



# Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

An Affiliate of Reconstructing Judaism

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Tammuz/Av/Elul 5780

July/August 2020



## Growth and Gratitude

By President Lissy Medvedow

In Kohelet (Ecclesiastes), we read that “To everything, there is a season.” After three years as president of Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, it’s now time for me to step down and turn over this awesome job to Bob Warren who will take the helm on August 1st.

I am often asked if I like being president of the synagogue and I always say “YES,” enthusiastically. Serving as president is extraordinarily rewarding, a great privilege, a bit time consuming, and never dull. I have loved getting to know members better, welcoming new congregants, delving into pressing issues, learning more about Judaism and Reconstructing Judaism, being an ambassador for CDT, and deepening friendships. Truly, it’s been an honor to serve as president. I’m not sure this would be true at every synagogue but CDT is a special and unique community. I’ve said this often but it’s worth repeating: we’re a congregation full of passion, intelligence, spirit and spirituality, wisdom, thoughtfulness, compassion, and energy. Everyone cares about this community and cares deeply. I feel so grateful for having had the opportunity to be a leader here.

Over these past few years, my mantra has been to “step up” to leadership by joining the Board, serving on a committee, or volunteering – for anything. Stepping up frequently requires stepping outside of one’s comfort zone and carving out time even when you’re incredibly busy. The adage “if you want something done, ask a busy person” has often rung true. I’m so appreciative of all the people who have said “yes” to my innumerable asks over the years.

Many of those asks were recruiting people to join the Board. I would like to take this moment to say thank you to all the Board members who have served with me at some point since August 1, 2017. On the Executive Committee, thank you to Jen Kaplan, past president extraordinaire; Cliff Cohen (my amazing husband who has been incredibly supportive but will be exceedingly happy on August 1st), Rob Greenly, Ezra Hausman, Ellen Hemley, Debby Saltzman, Bill Shorr, Jamie Tessler, and Rochelle Weichman. Thank you to the Board Members-at-Large: Ellie Axe, Nancy Gertz, Laurie Gould, Emily Mathis, Margo Michaels, Jordan Namerow, Ruth Paris, Lisa Samelson, Dan Rome, Jonathan Rosenthal, Bill Weinreb, and Steve Zisk. Without Board members, this congregation would not function and these individuals are dedicated, diligent, smart, and hard working. Thank you for all you’ve done for CDT and me.

Next, there is a group of people who continue to give of their hearts and souls to this community - the past presidents. Cindy Shulak-Rome opened her home to welcome me at a dinner with the past presidents shortly after my tenure had begun (she also remains, as she has for many years, our Rabbinic Liaison). To a person, our past presidents are unfailingly willing to share their counsel and respond to endless questions. They essentially maintain the mantle of representing

Dorshei Tzedek with pride, enthusiasm, and a fervent belief in our core values and communal strength. Thank you, wonderful past presidents, for all you've done for CDT and me.

Rabbi Toba deserves her own thank you. We are remarkably lucky to have such a brilliant and passionate Rabbi who has guided our congregation for more than 23 years. Our family joined CDT before Rabbi Toba (BRT) and I have watched her grow and become the best Rabbi any congregation could ever hope for. She's truly a force of nature, spiritually, intellectually, and organizationally. She cares about everyone and everything. Her *divrei Torah*, writings, sermons at High Holydays, and her commitment to social justice are unparalleled. I have learned a great deal from Rabbi Toba and respect and value her tremendously.

Reflecting on these past three years, we've experienced significant change. A treasured staff member left and new ones have arrived. We bid farewell to Marla Lichtman, our wonderful longtime Administrative Director who, in her thirteen years at CDT, helped us on our journey from being a small operation to a well-run congregation. We welcomed Melissa Colten as our inaugural Executive Director and I feel thankful every day for her (and the Search Committee, and Linette Liebling for agreeing to serve as Executive Director Liaison). Melissa took on her job with a vengeance and we are all benefitting from her talents, warmth, and enthusiasm. We introduced ShulCloud to this community and brought us into the 21st century. Lidia Prunte, our fantastic Office and School Administrator, has been invaluable to implementing ShulCloud and keeping us on track in so many ways. We grew to 241 households. We altered the structure of the Board to invest Board Members-at-Large with

greater decision-making powers. We created the position of Vice President of Tikkun Olam in recognition of the incredible work of CDT in the realm of social justice activism. Our committees continue to be actively engaged from Chesed to Welcoming to Wise Aging (and many more, including this terrific Newsletter). Thank you to all the Off-Board Chairs and Committee members. Together, we've accomplished a great deal.

