

## CHESED COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT - MAY 2019

This has been quite a busy year for the Chessed Committee. Our year always starts out with the delivery of a Rosh Hashanah plate to those in our community who are homebound. Also, a honey cake is mailed to college students and those serving in the military; on Chanukah latkes get hand-delivered to those who live nearby; Purim packages contain hamantaschen, made by a number of PTO and Chessed chefs; and chocolate-covered matza gets mailed for Passover. A big thank you to all those who bake, who create lovely packages, and who deliver: Mike and Ann Jacobson, Iris Adams, Rena Roseman, Keith Jaffe, Michele Howard, Susan Shwom, Carole Taut, Lisa Desberg and her daughter Angie, Andi and Scott Hannula and their sons, Adam and Zack. Amy Sherr makes the most beautiful cards to go on the packages. These packages that are delivered and the gift of personal greetings by deliverers are truly a wonderful gift to all those recipients. They are so grateful to not be forgotten by their Temple.

In December we offered a very well-received program exploring “Difficult Conversations Around End of Life Issues,” featuring a documentary based on Being Mortal, by Atul Gwande, MD. A lively and thoughtful conversation, led by Mary Crowe, LICSW, of Care Dimensions, a hospice and palliative care company, followed the movie. This was the first in a three-part series that followed, to be offered by Cantor Vera and Rav Mona.

In April, we heard our clergy talk about “Death and Taxes”—discussing Jewish rituals in death and mourning. Once again, there was an informative, engaging and lively discussion with Cantor Vera and Rav Mona, with the promise of a third program this coming Fall. **SPECIAL NEWS:** Plans are underway; final plans will be announced during the summer. In April we also offered our second Challah baking lesson led by Iris Adams. We all went home with beautiful challot, and much more confidence in making our own. **SPECIAL NEWS:** A third class will be held on September 18, when we will be learning how to make round challot for Rosh Hashanah—watch for sign ups as space is limited.

Sadly, there were many deaths in our community this past winter. Chessed committee members were quite engaged in providing bereavement folders with readings and information for families at the time of the death (put together by Amy Sherr); a package of items for the first shabbat of shiva (organized and delivered by Michele Howard); and, certainly last but not least, organizing attendance for shiva minyanim when needed. Lay leaders for shiva have been trained, and were most helpful during this period, especially Fred Feldman. A generous donation was made to purchase additional shiva prayer books. There is a bereavement center in the library, which contains literature on illnesses, losses, death and bereavement, kept updated by Paula Breger.

**The Greatest Generation Celebration** - For the first time ever, we are planning an occasion to celebrate those in our community who have reached their Golden Years. It is a blessing and a gift to have so many of these elders in our community to look up to, to share friendship with, to learn from and, with whom we pray and break bread. We will come together on **Saturday, June 1** to hear and honor their stories, their wisdom that they share so willingly. Watch the Bulletin/emails for more information.

Janet and Alan Kopel continue to send out birthday greetings to our homebound members.

LotsaHelpingHands continues to be a most useful tool for us to let Temple members know when there is a need to help our fellow member families—whether it is at the birth of new child, an illness, a need for a ride to a Temple program, or a death. You can sign up for LHH on the Temple website; help is available if you need it.

We always welcome your thoughts on additional programming that will facilitate our commitment to each other as a Temple community.

It continues to be a privilege to chair this committee and serve with such fine, caring committee members.

Sharyn Russell, Chairperson