Lisa Port White

The Board of Congregation Dorshei Tzedek met on January 20. The Adult Education and Fundraising Committees are both seeking additional members; interested Dorshei Tzedek members should contact Chayim or Judy Herzig-Marx. Andrew Schiff, Membership-Inreach Chair, reported that Congregation Dorshei Tzedek currently has 111 member-households, with new applications being requested. The Board approved a proposal from Cindy Shulak-Rome to apply for a grant from BJE (Bureau of Jewish Education) which would provide support to bring an Education Director to full-time.

The Board also met on February 11. There were extensive committee reports, including confirmation that the Education Committee has nearly completed the BJE proposal regarding our Education Director position. The Board planned the March Members' meeting (see page 13). Nancy Cohen and Elizabeth Ross presented a model of governance that came from the JRF conference held this past January. For those interested in seeing the workbook from the conference, there will be one in the office/library.

The next Board meeting will be **March 18**. Board meetings are open to all members.



Shabbat Programs



Tot Shabbat

Please join us for drop-in Tot Shabbat one Saturday a month from **10:30 to 11:15 am**. Remaining dates this spring are **March 17, April 28, and May 19**. 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



Once a month, we welcome Shabbat with a musical, all-ages Erev Shabbat family service, from **6-7 pm** at the Unitarian Society. The remaining dates for the year 5761 are **March 2, April 13, May 4, and June 1**.



Chanting and Meditation Erev Shabbat Service

On **Friday, March 16, at 8 pm**, welcome Shabbat with a combination of silent meditation and chants of Hebrew prayers, for a musical and contemplative experience! No meditation experience necessary.

Members' Potluck

We're looking for hosts and guests to participate in our next **Friday** night potluck, **March 23**. We need households with smaller kids, older kids, and without kids, so that means you! These wildly popular evenings are the perfect way to get connected with other members. Contact Judy Hersh at 617-332-2487 or hershj@juno.com to sign up.



Childcare Provided at All Shabbat Services

Did you know that childcare is provided at all Shabbat morning services at Dorshei Tzedek, led by post-b'nai mitzvah teens from our congregation? This is a great opportunity for younger kids and their parents to get to know the wonderful teens in our congregation and each other. No prearrangements are necessary.





B'nai Mitzvah Celebrations



Please note that the B'nai Mitzvah celebrations on March 10 and March 31 will **not** be held at the Unitarian Society. See directions below.

Those on March 17 and April 28 will be at the Unitarian Society, 1326 Washington Street, West Newton.

Olivia Claire Medvedow Bat Mitzvah

We invite the entire Congregation to join us on **Saturday, March 10** as we celebrate the Bat Mitzvah of our daughter, Olivia. Olivia is a 7th grader at Oak Hill Middle School in Newton and, of course, a member of our Kitah Zayin class here at Dorshei Tzedek. She is interested in performing arts, primarily acting and singing, is taking voice lessons and has appeared in stage productions in school and out. She plays softball in the spring. For the past several months, Olivia has been volunteering (with some of her Kitah Zayin classmates) at the Paul R. McLaughlin Center in Dorchester, helping in the day care center, as well as diligently preparing for her Bat Mitzvah.

Due to space considerations, the service will be held at **Temple Beth Avodah**, 45 Puddingstone Lane, Newton Centre, near Memorial Spaulding Elementary School. Dorshei Tzedek has exclusive use of the synagogue for the day.

Directions: Head south on Centre St. to the intersection of Centre and Beacon Sts., where Centre St. forks. Bear left onto Cypress St., then bear right quickly onto Parker St. Turn left on Dedham St. at the T. Turn left on Brookline St. At second set of lights, then right on Oak Hill St. at next light. First left is Puddingstone Lane. We hope you will make the journey to Temple Beth Avodah to join in our simcha!

