

CONGREGATION DORSHEI TZEDEK

An Affiliate of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation

1326 Washington Street, West Newton, MA 02465

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Nisan-Iyar 5762

May 2002



A Space for Service

by Rabbi Toba Spitzer

At this time of the year, during the counting of the *Omer*, we find ourselves on a journey from Pesach to Shavuot, from the experience of liberation to the receiving of Torah. Seven weeks after being freed from bondage in Egypt, the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai, where they received holy laws and teachings. We relive this mythic journey each year as we count the days from Passover to the holiday of Shavuot.

The deeper teaching of this journey is that our ancestors' freedom was gained not just for its own sake, but for the purpose of learning how to live in covenantal community, in a community bound by principles of *tzedeck* and *chesed*, justice and love. The Jewish notion of freedom is not libertarian, is not "freedom from" but "freedom to": it is bound up with the notion of obligation and service. Service to that which is Godly in the universe; service to the goal of creating a society and a world in which peace and abundance are shared by all.

This teaching about service is important to keep in mind as the Dorshei Tzedek community ponders the possibility of acquiring our own building. Over the past year, we have ascertained that our current location—while lovely in many ways—is becoming increasingly inadequate for our growing numbers. Space constraints have initiated our search for new space, but logistical concerns should not be the only factor driving our decision. Ultimately, our physical needs must be considered in the context of the service that we are doing as a Jewish community. How can our physical space help us fulfill our goals? What might our own building allow us to do that is not possible now?

There is great anxiety attendant on any major transition, and I know that contemplating the purchase of our own space raises doubts and questions for many of us. How will we afford it? Will congregational life become overly focused on money and fundraising? What divisions and tensions in the community might this uncover? These are all valid concerns, and the Executive Committee and

Board, with the able assistance of the Space Committee, are working to address those concerns. But all of the anxiety and effort will be worth it if we ultimately decide that a more permanent and more adequate physical space will in fact help us further our goals, our service, as a Jewish community.

If we decide to acquire a building, on some level we will need to understand that this structure is not entirely "ours." It will be, rather, a gift and a blessing that will invite us to give back in profound ways. I invite you to let your imagination run free – what can you imagine us doing in our own space that is not possible now? What kind of a Jewish school could we create for our children and for ourselves? What kinds of programs and speakers could we host? How could we support social justice organizing in the community? Could we house homeless families or families in transition as they re-establish themselves? Could we be a center for Jewish arts programming? Could we have space dedicated to Jewish meditation or other contemplative practices?

Rabbi Hillel asked, "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I?" His questions are a good guide for us as we consider this next step in our development as a community. The physical structure that houses our community's activities must provide for our own needs, and at the same time should help us further the contribution that we can make to the world around us. Or to put it another way: we need space for services, as well as space for service. I look forward to taking these next steps on our communal journey with you!

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All-Member Open House

On **May 15**, from **7:30 to 9:30 pm** at the Unitarian Church, the Space Committee will host an all-member open house to share information, take questions, and discuss the Central Congregational Church on Walnut Street, which we have been evaluating as a potential site. We hope every household will make an effort to attend, to share excitement, to express anxiety, and to receive as much information about the church and its possible acquisition as we have to share. Please be aware that, should we decide to move forward on the property, the Church wishes to receive bids this June. Therefore, a vote of the membership will be required at the upcoming June Members' Meeting. The all-member open house on May 15 is intended to prepare people in advance with all the relevant information.

For minutes of the March 17 Members' Meeting, please see the Members' Area of the Dorshei Tzedek web site.

Contacting the Rabbi: Rabbi Toba 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 617-454-0511. Rabbi Spitzer's new office is at the Second Church, 60 Highland Avenue, just up the hill from The Unitarian Society.

Rabbinic Liaison Committee: The Rabbinic Liaison Committee exists to insure the maintenance of a good relationship between our rabbi and the congregation. Any questions or concerns should be directed to Louise Enoch, Linette Liebling, or Mark Farber. These matters will be handled confidentially and appropriate solutions sought where possible.

