



Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

A Jewish Reconstructionist Community

Tammuz/Av/Elul 5775 July/August 2015

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Summer Reflections

by Rabbi Toba Spitzer



AS I write this column, the news of the horrific shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal church in Charleston, SC is still reverberating in the news and in my heart. The confluence of the iniquity of racism and the insanity of gun violence (not unrelated phenomena) is a truly deadly brew. Add in the possibility that the young man who carried out this atrocity was addicted to opiates, and we have a trifecta of scourges plaguing American society.

News of the shooting came just a few days after the event I organized at Temple Israel featuring Ali Abu Awwad and Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger of the Palestinian-Israeli group “Roots/Shorashim/Judur” (www.friendsofroots.net). At that program, entitled “Painful Hope,” Hanan and Ali each told their story: Hanan’s journey from a deep yet blinkered attachment to the land of Israel to an expanded awareness of both the Palestinian narrative and the validity of Palestinian claims to the land; and Ali’s journey from anger and desperation to a commitment to nonviolence as the only path to liberation—personal and political—for both the Palestinian people and their Israeli neighbors.

I was privileged to spend a day and a half with Ali and Hanan, hosting them at our house after the Sunday event and taking them to meetings and to the airport that Monday. In every setting, Hanan emphasized the transformation he has undergone over the past year and a half, and related stories of other Jewish settlers who have similarly had their eyes and hearts opened in ways that once seemed impossible. And I gained an even deeper respect for Ali’s work, his efforts to create a Palestinian nonviolence movement on a mass scale, capable of ending the occupation and bringing a new day for his people.

Even before the South Carolina massacre, I was reflecting on the relative ease with which one person or group of people can cause massive suffering and damage, in contrast to the incredible effort it takes to build something positive. I have no idea how long the project of Ali and Hanan and their compatriots will take; it might be years, or decades, or a century. I do

know that their path—the path of human encounter, of a deep commitment to nonviolence as a tool of transformation—is the only possible way to truly resolve this conflict. Similarly, those of us who want to see an America freed of its most insidious legacies must also be committed to the long, slow, hard work of personal



Summer splashing at the CDT Retreat. Photo by Liz Carver.

and communal transformation. What gives me hope is not only the coming together of so many people around the country in response to the horror of Charleston, it is also the work of our community—our Understanding Race working group, our Jobs Not Jails tikkun olam efforts—and emerging trends all around us, from the increasing impact of restorative justice to the Black Lives Matter movement to new initiatives to reform our criminal justice system.

Each year in the Jewish calendar we enact the movement from brokenness to transformation. In the weeks leading up to Tisha B’Av (July 25 this year) through the day itself, we mark the cataclysmic destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem and the ensuing dispersion of the Jewish people. On the Shabbat immediately following Tisha B’Av, we read the first haftarah of consolation, a prophetic reading accompanying the weekly Torah portion that brings a voice of hope to a people in exile. These haftarot of consolation continue for the seven Shabbatot leading from Tisha B’Av into Rosh Hashanah, each week growing stronger in the message of redemption. Similarly, the calendar moves from a time of mourning and despair into the season of renewal, which commences on the first of Elul (August 16), and continues through the four weeks leading up to the New Year, and the Ten Days of Teshuvah.

For many of us, summer is a time for the beach and a good book, for days off and a nap in the hammock. While we relax and renew, I hope we will be re-energized in our individual and collective efforts to move from a broken society and world to a new era of peace and wholeness.

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ON AND OFF THE BIMA

DEMYSTIFYING LEYNING OR HOW DO OUR MEMBERS KNOW HOW TO CHANT FROM THE TORAH?

by Cindy Shulak-Rome

As a twelve year old I loved my thrice weekly Hebrew School experience at my family's Conservative synagogue. However, when given a choice as to whether or not I wanted to have a Bat Mitzvah (yes, an unusually progressive Conservative shul to offer Bat Mitzvah in the 1960s), I emphatically said "no!" The reason for that response was clear in my mind. I was terrified of standing up and "singing" in front of a room full of people. End of story—or so I thought at the time. Years later, as I approached my 40s, I decided I wanted very much to become an adult Bat Mitzvah, so I took on the challenge of learning to *leyn*, or "chant," from the Torah scroll.

As someone with no musical background, learning to leyn was one of the more challenging things I have attempted as an adult, and also one of the most gratifying. What I didn't appreciate at age 12 was the power and connection that came from learning to participate in this ancient ritual, and the ways in which it brought me closer to Torah, both physically and spiritually. Early in my learning process, I was able to move beyond a fear of "performance" to a sense of connection to the sacred nature of these words I was learning to chant. I found deep satisfaction in making the words come alive and connecting to their vibrancy melodically and physically on the hand-scribed parchment of our Torah.

So, what is involved in this process and how does one master it? Trope, also called cantillation, is a set of symbols arranged around the Hebrew text that signifies both punctuation and melody. If you look closely at the Hebrew text in the *Chumash*, the printed version of the Torah such as the *Etz Chayim* that we use during services,

you will notice these symbols above and below the text. Trope symbols are generally arranged in patterns and the reader learns the melodic patterns associated with each symbol and sequence. Personally, I found that learning to leyn helped me understand the text better and improved the accuracy of my Hebrew.

Just as vowels are not written in the Torah scroll, the trope symbols are also not included. Chanting a section from the Torah scroll requires the reader to learn the text well enough so that it can be chanted without referencing vowels and trope marks. While it is customary and preferable to chant directly from the scroll, in our spirit of inclusiveness at Dorshei Tzedek, we also welcome members to chant from the Chumash if they prefer, while someone follows along on their behalf in the scroll.

