



Tv Oh!

The Newsletter of Tikkun v'Or

S P I R I T * C O M M U N I T Y * J U S T I C E



Fall 2025/5786

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Editors

Sue Merkel & Naomi Wilensky

Welcome to Tv Oh!

A new newsletter for Congregation Tikkun v'Or

We hope you noticed that the Communications Committee has been working to improve and expand our communication efforts with you all (congregants) and with the community. A year or so ago, we totally revamped our website, then we redid the e-news. Now we are working to bring back our newsletter. Our plans are to send out the Tv Oh! newsletter to members only four times a year. Our goals are to share more about the issues the Board is addressing; actions from our committees; teachings of our service leaders; and stories from our congregation. We hope you enjoy it! (And thanks to Jen Kagan for suggesting the name!)

Please send any suggestions to Naomi (info@tikkunvor.org) or Sue (presidents_22@tikkunvor.org).

From our Co-presidents, Martha Armstrong & Mitch Grossman

Our key objectives. One of our most important jobs as Co-Presidents of TvO is to work with the Board to establish key objectives for the year. This year, the Board has

agreed on 7 major objectives.

1. Continue the new service model successfully. Coming off our first year with our new “mosaic” model of spiritual leadership, we want to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our congregation. This includes scheduling the resources and building the pipeline for future leadership. The congregation’s support for Michael Margolin’s rabbinic training comes under this key objective.

[Click here to read more](#)



From Our Service Leaders...

Faith Rogow’s Kavanah for the Kol Nidre Prayer

Introduction. We recite Kol Nidre each year. Like reading the Torah, week by week, the same words, over and over, every single year. And each year, because we are different and the world is different, when we listen, we hear differently.

This year amidst the swirling chaos of our disintegrating democracy and a rising tide of hate and hurt, I was struck by something author Roxanne Gay wrote. She was reacting to this line from Kiese Laymon’s work on racism. He wrote: “If we in America have reached that point in our desperate culture when we must murder children, no matter for what reason or what color, we don’t deserve to survive, and probably won’t.” Gay’s reaction?: “I was stunned into stillness.”

She didn’t say, “stunned into silence.” Now is not a season for silence. But stunned into stillness. And I’ve been thinking a lot about what that means. I’ll share more as part of my d’var later in the service.

For now, consider that Yom Kippur is, by design, a day carved out for stillness. We stop work to embrace contemplation. We replace nuance and complexity with simple, straightforward declarations of what we need: life, love, peace, forgiveness.

As Chris plays Kol Nidre, I invite you to inhabit the stillness. Center yourself so that you can listen, deeply, with your whole self – body, mind, and soul.

[Click here to read more](#)

News to Note....

From the Enrichment Programming Group

We are having a busy year and there is much more to come. Members of the

committee are Annie Wexler, Jeff Bercovitz, Robin Dubovi and Ilana Rowe with me (Mara Sapon-Shevin) as Chair.

On October 18th, we sponsored a musical experience with Leah Shoshana that was very well received. People were enthusiastic about her singing and spirituality and we are trying to arrange another session with her (TBA).

There is a lot more coming including:

- A movie and dinner night on November 1st (showing An American Pickle);
- A presentation by Peter Beinart about our Jewish identities in this challenging time in Israel/Gaza on November 10th. Many TVO members read his book and participated in book group discussions);
- A Chanukah learning session with Lauren Monroe on December 19th in which she will talk about various interpretations and meanings of the holiday;
- An enlightening discussion of the Jewish Community in Kaifeng, China with Eric Maroney;
- A poetry reading by Fran Markover (date not set yet);
- A session on Our Jewish Artifacts, with congregant sharing (show us the menorah your Grandmother gave you or the Chai you got at your bar mitzvah); and;
- A God Cafe in which we explore our understandings and relationships with the idea of God and how it relates to our Jewish practices and identities.

The committee is still seeking an additional member or two. If you are interested, please contact Mara maradances@yahoo.com

And please COME to our events and invite your friends.

News from Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE)...

Highlights this year include:

- Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Youth and Family services;
- Vav/Zayin students reflecting on a Day of Awe in the Woods and Parents in the Woods;



- Building the sukkah, and celebrating Sukkot with fire-making, cider pressing, and

chocolate;

- Bet/Gimel students making their own Torahs and preparing to host a Shabbat dinner;
- Dalet/Hey students learning traditional Shabbat rituals and creating new ones;
- Welcoming new students at Simchat Torah, with musician Leah Shoshanah;
- Meeting with authors Gebyanesh Addisu and Arlene Schenker, authors of *Call Me Gebhayanesh*.

From the Board....

Affiliation Survey Results and Next Steps

(as seen in a previous email)

The Purpose, Identity and Affiliation Task Force was asked by the Board to help advance the congregational priorities of doing more effective “in-reach” for engagement and member retention and outreach for growth in congregational membership. We want TvO to remain a progressive and vibrant Jewish community in Ithaca and Central New York, while laying the groundwork for the future.

Thank you to everyone for participating in our multiple conversations over the past year about what matters most to us, and for completing the recent "affiliation survey." A clear and beautiful picture emerges that collectively we love the way we have evolved as a congregation and how we do things now! As we explore how we can best describe ourselves outwardly, while simultaneously honoring and being respectful of our current diverse membership, it is important to emphasize that we are not planning to change our rituals, prayerbooks, service leadership etc.

The 80+ responses to our affiliation survey provide insight into what really matters to our current membership. Here is a recap of the responses to the survey (81 total respondents):

[Click here to read more](#)

From Our Congregants....

For your enjoyment, here are some **Haikus**,
written on the morning following Yom Kippur 5786

Dreams of Yom Kippur
Feeling the Divine Spirit
Enveloping us
By Annie Wexler

Yom Kippur journey
Our community explored

Deep into the heart
By Martha Armstrong

Zoomlings abound
Lovingly embraced
Yom Kippur as one
By Harriet London

Community trusting
Safe spiritual practice
Pleading for Peace together
By Mihal Ronen

Our prayers for peace merge
There is power in numbers
Open hearts unite
By Mara Sapon-Shevin

Words and melodies
Still permeate our being
Walking in dawn's glow
By Lara Estroff

May all TvO
Have a joyful 5786
Shanah Tovah U'Metukah !
By Lise Rosenfield

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