



THE WHOLE MEGILLAH

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FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

Make it an Endless Season of Giving

Our wider culture often focuses on this time of year as a time of giving. This happens partly because of the holiday of Thanksgiving with its emphasis on gratitude for what we have, and Christmas, with its tradition of gift-giving and holiday parties – and partly because the end of the tax year reminds people that if they donate now they can get a tax deduction!

Now, these are all good reasons for being charitable. Whatever motivates people to be compassionate and generous to those in need is a good thing. But whenever we begin to think of a "season" for giving, there is a hidden danger. If there is a season for giving, what do we do the rest of year?

We are aware that we would not want to be homeless on a cold, wet, snowy night. But we would not want to be homeless or hungry on a balmy summer evening, either.



"Charity" comes from the Latin word for love, "Caritas." Tzedakah, however, comes from the root Tzedek, Justice. We are obligated to give because it is the right thing to do. If we give with a spirit of love, that is even better. But it is important to share with those who are needy no matter what emotion we are feeling.

What if you have a hard time empathizing with those in need? Deep down, some people feel that if they just tried harder, the unemployed, the poor, the disabled, and the disadvantaged would be better off.

One of the presidential candidates expressed this view recently. "If you don't have a job, and you're not rich, blame yourself." He continued, "It is a person's fault if he has failed."

From a Jewish perspective, it doesn't matter why a person is disadvantaged, unemployed, in need, or disabled. When there are people in need, those who have been blessed with the ability to help have a mitzvah to do so. And that mitzvah is a year-round obligation.

If you have kids, teach them about the causes that you support and why. Sit down as a family and talk about how to divide your Tzedakah dollars. Talk about how much to give to Jewish charities that need our help because they rely on Jews for virtually all their funding. And talk about the organizations that support the wider community and support both Jews and non-Jews. How do you apportion between humanitarian causes and environment or cultural ones? This is an important opportunity to teach your children your values, and yet many of us write checks along with the family bills and our kids have no idea about our giving.

Let's give generously to the causes we support at the end of the year. Let's volunteer to help the homeless, the unemployed, and others in need. But don't stop on January 2nd. Perform the mitzvah that keeps on giving. Happy Hanukah, and Have a Healthy, Joyous New Year!

Yocheved



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Cantor's Corner

To Sing is to Pray Twice



Do You Play an Instrument? Do you Like to Sing?

CSA's Shabbat Shirah Celebration Needs YOU!

A Happy New Year to All!! I hope you enjoyed the musical Chanukah selections that we sent the entire congregation by email. I hope you received them and that you were able to incorporate some of them into your family's holiday repertoire! Speaking of singing, we need YOUR voices and musical talents for our special Shabbat Shirah Service on February 3, 2012. During Shabbat Shirah, or "the Sabbath of Song," we read the Torah portion of the Exodus from Egypt and sing songs that celebrate the gift of freedom. Your musical talents

will bring the story of the Exodus to life. As singers you will belong to Shalom Aleichem's choir, Kol Shalom. We already have some enthusiastic members from last year and are seeking to expand our ranks. There are also several talented instrumentalists in CSA, including some younger members who are forming a rock band. All are welcome to participate in our Shabbat Shirah celebration. Please contact me at lindabaersings@msn.com if you or your children want to participate.
Cantor Linda Baer

SAVE YOUR USED POSTAGE STAMPS FOR HOLOCAUST PROJECT!

A Request from Shaina Segal



I would greatly appreciate it if you could please save and cut out the cancelled stamps from letters, cards, bills, etc. that you receive in the mail. The English department at my school, Mt. Hebron High School, is trying to collect six million stamps to commemorate the six million Jews who died during the holocaust. We are going to use the stamps to make a mural to hang in the hallway to give students and others a greater understanding in the enormity of "six million." You can place your stamps in the box that I will provide at Friday evening services and at Sunday school or mail them to Shaina Segal, 3630 Church Road, Ellicott City 21043. If you have any questions, please email me at purplekitty96@gmail.com or call (410) 461-5131. Thank you for your support!

CONGREGATION SHALOM ALEICHEM ISRAEL TOUR WITH RABBI HEILIGMAN

Plan Now For Our First Congregation Trip To Israel JUNE 17-27, 2012!!

Gary and I have been preparing an exciting and moving itinerary for our congregation's first organized trip to Israel. It will be appropriate for all ages, and includes what I feel are the most important sites for the first time visitor as well as few I haven't seen yet myself. There will even be an option for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony at Masada in one of the world's oldest synagogues.

We'll stay in First Class Hotels and travel on El Al Airlines. And we will be visiting the major cities and cultural and holy sites of Israel, including:

★The Museum of the Diaspora	★Biblical Landscape Gardens	★A Roman Theater
★A Biblical life re-enactment	★The Sea of Galilee	★The Mystical City of Sefat
★The Golan Heights	★A Kibbutz	★The Famous Bet Shean Mosaic
★Jerusalem and the Western Wall	★Mevakshei Derech Synagogue	★Masada
★The Dead Sea	★Yad Vashem	★And much more....

