

WELCOME WEEK PROGRAMMING: A HUGE SUCCESS!

During Fall 2008 Welcome Week, Hillel staff planned and executed multiple programs each day around IU campus and at several residence halls. The first of these programs, "Tie-Dye and S'mores at McNutt," was a huge success with well over 100 students participating. Through co-investment with McNutt staff members, we were able to provide free t-shirts to the first 100 students were given a prime outdoor space. Hillel staff and Student Board members came to the residence hall with tie-dye supplies and s'mores ingredients. It was a fantastic opportunity to engage with students who had never been to Hillel and those who make it a regular daily stop. With t-shirts gone, graham cracker boxes emptied, and spots of blues, oranges and purples throughout the grass at the end of the night, students left the program happy, full, and happy to have found a Jewish community on campus.

MITZVAH CORPS MAKES A DIFFERENCE

Hillel's Mitzvah Corps held a very successful cookie sale on October 23. The group baked 200 cookies and took turns working shifts to sell them late in the night outside of apartment buildings and bars around town. The cookies were a hit! One satisfied patron claimed that eating the cookies was like "a symphony of taste in my mouth." Mitzvah Corps was able to raise \$185 which will be donated to Save A Child's Heart in Tel Aviv.

Mitzvah Corps came to a group consensus to donate the proceeds to this worthwhile nonprofit. **Save A Child's Heart** is one of the largest undertakings in the world providing urgently needed pediatric heart surgery and follow-up care for children from third world and developing countries. All children, regardless of race, religion, sex, color, or financial consideration receive the best possible care that modern medicine has to offer. The entire surgical, intensive care, and nursing staff substantially volunteer their services and donate their time!

PARENTS WEEKEND 2008

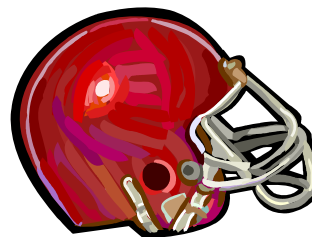
The staff of the Helene G. Simon Hillel Center at Indiana University cordially invites you and your family to be our guests at our Parents Weekend Brunch on Saturday, November 8th at 10:00 am at the Helene G. Simon Hillel Center (730 East Third Street).

Please RSVP to 812-336-3824

Or
office@iuhillel.org



If brunching isn't your thing, and you plan to attend the IU football game, please stop by our Parents Weekend Tailgate and enjoy Kosher hotdogs! You will find the Hillel tent and banner at 17th and Dunn (directly across the street from the IU Credit Union).



You are also welcome to join us for Friday night Shabbat Services at 6:30 pm and Dinner at 7:30 pm.

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

- 8th 10 am – 12 pm: Parents Weekend Brunch (Hillel)
- 10 am – 12 pm: Parents Tailgate (17th and Dunn)
- 9th 12:30 pm Outlet Mall Trip (meet at Hillel)
- 12th 6:30 pm JIGL (Jews in Greek Life) Call-out Meeting (Hillel)
- 13th 6:30 Birthright Reunion (location TBA)
- 18th 7 pm Interfaith Program with Keshet (Eigeman)
- 19th 1-6 pm Red Cross Blood Drive (Hillel)

FIND A COMPLETE LISTING OF PROGRAMS AT:

www.iuhillel.org

FROM THE RABBI

Dear Parents:

We are about halfway through this semester and it has already been a very busy and exciting one. We welcomed a completely new staff to Hillel this year. It has been my honor and privilege to get to know all of them. I can assure you that they are friendly, hardworking and dedicated to creating a warm, welcoming, supportive environment for all Jewish students on campus. They have already been working tirelessly with our student leaders to create a strong, creative and fun schedule of Hillel programs. We recently finished our High Holy Day services as well as Sukkot and Simchat Torah. As we examined our actions throughout the past year, I was reminded of my belief that most people are good, loving individuals who want to do the right thing and be part of a caring community. It is our responsibility at Hillel to provide your children with the opportunity to make this world a better place. So, I would like to share with you the sermon that I gave during Yom Kippur services.

