

Shofar



Jewish Family Congregation

Elul/Tishri 5763/5764

September 2003

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

Last month, I wrote in this space about the function of a synagogue today. I made some comments about the origins of the synagogue, and talked about how the synagogue evolved from a house of meeting and study into a house of worship and community service.

I had no idea when I wrote those words that our congregation would be profoundly challenged to demonstrate that it is a community, just as those words reached you.

Yet that is exactly what happened. The members of JFC rallied around the four families at the center of our concerns, to offer support in every way possible. All the families reported that they were grateful for the caring conveyed by this community.

Though we were not involved with the funerals of the mothers of Dafne Sanchez-Aldama or Sandi Auerbach, we provided shiva minyanim when needed, in support of our congregants at a time of great sorrow.

When, via e-mail, I asked for financial contributions to the Caring Committee so it could provide food for the shiva at the Aufsesser home, we were inundated with thousands...yes, literally thousands...of dollars in donations to that fund (a recent e-mail indicated that the committee is now well financed, for what we hope will be few needs, and generosity can be directed to other JFC funds; at this season, we could use additional support for the Religious School Scholarship Fund).

But it was not simply a matter of sending money. Dozens of people came to the funeral, and dozens more made it possible to hold evening services at the Aufsesser home so that the family could say Kaddish; it was especially gratifying to see some of our recent Bnai Mitzvah students fulfilling their religious obligations at these occasions.

At about the same time, the congregation's informal communications network kept people informed about Neal Blum's progress following his unintentionally stressful participation in a softball game. Our people drove family to hospitals, looked after the kids, and offered meals and every other conceivable kind of support for the rest of the family while Neal was looked after at the hospital in Danbury and then New Haven.

And congregants continue to express their concern via enquiries and offers of help. All of these sad occurrences took place over the summer, when many of us are away. Yet you came forward as needed and available, giving life to my comments about a synagogue community in last month's *Shofar*.

Of course, this is not new. JFC members have done this over and over again, as

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See us at www.jewishfamilycongregation.org

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L'Shana Tovah

Jewish Family Congregation

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FROM THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

by Leslie Gottlieb

With September comes a certain sense of renewal--- school begins, we buy new pens, and cotton shirts begin to stick with less virulence as fall nears. It is a very exciting time at JFC, too, as plans for the High Holy Days blast into full gear and new members' phone calls keep us all very busy.

With it all is this underlying current of excitement because another year of offering kids a meaningful Jewish education is on its way. Tweaking the curriculum to make sure it retains a well-rounded quality and packed with information and fun is the goal.

Over the summer months, looking through new texts/books offered by Jewish publishing houses is a thrilling activity; knowing that our students will be using the freshest materials available is a real treat from where I sit. As we unpack boxes upon boxes of new books, I can hardly contain my excitement as I know it will be only a few short weeks from the beginning of the month until they are distributed.

Passing out brand new siddurim (*Gates of Prayer* and JFC prayer CD are given as gifts to all 4th graders and those who enroll in our program after that grade) is the most treasured moment of all because we know this is one book that students can never grow out of; it will be theirs to use with their own children some day. It is the job of the school to teach our children how to use the siddur and why it will be their jobs one day to pass on our tradition.

After reviewing the summer information material mailed, students may be wondering about the new STARS program (Shabbat Together and Religious School). Jewish children don't always see how they can enjoy and make the most out of the Sabbath each week and so this program tries to encourage more excitement and participation.

According to Thomas Cahill in *The Gift of the Jews*, it was the Jews who first help to define and separate the weekdays from the weekend, mandating work,

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From the Early Childhood Center

by Bobbie Cohan

It's back to school: Nursery school officially begins for the children on Wednesday, September 10. On Tuesday September 9 children can come in by appointment and visit with their teachers and see their classrooms. On Monday, September 8 at 7:45 there is a Parent only Orientation. Our teachers are busy getting the classrooms ready. Paul and Jovanni are seeing to it that the classrooms look great. They have been painted and the carpets have all been cleaned. We have ordered new supplies and each classroom will have some new learning equipment. We look forward to seeing everyone, making new friends, reacquainting with old friends, and even meeting some new siblings! **Reminder to all nursery parents:** if you haven't already returned all the school forms please do so asap.... They are past due.....



PARENTING CENTER REGISTRATION: In this Shofar is the Parenting Center brochure. Please register for the parent and child classes and **spend some time with the one you love!** These programs are open to the community so please share this information with your neighbors and friends. Programs begin Tuesday, Sept. 30. Sign up Today!

Welcome to Johanna Perlman, Board Liaison to our Early Childhood Committee

TODAH RABAH

- b** To Michele Blum for camp photos
- b** To Andrea Kantor for completing the library organization
- b** To Ellen Strauss for sand toys
- b** To Michele Blum for assorted toys
- b** To Paul Turnley for the support of the summer program and the back to school administration



- b** Portable CD players for each of our classrooms
- b** Children's audio CD's
- b** Large shed to store outdoor bikes, wagons, etc.

