

CHESED AT DORSHEI TZEDEK

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Collaboration. Sometimes more than one volunteer fills a Chesed request.

Will you be my neighbor?

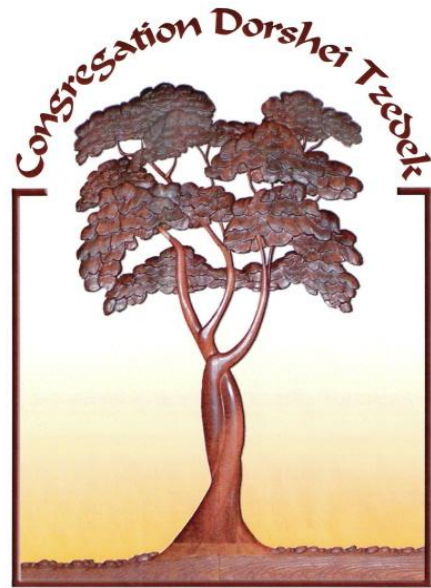
Q & A: I'm not a cook...What should I do?

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Chesed Creates A Caring Community

Chesed, the expression of loving kindness, strengthens our ties to one another and to our Dorshei Tzedek community as we share each other's joys and sorrows.

In her d'var on November 7, Rabbi Spitzer pointed out the eagerness that both Abraham and Rebecca show in performing acts of Chesed. Abraham rushes to offer hospitality to his angel visitors and Rebecca shows not only kindness but unsolicited generosity. She goes beyond the servant Eliezer's request for water to provide water for all the camels. Later she not only arranges his lodging but makes it extremely comfortable.



The Chesed Committee offers Dorshei Tzedek members the opportunity to experience the joys and blessings of Chesed. Members can participate by being both receivers and givers of Chesed and by joining the Chesed Committee to facilitate acts of Chesed in our community. The Chesed Committee thanks everyone who provided an act of Chesed last month.

Voices of Chesed

Being a Chesed coordinator has proven to me how much you get back when you give a little, what a caring and loving community CDT is, and how much kindness can make a difference during a difficult time, not to mention the great people I've gotten to know through quarterly meetings. Chagit Steiner.

Being a member of the Chesed Committee is a great way to connect to other members of the Congregation you may not have had an opportunity to meet while fortifying relationships within the CDT community. There is no better feeling than delivering a nice meal to a family overwhelmed with the responsibilities to caring for a new child or an ill family member, particularly if you've been in that situation yourself. You know what a blessing it is to create an opportunity for that family to have a home-cooked dinner together and to receive the caring of the greater community. Eileen F. Morrison

Join Us. The Chesed Committee gets together four times a year, usually for a great potluck dinner. We discuss our mission (to promote a caring community) and to orient new committee members. We evaluate how things are going and how we can improve the experience of Chesed for both givers and receivers. Contact us to ask about joining or if you have questions:

chesed@dorsheitzedek.org

You Never Know When You'll Be on the Receiving End...

Chesed at CDT is members helping members when there is a major life event such as the arrival of a child, death, injury or illness.

What does the Chesed Committee do?

We use the website LotsaHelpingHands (LHH) to organize members to provide

- a meal
- a food basket
- help with errands
- rides



How does Chesedwork? Contact Rabbi Toba Spitzer to tell her when you have a major life event. She will contact Chesed and you will get a call back from a Chesed Coordinator.

The coordinator will ask for information to post on the Lotsahelpinghands Calendar.

Help make Congregation Dorshei Tzedek a more caring community. All members are strongly encouraged to join the [Chesed at CDT](https://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/c/625130/login/) volunteer list at <https://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/c/625130/login/>

Sign up for LHH at <http://tinyurl.com/SignUpLHH>

Forgot your LHH password? Go to <http://tinyurl.com/GetPsWrdLHH>

Chesed Committee: A Matchmaker

If I am not for myself, who will be for me?

If I am only for myself, what am I?

If not now, when?

Rabbi Hillel's famous quote has often been used as a call for change. It is also a call to be part of a caring and participatory community.



Mirroring his saying, the Chesed committee says:

1. If you don't tell us, we can't help.
2. If you don't volunteer, you can't help.
3. Do it now (Keep reading)

The Chesed Committee coordinates our community's *acts of loving kindness* when things happen in members' lives.

- What kinds of things? Happy things, such as a new baby, sad things such as illness or a death in the family.
- What sorts of 'acts of loving kindness?' It depends upon the request/need, but it might be a meal, or shopping, or giving someone a lift. It might be as simple as visiting someone who is sick.

Generally, we use the website LotsaHelpingHands (LHH) to alert CDT members when another member is in need. However, we are respectful of privacy concerns, and will facilitate help through other channels when requested.

