



# Sha'arei Shalom

## Monthly Newsletter

February 2015

### Contact Us

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### Upcoming Events

#### January 30<sup>th</sup>

- SHABBAT KIDS @ 6:45 p.m.
- TU B'SHEVAT SEDER @ 7:30 p.m.

#### February 6<sup>th</sup>

- SHABBAT LIVE! @ 7:30 p.m.

#### February 27<sup>th</sup>

- SHABBAT CIRCLE POTLUCK DINNER @ 6:30 p.m.

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

- Book Group – February 1<sup>st</sup> @ 10:00 a.m.
- Sha'arei Café – February 8<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 p.m.
- Evergreen – February 24<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30 p.m.

**Sha'arei Shalom's membership year follows the calendar year, so membership is renewable now. Dues payments and forms were to be turned in by 1/31, so if you haven't already done so, please mail them asap.**

**[2015 Annual Dues and Membership Form](#)**

**Please mail to:  
P.O. Box 454, Ashland, MA 01721.**

## Rabbi's Letter

by Margie Klein

Dear friends,

This week, we experienced an epic winter storm. The roads shut down, the schools closed. From my warm house, I looked out the window as the snow blew in every direction, eventually burying Jeremy's car almost completely. Yet, with central heating, electricity, and excellent public programs to remove snow, the storm was more of a treat than a threat.

In ancient times, though, when storms were often terrifying, people saw snow and storms as proof of God's might.

God covers the sky with clouds;  
God supplies the earth with rain  
and makes grass grow on the hills.  
God provides food for the cattle  
and for the young ravens when they call.

...

God spreads the snow like wool  
and scatters the frost like ashes.  
God hurls down his hail like pebbles.  
Who can withstand his icy blast?  
God sends his word and melts them;  
God stirs up his breezes, and the waters flow.

Psalm 147:8-9, 16-18

In the world of the Psalms, natural occurrences were invitations to contemplate God's power. In today's world, though I am grateful for the blessings of science and technology and their capacity to insulate us from the fierceness of nature, it is also harder to connect with the wonder of nature. I wish we lived in a world where it was easier to notice God amidst the storm.

As we move into Tu Bishvat, the Jewish birthday of the trees and celebration of the natural world, I invite us to explore how we might connect with God through nature. Even if many of us do not imagine that God directly causes weather patterns, how might we wake ourselves up to look at snow or powerful rain or towering trees and experience wonder?

Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote, "Our goal should be to live life in radical amazement. ....get up in the morning and look at the world in a way that takes nothing for granted. Everything is phenomenal; everything is incredible; never treat life casually. To be spiritual is to be amazed."

This month, I look forward to exploring with you how we might cultivate radical amazement and wonder, and how to connect with God through nature.

May we all be blessed to stay safe and warm, and to live a life filled with wonder.  
Rabbi Margie

## President's Corner

by Jane Greenstein

Last year we conducted a survey of our Religious School families and 100% of respondents rated their experience as "Excellent" or "Good" and that they were either "Very Happy" or "Happy" with their child's teacher. How proud we are of that! Many adults unfortunately do not have fond memories of their religious school experience. So we at Sha'arei Shalom have always had as a top priority to have a school with a rigorous, meaningful curriculum, but one that also is enjoyable for the children. To have reached that goal is a testament to the dedication and hard work of our religious school teachers, our school committee members, and our rabbi. The current leadership also stands on the shoulders of those who came before them who helped to build the solid school program that we have today.

Our current school committee members have served for quite some time. **We are very much in need of new members to help us continue the wonderful education program that we have in place!** Please consider volunteering in this important way. A little bit of help goes a long way. You don't need to have an education background to help with logistics. ☺ *The school committee meets next on 2/8 @ 9:00 a.m. at the Ashland Middle School during Sunday classes; come join them to get a sense of what they do and what they need.* You can also speak with our school committee chair, Lisa Clay.

If you aren't a Sha'arei Shalom member and would like to come visit our school to learn more about what makes us so special, please contact our school committee chair, Lisa Clay, at [school@shaareishalom.org](mailto:school@shaareishalom.org) to schedule a visit.

