

February 2008

Volume 33, Number 2

Shvat/Adar I 5768

The monthly publication for the
community of

**Or Chadash,
The Congregation of
New Light**

In Chicago....

**Come Add
Your Light
To Ours!**

ק ה י ל ת א ו ר ח ד ש
CONGREGATION OR CHADASH
CONGREGATION OF NEW LIGHT



The New Light

Five for February

By Marvin Levin, OC Co-President

This month we experience a rare occurrence: a February with five Fridays. And so there are five *parashiyot* which we will read.

Mishpatim (rules) begins with the recitation of laws on slavery, injuries, property, moral behavior and calendar-cycle observances (as noted above), as well as an affirmation of the covenant. The section on injuries, by the way, includes the often-misunderstood words “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth,” which rather than demanding literal retribution is actually part of a passage that says that injuries to life and limb are to be met with punishments that reflect the seriousness of the crime [Plaut – *The Torah: A Modern Commentary*]. Some commentary says that the text should

more correctly be interpreted as “no more than an eye for an eye; no more than a tooth for a tooth.”

Terumah (gifts) “The Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Tell the Israelite people to bring Me gifts; you shall accept gifts for Me from every person whose heart so moves him.” Here we read about the various jewels, precious metals, fabrics, stones and oils that will be used to build the Sanctuary.

Tetzaveh (you shall instruct) gives further instruction relating to the lights to be kindled in the sanctuary and detailed descriptions of the priestly vestments to be worn by Aaron and his family. Note that the lights to be kindled, the *ner tamid*, are lit anew each morning. It wasn’t until the time of the Second Temple that these

Cycles of Our Lives

Happy Birthday:

- 1/31 Tom Conroy
2/4 Robert B. Dorfman
2/9 Marc Epstein-Reeves
2/9 Maria Parks
2/17 Julie Avchen
2/19 Lilli Kornblum
2/20 Marvin Levin
2/22 Paula E. Warnick
2/22 Barry Weinstein
2/28 Michael L. Simon

Happy Anniversary:

- 2/13 Tom Conroy and
Leonard Pal

Thanks for the Oneg....

Feb. 1: Yehuda Jacobi and Mike Simon in honor of Yehuda's new job

Feb. 2: Lunch still available for sponsorship.

Feb. 8: Sue Mazer and Jan Norton in memory of Dr. Henry Goldstein, formerly of Chicago

Feb. 15: Marvin Levin in honor of his birthday, and in memory of his parents, Leonard and Celia Levin

Feb. 22: Marshall Keltz in memory of his partner, Norman Cutler

Feb. 29: Maryl Rosen in honor of her son Gabriel's birthday

Feb. Service Schedule

Feb. 1: Shabbat service with Rabbi Larry Edwards, 8 p.m.

Feb. 2: Saturday service, 10 a.m. A light lunch follows.

Feb. 8: Torah service with David Morck and Judith Golden, 8 p.m.

Feb. 15: Shabbat service with Rabbi Larry Edwards, 8 p.m. The "Nosh and Schmooze" reception precedes the service.

Feb. 22: Shabbat service with Barry Weinstein and Judith Golden, 8 p.m. **Feb. 29:** Shabbos Tisch Service (potluck) led by Reuben Lewy, 8 p.m. Please bring a kosher style side dish (no pork or shellfish, no mixing of meat and milk) or dessert to share.

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lights were kept burning continually. Here we also read a description of the rituals involved with ordination of priests.

Ki Tisa (take a census) begins with instructions on collecting a half-shekel from every adult male as they are counted during the census of the Israelite people – this money to be used in support of worship in the Sanctuary. Moses is given instruction in additional holy implements related to washing, anointing oil and incense. Finally God reminds Moses of the importance of keeping the Sabbath and then, as Moses prepares to come down from Mount Sinai, gives Moses the original set of two Tablets, which are inscribed directly by "the finger of God." Meanwhile, back at the base of Mount Sinai, the people have grown restless that Moses has not returned from the mountain and say to Aaron, "Come, make us a god who shall go before us, for that man Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt – we do not know what has happened to him." We now read the story of the creation of the Golden Calf, God's anger, Moses' return up Mount Sinai and the creation of the second set of stone Tablets.

Vayakhel ([Moses] convoked...) Moses now calls the Israelites to assemble in a meeting where he reminds them to observe the Sabbath, noting especially that no fire is to be kindled. Finally, all the items mentioned in *parsha Tetzaveh* are now described anew as those earlier instructions are actually put into effect. The work of building the Sanctuary has begun.

Whew! That's a lot of ground to

cover. By March 8th we will have completed the Book of Exodus. And we'll keep on reading until next year as we keep moving in the Torah cycle and come back again to Exodus. Jewish observance is full of cycles. We have the cycle of Torah reading, calendar-cycle observance of the various holidays and more personal life cycle events. For me, February and the Hebrew month of Adar contain two very important life cycle events. On February 15th I'll be sponsoring the oneg to note the anniversaries of a birth (my own) and two deaths (my parents). I've joked that although my driver's license reflects my chronological age, my body and I don't agree with that number. And as the years go by I marvel at how far away 1977 and 1979, the years my Father and my Mother died, seem to be.