SERVICE SCHEDULE

Friday, Sept. 5/ Elul 9	7:30 pm	Parshat Ki Taytzay
Saturday, Sept 6	10:00 am	<i>Bar Mitzvah of Jonathan Roitman</i>
Friday, Sept. 12/ Elul 16	6:00 pm	Share A Shabbat, Somers
Saturday, Sept. 13	7:30 pm 10:00 am	Parshat Ki Tavo <i>Bar Mitzvah of Daniel Mabowitz</i>
Friday, Sept. 19/ Elul 23	7:30 pm	Parshat Nitzavim-VaYelekh
Saturday, Sept. 20	10:00 am	<i>Bat Mitzvah of Hanna Exel</i>
Friday, Sept. 26/ Tishre 1	8:00 pm	Rosh HaShanah
Saturday, Sept. 27	10:00 am*	
	1:15 pm	Tashlikh, at 188 Smith Ridge Road***
	2:30 pm	Children's Service
	8:00 pm	second evening, Rosh HaShanah
Sunday, Sept. 28/Tishre 2	10:00 am*	second morning of Rosh HaShanah
Sunday, Oct. 5 /Tishre 10	8:00 pm	Kol Nidre Service
Monday, Oct. 6	10:00 am*	Yom Kippur
	1:15 pm	Children's Service
	4:00 pm*	Concluding services, including Yizkor

* child care available

*** see article about Tashlikh in this issue of the *Shofar*

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BIRTHDAYS

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YAHRZEITS

Edith Blumenthal
Irving Cohen
Murray Emmer
Anna Fleischer
Joseph Fried
Roslyn Garin
Sophie Goodman
Sonia Goodstein
Max Kalb
Harold Kalikow
Seymour Kalter
Jeffrey Kling

Samuel Levine
Rose Margolis
Mordecai Lester Mendell
Louis Popp
Sey Shore
Dudley Westlake



FROM THE CO-PRESIDENT

Kids ask the Rabbi

As the High Holy Day season approaches, I am filled with anticipation. I welcome the changing color of leaves, the crunch of a crisp, newly picked apple against my teeth, the aroma and taste of just pressed apple cider. Fortunate we are that though we follow a lunar calendar, it is periodically adjusted so the Rosh Hashana always falls around autumn.

Most important for me, though, is that the High Holy Days afford me an opportunity that often escapes me during the rest of the year due to my busy schedule. I get to spend an uninterrupted period of time with my immediate and extended family. We talk, eat, sing, laugh, and play games. During these days, the “outside world” does not intrude. The sacred takes precedence over the profane and I banish all thoughts of work and any other pedestrian interruptions.

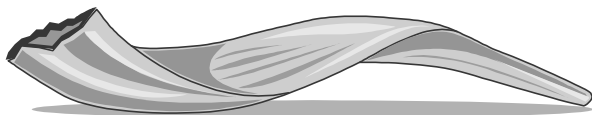
Best of all, I get to reflect on my connections with friend, family, work, JFC, and other organizations of which I am a member. I resolve to “do better” – not in any material sense – but to listen more intently, speak more forcefully, laugh harder, care more, in effect, become more mensch-like. At this time of the year, I invite you to stop, look, listen, think about what’s most important to you and spend more time and effort on what matters.



I look forward to seeing you in the tent.
L'Shana Tovah.

Ted Bloch
Co-President

L'Shana Tovah



Question: On Rosh HaShanah, I remember that the rabbi and the cantor actually kneel at some point during the service. How come this happens on Rosh HaShanah, and how come they kneel?

Answer: Two questions, there, but today we're offering a discount for two related questions, so enjoy the bargain!

First, we should note that this kneeling happens at the prayer we refer to as the *Aleynu*. This prayer was written originally for the Rosh HaShanah service, and was later added to all services as the opening prayer of the concluding section of the service. The prayer says that we acknowledge God as the Supreme Ruler, bowing and worshipping and giving thanks to God. It goes on to say that we pray for the day when the whole world will worship God in one way...when “God’s name will be one”. When the idea of praying for a time when we will all be united in worship of God was added, the prayer became appropriate for the ending of all services.

Except at its original place in the Rosh HaShanah service, this prayer doesn't involve kneeling; instead, at the point where we say *V'anakhnu kor'im u'mishtakhavim u'modim* (“and we bow our knees and bend over and give thanks...”), we actually bow our knees and then bend forward at the waist. We stay in that position until we come to the words *lif-nay melekh, malkhay ham'lakhim, haKadosh Barukh Hu* (“before the Holy One, the Supreme Ruler”). When we get to those words, we return to the upright position.

