



HA-KESHER

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Newsletter of Or Hadash
A Reconstructionist Congregation
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SAVE THESE DATES:

Doing Well by Doing Good – A Charitable Planning Workshop
Thursday, March 11

International Charoset Workshop
Thursday, March 25

Religious School Town Hall Meeting
Sunday, April 25

From Rabbi Josh

During Or Hadash's congregational visit to Israel in February 2008, we had the opportunity to meet with Rabbi David Forman, an American-born rabbi who made aliyah to Israel thirty-five years ago and became the founding chairperson of Rabbis for Human Rights. For more than four decades, Rabbi Forman has been a leading voice in Israel's peace movement, seeking to strengthen Israel by helping it live up to the lofty ideals that underlay its founding. A hard-eyed realist, Rabbi Forman led our group on a tour of the separation barrier that divides the Palestinian territories from much of Israel proper and told of the hardship this barrier causes many Palestinians in their daily lives. But he also spoke about how this barrier serves as an obstacle to terror and led us to sites where Israelis had been murdered by terrorists before the erection of the barrier. In a word, Rabbi Forman embodies the tensions and paradox at the heart of the modern state of Israel, a country committed to ideals of democracy and freedom which are often put under strain as it seeks to defend its legitimate security needs. Rabbi Forman has been at the front lines of the effort to support both goals – peace and security – and has been challenged by those both on the left and the right for his refusal to concede either of them.

We are fortunate to host Rabbi Forman this March as our 2010 Dickstein Scholar in Residence, where we will have the opportunity to learn both from his experience and his example. At our Shabbat evening service, he will speak about the history and principles of Rabbis for Human Rights, the organization he helped found, and the work that led to its being awarded the prestigious Knesset Peace Prize. On Shabbat morning, Rabbi Forman will lead a text study class that focuses on the centrality of Israel and Zion in Jewish thought from Biblical times forward. On Saturday evening, he will make his keynote presentation on how to reconcile Israel's democratic ideals with the reality of needing to provide for its citizens' security, with ample time for questions and discussion. And on Sunday morning he will present a more personal view of his own journey, reflecting on what it means to love Israel and be willing to question its policies. All of these events are free of charge and open to the public.

I hope you will join us for these powerful programs that will challenge us by refusing to depict Israel and its challenges in black and white, and will encourage us to engage more directly in our shared desire to see a strong, secure, and ethical Israel shining forth as a light to the nations.

B'shalom,

Rabbi. Josh



Join us for the 2010 Joan and Ben Dickstein Scholar-in-Residence Weekend

FRIDAY, MARCH 19, 8:00 PM
"Israeli Rabbis for Human Rights:
The Application of Jewish Values
to a Jewish State"
(Service followed by extended oneg)

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 9:00 AM
"Israel, Zion, Jerusalem in Jewish
Texts" *(RSVP for bagels & coffee)*

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 7:30 PM
"Morality and Security –
Reconciling Democratic Principles
with Political Realities"
*(Dinner begins at 6:30; RSVP
and prepayment required)*

SUNDAY, MARCH 21, 9:00 AM
"Personal Reflections on Aliyah
and Why I am Still a Zionist"
(RSVP for bagels + coffee)

President's Message

By Rick Dzubow

It strikes me that I'm writing this for our March/April "springtime" Ha-Kesher at a time when we're still digging out of a 28" snowstorm and waiting for another blizzard to start tomorrow evening. So while things seem very cold and bleak right now, I'm pretty confident that by the time most of you read this, the end of winter may actually be in sight, and the snow will be disappearing. I am reasonably confident that there will be a spring in 2010. Stay tuned.

This morning, I noticed a rather pregnant (or overweight) robin bouncing around the snow looking for breakfast, and concluded that massive snowstorms are very, very bad for hungry robins and very, very good for earthworms. While most life forms above ground are not real fond of blizzards, blizzards are an earthworm's best friend. Our misery above ground is countered by the wild celebrations taking place below ground. How is that possible?

