



# Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

An Affiliate of Reconstructing Judaism

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Kislev/Tevet 5783

December 2022



## PAIN AND POSSIBILITY

*Rabbi Toba Spitzer*



On November 10, I turned 60. I was in Jerusalem, having arrived a few days earlier in anticipation of a trip – called the Jewish Clergy Project for Peace & Justice in Israel/Palestine – that I helped organize. Before the official tour began, I visited with friends whom I first met when I was a rabbinical student living in Jerusalem in 1995. That year, I was out celebrating my 33rd birthday when I learned that Yitzhak Rabin had been assassinated. The tentative hope I had felt that

fall at the possibility that the occupation might end and two states, Jewish and Palestinian, finally come to be, turned into a nightmare. I walked home that evening through empty streets.

And so here I was, nearly half a lifetime later, enjoying meals and friendship in (predominantly Jewish) West Jerusalem for the first half of my birthday, then joining 19 rabbinic colleagues for the start of our trip that evening in a hotel in (predominantly Palestinian) East Jerusalem. We had come to witness and be in solidarity with groups both Israeli and Palestinian doing transformational work in the face of overwhelming odds. The Israeli elections had just yielded devastating results: a far-right government in which openly racist and homophobic, ultra-nationalist religious parties hold disproportionate power. As I write this, we have yet to see what the actual policies of this government might be. But our trip was not focused on current politics, rather the underlying issues that gave rise to the situation today.

On Thursday, December 15, I will share photos and reflections from the trip (see page 6 for details). What I want to share in this column were some moments that stood out for me during our trip, moments made possible by people and organizations who rarely, if ever, make the news:

On our first day, a Palestinian Israeli named Omar from the Israeli organization Zochrot took us on a tour of the remains of a village called Lifta. Omar shared with us the story of this village from 1948, a story similar to hundreds of Palestinian villages from that time, when it was attacked by Jewish combatants and the inhabitants fled, never allowed to return. One of my colleagues, a beloved friend and teacher, told us how as a young man he had lived a short distance away, looking over this site, having no idea what had occurred here. His voice shook with emotion, echoing the emotion in Omar's voice as he shared his people's painful history with us. It was a moment of both heartbreak and heart opening, the kind of moment that leads to deeper, transformative understanding.

A few days later we were in an olive grove on the West Bank with representatives of Rabbis for Human Rights (RHR), an Israeli group that has for the past 20 years joined with others to help protect Palestinian farmers who are regularly prevented from getting to their own fields by violent Jewish settlers and the whims of the Israeli military administration. We were happily not obstructed that day, and stood in the sunshine helping with the harvest. The Executive Director of RHR, Avi Dabush, told of us his own journey as a Jewish Israeli of Libyan and Moroccan descent, raised in a politically rightwing family. Based on the positive Jewish values he was also taught by his parents, he ultimately

decided to work for the economic and human rights of both Jews and Palestinians. In the wake of the Israeli elections, Avi spoke to us of the importance of communicating with the Jewish Israeli public in the language of Jewish religion and values, and a need to be aware of the fear driving the Jewish electorate to the right.

Our final day was spent with Osama, a Palestinian activist with Combatants for Peace, Jewish Israeli soldiers and Palestinian fighters who have forsworn violence and committed to working together to end the occupation. Osama, who lives on the West Bank, took us on a tour of the Jericho area, showing us the Jewish settlements that have sprung up all around that Palestinian city and describing to us – with dry humor – the many restrictions that define his life as a West Bank Palestinian. Osama took us to meet with a small Palestinian community that is constantly harassed by local extremist settlers and who need to illegally siphon water from a nearby stream because the vast majority of water in the area is diverted to the settlements. In his urgent pleas for Israel – and the world – to recognize the basic humanity of the Palestinian people living in this area, Osama manifested not only his commitment to his people's wellbeing, but a profound humanism. I learned from him the likelihood that many Palestinians share Jewish heritage passed on over the centuries (one of his grandparents' surnames is Mizrahi). The complexity of identities is only one of the many complications of living in that land.

I heard many things, both painful and inspiring, during this trip. The image that came to me while I was there was one of spaciousness. How can I – how can we in the American Jewish community – become mentally and spiritually spacious enough to contain all that must be held in order to fully comprehend the human reality of that place? The people I met have attained this spaciousness: an ability to clearly voice their own pain, their own aspirations, their own narrative, without needing to erase another. There is much wisdom to be learned from those doing the hard, deep, uphill work of transformation on the ground. I look forward to sharing more with this community and seeing how we might become part of that transformation.

## From the Board

### JOIN US FOR THE HYBRID CDT MEMBERS MEETING!

*Sunday, December 4, 10:00 am-12:00 pm*

*Zoom and CDT Religious School (Cabot Elementary School, 229 Cabot St, Newton, MA 02460)*

We hope every household will send at least one representative to join us for important updates and a review of Reconstructing Judaism's Resolution on Reparations, which you can find under the Congregation Documents section of our website.

## 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 Rabbinic Liaison Chair Cindy Shulak-Rome at [cbsrome@comcast.net](mailto:cbsrome@comcast.net).

The CDT Newsletter is compiled, edited, and designed by the office and published monthly (with a July/August summer issue). Email articles, events, and photos to [dtnews@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:dtnews@dorsheitzedek.org) by the 10th of the month for the following month's issue. For questions, email us at the same address. Volunteer Staff: Haralie Alpert (interviewer), Debby Saltzman (copyeditor), and Vivienne Shein (photographer). Please let us know if you'd like to join the team — we especially need photographers and copyeditors!!

