

Spring 2010 - 5770



Congregation Tikkun Olam



Member of the U.R.J.

McHenry County's Jewish Reform Congregation that prides itself on celebration and tradition



Upcoming Services -

7:30 p.m. at the Unitarian
Universalist Congregation
Church in Woodstock.

- Friday, March 26
- Friday, April 23
- Friday, May 28
- Friday, June 25
- Friday, July 23

We are looking for volunteers to host the Onegs for the March, May, June, July and August Services. Please let us know if you'd like to volunteer for one of these dates.

NOTE that the April 23 Service is our annual Children's Service. Please come and support the Sunday School children and teachers. We know you will be amazed and delighted to see how much the children have learned.

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Religious School -

Remaining dates for the year:

- March 21st
- April 4th and 18th
- May 2nd and 16th

Board News -

Next Board meeting:

Wednesday, March 10 at 7:00 p.m. at the Vigers. Call 815-455-9236 for directions. Please join us: we value your input! We are always looking for new ideas and new volunteers.



B'Nai Mitzvah -

Mazel Tov to Alanna Taubin on her Bat Mitzvah in February.

Best Wishes to Ethan Medansky on his upcoming Bar Mitzvah on April 24th. The entire Congregation is invited to attend this joyous event. Please see page 2 for details on the event and the Bar Mitzvah portrait of him.

Who Do You Want To Honor -

Remember special people with donations to CTO throughout the year. Some examples: memorials; honor rolls; graduations; and any other special events. Donations can be in any amount and can be made to our general fund or to our specific fund categories. With your permission, we will publish the remembrance in our newsletter.

B'Nai Mitzvah Information -



Upcoming Bar Mitzvah

Ethan Medansky will be called to the torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, April 24 at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation Church in Woodstock. The Congregation is welcome to attend the service, which is the morning after our annual Children's service.

Here is some information on our latest B'Nai Mitzvah student:

Ethan is the son of Robert and Crystle Medansky. He is the brother of Emily, Stefano, Lucas, Addison, Calista and Gabriel.

Ethan is in 7th grade and is active in band, playing alto and baritone sax. He is a Black Belt in Shotokan Karate and is an assistant instructor in the after school program at Algonquin Road School and Kon Jo Karate Club. In addition, he is a technical crew member for drama club at his school; and enjoys creative writing through the Young Authors Project 2010 and writing his first novel "The Book: Not Just an Urban Legend."

For his B'Nai Mitzvah service projects, Ethan attended the JNF Tu BiShvat Family Event as a volunteer and made a recyclable tree craft with kids to support JNF's efforts to help alleviate Israel's water crisis through the Books for Israel project.

When asked what he likes about CTO, Ethan replied, "Kindness. I like how everyone is nice and inviting. No one feels like an outsider; everyone is a friend."

Happy Passover -

Passover is March 29th to April 5th. The first Seder is Monday, March 29th. If anyone is interested in ideas for conducting a Seder, check out the following websites:

<http://www.urj.org/holidays/pesach>, which includes information about the holiday, a virtual Seder plate, recipes and much more.

<http://www.urjbooksandmusic.com>, which includes Passover books for adults and children, haggadahs, music and more

<http://www.tikkun-olam.org/links.htm>, which includes links to sites with information on the holidays as well as for Jewish recipes.



Books For Israel Project -

In the spirit of "Tikkun Olam" (repair the world), we are reaching out to connect with teachers and students in Israel.

The **Jade Bar Shalom Books for Israel Project** is an international grassroots effort to bring gently used good quality English books to school libraries in Israel. We invite everyone to participate in this wonderful opportunity. We will be collecting books (and shipping donations) at religious school and CTO Shabbat Services. The last collection date will be at the Children's Service on April 23, 2010.

Books should be for pre-k to 4th grade readers and should be in good condition, new or gently used. **Donations for shipping costs are very much appreciated.** Books will be shipped US Postal Service Surface-rate Media-Mail-Bag (M-Bag) rates: \$3.70/lb (eleven pound minimum).

President's Message - The following is condensed from a speech Debbi Viger gave at a Shabbat Service immediately after the Haitian earthquake:

I wanted to find out more about tikkun olam in a broader sense than just our own little bubble. We all know by now that a devastating earthquake in Haiti has left a huge path of death and destruction.

Israel, in less than 24 hours, began the process of offering aid and assistance. The Israeli foreign ministry prepared a rescue team including elite army corps engineers and medical corps ready to deploy field hospitals.

