



Congregation Kol Ami  
Religious School  
**CHAI TIMES**

September 26, 2010

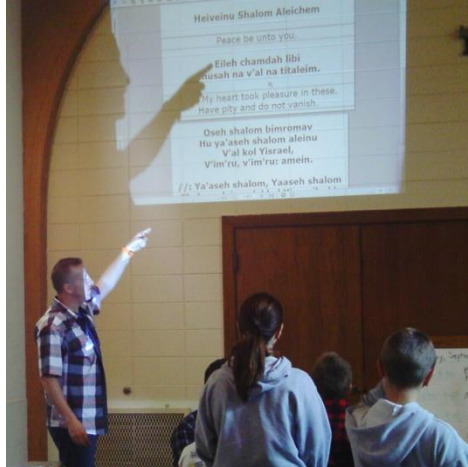
*Chai Family Time*

As always, we had a good time visiting, eating, singing, and learning together. We started with Cantor passing around the lulav and etrog for one last shake and wonderful smell of the season. Then we did the Hamotsi and had a breakfast oneg. Patrick led us in song, and then we heard from Larry Gelb, a Board member. He graciously told us that the reason he works so hard for Kol Ami is because he loves his Judaism and wants to make sure it is here for all of us. Steve Sackin spoke to us about the never-ending but ever-present 'Prairie Village Compost Dilemma at Kol Ami'. We discussed why composting was so vital to our Judaism and decided that we would purchase some composting barrels that are hopefully more aesthetically pleasing to the Prairie Village officials so that we can continue to compost for 'God's Garden'. We sang 'Happy Birthday' to our very own Ellie Lasky. She is now 5!!! 😊 Barry Speert enticed the adults to stay and learn by telling us that the slogan "Thank Heaven for Seven Eleven" had significance to Judaism. We ended with the K/1<sup>st</sup> grade class teaching us a song about the Sukkah and having a prayer before we dismissed to our classes.



**Coming together as a family before we eat, sing, learn, and play!**

**Friday, October 1<sup>st</sup> come to Kol Ami at 6:30pm for an Italian potluck dinner and stay for services at 7:30pm to celebrate Simchat Torah, sing with Yachad, and witness our consecration ceremony welcoming our new Chai School students who are beginning their journey as Jews to learn their story.**



Learning songs with Patrick.



Larry Gelb sharing his story.

Patrick started the morning off with talking about the Hakafah, specifically what the word refers to in a Shabbat service. Four students then loudly read English translations of the four songs we currently sing during the Hakafah on Friday night Shabbat services so everyone would know what the songs mean. Everyone then sang "Eileh Chamdah Libi", the least well-known of the four songs ("L'cha Adonai", "Heiveinu Shalom Aleichem", "Eileh Chamdah Libi", and "Oseh Shalom"), learning the words in Hebrew and then singing the whole song all the way through a couple of times.

### **K-1 with Stan Strauss**

It was a great day in the K-1 classroom! 😊 Today's theme was Simchat Torah. We started with a field trip to the sanctuary to see the Torah. The question was asked, "How is the Torah like a circle?" A few ideas were shared. We talked about how the Torah is the law, it teaches us how to live our lives, and it is how God talks to us. We discussed how on Simchat Torah the last part of the Torah is read and immediately we begin again by reading the first part, just like a good book that we enjoy hearing or reading again and again. This is one way the Torah is like a circle. The kids were told that the last word in the Torah is "Yisrael," which ends with the letter LAMED. When the first part is read, it begins with the word "Bereshit," which starts with the letter BET. When we go from LAMED to BET forming the

circle of the Torah, the word "Lev" is made, meaning heart. Torah teaches us to have a big heart.

When we returned to the room, we learned the Hebrew word, *DEGEL*, which means flag. We then made flags to wave on Simchat Torah this Friday. The rest of the morning was spent singing with Patrick and visiting God's Garden.

Each student took home a Mitzvah chart. We talked about what a Mitzvah was and that there are many ways to perform Mitzvot. Parents can place the chart on the refrigerator at home and the kids can fill in the circles as they perform a mitzvah. Giving monetary Mitzvah as Tzedakah is one way. We shall collect Tzedakah each Sunday morning and later choose an organization to donate to.



### **2-3 with Annette Carlson**

In the 2/3 class for this week we talked about Sukkot and the purpose of a sukkah as "portable houses" when the Israelites wandered in the desert for 40 years. We talked about the Esrog, Lulav, Myrtle branch and the Willow branch that was passed around during family chai time earlier that morning. Our activity for the day was making our own Hebrew flash cards (we will continue to work on them next week too) so we can take them home to practice with your moms and dads and quiz our brothers and sisters. We had Hebrew and music with Patrick and worked in the garden until it was time to go home.



Patrick met in the K-3 classroom to do some singing and dancing. He talked with the students about the Hakafah - when it happens during a Shabbat service and what music is sung during that time. Then everyone sang "Heiveinu Shalom Aleichem" as well as "Eileh Chamdah Libi", both of which are currently sung during the Hakafah in Shabbat services on Friday nights at Kol Ami. The class was then ended on a rousing singing of "The Tree of Life" - with motions and dancing.