## 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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Executive Director: Melissa Colten,

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Administrative Assistant: Alistaire Webbe,

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Inclusion Coordinator: Jess Green,

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Rabbinic Intern: Akiva Nelson,

[a.nelson@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:a.nelson@dorsheitzedek.org)

### Executive Committee:

President: Stacey Chacker

Immediate Past President: Bob Warren

VP Finance: Jen Levine-Fried

Secretary: Dan Rome

### Vice-Presidents:

VP Membership: Carole Slipowitz and

Marjorie Salvodon

VP Education: **Vacant — nominate yourself or a friend!**

VP Tikkun Olam: Tony Broh

### Board Members—at-Large:

Sheree Galpert, Melody Komyerov, Ayelet

Lipton, Jenny Sartori, Meryl Epstein, and

Rebecca Byard

### Off-Board Chairs:

Children's Education: Becca O'Murchadha

Chesed: Gail Pressberg

Nediv Lev: Janice Cole & Ezra Hausman

Ritual: Marion Ross & Peter Katz

Rabbinic Liaison: Cindy Shulak-Rome

Executive Director Liaison: Linette Liebling

Education Director Liaison: Lissy Medvedow

Space: Steve Siegel

Website: Dan Halbert

Welcoming: **Vacant — nominate yourself or a friend!**



# CDT Celebrates 30 Years



## Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

### CELEBRATING CDT AND HONORING RABBI TOBA

Annette Jacobs and Jennifer Kaplan



On November 5, 2022, many of us were finally able to come together with great joy to celebrate the 30th anniversary of our congregation and to honor Rabbi Toba for her 25 years of spiritual leadership at the Windsor Club. 170 people gathered in person to enjoy the program and to eat, drink, socialize, and dance the evening away. 68 people watched the program live through streaming. The effort was truly a team effort. So many gave many hours, much effort, their best thoughts and creativity, and physical strength and stamina to make the evening the tremendous success and fun it was. Please see page 7 for a full list of all those who made this evening possible.

**Psalm 150, CDT Gala-Style**  
**Tune by Miriam Margles**  
**Words by CDT Sings**



**CHORUS: Hallelujah**  
*Dorshei Tzedek began its run  
in nineteen hundred and ninety-one.  
Judy Herzig Marx envisioned the need  
for a Recon shul, and planted the seed.*  
**CHORUS: Hallelujah**  
*Six families then began to meet,  
Celebrating Shabbat, to pray and to eat.  
Their ambition and eagerness grew:  
They decided to host High Holidays too!*  
**CHORUS: Hallelujah**  
*For Rosh Hashanah, our public debut,  
we gathered at Brandeis, hopeful and new.*

*We worried that no one would show —  
but services gathered an overflow!*

**CHORUS: Hallelujah**  
*Then, Hebrew School, for the little folk,  
led by Judy, Elaine, and the great Jill Volk.  
A student rabbi became our next hire;  
Then came Rabbi Toba's wisdom and fire.*  
**CHORUS: Hallelujah**  
*A brilliant run of thirty years  
brings us to this time of toasts and of cheers:  
Dorshei Tzedek has passed the test;  
In this congregation we're truly blessed.*



## Interview of the Month

### ALEX SUGERMAN-BROZAN — OUR ADVOCATE OF THE PEOPLE!

Harlie Alpert



**What is your Jewish background and how did you decide to join CDT?**

I grew up in New York City, where Jewish culture is part of the city's identity. My family belonged to a large Reform synagogue where I did not feel much of a spiritual connection to Judaism. I went to a private school where at least half the students were Jewish, and bar and bat mitzvahs were mainly a middle school popularity contest. The materialism of it really

turned me off. Music became my spiritual outlet, and in particular the Grateful Dead. I found all the things in their music that I hadn't found in our synagogue — joy, awe, wonder, a sense of interconnection, etc. And so being a Deadhead was my spirituality for most of high school and college. And I also became an activist, mostly around environmental issues, which gave me a sense of mission and urgency.

In college, I dipped my toes into a few of my campus' Hillel activities, like going to seders for Pesach. I met my wife Jodi at Tufts, and she had had a very different Jewish upbringing than mine. She had grown up in a town where her family was one of the only Jewish families.

Both of us felt a desire to learn more about Judaism and to find a home in the Jewish community, so after we finished school, we started "shul shopping" and stumbled onto CDT quite by chance. We attended a Rosh Hashanah service that happened to be Toba's first with CDT, and her sermon hooked us. We were engaged at that point, and asked Toba to officiate at our wedding, and the rest is history, as they say.

**How did you decide to become a lawyer?**

I took a bit of a circuitous route. My father and grandfather were both lawyers, and I had no desire at all to follow in their footsteps. The work that my father did seemed really boring to me. As a zealous and probably-insufferable

## Interview of the Month (cont.)

young activist, I saw being a lawyer as being part of the system that was at the root of all the injustices in our society. I tried being a community organizer after college, but quickly discovered I was not well suited to it at all. It gradually dawned on me that I could make a real contribution to the causes I cared about by becoming a lawyer.

I went to Northeastern University School of Law, which is known for its commitment to creating lawyers dedicated to social change. After I graduated, I worked for Health Law Advocates for three years, which is part of the statewide advocacy group Health Care for All. I helped people navigate our overly-complicated health care system to get health coverage and medical treatments when they were denied or hit obstacles. I moved from there to run a project for five years called Prescription Access Litigation that got consumers and advocacy groups involved in class action lawsuits against pharmaceutical companies, challenging price gouging and deceptive marketing. Though the lawsuits did result in getting hundreds of millions of dollars back to consumers, the industry was able to chalk it up as just another cost of doing business. Through that, I saw some of the limits of the law as a social change strategy.

