



Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

An Affiliate of the Jewish Reconstructionist Movement

Kislev/Tevet 5778

December 2017

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Getting to Know You

by Lissy Medvedow



I WAS recently asked by a past President of CDT if being President changes the way I feel when I'm at services, meetings, or congregational events. The answer is yes. Although I have always been comfortable at CDT, now I'm regularly introducing myself to everyone I don't know; asking if I can join folks at a Kiddush table, or looking at members with an eye towards future leadership. I find myself feeling emboldened and proud to be President as well as mindful of what I don't know and what there is to accomplish. All in all, so far, so good!

I'm also still on the pathway of experiencing "firsts." My first High Holydays as President exceeded my expectations. The sheer number of members who volunteered for the multiple tasks was extraordinary. Childcare, children's and teen programming, service leaders, food coordinators, Board members and Past Presidents who greeted and ushered, **Mark Bronstein** who, yet again, enabled all of us to hear the services, the extraordinary staff at CDT: **Marla Lichtman** and **Lidia Prunte**, **Alison Lobron**, and, of course, **Rabbis Toba** and **Shahar**, who gave so much of themselves throughout the holidays. They really were Days of Awe in myriad ways.

And I just experienced my first Members Meeting as President. For those of you who were there, I hope you'll share in my characterization of the meeting as content rich and powerful (and jovial). We heard from **Jamie Tessler** who gave a presentation about Membership in her usual upbeat and enthusiastic manner, followed by **Rob Greenly** and **Ellen Hemley** who skillfully introduced a plan for Leadership Development and helped us think about what leadership looks like and means in a congregational setting. Rabbi Toba then raised our consciousness about Jewish learning on economic injustice and CDT's historical and current efforts to address those issues. Members of our newly-formed Economic Diversity Study Group shared deeply personal and meaningful stories about when they have felt uncomfortable, ashamed, or humiliated by feelings of economic inequity. In revealing their own vulnerabilities, they gave everyone permission to begin conversations, in small groups, about matters that are rife with complexity and nuance. Their courage provides inspiration for us, as a congregation, to take on this hard but important work. Thank you to **Susan Bernstein**, **Abby Cohen**, **Mark Farber**, **Lisa Goodman**, **Audra Karp**, **Linette Liebling**, **Amy Mazur**, **Mark Paley**, and **Lisa Schneier** (**Barry Ingber** is also part of the Study Group but could not be at the meeting). The

work of both Leadership Development and Economic Diversity will continue throughout the year and beyond.

There are a few unsung heroes at CDT for whom I'm already extremely grateful. **Dan Halbert**, our website guru, responds to every request (of which there are many) within minutes, willingly and graciously. **Sami O'Reilly**, our child care coordinator, handles all the teens who provide childcare during services every week — without fanfare or acknowledgement. The entire Newsletter team coordinates, writes, edits, and produces an incredibly readable and informative publication every month. You can never thank people enough and there are many others deserving of thanks (which I'll save for additional columns). For now, I just know that we are lucky to have an overabundance of individuals who dedicate time and energy to make our community welcoming, spirited, and engaging. We really are a special congregation.

If you have comments, ideas, or concerns about CDT, please be in touch. My e-mail is: **medvedow@gmail.com** (that's the best way to reach me). If we haven't met, please be sure to introduce yourself to me next time we're together. I really do hope to have a chance to get to know everyone.



Photo: CDT members at the members meeting, June 2017. Photo by Viv Shein.

Rabbinic Liaison

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**.

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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Program Associate: Lidia Prunte
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Newsletter

The CDT Newsletter is published monthly with a July-August summer issue. Email articles, events, and photos to **dtnews@dorsheitzedek.org**. Usually the deadline is the 10th of the month for the following month's issue. For questions, email us at the same address.

Volunteer Staff: John Holohan (chair), Josette Akresh-Gonzales, Barry Ingber, Barbara Pittel, Vivienne Shein (photographer), Amy Westebbe.

Shabbat

ALL-AGES EREV SHABBAT SERVICE

Friday evenings, December 8, January 5, February 9

6:00pm candle-lighting & potluck dinner,
6:45pm service

Join us for this fun, musical, all-ages celebration of Shabbat! We begin with candle-lighting and the Shabbat blessings at 6pm, followed by a vegetarian potluck dinner (please bring a main dish or salad, enough for 10-15 people; drinks and dessert provided). Services begin at 6:45pm, and we end with an Oneg Shabbat at 7:30pm.

SHABBAT MORNING TORAH STUDY

With Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Saturday mornings, 8:45-9:40am, December 9, January 6, February 10

All are welcome to explore the weekly Torah portion, with commentaries both traditional and modern. No text study experience necessary! Bring your own caffeinated beverage.

