

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR THE
HIGH HOLY DAYS**

WELCOMING IN THE YEAR 5771

Once again the time for our joyous, music-filled,
and deeply spiritual celebration of
Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur approaches.

Rosh Hashanah: Wednesday, Sept 8, 7 pm
Thursday, Sept 9, 10 am

Yom Kippur: Friday, September 17, 7 pm
Saturday, Sept 18, 10 am – sundown
(For children's services, see page 7)

The Angel Orensanz Foundation
172 Norfolk Street
South of Houston, 4 blocks east of 1st Ave

Suggested donation: \$100 per adult per service.
Secure/purchase tickets in advance to assure yourself a
seat. Ticket packages are available at:
www.theshulofnewyork.org

**We thank Shul of New York congregant Marie-Hélène
Weill for generously underwriting this newsletter issue.**

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THE SHUL OF NEW YORK
A SYNAGOGUE FOR SPIRITUAL JUDAISM

NEWS FROM THE HEART

FALL 2010/5771

www.theshulofnewyork.org

Rabbi Burt Aaron Siegel

**NEW BEGINNINGS
FROM THE HEART AND SOUL**

By Rabbi Burt



Photo Credit: Paula Goldfader

choices that shape our lives.

That freedom is, of course, not absolute. Limitations are imposed upon us, for example, by our genes and by the conditions in which we were raised. But those limitations, too, are not absolute. We truly do have enough freedom, even with those limitations, to make the changes in our lives that will enhance our health, our happiness, our well-being, and our sense of purpose.

The first step toward claiming our freedom to create positive changes is to realize, in the very depths of our hearts, that we indeed do actually have that freedom. If we don't affirm our freedom we are not able to energize it; It remains dormant. Affirming our freedom is affirming our inner power to live a life that is happy and purposeful. Some of us have forgotten that we have that power. Some of us have talked ourselves into thinking that we are powerless, or, at least, very limited in our power to participate in the creation of our lives. Indeed, there are the limitations that I have mentioned, but the space in which we have the power to create significant aspects of our own lives is much vaster than we sometimes allow ourselves to believe.

As I often teach, the more we are able to live from the heart and soul, and lessen the domination of the concepts, opinions and viewpoints in our heads, the more we can be free to choose how to live. The spiritual journey of our lifetime is to live more and more from the heart and soul. In our spiritual approach to Judaism, we affirm that our heart and soul bring to us God's gift of freedom.

Yom Kippur "Operation Isaiah Food Drive"
**Bring Canned & Non-Perishable
Foods for Those in Need**
See page 9 for details



Photo Credit: Kathryn Weill

High Holy Day Services
Rosh Hashanah: September 8 and 9
Yom Kippur: September 17 and 18
at the Orensanz Foundation
(See back page for details)

**NEW SHUL SCHOOL CURRICULUM AND
FAMILY CHAVURAH FOR SHUL FAMILIES**

By Sari Roboff and Stephen Palgon

For parents of pre-Bar/Bat Mitzvah-aged children, the Shul of New York is announcing two exciting initiatives inspired by a common vision: that over the years, each child at the Shul of New York will learn and truly internalize Jewish spiritual values, rituals and customs, prayers, and Hebrew, forging a path to a deeply meaningful Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

First: The Shul School has a new, custom-developed curriculum designed to convey the key principles of Spiritual Judaism. And, second: the Shul is launching a Family Chavurah offering a series of dynamic social and spiritual programs and creating a family-oriented community within the larger Shul community.

The New Shul School Curriculum

A major effort by Rabbi Burt, former Shul School teacher Aaron Rotenberg, and members of the congregation

(Continued on page 6)

**We thank Shul of New York congregant Marie-
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letter issue.**

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Our Roving Reporter: Reflections on High Holy Days at the Shul of New York

Edited by Sari Roboff

With the High Holy Days approaching, we sought the perspective of a few members to highlight what is most compelling about services at the Shul of New York.