The reader uses a *yad*, a pointer with the shape of a hand with an outstretched finger, to follow along in the text as it is read. In Exodus 31:18 we read: "When God finished speaking with him, on Mount Sinai, God gave Moses the two tablets of the Pact, stone tablets inscribed with the finger of God." Reading the text with the yad, we are an extension of the sacred experience that brings the Torah to the Jewish people. The yad has a practical function as well; it helps the reader track the text, and ensures that our fingers do not directly touch the parchment, which could be damaged by the oils in our skin.

At Dorshei Tzedek, we've held many leyning classes over the years. Our first classes were taught by **Chayim Herzig-Marx**, and currently **Rabbi Elaine Pollack** holds

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CDT

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.

Board

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Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Interim Education Director: Alison Lobron

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Ritual: Marion Ross and Laurie Goldman

Space: Noam Shore

Tikkun Olam: Bonnie Tenneriello

Website: Dan Halbert

Newsletter

The CDT Newsletter is published monthly with a July-August summer issue. Email articles, events, and photos to dtnews@dorsheitzedek.org by the 15th of the month for the following month's issue.

Volunteer Staff: Danny Shain (chair), Josette Akresh-Gonzales, John Holohan, Barry Ingber, Barbara Pittel, Vivienne Shein (photographer), Emily Shumsky, Michael Singer.

Rabbinic Liaison Committee

The Rabbinic Liaison Committee exists to ensure the maintenance of a good working relationship between our rabbi and the congregation. While congregants are always welcome and encouraged to discuss questions or concerns directly with Rabbi Toba, they may at times feel more comfortable talking to the Rabbinic Liaison committee. Issues raised by congregants are discussed confidentially and, when appropriate, are shared with the Rabbi in a constructive manner. To discuss a question or concern, contact Cindy Shulak-Rome, Rabbinic Liaison Chair at cbsrome@comcast.net.

Shabbat

SUMMER SERVICES SCHEDULE

In the months of July and August, we will have Shabbat morning services twice each month, on **July 11 and 25** and on **August 15 and 29**. Services will run from 9:45 am to noon, followed by a kiddush lunch.

UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE, ALL SHABBAT PROGRAMS ARE HELD AT THE DORSHEI TZEDEK PRAYER SPACE: 60 HIGHLAND STREET IN THE SECOND CHURCH OF NEWTON, WEST NEWTON. SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES ARE HELD WEEKLY, STARTING AT 9:45 AM. FREE CHILDCARE IS AVAILABLE DURING SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES, GENERALLY IN ROOM 111. FOR THE COMFORT AND HEALTH OF OUR MEMBERS AND GUESTS, WE ASK EVERYONE ATTENDING OUR SERVICES TO AVOID WEARING FRAGRANCES (PERFUME, COLOGNE, HAIR AND BODY SPRAYS).

ALL-AGES EREV SHABBAT SERVICE

Friday, August 14

6:00 pm, candle lighting and dinner;

6:45 pm, service

All are welcome to this fun, musical erev Shabbat experience! We begin with candle lighting and Kiddush at 6 pm, followed by a potluck vegetarian dinner (please bring a veggie/dairy/fish main dish or salad, enough for 15-20 people), followed by services at 6:45 pm. Bring a friend or two—this is a great opportunity for families with younger children (ages 0-8) to get to know our congregation!

Events

CDT HIKES...MT. MONADNOCK!

Sunday, July 12, 11:00 am

Monadnock State Park, 116 Poole Road, Jaffrey, NH

by Stuart Snyder

The CDT Hiking Club will caravan/carpool from CDT, departing promptly at 9:30am, or you can meet us around 11:00 at 116 Poole Road, Jaffrey, NH. We expect to begin hiking at approximately 11:30, so bring lunch with you to have mid-hike. Monadnock's website (www.nhstateparks.org/explore/state-parks/monadnock-state-park.aspx) contains lots of useful information, including a downloadable hiking map. There's also a video at the bottom of the website homepage, which gives an idea of what kind of hiking to expect.

We intend to hike for about 3 hours; depending on how long we take for lunch and other breaks, we will return to CDT around 5 pm. Pets are not allowed at Monadnock, so this hike will be for humans only. As always, wear sturdy shoes, dress in layers, and bring a water bottle (and lunch too, this time). And, as always, no RSVP is necessary—just show up!

Questions? Contact **Diana Fisher-Gomberg** (dfgomberg@gmail.com), **Richard Gomberg** (richardgomberg@gmail.com), **Marc Steinberg** (marc@metaphasia.com), or **Stuart Snyder** (SLS@SnyderLegal.com).

MOCA (MEMBERS OF A CERTAIN AGE) MATTERS

by Louise Enoch

MOCA has been pleased with attendance at MOCA events during this past year. These events included a social Havdalah evening in the fall, a CDT "TED" talk about the digital mapping of Sephardic Jewry, participation in the congregation-wide Shabbat Friday evening dinners, a fun game night in the winter, and a visit and tour of the Vilna Shul in the spring. The MOCA committee will be meeting to plan for next year. Please send any suggestions for "TED" talks or other programming to **Louise Enoch** (lpenoch@rcn.com), and see you in the fall!

PARTY IN THE PARK: SUN, SONG, GAMES, AND FOOD FOR THE BODY AND SOUL!

