



High Holiday Newsletter

September 16, 2008



Rosh Hashana is only a few weeks away, and we want to make sure you know about the various services and programs we are offering before, during and after the High Holidays. It's enough to make a BlackBerry burst, so please take a moment to plan your days with us so you won't stumble into Eastminster Church in mid-November and ask, 'Am I too late?'

Lend an ear to Rabbi Gottlieb as she writes about the importance of truly listening to one another. There are dates to keep in mind for registration, and a backup plan if you miss them. There is also a wealth of community news to read about, including a multifaith peace walk that will see the DJC join hands with other faith groups in our neighbourhood. So read on, read carefully but don't bother reading between the lines: we've spelled it all out, and look forward to seeing you soon.

*

On diversity and active listening

Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb

Dear friends,

Shalom Aleichem and Shanah Tova...

'Great is peace for God's name is peace.' (Gittin 59b)

God found no vessel to hold a blessing for Israel, only peace.

As the sage Hillel said, Be of the disciples of Aaron, loving peace, pursuing peace, loving humanity and bringing them near to the values of Scripture. (Pirke Avot 1:14)

David declared seek peace and pursue it. (Psalms 34:15)

The sages comment, Seek peace for your loved ones and pursue it for your enemies; Seek peace where you live and pursue it elsewhere; Seek peace with your body and

283 DANFORTH AVENUE #125
TORONTO, ONTARIO
M4K 1N2

TEL: (416) 580-6303
info@djctoronto.com

pursue it with your resources; Seek peace for yourself and pursue it for others. Seek peace today and pursue it every tomorrow. (Leviticus Rabah 9.9)

Pursuing peace is the central value of Torah. These days I spend much of my time focused on the sacred task of peacemaking with people who are often regarded by one another as enemies, including interfaith civilian diplomacy with Iran, reconciliation projects among Israelis and Palestinians, interfaith work among the children of Abraham. My hope for peace rests in being part of and contributing to peace building efforts with a truly diverse community of peacemakers who share an expansive view of welcoming and a commitment to nonviolent social transformation. This is one of the many reasons I am very happy to be part of The Danforth Jewish Circle, a community dedicated to openness and welcome, a community that cherishes diversity, a community that understands the richness of experience that diversity generates.

Diversity occurs on many levels. We come from different geographic regions, religious backgrounds and family settings. We also have differing views of most subjects, including God, music and politics. We are from different economic classes and are in culturally and religiously diverse marriages and relationships. We have different gender orientations and different notions of how to raise children and how to have a good time. We differ in our emotional and intellectual tones, our ways of learning, our experience of joy and suffering. With so many variables, how do we create a climate that truly welcomes diversity? How do we root the value of diversity in the communities we inhabit or try to create?

We learn from the texts above that rooting the value of diversity within community life requires active pursuit of understanding others. Diversity does not occur simply by being in a room together. Rather, diversity implies a climate of acceptance for all voices present. That is why diversity can only take root when we take initiative, go outside our comfort zone in order to understand others where they live.

A truly diverse environment will only emerge when active listening is adopted as a core spiritual value. Active or compassionate listening is the way we gain a more expansive understanding of the members of any given community. Instead of focusing on what we agree or disagree with, embracing the value of diversity means that we listen to gain understanding so we can better respond to the needs of our community.

A diverse community also thrives when everyone takes an active role in making things happen. However, those who have experienced silencing in the past may be hesitant to come forward. That is why active listening is so important to a community.

We cannot identify troublesome spots within our community unless we are willing to hear from others what hurts. Rather than become defensive, compassionate listening allows us to enter a process of reconciliation through deeper understanding.

This is the message of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. We turn inward and actively listen to our own heart song and the heart song of those around us. Only in this way can we chart a course toward healing and peace.

Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb





Announcements/ reminders

Services/Activities for Rosh Hashana:

- Children (9:00 am) and Adult services (10:30 am) will both take place in the Sanctuary (entrance via Danforth) - led by Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb.
- Please enter via the **Danforth entrance - 310 Danforth Avenue** to register.
- **A reminder** that Kabbalistic Music and Meditation (just before our Adult service) will start promptly at 10:00 am (no latecomers) in the Sanctuary and include chanting, singing, niggunim (wordless melodies), text study and meditation.
- **Rosh Hashana songs** from 10:00 - 10:30 am with Danny Bakan and Allan Merovitz in the auditorium for children and families.
- **Children's Activities** (for 9-12 age groups) will begin at 10:30 am to 12:30 pm in the Hurndale room (downstairs).
- **Adult workshop** -Jewish non-violence and peacemaking- from 2:30 - 4:00 pm will take place in the Hurndale room.
- **Tashlich** scheduled for 5:00 pm, will be held (as usual) at the Don Valley Brick Works (off Bayview Avenue.)
- **Dawn Service** 6:30 to 7:30 am- TBA.

Registration:

- **Early Bird mailing** was mailed on September 15.
- **All those who register** (including online) between **September 9 - September 26** may pick up their membership cards and/or tickets at the door at services. Please look for the **PRE-REGISTERED** sign in the lobby of the Danforth entrance.
- **All registration after September 26** will only be taken at the door at services. You can register for all services at the door - please look for the **REGISTRATION** sign in the lobby.

