



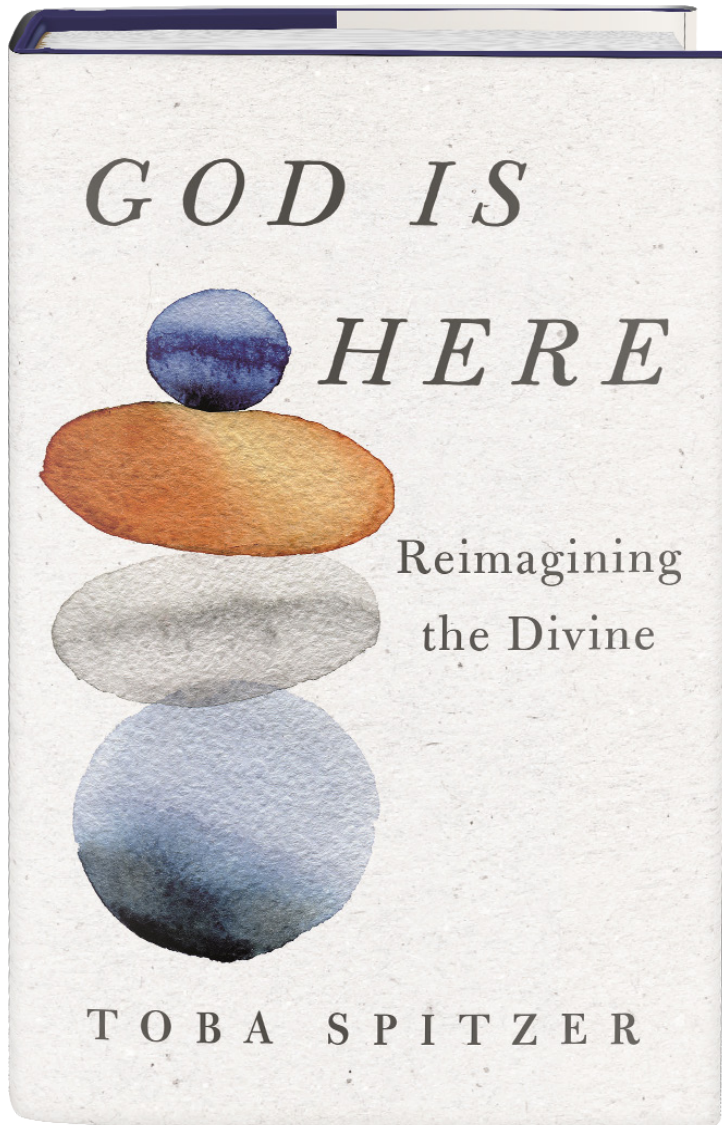
Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

An Affiliate of Reconstructing Judaism

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Shevat/Adar I 5782

February 2022



And finally, I am writing as the publication of my book *God is Here: Reimagining the Divine* looms on the horizon (March 8!). The production of this book has been an inquiry and a labor of love for over a decade. I brought my new interest in cognitive linguistics and how metaphor theory might transform our thinking and talking about God to a Rosh Hashanah sermon in 2012, followed by a class that a good number of CDT congregants participated in. In that class, and in additional classes in following years, I was humbled to realize that this approach is deeply meaningful, and even transformative, for many. I am so grateful to the CDT community for being my willing co-learners and partners in this exploration, and I am still a tad disbelieving that the book is finally done

A NOTE FROM THE MIDDLE OF SABBATICAL

Rabbi Toba Spitzer



I am writing this column as the first chunk of my 5782 sabbatical comes to an end (I will be taking the final seven weeks beginning February 15). Since the middle of December, I've had some wonderful opportunities to connect with family and friends, making my way down and then back up the coast via New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia, and spending time with my mother in Washington, DC. In the middle of those travels was a fabulous week spent in Oaxaca de Juarez, Mexico with my stepchildren and their partners. Oaxaca is an incredibly beautiful city in the mountains of southern Mexico. Covid was much less of a worry (they had a mask mandate not only indoors but also outdoors in the street and public spaces!), the food was wonderful, and the rich tradition of Mesoamerican indigenous cultures and their cooperative/radical spirit can be felt in numerous ways (especially in the incredible murals found on walls throughout the city). It was a wonderful place to escape, even if briefly, the stresses and strains of this past year and a half.

I am also writing this a few days after the horrifying hostage-taking episode at Temple Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas. What I am left with in the immediate wake of those events is a mix of pain, sadness, and appreciation. Pain and sadness at yet another incidence of a Jewish community being threatened with violence; appreciation at the incredible outpouring of support for that congregation, and the Jewish community in general, from people of many different faith traditions around the country and the globe. Appreciation as well for the leadership of Rabbi Charlie Cytron-Walker – who is not someone I personally know, but whose rabbinate, I am learning, is a model of a loving, expansive, spiritually grounded and justice-oriented approach.

and will be seeing the light of day so soon. Stay tuned for book launch events in March! It is also now available for pre-order here: <https://read.macmillan.com/lp/god-is-here/>

The theme that connects all of these things – my sabbatical, the near-tragedy in Colleyville, and the publication of my book – is a deep sense of appreciation and gratitude. Gratitude for having a job and working for a community where I have the privilege of taking sabbatical. These periodic times of nourishment for my spirit, a break from work, and time to write, have been vital for me over the past 25 years. In the wake of the Beth Israel trauma, I have deep appreciation for how

readily people spring into action and extend love and support both for those they know and those they do not know, as well as profound gratitude that none of the hostages were harmed that day. And finally, I am grateful that the journey of my book is near fruition. I am excited to see what happens next!

I also wanted to note that every February since 2009, the Jewish community worldwide has marked Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, & Inclusion Month (JDAIM). Originally established by the Jewish Special Education International Consortium, JDAIM has become an opportunity for congregations and other Jewish organizations to lift up issues of disability access and justice. We will be marking JDAIM at Shabbat morning services on February 5 as well as with a special program with Rabbi Lauren Tuchman on February 7. Please see pages 3-6 for more information about these programs and profiles of a few people at CDT doing important work to make CDT a truly “beloved community” in which every person is valued and celebrated.

I hope to see many of you either in person or via Zoom before I head off again on sabbatical on February 15, and I will be back for good on April 5. In the meantime, I will hopefully see some of you at the Reconstructing Judaism at the end of March in Washington, DC.