On Rosh HaShanah, however, this prayer occurs twice. The first time we say it is in the place for which it was originally written, as the introduction to the shofar service, during which we acknowledge that God is the Supreme Ruler of the world. And by way of signalling that we accept God in this way, as the Supreme Ruler of the world, we show our great respect for God by bowing down and kneeling, touching the forehead to the ground to show how low we are in comparison to the greatness of God.

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ASK THE RABBI

Question: How does forgiveness work in Judaism?

Answer: The answer to your question comes from Mishna Yoma 8:9.

There we are told that the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) atones for the sins that a person commits against God; Jewish tradition holds that each person must come before God on that day to confess aloud those sins.

If that confession of sins against God is accompanied by the sincere desire not to commit the same sins again, and if that desire is accompanied by a commitment to act differently when faced with the opportunity to repeat the sins, then, our tradition teaches, God is eager and willing to forgive.

But for those sins between human beings, unless there has been reconciliation between the two people involved, Yom Kippur cannot affect forgiveness.

The sins listed as “between human beings” include monetary damage, personal injury, abuse, insult, slander, defamation or libel.

The sins against God would include all the things we are commanded by God, but especially those moral obligations like avoiding murder, stealing, cheating, adultery, swearing falsely, and violating the Sabbath. This list also includes the obligation to look after the disadvantaged and the stranger amongst us.

Jewish tradition teaches us that as the New Year begins, the Book of Life (a three-volume set) is opened, and those who are totally bad are quickly sealed in the slim volume dedicated to their judgment, while those who are totally good are equally quickly sealed into their own equally thin book. The third volume, the gigantic one, for those of us who are neither totally bad nor good, sits open from Rosh HaShanah till the very last moments of Yom Kippur. And we have from the beginning of Rosh HaShanah till the sun sets on Yom Kippur to earn an inscription in the Book of Life for the coming year.

We are told on Rosh HaShanah that there are three avenues open to us during those ten days (the Days of Awe, *Yamim Nora-im*) to determine what the inscription will be: repentance, prayer and charity (*t’shuvah, tefilah and tzedakah*).

Repentance takes two forms. First, we are expected to approach those we’ve sinned against, confess our sins, offer compensation, monetary or otherwise,

commit to avoiding the sin again in the future, and then ask for forgiveness. The second form is to examine our lives, confess our sins to God during those Ten Days, and plan how to avoid the same pitfalls again. Then we come to services on Yom Kippur, confess our sins aloud communally, and ask God for forgiveness.

It is worth noting that the Hebrew term *t’shuvah*, used above to mean “repentance”, actually means “return”, and it implies that we can, by repenting our sins, return, by repentance as described above, to a state of sinlessness (in some traditions this is called “grace”) such as we enjoyed before we were old enough to sin.

Prayer, *tefilah*, between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, centres on asking God for the strength to atone with other people and with God.

And *tzedakah* (which is technically not “charity” at all, but rather “justice”, making the world right) is encouraged particularly at this season. We at JFC offer several opportunities for *tzedakah* at this time: there is of course the annual food drive to collect food for the Community Center of Katonah; we provide envelopes for *tzedakah* contributions to MAZON, the Jewish organization that provides hunger relief here and abroad; and we remind you to support JFC through donations at this season.

Some people think that we Jews seek Divine forgiveness only at this season of the year but a quick glance at the full weekday liturgy shows that a prayer for forgiveness occurs in the Amidah, which is traditionally read three times a day on weekdays (not on Shabbat, because we give God the day off from all our petitions on Shabbat!) all year long.

The ancient sage, Rabbi Samuel ben Nakhman, taught that the gates of prayer are sometimes open and sometimes closed, but the gates of repentance are always open. Others of course disagreed with him and said that the gates of prayer are also always open.

In the end, it matters not whether the gates are open or closed if we humans do not go through them when we can.

So I encourage you to make good use of your time, this year, between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, to accomplish repentance, prayer and *tzedakah*, that you may be inscribed in the Book of Life for a sweet year.

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (CONT'D)*(Continued from page 1)*

members have been struck with illness, or have been involved in traffic accidents, or experienced other tragedies. I assume that other congregations do the same, but I know that the depth of response here is quite amazing.

I think this derives from two aspects of this community. First, this is a remarkably young congregation, in that the overwhelming majority of our members are young families, and the congregation itself is only 22 years old. Thus, when we learn that sadness strikes, we feel deeply touched, because these things are happening to people our own age.

And second, the vast majority of our members live far from their own families, so that the congregation truly becomes our "Jewish family". When we need help, we have to be there for each other. And we are.

It gives me great satisfaction to know that the values we teach here in our synagogue and religious school are actively practised by the members of this community.

By the time you read this, we will be approaching the beginning of another Jewish year. It is appropriate to take stock of the year now closing, and as we do so, we can take comfort from the fact that our congregation has lived up to the responsibilities brought to us by the events of this year.

We become more conscious of our own fragility as we consider what has befallen our friends, and so, we should become more appreciative of the blessings we enjoy from day to day.

I invite you to bring these thoughts with you as you join us in the tent for worship, and to consider how you will use them to live more fully and more consciously in the coming year.

The entire staff of JFC wishes you a year of health, peace and prosperity.

Our Cantorial Soloist, Sheera Ben-David, the JFC Choir, and our Ritual Committee and I hope that you will find our High Holy Days services inspiring and meaningful.

And my partner, Jeanne Shanin, joins me in wishing you and your family a year of blessings and joy.

L'shanah tovah tikatayvu, v'tikhataymu.

*May you be inscribed in the Book of Life
for a wonderful new year.*

THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL, cont'd*(Continued from page 2)*

prayer and study for weekdays and rest for the Sabbath. "The God who made the universe and rested bids us do the same, calling us to a weekly restoration of prayer, study, and recreation (or re-creation). In this study (or *Talmud*), we have the beginnings of what Nathum Sarna has called 'the universal duty of continuous self-education,' Israel being the first human society to so value education and the first to envision it as a universal pursuit--- and a democratic obligation that those in power must safeguard on behalf of those in their employ."

The author continues to remind us of the beauty of Shabbat. "The connections to both freedom and creativity lie just beneath the surface of this commandment: leisure is appropriate to a free people, and this people so recently free find themselves quickly establishing this quiet weekly celebration of their freedom; leisure is the necessary ground of creativity, and a free people are free to imitate the creativity of God. The Sabbath is surely one of the simplest and sanest recommendations any god has ever made; and those who live without such septimanal punctuation are emptier and less resourceful."

To JFC students--- think hard about all of this when you are posting our new STARS program bulletin in your bedroom (you'll need to submit it at the end of the school year after our big ice cream party celebration--- did someone say ice cream party??). See whether or not you can squeeze in a few more services this year with friends and family!! Think about Shabbat as a--- gift to the Jews--- like a present sent to you every week loaded with possibilities!

With school about to begin, here is a quick list of the teachers in our program for the school year. JFC is very fortunate to have a small returning staff committed to our program and our families. It is an intimate program that not only teaches our students about Judaism and Hebrew, it teaches our high school students interested in Jewish education how to become educators (Student Mentor Program). You'll see plenty of mentors around this year as we had a waiting list to get into the program and felt lucky to place them all!!! Your kids will love it, too.

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Kids ask the Rabbi, cont'd.*(Continued from page 4)*

Do you remember the Purim story? In that tale, Mordechai got into a lot of trouble because he refused to bow down to Haman. The reason, of course, is that we Jews bow only to God. Most of the time, we even bow to God with the small movement of bowing and bending the knees (as we will do the second time the *Aleynu* is said on Rosh Ha-Shanah morning, as the service is coming to an end), but as we prepare for the shofar service, we will kneel completely, out of respect.

It used to be that everyone in the congregation knelt for "the great *Aleynu*", as it is called, but nowadays, only the rabbi and cantor do it, on behalf of the whole congregation.

Sheera and I invite the young children of the congregation to come close to the bimah to watch us, as we kneel down, in the hope that the kids will remember this dramatic moment in the service, and look forward to it each year.

Oneg Hosts

Sept. 5 Joel and Laura Kaplan
Patrick Meaney & Rhonda Dier-Meaney

Mindi Miller is the Board Member

Sept. 12 Philip and Grace Roitman
Michael Romanowski and Linda Levin

Sept. 19 Paul and Lorraine Malamet
Patrick Meaney & Rhonda Dier-Meaney

Trudy Wood is the Board Member

Sept. 27 Erev Rosh HaShanah

**Letters for the Oneg Hosts
for October 2003– August 2004
will be going out shortly.
Everyone has a turn
approximately every 18 months.
Mark your dates now.**

THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL, cont'd*(Continued from page 6)*

We are VERY proud of our Religious School, its teachers, students, and parents--- and we hope everyone will have a very special year at JFC.

Staff
(alphabetically listed):

Ellen Elias
Carla Freedman
Leslie Gottlieb
Zachary Gottlieb
Asher Meister-Aldama
Lisette Meyers-Orr
Ruth Ossher
Linda Paulding
Rona Salpeter
Laura Vayness
Barry Wechsler

2003-4 Mentors

Samantha Berg
Ivy Cohen
Jonathan Elias
Marc Kutscher
Allie Moss
Alex Perlman
Molly Seegers
Arman Okamoto
*(additional student
volunteers not listed)

**Todah Rabbah
from the Religious School...**

- To Susan Kaufman for offering to chair this year's JFC Book Fair
- To Lorraine Malamet for volunteering to act as Head Class Parent for the school year
- To Amy Fischer and Robyn Cohen for volunteering to help organize and run some fun community-building Religious School programs
- To Jason Breslin for volunteering, again, to help provide musical accompaniment for our weekly Jewish music program (and his parents for driving him to JFC twice a week!)
- To the JFC Board who approved the purchase of a new digital camera for the school
- To Doris Hettmansberger for volunteering to act as the Religious School Committee's new chair
- To all of our new class parents for offering their anticipated support
- To all of the student volunteers who help run the office and lend additional support to our Thursday and Sunday programs
- The Emmers for Books for the Religious School Library

News From the Women's Group

By Cindy Carson and Mindy Hoffman

We'd like to begin by thanking everyone who attended our first Planning Meeting on August 12th. We had a great turnout. Those who attended were treated to good food, drinks and lively conversation. We all caught up on our summer plans and then discussed the upcoming year of events.