Nancy Kaufman

When we first entered The Angel Orensanz Foundation, I burst into tears. It was as if the soul of every Jewish person was alive within those walls.

As the service progressed, I was struck that everyone...hundreds of people...all seemed to be full of feeling. I had never been in a synagogue where anyone was feeling anything, let alone the joy that everyone seemed to be experiencing – myself and my family included. This



Photo Credit: Kathryn Weill

was a totally new experience and one that I found I could not wait to repeat the following week at Yom Kippur services. To look forward to Yom Kippur Services...now that was a first!

Marty and Suzanne Katz

We love attending Shul of New York services, even though we live near Allentown, Pennsylvania. We hope this year to come for High Holy Days. What draws us to services at the Shul is this: warmth, spirituality, community, soulful/beautiful music, the depth of Rabbi Burt's sermons, and a joy in experiencing our Judaism that we have not found elsewhere. For our teenage daughters, Talia and Eliana, the services communicate the beauty of our religion and heritage in a way they do not get from our more traditional local synagogue.

Cathy Cooper

I love that we are an eclectic and welcoming congregation. There is true spirit and joy and contemplation -- not the confining and regimented services I remember from other congregations. Earlier on there was a sharing circle where we could all contribute -- to me that is still part of what the Shul services are all about...

Lester and Fran Raskin

Several years ago, we heard that Rabbi Burt was starting a new Shul. Since he had Bar Mitzvahed our grandson Reed Christian at the Village Temple, we were very impressed with his understanding of modern **Jewry**. We love the music. The warmth and participation of all those attending the services is very inspirational and moving. Many of our grandchildren attend services; since they are of mixed religions, they enjoy these services because Rabbi Burt relates to all religions and the common denominators of all people.

Shirley Weiner

I'm most impressed by the ambience, the joy, the sense of community, the music, Ernesto's Kol Nidre, the involvement of the congregants in the balcony and on the main floor below. The inclusiveness surprised me and made me feel very comfortable. We don't often find that welcoming quality in synagogues -- especially if one is not Jewish.

After attending a few High Holy Day programs, I realized that I was not only enjoying the spontaneous celebratory spirit but also appreciating the serious wisdom of "the storytelling Rabbi," the contemplative mood of Yom Kippur, and the communal recital of our human frailties. It felt like yin and yang, harmony.

Roger Sherman

We came for High Holy Days and right from the start, people welcomed us, shook our hands on the street -- no one asked us what we would do for the Shul.



Photo Credit: Kathryn Weill

What really caught us was the music. It's like a gospel revival -- you can't help but feel good, move your body, and be joyful. And then Rabbi Burt. I appreciate his sincerity, how he is open to things, that he's not dogmatic and does not talk down to us. "Stump the Rabbi" is fun, but it also gets to the heart of meaningful questions. The volunteer leadership is very real when they speak. When they asked for volunteers, I said, "I'm a photographer." When they said, "Can you shoot the High Holy Days?" I thought, "What a great way to give back."

Florence (Flo) Roen

A few years ago, a friend invited me to attend the High Holy Days. Everyone at the Shul was friendly. The Shul Band was playing wonderful music. I sat in the rear, on a folding chair, enjoying the sounds and flavor. Once Rabbi Burt started the service and the Shul Band continued playing its beautiful music, I knew that The Shul of New York was the Shul for me. I now encourage my friends to join me here.

MORE SCENES FROM SHUL LIFE



Newsletter Photo Credits

Noah Baumwoll, Mary Ellis Bookbinder, Paula Goldfader, Vera Michaels Hearn, Kathryn Weill

SCENES FROM OUR 10th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION



The Shul of New York's 10th Anniversary Shabbat celebration at the Orensanz Foundation on May 7. The service was overflowing with music, joy, inspiration, and appreciation of Rabbi Burt, The Shul Band, and the entire congregation.