In May of 1998, a man named Benjamin Smith came to Bloomington and began distributing anti-Semitic and racist pamphlets throughout Bloomington. The Bloomington community was outraged by this hate literature. Mr. Smith's activity continued throughout the summer. In August of 1998, the mayor's office along with a representative from the Chicago office of the Anti-Defamation League called a meeting of several community leaders including myself to let us know that Mr. Smith was a representative of the World Church of the Creator, a neo-Nazi white supremacist group based in East Peoria, Illinois. This group had become one of the fastest growing white supremacist organizations in the United States. At this meeting, we were told that this group was a particularly dangerous hate group. When they came to a community, if they perceived that there was little resistance to their activity, then they would quickly escalate to violence.

We decided to form a group called Bloomington United, a grassroots, community organization to fight hate and promote diversity.

Continued on pages 8-10.

We, at Hillel, believe deeply in the idea that our actions matter and we need to provide the next generation with the tools to make this world a better. We rely on your help and support in accomplishing this goal. Please contact us with any program ideas, concerns or ways that we can better serve your child. Also, please stop by Hillel anytime you are in town so that we can meet you.

B'Shalom

Rabbi Sue Laikin Shifron
Executive Director

MEET THE NEW HILLEL STAFF

Leah Hedrick Aft, Assistant Director

Leah currently serves as the Helene G. Simon Hillel Center's Assistant Director. She grew up in Kansas City, and since graduating from Indiana University in 2004, she has spent time teaching in Camden, New Jersey through Teach for America and working as a Program Manager at City Year Washington, DC. She is passionate about youth leadership, education, and social action. Leah joins the IU Hillel staff being very excited about engaging and empowering students to discover their own paths and develop powerful leadership skills. She is also excited to work with Hillel's vision and continue to push it forward as it grows and reaches more students each year.

Lauren Weinberg, Program Director/ Jewish Student Life Coordinator

Lauren currently holds the position of Program Director/Jewish Student Life Coordinator. A native of Kansas City, Lauren earned her B.A. in Jewish Studies and History from Indiana University in 2005, and went on to work as the Student Services Assistant at Collins Living-Learning Center on the IU campus. During the past year, Lauren was a participant in Adamah, the Jewish Environmental Fellowship, located at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Center in Falls Village, CT. The fellowship gave Lauren the opportunity to grow and harvest vegetables on an organic farm while studying Jewish texts, learning sustainable living skills, and taking part in formal leadership training. It is with great enthusiasm that Lauren plans to integrate her interests in Judaism, the environment, and involving students in creative programming at the Helene G. Simon Hillel Center.

Jen Abzug Zaligson, Engagement Director

Jen hails from Minneapolis, MN. She received her B.A. in sociology and psychology from Bradley University in 2003 and her M.A. in sociology from The University of Texas at Austin in 2006, concentrating on gender, sexuality, intimate violence, and Judaism. During her time in graduate school she was the Managing Editorial Director (2006-07) and Advisory Editor (2007-08) for "Intersections: Women's and Gender Studies in Review Across Disciplines," a graduate student journal housed at The University of Texas. As a Graduate Research Assistant at the RGK Center for Philanthropy and Community Service in 2007-2008, Jen worked with a team conducting UJC-sponsored research on Jewish identity and volunteering among young adults. Realizing her personal interest in Jewish young adults through this project, she decided to enter the field of Jewish communal service and has immensely enjoyed her time at Hillel this semester meeting and working with so many wonderful students.

Carlie Weisbrod, Engagement Associate

Carlie is a recent graduate from the University of Florida where she earned a Bachelor of Music in voice with an outside concentration in psychology. Carlie was raised in Rockledge, FL and loves relaxing on the beach with her family. She enjoys singing, dancing, and spending time with her friends. Carlie is excited to be working at Hillel and looks forward to meeting many new people and engaging them in Jewish life on campus.

Sarah Cohen, Program Associate

Sarah serves as Program Associate at Hillel. She comes from Lexington, Mississippi, but is no stranger to Bloomington. Sarah graduated from IU in May 2007 with a degree in Jewish Studies and Sociology. After graduation, Sarah traveled to Israel as a participant on a 10-month service based volunteer program called Project OTZMA. Sarah is thrilled to be back in Bloomington a part of the Hillel staff. She plans to make Aliyah and begin her life in Israel second semester.