We're saying goodbye to one more person. Rabbi Shahar, who became ordained while at CDT, transformed the culture of our Religious School into a place where both kids and families want to learn and gather. After five years, she is leaving CDT and we will miss her teachings, her quiet strength, and her ability to connect deeply with families. Thank you, Rabbi Shahar. And, as a result, we embarked upon yet another major search (virtually, to boot!) and hired Earnest Vener to be our new Director of Congregational Learning (thanks goes to this Search Committee, as well) and we look forward to his infusion of energy and creativity into our Religious School and congregational learning. Lastly, we experienced a pandemic and went into the "Zoomiverse" as Rabbi Toba refers to our online presence.

The world right now feels uncertain and painful but I am choosing not to end on that note. Rather, I want to say thank you to everyone at CDT for giving me the opportunity, the joy, the rewards, the immense satisfaction of moving us forward, the learning, and the deep friendships. It has truly been a pleasure and an honor. Now, as Pete Seeger exclaimed, the season has come to turn, turn, turn. Bob Warren, thanks for stepping up. We will all be in good hands.

## 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.

## Staff & Board

### Staff:

Rabbi Toba Spitzer, [t.spitzer@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:t.spitzer@dorsheitzedek.org)  
Executive Director: Melissa Colten,  
[m.colten@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:m.colten@dorsheitzedek.org)  
Rabbi for Congregational Learning (through July):  
Rabbi Shahar Colt, [s.colt@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:s.colt@dorsheitzedek.org)  
Director of Congregational Learning:  
Earnest Vener, [e.vener@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:e.vener@dorsheitzedek.org)  
Program Associate: Lidia Prunte,  
[l.pruente@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:l.pruente@dorsheitzedek.org)  
Inclusion Coordinator: Amira Shulman-Kumin,  
[inclusion@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:inclusion@dorsheitzedek.org)

### Executive Committee:

President: Bob Warren  
Past President: Lissy Medvedow  
VP Finance: Ezra Hausman  
Secretary: Ro Weichman

### Vice-Presidents:

VP Membership: Debby Saltzman  
VP Education: Diana Fisher Gomberg  
VP Leadership: Sheree Galpert  
VP Tikkun Olam: Stacey Chacker

### Board Members-at-Large:

Ellie Axe, Linda Kramer, Carla Naumburg, Dan Rome,  
Jonathan Rosenthal & Lisa Samelson

### Off-Board Chairs:

Children's Education: Sarah Birkeland & Webster Pilcher  
Chesed: Elaine Landes  
Nediv Lev: Debbie Waber  
Newsletter: John Holohan  
Inclusion: Susan Nitkin  
Ritual: Marion Ross & Peter Katz  
Rabbinic Liaison: Cindy Shulak-Rome  
Executive Director Liaison: Linette Liebling  
Space: Steve Siegel  
Website: Dan Halbert  
Welcoming: Benita Danzing

## Rabbinic Liaison

**Rabbinic Liaisons:** While congregants are always welcome and encouraged to discuss questions or concerns directly with **Rabbi Toba**, there are other avenues through which to bring concerns. The Rabbinic Liaison Committee exists to ensure the maintenance of a good working relationship between Rabbi Toba and the congregation. 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 [csrome@comcast.net](mailto:csrome@comcast.net).

## Newsletter

The CDT Newsletter is published monthly with a July-August summer issue. Email articles, events, and photos to [dtnews@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:dtnews@dorsheitzedek.org). Usually the deadline is the 10th of the month for the following month's issue. **Volunteer Staff:** John Holohan (chair), Josette Akresh-Gonzales, Liz Holohan, Barbara Pittel, Vivienne Shein (photographer), Amy Westebbe.

## Staff News

### STAFF VACATION SCHEDULE

Rabbi Toba will be on vacation/writing retreat during the month of July. During this time, she will not be receiving email or checking phone messages. For pastoral needs during the first three weeks of July, please be in touch with Rabbi Shahar, [s.colt@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:s.colt@dorsheitzedek.org). After July 26, please contact Melissa Colten ([m.colten@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:m.colten@dorsheitzedek.org)) if you are need of rabbinic support.

### OTHER STAFF VACATIONS:

Rabbi for Congregational Learning Shahar Colt will have her last day with CDT on July 26.