It can only be one tool in the toolbox, and has to always be linked with advocacy and organizing.

### Can you tell us about a legal case you are especially proud of?

A lot of our cases involve workers who are especially vulnerable, such as folks who are undocumented, and thus it's easy for unscrupulous employers to exploit them. I had a case recently where a construction company paid its workers for their first forty hours each week through a normal paycheck, but then hours over forty, which are overtime and have to be paid at one-and-a-half times their regular hourly rate, were paid in cash at the normal rate. This added up quickly, and meant that these workers, most of whom did not speak any English and were unaware of their rights, were underpaid by thousands of dollars each. We were able to get the company to agree to pay all those workers the wages they were owed, which will make a huge difference for them and their families.

### Does Reconstructionist Judaism guide you in your work?

Absolutely. A commitment to justice is central to Judaism, and Reconstructionism in particular places that commitment front



and center. Judaism's teachings about our responsibilities to each other and to "the stranger" have really helped cement my commitment to devoting my working life to helping people without access and power advocate for themselves and stand up to institutions with too much power.

### Can you give any words of wisdom to CDT?

I think the most important thing you can do to be in it for the long haul is to find things you are good at and also enjoy, and then play to those strengths. Not everyone wants to go out knocking on doors, or lobby their legislators, or work for a non-profit. But there's a way for each of us to use our skills to contribute to the things we care about – the needs are broad and deep, and you have a skill that's sorely needed somewhere. Figure out where that place is, and pursue it with a passion. And don't forget to celebrate! We can't do this work without joy.

## Shabbat, Holidays, and Spiritual Practice

We are excited to be gathering again in person for Shabbat services and holiday programs (most are also available on Zoom)!

**COVID Protocols:** For our in-person gatherings, **vaccination/booster shots are required for all those who are eligible aged 5 and older, and masks are required of all persons aged 2 and older** (KN95 or better recommended). Kids too young for vaccination are welcome! Please check our website for ongoing updates about our COVID policies, and see the calendar listing for each service to find information about Zoom links, links to our Shabbat prayerbook, and other information.

**We are fragrance-free:** For the health of our community, we also ask that all those attending programs in person refrain from wearing fragrances, including perfume, hair and body sprays, and other scented products. These cause illness for some of our members, and we appreciate all of our members' and guests' efforts to keep our space fragrance-free.

### ALL-AGES EREV SHABBAT WITH SPECIAL GUEST KOACH BARUCH FRAZIER

Friday, December 9, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm  
CDT's Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary and Zoom

All are welcome to this fun, musical, all-ages celebration of Shabbat! We begin with candle-lighting and the Shabbat blessings at

6 pm, followed by a catered vegetarian dinner with gluten-free options.

**This Shabbat, we are joined by special guest Dr. Koach Baruch Frazier**, a student at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and a wonderful musician, teacher, and prayer leader. We will be Zooming this service for those unable to attend in person. Don't miss it!

### SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

**Shabbat Vayetzei**  
Saturday, December 3, 10:00 am-12:00 pm  
CDT Sanctuary & Zoom

All are welcome to join Rabbi Toba in the CDT sanctuary or on Zoom for Shabbat morning

# Shabbat, Holidays, and Spiritual Practice (cont.)

services as we begin the story of Jacob and his adventures. Kiddush lunch follows services.

## **Shorashim Shabbat & Shabbat Childcare**

*Saturday, December 10, 9:30 am-12:00 pm*  
CDT Library

Shorashim Shabbat for grownups and kids 5 and younger and Shabbat childcare for all kids.

Shorashim Shabbat: From 9:30-10:30 am, come sing, pray, read, and play with the wonderful Morah Devora Rohr!

Shabbat Childcare: From 10:30-12pm, childcare will be available with experienced CDT teens, Ila and Adele, for all kids in the library until the end of the service in the sanctuary.

## **Shabbat Vayishlach – Special Guest Dr. Koach Baruch Frazier**

*Saturday, December 10, 10:00 am-12:00 pm*  
CDT Sanctuary & Zoom

We are thrilled to welcome RRC student Dr. Koach Baruch Frazier as our special guest this Shabbat. Koach will bring his music and spirit to our morning service beginning at 10 am, and lead us in Torah study during the Torah service. We will also be remembering Susannah Zisk on the occasion of her 11th yearzeit.

Koach will also engage in a “lunch and learn” opportunity during Kiddush lunch at noon. Join us for part or all of the morning, either in the CDT sanctuary or on Zoom! The Kiddush “lunch and learn” will be in-person only.

## **Shabbat Vayeshev**

*Saturday, December 17, 10:00 am-12:00 pm*  
CDT Sanctuary & Zoom

All are welcome to join Rabbi Toba in the CDT sanctuary or on Zoom for Shabbat morning services and Torah discussion. We will also be remembering Alex Fried on the occasion of his 15th yearzeit. Kiddush lunch follows services.

## **Contemplative Shabbat Service**

*Saturday, December 24, 10:00 am-12:00 pm*  
CDT Sanctuary & Zoom

Rabbi Toba will lead a contemplative service incorporating chant and guided and silent meditation during this Shabbat of Chanukah week, with Torah study beginning at approximately 11 am. No meditation experience necessary!

## **Shabbat Morning Zoom Service**

*Saturday, December 31, 10:00 am-11:45 am*  
CDT Sanctuary & Zoom

On this final Shabbat of 2022, all are welcome to join CDT intern Akiva Nelson and CDT

member-leaders for this Zoom Shabbat service – the morning service begins at 10 am, and Torah study at 11 am.

