



BETH CHAVERIM

HUMANISTIC JEWISH COMMUNITY



What's Happening at Beth Chaverim

Ma Nishmah

Sunday, March 19th - Sunday School Chocolate Seder; Pre-K meets

Sunday, March 26th - Passover Food Delivery with Maot Chitim

Wednesday, March 29th - Book Group via Zoom

Saturday, April 1st - Babka Baking with Masa Madre at the Cheskin's Home, 1-2:30pm

Sunday, April 2nd - Sunday School Spring Break

Thursday, April 6 - Beth Chaverim Second Night Seder, Hilton Northbrook, 5:30pm

Sunday, April 9th - Sunday School Spring Break

Sunday, April 16th - Good Deeds Day

Sunday, May 7th - Sunday School Ends

*We are continuing to evaluate the safety and logistics of in person events.
Please watch your email and our website for the most up to date information.*

You can find all of this information &
more on our [website](#) under
“[News & Events](#)”

Beth Chaverim Steering Committee

President - Carolyn Lewis

Secretary - Steve Rusnak

Treasurer - Deb Rusnak

Past President - Deb Rusnak

Members at Large - Dan Lewis, Alan Solid, and Rachelle Durrer

Renewal and Recommitment

The spring annually brings hope. It is a time of rebirth as animals give birth to their young, flowers begin to bloom, buds are transformed into fully blossoming trees. The holiday of Passover embraces this with the symbols of the egg for the rebirth, the parsley for the new greening of the season. We gather to celebrate our freedom and liberation, telling a story that never happened but provides inspiration nonetheless. We are part of a great collective with shared memories, shared stories and often shared experiences. Even if those with whom we share these things are people we have never met or are characters in our sacred mythology. We are part of the great paradox of the Jewish people, a people with ancient roots whose resilience in the face of hostility, prejudice and violence has proved greater than all those things. The holiday of Purim reminds us of the triumph of good over evil, of survival in the face of those who would destroy us.

These are important things to remember in our own time when anti-Semitism is on the rise in the United States. At a time when we are finally emerging mostly without fear from the pandemic to reenter the world, we may be tempted to once again withdraw. The silent part is being said out loud; a “day of hate” was recently declared to demonstrate the collective ability to instill terror in the Jewish population. Jews, the old joke goes, always know where their passports are. For the first time in my more than 25 years of being a Jewish educator, a student asked me “are they coming for us?” Secularity does not immunize us against hate, but knowledge can offer a degree of protection. Our faith as Humanistic Jews ultimately lies in the belief that people are overwhelmingly good, and that we can shape if not control our fates and the fate of the world. Never has the world seemed more in need of repair.

In the face of hate, let us recommit ourselves to acts of love and kindness. In the face of isolation, let us renew our communal obligations and once again become part of something greater than ourselves. In the face of potential despair, let us unite to engage in acts of tikkun olam, repairing the world. It is again part of the paradox of being Jewish: in the face of outside pressure to give up or hide our Judaism, let us celebrate. Judaism is a religion of memory, and it need not be memories of victimhood. Instead let’s remember the holidays and life cycle events, the times we come together to celebrate, the aspects of Jewish culture that form our Jewish identity. As Beth Chaverim is celebrating 20 years since its founding, I am optimistic about the future. I am grateful for this wonderful community. And I am renewed by each of you, as learners, members, and generous participants in making the world a better place



*B'shalom,
Rabbi Jodi*



Beth Chaverim Mission Statement

Beth Chaverim is a place for individuals and families to explore their Jewish heritage and traditions, to learn to think critically and independently about religious and theological issues, and to develop meaningful and relevant Jewish identities through education.

President's Column

Recently, my 16-year-old son, Parker, had the opportunity to attend the international convention for the BBYO youth group where thousands of teens, advisors, staff, and supporters from around the world came together to celebrate the social, educational, cultural, religious, and leadership aspects of being Jewish. BBYO is the leading pluralistic Jewish teen movement aspiring to involve more Jewish teens in more meaningful Jewish experiences. On top of that, Parker was one of about 25 youth from across the world selected to participate in the Leven Global Leadership Academy. He spent six months working virtually with this group of teens and adult mentors to build marketable leadership skills (cultivating strengths, networking, public speaking, managing a team, etc.). The culminating event took place at the week's convention; each of these 25 young people, Parker included, presented TED Talks that they spent the past several months writing.

A TED talk is a recorded public-speaking presentation that was originally given at the main TED (technology, entertainment and design) annual event or one of its many satellite events around the world. TED is a nonprofit devoted to spreading ideas, usually in the form of short, powerful talks, often called "TED talks." The talks are generally under 18 minutes long, and work well since it only demands the audience's attention for a short period of time, decreasing the chance of minds wandering or daydreaming about lunch. The talks usually involve a new or surprising idea or a great basic idea with a compelling new argument behind it that challenges beliefs and perspectives.

I wanted to use this space to share Parker's TED Talk speech. Yes, he is my child, and this is sort of a humble brag opportunity, but more importantly, by sharing this, I seek to highlight the power of words, the power of our youth, and the power of youth as leaders in the Jewish community. Every child has the potential to be a leader, and as adults, we have the responsibility to establish a climate that nurtures their growth as self-sufficient, engaged citizens, and to develop their leadership skills.

 Carolyn Lewis, President 

President's Column - Parker's Ted Talk

American entrepreneur Jim Rohan once said, “Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.” In November of 2016, I decided to go to my Junior High School’s wrestling informational meeting, simply because it was the only sport the school allowed 5th graders to participate in. Walking into that room, I had no clue it was going to change my life forever.

The culture of wrestling is extremely controversial to the public. Constant and rapid weight gain and weight loss looks dangerous and unhealthy to outsiders. My experience, on the other hand, created lifelong good habits and strategies.

All habits have to start with the first time doing something. The first time that I really started to focus on my diet and exercise for wrestling was during my third year in the sport, 7th grade. I remember that I had to make a certain weight class, it was 105 pounds, and I was about 109 at the time. This was the first time in my entire life that I was strictly focused on my diet and exercise to get down to the weight I wanted to be at. Eventually, I made the weight and wrestled at it the entire season.

But during the offseason for wrestling I would put the weight back on that I had lost during the season. This would happen year after year after year. However, although the cycle kept repeating, it became less and less extreme every time until I stopped putting so much weight on after the season. My continued action started to create a habit that will stick with me my whole life. That’s what a habit is. The dictionary definition of “habit” reads: “a settled or regular tendency or practice, especially one that is hard to give up.”

So, we’ve established what a habit is, and how I built one for myself over time; but why does that even matter? There are 3 different pillars to why habits are so important: health, productivity, and self-discipline.

Good habits like exercising regularly, eating a healthy diet, and getting enough sleep can help you maintain your physical and mental health. This ties into my previous example. After I had established that habit, I noticed huge improvements in my physical and athletic performances, as well as reduced stress in school and while under heavy pressure. Although self explanatory, your health is important because it affects your overall well-being and quality of life. Good health allows you to enjoy life to the fullest and participate in the activities you enjoy. It also enables you to work, be productive, contribute to your community, and care for your loved ones.

Building habits like waking up early, setting more goals, and staying more organized can lead to improved productivity. Being productive is crucial because it enables you to do more tasks in a shorter amount of time, which can help you accomplish your objectives more quickly. Being productive allows you to make the most of your time and resources, which can help you accomplish more and give you a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment. You can feel more in charge of your life and your time by being productive. When you perform tasks and reach your objectives, you could feel a sense of pride and achievement, which can increase your self-esteem and confidence.

For the last pillar, developing good habits can help you build self-discipline, which can be useful in many areas of your life. It’s an important skill to develop because it allows you to make deliberate choices rather than being controlled by your impulses or external circumstances. Self-discipline can be useful in many areas of life, including work, school, personal relationships, and physical health.

Health, productivity, and self-discipline all exemplify why good habits are important. The more good habits you build, the more your quality of life will improve, as 40% of all behaviors are controlled by habits. Habits build on top of each other like legos, building a staircase to improvement. Good habits are important because they can help you lead a healthy, productive, and fulfilling life. They can also make it easier to achieve your goals, both personal and professional. Developing good habits can take time and effort, the benefits are well worth it.

Parker Lewis, age 16

What's Happening at Beth Chaverim – Ma Nishmah

Todah Rabah

Rachelle Durrer for helping with our in-school Chanukah celebration, and the hamantashen baking for Purim

Sue and Hugh Pinkus for hosting our adult Purim event

PADS December Donors

Phyllis and Howard Cheskin

The Enciso family

The Fisher-Stawinski family

The Kornfeld Wild family

The Lewis family

The Moyer Uno family

Bobbi and Jim Taormina

Marlena Weheliye for delivering the food



PADS February Donors

The Enteen family

The Fisher-Stawinski family

Bobbi and Jim Taormina

Marlena Weheliya for delivering the food

Bernie's Book Bin Volunteers

Rachelle and Anastasia Durrer

Rich and Linda Horn

Carolyn, Dan and Marlee Lewis

Sue and Hugh Pinkus

Deb and Steve Rusnak

Alan and Rhonda Solid

Rabbi Jodi



What's Happening at Beth Chaverim – Ma Nishmah

Northern Illinois Food Bank Volunteers

Phyllis Cheskin
 Dan Lewis
 Barbara, Gianna and Kaelyn Ratliff
 Rhonda Solid
 Rabbi Jodi



Feed My Starving Children Volunteers

Nancy Freedkin
 Dan, Carolyn and Parker Lewis
 Rabbi Jodi

Donations

Linda and Rich Horn in honor of Jeff
 Solid's engagement
 Tami and Michael Baba in memory
 of Fern Lovitt, Tami's mother
 Rhonda and Alan Solid



Mazel Tov

Carolyn Lewis on becoming a member of the
 inaugural Vernon Township Mental Health Board

The Ratliff family on the upcoming bat mitzvah of
 their daughter Gianna

Rabbi Sherwin T. Wine

"[Humanistic Judaism] offer[s] a cultural definition of Judaism. In a world of enormous diversity in Jewish choice and practice, it is naive to confine Jewish identity to affirmations of theological belief and to religious behavior. If Judaism is primarily an ethnic culture, it can embrace wide ideological differences, allowing more people to identify themselves as Jews." *From Sherwinwine.com*



Second Night Seder

Why is This Night Different from All Other Nights?

It's the Beth Chaverim 2nd Night Seder!

When: Thursday, April 6th @ 5:30pm

Where: The Hilton, 2855 N. Milwaukee Ave, Northbrook, IL

Cost: \$46/Adult, \$24/Children Under 12, Free/Children Under 3



Dinner Includes

Appetizer: Gefilte Fish | Red Beet Horseradish

Soup: Chicken Soup with Matzo Balls

Salad: Mixed Garden Salad | Aged Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing

Entree Selections: Herb Roasted Half Chicken; Brisket of Beef | Caramelized Onions; Grilled Salmon | Light Lemon

Caper Buerre Blanc Sauce; Passover Vegetable Lasagna

Dessert | Select One: Strawberry Shortcake; Flourless

Chocolate Mousse Cake

Bring Your Own Wine

RSVP by April 2nd, 2023

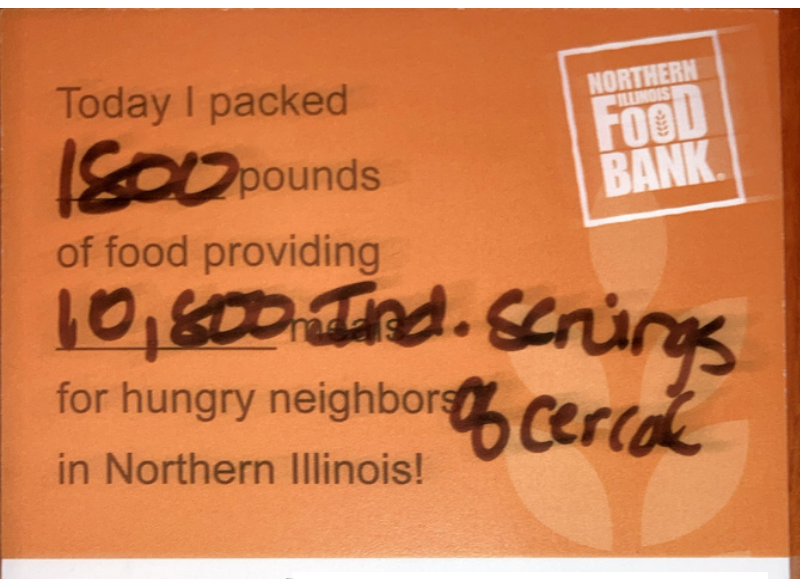
Please send payment to:

Zelle: info@bethchaverim.net

Paypal: On the website

Please indicate entree choice in the note on the payment

What the Mail Brought



FISHER OUTREACH GROUP, INC
Creating Contagious Compassion

January 19, 2023

Rabbi Jodi Kornfeld
Beth Chaverim Humanistic Jewish Community

Dear Rabbi Kornfeld:

We wanted to thank you for the amazing Valentine's cards your Sunday School students provided for the seniors participating in our **Adopt A Grandparent** Valentine's Program.

