



Sha'arei Shalom

Monthly Newsletter

July 2014

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Upcoming Events

- SHABBAT SERVICE June 6th @ 7:30 p.m.
- SHABBAT SERVICE June 20th @ 7:30 p.m.
- SHABBAT SERVICE July 25th @ 7:30 p.m.
- SHABBAT SERVICE August 22nd @ 7:30 p.m.

All Congregation Services take place at the Ashland Community Center, 162 West Union Street (unless otherwise noted).

- Pearl Street Café Volunteering—July 15th @ 5:00 p.m.
- Mid-Summer Cookout—July 20th @ 4:00 p.m.
- Evergreen – July 24th @ 7:30 p.m.
- Book Group – July 27th @ 10:00 a.m.

DUES REMINDER

For those members who split their annual dues into two payments, please remember that the second payment was due by June 30th.

You can contact Karen at treasurer@shaareishalom.org if you are unsure of your balance.

Rabbi's Letter **by Margie Klein**

The Power of Our Words

This week is the one-year anniversary of my marriage to Jeremy and, besides counting my blessings, the occasion has gotten me to think once again about the place of vows and commitments within Judaism. While there's a great deal to the subject, one generalization is that our tradition has always accorded extraordinary power to the spoken word, especially when the name of God is invoked.

One early illustration of this is in Genesis 27 when Jacob, with his mother Rebekah's help, dresses up as his brother Esau, and tricks their father Isaac into giving Jacob the blessing Isaac intended for Esau. When Esau and Jacob realize what has happened, they weep together. Ever since I read the story as a little girl, I wondered: Why couldn't Isaac just say he made a mistake, that his words were intended for Esau, and that he was taking back the blessing? Apparently, at least in biblical times, the words were deemed to have an almost magical authority of their own. Once uttered, the speaker lost the power to retract them.

In one of the Torah portions this month, Parashat Matot, the Torah prescribes rules for oaths and vows. The Torah teaches that oaths between people and God cannot be broken, and generally discourages people from making hard-to-keep vows in the first place. In Talmudic times, the sages realized that there needed to be some mechanism to absolve people from vows that became impossible to fulfill, and permitted annulment by a Beit Din (rabbinic court) of three rabbis. And, ever since the Middle Ages, Jews have chanted the Kol Nidre prayer on Yom Kippur night, asking that we be absolved from any vows we make during Yom Kippur or in the coming year that we cannot keep.

We have certainly come a long way from the days when using the name of God always involved an unbreakable commitment. Today, "I swear to God" is more likely to begin such sentences as: (a) "Mom, I didn't eat the extra chocolate-chip cookie," (b) "No officer, I wasn't speeding," or (c) "The check is already in the mail!" Even if we don't want to go back to the old days when words had a supernatural power of their own, our tradition has something important to teach us about taking ourselves and our promises seriously.

I know that there are times – like my marriage vows – where I want my words to have the power to create a sacred, life-long bond, knowing that in the Jewish tradition our words help create our reality. We want to be (or become) people with enough faith in ourselves and God to make very serious commitments. Yet, most of the time, though I want to set ambitious goals and intentions, I try not to make hard promises when I am not sure I can fulfill them. I invite you to do the same. Next time you feel inclined to promise or swear, if you aren't sure you can deliver, perhaps instead share your hope as a goal or an intention. When we are careful with our words, we have more integrity.

My blessing this month for us is this: When we make commitments, may we be both courageous and realistic, motivating ourselves to do our best, but also letting each other know when we are not sure if we can follow through.

Finally, when we use our words for prayer, let us give ourselves license to tell God who we want to be and how we hope the world will change, and humbly promise to do our best to make it so.

Rabbi Margie

President's Corner **by Jane Greenstein**

Summer in New England always means shifting gears—to a slower pace, earlier wake up (those birds!), and more time outside (Hallelujah!!). For me, it also means a slowing down of my Sha'arei Shalom life. While having fewer meetings to go to is nice for a change, I do miss having as many opportunities to connect with our community. But as Rabbi Margie taught us this year about the Jubilee in the Torah, we all need a time to take a break in order to best appreciate all that we have. As I slip into summer mode, I want to take a moment to

celebrate the rabbi, our religious school teachers, and our board and school committee members past and present who worked so hard to keep our congregation without walls the strong, vibrant, warm Jewish community that we are. I hope everyone enjoys the summer and comes back from time away energized for a year filled with joyous worship, relevant learning, and social connection.

