

L'Shana Tova, and Happy New Year.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and our staff, it's my pleasure to welcome you to the Chapel Hill Kehillah as we gather together to celebrate the beginning of the year 5769. I'm Howard Glicksman, your Kehillah president.

I'd like to welcome Rabbi Vivie Mayer as our Sh'Lichat Tzibur, our prayer leader. We're very fortunate that she is able to join us. We are blessed to have both Rabbi Jen and Rabbi Mayer here leading us.

I'd like to thank all of the people involved in the preparation leading up to our High Holidays services including our great staff. I want to especially thank Chari Diamant who has led our efforts this year. As she has in previous years, she's done a great job! Thank you, Chari.

I also want to talk about our social action which is based on our Jewish ethics, which is a central part of our Reconstructionist community activity. Poverty, racial discrimination, political injustice, war and environmental deterioration are concerns of Jews everywhere. Two years ago, our Board and Rabbi Jen both agreed that we needed to look outward and become more involved in Tikkun Olam, Repairing the World.

Our social action committee, led by Jackie Resnick and Irene Zipper, has done a great job in organizing our activities and keeping us focused. I don't have time to cover all of our activities, but I'd like to mention three of our efforts to give you a taste of what's happening.

I'm very pleased to announce that we have received a matching grant from the national organization Jewish Funds for Justice to support our first year of congregational membership in the Orange County Organizing Committee.

The Orange County Organizing Committee (OCOC) is building a broad-based organization with the power to take collective action in the name of justice and the common good. Over 29 religious congregations, schools associations, and community and civic organizations in Orange County are active in this effort. This effort is being led by clergy and lay leaders from religious congregations including the Chapel Hill Kehillah, representing 9 major religious denominations, working in partnership with other community organizations and leaders.

Our efforts are being led by Rabbi Jen and Kathy Kaufman, and I'd like to thank them both for their dedication and hard work on behalf of the Kehillah.

Second, under the dedication and volunteer leadership of Sue Orenstein, the Kehillah will be sponsoring a Burmese refugee family during their resettlement. This is a powerful opportunity to fulfill the mitzvah of loving and helping the stranger, for We were once strangers in the land of Egypt.

You can help this family in many ways:

- making monetary donations
- providing in-kind donations (such as furniture, clothes, and food)
- helping with finding employment and/or medical care
- assisting with moving into their Carrboro apartment
- helping with schools and learning English

Together our efforts can make a profound difference in the life of this family that has suffered so greatly in Burma. Please contact Sue for more information.

Third, as we enter the new year, we remember those who go hungry every day.

We continue to be very involved with the Interfaith Council. The Inter-Faith Council for Social Service provides shelter, food, direct services, advocacy and information to people in need in Chapel Hill and Carrboro. I'd like to thank Ava Nackman, our liaison to this great organization. During this season, we want to help stock the local food bank. Please pick up the paper bags in the lobby and bring them back to the synagogue filled with canned or dried food on Yom Kippur. For those who do not carry on Yom Kippur, you can drop your food donation during the week.

Attached to each bag is a donation envelope for Mazon, the primary Jewish agency addressing global hunger. Please consider donating the cost of what you would have spent feeding yourself for Yom Kippur to Mazon for their Yom Kippur appeal.

Please participate so that our fasts bring comfort, healing and justice into the world.

On behalf of your Board of Directors, officers and the Kehillah staff, I thank you for your support and involvement and I wish you and those close to you a sweet New Year.

Tomorrow, services begin at 9 am.

L'Shannah Tovah. Happy New Year.