VT Soup Kitchen Benefit
Honoring Dean Chavooshian

Saturday, April 14, 7:00 pm

Dean Chavooshian has been leading the VT Soup Kitchen for the last 18 years and will be transitioning his role to new leadership. He’s not leaving; he just won’t be as involved as he has been in the past. In honor of all the heart and soul and sweat and tears he has put into running and improving our Soup Kitchen, we are planning a benefit to honor him. Please join us to toast Dean at this fun cocktail party on Saturday, April 14 @ 7:00 pm. Tickets will be $50/person. More info will follow shortly.

NOTE: We will have a silent and live auction. If you have goods or services to donate or would like to help, please contact the office (212-674-2340)
Dear Friends,

Last month, when some of our teens spent the weekend at the Religious Action Center in Washington, DC, they explored a broad spectrum of issues (see Liotte Greenbaum’s article on page 4) confronting both American and Israeli societies. One workshop had students examine excerpts from both the US and Israeli Declarations of Independence. Students had to determine which quote pertained to which Declaration of Independence. Students also had the opportunity to discuss if the ideals set forth by the founding generation of both countries have been realized, ignored, or are part of an evolving process that faces challenges along the way.

In every struggle it is important to remember the points of origin. Students today are more attuned to our nation’s beginning thanks to the show Hamilton! Future generations will understand the depth of impact of September 11, 2001 by visiting the National September 11 Memorial and Museum. Similarly, historic sites and museums in the South capture the origins and continuing struggle for civil rights in our country. In the 1960s, Alabama was the flashpoint of multiple civil rights historic moments: Selma, Montgomery, Birmingham—cities that captured the hope and the resistance of the Civil Rights movement.

Reform Judaism is inextricably linked to the civil rights struggle. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and The Voting Rights Act of 1965 were drafted in the conference room of the Religious Action Center’s building in Washington—the same Religious Action Center that sponsored last month’s teen L’Taken (To Repair) social justice seminar.

For the past number of years, Etgar 36 has been running youth and adult civil rights

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Dear Village Temple community,

We are a neighborhood congregation that believes in community, but we also understand that our neighborhood extends out into the world. It isn’t a coincidence that The Village Temple is located two blocks from Union Square, a historic site of political activism, represented by statues of Abraham Lincoln and Mahatma Gandhi. All winter our synagogue has been connecting Jewish values to social change. As this letter is being written, seven teenagers from The Village Temple are in Washington DC with Alex Tansky, Liotte Greenbaum, and Rabbi Hirsch, participating in a L’Taken [to repair the world] seminar with 500 other teens from around the country. Sponsored by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, the students learn how to translate liberal Jewish thought into legislation through advocacy, including direct contact with members of Congress.

That same weekend at the Village Temple Disabilities Awareness Shabbat services, our congregation had the honor of hearing from Xian Horn. Xian is a remarkable woman who was born with cerebral palsy but is defined by her extraordinary spirit, intelligence and wit. She has dedicated her life to showing others the path to self-esteem by understanding where individual value lies. Earlier in the month, VT member Lilly Rivlin screened her documentary, “Heather Booth: Changing the World,” about the renowned political activist. Heather Booth answered questions from a packed sanctuary, filled with VT congregants and esteemed guests, including Gloria Steinem, Marlo Thomas, Letty Cottin Pogrebin, and Elaine May.

Looking forward, on April 20, Isabel Dunst, Chair of the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism, will be a featured speaker. It will be an evening of learning and celebration for old and young, with our teens that participated in the RAC trip to D.C. talking about their experiences, followed by a Community Dinner.

In honor of Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day) on April 11, Ann Dorzback, the remarkable 96-year-old mother of VT congregant Irene Dorzback, is coming to New York from her home in Louisville, Kentucky, to speak about her escape from Nazi Germany.