#### **4-5 with Ron Scrogam**

The Fourth and Fifth Grade Class spent most of our class reviewing the blessing of Moses upon the gathered tribes before his ascension to view the Promised Land, just prior to his death (Deuteronomy 33). We then traced the lineage of the tribes to the sons of Jacob and their mothers (Genesis 46: 8-27). The students then created a family tree for the sons of Jacob and their mothers. The absence of the tribe of Simeon from the blessing in Deuteronomy led us to explore the synagogue's library and Cantor's wisdom. Each student received a commentary, to discuss with his or her family, on this parsha from the web site [www.aish.com](http://www.aish.com) Patrick gave the students a Hebrew lesson, and there was a trip to the garden to harvest kale and to smell the rosemary. Next week, we will read the creation story and see how our perceptions have changed in a year.



What a group! It's a beautiful sight!

### **6-7 with Steve and Linda Sackin**

Class began with Patrick engaging the students in understanding how to decode Hebrew. Next we embarked on a discussion on time. What is it? Why do people measure it? What basic units of time exist in nature? What is the difference between the solar and lunar year?

How does the Jewish calendar reconcile this? How does the Jewish calendar differ from the one we regularly use here in the US? How does it differ from the Muslim calendar? Linda then presented the mosaic project. She explained how we would take all year to study the Jewish calendar and design and build a 60" diameter calendar in the garden. She passed around images of the Jewish calendar to begin to give the students ideas and to illustrate that it is portrayed as circular rather than square as typically are contemporary calendars. As the mosaic medium will be shaped pieces of broken plates, the students went outside and practiced breaking plates and shaping the pieces into usable parts of the mosaic. Matthew observed that it was necessary to destroy the plates in order to create the mosaic. We concluded the day harvesting cucumbers, basil and tomatoes in the garden

There are again ambitious plans this year for the garden. We plan on beginning the bios wale. We hope to create another large batch of compost. We plan on obtaining a revolving compost bin so we can again recycle food scraps. The Montessori and daycare programs taking place during the week at Kol Ami would like to help us making compost. Owen Shepherd, a professional gardener, has agreed to help each Sunday in the garden. Meanwhile much harvesting remains. If anyone would like to help coordinate the next Havdalah picnic, please let us know.



Linda asks, "Are we having fun yet?" Marie answers, "What do you think?"

### 2/3

The 2/3 class met in the lobby for Hebrew. The students worked on letter recognizing the letters Bet, Vet, Shin, Sin, Dalet, Reish, and Tav. They discussed sounds the consonants make as well as how some of the consonants look similar but make different sounds.

### 4/5

The 4/5 class had Hebrew in their classroom. The students worked on recognizing the letters Bet, Vet, Shin, Sin, Dalet, Reish, and Tav, and then explored **how** Hebrew words are read. The students then sounded out and learned the words Bat, Bar, Shabbat, Rav, Davar, Shar, and Sar.

### 6-8

The 6-8 class had Hebrew in their classroom. The students worked on recognizing the letters Bet, Vet, Shin, Sin, Dalet, Reish, Tav, and Lamed, and then explored **how** Hebrew words are read when vowels are included. The students then read and learned the meanings of the words Bat, Bar, Shabbat, Rav, Davar, Shar, Sar, Lateit, Sheish, Shabbat, and Daver.

### **Confirmation with Cantor Silbersher**

**Confirmation Class met in the quiet of the Cantor's Office...**

**This morning, we added meditation to help us think through**

issues such as Jewish identity...is it a plus or a minus?  
What are the concerns facing us in our society today?  
What am I for and what am I against? Judaism is a listening religion...

We shared the possible subjects for us to study and consider.  
Holidays...Life Cycle...Culture (food, music, humor)...  
Beliefs(free will, bioethics, gender, feminism)...Practice...  
(Study, Shabbat)...History...Jewish Texts...Israel.

In the middle of this discussion, in came Emory with a question from his 4th/5th grade Class: "Why was Simeon left off of the family "list?" in Deuteronomy 33, when Moses, at the end of his life, blessed all of the Children of Israel, except Simeon? That was a long answer which the Confirmands had not heard....yet. Emory went back with the necessary information.

However Torah leads us is that God is and that one cannot go where God is not and God wants us to be happy. It is work that we must do ourselves. We concluded with the idea that: "Happiness is usually the result of being too busy to be miserable."

Moadim L'simcha

### *Adult Education with Barry Speert*

Individuals attending the 9/26 adult education session compared definitions and examples of wisdom, based on the **Book of Ecclesiastes**, which is considered "wisdom literature" and read during the festival of Sukkot. Ecclesiastes likens wisdom to an inheritance and states a preference for wisdom since wisdom is generally harder to deplete than is an inheritance.

The group then discussed how wisdom might or might not be inherited from an ancestor. Recent news stories attributing **President Obama's** thought processes to his deceased father (who he hardly knew) were mentioned. The 10/3 session will continue this discussion and focus on **Charles Krauthammer's** Jewish background, personal commitment to Jewish education and support for Shinto-style ancestor worship.

All adult Kol Ami members are invited to attend these Sunday morning sessions from 10:00am to 11:00am in the social hall. For more information contact Barry Speert at 913-677-2896 or [speertonreligion@aol.com](mailto:speertonreligion@aol.com).

Remember to "**thank heaven for 7/11**" for that is the day on the Jewish calendar (11th day of Tishrei, immediately following Yom Kippur) when we are instructed to work on assembling the Sukkah that brings us all so very much pleasure.