SAVE THE DATE!

The next "Got Shabbat" will be happening January 13, in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday weekend. Stay tuned for more details!

TOT SHABBAT

December 16, 10:45am-Noon

Tot Shabbat is a monthly Shabbat morning program for families with kids aged 2-5. Join us in celebrating Shabbat with songs, stories, crafts, and other fun activities!

TO 120!

Shabbat morning, December 9

At Shabbat morning services on December 9, we will be celebrating the 90th birthday of **Marvin Brotman**, beloved elder of CDT. CDT Sings will be sharing some special songs in Marvin's honor. Come join the celebration!

CONTEMPLATIVE SHABBAT SERVICE WITH SPECIAL GUEST!

with Rabbi Sheila Weinberg

Shabbat morning, December 16,
9:45am-noon



Back by popular demand, Rabbi Sheila Weinberg will join Rabbi Toba for a chanting and meditation Shabbat morning service, and Sheila will share teachings from her new book, *God Loves the Stranger*. The contemplative service begins at 9:45am, followed by learning at 11:15am.

Rabbi Weinberg is a leading teacher of Jewish Mindfulness Meditation in the U.S., and a wonderful teacher and speaker.

SHABBAT SHIRA DINNER & MUSICAL KABBALAT SHABBAT

Friday evening, January 26

6:45pm Candle-lighting and Shabbat dinner

8:00pm Musical Kabbalat Shabbat

Shabbat Shira, the "Shabbat of Song," features the reading of the Song of the Sea in the book of Exodus, and has become a Shabbat to celebrate music and its liberating power. Back by popular demand, the evening will begin with a catered dairy dinner (vegetarian & fish, from our favorite CDT caterer, Kim Cox) followed by a musical Kabbalat Shabbat service led by Rabbi Toba and CDT musicians.

If you would like to attend the dinner, pre-registration is required. The link can be found in the Members' Section of the CDT website; please sign up by January 12. The cost of the dinner is \$25 per person; kids are half-price, gluten- and dairy-free options are available, and please contact Rabbi Toba if finances are an obstacle to participation — all who wish to attend will be able to!

Chanukah Celebration! (see page 5)

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 IN ROOM 112. 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).

Community

MAZEL TOV

To **Debbie Waber** on the birth of granddaughter Hannah Waber Hennessy! She arrived November 6 in Tokyo to Debbie's daughter Abigail and son-in-law Peter.

YAHARZEIT

We remember CDT members **Susannah Zisk**, whose 6th yahrzeit falls this year on December 3, and **Alex Fried**, whose 10th yahrzeit falls this year on December 10. We will be remembering Susannah at Shabbat morning services on December 9 (please note, this is a change from what was previously listed in the November newsletter), and we will be remembering Alex at Shabbat morning services on December 2.

REFUAH SHLEYMAH

We send blessings for complete healing to **DB Reiff, Susan Moser, Dan Karp, Jaime Wurzel**, and **Scott Gordon**.

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 <http://dorsheitzedek.org/sites/default/files/managed/mourning-2010.pdf>.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to **Rachel Kelemen** and **Joshua Brown**. Rachel and Josh found out about us through our website! They love astronomy, have a telescope, and love showing people the stars.

Welcome to **Janet Penn**! With thanks to **Ora Grodsky** for the referral.

Welcome back to **Lynne Brandon** and **Jyl Lynn Felman**.

Please notify the Newsletter of life cycle events, significant accomplishments, or other moments you would like to share with the community.



TODAH RABAH

Todah Rabah to everyone who helped with kiddush in October and November:

Joshua Herzig-Marx (Captain), Doron Gan, Carole Slipowitz, Susie Tanchel, Diana Perretta—in memory of Fred & Helen Herstein, Alyssa Cohen (Captain), Susan Nitkin & Jeffrey Marcus, Linda Hsu & Marc Steinberg, Emily & David Shumsky, Marjorie Feld & Michael Fein, Polly Crozier & Jessica Keimowitz, Pamela Rosenstein, Jenny Sartori & Barry Gilbert, Misha Dudnik, Leah Diskin, Annie Spanel, Susan Silberberg, Karen Engels & Lucy Engels, Annette Jacobs, Laura (Captain) & Joel Katz, Ellen Lubell, Jonathan Gordon (Captain), Dan Halbert, Tal Shalom-Kobi, David Greenberg, Diane Yates, Susan Bernstein (Captain), Ellen Pashall, Reva Kasman, Denise & Mark Yurkofsky, Sami O'Reilly (Captain), Amy Brodesky (Captain) & Rex Flynn, Ora Grodsky & Jonathan Rosenthal, Allison Hausman & Ezra Hausman, Tom Brown, Beth & Jeff Green—in memory of Eitan Green, and Jane Schwartz & Tracey Rogers (Captain).