Executive Director Melissa Colten will be on vacation from July 5 -- July 14.

Program Associate Lidia Pruenete will be on vacation from July 17 - August 1.

### AT THE BOARD JUNE 14, 2020 MEETING:

Reviewed budget for the current year (5780), as well as the proposed budget for next year. Both to be presented at the members meeting.

Discussed and approved the proposal from Tikkun Olam for a non-partisan Voter Mobilization Initiative.

Continued our review of the Personnel Policy Manual under development.

### SURVEY

Help us plan programs that meet the needs of our whole community by filling out the Programming & Inclusion Survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CDT-program-inclusion>

## CDT Virtual Gallery

This month we highlight CDT artist, and newsletter photographer, **Vivienne Shein**. Vivienne has been an active member of the Newton Camera Club for 15 years and has exhibited her work at many local venues. Vivienne describes her work as very eclectic, including photos of scenery, birds, flowers, people, and whatever lends itself to becoming a beautiful and compelling image. She also shoots family portraits. To see other examples of her work, visit Flickr Viv Shein.



# Shabbat, Holidays, & Spiritual Practice

As Dorshei Tzedek takes precautions during the Covid-19 pandemic, all of our programs have been moved to a “virtual” format for the time being. Like the Israelites in the wilderness, challenged by the Power that liberated them from slavery to create a new kind of society, we too are on a journey to foster our community connections, spiritual practice, Jewish learning, and social justice work in new ways. Please read on for descriptions of our on-line programs; information for logging onto any specific program can be found on the CDT website, [dorsheitzedek.org](http://dorsheitzedek.org).

## FRIDAY CANDLE-LIGHTING WITH RABBI SHAHAR

July 17, 6:00–6:15pm

Rabbi Shahar will be leading erev Shabbat candle-lighting on July 3 and July 17 from 6:00–6:15pm to welcome Shabbat “together” via Zoom! All are welcome to join Rabbi Shahar in lighting Shabbat candles, singing songs or hearing a story, and saying the Shabbat Kiddush blessing together. Have your candles and wine/grape juice ready!

## ALL-AGES EREV SHABBAT SERVICE

Friday evening, August 7, 6:00pm–6:45pm

All are welcome to join Rabbi Toba online at 6:00pm for candle lighting, a musical service, and a Shabbat story. Have your candles ready! The siddur/prayerbook for this service can be found on the CDT home page, [dorsheitzedek.org](http://dorsheitzedek.org), and Zoom information is there as well.

PLEASE NOTE: There will not be an all-ages service in July while Rabbi Toba is on vacation.

## SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

July 11 & 25, August 8 & 22  
10:00am–11:45am

During the summer months, we will be on a bi-weekly schedule for Shabbat morning services – July 11 & 26, and August 8 & 22, from 10am to approximately 11:45am, with Kiddush “chat” following. Zoom info for each service can be found that week on the CDT website; just click on the calendar link on the right side of the homepage.

**Shabbat morning, *Pinchas*, July 11** — All are invited to join **Elaine Pollack**, **Scott Tepper**, and **Debbie Waber** for a morning of song, prayer, and Torah study, including an opportunity to offer prayers for healing and to recite Mourners Kaddish.

**Shabbat morning, July 25** — On Shabbat Hazon, the Shabbat before Tish’a b’Av, we welcome back Cantor Louise Treitman. She will lead us in prayer and speak about her experience on the Zamir Chorale of Boston’s 1999 trip to Eastern Europe. Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Jewish choral movement, which was founded in Łódź, Poland, this powerful trip was captured in the PBS film, ZAMIR: Jewish Voices Return to Poland.

**Shabbat morning, *Eikev*, August 8** — Back fresh from her writing retreat in July, Rabbi Toba will be leading Shabbat morning services!

