



From Rabbi Josh



As the summer draws to a close and we return to the rhythms and routines of the fall, the High Holidays come upon us, ready to welcome us into the New Year. As vacations end and new school years begin, we are given this opportunity to prepare and reflect, to consider what we hope for from this new year and how

we can effect the changes in our own lives that can help make our aspirations reality.

This year, as sometimes happens, the first day of Rosh ha-Shanah falls on Shabbat – the New Year coinciding with the day of rest. While the focus of the day is naturally on Rosh ha-Shanah, there are some differences in the service when these two holidays coincide. Most noticeably among these the Shofar – one of the most prominent and powerful symbols of Rosh ha-Shanah – is not sounded. The traditional explanation for this prominent omission stems from the ancient prohibition against carrying on the Sabbath – a prohibition not generally observed by those in this community.

So if we are not concerned that carrying the Shofar to synagogue is a violation, why don't we sound the Shofar on Shabbat, as we do when Rosh ha-Shanah falls on any other day of the week?

I'd like to suggest that one reason to maintain this tradition lies in the different nature of these two holidays. True, they are both celebrations of Creation – the one celebrating the anniversary of the Creation of the world and the other our weekly affirmation of Creation by following God's example in resting and enjoying what has been Created. But the two holidays embody very

different aspects of this Creation and, by extension, our lives: striving and acceptance. Rosh ha-Shanah is about repenting, continuing to refine our relationships and our selves. It is a holiday where we work to align ourselves with the purposes of Creation: to be loving, just, compassionate, and moral. Shabbat is about celebrating and accepting; it is about embracing the rest and renewal necessary to accept ourselves as we are.

These two competing aspects of Creation are both critical – the desire to Do and the courage to Be – but they are in spiritual tension. The Shofar is an alarm that seeks to call us to ourselves, to rouse from our slumber and strive to improve our ways – and in this way is at odds with the acceptance that is critical to Shabbat and that gives us the strength to move forward. On Shabbat, when we call to mind the wholeness and perfection of Creation, when we seek to live in a perfected world, the cry of the Shofar is too damaging to the fabric of this holy day and so must be deferred to the second day of Rosh ha-Shanah, when we can accept it and its message of tearing down and remaking more freely.

This year I hope we can hold both aspects of Creation gently as we celebrate together – the urgency and the peacefulness – and ensure that we honor the meaning of both Shabbat and Rosh ha-Shanah.

L'Shanah Tovah / With Best Wishes for a Blessed Year.

Rabbi Josh

From the President—Rosh Hashanah Message

As we start a new year at Or Hadash, it is useful to step back and think about why synagogues exist, what purposes they serve, and the responsibilities that are attached to being a member of a synagogue.

For me, the discussion begins and ends with the words community, connection, and belonging.

Community is created when like-minded folks come together and find that they share like-minded interests, values, beliefs, and goals. Often, in the evolution of a community, this coming together creates shared purpose and a shared vision. Members of a community connect both to the community and to each other. Members of a community feel a sense of belonging from the bonds they form and from the friendships that endure.

But why a synagogue? What do we get from belonging to a synagogue?

I used to ask that question a lot. And for many years, my answer was always the same - I wasn't religious, and didn't think I'd get anything from being a member of a synagogue.... certainly not enough to justify the cost of being a member. So if I wasn't getting anything, why belong? The result of this thinking was that I wasn't affiliated for much of my adult life.

What I didn't realize was that I was asking myself the wrong question. Instead of asking, "What do I get?" I should have asked myself,

"What can I give, and where should I give it?"

If you believe that Judaism and our Jewish heritage is worth preserving, if you believe that your children, and their children, should have the opportunity to experience Jewish traditions, Jewish connections, Jewish culture, and Jewish community, then it becomes our obligation to keep Jewish centers of community and learning strong, vibrant, relevant and meaningful. The answer to the question "Why should I belong to a synagogue?" should be "What can I give, and where should I give it?"

Once in a while I'm asked why I'm president of a synagogue. Once in a while I'm asked why I belong to a synagogue if I'm not religious. Once in a while I'm asked why I belong to Or Hadash. And though my daughter does not live in the area, my answer to all these questions will often begin the same way - I do all of these things for my daughter, for her children, and for their children. It is certainly not the only answer, but it is one that keeps me rooted to our heritage and connected to future generations in a very personal way.

As this new year dawns, may you find purpose, meaning, connection and a sense of belonging in our community, and may our community be strengthened and energized by your participation and caring.

