



**Congregation Kol Ami
Religious School
CHAI TIMES**

January 24, 2010

Chai Family Time

After we noshed on bagels and delicious oranges, we learned and sang May Yafeh Hayom and then reviewed and sang L'chat Adonai as well as Havu L'Adonai with Patrick and Sophia. Cantor shared with us the Jewish response to Haiti and the crisis that is taking place in that country. We are all looking forward to Nathan Atherton's Bar Mitzvah on Saturday at 10:30pm. Don't forget that we do have Chai School this Sunday, January 31st. I'll see you there! ☺

Confirmation Class with John Shuchart

Our first Confirmation Class, Comparative Religions, class met on Sunday. We had 6 students and 3 adults attend and everyone participated in our discussion. We talked about religion in general, and tried to answer the question of whether or not man made up religion. We talked about the need for society to have rules and laws and we talked about because of that, did man invent religion? We had some interesting comments ranging from yes, man probably invented the different gods in mythology to the fact that man doesn't have the capability to really answer this question. We are pretty smart, but there are some things we just don't know and probably won't ever be able to figure out. One such thing is how did we begin? We talked about Adam and Eve and how almost every major religion has its own creation story. Most religions don't start the world with the Big Bang theory; they start it with a god creating the world and humans.

We will be attending a different place of worship every other week. Our first visit is February 7 at the Zion Grove Baptist Missionary Church on Swope Parkway. We'll leave Kol Ami at 9:00. We will attend their service and then spend some time with their minister asking questions. We will return around 11:00. Then, two weeks later we will meet at Kol Ami for a couple of hours and discuss our visit to Zion Grove as well as talking about the next place of worship we will be visiting. Our visits, by the way, will include a Catholic and Protestant Church, an Islamic service,

a Greek Orthodox service and probably a Buddhist encounter. Students have a voice in the services they want to attend, so our schedule will change as we go. For now, we do know about Zion Grove and we do know that we will meet every other Sunday through May.

K-1 with Stan Strauss

Today we had a very busy morning. The children were so happy with themselves when they placed Tzedakah in their Tzedakah box that they had made. We are still trying to figure out where their collective Tzedakah will go. Now parents, I want you to think of different ways your child can earn their Tzedakah money so they can truly enjoy and experience the mitzvah of giving.

For Hebrew we reviewed the letters Aleph and Bet. Patach was introduced which gives the silent Aleph the sound of "ah" as in "a" in father. We colored the letters and put sounds together. We learned the word abba, the Hebrew word for father. A packet went home with the students for them to review and to share with you. Later in the morning we met with the 2-3 class to view some You Tube videos that recite the Aleph Bet. They were really good. You may want to see and hear them for yourself.

We continued the story of story of Moses. Our Torah study is now going to follow the weekly parsha as best we can. We had some quick catch up to get to this week's Torah portion. There was a lot of ground to cover. We discussed and read about Moses growing up, having to leave Egypt, talking with God at the Burning Bush, returning to Egypt, and the first meeting with Pharoah and results of being turned down...whew!!!! This week's parsha was about the Plagues of locust and darkness, and then finally the death of the first born. We read about the preparation of leaving which includes the story of Passover. This will all be reviewed when we talk about the Passover holiday. It was a lot for the kids to absorb at one time and for the most part, they attended very well. Now that we are caught up, so much will not be covered at one time.

I have to attend an out of town meeting and will not be at Chai School next Sunday. The kids will participate with 2-3 class. I know they will have a great experience with Patrick and Annette.



Marcelles, Hannah, Desiree, Noah



Leah, and Stan

2-3 with Patrick Buckley

In 2/3 we missed having Annette help us out with her amazing arts projects! We talked about Tikkun Olam: what it means not only on a large scale (globally) but how we can be an effective, contributing part of repairing the world. As part of our continued effort, we discussed what plants need to be healthy, what makes pollution, and how we can help clean up pollution in order to improve our planet for ourselves, animals and plants! We then went out to the garden to get healthy soil and transplanted holiday cacti into large pots. The rocks and soils in the pots are just like the earth and remind us of our jobs as Jewish people to take care of the earth.