Rabbi Toba’s Sabbatical

Rabbi Toba will be taking her second sabbatical segment this year February 15 - April 4 (she will be “on” through February 14). During the sabbatical period, there will be special guests joining us on Shabbat mornings, as well as talented CDT members! We are especially excited to welcome some wonderful rabbis in February who have played a special role in CDT’s first 30 years: Rabbi Linda Potemken (CDT’s student rabbi, Zooming in on March 12), and Rabbi Adam Lavitt (who served as our Community Educator, offering a d’var Torah on February 19).

While Rabbi Toba is on sabbatical, CDT Rabbinic Intern Emmanuel Cantor will be available for pastoral support; you can reach him at e.cantor@dorsheitzedek.org (CDT members can also access his phone # in the membership directory online). In addition, our Shivah coordinators (shivah@dorsheitzedek.org) and Chesed coordinators (chesed@dorsheitzedek.org) will be available for support, and we will have “on call” rabbis in the area: Michael Luckens, Barbara Benzner, and Karen Landy. Please do not hesitate to contact Melissa Colten (m.colten@dorsheitzedek.org) or CDT president Bob Warren (president@dorsheitzedek.org) if you have any questions.

Rabbinic Liaison

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 cbsrome@comcast.net.

The CDT Newsletter is published monthly, with a July/August summer issue. Email articles, events, and photos go 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: Josette Akresh-Gonzales, Barbara Pittel, Vivienne Shein (photographer), Haralie Alpert (interviewer). Let us know if you’d like to join the team - we especially need photographers!!

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,
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Technical Support Person: Dennis Maler

Executive Committee:

President: Bob Warren
1st VP: Stacey Chacker
VP Finance: Ezra Hausman
Secretary: Dan Rome

Vice-Presidents:

VP Membership: Debby Saltzman
VP Education: David Rhodes
VP Tikkun Olam: Tony Broh

Board Members—at-Large:

Sheree Galpert, Melody Komyerov, Linda Kramer, Ayelet Lipton, Carla Naumburg, Jenny Sartori, Ro Weichman

Off-Board Chairs:

Children’s Education: Rebecca O’Murchadha
Chesed: Gail Pressberg
Nediv Lev: Janice Cole & **it could be you!**
Newsletter: **Vacant - could be you!**
Ritual: Marion Ross & Peter Katz
Rabbinic Liaison: Cindy Shulak-Rome
Executive Director Liaison: Linette Liebling
DCL Liaison: Lissy Medvedow
Space: Steve Siegel
Website: Dan Halbert
Welcoming: Debbie Saltzman (Acting)

Do you need a large print version of the newsletter?
Contact the office at office@dorsheitzedek.org

Staff Notes

FROM CDT'S INCLUSION COORDINATOR, JESS GREEN



On the occasion of Jewish Disability Accessibility and Inclusion Month, we'd like to express our appreciation and gratitude for the work of our amazing Inclusion Coordinator, Jess Green. We've asked her to tell us about how she came to the field and her work with CDT's Religious School.

In the summer of 2018, I was in grad school at Hebrew College working towards my Master's of Jewish Education degree and considering a special education concentration when I had the opportunity to take a new course on neurodiversity in Jewish education. This course represented the department's shift towards a neurodiversity approach to special education. Neurodiversity, simply put, recognizes that there is a wide variety in human brains and that, unlike older perspectives, this is something to be celebrated and broadly accommodated. That course changed my life, exposing me to new language, helping me understand my own brain better, reflecting my own strong feelings that everyone belongs in Jewish community, introducing me to incredible books, and giving me the opportunity to visit local programs that are shining examples of true inclusion such as the Mayim Hayim Mikveh and URJ 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy summer camp. I quickly switched into a special education concentration and was given the opportunity to be a 1:1 for an autistic teenager in a teen program at my job.

That 1:1 prompted me to ask our Inclusion Director if she might supervise me for a Field Experience. I gained more experience working with students who needed behavior and reading support and active learning. I learned excellent language to address a student in need, how to read IEPs, and so many ideas for active breaks and subtle behavioral interventions. This led to me becoming an Inclusion Support Specialist at that temple where I floated during religious school, taking kids on breaks, provided extra support in classrooms, checked on specific kids, and helped educators to write inclusive lesson plans. I truly felt like I was doing the work that I was supposed to do in the world!

I had worked with Earnest at that temple for two years and we remained friends and colleagues, so when he approached me about the opening for an Inclusion Coordinator at CDT, I was thrilled at the opportunity to do this work in a congregation that I'd heard rave reviews of and whose values mirror mine, and to partner with Earnest who is such an advocate for and example of inclusive community. I started at CDT this summer, meeting with Amira, learning about the values and history of CDT, understanding the religious school schedule and curriculums, meeting educators, and helping Earnest to revamp the Hebrew curriculum, plan staff training, and get our spaces at JCDS ready.

I have LOVED my time at CDT so far. Here's a snapshot of my average Sunday: At 9 am I start checking in with educators to see who wants extra support, needs fidget tools, or has ques-

tions about students. At 9:30, I'm at the door, on the blacktop, or in the Z'man B'yachad zoom room greeting folks – yay, the kids are here! I spend the next few hours visiting classes that I know could use extra support, checking on specific kids, bringing extra fidget tools, taking kids on movement breaks (hooray for wall push-ups!), responding to texts from educators, and comparing notes with Earnest and Liz. I LOVE being in the classrooms getting to know kids, admiring their artwork, listening to stories alongside them, being an occasional "guest speaker", and helping to tweak the environment so that each kid has what they need to learn well and have fun. During the week, I email and speak with parents and educators, read lesson plans, meet with Earnest, and get excited for the upcoming Sunday. I'm so excited for the rest of the year and to get to know more of you! Please feel free to email me at j.green@dorsheitzedek.org or find me on Sunday if you'd like to chat!