## **MEN’S GROUP SHABBATON**

*Friday, December 2, 5:30 pm-Saturday, December 3, 6:00 pm*  
Next Day Edwards House Retreat Center, Framingham, MA

We look forward to welcoming all CDT members who identify with manhood, including those who have not participated in the Men’s Group up until this point!

Shabbaton activities will include spirited Shabbat services, catered Shabbat meals, explorations in Jewish spirituality through text study, music, and meditation, and time to relax and unwind in community.

Please feel free to reach out to Emmanuel Cantor, Andrew Sofer, Eric Karp, or Rob Greenly with any questions or feedback. Thank you!

## **MINDFUL MORNINGS**

*Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:30 am-9:15 am*  
Zoom

We invite all CDT members to consider joining us for meditation. No meditation experience or regular commitment required. For questions or to find out more, please contact Karen Arnold or Carole Slipowitz.

## **CDT CHANUKAH PARTY!**

*Sunday, December 18, 4:30 pm-6:00 pm*  
First Unitarian Universalist Society in Newton  
(1326 Washington Street, West Newton)

Join us for this truly intergenerational night of celebration! We will gather at 4:30 pm to light the first candle of Chanukah together — bring your *chanukiah* (menorah) and two candles! We’ll begin with Chanukah songs and candlelighting, followed at 5 pm by a variety of activities for all ages, including:

- Israeli dancing with Pazit Lahav of Brookline Folk Dancing

- *Sufganiot* (donut) making
- Text study for teens and adults
- Dreidl extravaganza
- Chanukah arts & crafts
- Fair trade chocolate Chanukah gelt and Sindyanna olive oil for sale!

We’ll close the evening with music from our religious school band. Bring a friend, and join us for the Chanukah fun for all ages! We ask that masks be worn throughout the party (while we won’t be having a potluck meal together this year due to Covid, there will be food available to take home. We hope we can return to our latke potluck in 5784!).

## **CDT LIGHTS**

*December 19-23, 5:30 pm-5:45 pm*  
Zoom

All are welcome to join together in the Zoomiverse for candle lighting, Monday through Friday of Chanukah week, celebrating our community and our Core Values. Each night we’ll share a bit of Chanukah music from around the world, hear a story from a CDT member, and light our candles together. Come join us, and have your *chanukiah* (menorah) ready!



## CDT Groups and Events

### CDT FILM CLUB

Saturday, December 10, 8:00 pm-9:00 pm  
Zoom

Please join us for a discussion of *Leona*! Watch the film on your own any time before the discussion. Look for the Zoom link on the CDT Calendar.

*Leona* (1 h 34 min, 2018): Ariela, a young artist in Mexico City from a Syrian Jewish family is pressured into finding an appropriate partner. She develops feelings for a non-Jewish man, Iván. This presents her with a dilemma as she weighs up the relationship against the disapproval of her family and community.

Contact [filmclub@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:filmclub@dorsheitzedek.org) with questions and film suggestions.

### PARENT CAFE AFFINITY SPACE: PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS OF "GIANTS"

with Jacob Weinberg and Shawn Bact

Sunday, December 11, 11:00 am-12:00 pm  
CDT Religious School (Cabot Elementary, 229 Cabot St, Newton, MA)

Open to all adults caring for trans, nonbinary, and questioning children!

### AVELUT: SUPPORT FOR THOSE IN MOURNING

Tuesday, December 13, 7:30 pm-9:15 pm  
Zoom

All CDT members who are in the various stages of mourning are welcome to attend as we support one another, reflect on loss on the

occasion of a *yahrzeit*, and remember the legacies of the loved ones we carry with us. Drop-ins are always welcome anytime. For more information, please contact Nancy Gertz at [nancy.gertz@gmail.com](mailto:nancy.gertz@gmail.com) or Dianne Lior at [dianne.lior@gmail.com](mailto:dianne.lior@gmail.com).

### CDT MEN'S GROUP

Monday, December 19, 8:00 pm-9:00 pm  
Zoom

The CDT Men's Group meets on the third Monday of each month and is open to anyone who identifies with manhood. Contact Dan Rome at [dan.rome.md@gmail.com](mailto:dan.rome.md@gmail.com) for more information.

## Learning

### FROM METAPHOR TO PRACTICE: AN EXPLORATION

with Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Wednesday, December 7, 14, & 21, 7:30-8:45 pm  
Zoom

Working with Rabbi Toba's new book, *God Is Here: Reimagining the Divine*, we will explore how different metaphors for understanding and experiencing the sacred can shape our spiritual and ethical practices, on both an individual and communal level. How might experiencing God/liness as Water, as Rock, as Fire, as Becoming, affect the ways we pray, care for one another, work for justice? Participants are encouraged to read the relevant chapter(s) in *God Is Here* before each class:

**Session Two, December 7 – God as Place & Rock of Refuge:** Where is the divine as we support one another in times of transition and crisis, illness and mourning? Please read chapters 4 & 6 in preparation for this class.

**Session Three, December 14 – God as Fire, Rain of Justice:** Where do we locate God/liness in our work to repair the world? Please read chapters 3 and 8 in preparation for this class.

**Session Four, December 21 – The God-Cloud and Becoming:** When so many forces in society threaten to tear us apart, what might God/liness have to do with fostering community? Please read chapters 7 and 9 in preparation for this class.

Join Rabbi Toba as we come up with answers to these questions and more – please register on the CDT website.