APPLE PICKING EXTRAVAGANZA

Twenty-five students and two staff members got together on Sunday, October 5 to pick apples and enjoy fall activities right outside of Bloomington in Bedford, IN. The group enjoyed beautiful weather, fresh apple cider, popcorn, and was able to pick many apples to take home with them! The program engaged freshmen through seniors and was our largest apple picking adventure in Hillel's history- great job social committee!



Allison Oreck, Allison Shenker, and Abby Cooper enjoy their day at Apple Acres in Bedford, IN.

Who's Your Bus?
www.HoosierBus.com **\$94**
Round Trip

Direct Luxury Coach Bus
Service from IU to Chicago

2008-09 Trips
-Thanksgiving Break
-Winter Break with
Sorority Rush Early Return
-February 13-15 Weekend
-Spring Break
-Passover Weekend



(866) 723-RIDE - Ride@HoosierBus.com

ALTERNATIVE SPRING BREAK

Interested in spending spring break or a week in May making a difference? Have fun and meet new people while working in one of several communities to make a difference! Join others from IU Hillel and many other schools in the Gulf Coast, Israel, Nicaragua or an organic farm in the U.S. IU Hillel is bringing you several trips in our second year of providing alternative break programs focusing on hands-on service, community interaction and the exploration of social justice and Judaism, and we'd love for you to join!

Information sessions are the first two weeks of November, and applications and interviews for programs will take place throughout November, with decisions made by December for spots.

Trips range from \$125 + airfare to \$ 950.00 and are between 7-8 days. For more information on specific trips, please contact Jen at jazaligs@indiana.edu to at (812) 336-3824. We look forward to sending students on American Jewish World Service (AJWS), Jewish National Fund (JNF) and Weinberg Tzedek Hillel programs in March and May.



Students taking a break from work last year in New Orleans.

**FREE
MATZAH BALL SOUP!
812-336-3824
DOOR TO DOOR
SERVICE IN
BLOOMINGTON!**

WISH LIST

We are always looking for new or gently used items to help us grow and continue to meet the needs of the 4,000 Jewish students on campus. If you would like to help by donating one of the following items or have a question about our need for an item, please contact Leah Hedrick Aft at leahaft@indiana.edu.

- **Full Service Coffee Bar (machine that has capability to make lattes and cappuccinos)**
- **Playstation 3 or X-Box 360 (and games)**
- **Foosball Table**
- **Sports Equipment**
- **Sports Tickets to the Pacers or Colts**

FUN & FREE!

One of our main goals is to come up with exciting new ways to meet students on campus and engage them in the amazing Jewish community Indiana University has to offer! Each day of the week, students are able to Hillel staff members on campus, in dorms, and on Kirkwood for free fun snacks and coffee! Check out what's going on:

Mondays from 11am-1pm meet Carlie for lunch in Foster Gresham with students in the Northwest neighborhood!

Tuesdays from 12:30-2:30pm Join Jen at Starbucks in the Indiana University Memorial Union for a FREE cup of coffee and conversation!

Wednesdays from 12-2pm Hot Chocolate Stand right outside of Ballentine Hall- Grab a FREE cup of hot chocolate with Carlie in between classes!

Wednesday evenings Work out at the SRSC with Carlie! Her favorites are cardio kick-boxing and hip-hop!

Thursdays from 12-1pm JHOP (Jewish House of Pancakes) at Hillel. Stop in for Lauren and Jen's free specialty pancakes in a fun and relaxing atmosphere!

Friday from 12:30-2:30pm take a java break and meet Lauren at Starbucks by the Sample Gates (Indiana Ave. & Kirkwood).

All are welcome at these daily programs! If you can't make it, feel free to stop by Hillel and say hello or email a staff member to find a time to meet up!