Blessing for Rosh Chodesh Adar

Kohenet Ilana Joy Streit

May we be the poppy seeds in each other's hamentaschen this year

may the world be sweet to the taste
soft to the touch
and moonlight to the eyes
and redemption to the soul

may we design contests in which we all win
may we design beauty contests to which each moment is a contender

may we all be blessed with cousins who have our backs
and who would fast on our account

may we recognize when we are Esther
when we are Mordecai
and when we are Ahashverosh

may we keep remembering to forget to remember

may we each and may all of us appear at the party of our lives
wearing the crown of our royalty
and whatever the hell else we choose



Established in 2009 by Shelly Christensen, M.A., and the Jewish Special Education International Consortium, JDAIM represents a global effort to unite Jewish communities in raising awareness and championing the rights of every Jew to be accepted and included in all aspects of Jewish life.

Jewish Disability Advocacy Day is February 23 - 24, 2022. Join diverse communities across North America to harness collective power and break down barriers to opportunity and inclusion. Help advance policies that will empower millions of individuals with disabilities to lead more independent and fulfilling lives. Learn, take action, and be inspired!

Go to www.jewishtgether.org/jdad-2022#register to see the full program and register for this virtual event!

CDT Celebrates 30 Years

POSTPONED TO NOVEMBER 2022: CDT 30TH ANNIVERSARY GALA AND CELEBRATION

COVID is currently bringing a great deal of uncertainty and caution regarding gathering large groups of people together. Given this, the Executive Committee of the CDT Board and the CDT Gala co-chairs had an emergency meeting at which they unanimously agreed to postpone the Gala until November.

Watch for the announcement of the new date! We want to assure that people feel safe and comfortable attending and will join us in the celebratory, relaxed mood of the occasion.

To keep you preparing, another question that may appear in our CDT Jeopardy game at the gala is:

What do "Yellow Submarine" and "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" have in common regarding CDT services?

Stay tuned for more information! We very much look forward to seeing you there without masks.

– Jen Kaplan and Annette Jacobs, CDT Gala Co-Chairs



Congregation
Dorshei Tzedek

HISTORY AND CURRENT PRACTICES OF INCLUSION AT CDT

Haralie Alpert



FEBRUARY IS JEWISH DISABILITY AWARENESS, ACCEPTANCE, & INCLUSION MONTH! In its honor, this article will give the details of past initiatives and current practices of inclusion at CDT.

Our member Susan Nitkin has graciously agreed to be interviewed so that she can provide the background and current status of CDT's inspiring work in this area. Over the years, Susan has been a vital resource and has provided leadership in the area of disabilities and inclusion.

HISTORY/BACKGROUND

As Susan related, the first formal, congregation-wide inclusion initiative was when Rabbi Toba and several members started a one-year Torah of Chesed Inclusion Campaign in 2010 with the positive goals of supporting families of children with disabilities and fostering a greater awareness of disabilities and community inclusion.

Susan happily reported that there have been some wonderful activities that CDT has hosted over the past 11 years to promote the concept of inclusion. The first program was on the second day of Rosh Hashanah 2010, which through story telling and text study, focused on the theme of Seeing and Being Seen. Members of the congregation started to attend conferences to better understand disabilities and inclusion. In addition, CDT re-

alized that there was a need for support staff to be hired so that families with children with disabilities could attend summer retreats.

Over the years, the topic of inclusion has also been an important part of several members' meetings. At the November 2010 meeting during the Torah of Chesed Campaign, the group presented a program that conveyed various perspectives and experiences of disabled people and their families. Susan remembers that the program was designed so that it would touch "people's minds and hearts" through story, lifting up the issues of disabilities. From then on, the inclusion committee has conducted surveys both to understand members' needs as well as leverage CDT's collective expertise and wisdom on how to move forward with the work of inclusion.

Another success was that parents of elementary school children with special needs met and shared information, support, and resources. Consultants observed students at Religious School, then provided feedback to the teachers to promote best practices. Then, in 2016, the Ruderman Synagogue Inclusion Project (RSIP), in partnership with CJP, provided a rich array of resources and information as well as partly funding an Inclusion Facilitator position for our Religious School. CDT now fully funds the Inclusion Coordinator position, currently filled by Jess Green.

CDT's partnership with RSIP also marked the formation of our inclusion committee, which met regularly for three years. The committee's first project was to write, at the Board's request, a set of suggestions for welcoming

members and guests to high holiday services. In this document, Susan wrote, "welcoming each other is part of being inclusive, and truly taking note of each other's presence may have a greater impact than we realize, especially for people who may feel marginalized in other aspects of their lives."

Most recently, the inclusion committee kicked off CDT's Mental Health Initiative at the June 2019 members meeting. CDT then had a speaker at the March 2021 members' meeting to help us through Covid's challenges, boost our resilience, and find next steps in becoming a community committed to one another in the realm of mental health.

CURRENT ACCOMMODATIONS AND PRACTICES AT CDT

Listed below are the current resources for our members and staff to help follow through with CDT's inclusion initiative:

1. CDT continues to hire specific staff at our summer retreats to support children and youth with disabilities.
2. At Religious school, special needs services are provided by our Inclusion Coordinator Jess Green so that all our students can learn and thrive.
3. CDT provides funding for members and staff to participate in education and training that enhance inclusion efforts.
4. The congregation provides accommodations for physically disabled people. These include assistive listening devices, High Holy Days live stream for people who are homebound (and of course now, during COVID, this accommoda-

CDT Celebrates 30 Years (cont.)

tion is available for everyone), a portable ramp to go up to the bima at the Second Church, large print books and music stands to hold them, and reserved seating at services.

5. There are two groups comprised of CDT members and staff that meet periodically

on an as needed basis: a Mental Health working group and an Inclusion Advisory group.

Susan stated that Rabbi Toba and the board have provided tremendous support for the many inclusion initiatives over the years. She believes that "inclusion goes deeper than ac-

cessibility. It means believing that all of us, no matter what our challenges and difficulties are, should have the opportunity to participate, grow, and contribute to the community. We continually strive to get better at being a welcoming and accessible place for all members and guests."

Shabbat, Holidays, and Spiritual Practice

Vaccination/booster shots, KN95 masks, and registration are required in order to attend in-person in our sanctuary; learn more and register on the CDT calendar.

ALL-AGES EREV SHABBAT SERVICE

Friday evening, February 4, 5:30-6:30 pm
Zoom

Light your Shabbat candles and enjoy a musical Kabbalat Shabbat service, friendly to kids but meaningful for all! Have your Shabbat candles and grape juice/wine for Kiddush ready to go!