The Shul of New York Offers Diverse, Compelling Programs for 2010-2011

Here's a preview of up-coming programs over the next ten months. For specific dates, times, and locations, keep an eye out for email updates and check out the web site: www.theshulofnewyork.org

Family Chavurah Programs for Parents with Children from 1 day - 13 years old. See page 7 for details.

Jewish Current Events (October/February/May) – Three separate Jewish Current Events discussions will be facilitated by Rabbi Burt. Topics will be announced in advance and participants will sign up to receive articles of interest to read ahead as the basis for each discussion session.

Havdalah and Community Meditation (Jan/Mar/May) – Experience and learn about the beautiful ceremony that marks the end of Shabbat, and be guided through a calming and renewing meditation session. Rabbi Burt and Adam Feder lead. *(Note new schedule)*

Holiday Celebrations –

- ◆ Chanukah (12/5)
- ◆ Tu B'Shevat (1/20)
- ◆ Purim for adults (3/19)
- ◆ Purim for children and their parents (3/20)
- ◆ Interfaith Passover Seder (4/21)



How to Read the Bible (Oct thru June) – Rabbi Burt leads this year-long, twice a month course, an in-depth introduction to the Bible based on the popular book, "How to Read the Bible" by Dr. James Kugel. No prior knowledge of the Bible or Hebrew is necessary, just an interest in learning more about this amazing collection of books. Open enrollment through October, then group will close.

Interfaith Workshop (Feb) – An Interfaith Workshop will be led by guest speaker Sheila Gordon, PhD, President and founder of the Interfaith Community. Dr. Gordon will explore issues faced by interfaith couples/families related to holiday celebrations and will help participants focus on how to use holidays as an opportunity to deepen spiritual connections and respect for the other.

Shabbat Dinner and Torah Schmooze (second Friday of each month) – Join Rabbi Burt and fellow congregants at reasonably-priced local restaurants to eat together and learn about Torah. Absolutely no prior knowledge is necessary.

Sing-Along (Nov) – Adam Feder will lead a fun and uplifting sing-along session featuring a potpourri of Shul music, contemporary songs, and old favorites.



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SOCIAL ACTION AT THE SHUL OF NEW YORK

Teaming Up with Middle Collegiate Church

By Karen Seidman

Are you looking for opportunities to volunteer and make an impact? The Shul of New York is teaming up with Middle Collegiate Church (MCC), our collaborator on the Interfaith Seder, to better support New Yorkers in need. All activities are at MCC, 50 East 7th Street.

The Clothing Closet. Provides crisp, clean clothing for anyone who needs it – no questions asked. Volunteers escort clients to the Closet, help them pick out clothes (as asked), answer questions, and provide a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Clothing donations accepted (www.middlechurch.org/inside-middle/volunteering, for detail). **Volunteers needed Wednesdays 12-3pm, Thursdays 4:30-6:30 pm)**

The Food Pantry. Helps over 100 people every week by providing non-perishable foods and canned goods to those in need. Volunteers are currently needed to help bag groceries. Donations of canned, non-perishable food are welcome. **Volunteers needed Tuesdays 11-3.**

The Momentum Project. Helps people in need with AIDS. Volunteers help serve dinner at the Church, clean up plates and cups, and provide a warm welcome to all clients. Some volunteers pack up food for clients to take with them. **Volunteers needed Mondays 5-6:30**

The Shul in the World: Partnering to Rebuild a Jewish Community in Germany

By Rabbi Burt and Adam Feder

The Shul of New York has a goal of establishing a greater presence in the Jewish community, locally and in the larger world. Our first international project is to establish a partnership with the newly formed Reform Jewish community of Hamelin, Germany.

The story of the revival of the Jewish community in Hamelin begins with a love story. A Jewish woman from Pittsburgh married her college sweetheart, a non-Jewish man from Germany. Rachel decided that she would live her life with her husband in Germany. They had three children (including Rebekka, now a student at Barnard College who sang for us at a Shabbat service this past spring).