The Chicago Jewish Federation raised more than \$420,000 that is going directly to food, medical care and on site aid. Israeli military and civilian medical teams were the first to arrive on site and came prepared with imaging capabilities and full operating rooms. Israeli teams delivered 4 babies and freed 70 people from the rubble in the first 5 days. 100% of collected donations go directly to support non-sectarian needs on the ground, the Jewish Federation is absorbing all administrative costs.

We've all been taught that Judaism is about helping our neighbors, treating others with kindness, compassion and dignity. Something about living by the Ten Commandments, and haven't we all heard the Debbie Friedman song about loving your neighbors as yourself. We recite the v'ahavta and hear all the rules and regulations, but for now it's really all about how we choose to incorporate those ideals.

How are we, here in McHenry County fulfilling that Jewish dictate? I'm reading this amazing book- called Give A Little, how your small donations can transform our world. I swear to you it is the most amazing book I've read in years. I'm recommending that each of you find a copy, sit down and read how your \$10 can truly transform the world. It is amazing. Who would have thought!

For me, sure I can do that and I will, and I have, but what about here, in my own country, my own state, my own town, my own congregation. What's happening here? Look into your own life, how many of us have been touched by the economic downturn. How many of us have lost jobs, lost health insurance, lost the ability to pay bills in a timely fashion or even eat what we want when we want it. We get calls on the temple phone line and even more on the web email asking for help- can we purchase medical

supplies, food, clothes, can we cover expenses for religious school and membership fees.

As a congregation we have done great things, we have offset the costs of medical care, provided food, blankets, services, waived tuition and membership countless times. Now we are struggling to find ways to keep up with the needs of our community. We have \$8000 owed to us, -that is money we can use for providing for others. We never want to "pay to pray", we always want to offer our open door policy. We have the best religious services and we do meet the needs of many. But now the needs are greater than we are able to meet.

It's time we look around and see how we can do even more. Is it possible that if you have an outstanding balance that you make a payment or pay it in full? If your fees are current, is it possible that you have a little more that you could share with your neighbor? Could a donation be made to offset the cost of another's membership, school fees or even provide a gift card for groceries?

While we all love random acts of kindness- what about some not random acts, what about right now, right here to our fellow congregants that may need a little extra something. I look at the news coverage in Haiti and I am awed by the devastation. What supplies do they need, how will it get there, do they have water, food, what happens to the children that lost their parents? There are so many unanswered questions, but it also reminds me of the homeless here, the hungry the sick.

What should we tell these people who need so much? CTO offers a Jewish home to everyone, come, enjoy our services, pray with us. How many students can we take that are unable to pay the small tuition charge we have? How do we decide? At some point we are responsible to make sure that we are able to pay our own expenses. While each may be small- insurance, building use donations, MUM fees, high holy day expenses- we average about \$10,000 a year in expenses and with \$8,000 outstanding there is a fear that we will have to cut back on our ability to help heal the world.

What does the torah say about helping when times are good, but not so much when it gets harder to do? What does it say about the actual picking and choosing process? In all my searching I couldn't find anything except the shemah which just reminds us that our one g-d wants us, created in his image to be the very best that we can be because-- blessed is g-ds glorious majesty for ever and ever.

FROM OUR MAILBOX-

There is a Jewish cemetery in Woodstock, Illinois. Please call the Tikkun Olam phone number at 815-334-7110 if you would like additional information.

Beth Tikvah Congregation – Hoffman Estates - Hebrew language program open to high school students:

For more information please contact Rokki Parrinello, Director of Congregational Education at 847-885-4545

THANKS!

To Jack Minsley for leading the February Service and for reading the Megillah for Purim. Thanks to the Birnbaums for hosting the wonderful pot luck and Havdalah in February.

Watch for upcoming details regarding a summer pot-luck and BB-Q!!

Shabbat Candle Lighting -

March 12 – 5:55 p.m.

March 19 – 7:03 p.m.

March 26 – 7:11 p.m.

April 2 – 7:18 p.m.

April 9 – 7:26 p.m.

April 16 - 7:34 p.m.

April 23 – 7:42 p.m.

April 30 – 7:50 p.m.

May 7 – 7:57 p.m.

May 14 – 8:05 p.m.

May 21 – 8:12 p.m.

May 28 – 8:18 p.m.

***note daylight savings begins March 14**



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