Rick Dzubow

Etrog: A Rare and Revered Fruit

Tuesday, October 6 at 7:30

Aliza Green will be presenting a program about the history and culture of etrogim, a fascinating story that follows the etrog, the oldest of citrus fruits, brought by Jews to their settlements throughout the Diaspora, starting before the time of the Roman Empire. Today in Morocco's Atlas Mountains, citrons (etrogs) that were first brought there over

2,000 years ago, grow wild. On display, will be five varieties of fresh etrogs that developed in different parts of the world - from Morocco to Southern Italy (on the Riviera del Cedro or the Citron Coast) in Calabria and Campania to Greece to Yemen, where the etrogs grew as large as watermelons. Ms. Green will explain what makes a kosher etrog and will share the folklore of etrogs. With her fascination for all things culinary, Aliza will talk about

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Ritual Committee

SPIRITUALITY IN ACTION

As noted in a previous Ha Keshet article, the mission statement of the Or Hadash Ritual Committee is “To work to provide a means to meet congregants’ spiritual needs within a framework of evolving Jewish Reconstructionist principles.” Accordingly, I’d like to draw attention to two relatively unknown Or Hadash activities which are designed to meet congregants’ spiritual needs on an ongoing basis. These are the Alternative Saturday Morning Minyan Services and Evening Torah Study Group.

The Alternate Saturday Morning Minyan Services (sometimes simply referred to as “The Minyan” – which is somewhat of a misnomer, since a minyan is not always achieved) are held nearly every Saturday Morning at Or Hadash from 10:00 A.M. to 12:00 Noon. On mornings when there is a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, this service takes place in the Rabbi’s study. Once or twice a year, it combines with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service and there is no separate Alternate Service. (This is always publicized several weeks in advance.) On mornings when there is no Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the Alternate Service is held in the sanctuary and becomes “The Service.”

That covers the logistics, but what makes this service spiritual? The spirituality comes from a combination of factors: spirited singing, inclusion of English readings to enhance the meaning of the prayers, and periodic pauses in the service for discussion about the prayers. In addition, on Saturdays when Rabbi Josh does not lead because he is leading the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Service or is away, the service becomes group-led. The attendees share leadership of the service by spontaneously calling out page numbers for the next prayer or reading of their choice. This may sound disorganized, but it really

works! More importantly, it creates a group spirit of closeness and shared responsibility which greatly enhances the service.

A Torah Service is also included, with a member of the congregation’s “Trope Troupe” chanting from the Torah Scroll. Three *Aliyot* are given out, except in the absence of a minyan; in which case, the Torah chanting sometimes takes place, but without *Aliyot*. This brief description can’t possibly capture the flavor of this service, so please stop by on a Saturday morning and see for yourself. All are welcome!

The Evening Torah Study Group has a similar atmosphere. It takes place two evenings a month, usually on Tuesdays, at Or Hadash, 7:30-9:00 P.M. It’s a small group – usually 3-5 people - and is involved in intensive study of Torah. Intensive in the sense that only 10-12 verses are studied in detail (i.e., word-by-word) in the course of an evening. Some knowledge of Hebrew is helpful, but not necessary. The focus is on insights participants can bring to the verses, as well as traditional Torah commentaries. There is occasional discussion on translation of the Hebrew, but only as it might affect the understanding of the verse. Participants have found that delving into the Torah in such detail can’t help but provide new insights into the core text of Judaism. After four or five years of study, we are still in the first of the five books, Genesis, and probably won’t finish it for another year – but no one’s in a hurry.

The monthly schedule is set a few weeks in advance, so if you’d like to attend a session to see what it’s like, please e-mail me at martin.jacobs@verizon.net and I’ll add you to the e-mail list for meeting announcements. This is a small group, and there is always room for additional participants.

By Marty Jacobs, Ritual Chairperson

News from SATO

We are both very excited to be the new co-chairs of the Social Action-Tikun Olam Committee. We have three ambitious new goals that we will not be able to accomplish without the help of many volunteers. First, we plan to organize at least one SATO activity every month. Second, most activities will be in conjunction with a holiday or an event taking place at the synagogue. Third, we are going to work with the school to provide more family- and child-oriented social action events. Please look over the tentative calendar of events and email us to let us know the activities with which you're interested in helping.