And special thanks to those who helped take down the Sukkah: **Deb Albenberg** and **Audra Karp, Marla Cummins, Rebecca Gutman, Ben Dash, and Benita Danzing**

THANK YOU FROM RABBI SHAHAR & DARYA MATTES

So many Dorshei members came to our *aufruf*, sent us well wishes, and asked about our wedding. It was an amazing experience, and we were so glad to be able to celebrate with the Dorshei community on shabbat morning. Thank you all for sharing the joy with us, and especially thank you to the CDT religious school families for making us the biggest card ever!

—Rabbi Shahar and Darya

CDT GARDEN

by Laya Steinberg

The CDT/FUSN Garden has officially been 'put to bed' for winter. The final tally of this year's harvest was a whopping 870 lbs! Do we dare hope for 1000 lbs next year? The Newton Food Pantry was extremely grateful for our contribution to their program. A huge thanks to all those hard working CDT folks who came out on November 12th to dig up weeds and spent plants, remove the fencing to be rebuilt next spring, and clear the soil for 2018. And kudos to those who came out all season long—your contribution was essential to our success. As we 'grow' this program, hopefully more members will get involved in this worthwhile project. We'd love to have you!

P.S. We are hoping to find a small to medium sized shed since the one we are using is in poor shape. Any leads to a shed in good condition (or discount on a new one) would be much appreciated. Thanks!

CDT Events

SAVE THE DATE: CDT COMMUNITY POTLUCK DINNERS!

Save the date! The next round of CDT community potluck dinners will be held on the weekend of January 19-20. Hosts are needed—please contact **Debby Saltzman** (debby-saltzman@gmail.com) if you are willing to host a dinner for 6-12 guests in your home. Watch for sign-ups to open in early January.

CDT FILM CLUB

Saturday, December 9 at the home of JoAnn and Michael Feldstein

Past Life (2016, 1 hr. 49 min., English, Polish, German, Hebrew)

“With a keen sense of characterization, this moving drama follows two Israeli sisters — one an aspiring composer, the other a journalist — who dredge up dark family secrets when they attempt to learn the truth about their Holocaust-survivor father.” —Netflix

Potluck at 6:00 pm, movie starts at 7:00 pm to be followed by a group discussion. Feel free to come for any part of the evening. If you’re coming to the potluck, please bring a main dish, salad or dessert to share (in consideration of members with dietary constraints, if you are making a dish with dairy or wheat that can be added later, ie. salad with cheese or croutons, please keep separate). Due to space constraints, this event is for members and their families.

We hope you can join us! Contact the co-chairs, **Stan Fleischman** and **Emily Sper**, film-club@dorsheitzedek.org, for more information or if you’d like to host a film.

Jewish Community Events

IN CELEBRATION OF ISRAEL’S 70TH BIRTHDAY TEMPLE ISRAEL OF NATICK PRESENTS: NAVA TEHILA IN CONCERT

Sunday, December 10, 2017, 7:00 PM

Nava Tehila is a Jerusalem-based ensemble that plays original and traditional Jewish music. They are dedicated to Jewish renewal and reaching out to Jews of all affiliations and all walks of life in the US, Israel and Europe. Nava Tehila’s spiritual leaders compose new music for prayer and train rabbis, cantors and students in the art of musical and innovative prayer. They have produced albums of music for Shabbat and High Holidays prayers.

Tickets are \$18 in advance and \$25 at the door. Please call the Temple Israel of Natick office at 508-650-3521, x100 to make reservations.

GANN ACADEMY PRODUCTION OF “YOU CAN’T TAKE IT WITH YOU”

December 7 and 9, 7:30 pm

The Bernice Krupp Black Box Theatre, Gann Academy, 333 Forest Street, Waltham

Join us for our production of Moss Hart and George S. Kaufman’s masterfully crafted night of joyful escapism. This madcap comedy is about an improbably happy family during the Great Depression and great for children and adults. This is theatre to make your cheeks hurt! Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children and students. For tickets, contact 18ideykin@gannacademy.org.

Chanukah Celebration

Sunday, December 17, 4:30-6:30pm

First Unitarian Society, 1326 Washington Street, West Newton

Come celebrate the Festival of Lights! We will begin together with candle-lighting and Chanukah songs at 4:30pm — bring your own menorah and 7 candles for lighting! Then at 5:00pm we will have activities for all ages — including Israeli dance, crafts, cooking, study, and more! — followed by a potluck plus latkes dinner at 6:00pm. For the dinner, please bring a salad of any sort — green, veggie, pasta, egg, tuna — to accompany latkes, enough for 20 people. Drinks and dessert will be provided.

