

With the High Holy Day season behind us, we are entering into the regular rhythms of OZ synagogue life -- albeit during very *irregular* times! I am excited to share some highlights from the past few weeks and to preview some special opportunities for engagement in the weeks and months to come.

After a lengthy break from in-person activity with the OZ Full Circle Preschool, it was wonderful to sing and dance with the children in the *sukkah* recently (with masks and social distance, of course)! I am now working with Erika to find creative ways to continue to bring music and Jewish content to the little ones during the year. Besides singing with the Full Circle children, I'm looking forward to the return of our regular OZ Tot Havdalah programs for families with young children, on Saturday November 14 (5:30 pm): featuring song, story, sharing and schmoozing!

With the OZ Hebrew School in full motion again, I'm particularly energized by the opportunity to engage with the children during our prayer and music sessions, with a greater emphasis on interactivity and movement this year.... The "OZ Glee" club children are back at it! With the benefit of our devices, we have been able to watch video clips from some of the kids' favorite Broadway musicals, giving the students a chance to act out and sing, while exploring the Jewish themes and values found in each Broadway show. We've explored, for instance, the themes of "home" and "tradition" in *Fiddler on the Roof*, and the Jewish attitudes towards (and responsibility for) orphans and other vulnerable populations while singing the music of *Annie*.

As educational programs for the children are underway, I'm excited to announce an upcoming Adult Education class that I will be facilitating: "Making Prayer Real". We're fortunate that the basic tenets from the book were transformed into an amazing curriculum consisting of 20 classes- focusing on the foundations, themes and modes of Jewish prayer. The course will help students understand and talk about their own prayer lives, build vocabulary around Jewish prayer; explore traditional and alternative modes of prayer including meditation and chant; and to discuss openly some of the obstacles that we face when seeking to pray. Details and schedule to follow... In the meantime, please email me if you are interested in joining this class.

Building upon the success of our concerts, coffee houses and cabarets this past year, I am excited to be announcing a regular schedule of monthly musical events for this coming year... If you're interested in performing or singing, I'd love to hear from you. Stay tuned for OZ's full 2020/2021 calendar of musical events!

During these isolating times, I hope that Rabbi Amy and I can help to create moments of deep connection for you-- particularly through the power of prayer and music!

B'shirah/In song,
Cantor Steve