

The importance of *tzedakah* in Judaism cannot be understated, as it is a core value to being Jewish. In Hebrew, *tzedakah* literally means righteousness, but it also refers to social justice, kindness, charity, and ethical behavior. Jews consider charity to be an act of justice, and acts of performing *tzedakah* are one path to social justice. In Judaism it is expected that others more fortunate will honor people in need. The duty to give is so important in Judaism that even recipients of charity are obligated to give something.

Adapted from "Life Is With People: The Culture of the Shtetl" by Zborowski and Herzog and http://judaism.about.com/od/beliefs/a/tzedakah_what.htm



FUNDS COLLECTED

All members are encouraged to regularly contribute to the general *tzedakah* fund. This includes our young people, who are asked to drop even a few coins into the *tzedakah* box at Shoreshim events, services, and religious school. Adult members give at those times also, but we especially encourage them to add additional funds to their dues payment.

Members and non-members have been very generous in making contributions during the year in honor or memory of a *simcha* or loved one and at Shoreshim services.

Each year, the Shoreshim *Tzedakah* Committee meets to decide where 100% of the collected monies will be donated. While not a requirement, groups with Jewish connections are strongly considered. The funds are always divided among needy local, national, and international causes.

Past donations have gone to: Seeds of Peace, The Blue Card, Rabbi Menachem Youlous, Jewish Federation of Washington, D.C., B'nai Brith Youth

Organization (BBYO), Magen David Adom, Keshet Project, World Camps, and The Hebrew Free Loan Society, and many more worthy groups.

For those who wish to mail a donation check to the Shoreshim *Tzedakah* Fund, please see our address on the reverse side.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Reston Interfaith

Shoreshim is a founding member of Reston Interfaith, a nationally recognized, non-profit social service agency that serves needy Northern Virginians through support in housing, shelter, food, childcare, and other human services. One member of Shoreshim serves as a representative to the Reston Interfaith Board of Directors and informs the members about ongoing programs, upcoming events, and avenues for volunteering.

The Closet

Volunteers from numerous local religious organizations in the Reston-Herndon area run The Closet, a nonprofit thrift store in Herndon, serving those in search of low cost clothing and small household goods. Shoreshim representatives attend board meetings

SHORESHIM TZEDAKAH- A SMALL COMMUNITY WITH A LARGE HEART

The members of Shoreshim - adults, children, or whole families - have a variety of opportunities to perform *tzedakah*. This includes both action projects within or outside the local community, and collection and disbursement of funds to numerous organizations. The Shoreshim *Tzedakah* Committee and other community committees help to coordinate these *mitzvahs* and encourage any member who wishes to take part in social action to join in.

and coordinate the volunteers for our assigned work dates. Monies raised by The Closet are returned to the community and to the sponsoring organizations. Shoreshim adds this money to the *Tzedakah* Fund.

Other Activities

Participation in the Embry Rucker Shelter Walk

ACTION PROJECTS

Shoreshim is an active participant in several ongoing community projects.

Works Sunday Project

We participate in and sponsor *Works Sunday* in August for an inter-denominational community day of volunteering.

Reston Interfaith Food Bank

Several times a year we organize a large collection of non-perishable foods that are deposited in the food bank serving needy local families.

Sweater and Coat Drive

A recent tradition in Shoreshim is an early fall collection of winter outerwear and warm sweaters that are donated to several umbrella organizations for distribution.

Mitzvah Day

Shoreshim has participated with other Jewish congregations in a *Mitzvah* Day of action projects in the Reston area.

Monthly Tzedakah Collections

Since 2004, the Shoreshim *Tzedakah* Committee has organized monthly collections at events and services. Usually the items are gently used, but not always.

Besides food and winter clothing mentioned above, some of our recent collections include eyeglasses, cell phones for domestic violence centers, small appliances for families moving to transitional housing, prom dresses and accessories for the annual Reston Community Center give-away, and large print books and books-on-tape for residents of the Hebrew Home of Washington. In addition, athletic shoes, bathing suits, and baseball caps are continuing to be collected for children with HIV/AIDS at Camp Sizanani in Africa (World Camps).

MITZVAHS BY OUR YOUNGER MEMBERS

School-age Students

Our students are busy with special projects of their own. Besides their weekly monetary donations, *Mitzvah* Day activities are very popular. Some of the projects have included making: sandwiches for the Embry Rucker Shelter, baked goods for firefighters at the local stations, boo-boo bunnies and decorated pillow covers for Children's Hospital, and murals for several institutions.

B'nai Mitzvah Students

As our young teens graduate from religious school, move toward independent study, and prepare for *B'nai Mitzvah* and beyond, each is encouraged to create an independent *mitzvah* project of her or his own for the year. In the past some of their undertakings have included volunteering at The Closet or Laurel Learning Center, organizing a blood drive for the Red Cross, and collecting art supplies for Children's Hospital.



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OPPORTUNITIES FOR TZEDAKAH WITHIN SHORESHIM

