



Congregation Etz Chaim

A Reform Jewish Congregation
Fairport, New York

CONGREGATION ETZ CHAIM

November- December 2018

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From the Rabbis Desk

In late September, we gathered for our annual Sukkot potluck celebration, waved the lulav, blessed the etrog, and gave thanks for the bounty with which we have been blessed.

The secular Thanksgiving holiday which we will celebrate on Nov. 22 will be an even larger meal for most of us. Most of us will be surrounded by loving friends and families, and we will have food enough to last an entire weekend, if not a full week.

But as just as at Passover, when we spill wine on our plates to remind us that our celebration came at the cost of our adversaries' lives, we need to diminish our celebration at this time of year as well.

The facts are just too sobering: **Hunger in the USA and around the world is epidemic, and unless we mobilize to be part of the solution, we are part of the problem.**"

Here are the sobering statistics, sourced from Feeding America, Mazon, and whyhunger.org.

- **40 million Americans are food insecure,* meaning they are often forced to skip meals, eat less at**

meals, buy cheap non-nutritious food and/or feed their children but not themselves.

- **Over 12 million children in the US are food insecure.**
- **There are 15 million U.S. households suffering from food insecurity – 11.8 percent of all U.S households.**
- **5.8 million U.S. households suffer from severe food insecurity, which means the people who live in them are often hungry.**
- **2.9 million households with children are food insecure at some time each year.**
- **40.6 million Americans currently rely on SNAP (Supplemental Assistance Program, formerly food stamps) to meet their food needs.**
- **92% of SNAP households have incomes below the poverty line. Additionally, 82% of all SNAP benefits go to the most vulnerable households – those with children, elderly or disabled people.**

- **Among SNAP households with children, more than half of adults work while receiving SNAP, and almost 90 percent are employed the prior or subsequent year. SNAP helps Americans return to work, and increasingly, it helps those who already work, but do not receive a sufficient wage to feed themselves or their families.**
- **Many families suffering from hunger and poverty live in areas where fresh, unprocessed, healthy food is not available or is expensive, while the food they do have access to is nutritionally deficient.**

*** The USDA defines ‘food insecurity’ as “the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods.” Characteristics of households with food insecurity include skipping or reducing the size of meals, not being able to afford a balanced meal, going whole days without eating, and going without food despite feeling hungry. Households with very low food security are characterized as having food intake reduced and eating patterns disrupted, because the household lacks money and other resources for food. For these households, 96 percent report skipping and reducing meals because of not having enough money for food.**

It gets worse..

World-wide, one in nine people – that’s 821 million people -- are food insecure. World-wide, 60% of the world’s hungry are women or girls.

World-wide, 3.1 million children under age five die from malnutrition each year.

So what can we do?

Plenty. According to Feeding America, food insecure individuals reported needing an additional \$15.82 per person per week in 2012 to buy enough food for their household. If each of us were to make a Thanksgiving donation to organizations like Feeding America or Mazon, it would make an immediate impact.

As a congregation, we can become a Mazon congregation. Mazon is the Jewish response to national and world hunger. It means holding semi-annual food drives locally (Perinton Food Shelf and Brighton Food cupboard would welcome our collective donations). It means publicizing Mazon’s efforts in our bulletins periodically.

And as individuals, we can become part of the 3% solution: when we have a simcha – bar or bat mitzvah, milestone anniversary, graduation party, etc. – take 3% of what we are spending on the Simcha, and donate it to Feeding America, Mazon, or any other hunger-fighting charity we choose (and it’s really less than 3% because it’s tax deductible).

Five days before Sukkot began, when we gathered on Yom Kippur, we read Haftarah Isaiah, which reminded us again, **“This is my chose fast: Feed the hungry...”**

The need is immediate. So is the opportunity.

Let us all make a difference this Thanksgiving, and give thanks for the opportunity to do a mitzvah.

Rabbi David Abrahams

Multi-generational Mega Challah Bake

Ladies, bring your moms, sisters, daughters, girlfriends to the multi-generational mega challah bake at the JCC Nov. 29.

More info and to buy tickets: <http://www.loavesofloveroc.com>

If you have other questions send Stacey an email at Stacey.Freed@gmail.com

Our URJ Community

Communication and Collaboration: Working Better and More Effectively in Your Congregation and Beyond It's time to learn how The Tent, technology, and teamwork are all part of building a stronger congregation! URJ's award winning Tent Architect, Larry Glickman, Director of Network Engagement and Collaboration, (FTA), is coming to join us in person to guide us in exploring new ways to work that will save time and increase the impact of our work in our congregations and our communities. This program is designed for all board members, professional staff, and clergy, and is an important tool for helping leadership continue to grow strong.

Date: Wednesday, December 5th, 2018
Time: 7pm-9pm Location: Temple Sinai
363 Penfield Rd. Rochester, NY 14625

\$10 (covers the cost of food) Register here to join this wonderful event! For

more details, contact your URJ staff partner, Jenny Bernhard at jbernhard@urj.org

We hope to see you there! Let's continue to grow strong together!

Rob and Ellen Lerner attended a similar URJ event while they were in Arizona recently and found it worthwhile, interesting and enjoyable and would like to encourage our members to be more involved and perhaps consider being on the board in the future or spearheading a project. We think you will not be disappointed.