And of course we have a cycle of Or Chadash events too. Next month our annual Gala will be held. By now, you should have received your invitation for the celebration of Or Chadash's 32nd year. Thirty-two in Hebrew is expressed with the letters lamed-bet, which form the word *lev* meaning heart. And as an example of how everything is connected to everything else, on Simchat Torah when we cycle from the end of the Torah back to the beginning you will find that the last letter of the Torah is lamed and the first letter is bet – which also spells out the word *lev*. So I'll end this month's column with heart-felt wishes that all of you will enjoy the month of February and that I'll be able to greet you at the Gala on March 15th.

UPTOWN CAFÉ VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Or Chadash has a shift at the Uptown Café on Sunday, February 17th from 10:30am-12:30pm. We need 4 volunteers to help serve brunch.

If you are interested in volunteering on this date, please contact Robin Sampliner at office@orchadash.org.

GALA UPDATE

Save the date of Saturday, March 15th. That is when we will be honoring Stephen Weiser and Andrew Deppe at the 32nd annual Or Chadash gala! Invitations have gone out so please keep an eye on your mailbox. And don't forget to mail back your RSVP!

Items and services are needed for the gala silent auction. If you have something you would like to donate, especially with an Israeli theme, please contact Robin Sampliner at office@orchadash.org. And if you would like to advertise your business, or congratulate the honorees, consider taking out an ad in the honor book. **All donations must be in by March 1st.**

Congratulations!

We recently received a letter from Rabbi Dan Rabishaw, director of the URJ Great Lakes Council, and Laura Horn, Assistant Regional Director, in which they said:

“We are writing to let you know that our regional President, Dr. Willie Portilla, recently extended an invitation to **Robin Sampliner** to become a founding member of the Great Lakes Council Regional Social Action Committee. To our delight and appreciation, we are happy to report that she has accepted this position. ... Within the Great Lakes Council, we are blessed with many talented leaders who understand the importance of Social Action, Robin among them.”
Yashir koach (well done!) to Robin.

--Marvin Levin

Too much light makes the baby go blind...

Join us on Sunday, February 17 at 7:30 p.m. when we go to see the improv show “Too Much Light makes the Baby Go Blind” at the Neo-Futurarium, 5156 N. Ashland Ave. (corner of

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Cantorial Soloist: Judith Golden

Co-Presidents:

Howard Wax and Marvin Levin
Executive VP: Robin Sampliner
Treasurer: Rick Greenthal
Webmaster: Steven Joachim

Rabbi Edwards is available by appointment and can be reached via email:

rabbiedwards@orchadash.org
or phone (773) 326-1490

ONEG SPONSORSHIP

Celebrate a birthday, graduation or anniversary, or honor/memorialize a loved one with an oneg sponsorship. Please contact the Or Chadash office at office@orchadash.org to make arrangements and pick a date. Thank you!

Foster and Ashland). Admission is \$8-13 and the seats are first-come, first-served. Please try to arrive by 6:30 p.m. For info see Matt Simonette or contact the Or Chadash office at office@orchadash.org.



Purim is almost here — March 20!

Or Chadash will be celebrating Purim on the evening of Thursday, March 20. We will begin with the Megillah reading at 8 p.m., then follow up with this year's Purim Shpiel, "The Girl from P.U.R.I.M."—a salute to Queen Esther, foxy secret agents, seventies sitcoms, heavy leather and, of course, really tortured logic. You can look forward to refreshments and hamantaschen after. Be sure to wear a costume! For more information, contact Matt Simonette through the Or Chadash office at Office@OrChadash.org.

February Dine-around

The February dine-around will be Friday, February 8 at Pepitone's, 5437 N. Broadway, at 6:15 p.m. No reservations are needed, but try to arrive by 6 p.m. to ensure adequate seating.

"REMEMBERING HANK"

February 13, 2008 marks the first year of passing of our former friend and congregant Dr. Henry A. Goldstein, known to many of us as "Hank." He was born in Chicago, had his medical practice in Chicago and became one of the co-owners of the Diversey Clinic in the 80's.

Hank's dream had always been to move to Hawaii and retire there, where he could enjoy the sun and relax playing Bridge. After about 20 years of taking advanced medical courses on the Hawaii islands, he fell in love with the island of Kauai. In September of 1996 he left his home in Chicago and moved on to a new life on Kauai.

Hank had many visitors, and enjoyed his friends visiting him from the mainland as well as making new friends on the island. Dr. Goldstein enjoyed his dream of having a home which faced the Kauai Waterfalls, with a jacuzzi, and his chaise lounges next to his swimming pool.

Hank also took an active part in activities of the Kauai Jewish community as well as the Kauai gay community.

On February 13, 2007, Hank was found at his home after a massive heart attack. The following day, the Kauai newspaper had an article telling of Hanks win in the local bridge tournament which he had been a participant several nights before.

As personal friends we find Hank's death a great loss to us. Those of you who knew him knew that Hank always had a sense of humor and was a kind and generous person. One thing about Hank—he was a finder of fun events no matter where he was, small or large city, Hank ALWAYS knew where there was something interesting going on. He brought many interesting and wonderful, fun things into our lives.