September: High Holiday Food Drive. Please bring peanut butter!
October: Sukkah Party and Meal Assembly for Aid for Friends
November: Interfaith Hospitality Network
December: Rick Recht concert and Used Musical Instrument and CD Drive
Christmas Soup Kitchen and Sleepover
January: Martin Luther King Day Soup Cooking and Toiletry Bags Assembly for the Homeless
February: Purim Misloach Manot Brigade
March/April: Pesach Chametz Food Drive
May: Pennies for Peace Penny Party to buy school supplies for needy children

Other possible activities include an event in conjunction with the Scholar-in-Residence weekend; a can, pet, book, or toiletries drive in conjunction with each school potluck get-together; volunteer opportunities for Special Olympics; and a bicycle safety day.

Please pick a month during which you think you will have time to help or an activity that seems particularly interesting to you and email us soon to volunteer. If you don't see an activity that interests you and have an idea for one, let us know - our plans are not set in stone.

We're going to need all the help we can get! So please get involved and volunteer!

Email us at Alisa Belzer (belzera@rci.rutgers) or Debbie Bernstein (debbie.bernstein@mac.com)

By **Alisa Belzer and Debbie Bernstein, Co-chairs**

Writing From Your Heart and Soul to Prepare for the New Year

A Selichot writing workshop will be part of our Selichot observance this year on September 12, beginning at 7:30, at the home of congregants Michelle and Doug Smithman in Dresher. For many people, Selichot is the formal beginning to the most powerful and introspective time of the Jewish year, the High Holidays. In this hands-on workshop you will do short writing exercises to help you prepare for engaging with the core concepts of the upcoming holiday season, and that will inspire you to connect with Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur on a deeper level. No writing experience or expertise is necessary.

7:30–8:00 Schmoozing and refreshments (Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.)
8:00–9:00 Havdalah and writing workshop by Janet Falon.
9:00–10:00 Service

We look forward to being together for this very meaningful service. Call Michelle Smithman 215-641-4646 or email michellesmithman@msn.com to RSVP or if you have questions.

Schedule of High Holy Day Services 2009/5770

As in past years, we will use Gratz College for morning services on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, Kol Nidre, and the morning of Yom Kippur. All other services will be held in the sanctuary at Or Hadash, unless otherwise noted.

Please note that all service ending times are approximate.

Friday evening, September 18 — Erev **Rosh Hashanah** at Or Hadash

8:00-9:30 pm Evening Service

Saturday morning, September 19 — First Day **Rosh Hashanah** at Gratz

9:30-1:00 Morning Service

9:30-11:00 Adult Study Havurah leads a discussion—"Unique Perspectives on Judaism"

9:30-1:30 Activities for Children and Teens

Sunday morning, September 20 — Second Day **Rosh Hashanah** at Or Hadash

9:30-1:00 Morning Service

9:30-1:00 Activities for Children and Teens

1:15 pm Tashlich

Sunday evening, September 27 — Erev **Yom Kippur** at Gratz

6:30-9:00 pm Kol Nidre

7:00-8:00 pm Family Service (following chanting of Kol Nidre)

Monday morning, September 28 — **Yom Kippur** morning at Gratz

9:30-1:30 Morning Service

9:30-11:00 Adult Study Havurah leads a discussion—"Unique Perspectives on Judaism"

9:30-1:30 Activities for Children and Teens

Monday afternoon, September 28 — **Yom Kippur** afternoon at Or Hadash

2:30-3:30 pm Healing Service (in the Garden weather permitting)

3:30-4:30 pm Discussion Group: *Are We Our Brother's Keepers? Or has someone MADOFF with our Collective Reputations?* Jewish responses to economic crimes committed by Jews. Presented by Gerri Goldman and Jeff Chebot.

5:00-7:27 pm Yizkor, Minchah and Ne'ilah

7:28 pm Shofar, Havdalah and Break the Fast: light refreshments in the Community Room.

All are welcome.

Schedule of Children's Activities 2009/5770

Pre-K—2nd Grade (ages 3-8)		
Time	Activity	Room
9:30—10:45 am	Arts	Rooms 8 & 9
10:45—12:00	Family Service (optional games for youngest children)	Library
12:00—1:30 pm	Social Action	Rooms 8 & 9
3rd—6th Grade (ages 8-12)		
9:30—10:45 am	Creative Arts/Games	Rooms 12 & 13
10:45—12:00	Family Service	Library
12:00—1:30 pm	Social Action	Rooms 12 & 13
7th—12th Grade (ages 12+)		
9:30—10:45 am	Social Action	Rooms 115
10:45—12:00	Teen Discussion Group	Rooms 115
12:00—1:30 pm	Teen Service	Chapel
7th –12th Grade (ages 12+)		
9:30—1:30	Lounge	Room 116
10:45 am—12:00	Lounge	Room 116
12:00— 1:30	Lounge	Room 116

Education Corner

I am writing this article from the hills of the Pocono Mountains. I have been blessed with the opportunity to spend the summer at Camp JRF as Rosh Hinuh, the Director of Education. My role here is very similar to the one I hold at Or Hadash. I oversee the educational programming for our campers. Every-day, each eidah, or unit, has one hour of “havaya” which we translate as “experience.” It is a Jewish Educational experience, though we hope that the hanihim, campers, don’t notice that they’re actually learning from that experience.