Sunday, August 23, 11:00-1:00 pm

Auburndale Park, "The Cove" (on West Pine Street, Newton)

A special event for families with kids age 2-8 with Rabbi Toba and Alison Lobron—for CDT members and prospective members! This is an opportunity to introduce your friends and acquaintances to CDT and our religious school; we are especially seeking more kids for our preschool through 2nd grade classes. So tell a friend, spread the word, and join us yourselves! The party will feature a kosher cook-out, music, and fun.

ROSH CHODESH GATHERING

Sunday, August 16, 7:30 pm

60 Highland Street

This is for all CDT women who are interested in revitalizing the CDT Rosh Chodesh group, a monthly gathering to welcome the new month with ritual, song, reflection, and learning. Rabbi Toba will meet with the group to welcome the new month of Elul, and to lead a discussion about possibilities for renewing the CDT Rosh Chodesh group. If you are interested or have questions, please contact **Margo Michaels** at margomichaels@gmail.com.

CDT FILM CLUB

The Film Club is on summer vacation. We will resume in either September or October, so stay tuned for more information in the fall!

Nediv Lev

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions.

GENERAL FUND

Ellie Baron and Kate DeBethune

Polly Crozier and Jessica Keimowitz—in memory of David Levi Keimowitz Crozier

Diana Fisher Gomberg—in memory of Lawrence Stephen Fisher

Lauren Gibbs—in honor of Annette Lawson for her wonderful tenure as head of the DT school; in honor of my Dorshei drivers this year: Rachel Greenberg, Janice Cole, Nathan Aronow and Benita Danzing, Lisa Schneier, Sue Lanser, Dianne Lior, Valerie Graf and Doron Gan, Mark Paley and Rachel Davenport, and Esther Kohn and Mary Hickie

Ellie Goldberg—in memory of Jesse Koenigsberg; in memory of Theresa Koenigsberg

Laurie Goldman—in appreciation for Allison Hausman's leadership, Marion Ross's Ritual Committee steering, and Cindy Rivka Marshall's Torah-enlivening gifts

Beth and Jeffrey Green—in appreciation for the wonderful support from Rabbi Toba during this difficult year

Rob and Ricky Greenly

Gail Harris and David Reider—in honor of Ben Reider's Bar Mitzvah

Sarah Hartman and Benjamin Newman

Doug Hersh—in memory of Marilyn and Michael Hersh

Steffi and Eric Karp

Hazel and Bob Keimowitz—in memory of David Levi Keimowitz Crozier

Jeffrey Kichen—in memory of Alma S. Kichen

Sue Lanser and Jo Radner

Ilana Mainelli and Teddy Seidman—in memory of Rudolph Mainelli

Tatjana Meschede and Dani Krasa—in appreciation for the support of the CDT community during the illness and death of Dani's father

Sivan Nasoff

Elaine Pollack—in honor of Allison Hausman's leadership

Jo Ann Share—in memory of Harry Share

Jo Ann Share and Rochelle Weichman

Cindy Shulak-Rome and Dan Rome—in honor of Allison Hausman for her wonderful leadership of our community over the past two years

Steven Siegel—in memory of Sylvia Siegel

Susan Silberberg—in memory of Ross Silberberg, husband and father

Carol Sklar—in memory of Dorothy Solomon, Evelyn Bach and Frances Sklar, the three wonderful sisters

Carole Slipowitz and Dan Halbert

Sue Weil and Sandy Goodman

Ellen White—in memory of Paul M. White

CAMP JRF FUND

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Ronda and Jonathan Canter—with happiness at the birth and naming of our grandson, Isaac Benjamin Landes, son of Alexis and Gabe Landes

Diana and Richard Fisher Gomberg

Ruth Ann Fisher Mendel—in memory of Izzy Mendel

SCHOOL FUND

RETREAT FUND

Marion Ross

HOLY BOOKS FUND

JILL VOLK TEACHER DEVELOPMENT FUND

BUILDING FUND

There are many ways to financially support Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, including contributions to the General Fund or to targeted funds. The Rabbi's Discretionary 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 of the congregation (e.g., to buy books or help pay for an adult education program), and, most important, to help out congregants in need. The Jill Volk Teacher Development Fund provides scholarships for teachers in the Dorshei Tzedek religious school to receive professional development and training. Jill was one of the founders of our school and one of its first teachers; this fund allows her love of Jewish learning to continue to enrich our community.

Support CDT Through Amazon.com

Buy your books, electronics, and whatever else, and support CDT at the same time!

CDT is an Amazon Associate. When you click on the Amazon link on the bottom of the CDT homepage (www.dorsheitzedek.org), a portion of any purchase you make will be contributed to Dorshei Tzedek. It's an easy way to support the congregation while doing the on-line shopping you were planning to do anyway!



Learning

CHILDREN'S EDUCATION

by Alison Lobron, Interim Director of CDT Religious School

Dear CDT Community,

I consider it a great honor to be stepping into the role of Interim Director of the Dorshei Tzedek Religious School. I look forward to the incredible opportunity of working with **Shahar Colt** and **Rabbi Toba** to create an exceptional year of learning for our children and families. Over the past six years, I have been both a teacher and a parent at CDT's Religious School. These years have been the most formative years in the development of my Jewish identity. As a parent and congregant, I've participated in many wonderful learning opportunities, such as Project LO"X, Parenting Through a Jewish Lens, and Rabbi Adam Lavitt's year-long class, Shaarim: Gateways to Jewish Life and Thought. As a teacher, I've participated in numerous professional development sessions during which I've been encouraged to expand my own ideas about spirituality and Jewish identity. I feel so fortunate to have had the rare opportunity to blend my personal and professional journeys in such a profound and meaningful way.