Rachel wanted very much to raise her children as Jews in a Jewish home. She soon realized that to assure the Jewishness of her family, she needed to begin rebuilding and revitalizing the Jewish community of Hamelin.

Rachel envisioned a Jewish community with the progressive and liberal values of Reform Judaism and began the arduous process of building a new Jewish community. Little by little, the Jewish community in Hamelin became stronger. A hall was rented in which classes were held,

Looking for a few good men and women for

Bikur Cholim...

...Volunteer to provide support and comfort for congregants in distress.

Here are just some of the ways you can help:

- ◆ Accompany someone to a doctor's appointment
- ◆ Visit people who are hospitalized or homebound due to disability or illness
- ◆ Help with groceries, laundry, or bills
- ◆ Call to say, "Shabbat Shalom" or even just "Hello" during the week

To volunteer or for more information:
Naomi Shore, the Social Action Committee, at
nshore@hotmail.com

holidays observed and Shabbat services celebrated. Today, the community consists mostly of Russian immigrants, who – at the invitation of the German government – comprise the majority of Jews in present day Germany.

After many years of devoted effort, Rachel has succeeded in raising enough funds to build a new synagogue – the first new synagogue to be built in Germany since World War II. The synagogue will be erected on the very site where the Hamelin synagogue stood from 1879 until its destruction in 1938. Rachel looks forward to a synagogue in which religious services, lectures, and concerts will create a welcoming atmosphere for both Jews and non-Jews. She would like the community to have a sense of connection to the worldwide Jewish community. Our Shul surely can help in creating that connection.



The first Jewish wedding in Hamelin since World War II

In forming an alliance with the Jewish community in Hamelin, the Shul of New York is doing an important service to bring hope and healing to our Jewish brothers and sisters in Germany. We will keep the congregation up-to-date about the community. If you'd like to learn more, go to: <http://www.ighreform.org/>

To launch our partnership, the two of us (Rabbi Burt and Adam) have met with Rachel, president of the community, to start planning our alliance. We will both visit Hamelin to offer encouragement, to create Jewish educational opportunities (teaching, lecturing, and giving sermons), and to provide inspiration through our wonderful music.

100th Anniversary of New York's Worst Industrial Fire - at Triangle Shirtwaist Co.

By Louis Blumengarten

Our Yiddish-speaking ancestors referred to a "destruction" (especially of people) as a *Churban*. The Holocaust was the ultimate *Churban*. But the 20th century saw other tragedies worthy of that term, including the sinking of the Titanic (1912) and the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire (1911). We all know about the Titanic. But fewer of us know the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire... even though it occurred in Manhattan and particularly affected Jewish New Yorkers, who – like many of our grandparents and great-grandparents (including mine) – worked in the then-booming garment industry.

On March 25, 1911, a Saturday and a payday, New York City's worst ever industrial fire claimed the lives of 146 garment workers. Most of the dead were recent immigrants, young Jewish and Italian women – some as young as 15 years old.



The Jewish-owned Triangle Shirtwaist Company, one of the leading companies in that industry, had its modern factory on the 8th, 9th and 10th floors of the Asch Building at the corner of Washington Place and Greene Street. (The building, a National Historic Landmark, survives today as NYU's Brown Building, right behind NYU's main building). Because the doors were locked, the employees couldn't escape through stairwells. Even worse, the fire department's ladders and water hoses did not reach high enough. Many workers jumped to their deaths; others were burned alive. The 350 survivors never forgot the horror.

The city was in shock and as many as 100,000 people marched in the funeral procession. The tragic fire led to major changes in workplace fire safety laws in the United States.

For decades, the International Ladies Garment Workers Union and its successor unions have conducted a ceremony at the site of the fire every March 25th (or the closest business day). Sadly, with most of the garment industry now located in developing countries, union leaders at the ceremony remind participants that similar, if smaller fires regularly take place in garment workplaces around the world.

