



# Newsletter

April 2009 / Nisan 5769

## April Calendar

| Date | Event   |
|------|---|
| 4    | 9:45 AM, Shabbat HaGadol service (Lutheran Church)  |
| 11   | 9:30 AM, Shabbat Hol Hamoed Pesach, Early study with Rabbi Audrey Marcus-Berkman & service; no breakfast this month because of Pesach (Lutheran Church) |
| 18   | 9:45 AM, Shabbat service (Lutheran Church)  |
| 24   | 6:30 PM, Kabbalat Shabbat (led by Rabbi Audrey Marcus-Berkman) and potluck dinner (member home)   |
| 25   | No Saturday service   |
| 26   | 7:30-9PM, Rev Stendhal and Rabbi Marcus-Berkman (Lutheran Church)   |

## Setup & Kiddush Schedule

| Date  | Setup/Cleanup       | Kiddush                |
|-------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Apr 4 | Forman              | Spencer/Perkins        |
| 11    | Silverstein/Reisman | Wallit/Nemser          |
| 18    | H&M Morris          | Bridger                |
| 25    | No Service          | (Friday night service) |
| May 2 | TBD                 | E. Morris/TBD          |

## Torah/Haftarah portions for the month

|          |                     |               |         |                               |
|----------|---------------------|---------------|---------|-------------------------------|
| April 4  | Tzav                | Lv 6:1-8:36   | Malachi | 3:4-24                        |
| April 11 | Hol HaMoed          | Ex 33:12-36   | Ezekiel | 37:1-14                       |
| April 18 | Shemini             | Lv 9:1-11:47  | 2Samuel | 6:1-7:17                      |
| April 25 | Tazria-Metzora      | Lv 12:1-15:33 | Isaiah  | 66:1-24<br><i>Rosh Hodesh</i> |
| May 2    | Achrei Mot-Kedoshim | Lv 16:1-20:27 | Amos    | 9:7-15                        |

## Springs of Life: Water in the Ritual and Imagination of Christians and Jews

Sunday evening, April 26, 7:30 - 9:00 pm  
Lutheran Church

Rabbi Audrey Marcus-Berkman and Pastor John Stendhal will address the topic Springs of Life: Water in the Ritual and Imagination of Christians and Jews. In this topic both commonalities and differences abound. What are the biblical sources and symbols that speak to our distinct communities? What are the connections between mikveh and font, purification and baptism, and how do they differ? The presentations and conversation will look not only at the history and the theologies involved but at what the practical effects are when these symbols are interpreted by or in relation to the community of the other. Come to listen, and bring your questions, experiences, and observations to share as well. Light refreshments will be provided.

## Liaison Committee History

The Liaison Committee came into being in December 2007. The need for the committee arose because Rabbi Audrey had joined us the previous August and was by this point experiencing a multitude of demands coming from different directions. For example, Ritual might ask her to attend their meetings, Adult Education wanted her do a program, Programming was looking for her participation in holiday celebrations and Membership was saying they needed her to be involved in finding new members. The problem was there was no coordination between these demands.

Very quickly after we began meeting a parallel issue emerged. We did not know exactly what we expected from the Rabbi. It was one thing to say we wanted her to do all these things and another to be realistic and decide what was both feasible and met our priorities.

Officers

President: Michael Feldstein  
Vice-President: Rosalind Bronsen  
Vice-President: Joyce Lazarus  
Secretary: Steve Adler-Golden  
Treasurer: Ellen Fisher

Committee Chairs

Adult Education: Joyce Hollman  
Gemilut Hasadim: Richard & Joan Yospin  
High Holidays: Ruth Badler & Joan Belson  
House & Operations: Martha Jaffe  
Membership: Judith Hurwitz & Madelyn Morris  
Music: Richard Yospin  
Newsletter: Dena & Todd Rakoff  
Planning & Finance: Chuck Rich  
Program: Elaine Lindy & Ruth Seidman  
Ritual: Naomi Myrvaagnes  
Social Action: Peter Barrer  
Technology: Reuben Fisher

Shir Hadash  
**The Reconstructionist Havurah of Greater Boston**  
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Newton, MA 02461  
(617)-965-2775  
<http://www.jrf.org/shirhadash/>

SAVE THE DATE  
RETREAT JUNE 26-28

The 2009 annual retreat will be the weekend of June 26-28. As in previous years, it will be at the Craigville Conference Center on Cape Cod. Be sure to mark the dates in your calendar. Details will follow.

