



Interfaith Families Project

Nov./Dec. 2007 www.iffp.net P.O. Box 5413, Takoma Park, MD 20913 iffp@verizon.net 301-270-6337

SHARING THE HOLIDAYS



November and December are such rich months for us. They bring together family, great food, gratitude, cold weather (at last), darkness (very hard for people), new beginnings and fresh light starting to come into the darkness. Some of these holidays are ancient ones, beginning with the Pagans who celebrated the sun and the hope that light would bring amidst the long dark days. So, as we approach these special days, what intention do you want to bring to them?

Some thoughts from my own life: For Thanksgiving the last few years we have invited those in our neighborhood and lives who don't have a place to go or families with which to share the day. Last year we were joined at our small dining room table by a 98-year-old Christian woman and her son, an 87-year-old Jewish woman, a 55-year-old woman suffering from deep loneliness and a chronic illness, and a 52-year-old man who no longer has family. We had a blast making foods we thought they would like and decorating the table with their names. We wanted them to know they had a place at our table. This year our girls wanted to duplicate that same table but we are being called to the NC mountains to be with my 80-year-old father and his new wife. Things are always changing. The now 99-year-old Christian woman is days before her death in hospice care, the 88-year-old Jewish woman will spend Thanksgiving with her son, and the 56-year-old woman suffering from a chronic disease is planting hundreds of lilies in her yard (she measures her health by how many lilies she can plant so she is feeling good!), and we will make sure that the man without family has a place to go.

For the last three Christmases we have gotten on a mid morning flight to spend time with Randy's parents (my in-laws) who live in Kansas – somewhere near nowhere. They live in a small assisted-living apartment. We stay in a small and fully adequate hotel nearby. We hang out, talk, play scrabble, eat chocolate, and watch "Leave it to Beaver" and whatever movies are playing on the local small theater. It's wonderful. There are no decorated trees, very little gift giving, and no big deals made. It's just a simple connection with Randy's aging parents that has no glitter and it is so wonderful. The Christmas tree goes unplugged!

Christmas, from the Christian perspective, is about a very holy person being born in a stable with animals and no luxury, lights, glitter, expensive gifts, or stressed out people! It's about just being born, celebrating health and life and stars!

Christ is born Today! says the Gospel writer. What does that mean for us? The Christ spirit of breaking the chains of oppression and injustice is real and alive today in us! Christ is born Today. Where do you want to unplug the glitter and plug into creating a world of love, connection without barriers and hatred?

In great gratitude for all of you.

— **Rev. Julia Jarvis**, Spiritual Director

CALENDAR: NOV – DEC 2007

November 4 – Gathering

Sunday School, Session 6
Adult Group
Grieving Group
COA – Evening
COA Prep – Morning
Teens, 6:00 – 8:30 pm

November 18 – Gathering – Thanksgiving

Sunday School, Session 7
Adult Group
COA – Morning
COA Prep – Evening
Teens, 6:00 – 8:30 pm

November 18 – Ellen’s Ordination

*See
below*

November 22 – Thanksgiving

December 1– Holiday Party, 5:00 pm

Details below

December 2 – Gathering – Advent

Sunday School, Session 8
Adult Group
COA – Evening
COA Prep – Morning

December 5 – Hanukkah/חנוכה

December 9 – Gathering – Hanukkah

Sunday School, Session 9

New Member Welcoming Ceremony & Brunch

Adult Group
COA – Morning
COA Prep – TBA
Teens, 6:00 – 8:30 pm

December 16 – Gathering – Christmas

Sunday School, Session 10
Adult Group
COA – Evening
COA Prep – Morning

CALENDAR DETAILS

Advent Wreath Making at Holiday Party

Since our Holiday Party is early this year, it’s a wonderful opportunity to have the community make Advent Wreaths together. It’s a fun and festive family event and more fun when many of us are doing it together. Advent Wreaths are made on a circular foam base, decorated with greens (real or fake), four candles (3 of one color and a 4th a different color), ribbons, pine cones, and other small ornaments. It is lovely to light them throughout the month of Advent.