We also want you to know there are many ways to reach the Chesed committee:

- Contact the current Chesed coordinators: check the newsletter or website
- Contact Rabbi Toba
- Contact any member of the Chesed committee
- Ask a friend or family member to contact the committee

Our committee is a matchmaker: We match those in need with those who can help. We are always respectful of your needs and wishes and of your privacy.

Q & A: I'm not a cook...What should I do?

Question: I want to provide a meal for someone who is sick but I'm not a big cook. What should I do?

Answer: *No worries. You don't have to cook to provide a meal. Bringing prepared foods from a market or restaurant is fine. We are lucky to have many options from soup to quiches to salads to other prepared foods. You can also provide part of a meal or help deliver a meal.*

Acts of Chesed also include errands such as:

- Picking up medication from a pharmacy
- Shopping for groceries
- Picking up or returning library books
- Driving to a medical appointment.
- Walking a dog or other pet care.
- Transporting kids to or from school, daycare, after school sports, music lessons or other activities.



Chesed (Loving-Kindness) is an important CDT community value. The Chesed Committee is dedicated to creating a caring community. We coordinate volunteers who provide a meal or other acts of support and comfort when one of our members has a major life event such as a new baby, illness or death in the family. We post Chesed tasks online on the LotsaHelpingHands (LHH) calendar.

Sign up for LHH at <http://tinyurl.com/SignUpLHH>

Forgot your LHH password? Go to <http://tinyurl.com/GetPsWrdLHH>

Contact the Chesed Coordinators at chesed@dorsheitzedek.org.

Collaboration. Sometimes more than one volunteer fills a Chesed request.

Chesed (Loving-Kindness) is an important Congregation Dorshei Tzedek value. The Chesed Coordinators organize volunteer support when a member has a significant life event such as a birth or adoption, illness, or death in the family.

Most of the time, one volunteer fulfills the Chesed request for a meal or a ride. But sometimes two, three or more volunteers work as a team.



There was one family, who lived a distance from Newton, that had a sudden loss. They asked Chesed for a Shabbat dinner. Unfortunately, the weather was terrible, Shabbat was coming, and no one responded to the LotsaHelpingHands posting.

The Chesed Coordinator decided to email a short list of people who lived nearest the family. Someone from that list took the lead to respond.

Quickly the group self-organized, each taking a part of the task, making the Shabbat dinner and dropping it off. Mission accomplished!

If you have questions about Chesed, as a recipient or as a volunteer, please contact the Chesed coordinators at chesed@dorsheitzedek.org.

Q & A: What types of Chessed does Congregation Dorshei Tzedek provide?

The Chessed Committee is dedicated to creating a caring community by providing an expression of chessed or gesture of support and comfort when one of our members has a major life event such as the arrival of a child, death, injury or illness.

When Rabbi Spitzer notifies the Chessed coordinator about a member's need, the coordinator will call him or her to discuss ways that members of our congregation might help.

Typical Chessed activities have included bringing a Shabbat meal, food for shivas, doing errands such as grocery shopping or picking up medication, giving rides to doctor appointments or occasionally taking children to school or other activities. The request is posted as a task on the Lotsahelpinghands website.



The Lotsahelpinghands website enables us to fill needs efficiently. (Note: if the member requests privacy, the coordinator can make calls or send emails to selected members such as the members' "affinity groups" within the congregation.)

Members are encouraged to sign up on the Lotsahelpinghands website to get notified of Chessed opportunities and to sign up for a Chessed task. In order to create your login password click on this link: <https://www.lotsahelpinghands.com/c/625130/login/>

Resources

- Healing Conversations: What to Say When You Don't Know What to Say by Nance Guilmartin (Author)
- How to Be Sick: A Buddhist-Inspired Guide for the Chronically Ill and Their Caregivers Toni Bernhard (Author), Sylvia Boorstein (Foreword) .
- Talks on Dharmaseed website by topic www.dharmaseed.com

Q & A: What about a family's allergies....?

Q: I want to provide a meal but worry about doing the wrong thing, especially for a family I don't know. What about the family's allergies, food sensitivities and preferences?

A: The Chesed Coordinator's role is to take the guesswork out of providing a meal. Our goal is to make the mitzvah of Chesed easy and clear for both the giver and the recipient.

We ask about allergies and other preferences. You see the family's selections on the LotsaHealingHands task request. For example, we ask about...

Vegetarian	Kosher
Nut-free	Lactose-free
Wheat-free	Gluten-free
Soy-free	Sugar-free
Low-fat	Low-carb
Low-salt	Other (see Notes)



We also show the family's request for the time of day for meal drop off and whether to leave the meal in a cooler on the porch, to ring the doorbell and calling or texting when you are on your way. We give you contact information so you can ask the person directly for guidance about special foods.

Please contact the Chesed Coordinator at chesed@dorsheitzedek.org if you have questions, would like to share the task, or make comments or suggestions.