Some interesting ideas that were presented:

- taking advantage of the cultural opportunities in New York City, such as taking a tour of the Lower Eastside, or going to the 92nd Street Y for a lecture;
- a cooking night at JFC where we would plan a menu, prepare the meal, and enjoy it together;
- a movie night at the temple, with a discussion to follow (popcorn included!).

Many of us want to be more involved in community service but are not sure how to go about doing it. One idea that was mentioned is signing up for **Share-A-Shabbat** which is a monthly program organized by the temple and co-chaired by members **Cathy Raynor and Kathy Heller**. The Rabbi and volunteers help with a brief Shabbat Service and dinner at a group home in Somers for developmentally disabled adults. It begins about 6:00pm on one Friday each month and it takes about an hour. Families are welcome to do this together but it is recommended that children be at least 10 years old. If 12 Women's Group members each signed up for a Friday, Cathy and Kathy would have the whole year taken care of. Please consider helping with this mitzvah. Contact **Cathy Raynor (203) 966-7621** or **Kathy Heller (914) 276-3978** if interested.

In other news:

The Book Group will be meeting Tuesday, September 15 to discuss Dan Brown's "The DaVinci Code" and then on Monday, October 20 to discuss "The

Secret Life of Bees" by Sue Monk Kidd. The August book "White Oleander" proved to be an interesting discussion that everyone enjoyed. As always, you don't have to read the book to attend the meeting. We like the company!

Dinner Out: Wednesday, September 17th at 7:45pm will be at Lexington Square Cafe in Mt. Kisco. This is a fun restaurant with an interesting menu. Please RSVP to **Diane Richman** at (914) 763-0575.

Mah Jong: This event was such a success that **Ellen Lehrman** and **Doris Hettmansberger** want to teach another group of sessions in the Fall in the evening, for those of you who couldn't attend the last session. Please contact Ellen or Doris if you are interested so they can work out the day and time. Also, if you already know how to play and are interested in a monthly day/evening game, let **Ellen (914) 276-3978** or **Doris (914) 763-8911** know.

Beading Party: On Wednesday, Nov. 5th. we will hold a "make your own beaded whatever" at R Beads in Ridgefield. This will be a fun evening where **Susan Shafer** will assist us in picking out and making a piece of jewelry, purse, whatever. There is a \$15 entrance fee plus the cost of the project you choose to design. The party begins at 7:45pm at RB's Clothing Outlet, 424R Main Street, Ridgefield, Ct. Refreshments will be available. Contact Cindy (914) 763-8320 or Mindy (914) 763-2263 to reserve a place. Hope to see you there!

The Gift Shop, which provides us all with beautiful Judaica items, is in need of a "few good women". **Felice Kempler-Honig** needs help in "manning" the gift shop during Sunday religious school hours. This will allow others to purchase items from the gift shop during those few hours. You and a friend could even share the time. Call **Felice (914) 533-5275** and ask her which days are still available.

REGISTRATION FOR JFC WOMEN'S GROUP 2003-4

NAME

()
PHONE NUMBER

ADDRESS

E-MAIL ADDRESS

Please complete this form and return with your annual dues of \$36.00 to: Women's Group at JFC, P.O. Box 249; South Salem, NY 10590 or, drop off your registration form and dues to the JFC office located on the 2nd floor. For more information please contact Cindy Carson (914) 763-8320 or Mindy Hoffman (914) 763-2263.

TASHLIKH, JFC-style

Our sages knew that a ritual benefits from an action or activity. And for the act of getting rid of our sins, they gave us the Tashlikh ceremony.

We bring breadcrumbs to a body of water, and we caste the crumbs into it, as we would caste away our sins.

This is a brief and delightful ceremony, especially attractive to children (of all ages!). We do it on the first day of Rosh HaShanah, directly after the morning service.

Some drive down the road to park their cars on the lot of Stevens Memorial United Methodist Church, and from there to walk across Rte 123 to the home of John and Barbara Stern, at # 188. Others will walk down the road (under police escort); this takes about half an hour, and is a nice break between the services.

Please bring your own breadcrumbs.

Following the short service (*don't be late...you'll miss it!*), we return to the tent for the Family Service, advertised for 2:30 pm. Many families regard the Tashlikh service as the informal beginning of the Family Service.