In all fairness, and in deference to our traditions, I searched on-line far and wide for answers to that question from all kinds of sources, including our most sacred texts, by googling "happy earthworms." The information I retrieved was inconclusive and focused on some Philadelphia guy from the past who said something about the relationship between the early bird and the earthworm. Having failed to satisfactorily answer the question on-line, I sought the sage advice of a wise and trusted rabbi, and presented this moral dilemma to our very own Rabbi Josh. The conversation went something like this:

The Prez: So Rabbi, it has been miserable, cold and snow-covered for way too long. How is it that we could be so unhappy, while slimy earthworms are jumping up and down with joy?

Rabbi Josh: This sounds like a Board concern.

The Prez: With all due respect Rabbi, your community is running out of wiper fluid while earthworms have found true, spiritual bliss. How is that possible?

Rabbi Josh: That is an interesting paradox with far ranging implications. I think we should form a committee to study it further.

The Prez: Surely Rabbi, you must have an opinion why we are drowning in snow while earthworms are dancing the night away!

Rabbi Josh: (heavy sigh)...(yes, THAT kind of sigh) ... Well, look at it this way, don't you think it's about time earthworms get a break and have some fun?

Ah, what a wonderful perspective ... so how does this relate to Or Hadash?

Perspective is an easy concept to understand but a difficult concept to practice. As the recent 2009 Jewish Population studies showed, attitudes and demographics are changing, and it's incumbent upon us to embrace these changes by adjusting both our expectations and perspective.

The beauty of Reconstructionism, in part, is that our movement cherishes the constants in our tradition but also demands that we be active participants in creating a Jewish future for our children that is relevant and meaningful to their lives.

We embrace change; we incorporate evolving values; we improve upon older ways of thinking; we value both the old ways and the new ways, and we make sure the old and new live in harmony with each other. Our tradition, our Judaism, cannot stand still and continue to be meaningful for future generations. We must and will evolve.

And the same can be said of Or Hadash. While change is both a bit scary and challenging, Or Hadash, too, cannot stand still. There are "Or Hadashian" traditions that will live on for a very long time, but our future depends upon active and broad participation towards shaping our community's future – a future that embraces the changing world around us.

Would our children be drawn to Or Hadash? It is a perspective worth exploring.

MAZEL TOV!

- To **Albert Thompson** our custodian, on passing his US Citizenship test! Yasher Koach!

B'NAI MITZVAH

MARCH 6

Bat Mitzvah of **Alexis Weissman**, daughter of Jennifer Hoagland and Steven Weissman

MARCH 13

Bar Mitzvah of **Alexander Greene**, son of Debra Somers and Steven Greene

MARCH 27

Bat Mitzvah of **Samantha Bryton**, daughter of Cindy and David Bryton

APRIL 17

Bar Mitzvah of **Adam Deeves**, son of Jill and John Deeves

From the Administrator

By Laurie Albert

I need to remind you of all the work that goes on behind the scenes to make our programs, dinners and community events happen. Many hands are needed to coordinate, set up, and publicize. There may be caterers involved, shopping needed, or handouts to prepare. All of this takes time, which is why we ask for RSVPs in advance. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE respect our deadlines and make your reservations promptly. It makes everything else so much easier, and we really do not want to have to turn anyone away. Thank you.

From the Education Director

By Lori Rubin

Navigating the New Realities Of Girl World and Boy World: The Effects of Technology on Children's Interpersonal Relationships and Concrete Strategies for Helping Them Navigate Conflict Ethically. This is the topic of a workshop sponsored by the Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education/Jewish Outreach Partnership scheduled for Wednesday, April 14, at Congregation Adath Jeshurun in Elkins Park, PA. The speaker is Rosalind Wiseman, author of *Queen Bees and Wannabes*, which was the basis for the movie *Mean Girls*.

Why do I mention this program? Well, in addition to looking like a very worthwhile program, I am continually intrigued by the differences between life for our students today versus my life as a student in the 70's and 80's.