Helping Etz Chaim

We always like to congratulate our new members as they join our congregation, and all members on the wonderful simchas in their lives. With your permission, we would also like to add these events to the Jewish Ledger's "Mazel Tov" column. If you have a wedding, engagement, graduation, new baby, new job, promotion, or any other simcha we can send to the Ledger, please pass that information on to Ashley. Putting these items in print lets the Jewish community know that Etz Chaim has an active membership, one that they might consider joining.

Tableclothes Needed

Most of the tablecloths in our supply closet seem to have disappeared. Perhaps they have been taken home by someone to wash - please check your laundry- or maybe they've been borrowed. In any case, if you have a tablecloth at least 72" long that you can

donate, we'd appreciate it. Solid colors, especially white or blue, are preferred.

Shabbat Solidarity Service

On Friday, November 2, Etz Chaim held a Shabbat Solidarity service, as was held nationwide. We stood together with our Jewish community to remember those killed in the horrific October 29 shooting at Congregation Tree of Life in Pittsburgh. Rabbi Abrahams had invited Rev. Greg Osterberg of Mountain Rise and Abu Islam of the Rochester Islamic Center to speak at the service. The Rev. Walt Stuber of Wolcott Presbyterian Church and his family as well as several members of the Mtn. Rise congregation also joined us. This service, so moving and meaningful, was enhanced by our cantorial soloist Aaron Bigeleisen as well as the guitar music and songs of Rev. Osterberg.

This tragedy was not precipitated by one individual but by those who allow this type of hate and bigotry to rear its ugly head. Let's hope that the results of the recent vote will help to change the tide of the times.

Shortly after the Pittsburgh tragedy, we received the following note:

Dear Friends of Congregation Etz Chaim,

The Mountain Rise Community was stunned to learn of the terrible violence committed against the people of the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. We pray for healing from this trauma for the families of the victims and for the whole congregation.

Mountain Rise is very aware that this horrific act is affecting the entire Jewish community. We will continue to hold you, our brothers and sisters, in our hearts and stand with you against intolerance and oppression. We share more than a building and consider you a blessing.

**Sincerely,
Mountain Rise UCC Council and
Congregation**

We appreciate the love and fellowship that Mountain Rise offers to us. As they show kindness to us, we must also share kindness and do good deeds for others.

Etz Chaim Shout Outs!

Wishing a Happy Birthday to Chas Doerflinger on Dec 17th and Nancy Horn Dec 3rd.

Oneg Sign Up

If you haven't had a chance yet to sign up for a oneg or Holiday potluck, it's not too late! Just email Ashley to let her know when you can help. We understand that it's often hard to plan out months in advance, so just make your best guess. If it turns out that you're unable to help on your assigned date, let Ashley know and a replacement will be found.

The Board would like to invite members to sponsor an oneg and/or have an aliyah when you celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or special time in your life. Please email Ashley with information about your special simchas.

Chanukah doilies



Phyllis Shapiro has knitted some colorful doilies that she will have on display at the service. She is offering them to everyone for a donation of your choice to our congregation. Great gifts for Chanukah or to decorate your holiday table.

Chanukah Potluck



Please join us as on Friday, December 7th, with a potluck dinner and traditional lighting of the menorah.

Everyone is welcome to join in the celebration, which begins at 6:00 p.m.

We are located at 2 Mountain Rise in Fairport.

Please RSVP by December 5th
Email ashleyetzchaim@gmail.com

Donation

Stephen Ignacak and Judy Kramer-
High Holidays

Lewis and Sharon Pulvino- High
Holidays

Charlotte Ryman- High Holidays

Stephen Ignaczak and Judy Kramer-
Donation in Memory of Judy's Parents-
Steve and Carol Kramer

Philip Krasnoff- High Holiday donation

Mark Marcus – High Holiday donation

Lynn Harris- In memory of Harvey
Steron

Annette and Doug Muller- In memory of
Harvey Steron and in memory of
Annette's father

Jack and Wendy Schull- In memory of
Harvey Steron

New Members

Welcome to Mark and Mary Brown,
Sarah Brown and family, Rosette
Lieberman, Gregory Heyworth and
family, Annette and Douglas Muller and
family, and Bernard and Joan Marcus.

Month	Date	Day	Event	Time	Comments
NOVEMBER	2	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	4	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	11	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	16	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	18	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	18	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
DECEMBER	2	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	7	Friday	Chanukah Potluck	6:00 PM	Lower level, Mountain Rise
	9	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	16	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	16	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	21	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
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JANUARY	4	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	6	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	13	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	18	Friday	Tu'Bishvat Seder	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Social Hall

	20	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	20	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	27	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
FEBRUARY	1	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	3	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	10	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	10	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	15	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
MARCH	1	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	3	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	10	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	15	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	17	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	17	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	22	Friday	Purim Potluck	6:00 PM	Mountain Rise Social Hall (DAIRY
	24	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	31	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC

APRIL	5	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	7	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	14	Sunday	Annual Meeting	6:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	14	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	20	Saturday	Community Seder	5:30 PM	Mountain Rise Social Hall (set up)
	21	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	28	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
MAY	3	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	5	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	12	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	17	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	19	Sunday	Board Planning Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
JUNE	2	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	8	Saturday	Shavuot dairy potluck	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise (Ice Cream Social)
	9	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	23	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom