

# “Leave the Corners of Your Fields” Put into Action by Temple Or Olam

From the publicity they receive, it seems that meaningful tikkum olam opportunities are big, splashy events where selfies and group grins for the press are required. This is a small percentage of the population that does wonderful work in a big way. Most of us, though, are more attuned to the daily kindnesses and assistance that are within our power to give.

Temple Or Olam is in the thick of an ongoing activity that is quietly supplying our lower-income population with healthy fresh produce that would be normally out of their budget or geographically unavailable. The Society of St. Andrew has been coordinating gleaning opportunities since 1979 and in North Carolina since 1992. Their philosophy is an ecumenical outreach of “food for the body, God’s word for the spirit, community of love for the heart, opportunity for those who desire action.” It’s the latest iteration of an ancient practice from Deuteronomy that tells us to leave the unharvested portion in the field for the widow, orphan, and alien so that we all may be blessed (Deu. 24:19). “The North Carolina Gleaning Network is going strong, salvaging over five million pounds of fresh produce for the hungry each year. In this agriculturally diverse state, gleaners work to salvage everything from strawberries to sweet potatoes to

collard greens.”

Or Olam has been one of the gleaning partners for several years, recently coordinated by Arlene Filkoff. Mostly done in the summer and fall, gleaning dates are relayed to the Society by farmers who have finished their mechanical harvest. The Society wants the very usable produce that has been left behind, contacting communities like TOO to provide the labor. Most of these dates are very last-minute, usually no more than a week ahead of time. Such short notice requires our members’ continuous dedication for several months, a difficult task in our very busy lives.

Temple Or Olam’s members, both young and less so, have gleaned on almost every weekend this summer. In today’s world of pristine supermarkets and container gardens, walking between rustling corn rows or stomping in the mud between tomato plants, is both an adventure and a lesson for adults and children. Those cold, pink orbs lined up in their green boxes in the produce section don’t quite compare to the sharp, acrid smell of a tomato plant while holding the firm, red flesh of a really big one.

The fall will keep us just as busy in Cabarrus and Rowan counties. Our members have helped in the pulling of over 25 tons of produce, including 18,200 lbs. of corn and 5,000 lbs. of

tomatoes in Cabarrus alone, which have reached Charlotte and five other counties’ food distribution sites and food pantries, usually within 48 hours. On Saturday, September 6, the haul was 3,000 lbs. of tomatoes in two hours.

We have celebrated Rosh Hashanah as the day in which God created this world and all humanity. Why not consider the many ways Jews can and should reach out to care for God’s creation, all of it? Abraham and Sarah’s tent was open on all four sides, so the rabbis say, to welcome strangers. The religious cul-



Gleaning tomatoes.

ture that our ancestors created advocated welcoming others and caring for those in need. What better way to welcome others into our circle than to give them equal access to the fruits of the earth in-

tended for all? Gleaning is a very tangible way we can care for the earth and our fellow travelers.

[http://www.endhunger.org/gleaning\\_network.htm](http://www.endhunger.org/gleaning_network.htm) ☆

## Havurat Tikvah

Of course, Havurat Tikvah has been very busy the few weeks, welcoming in the new year.

Although Rosh Hashanah has come and gone once again, we still have plenty of holiday planning ahead of us.

To start off this month, Havurat Tikvah held lay-led Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur services on October 3 and 4, respectively. Now that the Day of Atonement has passed until next year, all we have left for the season are celebrations.

First off, Sukkot begins on Thursday, October 9 (the 15th of Tishrei). On Saturday, October 11, Havurat Tikvah will honor the holiday with a potluck dinner in

the Sukkah at a member’s house.

The following Thursday, October 16, marks erev Simchat Torah, and so we will hold a service and celebration, led by Charlie Brown, at Avondale Presbyterian Church Fellowship Hall.

After all of the holidays, Havurat Tikvah is planning an adult-ed Israeli movie night for November 1. We will also host a Jewish Literature Program on Saturday evening, November 15.

Havurat Tikvah is an affiliate of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation, providing a comfortable, family atmosphere where all Jews can feel wel-

come. If you are interested, we invite you to visit, get to know us, and to become part of our congregation of nearly 60 households.

For more information about any of our activities, check out our website ([www.havurattikvah.org](http://www.havurattikvah.org)). You can also find Havurat Tikvah and Havurat Tikvah Teens on Facebook. If you have any questions about membership or other aspects of Havurat Tikvah, give us a call at 980-225-5330. ☆



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