—Cliff Cohen and Lissy Medvedow

Rebecca Holohan Bat Mitzvah

Rebecca Holohan, a 7th grader at the Winsor School, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on **Saturday, March 17**. Among Rebecca's favorite activities are reading, writing, and ice skating. She also enjoys babysitting. For her *tikkun olam* project, Rebecca sponsored a Suitcases for Kids collection. The luggage will be donated to the Kid's Fund of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, for foster children who move from one home to another. Rebecca is planning to continue community service work that benefits children.

We look forward to celebrating this joyous event with our Dorshei Tzedek community and hope you will be able to join us.

—Sharon Gorberg and John Holohan

Zachary Chaim Rubin-Rattet Bar Mitzvah

Our son Zachary, a 7th grade student at Brown Middle School in Newton, will celebrate his Bar Mitzvah on **Saturday, March 31**. Zachary goes to Grossman Camp in Westwood during the summer. Among his favorite activities are playing soccer, ping-pong, snowboarding, skateboarding, rollerblading, and mastering the yo-yo. Zachary has a natural affinity for science and math, as well as the arts. As part of his *d'var Torah* he is creating an art project on the tabernacle. For tikkun *olam*, Zachary has been entertaining the senior residents at an assisted-living community in Newton. A Youth Endowment Fund at the Jewish Fund for Justice has been established in his name so that he may use the endowment to make donations to community-based organizations.

Directions: The Shabbat morning service will be held at the **Veronique Ballroom**, 20 Chapel Street, Brookline, corner of Longwood Ave. On-street parking is available as well as validated parking in the garage. The Longwood T stop is across the street.

We look forward to this simcha, surrounded by our family, friends, and Dorshei Tzedek community.

—*Debra Rattet and Leslie Rubin*

Alex O'Connell Bar Mitzvah

We hope you can join us on **Saturday, April 14**, when our son, Alex O'Connell, is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah. Alex is a homeschooled eighth grader from Lexington. He is currently rehearsing with the *Puddlejump Players* for a production of *The Land of Oz* that opens in May at the Mass. College of Art. Alex is really into gaming; especially *Dungeons and Dragons* and strategy games. He is also crazy about his baby sister, Tira. Alex volunteers at SunBridge Care and Rehabilitation For Lexington where he spends time providing companionship to a 46-year-old accident victim whose injuries from 23 years ago left him both brain injured and paraplegic. In between fierce poker games, they have started writing a book together describing how the accident has changed his life. Please join us.

—*Gail Leicher and Brian O'Connell*

Rebecca Fortgang Bat Mitzvah

Our daughter Becky will celebrate her bat mitzvah on **Saturday, April 28**. A 7th grader at Brown Middle School, Becky is also singing, for the third year, with the All-Newton Honors Chorus. She plays piano and started voice lessons this year, and likes to write songs and poetry. Becky has taken on two tikkun *olam* projects. She has always enjoyed caring for younger children, and now, every week at Kids Corps (an after-school program at the John M. Barry Boys and Girls Club), she helps kids with reading and art projects. She also volunteered at the Family Nurturing Program of The Second Step, a shelter for domestic violence victims. With the guidance of her exceptional tutor, Miranda Phillips, Becky has found Torah study both challenging and fun. She looks forward to sharing the fruits of her labor with the congregation. We hope you can join us for the service and kiddush.

—*Roberta and Jeffrey Fortgang*

Adult Education in the Community

Jewish Learning Open House

Tuesday, March 13, 7:30-9 pm

Leventhal-Sidman JCC, 333 Nahanton Street, Newton

ME'AH, a two-year course of study in Jewish texts and traditions from the Biblical through the modern periods, is an exciting opportunity for Dorshei Tzedek members to engage in serious study made accessible to people of all levels of Jewish knowledge (or lack thereof!). This open house will provide more information about the program and the application process. Applicants will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. Please RSVP for the open house by **March 8** to Robin Stein, 617-558-6448, or call that number for an application if you are unable to attend.