For me, CDT has been the place where I could explore my Judaism. It's a safe environment to ask questions, learn new things, and explore my own assumptions. CDT Religious School has been a place where I can learn alongside my children, my partner and my peers. My own learning has been integrated into the life of my community. Throughout the year there are opportunities to try new practices, and adapt traditional rituals to fit the reality of my life.

To give a little background, I began my career as an elementary school classroom teacher. As a teacher in public school, I became very aware of how little emphasis there was on students' social and emotional development. In the era of standardized tests and teacher accountability, all of the school's resources went towards improving student performance on the district and state tests. I left the classroom with a mission to learn how to create change in a school culture, to allow for social/emotional learning alongside academics.

As a parent, I have a dream for my children's Jewish education. I dream that, no matter what is happening in their lives outside of shul, that CDT can be a place where they feel accepted, nurtured and safe. I want them to learn about Jewish tradition and practice, but I also want them to learn about themselves as individuals. I want them to develop deep, meaningful connections to their peers, and I want them to understand and value their roles as cherished members of their Jewish community. As an educator and community member, this is what I want for all of our children's Jewish education. I feel privileged to have this opportunity to be part of the educational leadership team, and to work towards this vision at CDT's Religious School. Thank you all for this opportunity.

PARENTING YOUR TWEEN THROUGH A JEWISH LENS

Sundays, 10:15-11:45 am (During religious school at JCDS), starting October 25

Coming to Dorshei Tzedek this fall, a five-session program brings together caring parents and expert facilitator Judy Elkin. Parents explore compelling Jewish texts and traditions while sharing stories and ideas about raising tweens. Learn from both ancient and contemporary sources of wisdom that you are not alone in your journey through this special life stage. The sessions are:

- 1) A Jewish Conception of Parenting
- 2) A Time for Every Purpose: New Freedoms and Setting Limits
- 3) Mindful Speech
- 4) Our Jewish Family
- 5) Fostering an Ethic of Caring

Parents from all backgrounds welcome. For more information, visit www.hebrewcollege.edu/parenting or email parenting@hebrewcollege.edu.

MINDFUL MORNINGS

Thursday mornings—July 2, 9, 16

9:00-9:45 am (please note time change for the summer)

60 Highland Street, Library

This weekly gathering combines guided and silent meditation to develop our capacity for mindful awareness. All are welcome. Meetings may take place on July

23 and July 30, as well as in August, if there is enough interest; please check the CDT website and calendar. Contact **Laya Steinberg** (lasword@rcn.com) or **Carole Slipowitz** (carole@slipowitz.org) for more information.

LOOKING TOWARDS THE NEW YEAR by Alison Lobron

At the end of May, I was at Camp Yavneh with my family on the CDT Retreat. I walked into the common room in our bunk house, and found my son, Gabriel sitting on the couch with three friends from his Religious School class. The four of them were huddled together, with their heads bent towards a piece of paper spread out on the coffee table in front of them. When I got closer, I realized, they were writing a comic strip starring the letters of the Alef-Bet who were all dressed up as superheroes! They kept at it for a little while. The comic-drawing eventually transitioned into joke-telling, still with the Alef-Bet theme.

The kids: Knock Knock!

Me: Who's there?

The kids: The sound of Alef.

Me: The sound of Alef who?

The kids went into hysterics, because the Hebrew letter Alef is SILENT!

This moment captured for me what I want Religious Education at CDT to be all about. I hope our school and our education programs can help kids feel connected to one another. I hope our kids can bring a little bit of themselves into their learning—whether it is superheroes, drawing, knock-knock jokes, or anything else. I hope they can associate Jewish learning with something that is fun, creative, and playful. As I look forward to the year ahead, I think about taking our curriculum (the study of Hebrew language, prayers, holidays, and Torah) and infusing it with the joy and playfulness I witnessed among my son and his friends.

A few things you should know:

- The deadline for registration forms for the 5776 school year is July 31, 2015. Additional copies of the registration packet can be downloaded from:

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Tikkun Olam

The next Tikkun Olam Committee meeting will be Wednesday, August 5 at 7:30 pm at FUSN (1326 Washington Street in West Newton). Come join our ongoing work on economic justice, incarceration, climate change, and understanding race. Bring new ideas, and help plan for the new year!

LABOR DAY SHABBAT

Saturday, September 5

Labor Day often symbolizes the official end of summer and the start of a new school year, but it is also a time to reflect on the history and meaning of work in this country. Taking time to think about workers who have come before us and who are with us now sacrificing so that we may all work with dignity and respect can also be important aspects of this day.

You shall not oppress a hired servant who is poor and needy, whether they are one of your brothers or sisters, or one of the strangers in your land inside your gates. (Deuteronomy 24:14)

Attend the Labor Day Shabbat services on Saturday, September 5, when we will host and hear from representatives of the Massachusetts Domestic Workers’ Coalition, who have served on the front lines and have been instrumental in helping to pass the Domestic Workers’ Bill of Rights into law. Participate in the discussion of what it means to be a respected worker and a respectful employer, and how these efforts are tied so deeply to Jewish values.

An “Employer Checklist” will be available as a guide to respectful and dignified practices when employing domestic workers.