And bring a friend or two! This is a great way for folks to learn more about CDT.



Photo: Tsering Komyerov at the CDT Chanukah Celebration, 2016. Photo by Viv Shein.

Tikkun Olam

SAVE THE DATE: TIKKUN OLAM MEETING

January 24th from 7:30-9:00pm in the Library of Second Church

One of Dorshei Tzedek's Core Values is that of Tikkun Olam, Repairing the World. Our congregation's name means "seekers of justice," and, as that name implies, we strive to create a just and kind world by pursuing a variety of social action initiatives and projects both within our congregation and in conjunction with the broader community. We view such actions to end injustice and oppression as core to our spiritual journey and as a cornerstone of our ethical and moral tradition. At the January meeting, all are welcome to come and find out what the various committees have been doing as well as bring your own ideas and questions. We will be discussing the recent legislative action that CDT as part of the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) has been campaigning for. We will also update the sanctuary efforts in place for undocumented Americans.

If you have any questions or thoughts, please feel free to contact **Abby Cohen** at abby-cohen@verizon.net

PRISON BOOK PROGRAM THIS MONTH

by Barbara Shatkin

In keeping with our new schedule of volunteering at the Prison Book Program (PBP) in Quincy, MA on the first Tuesday of every even-numbered month, CDT members will be volunteering on Tuesday, December 5, from 6:30 to 9 pm. Volunteers select books in response to prisoners' written requests, wrap books for mailing, create invoices, etc. If interested in learning more about volunteering, contact **Barbara Shatkin** with questions (bfshatkin@aol.com) or sign-up

on the CDT sign-up page. We travel to the PBP by carpool or Redline to Quincy Center.

SANCTUARY AND BEYOND: SOLIDARITY WITH IMMIGRANTS

CDT held a meeting, "Sanctuary and Beyond," on October 29, to update members of the Newton Sanctuary and Solidarity Collaborative (NSSC) on the status of our sanctuary work and consider additional ways that we can support immigrant communities, including policy advocacy and direct aid. The meeting was largely attended by CDT members. It was organized by CDT members **Danielle Klainberg, Bonnie Tenneriello, Stacey Chacker, and Ellen Lubell.**

The meeting included an update on our sanctuary work, and focused on understanding needs and helping to prioritize how we may want to (1) take action in solidarity with the movement for immigrant justice and (2) directly support individual immigrants and refugees other than through offering sanctuary.

SANCTUARY UPDATE

At the time of the meeting, it looked like the arrival of a family was imminent, but no family arrived. Since then, we have been in a holding pattern. The NSSC has been using the past few months to prepare, plan, and work with lawyers and activists to meet potential guests. Thanks to the help and support of many volunteers and generous donors, we have turned the basement of a secure house of worship into a comfortable space where guests may stay. We have recruited and trained hundreds of volunteers who stand ready to accompany this family during their stay.

SOLIDARITY NEEDS AND ACTIONS BEYOND SANCTUARY

Guest speaker Sarang Sekhavat, Federal Policy Director at MIRA, the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, clarified the fast-changing im-

migration landscape and helped us consider where our support might have most impact. Sarang encouraged us to visit MIRA's website for action items (at <https://www.mira-coalition.org/>) and summarized these key advocacy needs:

- **DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals):** Congress has until March 5th to act before its official end date, when existing DACA permits will begin to expire without the possibility of renewal. It is important to urge Congress to pass the bipartisan DREAM Act, although there is not much for us to do in Massachusetts given the active support of our delegation.

- **In-State Tuition:** We need to urge our state legislators, Speaker DeLeo, and Governor Baker, to support in-state tuition for undocumented immigrants. This is a right they will lose if DACA is not renewed and the DREAM Act does not advance.

- **TPS (Temporary Protected Status):** This is also under siege, with groups like Centro Presente actively working to advocate for state-level legislation to maintain this status. MIRA believes this is a good tactic for education and building awareness of the injustice and failure of our immigration policy.

- **Massachusetts Safe Communities Act:** It is important for us to support this through city-by-city adoption of safe communities/sanctuary city legislation. We also need to push for statewide legislation. Since our meeting, the City of Salem voted to keep this on their books. More information is available at: <http://actnow.io/IWDPTPrP>.