HILLEL VOTES

In the spirit of our upcoming presidential election, Hoosiers for Israel co-chairs, Brittany Cohen and Nina Loftspring, hosted "Hillel Votes!" a two day event focused on bringing students together to discuss political relations between America and Israel. The series included a dinner discussion, lecture, and 'lunch and learn' with visiting scholar, Dr. Alexander Bligh. A former advisor to the Prime Minister of Arab affairs, Dr. Bligh is currently teaching at Notre Dame University through the ICC (Israel Coalition on Campus) Traveling Israel Scholars Program. During his visit, Dr. Bligh engaged students in a discussion on the Ehud Olmert transition over appetizers at Bloomington's Grazie Italian restaurant. Following this discussion, students were invited to attend a lecture entitled "Why America's vote counts for Israel." The culminating lunch and learn session gave students the opportunity to ask questions of Dr. Bligh, and share their thoughts on American and Israeli politics. The collaborative efforts of Hoosiers for Israel, Hillel, and the ICC made this event a most-excellent learning opportunity and overall success!

SHABBAT SPONSORSHIP

Many Jewish memories center around the celebration of Shabbat. The aroma of baking challah, the beauty of the dancing candlelight, the wonderful sounds of laughter and conversation around the table--Shabbat dinner has always been a vital centerpiece of Jewish life and community. Here at the Helene G. Simon Hillel Center, we are able to recreate that magic for hundreds of Jewish college students every week with our vibrant FREE Shabbat dinners. Serving as every Jewish student's "Jewish home away from home", we provide a FREE home cooked kosher meal every Friday night after services. It is truly a special tradition, and one that we take great pride in being able to offer to our students; in fact, many students tell us that the warmth, friendship and fulfillment that Shabbat dinner at Hillel brings is one of the highlights of their week.

If you are interested in sponsoring a Shabbat dinner for the 2007/2008 school year, please contact Leah Hedrick Aft: leahaft@indiana.edu or Rabbi Sue Laikin Shifron: hillel@indiana.edu.

We would like to acknowledge the parents and grandparents of current students, Hillel board members, and friends of Hillel that have made investments in Jewish student life at Indiana University by joining the Good Shabbos Club for the **2007/2008 school year**.

PLATINUM LEVEL (\$600):

Mr. and Mrs. Ron Brodey

PARENTS CLUB

We pride ourselves on creating a "Jewish home away from home", and now serve close to 4,000 Jewish students, providing them with a wide array of unique and innovative programs that help to create a strong and vibrant Jewish community on campus. We offer everything from Shabbat services and FREE Shabbat dinners to delivering FREE matzah ball soup to sick students. Hillel touches the lives of all Jewish students at IU through programs, religious observances, and as an advocate on campus. All of this involvement serves as a reminder to students that there is a strong Jewish community here in Bloomington. We also view it as one of our primary responsibilities to educate the general campus community about Judaism and Israel, and to promote diversity programming and understanding on campus.

At Hillel we pride ourselves on constantly developing new and exciting programs to better serve students, and empowering them to grow and become strong leaders within our community. Through your participation in Parents Club, you are enabling Hillel to continue to provide award winning and nationally recognized programs and services to your student while he/she is attending Indiana University.

Even if your child does not take advantage of these programs and services directly, your child benefits from IU Hillel's work to create a community that fosters Jewish life. We have worked diligently with Indiana University on diversity training, and successfully helped to create IU's policy allowing students to be excused

from classes without penalty for religious observances. Your investment in Jewish student life is critical to our continuing success! There has been a dramatic increase in the demand for Hillel over the past few years. We truly need your support more than ever. Please consider becoming a member of our Parents Club, *Club Dor L'Dor* (Generation to Generation).

When you become a Chai-Giver in *Club Dor L'Dor*, you will be helping us nurture your child's Jewish self. This membership will help to sustain our many creative programs and enable us to continue to inspire your child. Your tax deductible Chai-Giver donation will also provide you and your child with many exciting benefits. Please read on to find out more about the many giving options open to you.

PARENTS/ GRANDPARENTS COUNCIL: Council members will contribute to the vision and mission of Hillel, help with local fundraising efforts, be invited to two stakeholders meetings each year and are members of Club Dor L'Dor.

