



Rabbi's Table

Rabbi Ita Paskind

The Future is Now



Maybe that's a bit of chutzpah-dik claim. And I'm OK with that.

On March 31, 33 people from 10 families crowded into my (not that large) living room/dining room/staircase and enjoyed a raucous, joyous Erev Shabbat. We sang about Dinosaurs Knocking at the Door, Shma Yisrael, and blessing the children; we lit candles, drank a lot of grape juice, and ate a ton of brightly colored challah. We shared a delicious pot luck dinner. And most importantly, we formed and deepened connections among young families in the Congregation Beth El orbit. It was a dream come true!

You see, despite downward trends in Conservative Judaism, especially in the northeast, and despite trends among young adults to not join synagogues, **there are young Jewish families who are looking for Jewish community and connection.** Some are members of our shul; others are Nitzan families; one is a new regular attendee at Baby N Me; and some are newer to the CBE orbit and are checking us out. Over the last several years, I've been collecting these young families and reaching out whenever appropriate—Chanukah, Purim, a PJ Library Havdalah program, Rosh HaShanah kids' services. But this was the first time we held an event just for young families, and specifically not at the synagogue. And it was awesome.

I'm sharing with you for a few reasons:

1. With the support and encouragement of our Board of Trustees, I'm planning to continue putting a lot of effort into building this community. That's hugely important for these families right now, and it'll be wonderful for our shul down the road.
2. We've got another one of these events happening in May and hopefully another in June, and that means I won't be at Friday evening services on those nights. We'll just be hosting Shabbat in 2 locations, and everyone will be cared for.
3. And most importantly, I want you to join me in getting excited about the future of the Jewish people. Right here in Norwalk.

Can't wait to share more beautiful snapshots with you in the coming months.

B'Shalom
Rabbi Ita Paskind