

Dear Friends,

How lovely it was to gather around such a wonderful scholar, musician and artist as Cantor Dr. Tasat last month, in honor of the 61st Anniversary of our congregation receiving her Moroccan Torah scroll!

We learned more about the rich culture of Sephardic Jewry - the history of Moroccan Jews, their particular prayers and way of worshipping, the different types of music and languages...

Cantor Dr. Tasat took us on a fascinating tour of the Sephardic world, and we got to travel spiritually together to Spain, Portugal, France, Italy and Greece.

We reconnected with old friends and built up new friendships over exquisite treats provided by Chef Ika Ben Zaken, and it was such a heartwarming feeling.

At the dawn of Thanksgiving, we have so many happy memories to share and cherish, so much to be thankful for.

But as we remember those good old times and indulge in special Thanksgiving delights, let us not forget those who are locked in the chains of poverty and left behind.

Cantor Dr. Tasat reminded us, in relation to Psalm 145, Ashrei, that God "opens God's hands and satisfies the needs of all living things." Let us, in turn, open our hands and offer sustenance to those who suffer from hunger.

There are so many ways we can help, and, thanks to today's amazing technology and generous sponsors, a food donation is literally just an Internet click away.

If you visit the website

<https://thehungersite.greatergood.com/clicktogive/th/home>

you will see click a box that says "CLICK TO GIVE - IT'S FREE!", the next page says "Thank You! Your click donated 1.13 cups of food. Then it lets you know how many cups of food the website funded the previous day.

It also lists ten causes that need our help, including hunger. As our tradition states, "mitzvah goreret mitzvah", "a good deed leads to another good deed".

For more information please visit <https://thehungersite.greatergood.com/clicktogive/th/about-greatergood>.

It is a great website, that the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism has brought to our attention.

At this season of Thanksgiving, may we feel encouraged to share more of our time and resources. The ability to give is never beyond our reach. Quite the opposite.

As it is written in the book of Deuteronomy, "surely, this Instruction which I enjoin upon you this day is not too baffling for you, nor is it beyond reach. It is not in the heavens, that you should say, 'Who among us can go up to the heavens and get it for us and impart it to us, that we may observe it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that you should say, 'Who among us can cross to the other side of the sea and get it for us and impart it to us, that we may observe it?' No, the thing is very close to you, in your mouth and in your heart, to observe it" (Deuteronomy 30:11–14).

A simple gesture from us can make a huge difference in somebody else's life. Along with continuing to make donations to important organizations such as MAZON, a Response to Hunger, we can visit the Hunger Site and make it one of our daily blessings by clicking on that magical box every day. Whether we give a few seconds of our time, a smile or lend a helping hand, those small gifts go a long way. So don't let a day go by without that vital click!

"For the good in us, which calls us to a better life,
We give thanks.
For the strength to improve the world with our hearts and our hand,
We offer praise.
For the desire in us which leads us to work for peace,
We are grateful.
For life and nature, harmony and beauty, for the hope of tomorrow,
All praise to the Source of Being."
(Adapted from the words of Chaim Stern and Abraham Rothberg, Gates of Prayer, 1975
p. 271)

Wishing you all a Happy and Meaningful Thanksgiving,
Rabbi Severine Sokol