## Upcoming Services

On January 30<sup>th</sup> we have two events:

- **From 6:45-7:30 p.m., we have a Shabbat Kids.** Lucy Tannen and Ari Kaufman will be leading this interactive, musical event for young children and their families. This Shabbat event is geared to children ages 3-7 (older siblings of course are always also welcome). It is also a wonderful way for parents to connect with other families with young children in our community. We encourage you to bring a friend as well!
- **At 7:30 p.m. join us for our annual Tu B'shevat seder,** where we will celebrate the Jewish birthday of the trees using a fun and interactive ritual created by the kabbalists of Safed, Israel. Together, we will explore our relationships with nature and the seasons through personal, spiritual, and practical reflections, and set intentions for the new year. Don't miss this fruit-filled event, which will be both delicious and nourishing for body and soul!

**Our next Shabbat Live! service is on Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m.** Shabbat Live! is a musical and interactive service featuring our own Shabbat Live Band. Come experience our lively twist on a traditional Shabbat service. Filled with festive music and song, this is a service you don't want to miss! As always, an Oneg Shabbat will follow the service.

**Join us for a family-friendly Shabbat Circle Potluck Dinner on Friday February 27<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m.** at the Ashland Community Center. Relax with old friends and meet some new ones over Shabbat dinner. Attendees are asked to bring a potluck vegetarian/dairy dish to share

**[Click here to sign up for your food contribution](#)**

**We are currently in need of oneg sponsors. 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](mailto:sack.jamie@yahoo.com) or 508-627-0387 for more information. Thank you!**

## 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sha'arei Café

*Back by popular demand...*

**Come join the Sha'arei Shalom community for an Adult only evening of music and fun! Sing or just schmooze as musical members lead us with familiar favorites from the last few decades.**

Beer, wine, soft drinks and our Sha'arei Café Songbook will be provided.

*Please bring an appetizer or dessert to share.  
Feel free to bring your instruments if you want to join in.*

At the home of:  
Alan and Rachel Lovitz  
2 Shady Hollow Path  
Ashland

Email [lovitza58@gmail.com](mailto:lovitza58@gmail.com) with any questions

**DATE:** 3/7/2015 (Sat 7:00PM - 10:00PM)

**LOCATION:** 2 Shady Hollow Path, Ashland

**[Click here to rsvp and to sign up for what you will bring](#)**

**PLEASE RSVP BY WEDNESDAY March 4<sup>TH</sup>**

## Religious School Update

by Lisa Clay

February is a short month for Hebrew School. We have 2 weeks of class and then we are off for February vacation. However, there is still lots of great learning and preparing happening in that short time as we look forward to Purim, Passover and the Grades 3-6 Participation Service in March. We also have some special Rabbi time in the classrooms on February 8.

A reminder to note your Challah and Juice dates and be sure to bring for your child's class when it is your turn. If you need to switch, you can contact another parent from that class from your list. The kids really look forward to this snack and to doing the blessings and ritual that comes with it!

Below is our schedule for the month:

Sunday Feb.1: 9:00-10:00 am Learners Service 3-7, 10:00-Noon Class 1-7, 7th grade class with Rabbi

Tuesday Feb 3: 4:30 - 6:00 pm class 3-6

Sunday Feb.8: 9:00-10:00 am Learners Service 3-7, 10:00-Noon Class K-6, Rabbi spends time in classes

**\*School Committee meeting 9:00 am - Come check it out and see how you can get involved!**

Tuesday Feb 10: 4:30-6:00 pm class 3-6

Sunday Feb 15: NO CLASS - FEBRUARY VACATION

Tuesday Feb 17: NO CLASS - FEBRUARY VACATION

Sunday Feb 22: NO CLASS - FEBRUARY VACATION

Tuesday Feb 24: 4:30-6:00 pm class 3-6

Thanks!