Other Direct Support to Individual Immigrants and Refugees

- **Accompaniment:** Sarang noted that MIRA also encourages (but isn't organizing) people to support immigrants by ac-

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Inclusion Committee

companying them to ICE (U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement) check-ins and immigration or other court hearings in order to bear witness, show solidarity, possibly avoid their unlawful detention, and help notify their families and lawyers if they are detained. Our group is working with The Brazilian Worker Center and the Massachusetts Unitarian Universalist community to organize a volunteer database and make trainings available.

Supporting Refugees Through Resettlement

In addition to helping undocumented immigrants, we discussed opportunities to support refugees through resettlement in our local communities. The International Institute of New England seeks volunteers to assist with their program to help individuals with job interview skills, to host welcome dinners and collect supplies, and to host “suitcase stories” fundraising events. There is also the work being done by RIM, the Refugee Immigration Ministry, which organizes volunteers from collaborating faith communities to provide community-based support to refugees such as resettlement services (e.g. food, housing, transportation), out-reach to asylum seekers and others held in detention, and English language classes. There was a lot of interest from the group to pursue these options.

Next Steps

The meeting closed with a group discussion to assess levels of interest in involvement with these many immigrant-related activities. No decisions were made as to next steps, but the CDT organizers agreed to follow-up with the group in the coming weeks and to seek input from those who could not be present through a survey.

To keep up to date, email **Stacey Chacker** at chacsjc@gmail.com to be added to CDT’s listserv — cdt-immigration@dorsheitzedek.net.

NEWS FROM THE INCLUSION COMMITTEE

by Susan Nitkin

In October, I attended Opening the Gates: Introduction to Inclusive Shabbat Services. The training was presented by Gateways, which is a wonderful organization that provides Jewish education and support services to many children and youth who have a wide range of disabilities, and was sponsored by the Ruderman Synagogue Inclusion Project, of which CDT is a partner. Here are some of the highlights, and my thoughts on how we, as a congregation, are doing in this context.

The building blocks of inclusion, as per the speakers, are:

(1) Strengthen Our Welcome by greeting people and providing inclusion information on website, newsletters, and in the sanctuary.

The related concepts of welcoming and greeting have been major focuses of the Inclusion Committee and the Membership/Welcoming Committee and I believe that we are always striving to do better as a congregation. One helpful tip, when trying to be welcoming to individuals and families with special needs, is to offer extra encouragement and invitations, such as “Please sit with me at Kiddush,” or “I’m going to this event; would you like to join me?” Some people have felt uncomfortable and even been ostracized in many areas of their lives and have a really hard time believing that they are welcome and wanted.

Regarding the provision of inclusion and accessibility information, this is something that the Inclusion Committee will be actively working on this year, and I will address this more fully in a future article.

(2) Improve Access by providing accommodations large and small, such as ramps, large print siddurim, quiet rooms, and food allergy policies. We have made progress in several areas, and are thrilled that we now have a portable ramp to the bimah that can be set up with advance notice, and an Assisted Listening System for people with hearing impairments. This year we will be conducting a congregational survey to find out what sorts of accommodations would be helpful to our members and guests.

(3) Adapt Programming by making changes to current programs that help a person to participate (and, I would add, contribute). More to come on this!

Here’s the question of the month:

Should I help someone if it looks like they need it?

All people have varying levels of capacities and independence, so never assume anything. If someone looks like they’re struggling, ask before you help, because (1) they might or might not need it, and (2) if you are going to help, you want to make sure you are giving the right kind and level of assistance.

Thanks for reading, and, as always, please feel welcome to email me (using either the access or my personal address) with any concerns, questions, or to ask for inclusion help and support.

Contact access@dorsheitzedek.org.

Learning

CHANUKAH FOR GROWN-UPS

With Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Sunday, December 10, 10:45am-noon

JCDS, 57 Stanley Avenue, Watertown

The ever-evolving Festival of Lights has had many meanings over the centuries, from ancient origins in pagan solstice festivals to spiritual celebration of light to affirmation of Jewish power. How might Chanukah speak to us today, in a world — and at a time of year — when a bit of light and hope is much needed?

MINDFUL MORNINGS

Thursday mornings, 8:30-9:15am

60 Highland Street, Library

This weekly gathering combines guided and silent meditation to develop our capacity for mindful awareness, helping us cultivate qualities of patience, gratitude, clarity and compassion. **Karen Arnold** leads the first Thursday of each month, Rabbi Toba the second Thursday, and other sessions are led by **Carole Slipowitz** and **Laya Steinberg**. All are welcome, whatever your level of experience (or lack thereof!).

ON AND OFF THE BIMAH: AN OCCASIONAL COLUMN ON MATTERS OF JEWISH RITUAL AND TRADITION

By Michael Feldstein, member, Ritual Committee

Have you ever wondered on which side of your body you should hold the Torah scroll when it is removed from the Ark and handed to you? Should you carry it on your left side against your heart? Or should you carry it on your right side exposing your heart?