We have seen the difference our program make to these low income seniors, many who do not have a strong support system. The community has been wonderful in helping us spread love and kindness to them.

We are always looking for local businesses, families and individuals to become sponsors, display our program flyers and/or brochure, participate as a collection location for gift giving events, or just sharing our information.

We welcome you to follow the Fisher Outreach Group Facebook page for updates on programs we hold throughout the year.

Thank you again for helping our family honor my parents through these programs and know that you have made a difference.

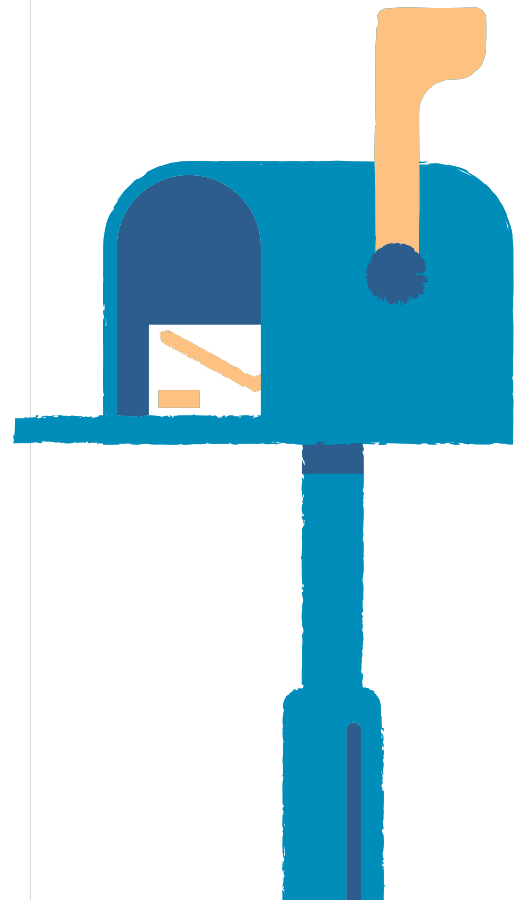
With a grateful heart,

Fisher Outreach Group, Inc.

Jacci Richards
Director

a contribution has been made by
SHT Board & Staff

in honor of
Beth Chaverim Humanistic Jewish Community
20th Anniversary
to the
Society for Humanistic Judaism
28611 West Twelve Mile Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48334
(248) 478-7610



Beth Chaverim Book Club

Please join us as we discuss the following books



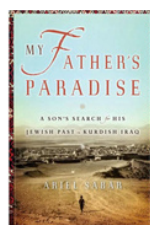
March 29, 7pm: **The Latecomer** by Jean Hanff Korelitz. u.s.macmillan.com describes the book as follows: The Latecomer follows the story of the wealthy, New York City-based [Jewish] Oppenheimer family, from the first meeting of parents Salo and Johanna, under tragic circumstances, to their triplets born during the early days of IVF. As children, the three siblings – Harrison, Lewyn, and Sally – feel no strong familial bond and cannot wait to go their separate ways, even as their father becomes more distanced and their mother more desperate. When the triplets leave for college, Johanna, faced with being truly alone, makes the decision to have a fourth child. What role will the “latecomer” play in this fractured family? A complex novel that builds slowly and deliberately, The Latecomer touches on the topics of grief and guilt, generational trauma, privilege and race, traditions and religion, and family dynamics. It is a profound and witty family story from an accomplished author, known for the depth of her character studies, expertly woven storylines, and plot twists.



April 26, 7pm: **My Father's Paradise** by Ariel Sabar. According to goodreads.com, In a remote corner of the world, forgotten for nearly three thousand years, lived an enclave of Kurdish Jews so isolated that they still spoke Aramaic, the language of Jesus. Mostly illiterate, they were self-made mystics and gifted storytellers and humble peddlers who dwelt in harmony with their Muslim and Christian neighbors in the mountains of northern Iraq. To these descendants of the Lost Tribes of Israel, Yona Sabar was born.

Yona's son Ariel grew up in Los Angeles, where Yona had become an esteemed professor, dedicating his career to preserving his people's traditions. Ariel wanted nothing to do with his father's strange immigrant heritage—until he had a son of his own.