We will set up Advent Wreath Making in the large room adjacent to the room where we eat. Please, everyone, bring lots of evergreens to use for decorating the wreaths. If you would like to reserve an Advent Wreath Kit (includes the foam wreath, candles & holders, ribbons, wires, ornaments & other decorations) for \$10.00, to make at the party or to take home and make, please e-mail **Susan**, Sury3@aol.com or sign up at the Greeting Table. The deadline for signing up is November 5. We must have a minimum of 20 families.

— **Susan Ryder**, Program Coordinator

Welcoming Ceremony and New Member Brunch

On Sunday, December 9, 2007, IFFP will officially welcome new members in a special Gathering ceremony. This will include members who have joined this fall 2007, as well as those who joined in the spring (after our spring New Member Brunch). This will be followed by a New Member welcome Brunch from 11:00am-12:00 p.m., to be held in the cafeteria with members of the staff and board. All new families are cordially invited to attend. Childcare will be available. Invitations will be sent in November. For further information, please contact New Member committee coordinators, **Stephani Abramson** or **Melinda Frederick**.

Holiday Party, Saturday, December 1st

The IFFP winter extravaganza Holiday Party will take place on Saturday, December 1st at 5 p.m. at the Margaret Schweinhaut Center (1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, Maryland). It's a wonderful festive time for families to visit, sing holiday songs, share holiday stories, make Advent Wreaths and eat great food prepared by our wonderful members. The feast is a potluck event, and we will have complete kitchen facilities. IFFP will provide paper goods, wine, and other beverages. If your family's last name (use female head of household if they are different) begins with:

- * A-G: Bring main dish to feed 10-15
- * H-O: Bring dessert to feed 10-15
- * P-Z: Bring side dish to feed 10-15

Please bring serving implements (labeled) and, whenever possible, bring food in disposable pans because it greatly expedites clean-up. RSVP to **Jessica Vistnes** by November 26. If you would like to volunteer to handle set-up and decorations and/or clean-up, let Jessica know when you RSVP. Extended family and friends are welcome; just tell us they are coming. We will need to know the numbers for table set-up, etc.

— **Jessica Vistnes**, Celebrations Coordinator

ELLEN'S ORDINATION

Our own **Ellen Jennings** will be ordained as a Christian minister into the United Church of Christ on November 18th at 2 p.m. The ceremony will be held at Christ Congregational Church, 9525 Colesville Rd. (just south of 495, corner of Brewster Ave and Colesville Rd, parking in lot on Brewster). All IFFPers are invited. This is IFFP's first ordination and it is our ordination with Ellen (she still does all the work) because she is being ordained as our Minister of Religious Education.

What is our part in the ordination? IFFP will have an active role in the ordination. We will be saying some "I do's" and "I will's" and participating in the "laying on of hands" part of the service. We also are in charge of putting together the reception afterwards and we need some hands to help with that! Please contact **Jessica Vistnes** if you want to help her with the reception. We also need some contributions to help pay for the gifts our community wants to give to Ellen and to pay for the reception. As you may have noticed, we have been collecting funds for the reception (look for the box at the IFFP Welcome Table labeled "Ellen's ordination.") We are asking each family to contribute \$5 (or more). We are all in for a big treat!

Congratulations Ellen!

ADULT GROUP

Upcoming Adult Group Discussion Topics

November 4: “What Makes a Saint” This session will be led by **Sr. Pat Parachini** of Georgetown University.

November 18: “Why I am a Muslim” One couple’s journey of faith.

December 2: “December Opportunities” A discussion of the joys and challenges of celebrating both Hanukkah and Christmas in an interfaith family, led by **Rev. Julia Jarvis** and **Ian Spatz**

Check the weekly bulletin for more details.

FROM THE BOARD



Greetings IFFP Friends!

The past month and a half I have gained a new appreciation for one of the many benefits of belonging to IFFP. At the beginning of September I broke my leg while playing soccer (the end of a short but enthusiastic career). That first day in the emergency room, Dan and I did not really know what this injury would mean for our lives, but we quickly realized that it would alter almost everything for the next several months. Fortunately, when word went out to the IFFP community, food started pouring in! The generosity of our community has been overwhelming and such a crucial part of sustaining our family through this crisis. We have felt so nourished emotionally and spiritually by these gifts of home-made food. Dan and I feel blessed to be a part of such a caring community.

