



## Message From Cantor Joshua Shron

I can't believe I'm saying this...but as of a couple of months ago, Mairov and I are officially the parents of TWO teenagers.

God help us.

Both are unusually tall. Both like to argue with their parents as often as possible. Both know how to push our buttons in the worst possible way. Both are deftly skilled in manipulating their parents to get what they want. Both look for every possible opportunity to escape "family time" at all costs.

Oy.

As many readers undoubtedly are aware, it's not easy to raise teenagers in 21<sup>st</sup> century America. They can be loud, expensive, outrageous, obnoxious, accident-prone, stress-inducing, and just a little bit...shall we say...cranky?

But as much as we parents like to complain, there's a long list of positives. Both of my teens are good students. Both can be extremely respectful, helpful and courteous (when they want to be). Both are well-liked by their peers. Both take on household responsibilities – an absolute necessity in a large family like ours. Both are good-looking, if I may say so myself. Both are blessed with many talents that are far above and beyond my own. And I'm extremely proud to say that both are passionate about almost all aspects of Jewish life.

Over the next few months, our synagogue is excited to offer our teenagers AND their parents the opportunity to become more involved in various aspects of Jewish life. From Shabbat observances to Israel advocacy to community service, our teens will enjoy a full schedule of programs this spring, truly offering something for everyone. The key here, however, is that **these programs are for kids AND their parents**. They offer families the chance to participate in Jewish life TOGETHER – and I sincerely hope our community will take full advantage.

I'd like to highlight three very important programs taking place very soon.

On Tuesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, I will kick off a two part series on campus anti-Semitism. No doubt you've heard the horror stories about what goes on at universities throughout the United States – but with the help of the next generation, we're going to do something about it. I recently learned quite a bit about this topic while preparing a series of classes for adults, and realized that this crisis is too important NOT to share with our high schoolers before they get to college. Through a series of videos, discussions and perhaps guest speakers, we'll learn what college-bound students should expect once they arrive on campus, and how they can fight back against the lies spread each and every day.

On Friday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, our high school families will join together for a lively Shabbat dinner at the synagogue! Our Friday night experience will include an engaging service, a delicious dinner, lots of fun and games, and best of all, a chance to connect or reconnect with other families in our synagogue. If we're going to form a thriving community for our young people – and by golly, I sure hope we are – then this is the perfect way to start. What a great way to turn an ordinary Friday night into something extraordinary!

Finally, on Friday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, it's the first seder night! As we invite guests into our homes, I challenge everyone – young and old – to do their part in making the seder more engaging for your family this year! Will you be inviting any young people over the age of, say, ten to your seder? Challenge THEM to find ways to make the seder more fun. There are TONS of online resources, and I'd be happy to provide lots of input. Call or text me at (732) 762-8484 and I'll be happy to help.

Whether you are a parent (or grandparent) of a teenager, or simply an interested congregant who is still reading this far into my article on teen activities (*thanks!*), I wish you and your family a *Chag Sameach V'Kasher* – a joyous, kosher and FUN Passover!

*Cantor Josh Shron*

### AN IMPORTANT CLASS FOR TEENS AND THEIR PARENTS

Thinking about college?

Then you need to be thinking about anti-semitism on campus.

*Join Cantor Shron for a 2-part series on the challenges faced by Jewish students at virtually every university in the country...and what YOU can do to fight back!*  
*A MUST for any college-bound teen!*

**8 PM TUESDAYS, 4/5 AND 4/12**  
**RSVP: CANTOR@OLNJ.C.ORG**