It’s a good thing that I haven’t been asked to describe the observations of the entire summer in one Hakesher article. There’s so much to share, so I’m happy that I’ll be able to do so in small snippets over the course of the year. For now, I’ll share a few of the things I’ve noticed.

INCLUSIVITY: Here at Camp JRF, every child, counselor, specialist, super-visor, and visitor is treated as if they belong from the moment they walk through the door. One example that I see on a weekly basis is our Saturday night program, called Shabbat Unplugged. It’s a talent show held in the spirit of Shabbat (hence, “unplugged”). Campers can show off their dancing, singing, or musical skills as well as tell jokes or put on a skit. This can be done individually, in a small group, or even with a whole tsrif, or cabin. Recently, as a camper did a dance by herself, she forgot the choreography and looked at the audience with a great deal of fear. The audience rallied around her and cheered. One of her peers, with whom she had been practicing, got up and danced with her until she remembered her moves. What an amazing sight! Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, but here we all build on each other’s strengths and talents.

MULTI-AGED GROUPINGS: At Camp JRF, we have one hour of Breira, electives, each day. The campers have a choice of many options. Some are open to a specific age group, but most are open to all campers. Campers range from entering 4th grade to entering 10th grade. So, in many of these electives, you may find a wide range of ages. I’ve seen many older campers befriend younger ones in ways I don’t see at home. Another program here is “Harim Buddies.” Our entering 9th and 10th graders buddy up with our entering 4th through 6th grad Ilanot campers. Friendships bloom as the older campers teach the younger ones “How We Be” at camp.

RUACH-SPIRIT: Shira, singing, is a 20-minute must everyday for the entire camp. While every camper may not participate to the fullest extent, what a cool thing it is to see so many campers and counselors singing at the top of their lungs songs like Hinei Ma Tov, or Od Yavo Shalom. There are hand motions for many of these songs and the spirit at camp is indescribable.

So, as I write this article, I am pondering how to take some of this home back with me. I’ve spent many Shabbatot in the past visiting Camp JRF wondering the same thing. Now that I’ve been here for an extended period of time, I am certain that most of camp stays at camp. However, I think some themes can be brought home. Don’t be surprised if we explore multi-aged programs, singing with a bit more spirit, or talking about Derech Eretz, being a mentch, and taking care of one another on a regular basis.

I look forward to seeing you all very soon. Have a wonderful rest of the summer. I’ll see you all in September.

B’Shalom, Lori Rubin, Education Director

B'nai Mitzvah

September 12

Rebecca Shorin
daughter of Richard and Andrea Shorin

October 10

Brian Glantz
son of Robert Glantz and Debra Ettinger

October 17

Hannah and Daniel Beier
children of Walter and Jane Beier

October 24

Mazzy Bell
daughter of Jonathan and Alyson Bell

October 31

Samantha Marcus
daughter of Larry and Jaclyn Marcus

November 7

Brayden Greenwald
son of Thomas and Lynda Greenwald

November 14

Lauren Goldenberg
daughter of Jon and Bari Goldenberg

November 21

Joseph Mernyk
son of Alisa Belzer

MAZEL TOV!

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their uses in the kitchen, from making etrog liqueur, etrog preserves, panforte de Siena (a dense dried and candied fruit and nut cake) to elegant rice pudding, *Riz a l'imperatrice* (The Empress's rice pudding). Please make a reservation by calling Laurie Albert at the Or Hadash office 215-283-0276 or emailing office@orhadash.com.

Aliza Green, the Philadelphia-based cookbook author, journalist and pioneering chef, is the author of eight highly successful cookbooks and two more on the way. Before her career as a cookbook author, Green wrote popular weekly food columns for both the Philadelphia Inquirer and the Philadelphia Daily News. Green has conducted numerous cooking classes, had many television appearances and radio interviews, and is a highly regarded television and print food stylist.

From the Synagogue Administrator

This summer I was fortunate enough to vacation at Niagara Falls. What a spectacular sight! One truly feels the grandeur of creation in such a place.