But on to the business of the Board: At the end of September, the Board held its second annual day-long retreat. Meeting together with the staff, and with the expert facilitation of our own **Ellyn McKay** (long-time IFFP member and professional organizational consultant), we gathered at Christ Congregational Church to do some strategic planning. As we reviewed the current state of IFFP, we determined that we are at a crossroad in the life of our organization. We have grown to such a size that we can support four part-time staff. Our staff still cannot, however, meet all the needs of our community and stay within their contracted hours. Some of that gap has been and will continue to be made up by our dedicated member volunteers. But even with everyone volunteering (and almost everyone is!) we are still at severe risk of staff and volunteer burn-out. In response, the Board and staff came up with these four strategic goals:

- Identify and obtain sufficient resources from internal and external sources to sustain IFFP’s financial viability.
- Retain a fulfilled professional staff that can deliver high-quality programs/services to the membership.
- Maintain a thriving and engaged membership that contributes in an equitable fashion.
- Secure adequate and aesthetically-pleasing community space.

We have already begun our efforts on the first goal. Working closely with **Rabbi Harold White**, the fundraising committee and the Board are seeking to identify external sources of funding (individual donors and foundations) to help support our organization. If you have ideas or expertise in this area and would like to help this critically important effort, please contact me or **Bobby Gelfeld**, the chair of the fundraising committee.

The other committee that could really use your help this fall is our Membership committee. When new members join, we want them to feel welcome and integrated into our community. We need a few more volunteers to help **Stephani Abramson** and **Melinda Frederick** with this critically important task. Please contact Stephani or Susan Ryder (sury3@aol.com).

I want to say a very heart-felt thanks to all of the amazing members of our community. Together we are creating something precious and vital. I look forward to seeing where we go from here!

— **Rebecca Weiss**, Board Chair

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION



Greetings!

I really enjoyed our Back to School Sunday adult group discussion last month. Many parents shared a desire for resources on how to be their child's "primary religious educator," and I've been thinking more about this. Over the years, IFFP has developed a number of resources for parents and families, and I'd like to make sure everyone knows they're available. I'm also considering some new possibilities (and I'd like to get your input on these). Here is a sampling of both the old and the new:

- Several years ago, I created a bibliography of books on Parenting and Spirituality, and I'd be happy to share it with anyone who's interested. The list includes books that focus on the spiritual development of children, rituals and traditions in the home, and parenting in ways that respect each child's unique spirit. Since that time, I've discovered some wonderful new books, and I plan to add them to the bibliography as well.
- Last winter IFFP celebrated its first Family Day. This was a great success, and many families expressed gratitude for the chance to spend some time together focusing on how to create "peace in the family." This winter IFFP will host another family day event, and we're still deciding on the theme. If you have a particular topic or activity that you'd love to explore with your family members, please let me know.
- This year, we're thinking about offering an adult group on parenting and spirituality, and I'd be interested in knowing where you'd like to focus: Children's spiritual development? Rituals in the home? Spiritual practices for parenting? If enough people are interested, there's the possibility of creating a group that meets regularly to discuss these issues.
- I'd also like to know if there are ways in which you think our Sunday school program might better integrate parents. What have the teachers done that's worked well for you and your children? What else can we do?

As we move rapidly toward the holiday season, I'm hoping that, as a community, we can enjoy a simpler, more relaxed, and less consumer-oriented Hanukkah and Christmas. This is indeed a family practice that requires personal intention, community support and a bit of joyful creativity! There are some excellent resources, such as "Unplug the Christmas Machine" (google for info), that can help us along this path. IFFP might also offer an adult group discussion on this topic (please let me know if you'd like this!).

In closing, I want to invite each of you to join me in celebrating my ordination to ministry in the United Church of Christ (UCC) on 11/18. The service will include many interfaith elements, and our own **Rabbi White** and **Rev. Julia** will be preaching about the Jewish and Christian concepts of "Communion," or, as I like to call it, "The Welcoming Table." As I believe it, we are *all* welcome at God's table. I hope to see you there!

May you and yours enjoy many blessings this autumn season,

— Ellen Jennings, Director of Religious Education

JOYS!