School News

Reminder for Kitah Aleph and Bet Parents

The last day of class for Kitah Aleph and Kitah Bet has been changed. Our last session will be on **Saturday, May 11**. There will be no class on May 18.



Shabbat Programs

Tot Shabbat for Families with Preschoolers



You're invited to join us one Saturday morning a month for a delightful session with singing, storytelling, crafts, and a snack. Upcoming Tot Shabbat programs will be held on **May 18 and June 8, 10:30 – 11:15 am**, in the Childcare Room at The Unitarian Society. Tot Shabbat is designed for children age 2½ – 5 and a parent (or two!), and siblings are welcome. (If you have an older child in Aleph or Bet, come on in right after "Torah Talk.") For more information, call Sheree Galpert at 617-558-8697.

Erev Shabbat Family Services

On the first (or so) **Friday** of most months, we welcome Shabbat with a musical, all-ages Erev Shabbat family service, from **6 – 7 pm** at The Unitarian Society. Mark your calendars: the remaining dates for the year 5762 are **May 10 and June 21**.



Religious School Classes Help Us Lead Services

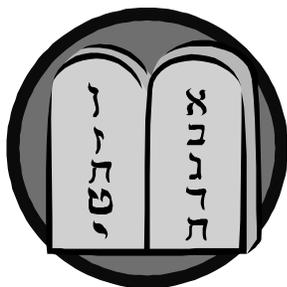
Join us for special Shabbat services being co-led by our older religious school classes. On Shabbat morning, **May 4**, Kitah Hay (5th grade) will be helping Rabbi Toba lead the morning service. On **May 10**, Kitah Dalet (4th grade) will help lead the erev Shabbat family service, and Kitah Vav (6th grade) will be featured on Shabbat morning, **May 18**.

Workshop on Creating a Shabbat Family Seder

If you would like to enhance your Shabbat Friday evening table ritual, or would like to learn how to create a family Shabbat seder, Dorshei Tzedek would like to be of support! (Some months ago we did a ritual survey and this was a very popular request.) This workshop will be offered on Wednesday evening, **May 22**, if enough folks are interested. If you would like to attend, please call Elaine Pollack, 617-965-1174, or preferably e-mail at elainep315@aol.com. Shabbat Shalom!

Chanting and Meditation Service

Our next Chanting and Meditation Service will be held on Shabbat morning, **June 1, at 9:45 am**. Please join us for this contemplative service that combines singing, silence, and Torah study (no meditation experience necessary!)



Shavuot

Thursday, May 16 at Temple Hillel B'nai Torah, 120 Corey Street
(between VFW Parkway and Center Street), West Roxbury

Seven weeks after Passover, we celebrate the moment of receiving Torah with a special celebration, a Tikkun Leil Shavuot, featuring study, services, and dairy foods. We will be celebrating Shavuot again this year with Temple Hillel B'nai

Torah and B'nai Or Congregation. Please join us for all or part of the program, and tell your friends!

7 pm: Study sessions, including a session for families (appropriate for kids in third grade and up).

8 pm: Special Shavuot ma'ariv service, followed by Shavuot nosh. **Please bring food or drink to share.** Please do not bring home-baked goods (unless you have a kosher kitchen), but feel free to bring fruit, cheese and crackers, or baked goods with a *hechsher* (kashrut symbol). Cheesecake and blintzes especially welcome!

9 pm: Featured study session with guest rabbi, Tirzah Firestone. Rabbi Firestone is a Jungian psychotherapist and the founding rabbi of the Jewish Renewal Community of Boulder, Colorado. Her spiritual memoir, *With Roots in Heaven*, details her own journey from an ultra-Orthodox family environment through her own experiences in a number of different spiritual traditions to Jewish renewal. She is known as a wonderful teacher, and we are excited to have this opportunity to learn with her.