There appears to be no argument among our sages on this matter, though they do offer some leeway under special circumstances. According to Rabbi Yisroel Cotlar, a Chabad rabbi in Cary, North Carolina:

In the Code of Jewish Law, it is written that a Torah scroll should be held in one's right arm (and rested on the right shoulder). This applies even if the one holding the Torah

is left-handed. There are two verses that support this: 1) "From His right hand was a fiery Law for them" — Deuteronomy 33:2. The Torah was given from the right hand of YHVH, as it were, and we therefore hold it in our right hand, too. 2) "And His right hand will embrace me" — Song of Songs 2:6. YHVH embraces us with the right hand, and we, in turn, embrace the holy Torah with our right hand.

According to Kabbalah, the "right hand" of YHVH is an anthropomorphic metaphor for the attribute of Kindness, as opposed to the left hand which alludes to the divine attribute of Severity. The Torah was given to us with lovingkindness, and with it, YHVH lovingly embraces us. We reciprocate by approaching the Torah with a deep love and appreciation, which even expresses itself in the way we carry it.

We are told that one who carries the Torah scroll or any book of Torah should carry it on the right side or with the right hand, even if s/he is left-handed. However, if this would cause difficulty or discomfort, s/he

The "right hand" of YHVH is an anthropomorphic metaphor for the attribute of kindness.

may carry it on the left side.

After all is said and done, I like my explanation: if you carry the Torah on your right side, you show both your heart and the Torah to the world.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL NOTES

by Rabbi Shahar Colt

Towards the beginning of the year, a student had a hard time transitioning into class on a Sunday morning, and his mother asked his teacher from last year to talk to him about coming to Sunday School. Last year

he had developed a strong connection with this teacher, and enjoyed the class. Why was it hard to get into a groove with religious school this year? His former teacher agreed to speak with him when she was done teaching. Their conversation lasted a good half hour, and revealed several dynamics at play, including the fact that he simply hadn't yet connected with his new teachers. Based on this conversation, and further discussion with the student's parents, we were able to make plans to support the child.

This vignette highlights a school community functioning at its best — where teachers and parents know each other, where teachers are around year to year to support student growth, where students connect with adults who care about them and listen to them. It was pretty amazing to witness. At the same time, it raised a question for me around my work with the teachers. This teacher had certainly gone above and beyond her role, donating her personal time to this family after she had finished teaching. How do we cultivate teachers who approach their roles at Dorshei from such a loving place, who are willing to listen to former students after they are done teaching different students- while also respecting their time and boundaries?

This question inspired our November staff conversation around the role of love in our teaching. Using the prayer *ahava rabba* — "a great love" — as our jumping off point, our conversation explored different words for love in the prayer, and how love functions in connection with learning Torah. We closed the conversation with an invitation for teachers to think about where love is relevant in their teaching practice (with their students, colleagues or parents!).

As the teachers are considering how to let their care for this community show, I hope that we all can return the favor and show our appreciation and care for the teaching staff in all that they do. We have printed some of the teacher bios in previous newsletters, but you can find the full staff bios and pictures on our website. Check out their diverse backgrounds and interests at:

<https://dorsheitzedek.org/religious-school-teachers-0>

Chesed

A GROWING CHESED TEAM: CARING FOR EACH OTHER

by Ellie Goldberg

A large group attended our November pot luck dinner: **Melanie Adler, Marla Cummins, Jo Ann Feldstein, Ellie Goldberg, Ami Gordon, Jan Gortler-Small, Beth Green, Judy Hersh, Lisa Hirsh, Annette Jacobs, Elaine Landes, Dianne Lior, Eileen Morrison, Susan Nitkin, Ellen Pashall, DB Reiff, and Debby Salzman.** Largest meeting ever!

There was a full table of delectable veggie dishes and desserts. Our introductions revealed some surprising personal facts about each other such as a *Hamilton* obsession and personal histories that included cheer-leading, sex-sorting chicks and cooking for the stars. Then we discussed our own experiences with giving and receiving Chesed and how Chesed builds stronger connections within the community.

We explained the difference between the LotsaHelpingHands CDT members-only calendar and how we help create personal LHH calendars for people with longer ongoing needs that are open to a broader community of friends and neighbors. Those calendars require a second sign up for CDT members.

Next the Chesed Committee will hold an orientation for new committee members about the Chesed Coordinator's job and how to post requests on the LotsaHelpingHands website.

The Chesed Committee would like to thank everyone whose acts of kindness manifest the spirit of Chesed in our community.

