

5 August 2010/25 Av 5770

Dear Beit Ahavah Community School families:

Welcome to a new and exciting year ahead of learning and connection in the **Beit Ahavah Community School!** Rabbi Riqi and the YOFIE Committee (Youth and Families Involved in Education) under Debra Immergut and Alison Mehlman's leadership have been working throughout the summer to develop our program to engage our children and enrich our families and community.

This registration packet includes the following important forms:

**Please fill out and return:**

- Registration form
- Tuition & Enrollment form (2 sides)
- Parent Volunteer form
- Medical Emergency Card

**Please post on your fridge and enter dates into you calendar (or sync up with the Beit Ahavah googlecalendar found at <http://beitahavah.org/events.html>):**

- Important Dates & Events (2 sides)

**DATES & ORIENTATION & FORMS:**

**Hebrew School begins Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup> and Religious School starts Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>.**

September is packed with Jewish Holidays so we hope to see you throughout the Hebrew month of Tishrei prior to school – at Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot events and more.

**Parent Orientation** is on the first day of Religious School led by Rabbi Riqi and YOFIE Committee members on Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup> – we'll meet in the Beit Ahavah sukkah once classes get started! School begins with an all-school "*Kehillah*" community gathering at 3:30pm, followed by first day of classes for students, nosh and Orientation for parents. At the end of Orientation, parents will be able to schmooze with other parents as well as join their children's prospective classes to get acquainted with the teacher.

If you have more than one child in the school, you can either divide up parental duties if you have more than one parent available, or else we will do our best to help you divide your time (multi-tasking is our specialty). This will be your first opportunity to meet and greet the teachers and help us get the year off to a great start together as parent-child-teacher teams. We listened to your feedback from prior years, and continue to strive to create stronger connections between parents and teachers.

**Registration form, Tuition & Enrollment form (2 sides), & Emergency Card, and the YOFIE Household Volunteer form:** Please return the forms as soon as possible or by August 26. Rosh Hashanah is early this year, and your prompt help registering your children will greatly help the office and school organization, and it may even help achieve a good slot in the Book of Life.

You can email these forms to [info@beitahavah.org](mailto:info@beitahavah.org), or mail them to PO Box 28, Northampton, MA 01060, or drop off to Leah Chavah at the NEW Beit Ahavah office at the church at 130 Pine Street, Florence, MA. We appreciate your help. WE MUST HAVE THESE FORMS OR YOUR CHILD CANNOT BEGIN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL.

**CALENDAR:** Enclosed please find the “Important Dates & Events” (2 sides) with dates of school sessions and school events. We may modify or add more events and special programs as the year goes on. You can also always check the School & Synagogue Full Calendar on the home page [www.beitahavah.org](http://www.beitahavah.org) or <http://beitahavah.org/events.html> for updates to the Synagogue/School calendar.

**MISSION:**

**Our mission** is to offer educational opportunities that emphasize experiential learning, family education and thoughtful Jewish content within the classroom. Our goal is to create a program that promotes a positive identification with a meaningful Judaism that is a place where both children and parents want to be while exploring Judaism and its richness through dynamic programs, the arts and learning opportunities.

We are excited to continue to build upon our Beit Ahavah Community School’s successes: Our Sunday Religious School program, Tikkun Olam Club (social justice projects) to include parent involvement when possible, Thursday Hebrew School with the Mitkadem Hebrew program, new modern Hebrew component & Tefillah/prayer led by Rabbi Riqi, B’nei Mitzvah Class program with Rabbi Riqi, Kef Mishpachah (younger grades K-2 Family & Fun programs), Holiday and Family Education programs, new Mini-Mester Chugim (Electives), Music & Drama, Family Shabbat Service Experiences, Shalosh-Arba-Chamesh! Jewish Music, Movement and Drumming program for 3-4-5’s & their Families, and more.

**Here are some Highlights of the full year ahead!**

Later this month we will update you with more information about teachers. For now we can proudly say we welcome Jennifer Friedman and Jennifer Levi, two Beit Ahavah parents, as teachers for K-1 and 2-3. We also welcome back Sheri Levson and Ben Beraha for grades 4 and 5-6, and soon will announce our 7<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. We look forward to another great year expanding our Teen Madrichim program as well. Felicia Sloin will not be teaching a grade this year, but we look forward to opportunities for special musical and holiday programs with her throughout the year.

**SHABBAT:**

We enlist your help in ideas on offering Shabbat celebrations together aimed towards school-aged families, such as Class Shabbat Dinners, Picnics & Havdalahs, Family Shabbat Services, and more.

**COMMUNITY CAFÉ’S & ADULT EDUCATION:**

We all want to support our community’s expressed desire for adult learning and cultural activities. Please give us your ideas, come to the YOFIE Committee’s Cafés which will be scheduled on different topics, come to the Community Forums, join the new Adult Education/Tarbut v’ Limmud (Culture & Learning) Committee chaired by Jessie Tropp, join one of the family or adult programs or volunteer your home for a Salon.

**TOTS/PRESCHOOL:**

Tot Shabbat led by Peggy Walker with Rabbi Riqi continues to be a popular service (first Friday of the month at 6:00pm). Shalosh-Arba-Chamesh! Jewish Music, Movement and Drumming program for 3-4-5’s & their Families returns this year as a collaboration with Lander-Grinspoon Academy on Sundays, once a month at 11am. To be on the Tot Shabbat/Preschool mailing list or to put your friends on this e-list, please email the office at [info@beitahavah.org](mailto:info@beitahavah.org).

**TEENS:**

Sheldon Snodgrass took the reigns last year for taking on the Shevet or “BAT’s” (Beit Ahavah Teens) tour de force. Now he and Margaret Miller are working with the nascent “J-TOV” (Jewish Teens Of the Valley), and we would like more teen leadership and parent involvement. We hope to expand our teens to become a youth group involved with NFTY – the Reform movement’s flagship North American Federation of Temple Youth program.

**THE YOFIE COMMITTEE:**

The YOFIE Committee has expanded and grown. We welcome our new co-chairs, Debra and Alison, and two new members Jen Gottlieb and Ruth Leuenberger. They are all available for your comments, ideas, feedback, help and support.

We are looking forward to an exciting school year of growth and learning, and of course we welcome your involvement. **If you know of other families new to the area or seeking a religious school and synagogue, please send us their info to help us grow.** We hope you are having a peaceful and healthy summer with your families.

**L'shalom u'l'shanah tovah u'mitukah l'chayim/  
peace for a sweet and healthy new year of life!**

Rabbi Riqi Kosovske  
The YOFIE Committee:  
Debra Immergut Marks & Alison Mehlman, Co-Chairs  
Jami Albro-Fisher  
Nina Brand  
Jen Gottlieb  
Aline LaBorwit-Davis  
Ruth Leuenberger