“JOBS NOT JAILS”—REPORT ON RESTORATIVE JUSTICE RESPONSIBILITY RETREAT

by Alan Epstein

The Restorative Justice Responsibility Retreat of 2015 took place on June 13–14 at MCI–Norfolk, a medium security state prison near Foxborough. The retreat was put together by the men of Norfolk prison, with the incredible guidance of Karen Lischinsky, their teacher and mentor. As we were escorted into the prison’s large auditorium, it was clear that every detail of the day had been organized as if it were a corporate event. The program was designed down to the minute, with speakers, musical events, and group meetings with facilitators and specific participants and topics. Various prisoners had roles as greeters, ushers, monitors, schleppers, group leaders, performers, sound engineers and masters of ceremonies. Few of the correctional officers were present even when 300–400 incarcerated men entered the hall.

Speakers welcomed us “outsiders” and the incarcerated men, and spoke about the work of restorative justice (RJ). Men who had gone through the RJ program with Karen spoke about their journeys, from destructive behavior and damage to understanding, emotion, remorse, and responsibility. The work in many cases took years. A few court judges spoke about the difficulties in the criminal justice system, and about the power and importance of the RJ work. An Asst. District Attorney spoke, as did a Chief Probation Officer, about alternatives to sentencing and halting the “school-to-prison” pipeline.

Some of the most poignant speeches were from victims and survivors of violence. These individuals talked about their loss, both personal and communal, their loved ones, and about working in the RJ arena to ultimately stop the violence from affecting anyone else. They talked about opening their hearts to the others damaged by the violence—the men behind bars. In most cases, the survivors of violence do not come to meet with the specific perpetrator of their crime. But it is powerful nonetheless for any survivor and any perpetrator to come together to understand each other’s pain, loss, and responsibility.

The retreat highlighted the men’s work in progress. Some had reached the point where they were able to make a public apology to their victims and communities, and did so in a very moving ceremony each day. Others took a pledge to turn their lives around, to take full responsibility, and to take actions to right their wrongs. Many of the men are lifers with no chance of parole, and many have committed murder and other crimes and acts of violence. The expectation is that they can also reach younger men in Norfolk who do expect to go home someday, and prepare them for new lives on the outside.

For me, the weekend was a transformative experience. I realized how ingrained my attitudes were about “criminals” and prisons, even as I held more progressive

FAMILY TABLE UPDATE

by Ilana Mainelli

Thank you, thank you to all the families who participated in Family Table on 6/14, especially on such short notice! One family from CDT worked at JF&CS organizing and packing groceries and 7 more families from CDT packed and delivered food. We were essential to Family Table’s ability to serve all of its clients in June, and they were very grateful for our help.

We need 1 person to bring our donations from our collection boxes at Second Church to Family Table on July 19. This is a quick and easy task in July because all of our donations are in one place. You can sign up for this at <http://tinyurl.com/deliver2FT> or link to that page from the CDT website (Members’ Area>signups>Family Table). And of course it is essential that we make donations during the summer. Please continue to bring your contributions of kosher and/or vegetarian soup and whole

grain cereal, or checks (made out to “JF&CS” and write “Family Table” in the memo line) to our collection boxes near the Highland St. door of our sanctuary.

FT can use our help again with distribution on July 19. Please go to <http://tinyurl.com/FT71915> to sign up or link to that page from the CDT website (Members’ Area>signups>Family Table).

Thank you all for your help and support of Family Table during my tenure as CDT’s FT coordinator. This has been a very rewarding job. I’m stepping down at the end of July, and CDT needs someone (or maybe 2 people) to be the Family Table coordinator(s) next year. I’m happy to talk to anyone about what it entails and to train the next coordinator(s). Please contact **Jen Kaplan**, our new President, if you are ready to do it. If you would like to know more about this position first, please email me at familytable@dorsheitzedek.org, or call me at 617–852–6351.

political views. Sitting in the group circles, listening to each man’s story and in many cases remorse, I began to see them in a new light, where every life matters no matter how broken, no matter how previously destructive. I could see them as people who could be my friends, co-workers and community members. Each one had something to offer and something interesting to say. Each had the capacity to do right and many were.

I also realized how much our culture values deception and denial. These men appear to have done much more work in being open and honest than many people in the wider society. They have worked harder to transform their earlier situations into models of behavior than most people do here outside. And they certainly lived up to the maxim articulated by Bryan Stevenson, among others: “We are not the worst thing we ever did.”

I don’t mean to paint too rosy a picture here. Many of these men will ultimately die in prison due to the current political climate that, despite our Massachusetts liberalism, still favors long prison terms, inhumane prison conditions, and impossible reintegration supports. And many survivors of violence have not been able to bring themselves to the table. We still have much work to do.

Chesed

The Chesed Committee would like to give a heartfelt todah rabbah to outgoing Chesed coordinators: **Barbara Shatkin**, **Jamie Tessler**, and **Ruth Paris**.

REFUAH SH’LEYMA

We send blessings for a complete healing to **Ilana Streit**.

Yahrzeit

We remember CDT member **Debbie Sher** on the occasion of her fourth yearzeit, which falls this year on August 29. We will be remembering Debbie at Shabbat morning services on August 29.

MOURNING AT CDT

As a reference, CDT members have created the brochure “Finding Comfort, Giving Support: A Guide to Mourning at Congregation Dorshei Tzedek,” available on the resource table in our sanctuary and on our website at: www.dorsheitzedek.org/sites/default/files/managed/mourning-2010.pdf.