## Eli Prybyla Bar Mitzvah

Eli Prybyla was called to the Torah as a bar mitzvah in Israel. His parents, Sharon and Jim, have this to say about their amazing experience:

Eli became a Bar Mitzvah in Israel on December 29, 2014 at the ruins of the ancient synagogue of Katzrin in the Upper Galilee. It was a perfect day with unseasonably warm temperatures, the sun shining upon us, and the birds chanting with us. It was truly magical. He did a beautiful job chanting his Torah portion and we were all incredibly proud of him.

During the night time celebration at a restaurant on the shore of the Sea of Galilee, Eli gave a speech about why he wanted to have his Bar Mitzvah in Israel and what it meant to him. Everyone was incredibly touched by his genuine words and the tears were flowing from everyone. A nearby table was filled with a group of firefighters from Nazareth. One of the firefighters came over to Eli and told him how touched he was by his words. He then proceeded to pull out his fireman's badge and handed it to Eli.

What an incredible moment for all of us. As the MasterCard commercial goes... "it was priceless"

As many of you know, Eli was the catalyst for having his Bar Mitzvah in Israel. We had thrown it out as an option and once he thought about it there was no turning back. Eli has always had a strong connection with Israel ever since he started camp at Tel Noar.

Each year he formed strong bonds with his Israeli counselors and learned so much from them about what it is like to be an Israeli.

The rest of the trip was filled with seeing Independence Hall, Masada, the Kotel, Tsafat, Yad Vashem, swimming in the dead sea, jeep tour through the Judean desert, having dinner with Israeli soldiers, visits to Kibbutzim and Moshavs, and so much more. We ate lots of falafel and shwarma and amazing salads! We were even able to have dinner one night with Rabbi Margie and Jeremy in Jerusalem. It was so nice to be able to share the experience with them.

We are also very proud of Eli's work with the Family Services Coalition for his Mitzvah project. With the help of so many from our congregation, Eli was able to put together bags that he distributed directly to the homeless families. It was an experience he will never forget and hopes to continue this work. Thank you all for supporting him on this project.

We look forward to celebrating with our Sha'arei Shalom family on May 8<sup>th</sup> when Eli leads a Friday night service.

**Sha'arei Shalom sends a big Mazel Tov to the Prybyla family on their simcha.**

## Thank you from Eli Prybyla

My work with the Family services Coalition has been very successful thanks to the generous donors from Sha'arei Shalom. With the help of the community we were able to provide toiletries and cleaning supplies to 20 families in need. I would like to thank Sha'arei shalom for helping me on my way towards my goal of helping homeless families in Framingham and Natick. Without your help I could have never accomplished this much.

## Member News

Happy 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Harvey Hecker on February 14<sup>th</sup>!

## Monica Weinstein Women's Book Group

by Leslie Jaffe

Our group had a wonderful post-Hanukah party on January 4<sup>th</sup> at the home of Jane Greenstein. We enjoyed a delicious potluck brunch as well as a book swap, and discussed "Caleb's Crossing" by Geraldine Brooks. Our next meeting will be held on Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup> at 10 am at Bodacious Bagels. We will be discussing "My Beloved World," by Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor. New members are always welcome, and are invited to contact Leslie Jaffe at [jlajfamily@verizon.net](mailto:jlajfamily@verizon.net) if they have questions or would like to attend.

Happy reading!

## Elissa Naiman Evergreen Group

by Sheila Watnick

At the January 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Elissa Naiman Evergreen Group at the lovely new home of Linda Hecker, members welcomed back Carole Levison and welcomed Barbara Marder. Members got caught up following the holidays. There was also the reading of a thoughtful email from Steve Naiman about his family's appreciation for the group being renamed honor of Elissa.

The next meeting will be on **Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 p.m.** at the home of Barbara Kleinberg. Female temple members 60 and over are welcome. Contact [evergreen@shaareishalom.org](mailto:evergreen@shaareishalom.org).

