



**Congregation Kol Ami
Religious School
CHAI TIMES**

March 28, 2009

Despite the blizzard we still had a full house for Chai School! Mazel Tov! There were three birthday to recognize, songs to sing with the wonderful 'Patrick and Sophia', and great food to nosh on. Nir Gad, an emissary to Israel, was on hand to discuss Israel and Jewish issues with us. It all made for a warm, educational, and enlightening time.



We honored birthday recipients, Nir Gad doing his thing, and 'Chai' students listening intently.

K-1 with Stan Strauss

It was great to see all of the kids again. Well, almost all of them. We really missed you, Elizabeth and can't wait to see you again. The kids shared a little bit about what they did while we were apart. It was nice to hear them talk about family. After making sure we were ready to begin learning again, Robert came to review the Passover questions. I was very very impressed with how well the kids recited the questions in Hebrew. We then spent some time talking and sharing all of the mitzvot that we performed. It was difficult to settle on just one, but that one was written on their hand "leaf" for the tree in our room. You really should come visit and read all of the mitzvot that our children perform. And you know what? While you are there, you can add your mitzvah leaf too!

To get ready for our study of Passover, we started reading the story of Moses. It is amazing what the power of love and the belief in God can do. Without it, where would we be? That is what the story of Baby Moses was all about. I hope the kids complete the back page of their booklets for fun and a review of the story. Our morning then turn to a study of Israel with the visit from Nir Gad. He shared facts about Israel through a matching game like the old game, Concentration. Children matched symbols of Israel with their United States counterpart. Nir gave us lots of information about Israeli sports, food, police, and the flag just to name a few. The morning ended with song led by Patrick. What a great way to spend a Sunday morning!

2-3 with Julie Hirsch Bohs

First of all, we want to make sure that Ethan knows he was missed this week. The class hopes we see his shining face this coming Sunday.

We are working very hard to prepare and learn about our next big holiday, Passover! We took turns reading several bible stories, which will lead to the story of exodus from Egypt. We are not there yet, but the kids do have a good memory for the basics of the story. We will continue this next Sunday. In addition, we are hoping to make a craft, which will be a lovely addition to their Passover seder tables. We had all of our regularly scheduled activities - Music with Patrick, Hebrew with Robert, and also the task of working on our mitzvah tree leaves. Even with a two week break, all of the children easily came up with wonderful mitzvahs they completed over the spring break.

If you have spare time, ask your kids to wow you by reciting some of the Four Questions! See you on Sunday.



Nir Gad spoke to the K/1 and 2/3 classes. Are you noticing something?



It looks like boy are on one side and the girls are on another! Hmm....

4-5 with Ron Scrogam and Patrick Buckley

The fourth and fifth grade class returned after spring break to hear Israeli Emissary Nir Gad discuss the recent elections in Israel and how they compared to the American elections. It was an enlightening presentation about the complexities

of Israel politics. After a walk in the garden to see the recent snowfall, the students studied Hebrew with Desiree. They are reviewing Hebrew letter recognition. Mr. Gad then visited the class to answer questions about fruits that grow in Israel, preparations for Shabbat, and the Israeli school system. He then showed a video about the Israeli Defense Force. Next week, we will continue our discussion of Passover.

Today Nir Gad, an Israeli emissary, spoke on the current political situation in Israel. He described their multiparty system and the dynamics involved in trying to establish a coalition. He spoke about the policies of the major Israeli parties and their leaders. When we adjourned to class, we first discussed what the students learned from the presentation. Happily they generally seemed to understand what he was saying.

6-7 and 8+ Steve and Linda Sackin

As a useful review we asked the students if they could explain how building and maintaining a garden in a parking lot is appropriate as Jewish education. They pointed out that it was a good example of 'tikkun olam, an idea at the heart of Jewish ethical consciousness. They noted the parallels between how they had restored barren land to fertility as had the early Israeli pioneers. We considered the realization espoused by many of the early leaders that the Jewish people in the limitations of the diaspora had become alienated from nature and only by engaging in agriculture and labor could they hope to establish their own nation. There was the interesting notion from A.D. Gordon that by restoring the barren land, the Jews could begin to restore their sanity. Grant pointed out that as the garden needs to be tended, so too, does our Jewishness.

Important Things To Remember:

> Sunday, April 5....."Pillows for Passover" @ 5:00PM @ 2nd Pres. Church located at 318 E. 55th Street; K.C., MO 64113 at the intersection of 55th street and Oak . This is a potluck dinner and educational program led by Barry Speert . Bring decorative pillows for donations.

> Monday, April 6.....'Jerusalem: Center of the World' program on KCPT Channel 19 at 2:00 AM Central Standard Time. Ray Suarez hosts a history of Jerusalem.

See you Sunday! Shalom 😊