Join "Operation Isaiah Canned Food Drive" On Yom Kippur

"This is my chosen fast... Share your bread with the hungry, Take the homeless into your home, Clothe the naked when you see him, Do not turn away from people in need." (Isaiah 58:6-7)

Bring high protein and high nutrition canned goods (soups, tuna, beans, vegetables, etc.) and other non-perishables to Kol Nidre and/or Yom Kippur services.

Please check cans for expiration dates.

Food will be donated to the Food Pantry at the Middle Collegiate Church (see Page 4 for more info about the Food Pantry).



Celebrate a Simcha...
Memorialize a Loved One...
Make a tax deductible inscription on the Shul Quilt
Go to www.theshulofnewyork.org/ShulQuilt.htm
to see the quilt and order your dedication now!

March 25, 2011 is the 100th anniversary of the Triangle *Churban*. The annual memorial ceremony will be held from 11:30 to 1 at the Asch / Brown Building (23 – 29 Washington Place, on the northern corner of Washington Square East). Special programs are also planned.

If you want to learn more, the Internet is filled with information about the fire, its victims, and its legacy. Go to <http://rememberthetrianglefire.org> for details about the 100th anniversary memorial and other programs.

The Shul Band – The Real People Behind- The Magical Music (Part II)

By Sari Roboff

While The Shul Band plays a most central and special role at our Shul, few of us know the musicians who make the music – and make our spirits soar. Curious to learn more, we interviewed them about their lives outside of the Band and what playing in the Band means to them. In our April 2010 issue, we profiled most of the members of The Shul Band – Adam Feder, Seth Ginsburg, Matt Snyder, Ernesto Villalobos, Dave Hertzberg, Lily Lavner, and Adam Seidman. In this issue, we round out our profiles with a focus on Sabrina Lastman.

Sabrina Lastman, Vocals



Who can forget the first time we heard Sabrina's luscious, soul-filled and Ladino-inspired vocalizing at Rosh Hashanah services in 2008 (5769)? Using her voice as an instrument, she captivated us as she amplified the spiritual tenor of our prayers.

Sabrina grew up in the grand and beautiful 18th century city of Montevideo, Uruguay, where she started singing as a little girl.

Introduced to opera by her father, she followed him to classical voice training. Throughout her youth, Sabrina sang in choirs – at school, in the synagogue, and around the city. Over time, she found herself drawn to working with dancers and discovered what has become a driving passion for integrating voice and movement.

So, it was not surprising that, when friends from the university introduced Sabrina to the work of Meredith Monk, she found her musical mentor. Monk, an early "BuJew," pioneered the use of voices as orchestral instruments in spiritually-inspired, experimental vocal compositions performed with both instrumentation and movement.

After college, Sabrina enrolled in the Jerusalem Academy of Music and Dance where she studied both movement and voice. During four years there, she broadened her range, exploring jazz, Ladino, American gospel, Uruguayan, Arabic, and pop music. It was in Jerusalem that she also developed her distinctive style of movement-inspired "wordless singing."

In 2006, Sabrina's husband Marcos began work on a PhD in Latin American Literature at CUNY and Sabrina came to New York. On arrival, she learned of and entered a Meredith Monk competition at Carnegie Hall – and found herself among those chosen to study with "the master" herself in an intensive, multi-day seminar.

Since then, Sabrina has brought a seemingly boundless energy to her work. Her Latin jazz band, the Sabrina

Shul Advisory Board is Reinvigorated as the Shul of New York Auxiliary Committee

At a special Shul of New York leadership retreat on May 1, Advisory Board members recommended reconstituting themselves as a more active and independent Auxiliary Committee that will help the Board of Directors address key priorities for the Shul.

During the 1-year term, in addition to attending requisite meetings, each Auxiliary Committee member will sponsor or co-sponsor an Oneg Shabbat and provide volunteer leadership and/or support for various other events. The committee as a whole will also take on other ongoing and special assignments to further strengthen the Shul community; determining those assignments is a top agenda item for the fall of 2010.