Refuah Sh'lemah

The community of Congregation Dorshei Tzedek sends blessings and prayers for healing, *refuah sh'lemah*, to Barbara Ayres, Efreim Goldberg, and Francis Greenberg. May healing and comfort come soon to you and those who help to care for you.

If you or someone in your household is ill or needs support around healing or sickness, please contact Rabbi Toba Spitzer (617-454-0511) or Susan Manheim (781-449-2984).

Mazel Tov

To Caren Smith on her acceptance to Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine!

To Debbie Blicher, on her engagement to Peter Dain!

To Miranda Phillips, beloved teacher and tutor, on her engagement to Bobby Kleinberg!

To Ben Weiner, esteemed Dorshei Tzedek bar/bat mitzvah tutor, on his acceptance to the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College!

We'd like to know about the significant occasions in your life. Please keep us informed by sending an e-mail to dtnews@yahoogroups.com.



Dear Dorshei Tzedek:

Thank you so much for the gift; I put it on a shelf in my room. Having my bar mitzvah at such a loving congregation was a great experience.

Thanks,
Gabe Donnini

Todah Rabah

A special thanks to Elise Brenner and her daughter, Julia Kagen, Michael White, Elaine and Anna Bresnick, and Melanie Forman, who helped clean out the kitchen and bring our papers that contained the name of God and needed to be buried to the *genizah*. A special thanks to the teamwork of all and particularly for finding the *genizah*.

Todah Rabah to Dan Halbert for updating and moving the Dorshei Tzedek web site to its new location at www.dorsheitzedek.org

Contributions

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions:

General Fund

Roberta and Paul Carson

In Honor of Nancy Gertz's recovery

Anne S. Cohen and Robert Cohen

In honor of Nancy Gertz: celebration of Life

Carolyn Fine and Jeremiah Friedman

In honor of Nancy Gertz

Trudy and Herbert Galkin

In Honor of Nancy Gertz

Deborah Gerber

In honor of the recovery of Nancy Getz: getting well and staying well

Mr. and Mrs. Junius Gertz

In memory of Baby Liat Channa Paskin

Speedy recovery to Harold Jacober

Speedy recovery to Berton Maskoff

In honor of Nancy Gertz's beautiful thank-you party

In honor of Betty Ann Pierce's Special Birthday

In honor of Barbara Shulkin's Special Birthday

In honor of Mr. and Mrs. Richard Klein's 50th Anniversary

In honor of Betsy Gertz's Show

Ora Gladstone and Mitchell Silver

In gratitude for Nancy feeling so well and for the great shindig - keyn yirboo-, and for Cliff Cohen and Nancy Gertz for being such a hard working and reliable "committee", and in the hope that our Efrem will yet find his way to renewed health

Kimberly and Andrew Gluck

In honor of Nancy Gertz

Sharon Goldberg and John Holohan

In memory of Gerald Rattet, father of Debra Rattet

Tessa and Clifford Goldsmith

In honor of Rabbi Toba's recent, exciting life events

Chiae W. Herzig

To wish Judy a happy birthday

Richard and Helene Klein

In honor of Nancy Gertz' celebration of life

Linette Liebling and Peter, Zach, and Jolie Demuth

In memory of Debra Rubin Rattet's father

Keith Rand and John D'Amico

In honor of Nancy Gertz, Michael Cohen, and sons

Susan Manheim and Andrew Schiff

In honor of Gabe Donnini's bar mitzvah

Amy Mazur

In honor of Nancy Gertz - to her health and ongoing caring and support from family and friends

Cheryl and Jeff Sacks

In honor of the Gertz/Cohen Family

Debbie Waber and Steve Leonard

In Honor of Nancy Gertz

Holy Book Fund

Joel and Laura Thorp Katz

In honor of the bar mitzvah of Jack Schiff

Cindy Shulak-Rome and Dan Rome

In honor of Gabe Donini's bar mitzvah

In honor of Nancy Gertz: in celebration of your wonderful life spirit - L'Chayim!