- Officer: \$10,000
- Executive Committee: \$5,000
- Member: \$2,500

PLATINUM CHAI-GIVER -- \$2,000

This highest giving level entitles your child to all the wonderful packages we offer.

BIRTHDAY PACKAGE: On your child's birthday Hillel will deliver a delicious homemade, personalized birthday cake (your choice of flavor and icing!), birthday card and balloons directly to his/her campus address. All care packages come personalized with your special message. It's an easy and convenient way to let your child know that he/she is never far from your thoughts!

FINALS WEEK CARE PACKAGE: At the beginning of finals week each semester, your child will receive a "Finals Week Care Package" of mouth-watering goodies to help him/her get through this particularly stressful time.

PURIM PACKAGE: Help your child celebrate this joyous festival with a goody-filled package of tasty Purim treats!

PASSOVER PACKAGE: Give your child a present of wonderful, kosher-for-Passover delights! Kosher-for-Passover treats can be hard to find in Bloomington but not at Hillel!

We also welcome grandparents to join *Club Dor L'Dor*. Simply forward their mailing/e-mail information to leahaft@indiana.edu.

GOLD CHAI-GIVER -- \$1000

Your choice of any 3 packages plus one free Kosher Café on the Night of Student's Choice

SILVER CHAI-GIVER -- \$500

Your choice of any 2 packages, plus one free Kosher Café on the Night of Student's Choice

BRONZE CHAI-GIVER -- \$250

Your choice of any one package, plus one free Kosher Café on the Night of Student's Choice

We know that you worry about your child when he/she is not at home. Rest assured that Hillel will always provide your child with a warm and welcoming Jewish home to visit on campus. Your gift ensures the continued growth and success of Hillel. If you have any questions, ideas, or concerns, please feel free to call 812-336-3824.

To join Parents Club, please print off the following page, send in with credit card (Visa/Master Card/Discover) or check (payable to IU Hillel) and mail back to:

**Hillel
730 E. Third Street
Bloomington, IN 47401**



Students enjoying themselves at the IU Hillel 2008 Homecoming tailgate!



Intensive Freshmen Summer Seminar students hanging out during the IFS Shabbat.

Yes! We would love to join Parents/Grandparents Council!

Parents/Grandparents Council will contribute to the vision & mission of the Hillel program, be involved in local fundraising efforts, be invited to 2 stakeholder meetings/year and automatically become members of Club Dor L'Dor.

- Officer** . . . \$10,000 (receives all packages)
- Executive Committee** . . . \$5000 (receives all packages)
- Member** . . . \$2500 (receives all packages)

Yes! I/we would love to join Club Dor L'Dor!

- Platinum** . . . \$2000 (receives all packages)
- Gold** . . . \$1000 (receives choice of 3 packages)
- Silver** . . . \$500 (receives choice of 2 packages)
- Bronze** . . . \$250 (receives choice of 1 package)
- Other** \$ _____

Parent Name(s) _____

Address _____

(City) (State) (Zip)

Email _____

Please provide the following information so we can invite your child's grandparents to join the Parent/Grandparent Council or Club Dor L'Dor:

Grandparent Name(s) _____

Address _____

(City) (State) (Zip)

Email _____

Grandparent Name(s) _____

Address _____

(City) (State) (Zip)

Email _____

Child's Name _____

Bloomington Address _____

Email _____
Phone _____ Grad Year _____

- Enclosed is a check for \$ _____
 - OR
 - Please bill my Visa/MasterCard (circle one)
- \$ _____ Card # _____

Name on Card _____ Exp _____

3 Digit Code _____

- Enclosed is the indicated contribution, but please do not send packages to my/our child.
- Grand/Parents Council & Platinum (All Packages)
- Gold (receives 3 of the following packages)
- Silver (receives 2 of the following packages)
- Bronze (receives 1 of the following packages)

Package Options:

- Birthday Cake
- Purim Goody Bag
- Kosher for Passover Goody Bag
- Finals Week Goody Bag

Please complete the information below so your child receives his/her package

For Birthday Package ...