*Copies of God in Metaphor are available from the CDT office for \$20, or can be purchased online; please be in touch with Rabbi Toba if purchasing the book is an obstacle, [t.spitzer@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:t.spitzer@dorsheitzedek.org). Please have a copy in preparation for the class!*

### THE SHEMA AS A FAMILY PRACTICE

with Dr. Koach Baruch Frazier

Sunday, December 11, 10:00 am-11:00 am  
CDT Religious School (Cabot Elementary, 229 Cabot St, Newton, MA)

Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers for children and youth are invited to join Dr. Koach Baruch Frazier for an engaging workshop about the Shema as a family practice!

### SEEKING PEACE & JUSTICE IN ISRAEL/PALESTINE: A REPORT

Thursday, December 15, 7:30 pm-8:45 pm  
Zoom

All are welcome to join Rabbi Toba for a report on her November trip to Israel and the West Bank, as part of the Jewish Clergy Project for Peace & Justice in Israel/Palestine. Rabbi Toba and 19 other rabbis spent a week visiting with a variety of organizations located both in Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories, all working in different ways to transform the situation on the ground for both peoples. The trip was both challenging and inspiring, and an opportunity to learn from Jews and Palestinians committed to overcoming narratives of victimhood, demonization, and despair.



## Learning

### SHABBAT MORNING TORAH STUDY

with Rabbi Toba Spitzer

Saturday, December 17, 9:00 am-9:45 am

CDT (60 Highland St, Newton; in-person only)

Shabbat morning Torah study is back! All are welcome to join Rabbi Toba for an exploration of the weekly Torah portion, using commentaries both ancient and new. Bring your own caffeinated beverage and a mask.

### SAVE THE DATES! CDT SHABBAT LEARNER'S MINYAN

with Rabbinic Intern Akiva Nelson

Saturdays, January 21 & 28 and February 4 & 11,

10:00 am-12:00 pm

CDT (60 Highland St; in-person only)

We're excited to announce the upcoming Learner's Minyan at CDT! The purpose of the Learner's Minyan is to provide people who

are not as familiar with the Shabbat morning service a space to ask questions, learn choreography, take a look at the prayerbook, and explore the meaning of each part of the service. We'll be spending part of the time in the sanctuary during the prayer service and part of the time in a separate space to discuss. Stay tuned for more details.

## Community

### NEW MEMBER WELCOME

A warm welcome to new members Rachel & Timothy Danford and Douglas Chene & Jennifer Elowitch!

### MAZEL TOV

Mazel tov to Carmel Schafer and her family on becoming Bat Mitzvah!

Mazel tov to Barbara Shatkin and Andy Littman on the birth of their grandson, Alfred Jonah Morris-Littman, son of Aaron Littman and Kate Morris.

### TODAH RABAH

A huge thank you to Gala co-chairs Jen Kaplan and Annette Jacobs for making the CDT Gala such a wonderful event! And gratitude to so many who contributed to the evening: to Allison Hausman and Debby Saltzman for greeting everyone and ensuring that COVID protocols were followed; to Debby, Allison, and Dianne Lior for assembling the invitations; to Andy Cohen, Josh Lieberman, Ben Tillinger, and Tony Broh for taking care of the wine, beer, seltzer and ice for the party; to Chris Combest, JoAnn and Michael Feldstein, Rachel Adler-Golden, and Arleen Kulin for turning a plain room at The Windsor Club into a magical, festive room (with special thanks to JoAnn for conceiving of and providing most of the decorations); to Barbara Pittel for her program book design; to Cindy Shulak-Rome for sharing the story of CDT's history; to Judy Hersh and John Holohan for the lovely slideshow of CDT through the years; to Sheree Galpert, for all of the CDT Trivia tidbits

in the newsletter leading up to the event; to Karen Arnold and CDT Sings for the beautiful songs; to Lissy Medvedow for the wonderful tribute with personalized stories from several members to Rabbi Toba; to Andrew Sofer for his poetic acumen in honoring Rabbi Toba, and to Bonnie Tenneriello for her beautiful reading of his poem; to Sandy Goodman for the terrific playlist that got us up and dancing; to Tal Shalom Kobi and the Tunes of Four for the incredible music throughout the evening; to Dennis Maler for providing the many audio-visual needs of the evening; and to Melissa Colten and Alistaire Webbe for all of the behind the scenes work, taking care of myriad details (with good cheer) and providing wise counsel.

Thank you to all those who provided Kiddush in November:

Karen & Jeff Arnold, Allison Peiser, Diana Perretta, Daniel Reeves, Ellen White, Barbara Beck, Matthew Fried, Jeffrey Kichen & Jodie Siegel, Susan Silberberg, Robin Bernstein, Jay & Jenny Leopold, DB Reiff, Carol Sklar, and Karen & Reinhard Engels.

Thank you to Louise Enoch for leading a GBIO Interest Meet-up at Religious School!

### REFUAH SHLEYMAH

We send blessings of healing to Anya Rhodes, Jaime Wurzel, Emelia Webbe, Gail Pressberg, Harriet Budd, and Ellen Pashall.

### YAHREZEIT

This month we remember CDT member Susannah Zisk on the occasion of her 11th yahrzeit, which falls this year on December 9; we will remember Susannah at Shabbat morning services on December 10. May her memory be for a blessing.

We also remember CDT member Alex Fried on the occasion of his 15th yahrzeit, which falls this year on December 16; we will remember Alex at Shabbat morning services on December 17. May his memory be for a blessing.

### CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences to Carole Slipowitz on the death of her father, Joe Slipowitz, father-in-law of Dan Halbert and grandfather of Adam and Jesse Halwitz. May his memory be for a blessing.

We also extend our condolences to Denise Yurkofsky on the death of her mother, Lois Treacey, mother-in-law of Mark Yurkofsky and grandmother of Jessica, Maxwell, and Sabrina. 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 [dorsheitzedek.org/mourning](https://dorsheitzedek.org/mourning).