Journeys in Spirituality: Jewish Mysticism and Meditation

Sundays, March 4, April 1, May 20, 10:00 am – 4:30 pm

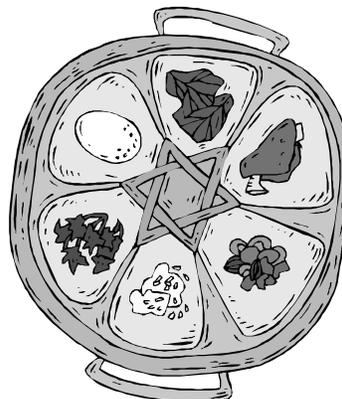
Hebrew College and ALEPH (Alliance for Jewish Renewal) are sponsoring three intensive Sunday workshops with leading teachers of Jewish spirituality, combining text study with practice. **March 4:** "A Contemporary Approach to Jewish Meditation," with Rabbi Miles Krassen (a scholar of Hasidism); **April 1:** "Preparation for Passover: The Purification of the Heart," with Rabbi Shefa Gold (who specializes in sacred chant); **May 20:** "Words and Silence: Jewish Mindfulness Meditation," with Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg (who teaches a Jewishly-oriented version of Buddhist Vipassana meditation). To register and for more information, call 617-278-4939. Brochures are also available at the Dorshei Tzedek office and at Shabbat morning services.

Learn to Read Hebrew

Sundays, March 11 and 18, 2 pm - 6 pm

Temple Beth Elohim, Wellesley

Hebrew Reading Marathon: An eight-hour Hebrew literacy experience to get you started reading Hebrew. Call 781-235-8419 to find out how to register. You may also call Elaine Pollack with questions about this program and its strategy.



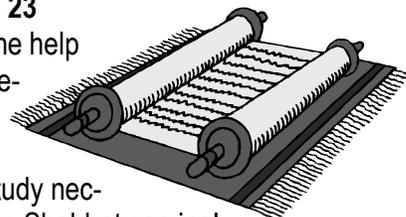
Adult Education at Dorshei Tzedek

Shabbat Morning Study with Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Saturday mornings, 8:45-9:40 am

Remaining Winter/Spring dates: 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)



From Passover to Shavuot: Studies in the Book of Ruth and Song of Songs with Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Wednesday evenings, 7:45 – 9:15, April 25, May 2, 16, and 23



Traditionally associated with the spring holidays of Passover and Shavuot, the books of Ruth and Song of Songs are among the most beautiful Biblical writings, exploring themes of human love and commitment, the relationship of non-Jews to the Jewish community, and an allegory of God's relationship to the people of Israel, among others. Utilizing exciting new curricula produced by the Reconstructionist movement, we will be doing close readings of these texts and relating their teachings to issues in our own lives and communities. (free for members; \$25 for non-members)

"Community of Learners" Open Meeting

Thursday, April 26, 7:45 pm

The Education Committees, Ritual Committee, and tikkun olam Committee have all been talking about the idea of having a community-wide education theme. This would be something that the entire community, adults and kids (through our school primarily), commit to learning about in the coming year.

This "Community of Learners" meeting is an opportunity to air our many thoughts and ideas for adult and child programming. It is a chance for all of us to connect with each other and to review what other congregations have been doing with annual education themes. We hope this discussion will influence our programming and perhaps kick off a process which will define what we think can be realistically achieved in 5762. We strongly encourage anyone in the community who is interested to join in this discussion.

These events are at the Unitarian Society, 1326 Washington Street, West Newton.



Contributions



We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions:

General Fund

In memory of Marty Bresnick:

Linda Snyder and Steven Kadish

The Rickey Family

Sarah Bresnick

Sandy Goldstein

Shirley and David Adler

Elaine and Anna Bresnick

Sorel Berman

Nancy Gertz and Michael Cohen

*In memory of Tillie Berman,
grandmother of Geri Segel, Stefan's Teacher*

In memory of Marty Bresnick

Speedy recovery to Efrem Goldberg

Speedy recovery to Judith Wolfman

In honor of Amy Goldsmith's Bat Mitzvah

In honor of the Adult B'nai Mitzvot:

*Karen Arnold, Cheryl Sacks, Sherry Katz, Linette Liebling,
Lisa Port White, Dinah Moeller*