- **Now:** There are many extracurricular activities.
Then: There were not as many extra-curricular activities.
- **Now:** Many families have two working parents.
Then: Not many families had two working parents.
- **Now:** Most students have multiple technology devices (cell phone, mp3 player, video game player, personal video game player, etc.).
Then: We were lucky to have Atari or a VCR, not usually both! Having our own landline phone line was really special!

(continued on page 7)



2010 PENN LECTURE SERIES:

The Secular and the Sacred in the Modern Jewish World

Join Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia's Kehillah of Bux-Mont and Kehillah of Old York Road for a fascinating series of upcoming lectures by fellows from the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies

Co-Sponsor: Kehillah of Bux-Mont

Secular Jews in a Religious Framework: The Case of the Jewish Community in Germany Today

Michael Brenner, University of Munich

Monday, March 1
7:00 pm

Temple Sinai
1401 N. Limekiln Pike (Limekiln Pike and Dillon Road)
Dresher, PA

Yiddish Theatre: Between Secular and Sacred

Annette Aronowicz, Franklin and Marshall College

Tuesday, March 16
7:00 pm

Congregation Beth Or
239 Welsh Road (Welsh Road and Butler Pike),
Maple Glen, PA

Co-Sponsor: Kehillah of Old York Road

Tsimtsum: The Secularization of a Kabbalistic Concept in the Modern Era
Christoph Schulte, University of Potsdam

Tuesday, February 23
7:00 pm

Kol Ami Congregation
8201 High School Road, Elkins Park, PA

All Lectures are free and open to the public.

For more information or to RSVP: www.cajs.upenn.edu or contact Etty Lassman at 215.238.1290 ext. 406 or lassman@sas.upenn.edu



Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia

jewishphilly.org

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News From SATO

By Alisa Belzer & Debbie Bernstein, Co-Chairs, Social Action/Tikkun Olam Committee

When it comes to social action/Tikkun Olam, there are essentially two ways to get involved. One is to give of your resources (money, food, clothing, books, musical instruments, etc.); the other is to give of your time. We have planned some of each kind of activity for upcoming SATO events.

In February, we will be asking for donations or pledges for Haitian earthquake relief at the Purim Spiel on February 27th. While it is a mitzvah at any time to help the needy, giving gifts of money to the poor is one of four mitzvot specific to Purim, so the activity is especially relevant. All proceeds will go to the American Jewish World Service Haitian Earthquake Relief Fund (<http://ajws.org/>). Please bring a few dollars to put into a basket or take a pledge card that night and send it in, or go online to make a donation ASAP! If you can't come to the Purim Spiel, we urge you to make a contribution through AJWS or any other recognized organization in honor of the holiday. Additional pledge cards can be found in the Community Room after Purim. If you gave right after the earthquake hit, this is a great time to renew your commitment to the Haitian recovery effort. The need is great, so every little bit helps.

In March we have an adult activity that asks you to give of your time. We are looking for 10 volunteers to work at the Bethesda Project (<http://www.bethesda-project.org/>) soup kitchen on Sunday, March 21st from 3:30-5:30. Volunteers must be at least 18 years old. This is our first time organizing such an effort, but we are eager to make this kind of connection with the community of committed volunteers and professionals who work with the homeless throughout the city. We will help prepare, serve, and clean up the meal and are also encouraged to spend time with the clients as they eat. If you would like to volunteer for this exciting opportunity, please contact Alisa at belzera@rci.rutgers.edu.

Also in March, we have our annual Chametz Food Drive for the Mitzvah Food Pantry. Similar to our very successful peanut butter collection effort over the holidays, this year we are collecting just one kind of item, cereal. We will be collecting boxes of any kind of cereal. Please pick up an extra box over the next couple of weeks every time you shop for your family. We will begin collecting at the beginning of the month. We have an ambitious goal of contributing 300 boxes. If every family brings 3 boxes over the course of the month, we can easily make this goal. Cheery-Oh(s)!

If you have ideas of ways you would like Or Hadash to get involved in SATO activities or would like to help us organize events, please let us know.