Congratulations to **Maureen & Mike Ellner** on the birth of their first child, **Hannah Sophia**, Thursday, October 25th, 7 lbs. 13 oz. We wish you a lifetime of blessings with your beautiful new daughter. (Maureen and Mike are IFFP's financial team-our bookkeeper and treasurer).



Congratulations to **Diego Vasquez**, son of **Adria Zeldin** and **Peter Gray**, who graduates from Ithaca College in December. Diego was in IFFP's first COA class and teen group.

GET YOURSELF LISTED AND LISTSERVED!!

Get a Name Tag

We're starting a new year and would like all members to have name tags in good condition. If you know that your name tag is lost, incorrect, or broken and that you need a new one, e-mail **Susan** at sury3@aol.com. New members will receive their badges shortly after joining.

Join the List Serv

The IFFP list serve is our **only** way to contact all the members with important announcements, bulletins, updates, and information requests. All members should sign on to the list serve by sending a blank e-mail to: iffplistserve-subscribe@yahoogroups.com. We would like to have 100% of our community read our weekly bulletins (Thursday) to keep up with timely information. If you have signed up and are not receiving our Thursday bulletins, please contact Susan, sury3@aol.com.

When you change your email address, please unsubscribe from your defunct address, iffplistserve-unsubscribe@yahoogroups.com then re-subscribe from your new email address, iffplistserve-subscribe@yahoogroups.com.

Members also can pass on non-commercial information to other members by sending an e-mail to: iffplistserve@yahoogroups.com. Please include "off topic" in the e-mail heading if your message is not related to an IFFP matter.

— Susan Ryder, Program Coordinator

COMMUNITY SERVICE/ תנוקי ועלם

Walkathon to Help the Homeless

The SSIHC (Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition) mini-walkathon to benefit the homeless on Saturday the 21st was a huge success. Girl Scouts from troop #1515, some of whom are members of IFFP, helped assist with the walk. First, the participants walked up and down a section of the Sligo Creek Trail for about ½ mile to start off the mini-walk. Afterwards there was a huge celebration with a DJ, prizes, food, face painting, and a mini petting zoo. All proceeds went to help out homeless families in the Washington area. Besides **Carol Muskin**, **Leah Muskin-Pierret**, and **Abigail Burman**, there was little IFFP participation except for a few greatly appreciated donations. The event was great for kids and adults alike, so we are hoping to get more IFFP participation next year. Be sure to sign up and/or make a donation next fall!

— Leah Muskin-Pierret, COA Class

Gleaning

Over 60 members of IFFP gathered at Butler's Orchard on a beautiful fall day to celebrate Sukkot and glean apples for MAGNET (Mid-Atlantic Gleaning Network). Gleaning for MAGNET has become a fall tradition at IFFP, but this was our first year to pick fruit. It was a sweet experience, with the only down side being a few overly friendly bees. We all worked together to gather 50 boxes of apples – more than a TON! Last year we harvested vegetables from a farm that grew rows specifically for MAGNET, while this year's event truly captured the biblical intent of the gleaning practice. While families picked off the trees to profit the farm, IFFP families gathered the fallen, but still edible produce that was distributed to hundreds of needy families in our area. Thanks to all who gleaned in September!

MOMS Thanksgiving Dinner

This holiday season we will again be reaching out to help many families and individuals enjoy the spirit of the season. As we have in the past, we will help the MOMS group (teen mothers and their families) enjoy a luscious Thanksgiving Dinner on November 15th. Once again we will be buying holiday gifts for the MOMS participants and we'll gather and package small gifts for the seniors at Springvale Terrace. Please watch for emails and help us share holiday cheer!

— Carol Muskin, Community Service & Justice Workgroup

Holiday Toiletry/Gift Collection for Springvale Terrace

IFFP is again collecting this year personal care/toiletry items for the residents of Springvale Terrace Assisted Living in Silver Spring. Please bring items such as: emery boards, shaving cream, hand lotion, moisturizer, socks, pantyhose, lipstick, etc. Springvale has about 150 residents.

The Dollar Store has great ideas and also hotel samples make great stocking stuffers.

The Community Service Committee will have a box at the Gathering table to collect donations.