Birthdate _____

Cake: Chocolate Yellow

Frosting: Chocolate White

Cake should read _____

Card should read _____

For Purim, Passover, Finals Packages...

Card should read _____

Please deliver a Regular Lite package

*Please complete ALL information and return to:
Helene G. Simon Hillel Center
730 E. Third Street, Bloomington, IN 47401*

PARENTS CLUB '08

We want to thank all of our parents & grandparents who invested in supporting Jewish life on campus at Indiana University with contributions received through October 31, 2008.

Thank you for your generosity and commitment:

SILVER LEVEL: (\$500-\$999)

Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Kanter
Mr. and Mrs. John Abrams
Mr. and Mrs. David Resnick

BRONZE LEVEL: (\$250-\$499)

Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Blitz
Mr. Todd Breen
Mr. and Mrs. Randy Drawas
Mr. and Mrs. Rob Burke
Mr. and Mrs. Bryan Hecht
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Kaye
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Levitt
Mr. and Mrs. Mitchell Levy
Mr. and Mrs. Aaron Lieberman
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Romanoff
Mr. and Mrs. David Rosenblum
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Sirlin
Mr. and Mrs. David Cort
Mr. and Mrs. Joel Beren

CONTRIBUTORS: (UP TO \$249)

Mr. and Mrs. Martin Goldin
Mr. Steven Nagourney
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Shane
Mr. and Mrs. Bill Trefzger
Community Foundation of
Louisville on behalf of Mark and
Robin Wolff
Ms. Karen Bass
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Gold
Ms. Barbara Haworth
Mr. and Mrs. Marshall Levy
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Mayo
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Milen
Mr. and Mrs. Howard Sachs
Mr. and Mrs. Dale Schatz
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Stern
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Zimmerman
Dr. and Mrs. Jeff Klein
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Feinberg
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce David
Ben Brener and Eileen Leiderman
Mr. and Mrs. Barry Gavril
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Moore
Mr. Leon Kadis
Ms. Lori Garon
Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Bloom

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We began planning a community rally, an anti-hate petition to be published in the local paper, educational forums addressing a community response to hate, and plans to organize a lobbying effort in support of an Indiana hate crimes law. Members of Bloomington United (BU) also discussed diversity programming for public schools, including the ADL's "World of Difference" curriculum. After publishing our anti-hate petition in the local newspapers, several articles were written in the newspapers about Bloomington United. Throughout the next several months from late August through November, the outpouring of community support for Bloomington United was overwhelming. One afternoon, I was sitting around with a small group of my friends of women clergy in town. We were talking about what we could do to channel the community's energy and support. We started talking about how we wished that everyone would put a sign in their yard that said, no more hate. We kept brainstorming the idea and soon we had a plan to bring to the larger Bloomington United group. We wanted to create signs for people to put in their yards that said, Bloomington United in Diversity on one-side and on the other the sign would say Bloomington United No Hate, Not in our yards, Not in our town, Not anywhere. Then came the most important question. How would we fund this initiative? We found out that we could get the yard signs printed for about 50 cents each. So, we decided that in the next newspaper article about Bloomington United, we would ask people to send in money to help pay for the signs and our other initiatives. It was overwhelming. Within about 2 weeks we had raised well over \$6,000 to fund the printing of 4,000 yard signs, T-shirts, and flyers. We didn't receive any check over \$50 or \$100, and most were for \$10-\$20. So, you can just imagine how many hundreds of checks we received from people who cared and wanted to take a stand against hatred. After printing and distributing all 4000 signs, we have since had 2 more printings of thousands more signs. The yards and businesses in Bloomington were virtually blanketed with signs that proclaimed Bloomington United in Diversity on one-side and on the other Bloomington United No Hate, Not in our yards, Not in our town, Not anywhere. You couldn't drive anywhere in town without seeing a sign. Shortly afterwards, in November, we held a rally in support of diversity at the courthouse downtown. Thousands of people attended.