OPENING THE GATES OF TORAH

INCLUDING PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Congregation Beth Or
Maple Glen, PA

SAVE THE DATE

Sunday, May 16, 2010
3:00 - 7:00 PM

THIS CONFERENCE WILL PROVIDE WORKSHOPS AND PROGRAMS FOR:

Parents of Children of All Ages Who Have Special Needs
Rabbis
Day School Principals
Religious School and Early Childhood Directors
Synagogue Lay Leaders
Teachers
Youth Group Advisors and Camp Directors
Jewish Communal Workers
Adults Who Have Special Needs

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: DR. DAN GOTTLIEB
NPR'S HOST OF VOICES IN THE FAMILY AND PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER COLUMNIST

CONFERENCE SAMPLINGS

BILL GAVENTA, WELCOMING ALL RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS
RANDY STEIN & BRUCE SHAM, CREATING FINANCIAL TRUST
RABBI JAY STEIN, HAR ZION TEMPLE
A TESHUVA, A RABBINIC RESPONSE TO SPECIAL NEEDS
DR. WENDY ROSS, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENTAL MEDICINE AND GENETICS AT ALBERT EINSTEIN MEDICAL CENTER
PANEL OF CAMP DIRECTORS, YOUR CHILD AND CAMPING
LISA NEY, SOCIAL GROUPS FOR ADULTS WHO HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS
... AND MUCH MORE!

For more information, contact:
Deborah Gettes, Consultant for Special Needs
Auerbach Central Agency for Jewish Education/Jewish Outreach Partnership
215.635.8940, Ext. 1231 • dgettes@acaaje.org

This conference is made possible in part by a grant from the Lasko Foundation

CO-SPONSORED BY THE SPECIAL NEEDS CONSORTIUM WHICH INCLUDES:



UPCOMING EVENTS

Friday, March 5 & Friday, April 9

Three Part Harmony Services

Tot Shabbat at 6:00 p.m.

Pot Luck dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Family service at 7:00 p.m.

Please note that it is NOT the first Friday in April due to the Passover holiday.

Friday, March 12

Shabbat Zemirah with music by Cheryl Kripke Cohen.

Friday, March 19 to Sunday, March 21

The 2010 Joan and Ben Dickstein Scholar-in-Residence Weekend

Our scholar is Rabbi David Forman, a founding member of Rabbis for Human Rights.

- **Friday, March 19 at 8:00 p.m.**

Israeli Rabbis for Human Rights: The Application of Jewish Values to a Jewish State

- **Saturday, March 20 at 9:00 a.m.**

Israel, Zion, Jerusalem in Jewish Texts

- **Saturday, March 20 at 6:30 p.m.**

Catered Dinner with Rabbi Forman. Advance reservations are required. It will be an Italian dinner from Annemarie's Cuisine. \$20 for adults and \$10 for children under 13.

- **Saturday, March 20 at 7:30 p.m.**

Morality and Security – Reconciling Democratic Principles with Political Realities

- **Sunday, March 21 at 9:00 a.m.**

Personal Reflections on Aliyah and Why I am Still a Zionist.

This is a Second Cup Café event and advance reservations are requested) so we know how many bagels to provide) but there is no charge.

Friday, March 26 at 8:00

Erev Shabbat Service: Guest Speaker, Libby Cone Presents "War on the Margins: Reflections and Excerpts"

Libby Cone is author of *War on the Margins*, a story about the German occupation of the British Channel Islands during World War II. This story provides the closest glimpse of what would have

happened to British Jews if Britain had fallen. She will discuss how she came to write this book, why this particular area is of interest to her, and read from compelling sections of her book.

March 29, 30, 31, and April 5

The Or Hadash office will be closed on in observance of Passover.

Friday, April 16 at 8:00

Leadership Development students and the Or Hadash staff will be honored during our Erev Shabbat Service.

Friday, April 23

Services will not be held at Or Hadash. We will celebrate the Sabbath with our friends at Congregation Temple Beth-El, 7351 Lowber Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19138. More details coming soon.

Adult Education will present a series of talks with Rabbi Josh on Sunday mornings April 11, 18 and 25 at 11:30. Watch for further information.