We wish to congratulate and thank the following individuals who have agreed to join the new Auxiliary Committee and help lead it in its new direction: Jiro Adachi, Laine Barton, Jill Benezra, Jan Cullinen, Robbin Cullinen, Danielle Durkin, Lisa Lewis, Richard Mach, and Claude Samton.

Any member of the community who wants to be considered for the Auxiliary Committee for the 2011-2012 year should contact any one of our Nominating Committee members: Lois Blank, Joy Mach, or Doug Seidman.

Lastman Quartet, recently won a grant to produce a concert in lower Manhattan. She is a principal with Tango Jazz Duo and the Candombe Jazz Project and sings with Voices of Phillip Hamilton, an *a capella* group. And, as evidenced by her new CD, *On Becoming*, she continues to explore interdisciplinary performance – voice, movement, dance, and theater – as composer, vocalist, and choreographer. Sabrina also teaches Feldenkrais (there's that connection to movement again), gives voice lessons, and offers vocal and theatrical performance workshops.

What's best about singing with The Shul Band? Unlike other synagogues, "the Shul is not uptight, not formal. Rabbi Burt is human, not at all grandiose. And, of course, there's the music itself, the joy of sharing it with the other musicians, because ultimately music is about relationships."



The Shul of New York Reaches Out Via Facebook: "Like" Us Now!

By Dani Durkin



What does a "Shul without walls" like the Shul of New York have to gain from having an Internet presence? This isn't a trick question, and I think you already know the answer. Why do you already know the answer? (I'm a Jew, I answer a question with a question, what did you expect?) You already know the answer, because chances are you, or your children, or your grandchildren use the Internet every day.

For many, following personal interests online has become second nature. Why not share spiritual ideas online, as well? Community itself is what keeps the Shul of New York a rich and powerful center of life and light. The Internet is a world without walls and thus brilliantly benefits our beloved "Shul without walls." Welcome to the Shul of New York Facebook Page!

We are a congregation of the heart, with a Rabbi and a Band who touch our spirits and our minds with beautiful wisdom and awesome music. And we are a Shul that chooses not to be left behind as technology improves ways we can all communicate with one another. So, we have created an online space on Facebook to supplement our web site. If you have a Facebook account, we would encourage you to find our page and "Like" us, i.e., press the "Like" tab, so that you may be updated easily with events and announcements.

We hope to launch discussions on the Facebook page. We want you to contribute your thoughts and suggestions about the Shul of New York, or to comment on any topic related to your Jewish life. We encourage anyone to join the page and post photos of themselves at Shul of New York events. We would like to be able to reach anyone who wishes to have a community of spiritual Judaism, whether you can make it to Shabbat services or not.

Please consider following the Shul of New York on Facebook and, if you enjoy the page, encourage your friends to do the same. Our goal is to connect with as many people as possible who choose love over fear, community over isolation, humor over despair, diversity over oppression, and curiosity over ignorance. We think our Facebook page is just one more terrific way for all of us to stay in touch. Let's make our "Shul without walls" a vibrant place to visit in this new world without walls.

See you online!

Editor's note: Our thanks to Dani, who with help from Miriam Lissak, created and is managing our presence on Facebook.

Shul Web Site is Redesigned: More Informative and Easier to Use

By Karen Seidman and Sari Roboff

"Informative" and "easy" are the key words for the new Shul of New York web site. The redesigned site, which will be up by Rosh Hashanah, will provide more information in a more user-friendly manner.



- ◆ An interactive calendar on the home page makes it easy to check for upcoming programs and services, while one on the Shul School page displays important dates for parents and students.
- ◆ It will be easier to make a donation to Gifts from the Heart, place a name on the Shul Quilt, or buy The Shul Band's CDs.
- ◆ It will also be easier for new visitors to add their names to our mailing list.
- ◆ The site will also better accommodate audio and video.