I can't even begin to tell you how it felt to see so many people united against hate. I grew up during the 70's and 80's when we were taught about the Holocaust. I always wondered how it had happened and whether it could happen again. I learned a most valuable lesson from my experience with Bloomington United. It affirmed for me that most people in the world are good and want to do what is right and want to make this world a better place, they just need someone to show them how, to be willing to lead them in the right direction. However, it also showed me how easily people can be led. If the wrong person comes along, sometimes people can be misled too. So, it is critical to remember to always evaluate the messages of our leaders and always be willing to take a stand for what you believe in.

Anyways, back to the Bloomington United story. With Smith continuing his hate activity in town, Bloomington United continued to organize educational activities to promote diversity in town. The community response continued to be overwhelmingly supportive. We decided to march in the city's Fourth of July Parade which would fall on Sunday, July 4, 1999.

The Friday before the 4th of July, the leader of the World Church of the Creator lost an appeal to practice law in Illinois. And, Benjamin Smith went on what would become a three-day rampage of racially motivated violence. Targeting Orthodox Jew in Rogers Park, Smith wounded six people as they were leaving Shabbat services. He then traveled to Skokie, IL where he fatally shot Ricky Byrdsong, former Northwestern basketball coach, as he was walking with his two children. Smith then drove to Northbrook, where he shot at, but missed, an Asian American couple. By midday Saturday, July 3rd, Smith was in Springfield, IL, where he fired at and, fortunately missed, two African American men. He continued to Decatur, IL where, a few hours later, he shot and wounded an African American pastor, Rev. Stephen Anderson. Then, in Urbana, he seriously wounded Steven Kuo, a student at the University of Illinois.

I remember being woken up very early to a phone call on the morning of July 4, 1999, from Jeffrey Willsey of the Safe and Civil City Project of the City of Bloomington. He was one of my partners in founding Bloomington United. He explained that Benjamin Smith was responsible for the shooting rampage and we had to make a decision as to whether or not it was safe for Bloomington United to march in the parade. Ultimately, we decided to march because

we weren't willing to allow hatred to intimidate us and keep us from doing what we knew was right. Just prior to the parade, we learned of another terrible tragedy right here in Bloomington. Benjamin Smith shot and killed 26-year-old Won-Joon Yoon, an IU graduate student, in front of the Korean United Methodist Church on Third St. in Bloomington and Smith was still on the loose. Nonetheless, we marched, sadly but proudly, in the parade and we were applauded by many of the bystanders for our message of diversity. Smith killed himself as police tried to apprehend him later in the evening in Salem, Illinois.

After an emergency meeting on July 5th, Bloomington United decided to host a gathering at the MAC to heal and unite the community. We spent the next several days preparing for the gathering and comforting Won Joon Yoon's family who had arrived from Korea. They had lost their only son. We received word that Janet Reno, the Attorney General of the US would be attending the gathering. We also received a message from President Clinton which was read at the gathering. President Clinton pledged to work with Congress to pass a hate crimes prevention act. Over 3000 people attended the gathering at the MAC. It was filled to capacity and the crowd spilled out of the building.

Several months later, just before Clinton went out of office, I along with a couple other founders of Bloomington United, was invited to the White House for a special meeting of clergy from around the country whom he had heard of that had done significant work to find racism and hatred. He charged us with continuing the important work that we were doing saying that diversity work is paramount and no matter what, we have to continue our efforts. No matter what, I will always remember him for that charge.

The work of Bloomington United has continued throughout the years. We continue to meet about 3-4 times a year, and more often if issues arise. We have continued to sponsor diversity education and to respond to hate in the community. A few years ago, we organized a campaign called "Every Minute Counts" in response to another hate group that came. We raised thousand of dollars on pledges from community members who paid for each minute this hate group came to town and spewed their message of hate. These funds were then given to the organizations that worked with the groups that were disparaged. Last year, there was an anti-Semitic incident against the Chabad house and Bloomington United organized a gathering of

support. Also last spring, the Ku Klux Klan started leafleting around town and threatened to have a march or gathering in Bloomington in the spring. We knew that we had to do something. So, we again decided to organize an "Every Minute Counts" type of response. People would be invited to make financial contributions for each minute the Klan marched and again we would distribute the dollars amongst the organizations the Klan denigrated. Also, there would be an alternative gathering for people should the Klan arrive. We wanted to keep people away from any Klan gathering as the most effective response is not to give these hate mongers the time of day. If you have a party and no one shows, it isn't much of a party. Our plans were widely publicized in the local papers. The Klan never showed. Of course, I would like to believe that is because of Bloomington United's efforts, but we will probably never know for sure.