In honor of Efrem Goldberg

School Fund

Sharon Goldberg and John Holohan

In honor of Elizabeth's 12th Birthday

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Ora Gladstone and Mitchell Silver

May Rabbi Toba find much joy in her new home

Gerald and Ilene Rattet

For her outstanding guidance and support during our time of loss

Sid Shapiro

Cindy Shulak-Rome and Dan Rome

Wishing Toba and Gina much joy in their new home

There are many ways to financially support Congregation Dorshei Tzedek: through contributions to the General Fund, or to targeted funds like the School or the Holy Book Funds. In addition, donations can be made to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. This fund is not part of the congregation's operating expenses and is administered solely by the rabbi. Monies in this fund are used for tzedakah in the greater community, for special needs at the congregation (e.g., to buy books or help pay for an adult education program), and, most importantly, to help out congregants in need. Donations to this fund are encouraged, in addition to (not instead of!) your contributions to help support the congregation. Checks should be made out to Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, but marked as intended for the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. Please contact Rabbi Toba directly if you are in need of financial help at 617-454-0511.



May Calendar



| Date | Time | Event | Set-up/Clean-up |
|--------------|------------------|---|---|
| Fri May 3 | 6– 8 pm | Gan Family Shabbat Seder | |
| Sat May 4 | 9:45 – noon | Shabbat Morning Service <i>Parashat Behar-Bechokotai</i> | Ellen Hemley, Sue Pearce, Hillary Marcus |
| Sat May 4 | 10 am – noon | Kitah Alef and Kitah Bet classes | |
| Sat May 4 | 1 – 2 pm | Kitah Hay Class Lunch | |
| Sun May 5 | 2 – 4 pm | Kitah Vav Family Education Program | |
| Sun May 5 | 2 – 4 pm | Gan Last Family Program | |
| Fri May 10 | 6 – 7 pm | Erev Shabbat family service Kitah Dalet Siyyum (<i>see page 2</i>) | Amy Brodesky, Jayne Bailin, Sheree Galpert |
| Sat May 11 | 8:45 – 9:45 am | Shabbat Morning Study | (<i>see page 7</i>) |
| Sat May 11 | 9:45 am – noon | Shabbat Morning Service - <i>Parashat Bamidbar</i> | James Kaplan, Michael White |
| Sat May 11 | | <i>Kitah Alef and Kitah Bet: last day of school</i> | (<i>see page 2</i>) |
| Wed May 15 | 7:30 – 9:30 pm | Informational Space Meeting | (<i>see page 2</i>) |
| Thurs May 16 | 7 – 11 pm | Tikkun Leil Shavuot <i>at Temple Hillel B'nai Torah</i> | (<i>see page 3</i>) |
| Sat May 18 | 9:45 am – noon | Shabbat Morning Service – Kitah Vav Siyyum Shavuot | Mark Steinberg, Caren Smith, Peter Hess |
| Sat May 18 | 10:30 – 11:15 am | Tot Shabbat | (<i>see page 2</i>) |
| Sat May 18 | | <i>No Aleph Bet classes</i> | |
| Sun May 19 | 7:30 – 9:30 pm | New member orientation | (<i>see page 7</i>) |
| Tues May 21 | 7:30 – 9 pm | Adult education: Creating a Caring Community | (<i>see page 7</i>) |
| Wed May 22 | TBA | Workshop: Creating a Family Shabbat Seder | (<i>see page 2</i>) |
| Sat May 25* | 9:45 am – noon | Shabbat Morning Service - <i>Parashat Nasso</i> | Geri Blitzman, J. Lieberman |
| Tues May 28 | 7:30 – 9 pm | Adult education: Creating A Caring Community | (<i>see page 7</i>) |
| Thurs May 30 | | <i>Last day of upper school</i> | (<i>see page 2</i>) |

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Events and services are held at the Unitarian Universalist Society, 1326 Washington Street, West Newton, unless otherwise noted. 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.