# Youth and Family Programming

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL UPDATE

Earnest Arky Solomon

It is hard to believe that we are wrapping up our first semester of Religious School! I am filled with much gratitude for our wonderful teaching and support staff, generous CDT member volunteers, and to our fantastic caregivers for prioritizing our community amidst the busyness of it all.

### Important dates!

- Save the Date! December 10th is Shorashim Shabbat from 9:30-10:30 am with Morah Devora for kids ages 5 and younger and their families. Shabbat childcare for kids of all ages is from 10:30 am-12:00 pm!
- Come and celebrate! All CDT members are invited to join us at the Chanukah party to participate in an intergenerational celebration. Our Kitah Hey students will be selling fair trade gelt and younger students will lead the Chanukah blessings.
- Our final Religious School sessions for the first semester are Sundays, December 4th, 11th, and 18th\* (\*special timing for Chanukah party, 4:30-6:00 pm). We will pick back up on Sunday, January 8th.
- Final weekday sessions for Gimel-Vav are the week of December 6th, 13th, and 20th\* (\*Rosh Hodesh, 4:00-6:00 pm). Tutoring will resume Tuesday, January 10th.
- Nitzanim families, please join us on December 18th for Chanukah and January 8th for Nitzanim.

In the spirit of celebrating the school year so far, I would like to share a window into a few moments from our semester that have reflected some of CDT's core values.

### Kehillah (Commitment to Community):

Opening day of Religious School began with a mysterious traveler (Rabbi Toba in costume) looking for a Rosh Hashanah meal. After rejection from all the townspeople, the traveler changed strategies. In a High Holyday rendition of the stone soup story, this traveler managed to make delicious Rosh Hashanah soup from a stone (!), that is with the help/vegetables of many villagers (teachers who emerged from the audience with vegetables

in hand). Just as it takes a whole village to create the soup, so too it takes each student, teacher, and grown up to create a caring and welcoming Jewish learning community.

We generated ingredients for our community that include: acceptance, cooperation, rainbow (appreciating differences), respect, listening, and more. Each week, Gan-Gimel (Kindergarten-3rd Grade) reads these ingredients aloud and students are reminded that they have what it takes to contribute to our caring and welcoming community. We also discuss being mistake making people and commit to making repairs when we inevitably miss the mark.

### Talmud Torah (Lifelong Learning):

Our Sunday and Weekday Religious School is overflowing with examples of how we live out the CDT value of engaging with Jewish texts, values, practices, and traditions and "reconstructing" them in ways that move and inspire us today. Here are just a few examples.

Weekday Religious School, when students first learn the alef-bet, is for students in 3rd-6th grade. At the first weekday session, CDT member and teacher Rabbi Emily Mathis led Kitah Gimel (3rd grade) students in an alef-bet baking project. Rooted in the centuries old practice of licking honey off an alef-bet tablet and being showered in candies to celebrate beginning to learn the alef-bet, our students baked alef-bet and Torah cookies for the whole school. It was a great way to bless our students with a year of Torah learning that is sweet as honey!

At Sunday Religious School with CDT parent and teacher Shira Cohen, our Kitah Dalet students (4th grade) got to interview soferet (scribe) Julie Seltzer! They prepared questions and got to ask Julie all about how Torahs are



prepared, written, and repaired. Each week the students also use calligraphy pens and tracing paper to practice scribal arts with portions of the Torah they are studying.

### Spirituality:

Our Kitah Vav (6th grade) students, led by CDT member and teacher Joanna Marcus, have taken on the project of redesigning our All Ages Siddur. The students have begun the year by studying Jewish artists, and with the help of CDT member volunteer Sharon Gorberg, they have created Jewish artist inspiration projects. Now they are studying different concepts of the divine with Rabbi Toba and will begin to decide which prayers in the service they would like to illuminate.

Kitah Hey (5th grade), led by Hebrew College student and CDT teacher Hannah Limov, focuses on the story of the Exodus. Hannah has guided the students in an exploration of the concepts of Mitzrayim (name for the location of the Israelite enslavement; the root means narrowness) and freedom. Through theater games, midrash, and discussion, the students explore these ideas within the story, the world around them, and their own lived experiences of moving from narrowness to freedom/expansiveness.

There is so much more to share about the deep relationship building and learning happening at CDT's Religious School! We hope to see you at the Chanukah party on December 18th!



# Reconstructing Judaism Movement

## RECKONING TOGETHER: A RECONSTRUCTIONIST PILGRIMAGE TOWARDS RACIAL JUSTICE

March 16-19, 2023

Montgomery, Selma, and Birmingham AL

This spring, join Reconstructionists from all across the movement on a pilgrimage trip to

the American South. Together we will visit the National Memorial for Peace and Justice and Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama, and iconic sites of the Civil Rights Movement. The memorial and museum are powerful and sacred spaces for truth-telling and reflection about racial violence in America and its ongoing legacy today. We will meet with leaders of the historic Civil Rights Movement

to gain insight and inspiration for the ongoing fight for racial justice in our day.

For more information and to register, go to [www.reconstructingjudaism.org/event/reckoning-together-a-reconstructionist-pilgrimage-towards-racial-justice/](http://www.reconstructingjudaism.org/event/reckoning-together-a-reconstructionist-pilgrimage-towards-racial-justice/)

## Tikkun Olam

### GBIO UPDATE

Louise Enoch

GBIO held a Delegates' Assembly on November 10 where an expanded Housing Justice proposal was ratified. The new initiative will focus energy on getting the Commonwealth to reinvest in public housing, since most of the public housing projects are in terrible disrepair and falling behind in upkeep day by day. There are reasons to believe the time is right to promote this important goal.