Chesed (Loving-Kindness) is an important CDT community value. The Chesed Committee is dedicated to creating a caring community by providing support and comfort when one of our members has a major life change such as the arrival of a child, death, injury, illness or other significant life cycle event. The committee coordinates our community’s response by using the website Lotsa Helping Hands, and encourages all members to sign up at <http://dorsheitzedek.org/chesed-caring-community> so you can respond when a Chesed request goes out. The committee would like to thank everyone who provided acts of chesed last month. We welcome new volunteers or committee members.

The Chesed committee’s coordinators in July are **Jenny Sartori** and **Susan Nitkin**, and in August are **Marla Cummins** and **Benita Danzing**; please use chesed@dorsheitzedek.org to contact them.

Contacting Rabbi Toba: Rabbi Toba is available to talk about any spiritual, religious, or personal issues that you might want to discuss. To schedule an appointment, please contact her (confidentially) at rabbi@dorsheitzedek.org or 617-965-0330 #2. She does not check email or voicemail on Shabbat (Friday evening through Saturday evening) or on Mondays (her day off).

For congregants experiencing financial difficulties, help is available through the Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund. This fund is administered solely by the rabbi and is completely confidential.

ON AND OFF THE BIMA

cont. from p.2

regular sessions to train new leyners. If you find yourself wondering about embarking on this journey, intrigued about developing a deeper connection to Torah and Jewish ritual, you may want to consider learning to leyn in one of our classes. You’ll want to first make sure you have a fair degree of fluency and accuracy in your Hebrew reading skills and that you are ready to put in the investment of time and energy to practice. Like all new skills, leyning becomes easier and more natural the more you do it. Over the years we have trained more than 40 adult members to chant from the Torah, and many continue to do so at our Shabbat morning services. Some chant regularly, some less frequently, some from the scroll, some from the Chumash, and all are welcome and appreciated for their efforts on the bimah.

LEARNING

cont. from p.5

- <http://dorsheitzedek.org/school-registration>.
- The first day of Religious School for students in Nitzanim (preschool) through Zayin (7th grade) will be Sunday, September 20.
- The entire Religious School calendar can be found on the Dorshei Tzedek website (<http://dorsheitzedek.org/calendar>).
- We are organizing a community building plus outreach event, “Party in the Park,” on Sunday, August 23, at 11 am at Auburndale Cove. There will be games, songs, and a cook-out! More details can be found in this edition of the newsletter on page 3.

Community

MAZEL TOV

To **Elaine Pollack**, on the birth of her grandson, Elijah Lucas Pollack Martz!

To **Deborah Waber**, whose daughter and son-in-law, Abigail Leonard and Peter Hennessy, joyfully welcomed their new son, Phineas Leonard Hennessy, on June 1 in Tokyo.

To our June B'nei Mitzvah, **Elan Katz** and **Ben Reider**, and to their families!

TODAH RABBAH

A huge thank you and *"yasher koach"* to everyone who helped make the 10th CDT Retreat so successful: first and foremost, our Retreat Coordinator, **Doron Gan**, and all those who helped out: the planning committee—**Sarah Birkeland**, **Liz Carpenter**, **Vilunya Diskin**, **Alison Lobron**, and **Bill Shorr**; the Housing Experts, **Erica Streit-Kaplan** and **Susan Silberberg**; the Talent Show organizers—**Gina Fried**, **Vilunya Diskin**, and **Henry Wasserman**; **Carole Slipowitz**, for inclusion consultation; and everyone who helped to plan and run an activity, schlepped supplies, and helped out in any way!

To our CDT leadership of the past year: the Executive Committee, headed by **Allison Hausman**, along with **Jen Kaplan**, **Melanie Adler**, **Lisa Schneier**, **Cliff Cohen**, and **David Lobron**; and our Board members at large: **Vilunya Diskin**, **Roy Edelstein**, **Mark Farber**, **Linda Hsu**, **Jessica Keimowitz**, **Lissy Medvedow**, and **Madeline Steinberg**. And a big todah rabbah as well to our off-board chairs who oversee the vital functions of our community: Ritual co-chairs **Laurie Goldman** and **Marion Ross**; Children's Education Committee Chair **Erica Streit-Kaplan**; Nativ Lev chair **Peter Katz**; Newsletter coordinator **Danny Shain**; Tikkun Olam chair **Bonnie Tenneriello**; Website manager **Dan Halbert**; Space Committee chair **Noam Shore**; and Rabbinic Liaison **Cindy Shulak-Rome**. Yasher koach to you all!

To the **Fisher-Gomberg family**, for once again hosting and organizing a wonderful *Havdallah on the Water*!

To **Emily Sper**, for creating the beautiful Tribute plaque for **Dan Halbert**.

Todah rabbah to everyone who helped with Kiddush/B'nei Mitzvah/Meetings in May and June:

Yale Lansky—*in memory of Edith Lansky*; **Sue Ann Wasserman**; **Sarah Little** and **Doug Hersh**; **Sharon Gorberg** and **John Holohan**; **Stacey Chacker**—*in memory of Fred Chacker*; **Jennifer Nichols**; **Jennifer Sartori**; **Misha Dudnik** and

Amy Dain; **Barry Ehrlich** and **Barbara Blumenthal**; **Leah Diskin**; **Nem Hackett**; **Karen Wasserman**; **Jodie Siegel**; **Amy Mazur**—*in memory of Rhoda and Marvin Mazur*; **Lilly Platt**—*in memory of Yankel and Chaike Platt*; **Stephen Zisk**; **Robert Imperato**; **Marjorie Feld** and **Michael Fein**; **Benita Danzing**; and **Linette Liebling**—*in memory of Zelda and Joel Liebling*; **Marc Steinberg**; **Sami O'Reilly**; **Kristin Butcher**; **Vilunya Diskin**.