Thanks,

— Diane Katz

Trick-or-Treat for UNICEF at IFFP

IFFP is doing "Trick-or-Treat" for UNICEF again this year. We think it's a nice focal point for teaching about the lives and issues of children around the world (especially countries with large populations living in extreme poverty) and how American children can get involved in the world community. The money will provide medicine, nutrition, clean water, education and emergency relief to kids in more than 100 nations.

After you have collected for UNICEF, bring money back to IFFP Gatherings any time in November. We will count up the IFFP's collection and let everyone know how we did!

— Philip & the family Bregstone

NEW MEMBER COMMITTEE

New Member Committee Activities for the 2007-08 year

The IFFP Membership committee has several new and continuing activities planned to help welcome new members into our group. Among them are:

New Member Brunch: To be held at Einstein HS December 9th for new members to get to know one another and members of the IFFP board and staff. The details of the brunch will be announced in the weekly e-mail bulletins.

New member profiles: In each newsletter, we will profile new members. Plans for a new member link on the IFFP website are also being considered.

FAQ handout: New members will be provided with a FAQ sheet that includes a list of contact numbers and referrals.

Welcoming Ceremony: New members will be recognized during Gatherings as part of a new member welcoming ceremony.

Weekly Hosts: Members of the New Member Committee will be designated each week to meet new members and guests and introduce them to the IFFP community prior to the gathering, and before and after Adult Group.

We are also looking for fresh ideas on bringing in new members and retaining existing members.

If you are interested in helping the Membership Committee, please contact Stephani Abramson.

— Stephani Abramson, New Member Coordinator

MEET OUR NEW MEMBERS

IFFP has been blessed with many new members joining us over the past several months. Here's a list of our newest new members. We also will be introducing new members in the next several newsletters, and short introductions for four follow the list.

Patty & Brian Friedman and **Ella Rose, K & Liliana**, 1 ½ yrs
Kim & Bruce Waxman and **Caroline**, 1st grade
Jen & Chris Byrne and **Grace**, Pre-K 3's class;
Leo, 1 ½ yrs
Karen & Leon Jackler and **Ben**, Pre-K 3's class
& **Elyssa**, 2 yrs
Lisa & Jose Dominquez and **Joshua**, 1st grade
& **Owen** 2 ½ yrs
Randee Exler & Sandy Kramer and **Molly**, 1st grade

Stephanie Flores-Koulish & Robert Koulish
and **Olivia**, Pre-K 3's & **Julian**, toddler
Jane Loewenson & Fernando Echavarría and
Isabel, 1st grade & **Rudy**, 3 yrs
Anne Masse & Dan Levan and **Carl**, 1st grade
& **Aaron**, Pre-K
Anna & Eric Sherman and **Ellie Heitkamp**, 1st
grade & **Lillian**, 7 months
Susan Bass and **Margaret, Will & Sarah**, triplets
in the 5th grade

Karen and Leon Jackler

Leon (Jewish) was born in New York and raised in Jacksonville, FL. **Karen** (Christian) was born in Dallas and raised in Richardson, TX. Karen and Leon met at Tulane University and they both have undergraduate and graduate degrees from Tulane; Leon has a JD and Karen has a Masters in Public Health. Leon works at the Federal Communications Commission and Karen is mostly at home with their two kids – **Ben** (who turns

5 in November and is in the Sunday school program) and **Elyssa** (who turned 2 in August) – but occasionally does consulting work for the National Institutes of Health.

Karen is very busy with the kids, but when she has the time, she enjoys Pilates and long walks with their dog, Duncan. Leon is an avid private pilot.

When asked what brought them to IFFP, Karen replied “We’ve been struggling with our spiritual family life for a while, but what really spurred us to find a place for our family was a comment from my son last winter. He noticed that we didn’t do very much to celebrate the season and commented that ‘all we do on the holidays is sit around.’”

The Jacklers know the **Priesters** through the preschool their children attend. The Jacklers have also realized that they know a few other IFFP families.

The Jacklers are looking forward to a great year at IFFP.

Stephanie Flores Koulish and Robert Koulish

Stephanie (Christian – Catholic) grew up in Prince George’s County, Maryland and **Rob** (Jewish) grew up in the New York City area. Both Rob and Stephanie have Ph.D.s – Rob in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin/Madison and Stephanie in education from Boston College.