On April 14, the VT social action committee will honor Dean Chovooshian for his 18 years of leadership at a benefit to support the synagogue’s Soup Kitchen. Every Saturday, more than 120 guests in need are served a homemade, hot lunch at the Village Temple. Help keep this tradition alive by coming to this evening of food, drink, and celebration. There will be a silent auction, with all proceeds going to the Village Temple to help sustain this important act of Tikkun Olam.

Thank you for being part of a community that cares about making Jewish values meaningful in a complicated world.

Julie Salamon and Fred Basch, Co-Presidents
jms118@att.net; fredbasch@nyc.rr.com

A Letter From Rabbi Hirsch, continued from page 2

trips to Alabama and Memphis. Participants touch history and have the opportunity to meet with those who made history—not news headliners—ordinary people who made and continue to make a difference.

It is my hope that The Village Temple adult members will participate in the Etgar 36 Alabama Civil Rights Journey with me. The Thursday evening – Sunday program includes: the site where Leo Frank was lynched, the Rosa Parks Museum, the Martin Luther King Center/Auburn Ave. district, Ebenezer Church, the Edmund Pettus Bridge, the Equal Justice Initiative, Freedom Park and Birmingham Civil Rights Institute, and the Names Project –AIDS Quilt. In addition we will worship Friday night with Temple Beth Or in Montgomery and have a creative Shabbat service on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Saturday morning. I have previously co-led this trip and it is an amazing experience. I would love to share it with our VT community.

The trip will take place May 2-5, 2019. The price/person will be approximately $900 plus airfare assuming a minimum of 25 participants.

If you are interested in participating and would like further details please email me at rabbidhirsch@villagetrempole.org. A full description, including price, will be in the March 20 E-blast.

Lishalom,
Rabbi Deborah A. Hirsch
Rabbidhirsch@villagetrempole.org
In February, seven of our Village Temple teenagers, Rabbi Hirsch, Alex Tansky, and I spent 4 days in Washington, DC for the L’Taken Jewish Social Justice Seminar sponsored by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. Over 500 teenagers from all over the United States came together to learn about current social issues, visit our national monuments, memorials, and museums. The weekend culminated on Capitol Hill where students lobbied and presented their views to Legislative Aides of our Senators and Representatives.

RAC legislative assistants led programs to help teens learn about issues such as homelessness and economic justice, bail reform, and Israel. Our VT teens also had opportunities to attend small group programs on Immigration Reform, Gun Violence Prevention, Separation of Church and State, Paid Family Leave, Reproductive Rights, Voting Rights, Health Care, LGBTQ+ Rights, Climate Justice, and Disability Rights. Each teen picked a topic about which they were passionate to present to their elected representatives. They learned how to lobby and spent hours in advocacy sessions preparing speeches. Every student presented twice, once in the Senate offices of Kirsten Gillibrand and Chuck Schumer, and once in the House of Representatives offices of Carolyn Maloney and Nydia Velasquez.


They met students from the other groups, and participated in joint Shabbat services and meals. Our teens were educated on so many current issues, and they were empowered to stand up and speak out. They were given tools and resources to bring back home to New York City and be engaged and an active voice for social justice.

Please join us at Shabbat services on Friday, April 20 at 6:45, where you can hear first-hand from the participants about their experiences.

Liotte Greenbaum
Director of Community Engagement
lgreenbaum@villagetemple.org

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TEENS AT THE VILLAGE TEMPLE

A Village Temple FIRST! Hold the date!

**SHABBAT-IN-THE-HOME**

**Friday, May 4, 2018**

On Friday, May 4, The Village Temple community will welcome and celebrate Shabbat in each other’s homes. The evening will start at 5:45 pm with singing, blessings, and appetizers at the temple, and then we will disperse to host homes for a delicious Shabbat dinner, conversation and fun. What better way to deepen connections with one another?

In order to make this a successful event we will need Shabbat hosts, as well as reservations for those individuals and families that would like to participate. Details, including registration and cost will be available in the next few weeks.