TRIBUTE TO DAN HALBERT

At the June Members Meeting, we honored uber-volunteer Dan Halbert for his incredible behind-the-scenes work that supports every aspect of CDT life, from managing the website to creating CDT listservs to IT support for the staff. Current and former leadership of CDT as well as staff members chimed in to sing Dan's praises, and these tributes were lovingly collected in a beautiful plaque by **Emily Sper**. Here are a few of the testimonials to Dan's work:

Dan Halbert is the ultimate "behind the scenes" volunteer—he keeps our offices running, connects our congregation through listservs and the website, and answers every and any technical question

I (or the rest of the staff) throws his way. I truly cannot imagine Dorshei Tzedek functioning without him. Thank you, Dan; we are and remain eternally grateful! —*Rabbi Toba*

continued on next page



Please notify the Newsletter of life cycle events, significant accomplishments, or other moments you would like to share with the community. (See page 2 for details.)

Community cont.

To me, Dan is the embodiment of the word “*mensch*.” He is kind, considerate, thoughtful and a consummate listener. Dan never fails to help when called upon, whether by me, admin staff, Rabbi Toba, or anyone else here at CDT. I have never heard him say “no”! I consider myself very lucky to have him in my/our corner and am grateful for every problem solved, every piece of equipment researched and purchased, every conversation about anything really. He is truly gifted at all things tech, and as a human being. —*Marla Lichtman*

Dan is exceptionally talented and exceptionally humble. He quietly completely revised our website, researching the best platform for the site and brilliantly implementing it when he had never done anything like that before. That saved our congregation thousands of dollars. I’m not

sure if he sleeps, because any change or suggestion happens immediately. And he brings a calm, positive, feeling whenever he’s around. We are so blessed to have his contributions and his presence. Thank you, Dan! —*Allison Hausman*

I don’t know what we would do without Dan—he’s been a silent partner on every committee I’ve been on over the years. Whatever the tech problem is, he knows what to do about it, and we rely on his responsiveness, excellent judgment, and good nature. Just this month he created a group communication list for the Chesed committee. It’s an example of a routine task for him that created a huge improvement for our committee. Thanks so much Dan! —*Judy Hersch*

Dan’s skills make everything work! The Tikkun Olam Committee has exponentially

increased our effectiveness with our listserv and sub-listservs, and our work is now visible on the CDT website, thanks to Dan. But it all happens so quietly and easily that it’s easy to forget he’s there doing the work, always with good cheer. Thank you, Dan! —*Bonnie Tenneriello*

Dan is gifted at figuring what you need in order to accomplish what you’ve set out to do. That’s because his curiosity is generous; his caring guides his questions. Dan has helped the Ritual Committee create sign-up sheets that are easy to use and hard to mess up. He even catches misleading typos in the chapters and verses! He’s also helped me work through numerous technological conundrums. Thanks to Dan’s calm patience, I’ve had much less stressful experiences with computer crashes and printer failures. —*Laurie Goldman*

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CDT RETREAT (MAY 29-31, 2015)

by Emily Shumsky

This year was our family’s third CDT retreat, and as in the past, everyone (in the congregation and in our family) really enjoyed it. The retreat was held at the end of May at Camp Yavneh in NH.

There were activities for adults, teens, and children, as well as some for the entire group. The number, variety of activities, and hard work that went into organizing, were all tremendous. We want to thank our fearless volunteer lead organizer, **Doron Gan**, for the many hours he put in. Many, many others led activities.

In addition, many of the activities were a huge success. The first night, there was a Kabbalat Shabbat service at Camp Yavneh’s outdoor amphitheater. This was followed by ice-breakers and an excellent “Sing-Down” contest. Teams were given a word and had to come up with songs with that word in it. Then they had to sing at least one line from the song. There were a lot of talented CDT singers and clever music aficionados singing old and new songs. Participants ranged from age 2 to 62.

On our second day (Shabbat morning), kids who were too old for Tot Shabbat and their parents who wanted to be outside in the sun joined **Laura Bellows** and **Bill Shorr** for “Torah and Tefillah” in the woods. This was a walk, and a time to contemplate, learn prayer, and enjoy nature.

On the second night there was a talent show. According to **Jacob Shumsky**, “There was a super fun talent show—everyone was performing. **Simon Schwartz** did a Rubik’s cube (solved it very quickly).” The talent show also included many musicians, dancers, singing, comedy, and hula-hooping. **Gina Fried**, **Henry Wasserman** and **Vilunya Diskin** organized the evening.



The yoginis of Dorshei Tzedek on Retreat.
Photo by Liz Carver.

Another part of the retreat that most CDTers

participated in was outdoor sports and games. We did swimming and boating at the waterfront, including jumping on and off a floating foam mat that was attached to the dock. Both kids and adults went out in canoes and kayaks. At the field, some played Ultimate Frisbee. While one group played softball, others tried whiffle-ball or participated in a variety of field games.

Highlights for our children included sundaes at the dining hall and campfire s’mores. On the last (Sunday) morning, **Bonnie Tenneriello** led a group of adults, teens and kids in making and baking strawberry rhubarb pies. They were delicious. **James Kaplan** led a workshop on comic books. **Dori Stern** and others led some awesome guitar-playing and singing at the campfire. **Tania Mireles** led us in tie-dyeing shirts, which both kids and adults enjoyed. **Bryn Austin** also led us in a gentle Yoga class on Sunday morning, which we all enjoyed.