THURSDAY, MARCH 25, 2010

INTERNATIONAL CHAROSET WORKSHOP

Jews from Mumbai to Mexico and Curaçao to Yemen make their own version of charoset every year for the Passover Seder using everything from pine nuts, figs, and sesame seeds to pomegranate, cashews, and coconut. Come to Or Hadash on Thursday, March 25th at 7:30 pm with knife, cutting board and mixing bowl. We'll make a variety of international charoset recipes, chopping, mixing and simmering away. Everybody will bring home several different kinds to serve to their families on Monday evening. (We'll also have some knives, cutting boards and bowls available to fill in.) Chef-author Aliza Green will lead this program with commentary on the history of the various recipes and lending her culinary expertise to participants.

Presented by the Kehillah of Bux-Mont Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia in partnership with Or Hadash, this program is free of charge and open to the public. RSVPs are requested no later than March 21 by email to office@orhadash.com.

Works from the Or Hadash Collection now on exhibit in the Staircase Art Gallery!

UPCOMING EVENTS

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 2010

Doing Well by Doing Good

You can do well financially by doing good financial deeds for Or Hadash. This is accomplished by using a variety of charitable planning techniques. Generally known as “split-interest” contributions, it is possible to provide a significant benefit to Or Hadash, as well as to our donors and their families. On Thursday, March 11, 2010, at 7:30 PM, Richard L. Fox, Esq. of Dilworth Paxson LLP (www.dilworthlaw.com), will provide an overview of these charitable planning techniques, including how they work, the benefits provided to Or Hadash, and the benefits available to our donors and their families. He will also address any questions you may have regarding these techniques or other questions involving your charitable planning goals. Following the talk, there will be dessert.

You are invited to attend this talk with Mr. Fox at Or Hadash.

Please RSVP the office by Sunday, February 28, 2010.

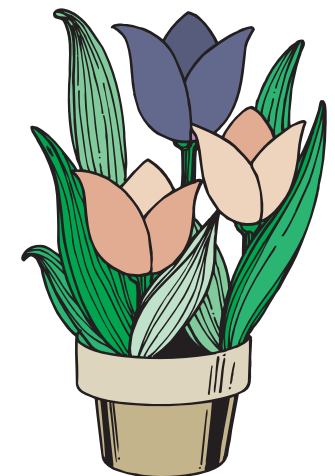
As Mr. Fox will be available for individual questions during the dessert period, we reserve the right to limit the number of attendees.

ABOUT RICHARD L. FOX

Richard L. Fox, Esq. is a partner in the Philadelphia-based law firm of Dilworth Paxson LLP, where he chairs the Philanthropic and Nonprofit Group. He concentrates his practice in the areas of charitable giving, private foundations, tax-exempt organizations, family planning, and trusts and estates. Mr. Fox is the author of the treatise, Charitable Giving; Taxation, Planning and Strategies, writes a national bulletin on charitable giving and nonprofit topics, and writes and speaks frequently on issues pertaining to estate planning and philanthropy. He represents a multitude of charitable organizations, including some of the largest private foundations in the United States. He was recently named by Worth Magazine as one of the Top 100 Attorneys in the country representing affluent families and individuals, including in the areas of private foundations and philanthropy, as well as a Pennsylvania Super Lawyer in these areas. He was also recently named as a top wealth management attorney based on client satisfaction by Philadelphia Magazine (November 2009 issue). Mr. Fox currently has several Or Hadash members as clients.

CONDOLENCES

- To **Herb and Peggy Mandell** on the passing of their cousin, Jeremy Kane.
- To **Isabel DeKoninck** on the passing of her grandfather David Gorton.
- To **Ellen Steurman** on the passing of her father, Sam Wapnowitz, father-in-law of Manny.
- To **Ruth Mermelstein** on the passing of her father, Frank Applebaum, father-in-law of Jules and grandfather of Hannah and Ben.
- We also mourn the victims of the Earthquake in Haiti.