We have our own waterfall here at Or Hadash in the Life Cycle Garden. While it is not quite on the same scale as what I witnessed this summer, it is a wonder created by our own members. I invite you to come and enjoy our garden when you have the time. The waterfall is turned on weekdays from 11:00 am – 1:00 pm and on Shabbat immediately before and after services. It is a very special spot for meditation, reflection, or just enjoying the flowers.

Wishing you a L'shanah Tovah – a happy and healthy new year.

Laurie Albert

Condolences

Condolences to Jim Rall on the passing of his grandmother, Anne Swick

Condolences to Mackenzie Learn on the passing of her grandfather, Harold Young

Condolences to Carol Weinman on the passing of her cousin, Esther Waxler

Condolences to Jim Marmion on the passing of his mother, Margaret Marmion

Condolences to Laurie Albert on the passing of her father-in-law, Lester Geist

Condolences to Wendy Elliot-Vandivier on the passing of her mother, Patricia Elliott

Condolences to Barry Brian on the passing of his mother, Bernice Brian

Condolences to Rich Shorin on the passing of his mother, Genevieve Shorin

Condolences to Manny Rosenberg on the passing of his father, Lipman Rosenberg

Condolences to Debbie Karl on the passing of her father, Leonard Rubenstein

Condolences to Ed Schacht on the passing of his father, Milton Schacht

Upcoming Events

Friday, September 4th - SHABBAT AL FRESCO. Services will be held outdoors at the home of Gail Morrison-Hall and Jim Hall-Morrison in Maple Glen at 7:00 pm. Services will be preceded by a light (dairy/vegetarian) potluck dinner at 6:30. Call Gail at 215-654-9222 to RSVP for dinner and to get directions. Join us for a peaceful Shabbat under the stars.

Friday, September 11th - Our second annual Welcome Back Barbecue and Open House. Please invite friends or family members who may be interested in becoming members to join us for this special Shabbat evening. Tot Shabbat begins at 6:00 pm, the barbecue, 6:30, and family services, at 7:30. Reservations are required by September 8th for members with payment of \$8 per person or \$20 per family. There is no charge for prospective members, but reservations are requested. Music will be provided by the band, "FILL IN THE BLANKS."

Saturday, September 12, 2009 beginning at 7:30 pm - Selichot

The Saturday night before Rosh Hashanah is known as Selichot, a time to focus our intentions, in preparation for the upcoming High Holidays. This year, we will join together at the home of congregants Michelle and Doug Smithman in Dresher.

7:30–8:00 Schmoozing and refreshments
(Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.)

8:00-9:00 Havdalah and writing workshop
by Janet Falon.

9:00–10:00 service

We look forward to being together for this very meaningful service.

For RSVP or questions, call Michelle Smithman at 215-641-4646 or email michellesmithman@msn.com.

Sunday, September 13th – First day of Sunday School

Tuesday, September 15th – First day of Hebrew School

October 2 – Family Service, including our Sukkot celebration. **Sukkot** will be celebrated on Friday evening, October 2 with Sukkah decorating and "Aid for Friends" meals at 5:30, pizza dinner at 6:30, and our family-friendly Sukkot Service with lulav and etrog at 7:00. Saturday morning we continue with our breakfast and Torah Study at 8:45 AM when we will study Ecclesiastes in honor of Sukkot, followed by our morning Shabbat service that will include Hallel.

Tuesday, October 6 at 7:30 PM - Join Aliza Green for a special holiday program **Etrog: A Rare and Revered Fruit.**

Friday, October 9 – Celebrate **Simchat Torah** as we end and begin our Torah reading cycle. Join us at 6:00 for a pot luck (dairy/vegetarian) dinner followed by Evening Service at 6:30. We will have Hagigat Limud to honor all of our new students, music and dancing with the Torah, and a special Ice Cream Oneg.

October 16 - Please note that we will share our Shabbat service with guests from Congregation Temple Bethel.

October 30th - Marissa Bluestine, of the Innocence Project, will be our special speaker at services.

November 6 - Three Part Harmony with 6:00 Tot Shabbat, 6:30 potluck dinner (dairy/vegetarian), and 7:00 pm service

Save these Dates

<p>SHABBAT AL FRESCO Friday, September 4th</p>	<p>WELCOME BACK BARBEQUE & OPEN HOUSE Friday, September 11th</p>
<p>SELICHOT Saturday, September 12th</p>	<p>SUKKOT FAMILY SERVICE Friday, October 2</p>
<p>Etrog: A Rare and Revered Fruit A special holiday program with Aliza Green Tuesday, October 6</p>	<p>SIMCHAT TORAH Friday, October 9</p>