In honor of Judy Shapiro's BIG Birthday

*In honor of Judy Hersh and Tim Rosa's teaching
and coordination of the Hebrew class*

In honor of Stefan Cohen's 11th birthday

In honor of Julian Cohen's 6th birthday

Jeff Fortgang and Roberta Cole Fortgang

In honor of the B'not Mitzvah of

*Rachel Hemley Bronstein, Mia Branco, Amy Goldsmith,
and the Adult Bat Mitzvah Group of*

Linette, Cheryl, Lisa, Sherry, Karen, and Dinah

Michael White

In memory of Mary Tomaryn (Matilda Bruckner's mother)

Laurel Diehl Wainwright and Gregory Diehl

In honor of the 11/8/2000 Bat Mitzvah

Tessa and Clifford Goldsmith

In honor of the Adult Bat Mitzvah

*In honor of Elaine Pollack for her dedication,
encouragement, and expertise in tutoring*

Amy Goldsmith for her Bat Mitzvah

Catherine and Alice Rouse

In honor of Lisa Port White's Bat Mitzvah

Gianna Bird

Matilda and Ed Bruckner

*In memory of Mary G. Tomaryn, with gratitude to the
Dorshei Tzedek Community and Rabbi Spitzer
for all your sympathy and support*

Carol and Bob Hausman

*In honor of the birth of Ezra's niece,
Rosa Hausman Vogel*

The Port Family Foundation

**The Beatrice and Melvin Lewis Family
Charitable Foundation**

Lori Rutter and Jeffrey Behrens

Sue Fischlowitz and David Roberts

Michael Miller and Heather Ayares

Mark Farber

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

Lauren Gibbs

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Amy Mazur and Michael Feldstein

Holy Book Fund

Elaine Bresnick

In honor of my father's 80th birthday on January 20

Lisa Samelson and Paul Hattis

*In memory of Emanuel Enoch, father of Louise,
grandfather of Hannah*

*In honor of the yahrzeit of William Samelson, father of
Lisa, Zaydie of Joey and Zev*

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

Mazel Tov!

School Fund

The Rubin-Rattet Family

*In Honor of the six women who became B'not Mitzvah
In honor of Amy Goldsmith becoming a Bat Mitzvah
In honor of the Religious School Staff*

RRC Matching Donation

Lisa Samelson and Paul Hattis

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!

Mazel Tov!

To Nicole Wilson, our Kitah Hay teacher, on her acceptance to the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College!



To Cynthia Pilch and Jamie Katz, on Lee's brit bat ceremony!

Todah Rabah

I would like to thank Dorshei Tzedek for its help and support of my *tikkun olam* project, Suitcases For Kids. The drive ended about a month ago and we collected about 50 suitcases for foster children in need of luggage. Although I tried to keep track of donors, we had a lot of mystery bags. So if your name is not on this list, please know we appreciated your donation! I would like to thank Elaine Pollack, Willa Kuh, Louise Enoch, Karen Smith and Elizabeth Ross, Elaine Landis, Cindy Rome, Ellen Pashall, Ora Gladstone, Judith Wolfman, and Judy Hersh. Also thanks to Rabbi Toba Spitzer and Judith Wolfman for letting me use the office as a drop-off site!

Thanks again, Rebecca Holohan

Dear Dorshei Tzedek: Thank you so much for the beautiful tzedakah box and for attending my Bat Mitzvah service. Thank you for making my Bat Mitzvah meaningful.
Love, Amy Goldsmith

Condolences



Dorshei Tzedek mourns the loss of our member Marty Bresnick, z"l (may his memory be for a blessing). Marty was a wonderful friend, father, husband, and community member who had an avid passion for life and who was always generous with his time and his caring. All who spoke of Marty in the days following his death spoke of his great *menschlichkeit*, and his passing is truly a loss to our community. We extend heartfelt condolences to Marty's family, especially to his wife Paula and to Elaine and Anna Bresnick. Contributions to Dorshei Tzedek in Marty's memory will go to a special fund to purchase the new Reconstructionist *shivah* booklets.



