

A Message From the Rabbi

Gun Control – A Jewish Perspective

Our country has become extremely violent, with the NRA, which is funded by and actually led by representatives of the gun manufacturing industry, now advocating that each school become an armed fortress to defend its students against potential attackers, after having advocated and accomplished a broad proliferation of assault weapons throughout America.



Our legislators in the various states and particularly in Congress, under pressure from the gun lobby, have made it possible for almost anyone to purchase an unlimited number of weapons, even automatic weapons which one would usually associate with the military.

The second amendment, which is used as the basis for legal gun ownership, is written in the context of the militia. Nothing is mentioned regarding individual ownership for self-protection or other personal purposes:

A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

Even Supreme Court rulings that the amendment does apply to the freedom of the individual to bear arms outside the context of militia service do not preclude strict laws to protect the citizenry from violent acts such as a renewed ban on assault weapons, serious background checks, or the prohibition of automatic weapons and ammunition magazines. To “bear arms” does not mean the government has to allow weapons of any and every sort. The government controls the extent of emissions from automobiles and limits driving speed for safety purposes. Why should gun control be so difficult?

The United States has become the murder capital of the world. Once again, the populace is endangered because of the government’s catering to business interests, just as it does by not sufficiently protecting the environment.

The people must rise up and say: “Enough!” Representatives in government must listen to the will of the people, the majority of whom want gun control, in this and in other matters.

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We need to vote out of office once and for all those legislators and other officials who are under the undue influence of lobbyists. We need legislation to limit guns as well as lobbyist purchase of votes.

It is ironic that Australia, which was colonized with the settlement of British criminals, has, not long ago, successfully enacted very strict gun control while the United States, which was colonized by religious groups seeking freedom from majority domination and which today continues to be much more religious than secular Western Europe, has such abhorrent, unbridled proliferation of guns throughout the land.

The Torah in Leviticus XIX:16 teaches: "Thou shall not stand idly by when the blood of your neighbor is being spilled." We must work hard with those who will advocate for serious gun control.

We have articulate, thoughtful people in our Congregation. This is the time to write to the newspaper and to speak to others to galvanize support. This is the time to make your thoughts known to government officials in Washington and in Springfield. Only thereby will we do our part to bring about Isaiah's vision of a time when "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks." (Isaiah II:4)

With best wishes for a peaceful and secure new year,

David Oler

Rabbi David Oler



Condolences

The congregation extends sincere condolences to the entire Oler family on the death of
Mary Crockett,
Mary Oler's mother

Donations

Patrons and Sustaining Members

Patrons and Sustaining Members choose to pay special dues which allows the congregation to continue its mission of providing a sense of community and stability for its members. Please consider becoming a Patron or Sustaining Member.

Patron: \$6,120

Sustaining: \$4,488

Sustaining Single: \$3,060

Patrons:

Al & Bobbie Levine
Jack Henkin & Louise Pearson
Dr. Scott & Amy Taxman
Sustaining Member:
Scott Warren

Member **Steven Simon** of Lake Forest and his brother Ben Simon of San Diego have graciously donated a section consisting of 16 graves at Westlawn Cemetery to the congregation. We are very grateful for their generosity.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
Linda and Ron Tomaszewski



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A Message from the Principal

Last month we witnessed another school shooting in our nation, this time with victims as young as six years old. After viewing the images of the young students being led out of the building with their eyes closed to avoid seeing the carnage, one can only imagine the destruction, both inner and outer, that the community will be coping with in the years ahead. For all of us who are engaged in nurturing children, the shooting in Newtown, CT is evidence of a fundamental failure of our society to provide the security they need in order to flourish.

Geographically closer to home, a friend of mine who is a youth officer for the Cook County Sheriff's force reminds me of the reign of terror that gun violence wields over the lives of youngsters in Chicago every day. In many neighborhoods children are denied access to outdoor play, dread their walk to and from school, witness horrific scenes of abuse and join gangs in order to have some kind of protection--albeit one that leads to even greater exposure to violence.

Like the Rabbi, I believe this is a critical moment to support the growing movement to press our lawmakers to regulate the sale and possession of firearms, with a first objective of limiting access to the assault weapons that enable mass murder. The NRA's proposal that shooting sprees like the one in Newtown should be addressed by a massive proliferation of arms in our schools is too ludicrous to be considered in a serious discussion of our options.

The reduction of violence in our society is so important a goal that we cannot leave its accomplishment to our government officials alone. In our school communities (and our Religious School) a few things come to mind right away as positive actions.

I think it is important to support anti-bullying programs. While the kids sometimes ridicule them as unrealistic and repetitive, I believe they make a difference and can be made more relevant by incorporating student feedback and leadership. My impression is that these programs do make bullying less acceptable and empower some students to speak up when relational aggression does occur.

As a parent of a high school and a middle school student, I have observed during their school years that while some parents regularly promote inclusion and respect for students who don't fit all of the social norms, other parents seek to engineer their children's popularity by creating exclusive groups and even take the lead in rejecting the youngsters who do not serve their aspirations. Last summer a Deerfield mother pushed her way ahead of the elementary school girls onto a bus bound for summer camp so that she could rope off seats for the clique she was trying to create for her daughter. As the girls boarded the bus, she called out the names of those for whom she was saving seats and held out her arms to bar others from sitting in those rows. It is more than sad when adults see relationships as a kind of commerce instead of a way of realizing the wonderful diversity and underlying unity of life; parents who foster the exclusion of certain children to offset their own children's social prominence probably don't get it when a "madman" feels so alienated that he enters his former school with a gun. Mental illness is a complex phenomenon--but sometimes it

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expresses a systemic problem, and parents need to speak up to adult bullies who foster it and to consistently support inclusion, respect and kindness.