**Shabbat morning, *Shoftim*, August 22** — **Bar Mitzvah of Nathan Feinfeld**  
Nathan Feinfeld, a seventh grader at Thurston Middle School in Westwood, MA, will become a bar mitzvah at Dorshei Tzedek on August 22. Nathan enjoys basketball, biking, and hiking, and looks forward to camp each summer at Mass Audubon’s Moose Hill in Sharon. He plays trumpet in his school’s band and jazz band, and this summer performed a duet with his brother, Izzy, who plays trombone. Nate’s Tikkun Olam project aligned with his passion for birds. First, in summer, fall, winter, and spring, he worked with Mass Audubon to hang owl boxes at the Museum of American Bird Art sanctuary in Canton, so as to gather data on owls and study their habitats. He also inspired his family to participate in the Mass Audubon Bird-a-thon in May: he spotted sev-

eral new birds for his life list and, collaborating with a team of birders, helped to raise funds for wildlife conservation. Please share our joy and join us virtually for this celebration in August. —*Marjorie Feld, Michael Fein, and Izzy and Nathan Feinfeld*

## TOT SHABBAT!

Visit [tinyurl.com/morahdevora](http://tinyurl.com/morahdevora) online anytime to enjoy some Shabbat prayer with **Morah Devora** and her kids! Stay tuned into the congregational emails for more ways to celebrate Shabbat together!

## MINDFUL MORNINGS

Monday and Thursday mornings, 8:30am–9:15am, through July

All are welcome to join experienced CDT leaders for guided and silent meditation. In these challenging times, these gatherings are an opportunity to cultivate qualities of compassion, calm, and resilience. No meditation experience required! Zoom info is available on the CDT website.

Summer schedule: Throughout July, we will meet every Monday and Thursday at 8:30am. In August, we will definitely meet on Thursdays but perhaps not on Mondays. Watch for announcements in the Upcoming Events email for more information.

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

## CDT Welcoming Committee

CDT is constantly working on building a community of connections, enhancing programming to be more inclusive, and discussing opportunities for members to become more engaged. The Welcoming Committee is integral to this mission.

What does the Welcoming Committee do? In the spirit of *kehilah* – community and connection – the CDT Welcoming Committee’s goal is to provide new members with a one-on-one experience with someone who is available to answer any questions on coming into the worship and workings of our congregation.

After a new member household joins, the Welcoming Committee reaches out by phone or email to say hello and address any questions the new household may have. The Committee prepares and delivers Welcome Bags that hold a host of helpful items such as Shabbat prayers (Hebrew and English), blessings for children, a Rosenfeld’s Challah gift certificate, the book, *Exploring Judaism: A Reconstructionist Approach*, and information on CDT committees like Tikkun Olam and Chesed. We maintain contact with new members over their first year just to say, “Hello, how are things going?”

A “welcomer” is present at Friday night family potlucks, holiday events and services to introduce themselves to visitors.

The Welcoming Committee organizes the popular, pre-Covid, congregation-wide potlucks held at members’ homes, and recently re-introduced Geshet—a buddy program designed to build bridges (*geshirim*) between new member households and the CDT community.

Welcoming is reaching out to new members and linking them with the congregation via virtual discussions and information sessions.

The fall will be here before we know it and whether we are virtual for a while longer or not, new members will once again begin appreciating welcome bags and welcoming words. If you have suggestions for how we might enrich the welcoming experience or if you would like to join the Welcoming Committee, please contact **Benita Danzing** or **Debby Saltzman** at [outreach@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:outreach@dorsheitzedek.org).

The members of the CDT Welcoming Committee — Amy Brodesky, Annette Jacobs, Benita Danzing, Dani Krasa, Debby Saltzman, Diana Perretta, Janice Cole, Sharon Gorberg, and Sheryl Koenigsberg — thought you would like to know:

Since last August 2019 CDT has welcomed 18 new member households into our community, nine households with children in the religious school. Households are from the following towns: Newton (8) Brookline (2) Waltham (3) Watertown (3) Somerville (2) and Boston (1).

**Let us all together give them a warm welcome to the CDT community.**

New members Summer 2019 to Summer 2020:

Jay and Jenny Leopold  
Michelle Aghassi and Kim Springer  
Marsha and Philip Klein  
Lisa and Meirav Keshet  
Becca and Shawn Bact  
Dave Weintraub and Jessica Middlebrook  
Sara Ulanet and Kevin McCarthy  
Ayelet Lipton  
Zelda (Zee) Gamson and William (Bill) Gamson

Rachel and Steven Adler-Golden  
Jonathan Adler and Jonathan Lewis  
David and Jeni Rhodes  
Allegra Heath-Stout  
Gavriela (Gavi) Bogin-Farber  
Miranda Patton  
Alec Stanton  
Melissa Spatz  
Terri Kasper

## Community

### MAZEL TOV

To **Tairou Komyerov** and his family, on becoming bar mitzvah!