Ariel Sabar brings to life the ancient town of Zakho, discovering his family's place in the sweeping saga of Middle-Eastern history. This powerful book is an improbable story of tolerance and hope set in what today is the very center of the world's attention.

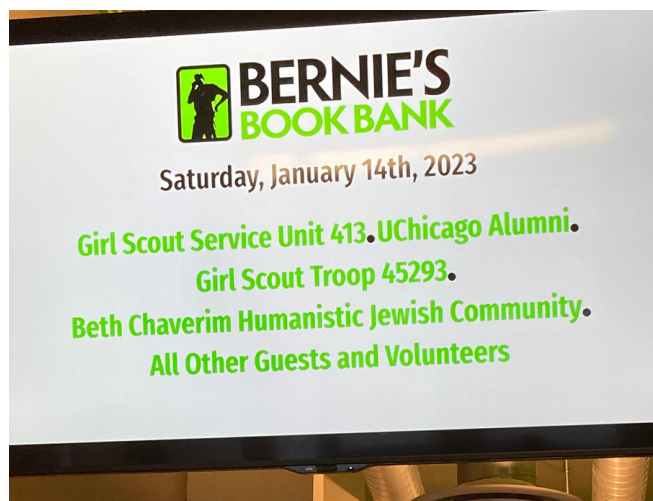




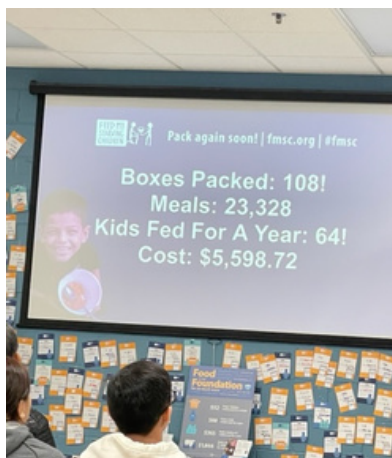
20 for 20



Our 20 for 20 activities have begun! We have volunteered in person and provided in kind donations as we celebrate our 20th anniversary with 20 community service projects. Please join us at upcoming events!

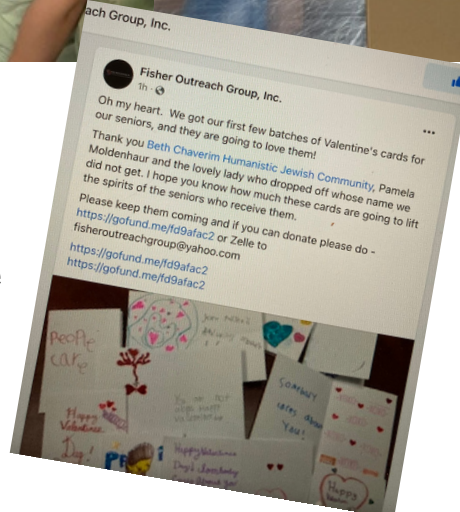


Volunteering at Bernie's Books.



Volunteering at the Northern Illinois Food Bank.

Our Sunday School students made Valentine's Day Cards for seniors.



Standing on One Foot

Judaism in roughly 140 characters

A Jewish word for gratitude is hakarat hatov - it means to see the good in the world and to be grateful for what you have. Developing the active habit of being grateful and giving back to the world is a fundamental Jewish and human value.

Adult Education

Adult education will continue with the final book of the Apocrypha, the second book of Maccabees on March 29th at 2pm on zoom.



Support Beth Chaverim through Donation Matching

Amazon has discontinued its Amazon Smile donation program. Thank you for everyone who has used it over the past number of years to generate donations for Beth Chaverim.

If your employer has a matching program for donations you make, please note that Beth Chaverim is a certified 501 (c)(3) organization; if needed we can supply the necessary documentation to receive matching donations.