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES AND SABBATICAL GUESTS

All are welcome to join us every Saturday morning for prayer, song, and Torah, beginning at 10 am. Zoom or YouTube streaming information for each service can be found on the CDT website; just click on the calendar link in purple writing on the upper right corner of the homepage. For the time being, we will not be sharing Kiddush lunch together.

Shabbat Terumah with Rabbi Toba

February 5, 10 am-noon
CDT Sanctuary and Zoom

All those who are vaccinated (including booster shot) are invited to join Rabbi Toba in the CDT sanctuary for a musical Shabbat morning service (the service will also be accessible via Zoom). As we read in the Torah about the building of the Mishkan, the holy space where the ancient Israelites encountered God's Presence, we will mark Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion month and celebrate our work in creating a congregational structure in which the Godliness of every person is honored. We will also remember CDT member Frances Greenberg on the occasion of his 17th yahrzeit.

Shabbat Services and Bat Mitzvah of Greer Howard

February 12, 10 am-noon
CDT Sanctuary and Zoom

Greer will celebrate in the CDT Sanctuary with family and friends. All are invited to join us on Zoom.

Please join us online as our daughter Greer is called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on February 12. Greer is a 7th grader at F.A. Day Middle School in Newton. She loves baking, animals, and staying active. Greer is a competitive gymnast at MGC Waltham and a Newton Panthers softball player. For her tikkun olam project, she volunteered sorting clothes at Cradles to Crayons. We are excited to celebrate this milestone with you!

— Amy Pollack-Howard & George Howard

Contemplative Shabbat Morning Service

February 19, 10-11:30 am
Zoom

All are welcome to join Rabbi Adam Lavitt and CDT member Karen Arnold for this service featuring chanted, guided, and silent meditation beginning at 10a m, with Torah study with Rabbi Adam beginning at approximately 11 am. This week's Torah portion, Ki Tisa, famously contains the story of the people idolizing a Golden Calf. Interestingly, right before it, we find the paragraph known as "Veshamru," in which we remind ourselves of our responsibilities as guardians of the Sabbath. How do we hold these two poles of human nature - our impatience and our steadfast dedication? We'll turn to the 18th c. Hasidic master Me'or Einayim (Rabbi Menachem Nachum of Chernobyl) to see how he holds this tension and

what it might teach us about our own spiritual growth.



Between 2011 and 2014, **Rabbi Adam Lavitt** served as Community Educator and, later, Assistant Rabbi at Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, before taking a few years "abroad" in Philadelphia. Since 2017, he has served as the Rabbi and Chaplain at Orchard Cove (a community of Hebrew Senior Life in Canton) and as a Spiritual Director for seekers near and far - including students at two rabbinical seminaries. He lives in Providence with his husband Alex where he enjoys playing clarinet, going on walks with friends, and teaching himself how to knit.

Shabbat Vayak'hel

February 26, 10 am-noon
CDT Sanctuary and Zoom

All are welcome to join Esther Kohn, Matthew Valleau, and Rabbinic Intern Emmanuel Cantor for Shabbat morning services and Torah reading/discussion. We will be remembering rebbetzin Gina Fried on the occasion of her 6th yahrzeit.

Shabbat Pekudei

March 5, 10 am-noon
CDT Sanctuary and Zoom

All are welcome to join Rabbinic Intern Emmanuel Cantor for Shabbat morning services and our very own Debby Saltzman for a Torah discussion as we bring the reading of the book of Exodus to a close.

PURIM IS COMING!

Save the date for Zoom Spiel II on March 16, 7-9pm

Oh, no! Queen Vash-tiffany is missing! Is she on sabbatical, or just refusing to dance (again!) for the king? And what will Shushan do without her? Find out in this year's Purim spiel on March 13th! It's not too late to be a participant and get the inside scoop, either! Email Sheree Galpert, spielmeister, at sgalpert@yahoo.com.

Mishloach Manot for all - We need bakers and delivery people!

In trying to find the funny in a pandemic, we are once again celebrating Purim in the Zoomiverse, with mishloach manot - hamentaschen delivery! We need volunteers to help bake (or buy), bag, and deliver hamentaschen to every household in our congregation.

That's about 1000 (yes, one thousand) hamentaschen!

So bakers, get out your sheet pans and fire up your ovens! Baggers, don those latex or nitrile gloves and wiggle those fingers! And drivers, fill up the tank and have your GPS ready to go! It's time to share those tasty triangles that we all know and love!

To find out all the details, and to please please please join Team Mishloach Manot by signing up to bake, bag, and/or deliver hamentaschen, visit the Purim page of the CDT website or contact Melissa Colten execdirector@dorsheitzedek.org or Erica Streit Kaplan ericastreitkaplan@yahoo.com.

CDT Events

JEWISH DISABILITY INCLUSION AND ACTION MONTH WITH RABBI LAUREN TUCHMAN

Monday, February 7, 7-8 pm
Zoom

February is Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month. We are thrilled that Rabbi Lauren Tuchman will be joining us for an hour of learning and practice aimed at giving us skills for the uncertainty we are living through, with an acknowledgement of the diversity of disability experience. We will explore a Jewish text and a resiliency practice rooted in Jewish tradition.



Rabbi Tuchman is a sought after speaker, spiritual leader and educator. Ordained by The Jewish Theological Seminary in 2018, she has taught at numerous synagogues and other Jewish venues throughout North America and was named to the Jewish Week's 36 under 36 for her innovative leadership concerning inclusion of Jews with disabilities in all aspects of Jewish life. In 2017, she delivered an ELI Talk entitled We All Were At Sinai: The Transformative Power of Inclusive Torah. She has trained and continues to teach with Rabbi David Jaffe and the Inside Out Wisdom and Action Project, which provides a space for Jewish spiritual and contemplative practice for social justice activists.

CDT MEN'S GROUP

Monday, February 21, 8-9 pm
Zoom

The CDT's men's group meets the 3rd Monday of each month and is open to anyone who identifies with manhood.

UNDERSTANDING RACISM MEETING: REVIEW & DISCUSSION OF RABBI LIEBLING'S MLK TALK

Thursday, February 24, 7-8:15 pm
Zoom

Understanding Racism is a CDT group that explores antiracism through education, discussion, and activism. We have several projects we are working on now. Even if you have never been to a meeting or are new to exploring the topic, we welcome you.