Stay tuned.

Join fellow Shul member Jim Gabbe in celebrating his new book and video

The Universe of Union Square

Party hosted by The National Arts Club
Thursday, September 16, 6:30-8:30PM
Presentation and signing by the author

For additional information please visit
www.gabbe.com/raconteur
or contact Jeff Lewis: 212-220-4444;
Jeff.lewis@gabbe.com

School Curriculum and Family Chavurah

(continued from page 1)

(especially Laine Barton, Dara Kessler, and Marsha Leo), has given birth to a new Shul School curriculum designed to teach spiritual Judaism and ethics as practiced at the Shul of New York. At its core is a set of "Essential Teachings" developed by Rabbi Burt (see sidebar).

By focusing on key Jewish concepts and holiday themes and by teaching through stories and the arts, the new curriculum will enable students to learn and internalize core spiritual concepts. For example, to understand what Judaism says about the spiritual essence and ethics of food, students will learn what the Torah says about how land, food workers, and food itself should be treated. Students will also learn what it means more generally to reinterpret the Torah in each generation – including a reinterpretation of Kosher laws relevant to today's world. In developing holiday themes, students will learn about "new beginnings" for Rosh Hashanah; about forgiveness and apology for Yom Kippur, and about living by one's convictions and being a source of light – even in the darkest times – for Hanukah.

In the spirit of the new curriculum, the Shul School has added a special teacher to work with PreK – K children. The school now serves four age groups:

- ◆ Level 0: PreK - K
- ◆ Level 1: Grades 1 - 3
- ◆ Level 2: Grades 3 – 5
- ◆ Level 3: Grades 5 – 8

For the younger students, the teaching will be more concrete and story-based. As students get older, they will increasingly focus on conceptual themes.

All students will study Hebrew. The youngest will learn the alphabet and play games. By the time they are in Level 3, students will read Hebrew with a reasonable degree of fluency and will know the key prayers.

The Shul of New York's Family Chavurah

A Family Chavurah: A group of Jewish parents and their pre-Bar/Bat Mitzvah-aged children who share communal experiences such as Shabbat and Holiday services and Jewish learning.

The Shul of New York's Family Chavurah is being created by parents at the Shul to be a "place" where you and your children will want to go, to celebrate, laugh, sing, and learn about Judaism in the way that can only be found at the Shul of New York. These programs are inspired by the philosophy that children best learn organically, through experience, rather than through simply being given facts with little connection to their daily lives. Through a creative and collaborative experience, children and their families will be engaged in the themes of love, generosity, kindness, and caring that live inside the rituals, stories, and spirituality of Judaism. Founder Dara Kessler hopes the programs will be "so dynamic,

Essential Teachings (abridged*)

Torah and Teaching

The Torah is written with an ancient people's concept of myth and history...The authors of the Torah were interested in teaching us about humanity and divinity. We need to find personal ways in which the struggles, decisions and risks of the characters who appear in the text ring true for us today. The curriculum emphasizes the lessons that the stories teach rather than the factual basis of the stories themselves.

God is Mystery

God is hard to understand. Students, like all people, will invariably have different approaches and much confusion about what to make of God. The school does not push a certain conception of belief in God on students. What they will learn is that understanding God is a lifelong task and that God is always a mystery.

Egalitarianism

The Shul School is committed to gender equality and egalitarianism. Teachers should be sensitive to the historic gender biases in Judaism and attempt to present a more egalitarian picture of Judaism for students.

The Soul

Even the youngest of students should be inculcated with a sense of having a spiritual and moral center. Students should be taught that they can feel their soul when they act in a kind and loving manner.

Inwardness and Outwardness

Our educational aspiration is that students will internalize lessons and values and display what they have learned through outward actions...The school teaches ethics based on empathy. Rather than focusing on "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not," we want students to learn to be sensitive to the feelings of others, so that their "outward-facing" ethical feelings and behaviors will be inwardly motivated, not based on a set of rules.