The Coordinators for December are **Melanie Adler, Gail Pressberg, and Ellie Goldberg.**

Chesed builds stronger connections within the community.

We invite your questions about the Chesed Committee or your feedback about a Chesed experience. Write to chesed@dorsheitzedek.org.

If you have a major life cycle event or illness or injury, please contact **Rabbi Toba Spitzer** (confidentially) at rabbi@dorsheitzedek.org or call 617-965-0330. Rabbi Toba is available to talk about any spiritual, religious or personal issues that you might want to discuss. 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 completely confidential.

CHESED

Congregation Dorshei Tzedek values Chesed, acts of loving-kindness, especially when members have a major life event such as the arrival of a child, death, injury or illness.

The Chesed Committee coordinates tasks such as meals, grocery shopping, and transportation to a medical appointment. We post Chesed tasks online on the LotsaHelpingHands (LHH) calendar. We encourage emails or phone calls between the volunteers and recipient families to confirm arrangements.

Sign up for LHH at: <http://tinyurl.com/SignUpLHH>. Forgot your LHH password? Go to <http://tinyurl.com/GetPsWrdLHH>.

Nediv Lev

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. 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.

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions.

GENERAL FUND

Elaine Bresnick — *In memory of Sidney Adler*

Wendy Buglio — *In memory and honor of Marla's mother*

Helaine and John Carroll — *High Holydays Honor — todah!*

Marjorie Feld, Michael Fein, and Izzy & Nate Feinfeld — *In memory of Roslyn Lichtman*

Lauren Gibbs — *In memory of Mara Sharon Gorbeg — In memory of Roslyn Lichtman, mother of Marla Lichtman, and in memory of Richard Kramer, father of Linda Kramer*

Beth and Jeffrey Green — *In memory of Herbert Green and in memory of Florence Zevin*

Doug Hersh — *In memory of Marilyn Hersh and in memory of Mara Gibbs*

Marcia Hershfield — *In appreciation for the Sukkot Tot Shabbat service*

Betsy Hinden and Karen Wasserman — *In memory of Betsy's father Henry Hinden*

Steffi and Eric Karp — *In memory of Roslyn Lichtman, mother of Marla Lichtman*

Marla Lichtman — *in memory of my mother, Roslyn Lichtman, and in gratitude to the CDT community for its loving kindness and amazing support at this difficult time. Todah rabbah.*

Continued on page 11

CDT Calendar

December 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>Unless noted otherwise, all programs are held at the Dorshei Tzedek prayer space: 60 Highland Street in the Second Church of Newton, West Newton.</p>					1	2
						Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am to 12:00pm
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Religious School Gr. 1-7 57 Stanley Avenue, Watertown, MA 9:30am to 12:00pm		Religious School Gr. 3-6 1326 Washington St. West Newton, MA 3:45pm to 5:45pm		Mindful Mornings 60 Highland Street: Library 8:30am to 9:15am Understanding Rac- ism Meeting 60 Highland St: Room 111 7:00pm to 9:00pm	All-Ages Erev Shabbat Service / Potluck 6:00pm	Shabbat Morning Torah Study with Rabbi Toba Spitzer, 60 Highland St.-Library 8:45am to 9:40am Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am to 12:00pm CDT Sings Rehearsal 60 Highland St: Living Room (Parlor) 12:45pm to 2:30pm CDT Film Club CDT member's home 6:00pm
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Religious School Gr. 1-7 57 Stanley Avenue, Watertown, MA 9:30am to 12:00pm Parenting Through a Jewish Lens JCDS: 57 Stanley Ave, Watertown 10:15am to 11:45am Chanukah for Grown-Ups JCDS: 57 Stanley Ave, Watertown 10:45am to 12:00pm	Wise Aging Meeting 60 Highland St: Room 111 7:00pm to 9:00pm	Religious School Gr. 3-6 1326 Washington St. West Newton, MA 3:45pm to 5:45pm	CEC Meeting FUSN: Alliance Room 7:30pm	Mindful Mornings 60 Highland Street: Library 8:30am to 9:15am Understanding Rac- ism Meeting 60 Highland St: Room 111 7:00pm to 9:00pm		Contemplative Service & Learning 9:45am to 12:00pm Tot Shabbat 60 Highland St., Room 111 10:45am to 12:00pm
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
Religious School Gr. 1-7 57 Stanley Avenue, Watertown, MA 9:30am to 12:00pm Parenting Through a Jewish Lens JCDS: 57 Stanley Ave, Watertown 10:15am to 11:45am Mindful Parenting JCDS: 57 Stanley Ave, Watertown 10:45am to 12:00pm Don't Kvetch, Organize 60 Highland St: Library 2:00pm to 4:00pm Chanukah Celebration FUSN 4:30pm to 7:00pm		Religious School Gr. 3-6 1326 Washington St. West Newton, MA 3:45pm to 5:45pm		Mindful Mornings 60 Highland Street: Library 8:30am to 9:15am		Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am to 12:00pm
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
				Mindful Mornings 60 Highland Street: Library 8:30am to 9:15am		Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am to 12:00pm
31	JAN 1	2	3	4	5	6
				Mindful Mornings 60 Highland Street: Library 8:30am to 9:15am Understanding Rac- ism Meeting 60 Highland St: Room 111 7:00pm to 9:00pm	All-Ages Erev Shabbat Service / Potluck 6:00pm	Shabbat Morning Torah Study with Rabbi Toba Spitzer 60 Highland St.-Library 8:45am to 9:40am Shabbat Morning Service 9:45am to 12:00pm CDT Film Club CDT member's home 6:00pm