Did you find Rabbi Mordechai Liebling's MLK talk moving, thought provoking, and comprehensive? Did you feel inclined to read it more closely, to discuss it with others? Did you miss his talk and are you curious about what this is all about it? For our next Understanding Racism meeting, all CDT members who identify as white are invited to participate in a discussion of his talk, led by members of the Understanding Racism group. Whether you are new to the conversation about racism or are already more involved, this will be a great opportunity to think about these issues together. Please mark your calendars and be on the lookout for further details.

TRANS/GNC/NB+ SHABBAT AFTERNOON MEET UP FOR GROWNUPS, KIDS, AND THE PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEM!

February 12, 6:30-7:30 pm
Location TBD

Join other members of the trans/gnc/nb+ community for a family friendly havdalah event! All CDT members who identify within the trans/gender nonconforming umbrella are welcome to join as well as their loved ones. We will do some activities, celebrate havdalah, and get to know one another!

VIMS (VIRTUAL INTEREST MEET-UPS)

Thursday, February 3, 7:30 pm
Cozy Mystery Book Chat with Sheree Galpert

Saturday, February 5, 2:00 pm
Walk/Light Hike at Beaver Brook Reservation with Jennifer Nichols

Sunday, February 6
4:00 pm: Thinking of Buying an Electric Vehicle? with Laya Steinberg and Bruce Miller
7:30 pm: Art Show and Tell with Viv Shein

Tuesday, February 8, 7:30 pm
Cozy Soups & Stews with Jenny Leopold

Thursday, February 10, 7:30 pm
Memoir Book Discussion with Diana Fisher-Gomberg and Debby Saltzman

Saturday, February 12, 1:30 pm
Participatory play reading with Sheree Galpert

Sunday, February 13, 1:30 pm
Hiking and Poetry with Esther Kohn

CDT Artist Spotlight

ILANA JOY STREIT



Ilana Joy Streit writes playful, earthy and embodied poetry, including creative liturgy for the Jewish year cycle. She is a singer/songwriter whose powerful voice and soulful music

bring life to selections of Hallel, the Song of Songs, and poetry by Mary Oliver.

Ilana is the grandchild and great-grandchild of Jews from Germany and Eastern Europe. She grew up in Montclair, NJ, and in the Reconstructionist movement. Ilana lived in Mount Airy, Philadelphia, after college, before moving to the Boston area in 2005, in time for her first niece's birth.

Ilana teaches creative and embodied approaches to Hebrew and Jewish holidays, and coaches Jewish leaders and seekers in living healthy, balanced, Jewishly empowered lives. She has taught Melody as Midrash to students of all ages, and is the melody matchmaker who put the Aramaic blessing "Brich Rachamana" to the Sanctuary song. She is known as Tante Ilana by her two nieces and a small but growing crew of young cousins and friends.

Ilana is a graduate of the Heller/Hornstein Program in Jewish Communal Leadership at Brandeis University, and an ordained Kohenet (Hebrew Priestess) with the title of Oreget Brachot: Weaver of Blessings. You can find more of Ilana's writing and music on her Patreon page, as well as on RitualWell.org and The Open Siddur Project.

Untitled

Kohenet Ilana Joy Streit

When you're giving birth
(to a world),
don't try to figure out
how close you are to being done
or how healthy your fruit is:
keep breathing;
accept a massage --
and depend on the ones around you
to tell you, you're doing great

Later, waking up,
you will be able to think;
for now, there is pushing and resting

Later, you and your baby will cry,
perhaps together, perhaps not for years.

Community

MAZEL TOV

Mazel tov to **Ava Levine-Fried** and her family on becoming bat mitzvah!

To **Ayelet Lipton**, **Daveed Harris**, and **Shai Lipton**, on Ayelet and Daveed's marriage!

YAHREZEIT

This month, we remember CDT member **Frances Greenberg**, whose 17th yahrzeit falls on February 2; we will remember Frances at Shabbat morning services on February 5. May his memory be for a blessing.

We also remember CDT rebbetzin **Gina Fried**, whose 6th yahrzeit falls on February 27; we will remember Gina at Shabbat morning services on February 26. May her memory be for a blessing.

CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences to **Mark and Denise Yurkofsky** on the death of Mark's mother, **Liliane Yurkodsky**. May her memory be for a blessing.

We extend our condolences to **Daveed Harris** and **Ayelet and Shai Lipton** on the death

of Daveed's brother, **Joseph Myers**. May his 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 dorsheitzedek.org/mourning.

AVELUT: SUPPORT FOR THOSE IN MOURNING

Tuesday, February 8, 7:30-9:15 pm

A group of CDT members in various stages of the journey of mourning meets via Zoom on the second Tuesday of each month to support one another, to reflect on loss on the occasion of a yahrzeit or other occasion, and to remember the legacies of the loved ones we carry with us. Any CDT member is welcome to drop in anytime. For more information, please contact Nancy Gertz at nancy.gertz@gmail.com or Dianne Lior at dianne.lior@gmail.com.

REFUAH SHLEYMAH

We send blessings for complete healing to **Anya Rhodes**, **Elaine Pollack**,

Ellie Goldberg, **Al Glazerman**, **Steve Adler-Golden**, **Emma Price**, and **Emelia Webbe**.

TODAH RABAH

To our service e-leaders and leyners:

Laurie Goldman, **Matthew Valteau**, **Dani Krasa**, **Sue Lanser**, **Marion Ross**, **Chayim Herzig-Marx**, and **Ezra Hausman**.

To **Sheree Galpert** and all the VIM Zoom coffeehouse performers for an incredible evening on Saturday night, January 22 (in order of appearance):

Emily Mathis, **Elaine Bresnick**, **Shalev Moser**, **Malka Pomerantz**, **Ayla Kobi**, **Nathan Aronow**, **Ken Ormes**, **Ziv Dudnik**, **Josette Akresh-Gonzales**, **Joanna Marcus**, **Susan Nitkin**, **Benjamin Newman**, **Terry Traub**, **Tal Shalom-Kobi**, and **Andrew Sofer**. To **Steffi Karp**, **Dianne Lior**, and **Sara Ulanet** for furniture donations to the Tuesday Religious School Program.