While we slow down, we don't stop all together. We hope you will join us for one of our July events. With opportunities for worship, community service, and socializing, there is something for everyone!

Upcoming Services

On **Friday July 25th and August 22nd**, join us for a traditional Friday night service at 7:30 p.m. at the Ashland Community Center. As always, we also invite you to join us after services for a community oneg Shabbat.

We are currently in need of oneg sponsors for July 25th, and August 22nd. Please consider volunteering to host an oneg this year...it's easy, fun and rewarding to provide refreshments for congregants, friends and family after the Friday evening service so we can enjoy the warmth and joy of the Sabbath together. Hosting an oneg is a mitzvah, and your gift of time and effort is greatly appreciated! Please contact Jamie Sack at sack.jamie@yahoo.com or 508-627-0387 for more information. Thank you!

We are currently enrolling for the 2013-14 school year. If you are a current family and have not yet sent in your forms and deposit, please do so now.

[Click here for 2014-15 School Registration Form](#)

If you are a prospective family and would like to learn more about our school, please contact Lisa Clay at school@shaareishalom.org.

Talia Muller Bat Mitzvah

Talia Muller will be called to Torah as a bat mitzvah on Saturday, July 19th in Disney World. Her parents, Cindi and Dain, have this to say about her and this upcoming event:

We are so proud of Talia as she prepares to become a Bat Mitzvah. Talia is an extremely compassionate girl who has decided to devote herself to animals. She has become an active member of two different 4-H clubs where she gathers with other kids that share an interest and passion for animals. Over the past few years, we have watched as she has learned practical skills: caring for animals, building a chicken coop, building rabbit cages, spinning, and gardening. She has put her animal care skills to work by rescuing the stray cat in the neighborhood and rabbits from a hoarder. She has hand nurtured day-old rabbit kits when their mother did not know how to care for them, and helps take care of all of our animals – from the cats, to the chickens, ducks, geese, turkeys, and even the peacock. Talia dreams of the day that she can become a veterinarian and live on a farm.

She has worked so hard to reach this day. Talia has been attending the Sha'arei Shalom Hebrew School since kindergarten and has been blessed to have so many wonderful teachers along the way; many thanks to all of them. In particular, we want to thank Rose Spitzer who has been an amazing and patient tutor for Talia for the past few years. We are not sure how she would have reached this day without her help. We are thankful for the small, family-like, community that Sha'arei Shalom has always been that has allowed our children to thrive. This month, Talia will be called to become a Bat Mitzvah at our home-away-from-home, Disney World. She has requested that her Bat Mitzvah be a small and intimate affair so we are thankful for all that are able to be with us in that day, but we will be thinking of all of you here and all of your support that has allowed us to reach this day.

Sha'arei Shalom sends a big Mazel Tov to the Muller family on their simcha!

We send prayers for healing to Harvey Hecker and Judy Ernest.

Mid-Summer Cookout

Looking for some mid-summer socialization, fun, and food? Please join us at the home of Andy and Nancy Witty, 58 Salem End Lane, Framingham for a mid-summer cookout at 4:00PM on July 20th. Please bring your own lawn chair, and an outdoor game your kids enjoy. Any questions? Call the Wittys at 508-820-3001.

Please use the link below to sign up for your contribution of food, beverages and/or dessert.

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/60B0F4FA9AE2AA75-cookout

Tikkun Olam—Pearl Street Café Volunteering

by Lisa Freedman

The United Way serves dinner to individuals in need at the Pearl St. Cafe in Framingham on Tuesday and Thursday nights. The 6th grade Hebrew School class has volunteered twice during this past year. I thought that we could open up this opportunity to the Sha'arei Shalom community (appropriate for 5th grade and older).

EVENT INFORMATION:

Date: Tuesday, July 15th 2014

Time: 5:00-8:00 p.m.

Place: Pearl St. Cafe, 10 Pearl St., Framingham

of volunteers needed: 10

EVENT EXPECTATIONS

The location is Pearl Street Cupboard and Café, 10 Pearl Street in Framingham. We ask our volunteers to arrive at 5:00 p.m. to assist with set-up and receive your assignments. We then serve our clients from 5:30-7:30. Afterwards, some volunteers assist with the kitchen clean-up. This would consist of washing pans and serving utensils; as well as, cleaning the stainless steel countertops. The remainder of the volunteers assist with cleaning the dining room tables and disposing of trash. With everyone's help the evening ends around 8:00. We recommend wearing jeans, t-shirts and comfortable shoes. We do provide aprons.