## Babysitting!

Josie Kaufman is available for babysitting. She is 11 years old and has taken the Red Cross babysitting course. She can babysit on weekends. Contact Josie with any questions at 508-881-6930

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

**Venues  
Caterers  
DJ's**

**Please email Lisa Freedman, [LNFkitty2@aol.com](mailto: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.**

## 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/>

## 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](http://www.shirjoychorus.com), or email [ShirJoyMA@gmail.com](mailto:ShirJoyMA@gmail.com). Shir Joy is partially funded from a generous grant from Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts.

### Visit and Tour JCC Grossman Camp

Visit and tour JCC Grossman Camp on Sunday, March 15 (294 Powissett Street) in Dover from 2-4pm. Meet the camp director and staff and learn how JCC Grossman Camp is a place to be active, a place to make friends and a place for building skills and community. Varied activities give campers ages 4.5 to 15 years old a sense of the world around them—and supportive, experienced staff encourage exploration and growth in this vibrant Jewish camping environment. Bus transportation available from more than 40 communities throughout Greater Boston. Extended day available in Newton (at the Leventhal-Sidman JCC). Financial assistance is available. No charge. Everyone welcome. A program of the Ryna Greenbaum JCC Center for the Arts. For more information, visit [bostonjcc.org/grossman](http://bostonjcc.org/grossman) or call 617-244-5124.

### добро пожаловать!

#### Engaging Metrowest Russian Jewish Families in Jewish Community Life

A grant from the Genesis Fund is enabling us to reach out to Russian Jewish families throughout Metrowest. By developing collaborative relationships, we are identifying and connecting with members of this large and vibrant community through engaging programming and activities.

As part of this program, JFN is also doing special "**Privet Malish**" visits -- **Welcome Baby!** visits with gift baskets and resources tailored for Russian Jewish families.

If you are interested in learning more about our programs or "Privet Malish," or if you know someone who is, please contact our Russian community connector, [Luba Olshan](#), for more information.



*Christians and Jews in defense  
of Israel and of liberty and  
Judeo-Christian values in America*

CHRISTIANS & JEWS  
**CJUI**  
UNITED FOR ISRAEL

CJUI presents an evening with Kay Wilson



**Kay Wilson** is a British born Israeli tour guide. She is the survivor of a brutal terrorist attack that occurred in December 2010 while hiking in the hills of Jerusalem.

Come hear Kay's riveting account of a murderous attack, incredible survival, and discussion regarding terrorism.

Tuesday, February 3  
7:00 PM  
Temple Emeth  
194 Grove Street  
Chestnut Hill, MA

Please enter at the entrance on Puddingstone Rd.  
Tickets : \$10 online at [www.cjui.org](http://www.cjui.org) or at the door.  
(Click link at top of CJUI Homepage)

Co-Sponsors:



Purchase tickets to hear Kay Wilson [HERE](#)

Come share the joy of Jewish music with  
Shir Joy Chorus in concert, Wendy Damoulakis, Director  
Sunday, Feb. 8th, 7:00 pm,  
Congregation B'nai Shalom, 117 East Main St., Westborough.  
Adults: \$10, Seniors and Children: \$5

## Tu B'Shevat Community Celebration

### Planting the Seeds of Hope

**\*NEW DATE!**

Thursday, February 5, 2015  
Congregation Mishkan Tefila  
300 Hammond Pond Parkway  
Chestnut Hill

7:00 pm

**Speaker: Kay Wilson of OneFamily**

Kay Wilson is a British-born Israeli tour guide and talented motivational speaker. She is the survivor of a brutal terrorist attack. Kay's incredible story is one of survival and inspiration.



\$36 per person

[Click here](#) to register online or call Hadassah Boston at 781-455-9055 to pay with a credit card. You may also mail a check to:  
Hadassah Boston, Tu B'Shevat Community Celebration  
1320 Centre Street, Suite 205  
Newton Centre, MA 02459

Hosted by Hadassah Boston and the Sisterhoods of Temple Emanuel and Congregation Mishkan Tefila. For more information please contact Sharon Diamond at [sharon.diamond14@gmail.com](mailto:sharon.diamond14@gmail.com).