To **Charlotte A. Robbins**, daughter of **Lisa Goodwin-Robbins** and **Andrew Robbins**, on graduating from Trinity College, with a Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science and Urban Studies, *summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa, Urban Studies President’s Fellow, Urban Studies Thesis Award, Outstanding Urban Studies Senior Award, Faculty Honors (all years), NESAC All-Academic Track and Field (all years), and Chi Alpha Sigma (athletic honor society).

### YAHARZEIT

This month we remember **Evelyn Felson**, whose 14th *yahrzeit* falls on July 7; we will be remembering Evelyn at Shabbat morning services on July 11.

### CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences to **Bruce Miller**, on the death of his mother, Bernice Miller, mother-in-law of **Laya Steinberg**, grandmother of **Marina** and **Perry Miller**. May her memory be for a blessing.

### 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 <https://www.dorsheitzedek.org/mourning>.

### REFUAH SHLEYMAH

We send blessings for complete healing to **DB Reif**, **Jamie Tessler**, and **Ayelet Lipton**.

### TODAH RABAH

A HUGE thank you to **Jerold Gelfand**, for lovingly crafting the beautiful appreciation video for **Rabbi Shahr**.

An ongoing and limitless *Todah Rabah* to **Mark Bronstein**, for making our Zoom services from the sanctuary possible, and keeping Rabbi Toba company on Shabbat mornings.

## UNDOING RACISM

By Rabbi Toba Spitzer

On June 17, one hundred CDT members and staff convened on a Zoom call to take a first step in exploring, as a community, what it will mean to become an actively anti-racist congregation. We began with a land acknowledgment and some powerful words from CDT member **Joan Autio**, reflecting on the long history of oppression of Native peoples in this land, how that history shapes our entire culture, and new possibilities for transformation. We watched a segment of a video featuring the incisive words of author Kimberly Jones, “Why We Can’t Win” (if you have not seen it, it is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iici8MVh8J4> — with gratitude to **Marjorie Salvadon** for the recommendation). We then broke into small break-out groups, with one group for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in our community to connect with one another, another for members of multi-racial families to share their experiences and hopes for our community, and the rest groups of white people. For these latter groups, the instruction was to first share what each of us was sitting with in our hearts and minds, in the wake of the uprisings following the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and too many other Black Americans; and second, to reflect on what each of us is realizing now that perhaps we had not seen clearly or deeply enough before. We closed with an invitation for white folks especially, but anyone who wished, to indicate what areas of learning and exploration they were interested in going forward. Two topics that garnered the most interest were learning more about the intersections of Jewish identity and whiteness, and how to become actively ant-racist.

In a follow-up meeting with members of the Undoing Racism working group, myself and our new DCL, **Earnest Vener**, we reflected on the work ahead of us as a congregation. I am acutely aware of the special challenges—and opportunities—facing a community that offers spiritual refuge and support to all of its members, yet in which some of us enjoy far greater privilege—whether of white bodies, economic wealth, gender status, and other forms of privilege—than others. How do we hold one another accountable, when we unintentionally cause harm, in a way that deepens

rather than destroys our connections to one another? How do we encourage each person in our community to do the hard work of owning our own implicit biases without defensiveness or fear? And perhaps most importantly, how do we become a place that is far more welcoming of people of color, and especially of Black Jews, so that we can better reflect the growing multi-racial character of the American Jewish community?

The deep-seated violence of white supremacy that began when European explorers first set foot on this continent over 500 years ago is not a thing of the distant past; it certainly did not end with the Emancipation Proclamation or the civil rights legislation of the 1960s. It is ingrained in our social, economic and political institutions and in our hearts and minds. The shift in consciousness that appears to be happening right now across broad swaths of white America in this moment is heartening, even as the grief and exhaustion of Black Americans, of Indigenous peoples, and of immigrants and other people of color intensifies. As a congregation, we have the opportunity to be one small drop in what I hope is a coming wave of transformation. But that will only happen if those of us with white skin privilege take this work seriously, with a lot of compassion for ourselves and others as we move forward. It is political work, but I believe it is also, at its core, spiritual work—which takes commitment, discipline, and a great deal of humility. As we set out on this work, we can take to heart the words of Psalm 126, traditionally sung every Friday night before the blessing after the meal: Those who sow with tears will harvest in joy... That is, when we stay close to the pain that is around us and that we ourselves may have caused, we have the opportunity to do the deepest kind of repair, repair that will bring us to a place of wellbeing and collective joy. Please stay tuned for opportunities for learning and action in the coming weeks.