To sign up or for questions contact Lisa Freedman LNFkitty2@aol.com or (508) 308-2514.

Please let me know as soon as possible.

Monica Weinstein Women's Book Group

by Cindi Muller

In light of the usual craziness of summer, our Book Club has elected to meet next July 27th at 10am at Bodacious Bagels. Our book this month was recommended to us by Linda Hecker. We will be reading "The Headmaster's Wife" by Thomas Christopher Greene. For those of you who like to plan their summer reading far in advance our following meeting will be August 24th at 10am at Bodacious Bagels and we will FINALLY be discussing "The Invention of Wings" by Sue Monk Kidd. The August book is a book that many of us keep coming back to so the hope is that by the end of August everyone would have finally found a copy of this book to read & discuss.

We know that everyone is usually very busy in the summer with day trips, camp runs & vacations. We sincerely hope that if you can't come to one of our meetings this summer that you can still make it to the other.

Happy Reading everyone!

Evergreen

by Sheila Watnick

At the June 24th meeting of Evergreen at the home of Sheila Watnick, members reported very surgeries and illnesses with family members and with themselves. Everyone was so supportive. On a happier note, one member was enthusiastic about seeing Cirque du Soleil for her recent anniversary, while another talked about her recent 2400-mile road trip to VA, NC, GA and NJ, visiting and staying with family and friends along the way.

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, July 22nd, at 7:30 p.m.** Location TBD. Female temple members 60 and over are welcome. Please contact evergreen@shaareishalom.org

We are compiling a list of Bar/Bat Mitzvah information consisting of:

**Venues
Caterers
DJ's**

**Please email Lisa Freedman, LNFkitty2@aol.com with some you've experienced.
It would be nice for Sha'arei Shalom families to have a resource of this kind.**

THANK YOU.

Comfort and Caring Shawls

by Margot Podtburg

The Helping Hands Committee has introduced a new way that we can help one another during times of serious illness and challenges. A Comfort and Caring Shawl can be a thin scarf, a shrug, a wide shawl or a lap blanket. What makes it a comfort and sharing shawl is the intentions of the creator. Shawls are made with love and care by a volunteer within our Sha'arei Shalom community for someone within our community. They represent prayers for the recipient's health, joy and peace as well as hopes for comfort for the recipient. The shawls would be delivered to recipients either by the Rabbi or by someone with Helping Hands accompanied by a note explaining the shawl.

If you knit or crochet, you, too, can help by making a shawl. If you are unable to make a shawl, you can still help by providing a gift card so that those of us who can so that we may purchase yarn to create a shawl. Our hope is to have several shawls on hand in case of an immediate need, and then to replenish the shawls as they are distributed. We also have a newly created knitting circle (see below) who can help you learn to knit/crochet and can help you make a shawl for someone you know. If you would like help making a shawl or would like to donate a gift card for supplies, please contact Margot Podtburg at mpodtburg@hotmail.com

Babysitting!

My name is Lexi Maher. I live on Pennock road and I love children. I am 15 years old and have taken the Red Cross babysitting course. I can babysit on weekends and various weekday nights. Contact me with any questions at:

508-231-0883 or 774-279-6647
leximaher@hotmail.com

American Red Cross Babysitter Training Class

To provide youth who are planning to babysit with the knowledge and skills necessary to safely and responsibly give care for children and infants. This training will help participants to develop leadership skills; learn how to develop a babysitting business, keep themselves and others safe and help children behave; and learn about basic child care and basic first aid. The recommended age for this course is 11-15 years old.

Please contact Michelle Levenson for more information (617-529-0429, mlevenson@verizon.net)

DO YOU LOVE TO SING? CHECK OUT SHIR JOY!

Whether you sing professionally or have only sung in your shower, this is your chance to join with other adults who love to sing Jewish music. Shir Joy is a Jewish choir that started up in the fall of 2011. We practice on Sunday evenings from 7-9 pm right at Congregation B'nai Shalom in Westborough. In our first year we had over 35 members from 14 central MA towns & cities. Rehearsals this coming year will begin on October 14 following the High Holidays. Choir participants are not required to be Jewish nor do members need to be affiliated with a Jewish organization to join. We hold several concerts over the year in the Central MA area.