Stephanie and Rob live in Baltimore City with their two children – **Olivia** (who is 4 and is in the 3’s Sunday School class) and **Julian** (who is 1). They spend most of their leisure time with the kids, going to family-oriented activities and festivals.

Stephanie and Rob came to IFFP because they value faith dialogue and want to share both faiths with their children. They did not know other IFFP families prior to joining.

Jose and Lisa Dominquez

Jose (Christian – Catholic) was raised in Miami, FL (his parents are originally from Cuba) and **Lisa** (Jewish) was raised in Bethesda, MD.

Jose has a BFA from Southern Methodist University and an MFA from New York University. While Jose has a background as an actor, he is currently the Director of Grants Administration for DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corp. Lisa has a BA in Psychology from the University of Maryland, College Park and a Master in Social Work from New York University. She has experience working in the school setting doing both individual and group therapy, but is currently doing part-time contract work with Adoptions Together.

The Dominquez family, which includes **Joshua** (who is 7 and in the Sunday school program) and **Owen** (who will be 3 in November), loves sports and the arts.

Jose and Lisa came to IFFP because they have a desire for a spiritual home that will honor both of their faiths and provide religious education for their children.

Prior to joining IFFP, the Dominquez family knew a few other IFFP families though Takoma Park Soccer and Rolling Terrace Elementary School.

Kim and Bruce Waxman

Kim (Christian) grew up in Richmond, VA, but lived in Washington, DC for 20 years before marrying **Bruce** and moving to Fairfax, VA. Bruce (Jewish) grew up in Southern Maryland and moved to Virginia after college.

Kim used to work in the IT field, but “retired” when their daughter, **Caroline** (who is 6 and is in the Sunday School program), was born. Currently, Kim is working on a graduate degree in Children’s Literature at Hollins University. Bruce has always worked in the IT field (some of the first computers he worked on are now in the Smithsonian) and currently works at the Department of Agriculture.

The Waxmans enjoy music, art, literature, education, photography, and computers.

They came to IFFP because they wanted a spiritual base for their family that was inclusive of both of the religious traditions. They want to educate themselves, as well as their daughter, in both religious traditions. The Waxmans did not know any other IFFP families prior to joining.

— **Stephani Abramson**, New Member Coordinator

IFFP WOMEN’S GROUP

As a member of IFFP much more so in spirit than in participation these past couple of years (as my children have outgrown Sunday School and our family no longer has regular IFFP gathering dates), I have been thinking about how I can still maintain ties with our wonderful community.

After missing a couple of years of annual Women’s Retreats, it became important for me to attend and reconnect this past spring. I think that if you’ve ever had the opportunity to attend one of these unique weekends, you’ll relate to my appreciation of such a gratifying experience, filled with fellowship, connection, spirituality, and fun.

Though I had never attended a Women’s Monthly Group meeting before, I decided to co-host for this session, along with Stephani Abramson, in an effort to extend these experiences of connection and friendship throughout the year.

So if you’ve never attended one of these meetings or aren’t sure about being able to make an ongoing commitment, please consider giving it a try. Remember, I’m brand new to this as well, and Stephani and I encourage any and all ideas from interested members. Check the IFFP Weekly Bulletin for dates, locations, and times, and I hope to see you soon!

— **Lauren Groff**, Women’s Group Co-Coordinator

SPRING WOMEN’S RETREAT

Yearly Women’s Retreats are part of the benefit of belonging to IFFP (as Lauren noted above!). Some years we have ventured to the beach in Delaware. Other years we have gone to the mountains in either Virginia or West Virginia. Every year we have had delicious food, walks on the beach or in the mountains, yoga, a facilitator to guide and encourage discussion, delightful company and time to connect with other women and ourselves.

This year we will have our retreat on Mothers Day Weekend. Beyond that, nothing has been decided! If you would like to join in the fun of determining location, theme, and facilitator or have suggestions, please contact Susan, Sury3@aol.com. We need your help!

YOUNG COUPLES/YOUNG FAMILIES

Calling All Young Couples with and without Children!

We would like to continue the tradition of providing an opportunity for Young Couples involved in IFFP to get together and have some fun! We will plan dinners, brunches, gatherings at Washington Capitals games and much more.

A “young couple” is any IFFP member who is dating, engaged, married without children or with preschool age children. If you have any questions, please contact **Kristina Seppala**.