### CDT Signs on to Jewish Communal Letter Supporting Black Lives Matter

At the end of June, the CDT signed onto a letter of solidarity from a wide range of Jewish congregations and communal organizations (over 600 as of late June), affirming solidarity with the widespread movement in support of Black lives. The letter reads, in part:

“We speak with one voice when we say, unequivocally: Black Lives Matter.

“We support the Black-led movement in this country that is calling for accountability and transparency from the government and law enforcement. We know that freedom and safety for any of us depends on the freedom and safety of all of us.

“There are politicians and political movements in this country who build power by deliberately manufacturing fear to divide us against each other. All too often, antisemitism is at the center of these manufactured divisions...

“...As Jews, we know how dangerous this is: when politicians target Jewish people and blame us for problems, it leads directly to violence against us. When Black movements are undermined, it leads to more violence against Black people, including Black Jews.

“Antisemitism is part of the same machinery those politicians use to blame Black and brown people, people who are immigrants, people who are Muslim, and more. But whether they generate division and fear based on our religion, our skin color, or how long we’ve been here, their goal is to keep us from working together to win the things we all need to survive and thrive.

“When Jewish people join together with our neighbors across racial and religious differences, as we have in the past, we can protect each other and build the future of freedom and safety we all deserve.” (to see the full statement and list of signatories, go to <https://medium.com/@jewishorgssayblacklivesmatter>).

## GBIO PIVOTS TO COVID-19 AND POLICE REFORM

By Louise Enoch and Tony Broh

GBIO has been agile and active with new actions and campaigns since the beginning of the COVID crisis. During April and May, GBIO clergy and leaders held meetings with Governor Baker, Attorney General Maura Healy, District Attorney Rachel Rollins, and Senate President Karen Spilka. These meetings focused on policies that address issues emerging from member congregations, i.e. health care, housing, decarceration, and mail in voting. Working with the elected officials built several successful relationships that emphasize the GBIO model: holding public officials accountable through the telling of people’s stories and needs.

In a June 9 Zoom event, 28 members of Dorshei Tzedek listened and watched with over 300 others while GBIO launched the "Coronavirus Congregational Campaign," on the issues mentioned above plus police and criminal justice reform following the horrific murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Following from the conversation, GBIO conducted a phone-in campaign to the office of House Speaker Robert DeLeo in support of a 10-point police reform plan introduced by the Massachusetts Black and Latino Legislative Caucus. Speaker DeLeo subsequently released message promising legislation this term for independent Police Standards and Professional Conduct related to the use of force, officer certification, and training; abolition of the chokehold; an obligation for police officer intervention in the improper use of force, and the establishment of a commission to ensure minority recruitment.

All of the issues will become part of community-based meetings with the legislative candidates during the campaign period for the November election. Watch for details.

Please direct any questions to GBIO Liaisons Louise Enoch or Tony Broh, and let them know if you are interested in getting more involved with GBIO efforts.

## CDT LAUNCHES VOTER MOBILIZATION PROJECT

By Cindy Shulak-Rome

Thank you to everyone who attended our Kickoff event on Tuesday night- what an amazing group we had to hear our speakers and learn about this project. We are thrilled to have so much interest in the community and we will be scheduling actions for both Reclaim Our Vote (ROV) and Environmental Project (EVP) from here on in, beginning next Tuesday evening. You can stay up to date on the upcoming actions and find more info about both organizations on our Voter Mobilization Project webpage which is linked to the Dorshei Tzedek home page. There you can also view our first project video, "Your Vote is Your Voice," with contributions from CDT Members, compiled by **Jeni Rhodes**, and also find out how you can contribute to the video project. We'll have events and opportunities for members of all ages. Stay tuned and visit our Voter Mobilization Project webpage often!

The Kickoff event was recorded, so for those who missed it, there will be a link on our webpage once it's ready to post.

Questions: **Cindy Shulak-Rome** [cshulak-rome@gmail.com](mailto:cshulak-rome@gmail.com)

## DISASTER RELIEF FUND

The Disaster Relief Fund has been created to support immigrants (majority undocumented) in East Boston and surrounding areas. The fund is run by the Center for Cooperative Development and Solidarity (CCDS), a small nonprofit dedicated to fostering the development of cooperative businesses within the immigrant community of East Boston.