**Would you like to contribute
to JFC's success through your knowledge
of the World Wide Web?**

JFC's membership committee is seeking an individual to help manage our web site.

By helping to maintain JFC's website your contribution has an immediate impact on prospective members and communications with the congregation.

This is a small time commitment that can be done from home at leisure.

**To learn more about how your skills
can help grow JFC, please call
David Fischer at 914-533-3090**

**THE CARING COMMITTEE DOES
GOOD WORK!!!!!!!!!!**

Recently, our Caring Committee (which might be known in Hebrew as the *Khesed* Committee), was pressed into active service to provide food for 3 different houses of mourning (the Sanchez- Aldama {Meister} family, the Auerbach family and the Aufesser family). The committee also delivered a carload of heart-healthy foods to the Blum family, to support Neal in his recovery from the heart attack he had in July.

The support offered through JFC came via the financial contributions to purchase food and the people-power to bring it to the table (and clean it up afterward). We are proud of both sides of this important mitzvah and all those who fulfilled it.

Jewish tradition teaches that, at the time of a death in a family, the mourners must be sustained with food despite the natural inclination to lose interest in eating which often accompanies grief. Since the mourners are unlikely to put much energy into food preparation, their family and friends come together to do it for them. In times past, when we all lived close to our extended families, this was not a difficult thing. Today, however, we rely on others, the "family" of the Jewish Family Congregation, to help out in such situations.

The rabbi circulated an email appeal for funds to support the committee, and as she mentioned on the front page of this edition of the *Shofar*, JFC members came through immediately and handsomely. Many others came forward to do the actual leg-work of the committee.

To all, we are grateful.

Now, the Caring Committee has asked that generosity be directed to the two other funds which enable the congregation to act on its values: the Religious School Scholarship Fund and the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. The former is obvious; the latter is used to help the congregation in a lot of very important but behind-the-scenes ways.

If you'd like to join the Caring Committee, please call **Lisa Block (914)763-6289** or **Doris Hettmansberger (914)763-8911**; with any kind of luck, the committee will rest on its laurels for some time to come, its only work being regular meetings to refine procedures. Right now, they are busy sending thank-you notes.

CONGREGATIONAL TRIPABROAD

It is the deeply felt desire of this congregation to make a trip to Israel...but the events on the ground there have scared many people off, at least for the near future.

Still, the idea of a congregational trip abroad is attractive, and there are a number of possibilities.

We could take a trip to Europe and/or Russia to visit Jewish historical sites and the growing Reform community there. We could visit Jewish communities in South America. And there are other possibilities, too.

We are thinking of taking such a trip next summer (at the earliest). We'll need at least 20 people to make such a trip viable. When this suggestion was offered by email a few weeks ago, a handful of people expressed an interest. And we need more if we are to approach a tour company for assistance.

This would, of course, be open to people of all ages, with a minimum of age 8; it would be open to people outside the congregation as well (like your extended family or friends).

If you are interested in being part of an educational vacation with "the family", please contact Rabbi Freedman at 914.763.3028, x 12 or email at jfc@bestweb.net.

JUDAIC STUDIES AT U. OF HARTFORD

The University of Hartford, through its Maurice Greenberg Center for Judaic Studies, is offering an interesting array of programs for the adult learner this fall.

- b** Sept. 3, 7: the archaeology of Israel
- b** Sept 7, 9, 10: Open parts of a conference on archaeology, history and technology

Film premieres:

- b** The Kingdom of David...
Parts 1 and 2: Sept 17
Parts 3 and 4: Sept 24
- b** An Archaeological Search for Jesus...Oct 1
- b** Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls...Oct 8
- b** Jerusalem, Eternal City...Oct 15

In November and December there will be lectures on a variety of topics...

For further details, and/or to receive a brochure, call the Greenberg Center at 860.768.4964

TORAH SCROLL REPAIR OPPORTUNITY

Last fall at Simkhat Torah, when the Czechoslovakian Torah scroll was unrolled all the way around the sanctuary, we noted that there were some worn spots and tiny pinholes in the parchment. So we took the scroll to visit with Neil Yerman, the scribe who restored it when it first came to be part of our community.

Neil examined the scroll carefully and found the spots we had seen; he further diagnosed some other repairs and suggested a strategy for us: his team of *sofrim* (scribes) would do the actual physical repair work, but *we would be given the opportunity to clean the surface ourselves, under his supervision.*

This is an exciting opportunity to actually work on the scroll, which as we all know, was written (by hand!) in 1838 in Brno, Czechoslovakia. It represents a Jewish community that no longer exists, and therefore we have a critical obligation to preserve this scroll for the future.

But using the services of professional scribes is not cheap. So we are offering our community the chance to actually work on the scroll itself and contribute financially to its repair.