**NOTE:** There will be no Kabbalat Shabbat service on May 4. Those individuals/families who are observing a Yahrtzeit will gather at 5:30 pm in the sanctuary for memorial prayers including Kaddish.
It’s hard to believe that we are already at the beginning of March and we are already thinking about Pesach, but that’s just the way the calendar works this year. The first Seder is on Friday night, March 30 and I cannot wait for its arrival!

Seder Pesach is one of the most carefully designed learning experiences ever created. In an amazing combination of auditory and physical tasks, the Seder has something for everybody—drink, food, symbols, prayers, songs, stories, text study, simulations, ritual—all designed with one overarching goal: to take each person at the Seder table back to Egypt, to reenact the dramatic Exodus story, to make each one of us feel as if we had actually been redeemed from Egypt. Thus, Seder night is the family education experience par excellence. The rabbis who created its structure and content were brilliant family educators, filling the ceremony with an array of multisensory methods of transmitting the messages of the evening. The Seder is filled with symbolic foods, elaborate rituals, words and song, and most importantly, questions designed to keep even the youngest of children interested.

7 Tips For Your Seder This Year
Here are Dr. Ron Wolfson’s seven tips on how you might enliven your family’s Seder experience this year:

1. **Give homework on some aspect of the Seder ceremony.**
   An explanation of what the Haggadah is trying to convey, a play, a song, or a take-off on a game show; there is no better way to encourage participation than by asking people to prepare something in advance to bring to the table.

2. **Buy time.** One way to buy time to spend more on the telling of the story is to offer your guests something to nibble during the seder and the meal. Consider an edible centerpiece or artichokes with salad dressings as a much more interesting and filling than parsley.

3. **Tell the story.** The core of the Seder experience is the telling of the story of the Exodus from Egypt. Think of ways to tell the story that supplement the Haggadah. Consider a skit, puppet show, acting out the plagues, or magic show.

4. **Ask questions.** Since the Haggadah invites question, encourage your guests to liberate themselves from the book and discuss what it is the Haggadah is trying to tell us.

5. **Have fun.** Having family fun is serious business, especially at the Seder table. The Seder was never meant to be dull. Use various songs as the backdrop to each part of the Seder, re-writing and pairing and laughing all the way!

6. **Change it up.** Each year, experienced Seder leaders look for new ideas to incorporate into the ceremony. Here are a few of my favorites. Instead of filling Elijah’s Cup with wine at the beginning of the seder, wait until just before opening the door and pass Elijah’s cup to each participant who pours some of her/his wine into it. One Sephardic custom is to beat the leader with green onions during the singing of Dayenu as a reminder of the plagues.

7. **Most of all, have fun and enjoy the holiday!**

I wish you and your loved ones a Zissen Pesach, a sweet and happy Passover and a wonderful family adventure, from slavery to redemption.

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FOR ADULTS: LEARNING HIGH HOLIDAY TROPE

Sundays March 18, April 8, 15, 22, 29, and May 6
9:30-10:15 am

With a whole half year ahead of us, we invite you to a series of six 45-minute classes with Cantor Bach, who will be teaching congregants the melodies to which we chant Torah during the High Holidays. Those Hebrew readers who are interested in possibly chanting during the High Holidays at Cooper Union are especially encouraged to join this mini-course. We will break down the various phrases of trope, and spend class time learning and drilling them, and ultimately will apply them to Hebrew text by the end of the 6 weeks. Our hope is that those who wish to chant will acquire the skills with which to take on the honor of chanting Torah during High Holidays 5779.
don’t miss

MARCH
THURSDAY, MARCH 22: Book Club, The History of Love by Nicole Krauss, 3:00 pm

APRIL
FRIDAY, APRIL 6: Yizkor services, 8:00 am
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 11: Yom HaShoah V’Ha’G’vurah (Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Day), 6:30 pm
Special Speaker: 96-year-old Ann Dorzback (mother of VT congregant Irene Dorzback) will speak about her escape from Nazi Germany and the short documentary film: The Margaret Lambert Story will be shown and discussed.
FRIDAY, APRIL 13: 1st to 4th Grade Family Shabbat Experience, 5:30 pm including dinner
Shabbat Services with 3rd and 4th graders’ participation, 6:45 pm
SATURDAY, APRIL 14: Soup Kitchen Benefit honoring Dean Chavooshian, 7:00 pm (see page 1 for details)
FRIDAY, APRIL 20: Social Action Shabbat; Special Speaker: Isabel Dunst, 6:45 pm
We will also have the VT teens who participated in the RAC trip sharing their experiences.