This fund was created not only to support the urgent needs that this immigrant community is facing right now, but also to further CCDS' mission of creating cooperative economic alternatives to fight the rapid gentrification of East Boston and the subsequent displacement of the working-class immigrant community, a

process which will be accelerated by this crisis. CDT member Jonathan Rosenthal is an advisor to CCDS and is part of the committee overseeing the fund.

The CCDS fund is also a recipient through a broader grassroots fund, the Mass Redistribution Fund, conceived of by the founder of the Ujima project along with other Boston area grassroots nonprofits. Jonathan can be contacted at [jonathan@just-works.com](mailto:jonathan@just-works.com) and 617-744-9026.

## PRISON BOOK PROJECT

Anyone interested in supporting the PBP during their temporary closure due to COVID-19 can order books from the PBP's wish list on Amazon. Books ordered from this list are being sent to a PBP volunteer staffer, who is sending out individual, specially requested books to prisoners from her home. Other books that come off the wish list will be set aside until the PBP is reopened. The link for the PBP wishlist is: <http://a.co/1Yr7Tkv>.

## Chesed



**Rabbi Toba** will be on vacation/writing retreat during the month of July. During this time, she will not be receiving email or checking phone messages. For pastoral needs during the first three weeks of July, please be in touch with **Rabbi Shahar** ([s.colt@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:s.colt@dorsheitzedek.org)). After July 26, please contact **Melissa Colten** ([m.colten@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:m.colten@dorsheitzedek.org)) if you are in need of rabbinic support.

# Learning

## FROM OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF CONGREGATIONAL LEARNING

By Earnest Vener



Thank you to everyone who has warmly welcomed me to CDT! I am grateful for this opportunity to introduce myself. I am Earnest and I live in Cambridge with my partner Emma Price and our two cats. We came to Boston two years ago so Emma could pursue her Master's in School Leadership at Harvard. Little did we know we would find amazing work opportunities and a place we'd want to call home. When we arrived I began working at Temple Beth Shalom in Needham as a full time K-12 teacher. This past year I joined the SVARA Teaching Kollel, a pedagogy and study fellowship for queer and trans educators, to support my love of learning and teaching Talmud. Before moving to the East coast I lived in North California, where I ran outdoor youth programming and pursued my M.A. in Jewish Studies. Emma's background is in education and theatre and she currently works as the Diversity Equity and Inclusion and Global Educa-

tion practitioner at the BB&N Lower School in Cambridge. We've been searching for a Jewish community and are excited for the role CDT will play in our lives.

I am entering into this community in an extraordinary time. As I imagine many of you are, I have spent the last weeks oscillating between profound grief, anger, and heartbreak and deep awe, learning, inspiration and gratitude for Black leadership across this country and within the Jewish community. Underlying critical political demands of this moment are the demands for individual introspection, collective action and imagination. This call is echoed by Grace Lee Boggs, who, in conversation with Angela Davis in 2012 said, "we all have to change what we say, what we do, what

we think, and what we imagine." I am grateful to do this larger work within CDT, a community that supports personal introspection and communal imagining and action, with a large collective impact. One of my primary roles as Director of Congregational Learning will be to work with the religious school teaching team to cultivate the conditions for imagining, to tap into powerful Jewish sources that provide a roadmap for resiliency and a curriculum for imagining and taking responsibility for creating a just world.

This summer I will be working closely with Shahar, Melissa, Rabbi Toba, and many committees as we prepare for High Holidays and the fall semester. I am attending training programs and working with the re-entry protocols committee to craft a robust and flexible religious school that will be able to toggle between virtual and in person learning. This summer is also an opportunity for me to begin getting to know you! Stay tuned for Zoom opportunities to meet and learn with me in small groups, as well as opportunities for outdoor socially distanced get togethers for youth. I am honored to work at CDT and eager to learn from and with this incredible community.

### REGISTRATION FOR THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR IS NOW OPEN!

Help us spread the word to any families with children, especially in pre-K through 3rd grade, who might be interested in joining our program! Register at <https://www.dorsheitzedek.org/form/school-registration-5781.html>

## Children and Family Programs

### SAVE THE DATE: RELIGIOUS SCHOOL PICNIC!

August 23, 2020, 1-3pm

In person (or Zoom if necessary): Bring yourselves! Bring your friends! Bring your (own) food!