We need to get an idea of how many people are interested. If you are considering joining us, please email rabiheilgman@verizon.net or gary.heiligman@jhuapl.edu, or call us at 410-997-7606.



President's Message: Thanks for Your Help!

Thank you! Thank You! Thank You! We are starting the 2012 year on a wonderful note thanks to all of you. Our pleas for your time, money and energy have been heard and granted by many of our members. We have put into action a few of the ideas that were suggested at last year's annual meeting and have seen many positive results. Our first Meet and Greet coffee hour gave us the chance to mingle and get to know each other. Our Bima Fairies have been flying around making Shabbat set-up run more smoothly. Our website has been updated with information about current and upcoming events. Check it out at www.shalomaleichem.org.



It has been a pleasure seeing so many of you at our Friday evening services. Our attendance has increased in number and spirit. If you haven't been to our services in a while, please join us on the first and third Friday evening of each month. The young and restless can feel free to discreetly leave early if necessary.

We look forward to seeing everyone at our **Annual meeting on January 8th at 9:15 a.m.** Please remember, Shalom Aleichem is a member-driven congregation, and your feedback, suggestions, and man- and woman-power are essential to keeping us running smoothly. Please contact me at celestevsegal@gmail.com or any board member with your comments and suggestions.

Celeste Segal

Please Attend Our Annual Meeting!
Sunday Jan. 8th
9:15 a.m. (immediately after drop off from Sunday School)
Florence Bain Center

RE/MAX Advantage Realty
Vicki Harvey
 REALTOR®
 The Wendy Slaughter Team
 8171 Maple Lawn Blvd., Suite 150
 Fulton, Maryland 20759
 Cell: (410) 979-8336
 Office: (240) 295-6000 x 1546
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Temple is “All in the Family” for Emma Neiswender

If you were a 10-year-old girl living in Carroll County, you might not be enthused about trekking at least 45 minutes to Temple on Friday nights after a long week at school. But not if you were Emma Neiswender.



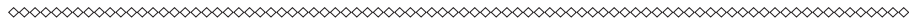
“If there is no service, Emma is very upset,” notes her Mom, Lisa Katz. Although her brother Ryan is preparing for his Bar Mitzvah on April 20, 2012, and is required to be there, Emma is the one chomping at the bit to go to services. “She loves it and can’t wait to get there,” says Lisa.

Emma, a 4th grader at Winfield Elementary School, started out at Congregation Shalom Aleichem as a kindergartner and counts her Hebrew School cohorts as some of her best friends. For Emma, the Temple community is more than a circle of friends – it is literally family. Former congregation president Marc Shapiro is Emma’s great uncle, which makes Hebrew School Director Rachael Shapiro Demb a cousin too. “Our family and friends are all there,” explains Lisa. Emma’s teacher, Holly, also happens to be one of Lisa’s best friends, and “Emma has grown up with her daughter Ayla,” who is also in Emma’s Hebrew School class.

When she’s not at Temple, Emma can be found playing soccer or lacrosse, reading, playing trombone, or – one of her favorite activities – cooking. “She makes homemade salsa, pizza bagels, cookies, you name it,” says Lisa. “She watches the cooking shows. She has even made spaghetti pie for the family for dinner.”

“I want to be a chef at a restaurant,” Emma says.

Mom Lisa is an art teacher at South Carroll High School, and Emma, a gifted student at Winfield, also shares that passion. “We have an art studio area in our house with an L-shaped counter and we sit and create things together,” says Lisa.



Mazel Tov to Jacques Fein, Howard County Volunteer of the Year!

Howard County has bestowed the honor of Volunteer of the Year upon Jacques Fein, a distinguished member of our congregation. Fein, 73, was born in Paris just before the start of World War II. The Oevres de Secours aux Enfants (OSE) (the Society for the Rescue of Children) helped his parents place Jacques and his sister Annette with a Catholic family just before they were deported to Poland and subsequently murdered in Auschwitz. After the war, Harry and Rose Fein, a Jewish American family who were connected to the OSC in New York City, adopted Jacques and Annette. Fein, who completed his schooling in the United States and works in the computer software and aerospace industry, has given back to the

community for 30 years. He is one of the founders of the Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust and an active member of the Jewish Federation of Howard County. He served on the County’s Hate Bias Impact Panel and counseled young offenders who committed various forms of hate crimes. According to his nominator, “Jacques exemplifies how a grateful immigrant can provide the creative leadership to motivate people in his community and beyond.” For more details, visit <http://washingtonjewishweek.com/main.asp?Search=1&ArticleID=16044&SectionID=4&SubSectionID=4&S=1> Mazel Tov Mr. Fein!