Young Families Group

We are thrilled about the number of young families (pre-preschool age children) who have joined IFFP. Also, many of our former “Young Couples” now are parents and want the social time to be kid inclusive and convenient. We would like to plan some activities for the months to come. If you have ideas/suggestions please e-mail **Tova Sanders**.

IFFP TEEN GROUP

The IFFP Teen Group got off to a real solid start this year. For our first event we shot lasers at each other while bonding at Shadowlands Laser Tag, but only after stuffing ourselves at CiCi's Pizza buffet. Other events included tie-dyeing hot new clothing apparel and planning the IFFP Yom Kippur Service, which was also a Teen Group-led function. We plan on having a breakfast out at IHOP or the Silver Diner after the Gathering on November 4th. Looking a bit into the future, the group will work at the Silver Spring Interfaith Housing Coalition and then watch a socially-conscious movie of sorts while eating pizza (Yes, pizza, again. Most teen group events do in fact have something to do with pizza.) Zoe, Julia, and I are all jazzed about the group and look forward to seeing the group grow and bond even more.

— Sam Seiligman, Teen Group Leader

CONCERNS OF THE COMMUNITY

The thoughts and prayers of the IFFP community are with the family of Grace Orlansky, mother of **Karen Orlansky**, mother-in-law of **Ian Spatz**, and grandmother of **Isaac** and **Juli-Anne**, who died following a short illness.

Lisa Beaudet's mom, **Flora** (wife of **Paul**) has lost most of the sight in one eye and is losing it in the other. They would appreciate your thoughts and prayers.

YOGA IS BACK AT IFFP

Yoga has returned to IFFP. Janice Simsohn Shaw, a member of an interfaith family and an experienced yoga practitioner, is teaching the class. Janice uses a flowing style that draws upon a variety of yoga forms, including Astanga and Kripalu. The first class was a mix of novices and experienced students – male and female, young and young-at-heart. Students were looking forward to the yoga class for its ability to stretch and strengthen the body, and calm the mind. The majority of the participants in the first session have children who have already completed the COA program and were looking for a way to stay connected to the IFFP community. Yoga is taught in the Dance Studio in the hidden corridor behind the gym. All are welcome and there is plenty of room for drop-ins. The cost for a drop-in session is \$15.

— **Grace Goodman**

FOR SALE!

IFFP T-Shirts

*Show your IFFP spirit in a short sleeve IFFP t-shirt.

Great to wear for IFFP events like gleaning, holiday party, community service days, and the Gathering and Sunday School.

Look for the t-shirt table at the back of the Gathering or you can send your order form and check to:

Diane Katz

(If you click in the box to the right, then “right click” and click on “copy,” you can go to a blank page, click “paste” and enlarge the order form.)

Interfaith Families Project Shirt Order Form			
Name:			
Address:			
City:	State:	Zip:	
Daytime Phone:		Evening Phone:	

Item# G2000
 Description: 100% Cotton
 Short Sleeve T-Shirt
 Front and Back Imprint
 Adult (Small - XXL):
 Stone Blue
 Youth (Small - Large):
 Red
 Unit Price: \$11.00
 Youth and Adult
 Add \$1.50 for XXL



Size Chart	Item #	Description	Unit Cost	Quantity	Extended Cost
Youth S M L					
Adult S M L XL XXL					
Youth S M L					
Adult S M L XL XXL					
Youth S M L					
Adult S M L XL XXL					

TOTAL ORDER AMOUNT: _____

A LAST WORD

Volunteers for 2007-08

We are very grateful to all the members who have volunteered to fill the many needs of our community. It is vitally important for a community like ours to have a strong volunteer base. Members as volunteers plant the seeds for our involvement with each other, activities, and the outer community. We are very much in need of additional volunteers on the Membership Committee that works with New Members as well as long time members. Also, **Erica Burman**, whose smiling face greets you every week at the Greeting Table, really needs someone to work with her. If you would like to join any of the activities listed here (or are incorrectly listed), please contact **Susan, Sury3@aol.com**. (Please forgive us if we omitted your name, but let us know!)

