

Mitzvah Day - Teaching Tikkun Olam through Action; Bringing Our Learning to Life

By Rabbi Judy Schindler

A mitzvah is a commandment enjoined upon us through the words of the Torah. A mitzvah makes a difference. Ritual mitzvot elevate the mundane to the realm of the holy. We sanctify time through the celebration of Shabbat and holidays. We sanctify our eating through blessings or through traditional kashrut or ecological kashrut (following traditional laws or ecological precepts surrounding the food we ingest). Ethical mitzvot bring healing, justice and peace to our world. Feeding the hungry, helping the disadvantaged, pursuing equity and equality for every human being all help to honor the spark of the Divine within every human being.

At Temple Beth El, we spend our final day of Religious School not in the classroom studying mitzvot but in the congregation and community doing mitzvot. At Temple Beth El, our final day of education is not only for our

students, but for everyone - The Porch, Sisterhood, Brotherhood, SPICE, LIBERTY and beyond. We do not abdicate to our Religious School teachers the responsibility of transmitting Judaism from one generation to the next. We each take that responsibility upon ourselves.

We hope you will join us on Mitzvah Day, Sunday, May 17. We need you to show our children that mitzvot are not something our kids do, but something everyone does. Temple Beth El in its entirety makes Tikkun Olam, healing our world, a priority. It is an essential component of our Judaism.

Rabbi Arnold Jacob Wolf compares the mitzvot to jewels: "I try to walk the road of Judaism. Embedded in that road there are many jewels. One is marked 'Sabbath' and one 'Civil Rights' and one 'Kashruth' and one 'Honor Your Parents' and one 'You Shall Be Holy.' There are at least 613 of

them and they are different shapes and sizes and weights. Some are light and easy for me to pick up, and I pick them up. Some are too deeply embedded for me, so far at least, though I get a little stronger by trying to extricate the jewels as I walk the street. Some, perhaps, I

shall never be able to pick up. I believe that God expects me to keep on walking Judaism Street and to carry away whatever I can of its commandments. I do not believe that God expects me to lift what I



cannot, nor may I condemn my fellow Jew who may not be able to pick up even as much as I can."

May the mitzvot we do on Mitzvah Day and every day make our lives and Queen City more beautiful.

For more information about the listed projects please call Temple Beth El at 704-366-1948 and register for any of the events at www.templebethel.org. ☆

Mitavah Day Projects

Open to All Ages

- Camp Mindy Clean Up* – Clean up around Camp Mindy.
- Charlotte Family Housing #1* – Assemble care packages for homeless families moving into homes.
- Charlotte Family Housing #2* – An activity with children and meal preparation for families in a shelter.
- Hebrew Cemetery* – Headstones and general grounds cleanup. Bury sacred items in a geniza.
- JFS* – Assemble food pantry recipe bags for clients.
- Joy of Sox* – Assemble toiletry kits for men's shelters.
- Levine Children's Hospital* - Make care packages and cards for new patients.
- Salvation Army Center for Hope* - Prepare snack bags for women and children.
- Sterling Elementary* – Put together summer fun packs for students at Sterling Elementary.
- Sunrise Assisted Living* – Sing songs and spend time with our across-the-street-neighbors.

Children and Parents

- Battered Women's Shelter #1* – Organize collected items, make cards, and a gift item. Age 5+.
- Bright Blessings* - Tour the Giving Village and help with projects that support local homeless children. Age 5+.
- Charlotte Green* – Work to help develop and sustain community gardens. Age 9+.
- Freedom School Welcom Baskets* - Assemble welcome bags and write a letter to each Freedom School Scholar. Age 6+.
- Friendship Garden* – Volunteer in the garden behind Friendship Trays. Age 6+.
- Hemby Children's Hospital* – Decorate pillowcases and cards for the children. Age 6+.
- Loaves and Fishes* – Help us restock the shelves and help where needed. Age 7+.
- Ronald McDonal House* – Be the cleaning crew. Age 10+.
- Sterling Elementary Spruce Up* - Help clean and prepare the gym, library, and art room for next year summer. Age 8+.
- Stop Hunger Now* – Clean warehouse and package meals. Age 8+.
- Temple Beth El Building and Grounds Committee*– Restore the pine straw at the perimeter of the building. Age 10+.

Teens and Adults:

- Alexander Youth Center* – Host a carnival and lunch for 25 children. Age 14+.
- Battered Women's Shelter #2* – Plant flowers and beautify the grounds. Age 13+.
- Behailu Academy* – Join Behailu Academy students, LIBERTY members, and our confirmation class to clean, organize, and paint walls. Age 12+.
- CMS Classroom Central* – Organize, stock the shelves, and make die cuts for CMS teachers. Age 12+.
- Freedom School Preparations* – Put together first aid kits for Charlotte-area Freedom Schools. Age 12+.
- Men's Shelter of Charlotte* – Join Brotherhood to complete improvement projects. Age 12+.
- Recycling Green Team* – Gather recyclable materials from Mitzvah Day projects sites. Age 12+.
- Sterling Elementary Project # 2* – Teacher Workshop. Assemble games, class sets of activities and manipulatives for math and reading. Age 12+.
- Thompson Child and Family Focus* – Host games, activities, and lunch for the children and staff. Age 18+.



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HADASSAH



The Big Reveal

Tuesday, October 20, 2015, 6:30 pm | The Ritz-Carlton - Charlotte

Terre Blair Hamlich, Key Note Speaker

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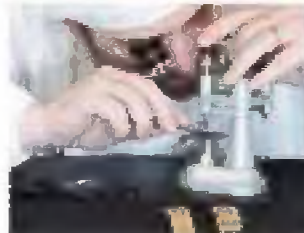
Benefiting Research for Breast Cancer

For more information, please contact Talia Goldman at taliagoldman18@gmail.com

or Jonathan Berger at jbergertisa@gmail.com.

Also Painting Days will be at Shalom Park,

Sept. 3rd & 10th by appointment.



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