Liz Dunst

Dinner follows services. Isabel P. “Liz” Dunst is a long-time social justice activist within the women’s and Jewish communities. She is the Chair of the Commission on Social Action of Reform Judaism and member of the board of the Union for Reform Judaism. She also serves on the board of Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice. Liz currently resides in the Washington, D.C. area and received degrees from both Harvard School of Public Health and New York University School of Law. After a 20-year career in government service at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, she joined Hogan Lovells for 25 years, where she practiced healthcare law.

At a young age Liz dedicated herself to “repairing the world” and carries a strong passion for hands-on social justice work. This work has included trips to New Orleans to help rebuild the city after Hurricane Katrina, and standing guard at Planned Parenthood Clinics where she felt the power of “making a commitment with our physical bodies.” Liz is particularly passionate about economic and racial justice, as well as championing women’s issues such as reproductive choice, health, and wage equity.

FRIDAY, APRIL 27: Jazz Shabbat, 6:45 pm
This year Cantor Bach joins Rabbi Hirsch, Anita Hollander, Hila Kulik, and a jazz combo for an extra special musical Shabbat. Join us, as we snap and sway along to our liturgy set to the jazz standards our community has come to love, as well as some new arrangements by our jazz expert, Hila Kulik.

SUNDAY, APRIL 29: Annual Park Cleanup, 11:00 am

MAY
FRIDAY, MAY 4: Shabbat Dinner across the VT community, starts at 5:45 pm at the VT and continues at congregants’ homes

Congregational Trip to Israel
On Thursday, March 1, Rabbi Hirsch will lead the temple trip to Israel. The group of 17 will be doing a southern Israel experience. Beginning in Tel Aviv, participants will explore the sites and sounds of that great city. Tel Aviv highlights will include a Dialogue in the Dark experience, a co-existence walking tour in Jaffa and a meeting with Yaron Bob—who used his artistic talent to cope with the relentless bombings during the Gaza War. There will be a day trip to Haifa and participants will learn about the Israel Reform Movement, visit the Bahai Temple, Leo Baeck Educational Center, and Akko. We will then proceed south to Mizpe Ramon—a magnificent natural sight resembling, but not quite a crater. We will meet with Bedouin women who are trying to balance tradition with modernity. There will be a Jeep tour into the Machtesh (the Hebrew name for the non-crater), an evening of awesome stargazing, and a trip to Kibbutz Lotan for a program on ecology and Israel environmental issues. Stops at Masada and the Dead Sea will prepare the group for the journey north to Jerusalem. The Holocaust Museum, guest speakers, the Old City, a visit to Shorashim in the Gush Etzion Block and a trip to the Flam Winery are just some of the highlights. Many of the participants will journey on to Eilat and Petra in Jordan—a remarkable site! Rabbi Hirsch will be back in the office on Wednesday, March 14.
FRIDAY, MARCH 30: FIRST SEDER

Once again, the first night of Passover falls on a Friday evening (March 30).

As Passover is a home celebration, there will be no Kabbalat Shabbat service that evening.

For those observing a Yahrtzeit that Shabbat, Rabbi Hirsch will convene a conference call at 4:30 pm on March 30. Participants will be able to share a little of the person’s life whom they are remembering. The call should be approximately 15-30 minutes. The office will send out a notice with the conference call phone number to those whose loved ones are on our Kaddish and Yahrtzeit lists for the week of March 24-30. If you have any questions, please contact Sandy Albert at 212-674-2340 or salbert@villagetemple.org.
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**THE VILLAGE TEMPLE**
Congregation B’not B’sorah of New York
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New York, NY 10003