NEW MEMBER WELCOME

A warm welcome to new members **Reesa and Irving Gottschalk** who join us from Whitefish Bay, WI!

Chesed

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 Rabbi Toba (confidentially) at t.spitzer@dorsheitzedek.org. Rabbi Toba does not check email 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. For pastoral support during Rabbi Toba's sabbatical, please contact rabbinic intern Emmanuel Cantor, e.cantor@dorsheitzedek.org, or chesed@dorsheitzedek.org to get in touch with "on call" rabbis.

CHESED BASICS: OUR CARING COMMUNITY

Ellie Goldberg

Chesed at CDT is 'members helping members'. The Chesed Committee uses the website LotsaHelpingHands (LHH) to organize volunteers to provide a gesture of caring such as a meal, a ride, a visit, and help with errands and other tasks.

How does Chesed work?

Let Rabbi Toba Spitzer know when you or a family member has an event such as the arrival of a child, death, injury or illness. Or send an email to the Chesed Coordinators at chesed@dorsheitzedek.org. You will get a call

or email from a Chesed Coordinator who will ask for information about the requested task to post on the LotsaHelpingHands Calendar. All volunteers will receive an email notifying them of the new post.

Sign Up. Help make Congregation Dorshei Tzedek a more caring community. All members are invited to join the CDT Chesed Caring Community volunteer list at this link.

Meals: While Covid continues, members have the option of a home cooked meal or having Chesed order meals from a local restaurant such as Inna's Kitchen, thanks to Rabbi Toba's Discretionary Fund. A Chesed Coordinator will contact the member to inquire about prefer-

ences, order the meal, and send out a request from LotsaHelpingHands for a volunteer to prepare or pick up and deliver the meal.

Rides: For everyone's safety, the volunteer driver and recipient need to discuss precautions (masks, open windows, sitting in the back seat), their vaccination status and the status of people in their household when they confirm arrangements for the ride.

The Chesed Committee thanks everyone whose acts of kindness manifest the spirit of Chesed in our community. Please contact the Chesed Coordinators if you have questions or a request for Chesed at chesed@dorsheitzedek.org.

Tikkun Olam

GBIO UPDATE

Louise Enoch

GBIO has been looking back over its many accomplishments for 2021. For CDTers, we added our Listening Sessions voices to others across GBIO, attended the Delegates Assembly in August, participated in fruitful actions with Boston Mayoral candidates and City Council candidates, and contributed generously to the GBIO Impact Fund. Now, it's time to look forward to all that is planned for 2022.

GBIO will be focusing on building power throughout the GBIO network and within GBIO congregations. Our CDT members are all invited to participate in trainings around doing relational meetings, building Core Teams, and learning about Power Organizing. These are tools to build that power.

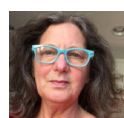
In terms of using our power, GBIO will be holding elected officials accountable for what they have already promised in the areas of housing, reentry, and mental health/substance abuse. GBIO is considering whether and how to get involved with other state wide upcoming races like the Governors race and legislative

races. GBIO is also looking for people from the congregations to get involved on their three platform issues: Housing, Reentry, and Mental Health/Substance Abuse. If you are interested in any of these issues please let me know and I will put you in touch with Steering and Action Teams that are forming on each of these issues. These teams will work on developing campaigns or actions to bring about specific change. Again, please let me know if you want to get involved working with people across GBIO on these issues! This work can bring you satisfaction and new relationship outside your usual spheres.

AFGHAN FAMILY RESETTLEMENT UPDATE

Sharing our Stories

Beth Green and Alice Markowitz



Each time our Afghan family welcomes us into their home we are greeted by a different delicious aroma wafting from the kitchen. Usually it is from the lunch the family has just finished, but this day, a weekend, the visit seemed to be more social and less busi-

ness than usual. A chance to build our relationship by getting to know each other a little better. As we settled down on the floor, as is the custom in Afghanistan, the husband spread a plastic tablecloth over the carpet and brought out two plates of food. The wife made sambusa and bolani for us. Sambusa is a thin yeast dough wrapper around a well seasoned, slightly spicy potato filling wrapped up like a blintz or Chinese egg roll. Bolani is again a thin yeast dough, but this time shaped more like a small pizza and stuffed with seasoned onions and spinach. They were delicious!

As we ate, we talked. And as we talked the complexities and challenges of settling a new family into such a different culture took a backseat for a moment. So much goes into setting up a completely new life and identity from scratch in a new country. The complexities we are facing together include a host of bureaucratic chores including obtaining social security numbers, applying for Mass Health, finding doctors, organizing ESL lessons, and gathering details to prove residency in order to receive benefits. And on the emotional side, recognizing their worry about getting work, the cost of housing, their long-term financial

Tikkun Olam (cont.)

security, and deep concern about family left behind, with whom they keep in close touch and miss greatly.

But these challenges briefly melted away, and we became three families sharing stories and getting to know each other.

As we talked and ate, we learned that in Afghanistan the family had lived in a house with their parents and siblings and their children. Imagine the trauma of having to quickly leave such a bustling, supportive household and coming to a new country, alone, with no family around, not knowing where you were headed once you got to the US, and being deeply worried about the family you left behind! As we continued our conversation, the daughter finished her food and was eager to play. Her father reminded her to recite her prayer of thankfulness for the food she had eaten. She did and then scampered off to play.

Despite all the difficulties they have faced and their worry about the future ahead of them, the family is always incredibly welcoming and gracious. The father is energetic, positive and determined to succeed. I enjoy the optimistic twinkle in his eye. The mother is quiet and shy to speak, but her soft, warm eyes are attentive and alert to the goings on. Their smiles are hidden behind their Covid masks but we can

see it in their eyes. The daughter is a petite and energetic kid just as you might expect of any girl her age, despite all the upheaval she has been through. And the youngest - we've enjoyed seeing him go from furniture walking, when he first arrived a mere three weeks ago, to taking his first tentative independent steps across the living room just as the family is learning to take their first independent steps towards settling into their new home, their new country and their new life.

Many members have contacted us to ask how they can help. Thanks to the generosity of the CDT/HBT communities, as well as many others, the family is now in a simply but comfortably furnished apartment and has the clothes they need for winter, kitchen and home supplies and some toys for the children. The Leadership Team has thought intentionally about introducing new people into the family's lives on a gradual basis, slowly as the family adjusts and builds trust, in a way that is safe in this Covid environment. Helping this family is a marathon not a sprint! Over time there will be many volunteer opportunities for CDT/HBT members and our new partners at Reservoir Church in Cambridge.