The Scroll Repair Workshop will be held here at JFC on Tuesday, October 21 in the early evening; specific times will be announced next month. In addition to supervising the cleaning, Neil will present a lecture on how the scroll is written and bound, etc. He is a very knowledgeable man, and lots of fun to work with.

We are encouraging everyone to be part of this experience:

- b** Under 12...\$18.00 (per person)
- b** In the Bnai Mitzvah class of 04 (work on *your* Torah portion!)...\$36.00 (per person)
- b** Post Bnai Mitzvah...\$54.00 (per person)
- b** Family...\$108

Minimum donation to pay for a column: \$500.00

Minimum donation to pay for a whole Torah portion: \$1000.00

Please send your contributions to the JFC office, clearly marked "Torah Repair Workshop".

We will assign time slots for work on the scroll over the course of the evening, working hard to accommodate younger children early in the workshop. *This is a memory many of us never acquire; don't miss out!*

And of course we will record this event for posterity... make sure you're in the photos and video!

You don't know what you're missin'

Junior Choir

Learn Jewish music and have a blast!!!!

Bring a bag lunch and your singing voice and be a part of JFC's new Junior Choir program. JFC favorite, Kathy Storfer, will lead the Junior Choir once a month for one hour following our Sunday Religious School Program. Call your JFC friends and plan to sign up so that you can spend more time together having tons of fun. You'll get to perform for the congregation many times throughout the school year.

Adult Cantillation (Trope) Class

Yes, YOU TOO can chant Torah!!! Don't believe it? You'll knock yourself out with self-pride and a great sense of accomplishment once you get going...Ruth Ossher will lead the way through Torah trope for both beginners and for those with a little know-how (2 sections).

Our congregation invites you to chant Torah as soon as you give us the green light.

"A wonderfully rewarding experience...a joy of teacher...it brought me closer to other members of the Congregation in the class." Jeanette Sanders



Taught by Barry
Wechsler

Great Jewish Thinkers & Reform Judaism

Explore Jewish history, culture and the movers and shakers who made Judaism what it is today...

the goal of the course is to refine

YOUR personal style of Jewish thinking

Read what a student this year had to say:

I really enjoy Barry's course. It's one of the highlights of my week. When I think about it, it's simply because he is a great teacher. Like many good teachers, he knows his material and can communicate it well. But what makes Barry great is his breadth of knowledge to put everything in an historical and Jewish perspective and his willingness to incorporate the perspectives of his students into the discussion. The student discussion has really been fun. It's been fascinating to hear other people's stories about their Jewish lives. The readings and discussions are thought provoking and at times challenging, but not overwhelming. My only complaint is that the class is too short; just as I get all revved up in thought, it's time to go home!

Ray Rosenblum

Register Today!!!!

For more information, call Leslie Gottlieb at (914) 763-3028, Ext. 13

ADULT EDUCATION BEGINS

Our array of wonderful adult education programs resumes in September this year.

Beginners' Hebrew, for those who have forgotten everything they learned as kids and for those who never learned Hebrew at all before...this class *guarantees* that students who attend regularly and complete the self-paced workbook will be able to read and keep up in the prayerbook during services.

9:00- 10:00 am Sundays (when Religious School is in session)...taught by Rabbi Freedman
Fee: \$6.00, for the workbook. *First class: September 14.*

Continuing Hebrew, for those who have already mastered reading and want to keep their skills active. This class reads the weekly Torah portion (in Hebrew), probing the meaning of the text from its original language (don't let this description scare you...all you need for this class is the ability to read Hebrew, *not* translate it...)

9:00- 10:00 am, Sundays (when religious School is in session)...taught by Neil Jacobs, who has a yeshiva background and knows his Hebrew!! No fee. *First class: September 14.*

Torah Study is for those who want to learn the basis of Judaism. This class reads the weekly Torah portion in *English*, pausing to discuss the text, comparing translations (participants are welcome to bring their own Bibles, and we supply the text via the Plaut *Torah Commentary* otherwise. There are no prerequisites for this class. Discussion is always lively, creative, and intellectually stimulating....all are welcome.

10:00- 11:30 am Sundays (when Religious School is in session)...taught by Rabbi Freedman
No fee. *First class: September 14.*

Introduction to Judaism, for those interested in learning more about Judaism, its history, practices, theology, calendar, values, movements, and the Jewish approaches to current issues like abortion, birth control, homosexuality, the role of women, etc. This class will be of value to those Jews who want to know more, those who are considering conversion to Judaism, and their partners (where applicable).

This class will meet about once a month, with reading and video assignments between classes.

First class: Thursday, September 11 at 8:00 pm; the group will choose its own schedule thereafter.

This class will be taught by Rabbi Freedman; if you are interested, please discuss this class with the rabbi.

There will be a fee for non-members of JFC.