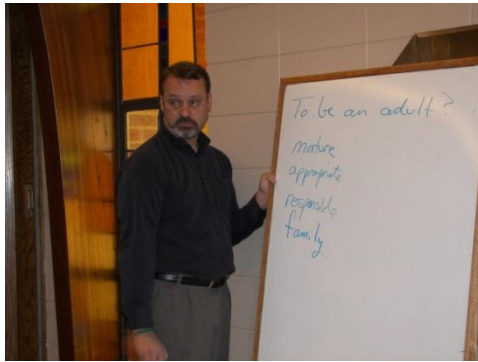
Jonathan

Patrick

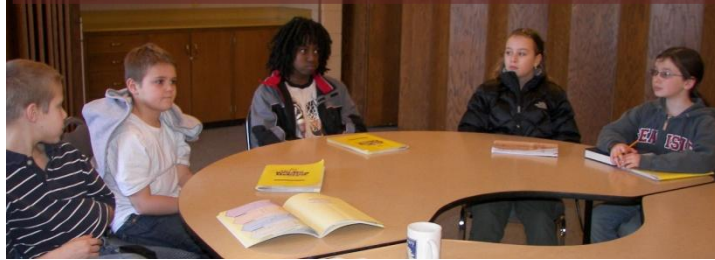
Mariah

Aidan

4-5 with Ron Scrogam



Ron, Emory, Ethan, Michael, Sarah, and Julia



6-7 with Steve and Linda Sackin

We began class demonstrating the 'eddy current' effect: the phenomena of a magnet falling at a much slower rate than expected when dropped through a copper tube. What methods of inquiry do we use to understand this? The students pretty much recognized that they approached this problem scientifically. We pointed out the contrasting type of thought required for the next segment of class where we studied the Abraham story. We reviewed the Covenant as well as the significance of Abraham's challenging God over Sodom and Gomorah.

We told the Ishmael story and noted how roughly 1600 years after it was written, Ishmael was claimed by Mohammed as his ancestor. As the students were generally aware of the Arab-Israeli conflict as well as the enmity between Jews and Muslims, we presented the Yehuda Amichai poem "Jerusalem" as a device to help inspire them to express their reaction to what had been presented to them in class. Here are some from Cole, Aly and Matthew:

So easy it is
to see the enemy as
inhuman. When we tell

I see the enemy
I see the enemy.
They stare at me.

ourselves that they are evil, that they are wrong, that they are not human, it becomes easier to fight. But the enemy is human. The enemy can feel as we feel and they are real. The tragedy begins to sink in: death and hurt and bombs. When we tell ourselves that they are evil, that they are wrong, that they are not human, it becomes easier to fight.

I stare back.
I think we shouldn't be enemies.
I want to be their friend.
It's nice to be friends.
I hate to be enemies.
I want to be friends.

Our world has many thoughts. Thousands right, thousands wrong, but an answer to what is wrong must come from understanding and you must hear to understand and if you fight you don't hear and if you don't hear you don't understand you must allow yourself to hear....



Matthew	Nathan	Asher	Linda	Steve	Aly
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Dates to Remember

- Friday, January 29: Tu B'Shevat
- Sunday, January 31: Chai School will be is session starting at 9:00
- Sunday, February 14: Potluck Breakfast
- Sunday, February 28: Busy Buddies

News Extra

10th Annual Community Tu B'Shevat Seder is January 31

January 20, 2010 (Overland Park, Kan.) — The Kansas City Jewish community is invited to attend the 10th Annual Mitzvah Garden Tu B'Shevat Seder at Village Shalom, 6:30 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 31, 2010.

There is no charge to attend this family-oriented celebration of the Jewish “birthday of the trees.” The event will follow the “seder” format created by Kabbalists (Jewish mystics) during the Middle Ages, modeled after the Passover seder.

Shireinu, Kansas City’s Jewish Community chorale, will add a musical component to the event with holiday-related songs and “ruach” (spirit). Everyone in attendance will have an opportunity to participate in the readings, singing and dancing.

As part of the evening’s program, the Mitzvah Garden “Golden Trowel” award will be presented to the community volunteer who had the greatest impact on the garden during the past year. The evening will conclude with the opportunity for everyone to start plants that will grow in time to be used at home Passover seders.

Additional seedlings will be planted in preparation for the 10th Annual Mitzvah Garden Camp-out, which will be held May 1-2, 2010. This year’s camp-out will actually coincide with the Jewish holiday of Lag B'Omer. The celebration will include a bonfire with food and song in typical Israeli style.

Come celebrate Tu B'Shevat, and help to initiate another successful community Mitzvah Garden growing season.

For more information, contact Dr. Ken Sonnenschein at 913-402-8588.