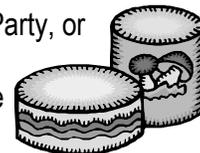
We want to thank all of you for your kind expressions of sympathy over Marty's death. It means so much to know that there are people around us to offer support and help during such a difficult time. Our heartfelt thanks to Rabbi Spitzer and the Dorshei Tzedek community – we will always remember how you have helped to pull us through.

—*Elaine and Anna Bresnick, Paula Kaplan*

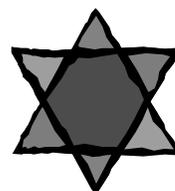
Class Projects for the Community and for Peace

The Kitah Gimel class will be conducting a drive to collect non-perishable food items for the Newton Food Pantry. Please bring your cans to the Purim Party, or to Dorshei Tzedek during the next week.

We're counting on everyone to help make the drive a success.



Kitah Aleph is collecting pennies for Peace!!! Please give us your pennies – they all add up – and we will be giving them to Rabbis for Human Rights, who are replanting olive trees in Palestinian villages where trees have been torn down in the recent violence. Look for our penny jar in the upstairs hallway on Saturdays, Tuesdays and Thursdays, just before class ends.



JRF News

by Cindy Shulak-Rome

I have the honor of serving on the Board of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (JRF), which meets twice yearly. The most recent Board meeting was this past November, just prior to the JRF Convention. Here are some highlights from this Board meeting:



Role of the Rabbi Commission—The commission report, “The Rabbi-Congregation Relationship: A Vision for the 21st Century,” was presented to the Board and was approved without change. This great document will be of use to Dorshei Tzedek, and, I am sure, to many other congregations. A study guide for use of the commission report will be issued and will include: information from the Placement Commission, model contract, description of the covenantal relationships, etc. Mordechai Liebling described the report as “Light-years ahead of anything from the other movements”.

Education—JRF acknowledges that youth programming is inadequate and will be a priority in educational planning. The Reconstructionist Summer Camp is geared to begin in the summer of 2002. Camp directors have been appointed and plans are underway to secure a site and develop programming. A Teen Leadership Kallah was held at Congregation Ramat Shalom in Florida this past January to recruit Reconstructionist teens to serve as leaders for youth and camping programs.

International Associates—The Board passed a resolution developed by the Outreach and Affiliation Committee to create a new status of International Associate, for communities outside North America desiring a Reconstructionist association. We have for quite a while been receiving queries of interest from congregations in Europe, Asia, and Australia that are attracted to the Reconstructionist liturgy, our values of inclusivity and democracy, and the many publications and resources the movement offers. International Associate status offers more limited services as the movement is unable to provide the same level of service to international groups as to our North American affiliates. These are small steps now, but this is just the beginning of a great new area of influence for JRF and Reconstructionism.

Tikkun Olam—There is a new Movement Committee to set up a *tikkun olam* program. This committee met for the first time in mid-January, and we look forward to hearing about

the ideas they generate.

Governance Workshop—This year’s Movement workshop series is “A Sacred Trust”, a governance-training workshop led by Rabbi Shawn Zevit. Four Dorshei Tzedek members attended the first workshop in January. See the related article on page 9.

Local JRF News—The New York and New England Regions of the JRF will once again host a fall weekend *Shabbaton* this coming November, at Camp Isabella Freedman in the Berkshires. This is a wonderful opportunity to get a taste of the JRF experience without traveling too far from home. We are looking for someone to serve on the Planning Committee – a time limited task which would involve a few conference calls and some e-mail communication for planning purposes. If you might be interested and would

MANIFEST, directed by Lesley Chapman

March 23-April 14, Thursday-Saturday nights at 8 pm

The Theatre Cooperative, 277 Broadway, Somerville



When have you ever had the opportunity to see a play of enormous social relevance to all of us, followed by a discussion with the director, actors, and fellow members of the Dorshei Tzedek community? The Theatre Cooperative presents the Boston-area premiere of **MANIFEST**, written by Brian Silberman and directed by Lesley Chapman, a teacher in the Dorshei Tzedek community and Artistic Director of the Theatre Cooperative.