As usual, I welcome all ideas and offers of help.

Thanks,  
Charlotte Swartz  
781-488-3615 or chars1@msn.com

Liaison Committee (continued)

The Liaison Committee took on the role of addressing both these issues. The committee consists of Michael Feldstein, president; Joyce Lazarus and me, vice presidents; and the chairs of the committees that directly interact with Rabbi Audrey. These are Naomi Myrvaagnes for Ritual, Joyce Hollman for Adult Education, Ruth Seidman for Programming, and Madelyn Morris and Judith Hurwitz for Membership.

The first thing we did was to assume the role of the centralized coordinator of the requests Rabbi Audrey was getting for her involvement. The next was to come up with a mutually agreeable plan for her activities for the remainder of the year. Some of the programs that were initiated year were a 5-session course on Jewish prayer and another 5 session course on leading Shabbat services; a program on Jewish Perspectives on Death and Mourning; and a session on poetry and the introduction of new melodies for services at the retreat. These were in addition to her role in morning services, Kabbalat Shabbat services, and Torah Study as well as holiday celebrations. We then went on to plan her activities for the period prior to her maternity leave and then for the period following her return from maternity leave. A sampling of the programs that we have agreed upon for this year are a continuation of Torah studies, a joint program with Rev. Stendhal and the Lutheran congregation on the meaning of water in both traditions, joint programs with Hillel B'nai Torah and Dorshei Tzedek and a very successful joint Kabbalat Shabbat service with the Sunday School for Jewish Studies.

The areas of Rabbi Audrey's role at Shir Hadash, as stated in her contract are: 30% each Ritual, Education and Sustainability and 10% Other such as pastoral care. For 2007 – 08 we agreed that her primary focus should be on Ritual and Education.

For 2008-09, the Liaison Committee turned its focus to *sustainability*. We recognized that Shir Hadash had become quite insular and this affected not only our ability to grow but also the quality of our members' experience. The questions we are now facing is what do we mean by *sustainability* and what would we be willing to do to support the Rabbi in these efforts. These questions go well beyond defining her role as rabbi. They are questions that define how we view Shir Hadash and what we want to be as we move forward. It is the intention of the Liaison Committee to initiate this discussion.

*Rosalind Bronsen*  
*rosalind10@comcast.net*

## Purim Celebration Tzedakah

Shir Hadash sent the proceeds from the Tzedakah collection at our Purim celebration to MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, of which Shir Hadash is a member. Ruth Seidman received a reply from them, which read, in part:

On behalf of the Board and staff of MAZON and the hundreds of thousands of people who receive help from the hunger response organizations we support in America and abroad, I send my deepest appreciation for the \$100 donation. Your generosity enables us to keep the promise of our mission: leading the American Jewish community to fulfill our tradition's obligation to provide food for the hungry.

Then, hand-written from the President, H. Eric Schockman:

Ruth: Many thanks for the meaningful Purim contribution and to all the members of Shir Hadash for continuing to partner with us in our work.

## Welcome our Newest Member

Lynn Wetreich (pronounced wetrick) has joined the Havurah after attending several events over the last few weeks. Lynn is a retired teacher of English and theatre in New York city who now lives in Newton Centre. She sent the Havurah a letter which reads, in part:

You have welcomed me into your home of worship with open arms ... I believe I lucked out in finding this Reconstructionist community. Thank you... After reading one of the slogans on the Shir Hadash welcoming folder - "This is what you can accomplish in a small congregation"- I look forward to sharing; my sincere heartfelt prayer is "this is what we can accomplish on a small planet."

*Aaron Seidman*  
*seidman@theworld.com*