Tu B'Shevat Celebration



Celebrating Tu
B'Shevat

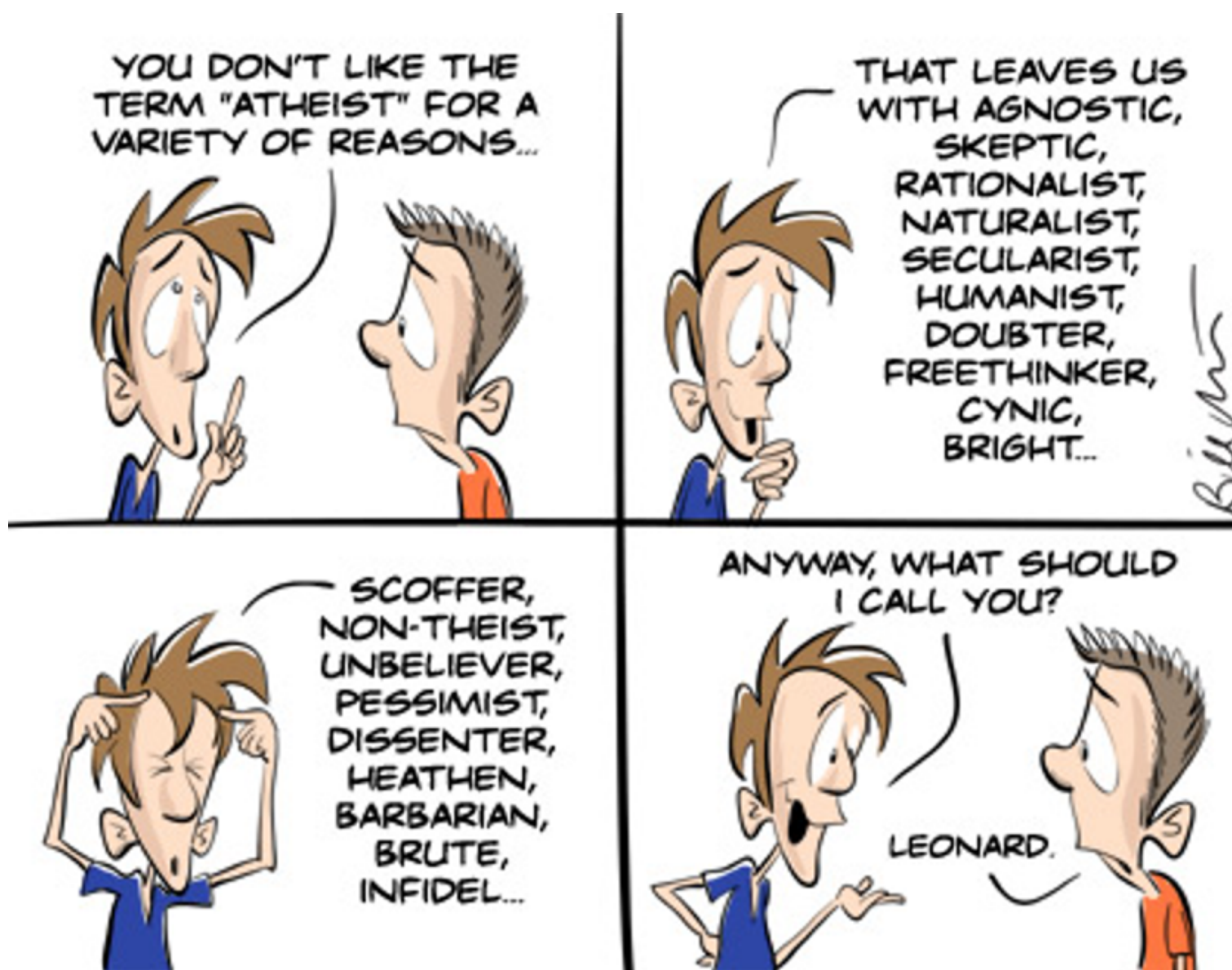


Our pre-K class made trees
with the handprints of the
entire class.



Humanist Café - Food for the Mind & the Appetite

Approaching Life's Questions with a Good Sense of Humor Goes a Long Way



<https://openparachute.files.wordpress.com/2008/09/leonard-atheist.jpg>

Humanist Café - Food for the Mind & the Appetite

Fallen Chocolate Cake

Recipe from epicurious.com

Serves: 8-10

Equipment: 9" diameter springform pan

Ingredients

Cake

1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into 1" pieces, plus more, room temperature, for pan 3/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar, divided, plus more for pan

10 ounces semisweet or bittersweet chocolate (61%-72% cacao), coarsely chopped

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

6 large eggs

2 tablespoons natural unsweetened cocoa powder

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

3/4 teaspoon kosher salt



Topping

1 cup chilled heavy cream

1/2 cup mascarpone

3 tablespoons powdered sugar

Humanist Café - Food for the Mind & the Appetite

Fallen Chocolate Cake Preparation

For cake:

Step 1: Preheat oven to 350°F. Lightly butter springform pan and dust with sugar, tapping out any excess.