Klezmer music, vaudeville, and stand-up comedy in Auschwitz? Brian Silberman has written a play of “incredible power that seeks to debunk the myth that Jews timidly accepted their fate in the Holocaust”. **MANIFEST** focuses on the real-life stories of those who resisted and suggests that music, comedy, art, and love are all ways in which we fulfill the ancient Jewish adjuration: “In a place where there is no humanity, strive to be human.”

Dorshei Tzedek is organizing a group for Saturday, March 31 at 8:00 pm, followed by a post-show discussion with the director and actors. The group will meet at The Theatre Cooperative located in the Elizabeth Peabody House, 277 Broadway, Somerville, 3 blocks west of Route 28. There is plenty of free street parking. Call Clifford Goldsmith at 617-965-7323 if you would like to participate in this exciting theater experience or for more information. Tickets are \$15.00 each and are non-refundable once the group is committed. We need to hear from you by **March 12** at the latest!



March Calendar



Members' Meeting

Sunday, March 11, 7:30 pm

Note: The meeting will be held at the Second Church, 60 Highland Street, one block up from the Unitarian Society (across the bridge and across the street). We'd love to have every household represented!

Date	Time	Event	Setup/Cleanup and Notes
Mar 2, Fri	6 - 7 pm	Family Shabbat Service	Elizabeth Miller, Janet Boguslaw
Mar 3, Sat	8:45 am	Adult Education: Shabbat Morning Study	(see page 9)
Mar 3, Sat	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Kathy Pillsbury, Debra Rattet, Dan Rome
Mar 3, Sat	10 am - 12 pm	Alef and Bet Classes	
Mar 4, Sun	2 - 4 pm	Gan Program	
Mar 4, Sun	3:30 - 5 pm	Purim Rehearsal	
Mar 7, Wed	7:45 pm	Adult Education: Spiritual Autobiography (4)	(see previous newsletter)
Mar 8, Thu		<i>No School / Teacher In-Service</i>	
Mar 8, Thu	7 pm	Purim Celebration (see page 3)	Michael White, Lisa Susswein, Cheryl Sacks, Carole Slipowitz, Jamie Katz
Mar 10, Sat	9:45 am	Olivia Medvedow Bat Mitzvah	Temple Beth Avodah (page 6)
Mar 11, Sun	2 - 4 pm	Alef Family Education	
Mar 11, Sun	2 - 4 pm	Dalet Family Education	
Mar 11, Sun	7:15 pm	Members' Meeting Second Church	Robin Einzig, Stephen Ansolabehere
Mar 13, Tue	8 pm	Men's Group	
Mar 14, Wed	7:45-9:30 pm	Adult Education: Spiritual Autobiography (5)	(see previous newsletter)
Mar 15, Thu	7:45 pm	Mitzvah Committee Open Meeting	
Mar 16, Fri	8 pm	Chanting and Meditation Erev Shabbat (page 5)	Barbara Ayres, Karobi Sachs
Mar 17, Sat	8:45 am	Adult Education: Shabbat Morning Study	(see page 9)
Mar 17, Sat	9:45 am	Rebecca Holohan Bat Mitzvah (see page 6)	Emily Saltz, Tracey Rogers
Mar 17, Sat	10 am - 12 pm	Alef and Bet Classes	
Mar 17, Sat	10:30 - 11:15 am	Tot Shabbat	(see page 5)
Mar 21, Wed	7:45 pm	Adult Education: Spiritual Autobiography (6)	(see previous newsletter)
Mar 23, Fri		Shabbat Home Potlucks	(see page 5)
Mar 24, Sat *	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Jeff Sacks, Phyllis Sandell, Andrew Schiff
Mar 30, Fri	6 - 8 pm	Kitah Bet Shabbat Seder	
Mar 31, Sat	9:45 am	Zachary Rubin-Rattet Bar Mitzvah	Veronique Ballroom (page 7)
Mar 31, Sat	10 am - 12 pm	Alef and Bet Classes	
Mar 31, Sat	8 pm	MANIFEST	(see page 12)