Adult Education: Ian Spatz, Ron Weich, Chuck Fromm, Robin Thieme, Jimmy Mrose, Josh Bernstein; Scott & Ilisa Paul

Advent Wreaths: Paul Colarulli, Kim Waxman, Susan Priester, Barb Gottlieb

Building: David Quigley

Celebrations: Jessica Vistnes

COA Prep Teacher: Adria Zeldin

Coffee: Larry Ravitz & Marika Partridge, Sue Katz Miller & Paul Miller, Peter Feiden

Comfort: Cheryl Dembo, Mary Wichansky, Susan & Matt Priester, Lisa Dominquez

Community Service: Carol Muskin, Chair, Chuck Pierret, Deborah Schaumberg, Diane Katz, Betsy Keeler, Kathy Vogelmayr, Rachel Makar, Amy & Dan Richard, Steve Brescia, Promise Alstrom, Kari Minnick, Gayle Parraway, Jeff & Karen Kenton

Fundraising: Bobby Gelfeld, Chair, Danny Weiss, Jill Bernstein, Julie Stewart, Al Minnick, Philip Bregstone, Jose Dominquez, Karen Jackler, Andre Parraway, Laura Glockner, Kristina Seppala, Larry Ravitz

Gathering: Dan Griffin, Pete Flynn, Larry Bostian, Marci Shegogue, Jodi Kantor, Andy Herman

IFFP Band: Pete Flynn, Marci Shegogue, Larry Bostian, Dan Griffin, Andrew Flynn, Susan Mathis

Greeting Table: Erica Burman

Hebrew Teacher: Michael Rosenman

Men's Night Out: Leon Jackler, Philip Bregstone

Music Teachers: Marci & Rich Shegogue

New Members: Stephani Abramson, board liaison; Melinda Frederick

Nursery: Diane Jentilet, Coordinator; Lisa Gabriel, Scheduler

Prospective Greeters: Sue Katz Miller

Public Relations: Phil Jakobsberg, Mary Melrod, Rob Liebreich, Nina Mrose, Danny Weiss.

Refreshments: Lisa Beaudet, Lori Walker Roth, Tracy Katz (back-up)

Set up/Clean up: Susan Mathis, Coordinator; Bruce & Kim Waxman; Debra & Michael Thompson, Heidi Friedman & Tom English, Philip Bregstone the Partridge/Ravitz family.

Sound System: Barr Weisman & Linda Goldman, Scott Abramson, Chris Thieme

Sunday School Helpers: Gail McCallion, Wendy Brown, Chris Thieme, David Habenstreit, Curt Meuse, Nina Schumofsky; Susan Kaplan, Lance Flitter, Mark Corrales, Daniel Kohrman

Sunday School Substitute: Philip Bregstone

Women's Monthly Group: Stephani Abramson & Lauren Groff

Women's Retreat: Eileen Kraus-Jakobsberg, Stephanie Flores-Koulish

Young Couples: Kristina Seppala

Young Families: Tova Sanders

MONTGOMERY COUNTY WEATHER CANCELLATION POLICY: IFFP follows Montgomery County Public Schools for closure due to weather. In case of icy conditions, snow, or storms, call 240-777-2706 or check the website <http://www.mcps.k12.md.us>. WE WILL SEND OUT A LIST SERV ANNOUNCEMENT IF THE WEATHER SUNDAY MORNING IS QUESTIONABLE. PLEASE CHECK THE LIST SERV BEFORE LEAVING HOME.

IFFP Board Chair: Rebecca Weiss

IFFP Coordinators: *Adult Group:* Colette Matzzie, & Ian Spatz • *Celebrations:* Jessica Vistnes • *Community Comfort/Support Group Contacts:* Mary Wichansky & Cheryl Dembo • *Community Service Workgroup:* Carol Muskin • *Membership:* Stephani Abramson • *Newsletter:* Peter Gray • *Website:* Mark Shellenberger • *Worship:* Larry Bostian • *Young Couples:* Kristina Seppala - *Young Families:* Tova Sanders

IFFP Staff: *Spiritual Director:* Rev. Julia Jarvis, 301-270-6337 (office) • *Director of Religious Education:* Ellen Jennings • *Spiritual Advisor:* Rabbi Harold White • *Program Coordinator:* Susan Ryder, sury3@aol.com.