The proposal will continue the current efforts on affordable housing and will now also include housing issues relevant to returning citizens and those who are challenged with mental health and substance use issues. Go Housing Justice!

On another note, CDT's Impact Fund team, headed by Louise Enoch and Miriam Bronstein, has just launched our fundraising effort with an email to many of our members. GBIO really needs our help to hire new organizers to

carry out its ambitious plans. Members of our Core Team will be in touch with many of you to encourage your participation. So please read our materials and consider donating generously.

Our next CDT GBIO meeting will be held on December 7 at 7 pm. Contact [lpenoch@gmail.com](mailto:lpenoch@gmail.com) for details.

## Artist of the Month

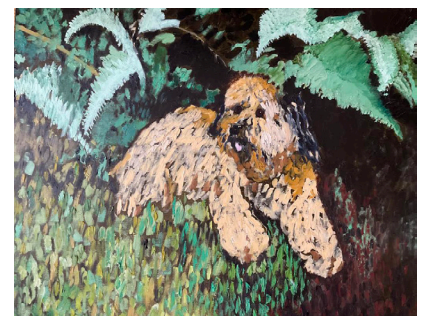
### SUSANA TABBAT WURZEL



Despite the fact that my career was in the field of psychology, I have been an artist all my life.

Whether I'm painting or working with textiles, the work I make is largely narrative and

autobiographical. I have created portraits of my pets, of people I love, of homes I have lived in, and of the artifacts of my domestic life. In addition, I have made numerous stitched maps of places that matter to me, including Newton. Maybe you will be able to find Dorshei Tzedek on my map, when it is hanging in the gallery in December....



# 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](mailto: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 while Rabbi Toba is away, please contact [chesed@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:chesed@dorsheitzedek.org) to get in touch with "on call" rabbis.

## CHESED TOP TIPS

Ellie Goldberg



Our congregation values Chesed, acts of loving-kindness when members have a life cycle event such as the arrival of a child, death, injury, or illness.

The Chesed Committee offers CDT members the opportunity to experience the joys and blessings of Chesed as both receivers and givers. Join the CDT Chesed Caring

Community volunteer list here: <https://tinyurl.com/LHH2022>.

Top Tips (Adapted from [mealtrain.com](https://mealtrain.com)):

1. Email, text, or call the recipient to ask about food allergies or preferences and to confirm delivery and drop off arrangements
2. Consider making enough food for leftovers.
3. Freezer meals are also helpful.
4. Include preparation instructions. "Bake for 1 hour at 350 degrees."
5. Include your recipe and/or list of ingredients.

6. Deliver your meal in a recyclable or reusable container. Put your name on it if you would like it back.
7. If you arrange for food delivery (e.g. pizza), pay and tip in advance.
8. Text or call the recipient when you are on your way and when you arrive.

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](mailto:chesed@dorsheitzedek.org).

## Nediv Lev

There are many ways to financially support Congregation Dorshei Tzedek, including contributions to the General Fund or to targeted funds. The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund is not part of the congregation's operating expenses; monies in this fund are used for *tzedakah* in the greater community, for special needs of the congregation (e.g., to buy books or help pay for an adult education program) and, most importantly, to help out congregants in need. **We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions:**

### 30TH ANNIVERSARY GALA DONATIONS

Rabbi Jamie Arnold — *In honor of Rabbi Toba*  
Rabbi Lester Bronstein & Cantor Benjie Schiller  
Louise Enoch & Alan Epstein  
Mark Farber & Sherry Katz  
Carolyn Fine Friedman & Jerry Friedman  
Sheree Galpert — *Yasher koach to Annette Jacobs and Jen Kaplan for the CDT Gala!*  
Muriel Heiberger

David Jaffe & Janette Hillis-Jaffe  
Melody & Josh Komyerov  
Barbara & Keith Lietzke — *In honor of Cindy Shulak-Rome for her tireless efforts over the years to help establish and build a vibrant and inclusive community at Dorshei Tzedek*  
Rabbi Barbara Penzner & Brian Rosman  
Diana Peretta  
Rebecca Pomerantz & Terry Traub  
DB Reiff & Lisa Hirsh

Elana Rome Cutler & David Cutler  
Ann Spanel — *In honor of Rabbi Toba*

### AFGHAN ASSISTANCE FUND

Alice Markowitz & Richard Glassman

### GENERAL FUND

Sheree Galpert — *In memory of Joe Slipowitz*

### HIGH HOLYDAYS DONATIONS

Daniel Moss & Tyler Haaren

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Pauline Coderre — *In honor of Rabbi Toba's 60th birthday!*