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April Calendar



Date	Time	Event	Setup/Cleanup and Notes
Apr 1, Sun	2 - 4 pm	Kitah Hay Family Education	
Apr 1, Sun	2 - 4 pm	Kitah Vav Family Education	
Apr 4, Wed	7:30 - 9:30	Yom Ha'Shoah Rehearsal	(see page 3)
Apr 7, Sat *	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Deb Feldheim, Lisa Levine, Cynthia Piltch
Apr 7, Sat		<i>First Passover Seder</i>	
Apr 10, Tue	8 pm	Men's Group	
Apr 11, Wed	7:30 - 9:30 pm	Yom Ha'Shoah Rehearsal	(see page 3)
Apr 13, Fri	6 - 7 pm	Family Shabbat Service	Leslie Rubin, Bill Shorr
Apr 14, Sat	9:45 am	Alex O'Connell Bar Mitzvah <i>7th Day of Passover (Yizkor)</i>	Jeffrey Green, Beth Green (see pages 3, 7)
Apr 17, Tue		<i>No School</i>	
Apr 19, Thu		<i>No School</i>	
Apr 19, Thu	7:30 - 9:30 pm	Yom Ha'Shoah Dramatic Reading	(see page 3)
Apr 21, Sat	8:45 am	Adult Education: Shabbat Morning Study	
Apr 21, Sat	9:45 am	Shabbat Service	Carol Sklar, Laura Katz, Shoshana Simons
Apr 25, Wed	7:45 - 9:30 pm	Adult Education: Ruth and Song of Songs (1)	(see page 9)
Apr 26, Thu	7:30 - 9:30 pm	Community of Learners Meeting	(see page 9)
Apr 27, Fri	6 - 8 pm	Kitah Hay Shabbat Seder	
Apr 28, Sat	6 - 8 pm	Kitah Gimel Siyyum and Havdalah	
Apr 28, Sat	9:45 am	Rebecca Fortgang Bat Mitzvah (see page 7)	Jayne Bailin, Alex Sugerman-Brozan
Apr 28, Sat	10 am - 12 pm	Alef and Bet Classes	
Apr 28, Sat	10:30 - 11:15 am	Tot Shabbat	
Apr 29, Sun	2 - 4 pm	Gan Program	

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.

Shabbat Child Care

Free child care is available during Shabbat morning services in the large classroom near the office on the first floor.

JRF Workshop Notes

by Elizabeth Ross, Nancy Gertz,
Cindy Shulak-Rome, and Lisa Port White

This past Martin Luther King Weekend, we had the opportunity to attend the JRF workshop, "A Sacred Trust: A Reconstructionist Approach to Governance and Leadership," at the Reconstructionist Congregation of the North Shore in Plandome, Long Island. The workshop, led by Rabbis Shawn Zevit and Elyse Wechterman and attended by 40 participants from the East Coast and Toronto, was developed to help Reconstructionist congregations successfully balance spiritual and institutional needs fundamental to building and sustaining vibrant communities.

We began the workshop with a *bracha*: "Blessed is the Source of Life, Sovereign of Creation who sanctifies us through *mitzvot* and commands us to engage in the needs of the community (*Baruch ata adonai, Eloheyinu Melech haOlam, asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu l'asok b'tzorchai tzibbur*)." This blessing, which Rabbi Zevit encouraged us to recite before all of our meetings, reminds us when we are working on congregational issues we are engaging in sacred work. Over the next two days, we studied Jewish texts, explored our Jewish and Reconstructionist values, and studied practices and structures intended to help us harmonize the often mundane and seemingly secular work of a congregation with our values and the holy in Jewish life.

We started with Mordecai Kaplan's "Principle of Organic Reciprocity," which, simply put, states, "the whole acts upon the part, and the part in turn acts upon the whole." In congregational terms, this means that each of us has a vision for our community, each of our individual visions affects the shared communal vision, and each of us in turn is affected by this communal vision. Whenever we participate in Shabbat services, adult education, or the Hebrew school, plan and attend holiday events, or volunteer for the congregation in any way, we have an impact on Dorshei Tzedek and may be transformed as a result.

We had the opportunity to bring issues facing Dorshei Tzedek to the workshop for discussion, and brought back some ideas we feel would benefit our community. These were presented to the Board at the January 21 meeting and are now being reviewed by the Executive Committee. We should be hearing more about them in future newsletters, committee meetings, and members' meetings. A 900+ page binder containing the materials we received at the conference is in the office and can be reviewed on request, or, for more information, contact one of us.

Membership

The Membership Committee has welcomed 17 new households into the congregation thus far this year! In December and January, we held two orientation sessions, and it was great to get so many of the new members together. We plan to offer an open house this spring. Anyone who is interested in joining the Membership Committee or who would just like to help out at an open house should contact Andrew Schiff.

Here are a few introductions. Many more will follow!



We welcome **Susan**

Hart and her two-year-old daughter, **Sowmya Betsy**.

Susan adopted Sowmya from India this past summer. Susan is the clinical supervisor at AIDS Action in Boston. Susan and Sowmya have already enjoyed several services and look forward to getting more involved at Dorshei Tzedek in the future.

Laura and Joel Katz and their children, **Daniel, Julianna,** and **Jeremy**, moved from Pittsburgh about nine months ago. Having been members of a tiny Reconstructionist congregation there, they were pleased to find such a warm and thriving congregation close to home. Prior to Pittsburgh they lived in Auburndale for about six years. Joel is a medical residency director and infectious disease doctor. Laura, an elementary school teacher, is currently not working. She was raised as a Quaker and is learning about and growing into Judaism with her children. The family enjoys lots of outdoor activities including camping, biking, and hiking.

After years of wandering the deserts of Washington, Jerusalem, Cleveland, Baltimore, Clinton (NJ), and most recently Cincinnati, **Dede Ordín** appears to be taking root in Boston, where she has lived for six years. The wandering was mostly for work (writing about Middle East politics, then medical school and public health). In an odd but quite satisfying career twist, she is now working for Medicare, struggling to figure out how to improve quality of care for Medicare beneficiaries. As a fairly recent empty-nester (daughter Anna Levin is a first year student at Oberlin), she finally has time to kayak, sing in a chorus, play the recorder, learn salsa, and generally drive herself crazy trying to do all the things she wasn't able to do as a single parent. Dede joined Dorshei Tzedek after years of congregation hunting because the people, the music, the values, and the spirit felt (and still feel) so very right.

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

A Night of Questions: A Passover Haggadah

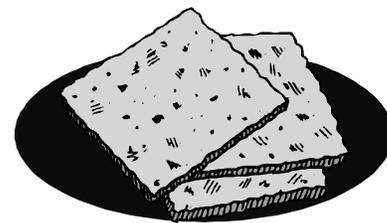
Edited by Rabbi Michael Strassfeld and Rabbi Joy Levitt

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Prices: (JRF member prices in parentheses)

- Haggadah \$18 (\$14.40)
- 10 or more haggadot \$16.20 (\$12.60) each
- Companion recording (30 tracks):
 - CD \$16 (\$14.40)
 - Cassette \$12 (\$10.80)
- 10 Haggadot with CD \$172 (\$137.60)
- 10 Haggadot with cassette \$168 (\$134.40)



Send orders to: Reconstructionist Press, c/o Beit Devora, 7804 Montgomery Avenue, Suite 9, Elkins Park, PA 19027, fax 215-782-8805, e-mail press@jrf.org, or call toll-free 877-JRF-PUBS.

List what you are ordering, and include name, address, daytime phone, e-mail, and payment in US funds including shipping (checks made out to JRF, Visa, or Mastercard).

Shipping/Handling: for continental US, \$6 minimum for first book (\$2 if ordering recording alone) each additional item, \$0.50.

For countries other than the US, Alaska, and Hawaii, we charge actual shipping (specify air or surface) plus \$3.