As we leave, after a lovely visit, as the thank you's fly back and forth, the family again tells us how deeply they appreciate all that our

community is doing for them and how lucky and blessed they are to have been delivered into the hands of our community. The CDT/HBT community should be very proud of all that you have done to provide a warm, comfortable, inviting home for this family!

UNDERSTANDING RACISM GROUP UPDATE

Understanding Racism is a CDT group that explores antiracism through education, discussion, and activism. For our next meeting on Thursday, February 24 at 7 pm on Zoom, in addition to updates, we plan to discuss 1 or 2 short readings which can be found on the CDT calendar event listing. All are welcome. If you have questions feel free to reach out to Alan Epstein at ade26g@gmail.com or Tatjana Meschede at tatjana.meschede@gmail.com.

ISRAEL/PALESTINE PEACE

CDT is cosponsoring a free series about Israel/Palestine led by Reconstructionist rabbis over 9 sessions between January and May. Zionists, non-Zionists, anti-Zionists, and those unsure of how to define themselves are all welcome to participate as the meanings of these terms are explored. Each 90-minute session includes a lecture and discussion. **Rabbi Toba's talk, "A New Conversation: A Land for All," is on February 22.** Details and registration can be found on the CDT calendar.

Nediv Lev

CONTRIBUTIONS

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions:

AFGHAN ASSISTANCE FUND

Michele Aghassi & Kim Springer
Steve Beck, Partner, Charity Operations and Community Impact, CMRK, Inc.
Kristin Callahan
Liz Carver & Bryn Austin – *in memory of Harold Carver*
Susan Dargon-Hart
Carolyn Fine and Jerry Friedman
Zee Gamson – *in memory of Bill Gamson, who devoted his life to understanding social movements and acting on what he learned*
Lori & Pushkal Garg
Laurie Goldman

Alice Markowitz & Rick Glassman
Diana Perretta
Janet Rickles
Tracey Rogers
Teri Rumpf
Sue Weil & Sandy Goodman
The Family of Rebecca Gutman/Liz Steinhäuser/Nuriel Gutman/Heschel Steinhäuser Roelofs

GENERAL FUND

Michele Arons & Michael Brann – *in memory of Gilbert Arons Yahrzeit January 7*
Barbara Beck – *in memory of sister Louise Beck, brother Stephen Beck, and parents Edith and Irving Beck*
Sharon Gorberg – *in memory of her beloved mother, Sylvia R. Gorberg*

Donna Hirsh
Sue Lanser & Jo Radner – *in honor of Melissa Colten, Executive Director Extraordinaire!*
Ilene Lerner
Fran Malino – *in memory of her parents, Jerome and Rhoda Malino*
Ruth Paris & Rob Saper
Elena & Ted Morrow-Spitzer

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Sue Lanser & Jo Radner
Loretta G Lipka – *in honor of granddaughter Rita Hackett's studies at UMass Amherst and in gratitude to Rabbi Toba Spitzer*
Sandy Sedacca & Sherwood Ives – *with heartfelt thanks*
Peggy Stafford & Mike Shapiro

Nediv Lev (cont.)

NEDIV LEV

Amy Brodesky – *in honor of Rabbi Toba*

Shahar Colt & Darya Mattes

Ellie Goldberg – *in loving memory of her father-in-law, Sampson Goldberg*

Ellen Hemley & Mark Brostein

VOTER MOBILIZATION PROJECT

Madeline Steinberg & Mitchell Feuer

Childrens' and Family Programs

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL UPDATES

Earnest Vener, Director of Congregational Learning

Our second semester of school did not begin how we imagined it. Instead of a bustling reunion at the JCDS campus we found ourselves in tiny boxes on our screens dressed in our favorite PJs. We decided to start the semester on Zoom, knowing it would be the safest way for all of us to gather. Due to COVID we have avoided mixed aged programming all year, and although nothing beats face-to-face time, it was really special to get to all be in the same room together, even if it was a Zoom room. We started the semester off with a Pajama Day and the teachers did an amazing job creating a welcoming and joyful atmosphere during this bumpy time in the pandemic. A committee of Religious School parent physicians have formed an advisory board, and in consultation with the CDT COVID protocols committee, we will be meeting regularly to create protocols for the months ahead. While the plans for the second semester are still taking shape, we will continue to adapt to the needs of the moment by pivoting between in person and virtual learning as needed.

Our first semester was filled with lots of learning and community building. We began two initiatives with Religious School parents to help support our school's goals. The first is an initiative, in partnership with Education VP and parent David Rhodes, to begin to dialogue about Israel/Palestine with Religious School parents as a first step towards creating an educational framework for the school. The second is the creation of a school lending library of diverse Jewish children's books. The initiative about developing a framework for Israel/Palestine education at our school is largely informed by Rabbi Toba's Rosh Hashanah talk in which she raised the possibility of a new orientation to conversations about

Israel/Palestine, one that encourages radical curiosity about positions that are not our own and fosters an embrace of all those who live in the Holy Land. In an effort to move beyond divisions and silence, we are inviting parents into a beginning conversation about Israel/Palestine. We held the first conversation in November and over 20 parents came together to participate in small group discussions about their experiences with Israel/Palestine. Instead of diving right into what we want for our children's education, these first conversations are meant to bring as many parent voices into the space as possible (from those with strong political opinions and personal connections, to those who do not have a strong stance) so that we can really grasp the diversity of experiences in our community. We will host this program again and continue to take steps towards values clarification and curriculum development.

The second initiative is connected to our school goal that by the time our students graduate from Religious School they have a foundational understanding of the Jewish people as multiracial, multicultural, and global. In December Ellie Axe, CDT member, parent, and Director of Story Starters led a discussion about raising antiracist Jewish children. Ellie's organization, Story Starters, equips families with strategies to raise children to develop antiracist values and inspires racial justice action in homes and communities. Ellie's session focused on single stories we tell about who the Jewish people are and how diverse Jewish children's books can support children in developing an understanding of Jewish diversity and a commitment to justice within and beyond our communities. Families are donating books that support these goals and once a month they will be able to check out a new book from our growing CDT RS Lending Library. I look forward to working on these initiatives with our many parent partners, teachers, and students.