Even in the suburbs our children are surrounded by violence in the images that assault their senses and distort their worldview. They deserve protection from the horrific scenes in popular television shows and movies and guidance in the selection of video games. They deserve to enjoy sports in an atmosphere that is not burdened with parents' aggressive needs. (At one of our son's volleyball games last month, while the boys were expertly jumping and diving to return the serves, a father stood up and began to scream, "Kill him! Kill him! Kill him!!!") When the prevailing culture glorifies violence, we must literally and figuratively change the channel and model appreciation for the alternatives to violence and commitment to the preservation of childhood, community and life itself.

Shalom,
Mary Oler, Principal

Religious School resumes
Friday, January 11

Special Speaker at February 1 Shabbat Services

Lee Goodman, an organizer with the Stop Concealed Carry Coalition and the 2004 Democratic nominee for the 10th Congressional District, will join us at Shabbat services on Friday, February 1, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. to talk about guns and public safety in light of recent high-profile shootings, court decisions, and proposals for new gun control legislation. Come learn about the gun issues that are relevant to our families and the potential responses to these issues that are happening in the community and throughout the country.



Mark your calendars for our

Pot Luck Dinner and Wine Tasting
Saturday, January 26
7:00-9:30 p.m.

at Linda and Ron Tomaszewski's

Come for fun, food and festivities, complete with sing-along!
Further details via email.

Congregational Happenings

Social Action Committee

The Social Action Committee (SAC) met in December 2012. The SAC's purpose is to find opportunities for Kadima members to reach out and help the community, do mitzvot and help heal the world, the idea of "tikkun olam." This year, the SAC is inviting and encouraging teens and young adults of our congregation to attend our meetings and help the Committee find activities that appeal to them.

The first activity to be planned for the New Year is a blood drive on March 10, 2013. The exact time, place and service provider are being determined. An email and flyer will be coming out when the details are finalized. Another activity that the SAC has planned is to have Kadima be involved, on a regular basis, feeding the homeless. The SAC is researching a location that is closer to the Deerfield/Riverwoods/Northbrook area where the congregation can feed the homeless. Along those same lines, the SAC will determine when to do one or more canned food drives. The canned food drives in the past have been very successful. A final activity discussed was a "cause" carnival, to be held around Purim. The teens and young adults will be taking the lead on the carnival. The idea is that the carnival can be used to help raise funds for a specific cause or charity.

The SAC also discussed the possibility of Kadima working with the Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs (now known as Open Communities). Finally, the Committee talked about if and how the congregation might respond to the Sandy Hook tragedy and the ensuing gun control issues.

The SAC welcomes suggestions and comments from the congregation. Please feel free to contact the Chair, Callie Dixon, at 847-749-2929 or email at cjjsd4@hotmail.com.

Program Committee

In addition to the Pot Luck and Wine Tasting on January 26 (see page 4), the Program Committee is planning a year of fun social activities. Please save the dates and join us on:

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|--------------------|--|
| February 24 | Bowling Night for Purim
Adults and children meet at 5:00 p.m. at Abruzzo Restaurant, then go to Brunswick Bowling |
| March 9 | Tapas Night in Northfield. Will include dinner and entertainment |
| April 12 | Israeli Celebration in conjunction with the religious school |
| May 11 | Movie Night
Meet at Phoenicia Restaurant in Highland Park at 5:00 for dinner then go to Louise and Jack Henkin's for a movie night. |

(Watch emails for further details as the dates approach)

JANUARY-FEBRUARY CALENDAR*

JANUARY

- Friday, Jan 4**
7:30 p.m. *No Religious School*
Shabbat Service
- Sunday, Jan 6**
10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class Brunch
- Friday, Jan 11**
4:30 p.m. Religious School
7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service
- Friday, Jan 18**
7:30 p.m. *No Religious School*
Shabbat Service
- Friday, Jan 25**
4:30 p.m. Religious School. [Tu B'Shevat](#)
7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service (*No Family Shabbat dinner this month because of Pot Luck dinner on the 26th*)
- Saturday, Jan 26**
7:00-9:30 p.m. Pot Luck Dinner and Wine Tasting
Linda and Ron Tomaszewski
- Sunday, Jan 27**
10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class Brunch

FEBRUARY

- Friday, Feb 1**
4:30 p.m. Religious School
7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service. Speaker: Lee Goodman
- Friday, Feb 8**
4:30 p.m. Religious School
7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service
- Sunday, Feb 10**
10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class Brunch
- Friday, Feb 15**
7:30 p.m. *No Religious School*
Shabbat Service
- Friday, Feb 22**
4:30 p.m. Religious School. [Purim Celebration](#)
6:45 p.m. [Family Shabbat Service and Dinner](#)
- Sunday, Feb 24**
10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class Brunch
5:00 p.m. Bowling Night for Purim. Adults and children meet at Abruzzo Restaurant, then go to Brunswick Bowling

***Fund-raising** occurs every Tuesday evening. Volunteers are welcome to join our friendly group of workers!

***B'nai Mitzvah Hebrew Class** meets on Wednesday evenings. Participating families have received the schedule.

*Note: Further details and additional congregational activities are likely to be added.
Watch your e-mail for updates.*