From the Education Director *(continued from page 3)*

But what does this mean to our children's Jewish education? Well, there are many more distractions for both our students and their parents. Increasingly, it is difficult to find time to be with our family, or to do things we want to be able to do. We are continually bogged down with activities and events. How do we make decisions using our values? Better yet, what are our values? Absolutely, extra-curricular activities are important for our children. We want them to strengthen their skills, become part of a team, and try new things. But family time is important as well. And where does the synagogue fit in? Often, it is too hard to squeeze one more thing in, so Shabbat or even religious school might get pushed to the back of the line.

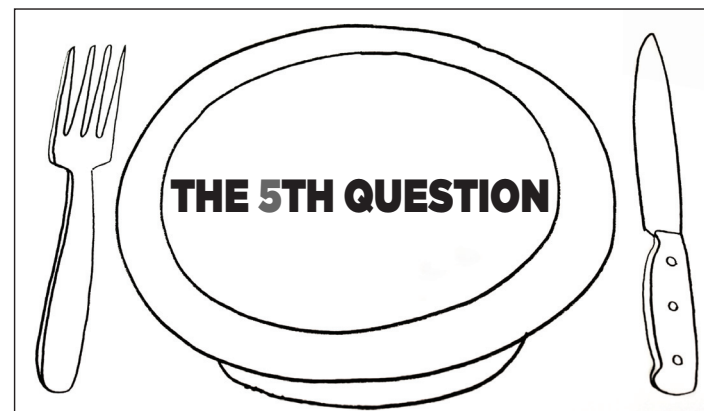
I mentioned in my last article, that we are working diligently and continue to modify our school program to meet the current needs of our families. We want to help you find the time you are seeking to be with family in an engaging way. Our Sunday school program for next year will involve multi-aged groupings and experiential learning in an innovative setting. It might involve some creative Shabbat Family Education Programs. I can't wait to share it with you. Please save the date for A Town Hall Meeting on Sunday, April 25th at 9:15 a.m. Join Rick Dzubow, outgoing president, Janet Karp, incoming president, Amy Grossman, Education Committee Chair, and myself, as we unveil the new school structure.

Together, we can explore the possibilities of raising Jewish children in a meaningful, relevant way. Please contact me with any comments or questions.

Ha-Kesher Now Accepting Advertising

Thank you for your interest in advertising in our synagogue newsletter, *Ha-Kesher*. We have "gone green," and *Ha-Kesher* is now a bimonthly online publication available at our web site, www.orhadash.com. We will be publishing quarter-page ads at a rate of \$30.00 per issue or reproducing business cards at a rate of \$20.00 per issue. Please contact me if you have general questions. If our terms are acceptable, please email photo-ready ads to debra.schaeffer@gmail.com for evaluation. If your ad is accepted for publication, we will invoice you through email and forward your ad to our printer. Please contact our printer, Guy Homer, at homer@homergroup.com, for more specific information regarding printing specifications.

THIS PASSOVER, ASK AND ANSWER



WHY ON THIS NIGHT ARE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE GOING HUNGRY?

THE ANSWER - BECAUSE ON THIS NIGHT, LIKE EVERY OTHER NIGHT, MILLIONS OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY HAVE NO OTHER CHOICE.

This Passover, as you gather to retell the story of our people's freedom from bondage, help re-write the stories of others less fortunate.

1. Incorporate The 5th Question into your Passover Seder. Talk about how it would feel if you and your family lived meal-to-meal. Talk about the injustice of senior citizens missing meals to afford rent. Talk about how hunger impacts a child's ability to learn. Talk about how you can make a difference.
2. Act. Help MAZON respond to hunger in communities across America and abroad. Donate what you would have spent to invite one more person to your Seder table.
3. Share your answers with others at MAZONPassover.org. Write a blog post. Share photos. Send tributes or e-cards. Advocate. And donate. For more information about incorporating The 5th Question into your Seder, please visit MAZONPassover.org.

This year, don't just say the blessings, share them.

DONATE TODAY

Mail: MAZON: A JEWISH RESPONSE TO HUNGER
 PO Box 894765
 Los Angeles, CA 90189-4765
 Online: mazonpassover.org
 Phone: 1 800 813-0557

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