Thanks to everyone for all their hard work in organizing and leading events! Thanks especially to **Rabbi Toba** and all of the CDT Staff. Congratulations to all on a job well-done, and we look forward to seeing you at our next CDT retreat in 2017.

CDT Calendar

July 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE, ALL SHABBAT PROGRAMS ARE HELD AT THE DORSHEI TZEDEK PRAYER SPACE: 60 HIGHLAND STREET IN THE SECOND CHURCH OF NEWTON, WEST NEWTON.				2 Mindful Mornings 9:00-9:45am Library	3	4
5	6 Jobs Not Jails Taskforce Meeting 7:00-9:00pm FUSN	7	8	9 Mindful Mornings 9:00-9:45am Library	10	11 Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am-12:00pm 60 Highland St, Room 111
12 CDT Hikes 11:00am Mt. Monadnock	13	14	15	16 Mindful Mornings 9:00-9:45am Library	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25 Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am-12:00pm 60 Highland St, Room 111
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

August 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
2	3	4 Tikkun Olam Committee Meeting 7:00pm FUSN	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14 All-Ages Erev Shabbat Service / Potluck 6:00 pm	15 Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am-12:00pm
16 Rosh Chodesh 7:30-9:00 60 Highland St, Living Rm	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 Party in the Park 11:00am-1:00pm Auburndale Park, Newton	24	25	26	27	28	29 Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am-12:00pm
30	31	SEPTEMBER 1	2	3	4	5 Labor Day Shabbat Service 9:45am-12:00pm Selichot 8:00-10:00pm Temple Hillel B'nai Torah

KIDDUSH ASSIGNMENTS

JULY 11 Shabbat Morning Service: Wendy Frankston / Charles Frankston / Dianne Lior

JULY 25 Shabbat Morning Service: Cindy Shulak-Rome / Dan Rome / Ellie Goldberg—*in memory of my mother Theresa Goldberg, z'l*

AUG 14 All-ages Erev Shabbat Service & Potluck: Carol Sklar—*in memory of Frances Sklar, z'l* / Erica Streit-Kaplan—*in honor of my birthday*

AUG 15 Shabbat Morning Service: Lauren Stefano / Ellie Baron / Kate DeBethune / Ben Newman

AUG 29 Shabbat Morning Service: Andrew Stefano / Matt Fried / Caitlin Golden / Danny Shain

SEP 5 Labor Day Shabbat Service: Linda Katz / Peter Katz / Lisa Goodman / Bill Weinreb

Kiddush Note: The complete kiddush and holiday assignment schedule is available in the members' calendar on our website. When notified of your dates, please be sure to put them into your personal calendars. The whole congregation counts on your participation in kiddush and each assigned person is needed and expected to show up. Thank you!

Parents of students in 5th, 6th, 7th & 8th grades, who generally help out with B'nei Mitzvah kiddush, ushering and sanctuary clean-up, can primarily find their names listed on B'nei Mitzvah dates.

No Fragrances, Please. So that Dorshei Tzedek events are accessible to all of our members and guests, we ask that people refrain from wearing fragrances (perfumes, scented oils, colognes, etc.) to all CDT events. While pleasant to some, fragrances can cause illness to those who are chemically sensitive. Thank you for your understanding and flexibility.

Reconstructionist Movement

CAMP JRF

JRF Family Camp is happening on August 19-23, 2015 in South Sterling, PA, and the application and information are up on their website (<http://campjrf.org/parents/family-camp/>). The time to sign up is now!

HIGH HOLYDAYS 5776

Sunday-Tuesday, September 13-15

Tuesday-Wednesday, September 22-23

We ring in the new Jewish year with Rosh Hashanah services on Sunday evening, September 13, and the mornings of September 14 and 15. Yom Kippur services will be on Tuesday evening, September 22, and all day September 23. We look forward to the community gathering together at Gann Academy in Waltham—stay tuned for more information on children's programming, timing of services, and more! The High Holydays mailing, and information on the website, will be available by mid-August.

SELICHOT

Saturday, September 5, 8:00-10:00 pm

Temple Hillel B'nai Torah, 120 Corey Street, West Roxbury

We kick off the High Holydays season with our sister Reconstructionist congregations, Hillel B'nai Torah and Shir Hadash, with a Saturday evening Selichot program. To enter into the season of teshuvah, turning/returning, we will begin with havdalah, food, and shmoozing at 8 pm, followed by Rabbi Toba's study session on "Beyond Avinu Malkeinu: New Metaphors for God during the Days of Awe." Following the study, Rabbis Barbara Penzner and Rachel Dvash Schoenfeld will help us begin our journey into the High Holydays with Selichot melodies and meditations.



Incoming CDT President Jen Kaplan and outgoing President Allison Hausman at the June members meeting.
Photo by Vivienne Shein.



Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

60 Highland St.
West Newton, MA 02465

Address correction requested

The CDT Carbon Challenge is ON!

As a congregation, we set out to earn 350,000 Carbon Points between Shavuot and Rosh Hashanah. This is a community event, and we can all earn Carbon Points by taking easy (changing a lightbulb) as well as long-horizon (writing an elected official) actions to reduce our carbon footprint. See how we're doing or pledge and track your own progress on the "More than Lightbulbs" list (<http://dorsheitzedek.org/climate>). The results will be announced on September 15 at Rosh Hashanah.



And, speaking of environmental challenges, the CDT Hiking Club (and pet friends) conquered Mt. Wachusett on Saturday, June 6th. Next hike is Mt. Monadnock on Sunday, July 12. See p.3 for details.