

THE DANIEL CENTERS FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM



THE DANIEL CENTERS
FOR PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM

Beit Daniel

The Center for Progressive Judaism in Tel Aviv-Jaffa

Mishkenot Ruth Daniel

Education and Culture Center and Guesthouse, Jaffa

Kehilat Halev

Spiritual Kehila in the Center of Tel Aviv



Rabbi **Gilad Kariv** and Knesset
Member **Stav Shaffir**



Welcoming **Shabbat** at the **Port of
Jaffa**



Celebrating **Purim** at
Beit Daniel

www.beit-daniel.org.il

SUMMER 2015



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK



THINGS ARE HAPPENING...

Dear Friends,

Being the Rabbi of the Daniel Centers for Progressive Judaism for the last 25 years has been a source of great pleasure for me. I have learned much and have experienced so many memorable events throughout the years. I saw the growth of our community and the development of Reform Judaism in Israel. I had the privilege of performing weddings for thousands of couples and bar and bat mitzvah for thousands of young adults.

This spring I experienced one of the highlights of my career as a rabbi at this unique congregation by having the privilege of bringing to our synagogue a new Torah scroll of Sephardic descent. The scroll, which is encased in silver, is 140 years old and was smuggled to Israel from Lebanon. The Sephardic family that kept the scroll decided to move the Torah from an Orthodox synagogue to our community. This decision truly reflects their understanding of the need for change within our Jewish society, and honors our community that stands on the frontline of creating a modern and vibrant Jewish approach. More people now understand that Judaism must provide meaning for Israelis in the 21st century, and our Reform approach in Tel Aviv is the right flavor for them. This family chose a synagogue that allows different types of people to pray freely and feel at home.

This spring, a quarter of a million Israelis saw our mission to promote pluralism and democracy actualized through the Shonim B'yahad exhibition in Jaffa. This is only one event of many that demonstrates our emphasis on these values. This newsletter allows you to gain an insight into how we bring the voice of Reform Judaism to the capital of culture and business in Israel. We would like to thank those who support us and understand the challenges of building a strong and vibrant community in Tel Aviv-Jaffa.

Meir Azari

Senior Rabbi

The Daniel Centers for Progressive Judaism



Connect with Rabbi Meir Azari on Facebook.

Shonim B'yahad Embracing Our Differences

Over 250,000 visitors to the Jaffa Port from March to June experienced the First Annual "Embracing our Differences" art exhibit, organized by the Daniel Centers with the cooperation and support of the Jewish Federation of Sarasota Florida. This exhibit features ten foot tall enlargements of 37 pieces of student artwork, all of them based on the subject of connecting with and "embracing others" who differ in their religion, ethnicity, race, physical features, or socio-economic background. Students from twenty elementary and secondary schools located throughout the central region in Israel submitted art work on this subject. Three respected artists and art critics then selected the 37 pieces for display at the Jaffa Port. The positive response to this display has been so great that the Jaffa Port Authority has extended the exhibition until the end of the summer. Not only does the extension of the project allow more locals and tourists to visit the exhibition, but it gives us the opportunity to host summer events that focus on the theme of "embracing our differences."

The Daniel Centers are proud of the partnership with the Jewish Federation of Sarasota and cooperation with President Nancy Swart and Executive Director Howard Tevlowitz. "Embracing Our Differences" was based on a similar program which has been going on for ten years in Sarasota, Florida.

Kabbalat Shabbat at Jaffa Port

Beit Daniel is coming to Jaffa Port this summer to celebrate Kabbalat Shabbat! We are proud to welcome Shabbat in this biblical city while maintaining a progressive and modern spirit. Our rabbis at the Daniel Centers, accompanied by musicians, will be leading the Friday evening services. Further details can be found on our website.



EVENTS AT THE DANIEL CENTERS

Tikkun Leil Shavuot at Beit Daniel

On Erev Shavuot, we hosted our annual Tikkun Leil Shavuot, a traditional all-night Torah study. The theme this year was "The Garden of Eden," an exploration of the notion of paradise through the lens of religion, art, music, psychology and more. Over 1,000 individuals from all walks of life arrived and attended, according to their own preferences, diverse lectures and workshops.

One of the highlights from the evening was a conversation between Rabbi Meir Azari and Sheikh Mahmud Weil, the Qadi (an Islamic judge) of Jaffa, on the Garden of Eden as seen in Judaism and Islam. What made this particular lecture so unique was Sheikh Weil's ease in entering into a religious Jewish space and our community's enthusiasm of inviting a sheikh into our midst. This lecture drew over 400 participants.



We were pleased to welcome Knesset member Stav Shaffir and Executive Director of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism, Rabbi Gilad Kariv, who discussed the 'reality' of the Garden of Eden in our modern day society. Actress, screenwriter and film director, Shira Geffen, and screenwriter Galit Roichman spoke about sources of inspiration and the process of creating a film.