This whole experience with Bloomington United has taught me so many lessons which is why I am sharing this story with you tonight. First and foremost, each one of us matters and can make a difference. We are created in the Divine image. Our lives count. Our lives matter. You might say, you're a rabbi, so of course you could do something like this. Let me tell you, at the time, I was a pretty young and quite inexperienced rabbi. I didn't really know what I was doing and I felt scared and unsure inside. However, I knew that I cared and I had to do something. I also knew that I could never do anything alone. So, I worked with lots of other friends and caring folks who also needed to do something in the face of evil. None of us was quite sure what the best response was, but we knew that we cared and that we were committed to working together and doing the best that we could.

It has always been interesting to me that when Moses is speaking to the Israelites and giving them the Torah he switches back and forth between the singular and plural. In Hebrew, much like in French, Spanish and many other foreign languages there is both a singular and plural form for you, kind of like "you" verses "y'all". When Moses addresses the Israelites, sometimes he says "you", in the singular, must obey these commandments that God is speaking to you. And, other times, he says the same thing in the plural—y'all must obey these commandments or I give this Torah to all of you. I believe this switching back and forth between the singular and the plural lets us know that sometimes we might feel like we don't matter

when we are part of a large group but that in fact we DO matter very much. We can't hide behind others and get lost when asked to take a stand.

And we should always remember that even though we may sometimes feel lost or unimportant when we are in a community, each one of us is in fact a very important member of the community. Each of us counts!!!! At the same time, Moses speaks to us as a community to remind us that while we need to make our mark as individuals, we must also remember the importance of those around us. Just as I am important, so is every person around me.

The High Holy Days are a gift, a reminder that we each have the opportunity to turn, to take a new path or continue down a path that is a good one. We are not bound by the mistakes of yesterday. Each one of us can make our lives count each and everyday.

The other night I saw a performance of "The Diary of Anne Frank" here in Bloomington. I was reminded of the movie Freedom Writers. In this inspiring film, based on a true story, a young teacher, Erin Gruwell, played by Hillary Swank, begins her career in an LA school teaching high school students that had been written off. They had low test scores, were in and out of juvenile hall, totally alienated by the system which had labeled them as "unteachable," "below average," and "delinquents." However, teacher Erin Gruwell, lovingly referred to by the kids as Ms. G, looked beyond the labels given to these high schoolers and was determined to see each one as an individual with great potential. She believed that each student mattered and it was up to her to reach out to each and every one

of them. She gave them books written by teenagers that they could relate to. Through reading the Diary of Anne Frank, they began to realize that they could relate to a little girl who had lived on the other side the world, fifty years before them. They learned that they could make a difference and that they had the potential to change their lives and the world. They learned about Miep Gies, the woman who hid Anne Frank and her family. The class decided that they would bring Miep Gies to LA so they could meet her. When Miep visited, she challenged them to keep Anne's memory alive and "passed the baton" to these high schoolers. She inspired them to make a difference in this world.

She said to them, "You are the heroes. You are heroes every day...even an ordinary secretary or a housewife or a teenager can, within their own small ways, turn on a small light in a dark room."

These words remind us that each one of us can make a difference. Each and every one of us can change the world. One of the boys in the film, Marcus, said to Miep, "I've never had a hero before. But you are my hero." To which she replied, "Oh, no. No, no, no, young man, no. I am not a hero. No. I did what I had to do, because it was the right thing to do. That is all."

Miep's words deliver the most inspiring message that I can leave you with tonight. We are all commanded, especially tonight, on the holiest of all nights in the Jewish calendar, to move forward in the world and do what is right. Make this world the best place that it can possibly be. Our actions matter!!!! We can make a difference and we will be remembered for those actions by future generations.