Torah Chanting is the art of singing the Torah text from the scroll, according to the thousand-year-old system of musical notation we call *trope*. We are offering three different sets of classes, and *students may advance from beginners' level as the year progresses*. Students are invited to chant Torah during regular Shabbat services as they gain competence. Limit: 8 students per class.

Beginners...7:30-8:30 pm, Mondays, Sept 22, 29, Oct 20, 27, Nov 3, 10, 17...

Fee: \$105, plus \$40.00 optional for cantillation text. *First class: Sept 22.*

Beginners and Intermediate...for those who want to continue their studies, whether at the beginners' or more advanced level:

7:30 -8:30pm, Mondays...Dec 1, 8, 15; Jan 5, 12, 26; Feb 2

7:30-8:30 pm, Mondays...Feb 9, 23; Mar 1,8,15,22, 29

Fee: \$105 for 7 sessions (\$210 for 14 sessions)

All these classes will be taught by Ruth Ossher, who is one of our outstanding Bnai Mitzvah tutors, who chants Torah for us (with her husband Harold) on the second day of Rosh HaShanah; if you haven't heard them, you are missing a treat!

Great Jewish Thinkers and Reform Judaism is an intellectually stimulating opportunity to discover how Jewish thinking has evolved since the time of the Torah. This class covers all the major movements in Jewish thought, right up to our own time, and shows how Reform Judaism emerged from our intellectual past.

8:30- 9:30 pm, Mondays (when Religious School is in session)...

taught by Barry Wechsler, who teaches in our Sunday program and is also one of our outstanding Bnai Mitzvah tutors.

Fee: \$250 for JFC members, \$300.00 for non-members. *First class: Sept 29*

CALLING ALL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FAMILIES!

JOIN US FOR AN INFORMAL OUTDOOR LUNCH TO
KICKOFF THE START OF HEBREW SCHOOL

RECONNECT WITH OLD FRIENDS, CATCH UP ON YOUR
SUMMERS, MEET NEW STUDENTS AND TEACHERS!

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2003
ON THE "GREAT LAWN" OF JFC

TIME: 11:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.
(SUNDAY STUDENTS JOIN US AFTER HEBREW SCHOOL)

PLEASE BRING LUNCH FOR YOUR FAMILY, OUTDOOR CHAIRS OR
BLANKETS, AND TOYS (FRISBEES, BALLS, KITES, ETC.)

WE'LL SUPPLY ICE POPS FOR THE KIDS!

ORGANIZED BY ROBYN COHEN AND AMY FISCHER
CO-CHAIRS OF THE JEWISH FAMILY PROJECT OF JFC

September 2003 - Elul/Tishri 5763/5764

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day Office Closed	2	3 NS Teacher Mtng	4 NS Teacher Mtng SMP Orient 6:15-7:15 RS Staff Mtg 7:30 - 9 Board Mtg	5 NS Teacher Mtng Tot Shabbat Service 7:30	6 No Gr 7 Bar Mitzvah Jonathan Roitman (‘03) 10 AM
7	8 NS Teacher Mtg Nursery School Parent Orientation 7:45	9 NS Visits 9AM—1PM Membership Committee Ritual Committee Meeting	10 NS Transition Schedule 2s- 4s	11 RS Parent Orientation 7:30-8:30 YG	12 NS Transition Schedule 2s-4s Share-a- Shabbat 6pm Service 7:30	13 Gr 7 9:45 AM dismissal Bar Mitzvah Daniel Mabowitz (‘03) 10 AM
14 Gr. 4-6 First Class 9AM-12PM	15 NS 4’s Reg Sch 3’s Transition Schedule Women’s Grp Book Club Gr. 7 Sect 1: 3:45 Sect 2: 7:15	16 NS 3’s Transition Schedule Gr. 5-6 Study Grp	17 NS 2’s & 3’s Transition Schedule WG Dinner	18 K-3 1st Class 4:15 PM Confirmation Class 6:15 SMP/JYG Exec Cmt	19 NS 2’s & 3’s Tran- sition Sched- ule Service 7:30	20 Gr 7 9:45 AM dismissal Bat Mitzvah Hanna Exel (‘03) 10 AM
21 Gr. 4-6 Jr. Choir 12:15-1:15	22 NS Gr. 7 AE - R	23 NS (3’s Regular Schedule 9:15-Noon) Tent arrives Study Grp	24 NS (2’s Regular Schedule 9:30-11:30)	25 Volunteers set up chairs K-3 <u>No CC</u> YG	26 No NS Office Closed 2:00 PM Erev Rosh HaShanah Service 8PM	27 No Gr 7 Distribute HHD Food Drive Bags Gr. 7 Rosh Hashanah
28 No 4-6 Distribute HHD Food Drive Bags Gr. 7 Rosh Hashanah	29 NS Gr. 7 AE - R AE - B	30 NS Parenting Center Begins Study Grp	31 NS	High Holy Days Packets coming soon! Get in your Guest Ticket Requests and Flower and Memorial Book Donations early.		