Day Care:

- **We offer free childcare** for children (ages 2 and 11) in both the Nursery (beside the auditorium) or in the Gym during all services, adult workshops and Torah Study (2nd Day Rosh Hashana).
- Children must be signed in and out by parents.

We thank you and appreciate your cooperation!

If you have any questions, please write to info@djctoronto.com or call us at our main line: 416.580.6303



Community Apples & Honey, Rosh Hashana Kiddush

***After Children's service on EREV (Sept 29) and morning services on (Sept 30):
You're invited...***

To join us for a community Kiddush in the **Hurndale room** (downstairs). All are welcome. Please join us for a delicious array of challah, apples & honey, cakes and conversation.

We'd like to thank Sara Novak for organizing this event, and the many volunteers who also gave of their time.

**



High Holiday Newsletter

September 16, 2008

The DJC Book Club

The tradition continues...with 4 more exciting books, and 4 smashing facilitators!

The Human Stain, by Phillip Roth; *The Funeral Party*, by Ludmilla Ulitskaya; *The Orientalist*, by Tom Reiss; and *A Sharp Intake of Breath*, by John Miller.



Sound intriguing?

Be sure to pick up a flyer in the lobby at the High Holiday services for more information about this years' line-up.

And remember to register! Just click: info@djctoronto.com or call 416.580.6303.

*

JC Children's Jewish Studies program

Classes begin October 16 for children in our Jewish Studies program (SK- grade 7). We'd also like to invite children your JK aged children to enroll in our program this year. If interested, please write to info@djctoronto.com for more information.

*

Mark your calendars - bring your families!

We're very excited to announce...

1st Annual Danforth Multifaith Peace Walk

When: Sunday, October 5

Where: 1470 Gerrard Street East - Starting at Glen Rhodes United Church & the Pakistani Community Centre

Time: 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

The Danforth Jewish is partnering with Eastminster and Glen Rhodes United Church(es), Madinah Masjid and the Pakistani Community Centre to launch this inspiring multifaith event in support of peace.

Come walk with us, meet new friends and share in our hope for peace in our varied homes of worship. Mark October 5th in your calendar and bring the whole family!

****For more information see the attached flyer.** If you'd like to help volunteer for this event (we need lots of helpers) please contact Karen Robbins: karenmrobbins@aol.com (416.466.5548).

*

TOUR OF PAPE AVENUE CEMETERY

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19, 11:00 AM

Join the DJC, in association with the Ontario Jewish Archives, for the inaugural walking tour of the Pape Avenue Cemetery!

Established in 1849, and owned by Holy Blossom Temple, this is the oldest Jewish cemetery in Toronto. This guided tour will tell the stories of those who established the cemetery, as well as those buried there. Gain a new insight into Toronto's early Jewish life by strolling through this historic site.

The tour is limited to a maximum of 30 people, so register early! The cost is \$10 per person, and must be paid in advance by cash or cheque. Contact Donna Bernardo at the Ontario Jewish Archives, at 416.635.2883 x 5170 to register and for information regarding a meeting place.



High Holiday Newsletter

September 16, 2008

- In Memoriam -

Helen Grebow, mother of DJC member Brian Grebow, passed away on June 27, 2008. She was 88 and passed away in Danbury, Connecticut. She is survived by a daughter and two sons.

*

Robert Klein, brother-in-law of DJC member Claudia Bali, husband of Dora Klein (Claudia's sister), passed away on September 1st after a long battle with cancer.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Dear friends,

I write to give you an early heads up about the launch of my book "I Am My Family," (Princeton Architectural Press 2008) on **Sunday, September 21st, from 2pm to 4pm at David Mirvish Books - 596 Markham Street, Toronto.** Please mark your calendars and come to share and contribute to the buzz and excitement. I look forward to seeing you and to signing your copy. Below is an excerpt from the upcoming press release.

All the best,
Rafael

Rafael Goldchain's ***I Am My Family*** is a family album of traditional portrait photographs with an unconventional twist: the only subject is Goldchain himself. In an elaborate process involving genealogical research, the use of makeup, hair styling, costume, and props, Goldchain transforms himself into his ancestors and captures their personifications with the camera. Taking some liberties with historical accuracy, Goldchain has assembled a fascinating cast of characters: from his short-

283 DANFORTH AVENUE #125
TORONTO, ONTARIO
M4K 1N2

TEL: (416) 580-6303
info@djctoronto.com

story-writing grandfather, to his great-aunts Pola and Fela, to the Gur Rabbi's nephew and his bride Rachelle, Goldchain reinvents himself over and over again. These beautifully reproduced self-portraits trace the evolution of Jewish culture from tradition to modernity and invite us to engage the history of a family decimated and scattered by the traumatic events of the 20th century. Featuring an essay by art historian and curator Martha Langford, the portraits are complemented by a selection of the archival images and selections from the artist's sketchbooks.