Learning

EXPLORING AGING THROUGH LITERATURE

Sunday afternoons, 3-4:30pm, January 9, Feb 13, March 13, April 10, May 15
With Carol Hausman

This class will read short novels, short stories and poetry on many topics of aging. We hope to deepen our awareness of some of the challenges and opportunities faced by elderly people and their caregivers.

IMPOSSIBLE TO TRANSLATE BUT I'LL TRY – TRUE LIFE IS-RAELI STORIES

with Noa Baum — Sponsored by CDT's Keshet Yisraeli Group
Wednesday, February 16, 7:30pm
Zoom



Noa Baum is coming back to CDT! Virtually, that is. On Wednesday, February 16, at 7:30 pm, storyteller Noa Baum will be presenting a special program for our congregation.

Those of us who attended her riveting performance of "A Land Twice Promised" a few years ago remember Noa's vivid style; she is no less vivid on Zoom. "Impossible to Translate" is a different program, focused on her memories of growing up in Jerusalem, which, as she says, is about "more than the Bible and war." This award-winning show takes us on a poignant and humorous journey through her life, revealing a completely different side of Israel with stories of childhood adventures, outrageous matchmaking, and more. For more information about Noa, visit her website at <https://noabaum.com/>.

February 2022 • Shevat/Adar I 5782

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 Shevat 28 9:30am Kitah Vav Family Ed 9:30am Sunday Religious School 10:30am Parenting Through a Jewish Lens 7:00pm Adult B'nei Mitzvah Class with Rabbinic Intern Emmanuel Cantor 7:00pm VIM: Virtual Games Night	31 Shevat 29	1 Shevat 30 Rosh Chodesh Adar I 8:30am Mindful Mornings 3:00pm Tuesday Religious School 4:00pm Rosh Chodesh Adar I + Camp Havaya Q&A 6:00pm 8th/9th Grade Tuesday Program 9:00pm VIM: Late Night Sudoku	2 Adar I 1 Rosh Chodesh Adar I 7:00pm Mussar (applied Jewish ethics) Practice Group with CDT Member Ora Grodsky and Earnest Vener	3 Adar I 2 8:30am Mindful Mornings 6:30pm Tikkun Olam Committee Meeting 7:30pm VIM: Cozy Mystery Book Chat	4 Adar I 3 6:00pm All Ages Erev Shabbat	5 Adar I 4 Terumah 10:00am Shabbat Terumah with Rabbi Toba 2:00pm VIM: Walk/Light Hike at Beaver Brook Reservation
6 Adar I 5 9:30am Parenting Through a Jewish Lens 9:30am Kitah Zayin Family Ed 9:30am Sunday Religious School 12:00pm Dalet-Vav Band 4:00pm VIM: Thinking of Buying an Electric Vehicle? 7:00pm Adult B'nei Mitzvah Class with Rabbinic Intern Emmanuel Cantor	7 Adar I 6 8:00am Torah Study with Rabbinic Intern Emmanuel Cantor 7:00pm Rabbi Lauren Tuchman - JDAIM program	8 Adar I 7 3:00pm Tuesday Religious School 7:30pm VIM: Cozy Soups & Stews 7:30pm Avelut	9 Adar I 8 8:00pm Decolonizing Jewish Liturgy, Rabbi Brant Rosen	10 Adar I 9 7:30pm VIM: Memoir Book Discussion	11 Adar I 10	12 Adar I 11 Tetzaveh 10:00am Shabbat Morning Service & Bat Mitzvah of Greer Howard 1:30pm VIM: Participatory play reading 6:30pm Trans/Nonbinary/GNC+ Meet Up
13 Adar I 12 9:30am Sunday Religious School 10:00am 8th/9th Grade Kids4Peace 12:00pm Bandits (Vav-Zayin) 1:30pm VIM: Hiking and Poetry 3:00pm Exploring Aging through Literature 7:00pm Adult B'nei Mitzvah Class with Rabbinic Intern Emmanuel Cantor	14 Adar I 13	15 Adar I 14 Purim Katan 3:00pm Tuesday Religious School	16 Adar I 15 7:30pm Noa Baum's "Impossible to Translate but I'll Try - True Life Israeli Stories"	17 Adar I 16	18 Adar I 17	19 Adar I 18 Ki Tisa 10:00am Contemplative Shabbat Morning Services
20 Adar I 19	21 Adar I 20 Admin: Presidents' Day 8:00am Torah Study with Rabbinic Intern Emmanuel Cantor 8:00pm CDT Men's Group	22 Adar I 21 8:00pm A New Conversation: A Land for All with Rabbi Toba Spitzer	23 Adar I 22 7:00pm Mussar (applied Jewish ethics) Practice Group with CDT Member Ora Grodsky and Earnest Vener	24 Adar I 23 1:00pm Jewish Disability Advocacy Day: Making Change 7:00pm Understanding Racism Meeting	25 Adar I 24	26 Adar I 25 Vayakhel 10:00am Shabbat Vayak'hel Morning Service
27 Adar I 26	28 Adar I 27	1 Adar I 28 3:00pm Tuesday Religious School 4:00pm Rosh Hodesh Tuesday RS 6:00pm 8th/9th Grade Tuesday Program	2 Adar I 29	3 Adar I 30 Rosh Chodesh Adar II	4 Adar II 1 Rosh Chodesh Adar II	5 Adar II 2 Pekudei 10:00am Shabbat Pekudei Morning Service



Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

60 Highland St.
West Newton, MA 02465



Address correction requested



Current guidelines for in-person CDT events and gatherings:

- » Pre-registration of those attending indoor gatherings is required; we can now safely have 40 persons in the CDT Sanctuary.
- » (K)N-95 masks are required for the duration of the program/service. CDT will always have masks on hand in case of need.
- » Vaccination and booster shots are required for all that are eligible (we are maintaining the honor system)
- » Please stay home and take advantage of our Zoom option if you are experiencing elevated temperature, sore throat, nausea, muscle aches, cough, respiratory symptoms, unexplained rash, and loss of smell or taste, or have been in contact with someone with COVID.

Please review the full update at

<https://www.dorsheitzedek.org/covid-19-resources>