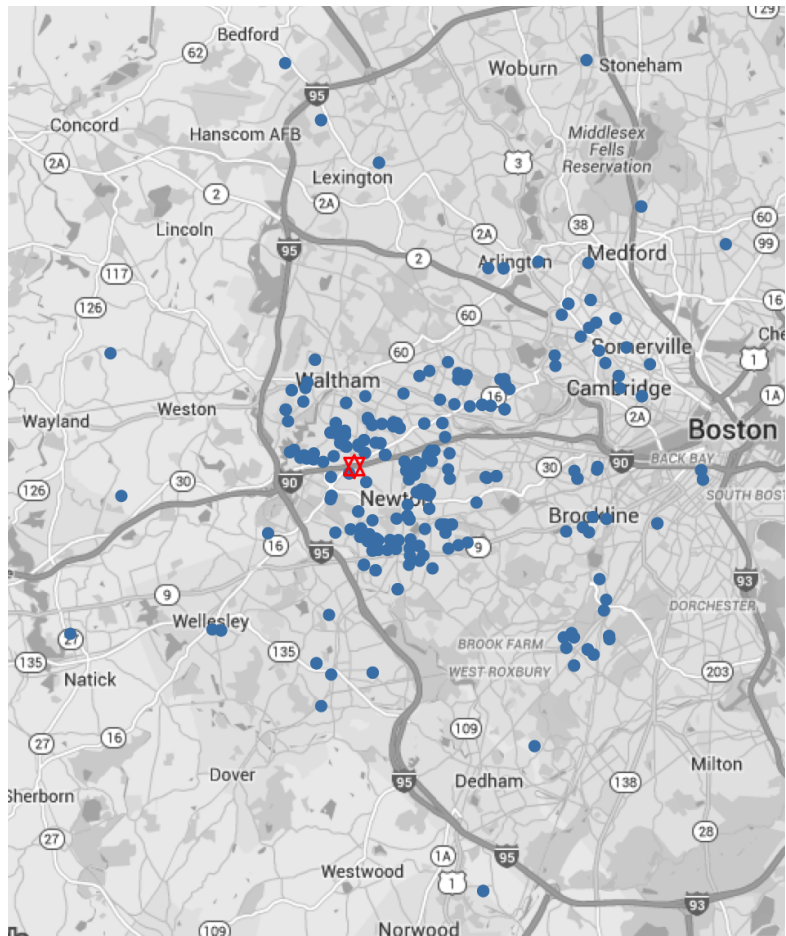
Will you be my neighbor?

(Map by Jeff Marcus shows CDT households.)

Doing Chesed (acts of loving kindness) is a lot like being a good neighbor -- being welcoming and helpful, sharing a life cycle event such as a birth, bar or bat mitzvah and lending a hand during a crisis or stressful time. The Chesed Committee knows that requesting or providing help is easier when you already know your neighbors.

At CDT, there are many ways for members to develop neighborly connections whether we live near or far. We get to know each other by sharing interests and activities, joining committees, and attending services, holiday celebrations, and Shabbat dinners. When we attend a shiva or do an act of Chesed, we strengthen community bonds.

As Mr. Rogers said, “The connections we make in the course of a life--maybe that's what heaven is.”



Q & A: What does it mean when someone requests a “gluten free” (gf) meal?

Q: What does it mean when someone requests a “gluten free” (gf) meal? Is it just no challah for a Shabbat dinner??

A: Avoiding Challah is a start since gluten is a protein present in wheat, barley, rye and some other grains. People who are gluten intolerant or sensitive need to avoid gluten to various degrees. People with Celiac disease need to avoid gluten completely.



Chesed has guidelines to help you prepare meals for members with Celiac disease, or alternatively, names of local restaurants where Celiac level gluten free take out food can be picked up.

Members love home cooking and the following foods are fine for gluten sensitive folks:

- Potatoes—both white and sweet potatoes
- Cheeses, soft
- corn
- fruits
- herbs
- Meat, chicken and fish
- pastas with the gluten free gf “hechsher”
- quinoa
- rice
- squash
- tofu
- vegetables

If you are preparing food for a member with Celiac all traces of gluten residue must be removed from any pots, surfaces, utensils etc, used in food preparation. Food should not be prepared near sources of gluten such as bread or flour. A crumb can make a difference to someone.

For more information and if you have any questions, please feel free to email Susan Nitkin at suenits@gmail.com.

Q & A: What about returning food containers?

We all know how crazy things can get when you have a new baby, a serious illness or injury, or a loss in the family. So when you're bringing a Chesed meal consider increasing the mitzvah by bringing the meal in a recyclable container or foil pan that you don't need back.

If you want the container back, write your name on the container and the lid (or stick on an address label). Ask the recipient to leave the container on the front porch or other location so you can come back to pick it up.