Shir Joy will be directed again this coming year by Jonathan Rappaport, an experience choral conductor with over forty years of experience. Dues of \$75 per year. love of Jewish music, and ability to keep in tune with your neighboring singers are required. Although we do make beautiful music together, we also build strong community bonds. We welcome new members. If you are interested in participating or want additional information, check out our website www.shirjoychorus.com, or email ShirJoyMA@gmail.com. Shir Joy is partially funded from a generous grant from Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts.

WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG FAMILIES

PJ LIBRARY IS A JEWISH FAMILY ENGAGEMENT program implemented on a local level throughout North America. We mail free, high-quality [Jewish children's literature and music](#) to families across the continent on a monthly basis.

PJ Library is a program of the [Harold Grinspoon Foundation](#), made possible through partnerships with philanthropists and local Jewish organizations. Today, families in hundreds of communities across the United States and Canada are able to explore the timeless core values of Judaism through books and music.

All families raising Jewish children from age six months of age through five, six, seven or eight years (depending on the community) are [welcome to enroll](#).

<http://pjlibrary.org/>

Dror Leadership High School

This is a semester study abroad program for 10th and 11th graders which will take place in the lovely northern town of Karmiel. The American students will have their own English speaking classes within an Israeli high school in order to encourage them to create bonds with Israeli peers and understand life in Israel. Along with their academic studies students will learn Hebrew, Jewish History, Israeli Society, and take part in a weekly field trip as well as regular volunteering projects. Our aim is to have students connect to Israel and develop as Jewish leaders during their time here which they can then bring to their home communities.

If you would like more information, visit our website at www.drorleadership.org.

PJ goes to the Beach

at Grossman Camp



Sunday, July 20 • 10am-1pm

For families with children 2-6 years

Powissett Pond, JCC Grossman Camp, Dover Road, Westwood

Free for JCC member families. Non-members \$15/family

**Come to a PJ Library® family beach party!
Splash in the lake, go down the waterslide,
build sandcastles and enjoy a summer
sing-along with entertainer, Janet Feld.**

Bring a dairy picnic lunch! Dessert provided.

In case of inclement weather, please call 617-558-6587
after 8:30am on the day of event for updates.

Register online at bostonjcc.org/pjbeach2014

For more information, contact pjlibrary@jccgb.org
or 617-558-6587.



Qi Gong (Chinese Yoga)
at Temple Israel this summer!
145 Hartford Street, Natick
Tuesdays
10:00 to 11:00

July 1, 8, 15, 29 (no class July 22)
August 5, 12, 19, 26



What is Qi Gong?

- Gentle, relaxing and energizing stretching
- No mat required: Qi Gong is done seated or standing
- Great for arthritis, neuropathy, joint pain, circulation and digestion
- Meditative-great for concentration
- Fun!

Nancy Fried-Tanzer is a certified Qi Gong instructor

Healthy aging programs are made possible through funding from CJP



Dear Shaarei Shalom,

I am writing you today to let you know that one of our Jewish educator colleagues is asking for your help. Avis Smith is the Director of Congregation Shaarey Tphiloh in Portland Maine. She and her husband Roger have been part of CAJE and NewCAJE since 1991.



Avis has polycystic kidney disease which has now progressed to its final stages. She needs a kidney transplant. Avis told me that her best odds of healthy survival are to find a living donor. While it helps to have a matching blood type (hers is A positive), it is not necessary.

Obviously, donating one of your kidney's is a great act of hesed (loving kindness) and piety. It supports the idea that one should "not stand idly by the blood of another human being." Leviticus 19:16 For more information about the Jewish medical ethics of becoming a living donor, check out the Halachic Organ Donor Society, www.hods.org, to read more about Live Kidney Donors and the Living Donor Program. The site has lots of good information about becoming a living donor.

Anyone who is considering such a donation, can contact Avis at avismsmith@yahoo.com or the Maine Transplant Program at www.mmc.org/mainetransplantprogram. Costs for potential donors and medical tests are paid for by the Transplant program.

Avis' friends have set up a facebook page called: A kidney for Avis Merdek Smith. Please consider putting a link this page on your Facebook pages. The more people who know, the more likely Avis is to find a donor.

I know you will add Avis to your prayers for a Refuah Shelayma.

Rabbi Cherie Koller-Fox, President, NewCAJE