The Class as a Community

Shul School students should get to know their classmates on a personal level through activities, discussions and icebreakers. The ideal feeling in class should be one of community where mutual respect comes from a place of shared commitment to each other and friendship.

*Go to www.theshulofnewyork.org to read the Essential Shul School Teachings in their entirety.

enriching, and rewarding that children and families will feel inspired – not at all obligated – to participate."

In order to create this one-of-a-kind family experience, the Shul of New York is partnering with Kids Creative, an educational non-profit that offers arts-based, peace-

education programs for Pre-K to High School age students. Kids Creative will work with us to design a series of programs that help children learn by tapping



into their own personal creativity. We believe that bringing Kids Creative together with Rabbi Burt, the Shul Band and our loving community will create a unique and extraordinary family experience.

The Family Chavurah program offerings, which will launch at the High Holy Days, will be an opportunity for our community of young families to come together and experience the Shul of New York in a way that is guided specifically toward our children.

High Holy Day Programs: During the High Holy Days we are creating for the first time a specific service completely geared toward enriching our children's experience of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. On Rosh Hashanah, we will explore themes of Creativity and Creating the World; On Yom Kippur, we will explore Community, Forgiveness, and Compassion. The Family Chavurah Director and Shul School teachers will facilitate these services.

First Friday Programs: You thought you loved Tora Ora before, well just wait 'til you see it with Rabbi Burt leading all the children in the Torah parade when they join the congregation for the Torah reading. The monthly First Friday programs will be a chance for your children to be involved with our Friday night services, while at the same time having their own space for story time based on the week's Parsha, as well as arts and crafts, music, movement, instruments and a mini-Oneg Shabbat. It will be a terrific way for families to celebrate Shabbat together in the full spirit of the Shul of New York.



On December 19, my wife and I had our sweet baby boy, Wylie Aulden Palgon. We have brought Wylie to several services and he's already shaking his butt to Torah Ora! We consider ourselves in-

credibly blessed to have Wylie in our lives, but also to know that as he grows up, the Shul of New York will become his spiritual home.

As the parents of a little boy born last December, my wife Jen and I are thrilled that the Shul of New York is now offering families with children up to age 13 an exciting new program, The Family Chavurah. S. Palgon

Second Saturday Programs: Looking for something meaningful to do with your kids on Saturday mornings? Come to the Second Saturday programs of the Family Chavurah, where your children (and you) will explore different themes of Judaism and spirituality through music, art, movement, dance, yoga, meditation, and breath. Enjoy a bagel brunch—and schmoozing with fellow parents, too.

We cannot wait to share these exciting programs with you and your children. For more information contact Dara Kessler, doctordara@yahoo.com

The Shul of New York's Family Chavurah

Program Offerings

High Holy Day Programs

10:30am-12:30pm

Rosh Hashanah: Thursday, September 9th

Program: Creativity and Creating the World

Yom Kippur: Saturday, September 18th

Program: Community and Forgiveness/Compassion

First Friday Programs

Fridays, 6:30-8:30pm at Friends Meeting House on 15th Street between 2nd and 3rd Avenues

- ◆ October 1st (Simchat Torah)
- ◆ November 5th
- ◆ December 3rd
- ◆ January 7th
- ◆ February 4th
- ◆ March 4th
- ◆ April 1st
- ◆ May 6th
- ◆ June 3rd

Second Saturday Shul Family Day

Saturdays, 9:30am-12:30pm at Hope Martin Studio 39 W. 14th Street Suite 508 (between 5th and 6th Avenues)

- ◆ October 9th
- ◆ November 13th
- ◆ December 11th
- ◆ January 8th
- ◆ February 12th
- ◆ March 12th
- ◆ April 8th
- ◆ May 13th
- ◆ June 11th

Holiday Parties

3:30-6:00pm Location TBA

Chanukah: Sunday, December 5th

Purim: Sunday, March 20th



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