Step 2: Combine chocolate, oil, and 1/2 cup butter in a large heatproof bowl. Set over a saucepan of simmering water and heat, stirring often, until melted. Remove bowl from saucepan.

Step 3: Separate 4 eggs, placing whites and yolks in separate medium bowls. Add cocoa powder, vanilla, salt, 1/4 cup sugar, and remaining 2 eggs to bowl with yolks and whisk until mixture is smooth. Gradually whisk yolk mixture into chocolate mixture, blending well.

Step 4: Using an electric mixer on high speed, beat egg whites until frothy. With mixer running, gradually beat in 1/2 cup sugar; beat until firm peaks form.

Step 5: Gently fold egg whites into chocolate mixture in 2 additions, folding just until incorporated between additions. Scrape batter into prepared pan; smooth top and sprinkle with remaining 2 tablespoons sugar.

Step 6: Bake until top is puffed and starting to crack and cake is pulling away from edge of pan, 35-45 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack and let cake cool completely in pan (cake will collapse in the center and crack further as it cools). **DO AHEAD:** Cake can be made 1 day ahead. Cover in pan and store airtight at room temperature.

For topping:

Step 7: Using an electric mixer on mediumhigh speed, beat cream, mascarpone, and powdered sugar in a medium bowl until soft peaks form.

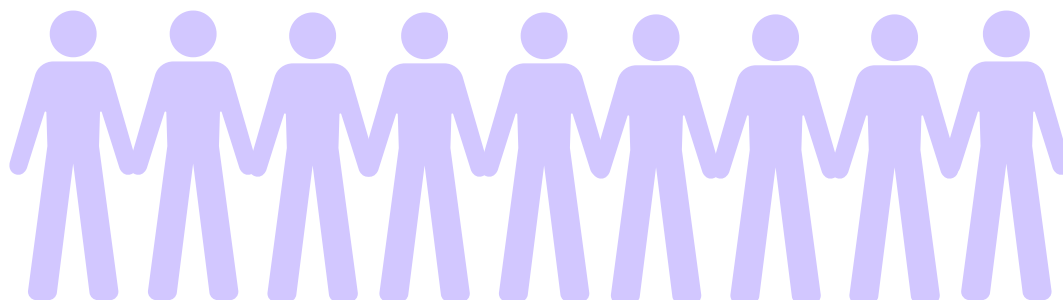
Step 8: Remove sides of springform pan from cake. Mound whipped cream mixture in center of cake.

Can You Help?

Over the past few years, we have had several families within our community that have had a temporary set back, ie: a surgery, loss of a job, family crises, etc. "Helping Hands" is available to help with the needs of these families, either through delivering a meal, or driving to a doctor's appointment or any other minor needs a family could use. If you would like to be added to the list of members who will assist when needed, please email us and we will contact you when the need arises. Thank you to everyone who has volunteered already; it is greatly appreciated. Any family needing assistance can seek it by contacting Rabbi Jodi.



We are always looking for some assistance, large and small, for our events.
Please let us know if you are interested in helping.



Humanistic Judaism 101



- Defines Judaism as the collective historic experience of the Jewish people and promotes a community of shared Jewish values.
- Promotes the development of a strong Jewish identity, especially for those Jews who cannot intellectually or emotionally embrace a supernatural being, or who are unsure about the existence of such a being and want to express their Judaism in an honest and meaningful way.
- Emphasizes the capacity in all human beings to improve themselves and the world through learning and the performance of good deeds.
- Teaches that ethical behavior is conduct which enhances the dignity of every individual.
- Understands that ritual without meaning is simply empty ritual and that liberal Judaism is authentic Judaism without apologies to the present or nostalgic bows to the past. Beth Chaverim is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism.

Did you know?

Rabbi Jodi Kornfeld is available to conduct life cycle ceremonies including weddings, baby namings, and funerals for members and non-members. Contact Rabbi Jodi for further information at:

(847) 945-6512

rabbijodi@gmail.com

Thank You for Reading!

This is a quarterly publication by



Beth Chaverim

Humanistic Jewish Community

Deerfield, IL (847) 945-6512

<http://bethchaverim.net/>

Rabbi - Jodi Kornfeld

Administrator - Linda Horn

Editor - Lindsey Grant



Beth Chaverim is proudly affiliated with:



Visit our website to learn more about us!

<http://bethchaverim.net/>