### CAMP HAVAYA@HOME THIS SUMMER

Camp Havaya, the Reconstructionist Summer Camp, has lots of virtual offerings for campers and non-campers this summer. Check out their facebook page — <https://www.facebook.com/CampHavaya> — for details and email [Isaac@CampHavaya.org](mailto:Isaac@CampHavaya.org) to get involved.

When: Sunday, July 12 – Saturday, July 25

Where: We like to say: "safe at home, hearts at camp." All Havaya@Home programs will be online, primarily via Zoom and Facebook Live.

What: Approximately five programs daily, geared to appeal to a wide variety of kids. We'll have opportunities to be physically active, explore the natural world, be creative, experience Jewish values, play games, celebrate Shabbat, share our talents, and more. While most sessions will be one-time opportunities, kids can choose to participate in as many (or as few) as they'd like. There will also be week-long arts studios for which interested young artists can register in advance. And, of course, we'll have some special programs, too!

Who: Havaya@Home programs are primarily intended for entering third through ninth graders. (Worry not – we'll also have some opportunities for younger kids and older teens!) With the exception of some virtual eidah (unit) meet-ups for kids who were supposed to be at camp this summer, all programs are free and open to Havaya campers, members of Reconstructionist congregations, and those in the wider community who share our values and want to have fun.





## CONTRIBUTIONS

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

Melanie Adler and Andy Cohen  
Liz Carver and Bryn Austin—*In memory of Gertrude Spiegelman*  
Amy Dain and Michael Dudnik  
Sheree Galpert—*In memory of Bruce Miller's parents; with gratitude to Paul Hattis, Lisa Samelson, Rob Saper, and Melissa Colten for the terrific Zoom session on Covid 19*  
Rick Glassman—*In support of Lidia's project for picture books depicting Jewish diversity*  
Phyllis and Alvin Glazerman  
Sarah Hartman and Benjamin Newman  
Douglas Hersch and Sarah Little  
Debbie Isenberg  
Audra Karp and Deb Albenberg—*In honor of Rabbi Shahar, Rabbi Toba, and Melissa!*  
Jeffrey Kichen and Leslie Pinnel  
Sue Lanser and Jo Radner  
Ilana Mainelli and Daniel Seidman—*In memory of Roz & Rudy Mainelli, and Aaron Seidman*  
Shira Moss—*For kitah bet tzedakah*  
Cheryl and Jeff Sacks—*In memory of the mothers of Ellen Pashall and Stacey Chacker*  
Debby and John Saltzman —*In honor of Diana Fisher-Gomberg, with great appreciation for the weekly Challah deliveries*  
Diane Shufro and Matthew Shuster  
Melissa Spatz  
Bonnie Tenneriello and Andrew Sofer—*In honor of Rabbi Shahar Colt*  
Theresa St. John-Siegel and Steven Siegel —*In memory of Bruce Miller's parents*

Leslie and Steven Van Volkinburg—*In memory of Stan Fleischman*

## COVID-19 EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE FUND

Meryl Epstein and Trish Nuzzola—*In memory of Ruth Chacker; in honor of Phyllis Kantor's amazing masks*

## RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Haralie Alpert—*In memory of Bernice and George Miller*

Fred Bogin—*In honor of the naming of my granddaughter, Margaux Nina (Margalit Rina) Bodoïn, on Shabbat Parashat Naso*

Annette Jacobs—*In memory of Stan Fleischman*

Judith Kaye—*In expression of her appreciation*

Diana Perretta—*In memory of Noah & thank you to Susan Nitkin for her beautifully crafted masks*

## SCHOOL FUND DONATION

Sheree Galpert—*In honor of Nadia Diskin-Gaudette, on the occasion of her graduation, and Grace Kellman, for her leadership in organizing the Newton vigil for George Floyd*

## YAHRZEIT

Annette Jacobs—*In loving memory of her grandfather Benny Jacobs and her grandmother Sofie Loewenherz*

## SUPPORT CDT THROUGH AMAZON.COM

Buy your books, electronics, and whatever else, and support CDT at the same time! As an Amazon Associate Congregation Dorshei Tzedek will earn money from qualifying purchases! Got to the CDT website:

**<https://www.dorsheitzedek.org/amazon>** to find the link. It's an easy way to support the congregation while doing the online shopping you were planning to do anyway.



Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

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Address correction requested



## Outdoor Summer Fun



**Gabe Cutler** enjoying sugar snap peas right off the vine at Coonamessett Farm in Falmouth. Photo: **Elana Cutler**.