

SYNAGOGUES & CONGREGATIONS

Havurat Tikvah Begins Search for New Student Rabbi

By Sharon Wilson

For those who are not familiar with Havurat Tikvah, we are primarily a "lay-lead" community. Our membership is comprised of learned and dedicated individuals who lead parts of services, read trope, present d'varim torah, etc. at our community services. However, for the past three years, we have also been fortunate to have Student Rabbi Me'irah Illinsky join us four or five times a year to teach and learn with us, presenting programs during Shabbatons, teaching classes, leading discussion and providing insight into traditions, holidays and more.

Me'irah was raised very assimilated, the daughter of a Jewish mother with a strong Jewish soul,

but without a Jewish education. During her senior year of High School, an observant Jewish friend gave her name to the Conservative Rabbi in her community. The Rabbi called Me'irah and some of her less observant friends to ask if they would like to meet regularly during their senior year of high school. "What a difference one person can make. Rabbi Gelbart encouraged us to talk about what was on our minds, and then would take the end of the hour to let us know the Jewish point of view - about parents, dating, etc. I still remember some of the lessons he taught us." Once in college, Me'irah found that Judaism seemed strange, and complicated and inaccessible. Much later in life, after beginning a family, Me'irah had a neighbor very involved with a havurah, and Me'irah eventually went to a Rosh Hashanah Service. "I was very inspired by the rabbi, Roy Fuhrman. I joined the havurah, and spent years learning under the tutelage of Rabbi Joey Wolf. After my adult bat mitzvah, I thought, "What next?" It was another seven years from the initial desire to apply to rabbinical school, until I finally did. I have had to spend



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many years becoming more and more proficient in Hebrew in order to pursue my studies." Prior to beginning formal study at the Reconstructionist College in Pennsylvania, Me'irah went to Israel to study Hebrew and prepare for the education to come.

Me'irah will graduate this spring after eight years of study toward becoming a Rabbi and will pursue her dream of working full time. "What has most affected me is seeing the brilliance of the way we study our holy texts, how they have guided us, how the Jewish people have adapted throughout history, always emphasizing life, joy, ethics, while also acknowledging losses."

So now Havurah Tikvah begins a search for a new student rabbi to learn from and to teach.

Up Coming Events:

- * **Adult Programs** throughout the Spring (TBA). Please check our website for further information.
- * **April 21** — Community Service (10 AM).
- * **May 26** — Community Service

for Shavuot (10 AM).

* **June 23** — Community Service (10 AM).

* **July 23** — Tisha b'Av Evening Service (7 PM).

* **July 28** — Zach Roth's Bar Mitzvah.

Havurat Tikvah, an affiliate of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, offers monthly servic-

es, adult study, holiday celebrations and more. All services and many events are at the Fellowship Hall of St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 2201 Springdale Ave (at Magnolia) in Dilworth.

For an updated calendar of events, locations and other information, visit the HT website (www.HavuratTikvah.org). ☆

Fourth Annual JOINT CONCERT

Featuring the combined choirs of Temple Israel and Temple Beth El and Cantor Andrew Bernard and Cantor Elias Roohvarg.

Sunday, April 29, 7 PM at Temple Israel.

Free and open to the public.

Because the concert is just a few days after Israel Independence Day, the theme will be *The Spirit of Israel in Song*. The program will include a wide variety of beautiful and exciting music, and a sing-along of favorite Israeli songs.



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