No Fragrances, Please: So that Dorshei Tzedek services and events are accessible to all of our members and guests, we ask that people refrain from wearing fragrances (perfume, scented oils, cologne, etc.) to Shabbat morning services and adult education sessions. While pleasant to some, these fragrances can cause illness to those who are chemically sensitive. Thank you for your understanding and flexibility.



June Calendar



Please check the June newsletter when it arrives for changes and additions to this schedule.

| Date | Time | Event | Set-up/Clean-up |
|----------------------------|------------------|--|-----------------|
| Sat Jun 1 | 9:45 am – noon | Chanting and Meditation Shabbat Service <i>Parashat Beha'alotcha</i> | |
| Tues Jun 4 | 7:30 – 9 pm | Adult Education: Creating a Caring Community | (see page 7) |
| Sat Jun 8 | 9:45 am – noon | Shabbat Morning Service - <i>Parashat Sh'lach</i> | |
| Sat Jun 8 | 10:30 – 11:15 am | Tot Shabbat | (see page 2) |
| Fri Jun 14 – Sun Jun 16 | | Dorshei Tzedek Retreat at Camp Isabella Friedman | |
| Sat Jun 15 | | <i>No Shabbat morning services in Newton Dorshei Tzedek on retreat</i> | |
| Fri May 21 | 6 – 7 pm | Erev Shabbat family service | (see page 2) |
| Sat Jun 22 | 8:45 – 9:45 am | Shabbat Morning Study | (see page 7) |
| Sat Jun 22 | 9:45 am – noon | Shabbat Morning Service <i>Parashat Chukat-Balak</i> | |
| Sat Jun 29 | 9:45 am – noon | Shabbat Morning Service - <i>Parashat Pinchas</i> | |

New Women's Voices in Jewish Studies: Using Story in Adult Jewish Education to Transform Ourselves and Our Community

Presented by Orit Kent, with an introduction by Dr. Debra Kaufman

The fifth of a series of six evenings of exploration with some of Greater Boston's most dynamic new scholars. Share with us an extraordinary opportunity to hear from this refreshing generation of women thinkers. Sponsored by the Adult Learning Collaborative of CJP and Hebrew College, in partnership with Women's Division of CJP. **May 6, 7:30pm**, Hebrew College, Assembly Hall, 160 Herrick Road, Newton Centre. Cost: \$10 by mail; \$15 at door. \$48 for the series of six. For more information, contact Gloria Greenfield at (617)457-8774 or e-mail her at gloriag@cjp.org.

Fourth Annual Community Service Day

May 19. Meet at 9 am, depart for sites 10 am: Devotion School, 345 Harvard Street, Brookline.

Join the Young Leadership Division of CJP and Jewish InterAction for a day of mitzvah-making at the Fourth Annual Community Service Day. Paint a school. Plant a garden. Visit an elderly person. Meet fantastic Jewish young adults while doing *tikkun olam*. Please bring a bag lunch and a cold drink. Please dress to work, no open-toed shoes. For more information or to RSVP, contact Helene Freedman at helenef@cjp.org or (617) 457-8569. Space is limited. RSVP by Wednesday, May 15, 2002.

Send items to be published in future newsletters to dtnews@yahoogroups.com. Thanks!—*The Newsletter Committee*: Mark Farber, Dan Halbert, Josh Herzig-Marx, Tim Rosa, and Susannah Zisk.

Membership

Welcome new members **Diana, Richard, Lily, and Maya Fisher Gomberg**. Richard is a psychiatrist with a practice in Newton Centre. He also teaches at Cambridge Hospital. Diana has a background in public health and is now taking care of Lily (age 4) and Maya (almost 2) and volunteering as a La Leche League Leader. They hail from New Castle, PA, Dallas, TX, and Teaneck, NJ, but they've been in New England for 15 years now. They love hiking, camping, canoeing, cycling, and playgrounds. The Fisher-Gombergs joined Dorshei Tzedek because it is an open-minded, thoughtful, diverse community, and appreciate the warm welcome that they have received.