--Sue Mazer and Jan Norton

Thanks for the Donation

In January we received Sandfield Challenge Grant donations from Peter Kessler, Robin Sampliner, Warren Rosen, Tom Conroy & Len Pal, Dillie Grunauer, and Craig Krandel in honor of the Wax-Pooley family. A general donation from Pamella Fettig and Mindy Mayer. A donation from Yehuda Jacobi and Mike Simon in memory of Arthur Jungmann, a donation from Reuben Lewy in memory of Kurt Kant, a donation from Burton Korman in memory of his parents, Samuel & Rae Korman, and a donation from Susan Jacobson in honor of Carol Goldbaum's 65th birthday.

Our Mission

To provide a warm and affirming community where all Jews can feel welcome. To accomplish this mission, Or Chadash will:

Remember that it was founded as an answer to the prejudice that gay and lesbian Jews experienced in other synagogues;

Strive to ensure that no Jew experiences prejudice within our community;

Maintain affiliations with the Union for Reform Judaism and the World Congress of Gay and Lesbian Jewish Organizations;

Build strong ties within the greater Jewish community of the metropolitan Chicago area;

Dedicate itself to the basic obligations of Jewish life, including:

- **Respecting** the contributions of people of all generations
- **Sharing** the life-cycle events of its members
- **Celebrating** Shabbat and the holidays
- **Fostering** prayer with sincerity
- **Visiting** the sick
- **Comforting** the bereaved
- **Encouraging** the study of Torah

Congregation Or Chadash is a not-for-profit organization that is largely supported by contributions from its members and friends. Please remember us generously.

Rabbi's Article Continued

Jewish law. This applies to the individual in anticipation of his or her own death, as well as to health care proxies or next of kin, whenever they are legally empowered to make such decisions on behalf of the deceased. The identity and, certainly, the religious status of the recipient are irrelevant.

There is also a Halachic Organ Donor Society (www.hods.org) which cites many Orthodox authorities on the issue of organ donation.

In Illinois there is a new registry, and it is easy to register online at <https://www.ilsos.gov/organdonorregister/>. Please consider this important mitzvah.

We Did It!

Congratulations to the Congregation – we met the Norman Sandfield Challenge Grant challenge!

In February of 2006, at the Annual Gala celebrating Or Chadash's 30th Anniversary, Norman Sandfield challenged the Congregation to raise a total of \$50,000. He began with a contribution of \$10,000 and promised to match, over the two succeeding years, up to \$20,000 if it was raised by the Congregation.

Thanks to 55 generous people who made donations that ranged from \$18 to \$2,000, we've met Norman's challenge! This fund raising effort has helped to solidify Or Chadash's financial stability for the near future. It has allowed us to keep our dues the same for the past three years, it has funded new initiatives such as Saturday morning services and the Nosh 'N Schmooze, and has funded one time events such as participation in the Gay Games. We look forward to being able to continue innovations with the ongoing support of the Congregation and its friends.

So "thank-yous" go out to the many congregants, former congregants and friends of Or Chadash who contributed to the Sandfield Challenge Grant, and, of course, a very special thank-you to Norman Sandfield himself.

Organ Donation – A Positive Mitzvah
Life Planning – Part 1
By Rabbi Laurence Edwards

A group of Or Chadash members gathered on Sunday, January 20 for a serious conversation about several aspects of life, and end of life, planning. We touched on issues of estate planning, health care proxy, and funeral arrangements. There are often special legal issues at stake in these matters for LGBT folks, and in future newsletters we hope to share some information, and some relevant questions to think about.

One issue came up in our discussion that should be brought to everyone's immediate attention: the question of Judaism and organ donation. Statistics indicate that there is a lower percentage of organ donors in heavily Jewish neighborhoods, apparently because many people are under the impression that Jewish law prohibits any kind of tampering with the body after death.

It is true that there are

two Jewish principles that seem to come into conflict here. *Nivul ha-met* is the principle that a dead body should not be desecrated, but treated with great respect. It should certainly not be needlessly damaged, such as for routine autopsy. The competing principle is *pikuach nefesh*, the sacred duty to preserve life.

Virtually all Jewish authorities are in agreement that **organ donation is an extremely important mitzvah**. This is especially so in situations where another life can be saved. This view is shared by Reform, Reconstructionist, Conservative, and most Orthodox authorities. For example, this statement from the (Reform) Central Conference of American Rabbis:

***Pikuach nefesh* is of primary significance. From our liberal understanding of the *halakhah*, this is the decisive factor. The act of donating organs does honor to the deceased; many of**

those about to die would gladly forego any other honor and donate organs for this purpose ... As the donation of an organ will help to save the life of another human being, storage until the time of proper use presents no problem.

Or this from the (Conservative) Rabbinical Assembly:

The preservation of human life is obligatory, not optional. Since all conflicting religious obligations are suspended, and specific, readily identifiable human lives are at stake, withholding consent for post-mortem organ donation when needed for life-saving transplant procedures is prohibited by

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