# December 2022 • Kislev/Tevet 5783

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 <i>Kislev 3</i>	28 <i>Kislev 4</i>	29 <i>Kislev 5</i> 8:30am Mindful Mornings 4:00pm Tuesday Religious School 7:30pm The Non-Violent Path to Palestinian Freedom: ALI ABU AWAD AND TAGHYEER	30 <i>Kislev 6</i> 7:30pm From Metaphor to Practice: An Exploration with Rabbi Toba Spitzer — God as Water and as Voice	1 <i>Kislev 7</i> 8:30am Mindful Mornings	2 <i>Kislev 8</i> 5:30pm Men's Group Shabbaton	3 <i>Kislev 9</i> <b>Vayetzei</b> 12:00am Men's Group Shabbaton 10:00am Shabbat Morning Services
4 <i>Kislev 10</i> 9:30am Sunday Religious School 10:00am Hybrid CDT Members Meeting 3:00pm Wise Aging	5 <i>Kislev 11</i>	6 <i>Kislev 12</i> 8:30am Mindful Mornings 4:00pm Tuesday Religious School	7 <i>Kislev 13</i> 7:30pm From Metaphor to Practice: An Exploration with Rabbi Toba Spitzer — God as Place and Rock of Refuge	8 <i>Kislev 14</i> 8:30am Mindful Mornings	9 <i>Kislev 15</i> 6:00pm All-Ages Erev Shabbat with Special Guest Koach Baruch Frazier	10 <i>Kislev 16</i> <b>Vayishlach</b> 9:30am Shorashim Shabbat with Nitzanim & Gan 10:00am Shabbat Morning Services with Special Guest Koach Baruch Frazier 8:00pm Film Club Discussion: <i>Leona</i>
11 <i>Kislev 17</i> 9:30am Sunday Religious School 10:00am Caregiver Learning with Dr. Koach Baruch Frazier 11:00am Parent Cafe Affinity Space: Parents and Caregivers of GlAnTs with Jacob Weinberg and Shawn Bact	12 <i>Kislev 18</i>	13 <i>Kislev 19</i> 8:30am Mindful Mornings 4:00pm Tuesday Religious School 7:30pm Avelut	14 <i>Kislev 20</i> 7:30pm From Metaphor to Practice: An Exploration with Rabbi Toba Spitzer — God as Fire, Rain of Justice	15 <i>Kislev 21</i> 8:30am Mindful Mornings 6:00pm Kulam: 8th Grade Program 7:30pm Seeking Peace & Justice in Israel/Palestine: A Report	16 <i>Kislev 22</i>	17 <i>Kislev 23</i> <b>Vayeshev</b> 9:00am Shabbat Morning Torah Study with Rabbi Toba 10:00am Shabbat Morning Services
18 <i>Kislev 24</i> 3:00pm Wise Aging 4:30pm All-Ages Chanukah Party & Candlelighting	19 <i>Kislev 25</i> <b>Chanukah</b> 5:30pm CDT Lights: Chanukah Candlelighting 8:00pm CDT Men's Group	20 <i>Kislev 26</i> <b>Chanukah</b> 8:30am Mindful Mornings 4:00pm Tuesday Religious School: Rosh Chodesh 5:30pm CDT Lights: Chanukah Candlelighting 6:00pm Youth Group Chanukah Party	21 <i>Kislev 27</i> <b>Chanukah</b> 5:30pm CDT Lights: Chanukah Candlelighting 7:30pm From Metaphor to Practice: An Exploration with Rabbi Toba Spitzer — The God-Cloud and Becoming	22 <i>Kislev 28</i> <b>Chanukah</b> 5:30pm CDT Lights: Chanukah Candlelighting	23 <i>Kislev 29</i> <b>Chanukah</b> 5:30pm CDT Lights: Chanukah Candlelighting	24 <i>Kislev 30</i> <b>Chanukah</b> <b>Rosh Chodesh Tevet</b> <b>Miketz</b> 10:00am Contemplative Chanukah Shabbat Morning Service
25 <i>Tevet 1</i> <b>Chanukah</b>	26 <i>Tevet 2</i> <b>Chanukah</b> Office Closed for Federal Holiday	27 <i>Tevet 3</i> 8:30am Mindful Mornings	28 <i>Tevet 4</i>	29 <i>Tevet 5</i> 8:30am Mindful Mornings	30 <i>Tevet 6</i>	31 <i>Tevet 7</i> <b>Vayigash</b> 10:00am Member-led Shabbat Morning Service





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

Address correction requested

Do you need a large print version of the newsletter?  
Contact the office at [office@dorsheitzedek.org](mailto:office@dorsheitzedek.org)

## SPECIAL DECEMBER GUEST: DR. KOACH BARUCH FRAZIER!

We are thrilled to be welcoming RRC student Koach Baruch Frazier to our community for a weekend of programs, beginning Friday evening, December 9, at the all-ages service. **See inside for complete details about these exciting opportunities!**



**Koach Baruch (KB) Frazier, Au.D.** is a transformer, heartbeat of movements, healer, musician, founder of the Black Trans Torah Club and co-founder of the Tzedek Lab, a network of practitioners working at the intersection of dismantling racism, antisemitism and white supremacy. A collaborative leader, rooted in tradition, curiosity and love, Koach strives to

dismantle racism, actualize liberation and transform lives both sonically and spiritually. Koach lives and gardens with their wife, LaJuana and daughter, Aasha in Philadelphia on unceded Leni-Lenape Land where he is a student at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College.

### All-Ages Erev Shabbat

Friday, December 9, 6:00 pm-8:00 pm

CDT's Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary and Zoom

All are welcome to this fun, musical, all-ages celebration of Shabbat! Candle-lighting and the Shabbat blessings are at 6 pm, followed by a catered dinner. We will be Zooming this service for those unable to attend in person. Don't miss it!

### Shabbat Vayishlach – Torah Study and Kiddush Lunch & Learn

Saturday, December 10, 10:00 am-12:00 pm

CDT Sanctuary & Zoom

Koach will bring his music and spirit to our morning service beginning at 10 am, and lead us in Torah study during the Torah service. Koach will also engage in a "lunch and learn" opportunity during Kiddush lunch at noon. Join us for part or all of the morning, either in the CDT sanctuary or on Zoom! The Kiddush "lunch and learn" will be in-person only.

### The Shema as a Family Practice

Sunday, December 11, 10:00 am-11:00 am

CDT Religious School (Cabot Elementary, 229 Cabot St, Newton, MA)

Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers for children and youth are invited to join Dr. Koach Baruch Frazier for an engaging workshop about the Shema as a family practice!