Kabbalat Shabbat at Kehilat Halev

Kehilat Halev, our center in central Tel Aviv, welcomes individuals and visiting groups for musical and spiritual Kabbalat Shabbat services. For groups that are visiting from abroad, Kehilat Halev also offers a joint dinner program that allows the group to meet and interact with local congregants. Through this personal encounter, group members have the opportunity to learn about liberal and progressive Judaism in Israel while enjoying a delicious meal. For more information, please email Efrat Rotem at efratrotem@gmail.com

Please welcome our new
Education Director,

Sharon Abulafia

We are proud to welcome Sharon Abulafia as the new Education Director. Sharon's vision is to develop an integrated education program linking our "young families" nursery school (Zulazu), the 20 pre-schools in which we are involved, our bar and bat mitzvah and Jewish identity programs in elementary schools, and a wide variety of informal adult and senior education activities.

Prior to coming to the Daniel Centers, Sharon was responsible, at the headquarters of the Israel Movement for Progressive Judaism (IMPJ), for Noar Telem, the Israeli Reform youth movement, which she helped to grow to 1,500 participants. At the IMPJ she developed new Movement branches throughout the country, offering travel, seminars, weekend retreats, and summer camps. Previously she was the Youth Director at Kol Hanesama synagogue in Jerusalem and she has also managed adult and senior citizen education programs. Sharon studied Judaism and Bible studies at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem.



Please welcome our
Student Rabbi,

Efrat Rotem

Under the guidance of Rabbi Meir Azari, Efrat joined the staff at the Daniel Centers in March 2014, and is currently serving as the community leader of Kehilat Ha'lev. As a community leader, Efrat conducts life-cycle events.

Efrat is currently attending the Israeli Rabbinical School Program at Hebrew Union College in Jerusalem. She holds a Masters of Arts in Literature and a Bachelor of Arts in Literature and Sociology from the University of Tel Aviv. Prior to her studies, Efrat was an Education Officer in the IDF. From 2009 until 2012, Efrat served as the chairperson of Hoshen (Education and Change) Program at the LGBT Education and Information Center in Israel. Efrat considers herself to be a feminist activist in the field of Progressive Judaism and within the LGBT community.



Tikkun Olam in Tel Aviv-Yafo

The Daniel Centers, together with the Bina Center for Jewish Identity and Hebrew Culture, are proud sponsors of the **MASA Tikkun Olam Program**.

This program is excellent for college graduates with a passion for social justice and promoting understanding between Arabs and Jews. Participants choose between a five month or ten month track and volunteer or intern at local organizations, while living and studying alongside participants from Israel and around the world. Participants study Hebrew, learn about the complex realities in Israel from a broad range of perspectives, explore questions of social justice in the Jewish tradition, and discover the land and people of Israel through fascinating discussions, trips and tours.

Choose between four tracks:

- **Social Action Track** - Live in South Tel Aviv and volunteer with refugees from Sudan and Eritrea, migrant workers, and at-risk Jewish populations.
- **Coexistence Track** - Live in Jaffa, and volunteer to build understanding between Jews and Arabs in this diverse community.
- **Internship Track** - Intern with a non-profit organization, gaining valuable career skills while making a difference in Israeli society.

NEW

- **Master's Degree Track** - Gain an MA in Non-Profit Management from the Hebrew University while interning and exploring your Jewish identity.

Go to www.tikkunolamisrael.org and apply now.



Celebrating with the Daniel Centers - Bar/Bat Mitzvahs & Weddings

From Tel Avivans to international visitors, we celebrate hundreds of Bar and Bat Mitzvahs and weddings each year within our walls, in the city, and on its beaches each year. Beit Daniel's distinctive egalitarian and progressive spirit makes the experience one of a kind. Our office is happy to speak with you about hosting your life cycle event and to tell you about the experiences of others.

Contact office@beit-daniel.org.il for further information.

FRIENDS & MEMBERS

Support the Friends of the Daniel Centers

While over 75% of our budget is self-financed, the Daniel Centers need additional funds to meet our ambitious goals of religious pluralism, multiculturalism and service. You can donate online to Friends of the Daniel Centers, by going to our website. Your donations will be processed through the secure website of the Network for Good. Or send a check directly to Friends of the Daniel Centers, 4108 Leland Street, Chevy Chase, MD 20815. Your donation is tax deductible to the extent allowed by the law. If you are interested in establishing a longer term relationship with the Daniel Centers, please contact us at office@beit-daniel.org.il



BEIT DANIEL

The Center for Progressive Judaism in Tel Aviv-Jaffa

62 Bnei Dan St. 62305 Tel Aviv Israel

Tel: 972 3 544 2740 Fax: 972 3 544 4030

Email: office@beit-daniel.org.il

Rabbi Meir Azari | Rabbi Galia Sadan | Cantor: Freddy Pe'er
President: Bruria Barish | Chairperson: Nuri Conforti

MISHKENOT RUTH DANIEL

Culture Center, Education Center and Guesthouse

47 Jerusalem Blvd. corner of Ben Zvi, Yafo

Tel: 972 3 5264526

Email: mishkenot.tours@gmail.com

Rabbi Mira Raz

KEHILAT HALEV

Spiritual Kehila in the Center of Tel Aviv

48 Rashi Street, Tel Aviv, Israel

Email: efratrotem@gmail.com

Student Rabbi Efrat Rotem

Friends of the Daniel Centers for Progressive Judaism

4108 Leland Street, Chevy Chase, MD 20815

Tel: 301 654 1259

Email: edit@beit-daniel.org.il

www.beit-daniel.org.il