New Member Orientation

New members who missed the new member orientation in January are encouraged, urged, and subtly required to attend the next New Member Orientation on **Sunday, May 19, at 7:30 pm**. Come meet other new members, discuss the philosophy of the congregation, and learn about committees and other great ways to get involved.

Dorshei Tzedek in Cyberspace



Dorshei Tzedek's Web site address has changed to **www.dorsheitzedek.org**. The user names and passwords from the old web site will not work at our new URL. For a password, please contact Dan Halbert (halbert@world.std.com) or Elizabeth Ross (elizmr@yahoo.com). If you are interested in helping out with the web site, please contact Elizabeth.

The listserv for exchange of ideas and information among members of Dorshei Tzedek is **cdt-list@shamash.org**. For questions regarding the listserv, contact Paul Carson (p-carson@ti.com). Official announcements are posted on CDT-announce. If you have something you would like to post there, please send it to Paul Carson, Elizabeth Ross, or any member of the Executive Committee.

Adult Education



Shabbat Morning Study with Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Remaining Spring dates:
May 11 and June 22; 8:45 – 9:45 am

In our Shabbat morning study this year, we will explore the weekly Torah portion with the help of a variety of commentators, ancient and modern, including rabbinic midrash, the medieval commentator Rashi, Hassidic interpretations, and modern feminist insights. All texts will be provided in English translation, and no previous experience with text study is necessary. A pre-reading of the week's Torah portion is helpful but not required. Bring your own coffee/tea and join us for this early morning prelude to the Shabbat service! (no fee).

Creating A Caring Community

with Rabbi Karen Landy

*Tuesday evenings, May 21, 28, June 4;
7:30 – 9:00 pm, at The Unitarian Society*

*(free for members;
\$18/series for non-members)*



Have you wondered how to make a shivah call, particularly when you don't really know the person? Or how to help an ill member of our community without intruding or saying the "wrong thing"? Our congregation is committed to helping our community when people need help the most, and yet, we may not always be certain of what to do or say to be most helpful.

Join us for a three part series in which we will focus on the opportunities for, and the obstacles to, becoming a truly caring community. Rabbi Karen Landy, Spiritual Consultant for Jewish Healing Connections at Jewish Family and Child Services (and Rabbi Toba's rabbinical school classmate) will lead us in Torah text and study as we explore our obligations, concerns, and questions.



Beginning and Intermediate Hebrew Classes in the Boston Area

Natasha Shabat, a teacher who comes very highly recommended by several Dorshei Tzedek members, teaches Hebrew classes for adults at a variety of levels at several different Boston Locations. For more information, contact Natasha Shabat at Nshabat@post.harvard.edu or 781-643-1346.

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

Dorshei Tzedek Mission Statement

Dorshei Tzedek is a Reconstructionist Congregation dedicated to creating a caring and inclusive community, and to enhancing Jewish practice and learning in the lives of our members. As our name implies, we are seekers-of meaningful spirituality, of serious Jewish learning, and of social justice.

Consistent with Reconstructionist philosophy, we are committed to seriously engaging with Jewish tradition, challenging that tradition, where need be, and building on the tradition in creative ways. We do this in order to enhance our own lives as contemporary Jews and to perpetuate our bond—and our children's bond—to our heritage. We view education for ourselves and our children as fundamental to Jewish life.

We are a participatory congregation, encouraging all of our members to take an active role in some aspect of our congregational life. Our rabbi is our partner in this endeavor, and is both teacher and participant in our community. We value diversity in our congregation, and welcome all those who share our commitments.

Finally, we affirm the concept of mitzvah as obligation, acting on our Jewish values through deeds of tzedek (social justice) and gemilut chasadim (loving kindness), both within our congregation and in the larger community.