KIDDUSH ASSIGNMENTS

DEC 2 SHABBAT: Melanie Adler & Andy Cohen / Lisa Goodman (captain) / Beth Brooks

DEC 8 EREV SHABBAT: Noam Shore (captain) / Max Roberts / Andrew Garnett-Cook / Idit Klein

DEC 9 SHABBAT: Judy (captain) & Chayim Herzig-Marx / Jacqui Bloomberg / Linette Liebling, in memory of Zelda and Joal Liebling

DEC 16 CONTEMPLATIVE SERVICE & LEARNING: Louise Enoch & Alan Epstein, in honor of Social & Political Sanity / Carol Sklar (captain) / Gail Pressberg

DEC 17 CHANUKAH CELEBRATION:
Setup: Ellie Axe / Susana & Jaime Wurzel / JoAnn & Michael Feldstein / Emily Sper (captain) / Polly Crozier & Jessica Keimowitz, in memory of David Crozier
Cleanup: Bonnie Tenneriello & Andrew Sofer (captain) / Diana Fisher Gomberg & Richard Fisher Gomberg / Jonathan Weisberg / Jennifer Nichols & Jerold Gelfand / Joan Autio

DEC 23 SHABBAT: Vivienne & Norman Shein / Phyllis (captain) & Bill Kantor

DEC 30 SHABBAT: Matilda (captain) & Edward Bruckner / Amy Dain

JAN 5 EREV SHABBAT: Valerie Graf / Reinhard Engels / Jennifer Greenberg / Liz Reisberg (captain)

JAN 6 SHABBAT: Tessa Goldsmith / Sami O'Reilly / Chagit Steiner (captain) / Lisa Schneier

KIDDUSH NOTE: The complete kiddush and holiday assignment schedule is available in the members' calendar on our website. Please remember to sign-in to the site to access the calendar as well as all member-specific information. 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 and 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.

"Nediv Lev" continued from page 9

Linette Liebling — *In memory of Joel Liebling and in memory of Zelda Liebling*
Fran Malino — *In memory of Eugene Black*

Amy Mazur — *In honor of Bob Ross joining the congregation — a welcome addition; in honor of the wedding of Adam Halwitz and Robin Harney*

Chanda Prescod-Weinstein and Kevin Hsu-Weinstein — *As friends of Meredith Schweig, Andres Su and June Schweig-Su, we would like to honor Rabbi Shahar for her supportive homegoing services for Marc Schweig and Ellyn Schweig. We appreciate her thoughtful services for our extended family in times of grief, and we are thankful to CDT for bringing her into our lives.*

Deborah Waber — *In memory of Helen Waber*

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Jonathan Canter — *In memory of Ronda Canter*

SCHOOL FUND

CAMP JRF FUND

RETREAT FUND

HOLY BOOKS FUND

JILL VOLK TEACHER DEVELOPMENT FUND

BUILDING FUND

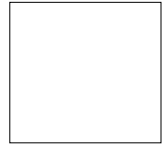
Alissa and Gerry Leonard — *In memory of Susannah Elkin Zisk and Sol Elkin*

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 at 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!



Congregation Dorshei Tzedek
60 Highland St.
West Newton, MA 02465



Address correction requested



Chanukah!

Join CDT for a Chanukah Celebration!
Sunday, December 17, 4:30-6:30pm
First Unitarian Society, 1326 Washington Street,
West Newton

Candle-lighting, Chanukah songs, Israeli dance, crafts, cooking, study, and more! Potluck plus latkes dinner at 6:00pm.



Photos: CDT children at the CDT Chanukah Celebration, 2016. Photos by Viv Shein.