



May-June 2009 [www.iffp.net](http://www.iffp.net) P.O. Box 5413, Takoma Park, MD 20913 (301) 270-6337

## FROM THE RABBI

### The Decalogue

The Ten Commandments have been cherished by both the Jewish and Christian communities throughout our respective histories. Shavuot, the Feast of Weeks commemorates the revelation of the Decalogue at Mount Sinai. This pilgrimage festival is considered to represent the foundation of Judaism as a formal religious entity. The parallel holiday to Shavuot in the Christian calendar is also known as Pentecost inasmuch as it occurs on the seventh Sunday after Easter. Pentecost, also known as Whitsunday, commemorates the experience of the Disciples of Jesus as they were confronted by tongues of fire and engaged in glossolalia, speaking in diverse tongues, the meaning of which they were able to decipher each from the other. Christian Pentecost commemorates the foundation of the church and thus shares historic significance with Shavuot.



The Decalogue in Hebrew does not denote commandments but rather words. The ten phrases of the Decalogue correspond to the ten repetitions of the phrase “let there be” in the Genesis creation epic. The creation of the universal by ten statements in Genesis is paralleled by the re-creation of the particular by ten phrases in Exodus. Adam and Eve are any man and any woman, universal creations. The Children of Israel standing at the foot of Mount Sinai, in contrast, are particular man and particular woman, linked in unity by their Hebraic identity.

I have often contemplated the heretical idea that Genesis was an experiment that failed. Can any individual contemplate the possibility of universality without a particular identity? The Decalogue offers us a blueprint for community building. The first five commandments deal with history and time—the relationship between God and the people Israel, the Sabbath to the rest of the week, and child to parent. The three commandments that follow the initial five pertain to space—murder, adultery, and theft. The final two commandments deal with values—not bearing false testimony and not coveting that which belongs to your neighbor. The foundation for a solid community requires a sense of history, a definitive space, and moral values. The objective of community is to enable its individual components to link the microcosm to the macrocosm, to utilize a particularistic identity to embrace the universal.

IFFP meets this challenge by creating a partnership between Jewish and Christian identities, by striving to create a sense of unity within diversity. Shavuot and Christian Pentecost are the foundation stones for two faiths, and the Decalogue is perhaps the glue that provides the nexus between them.

## FROM THE BOARD

Dear IFFP Member Families,

Thanks to all who spent a sunny Sunday at the Annual Membership meeting April 26<sup>th</sup>. We enjoyed a bagel and donut nosh and glorious weather in the courtyard. New board members were introduced and voted in – welcome Andre Parraway (incoming Treasurer) and Barr Weissman! Big thanks were given to outgoing board members Robin Thieme (Interim Treasurer and Budget Preparer Extraordinaire) and Bobby Gelfeld.



I provided an overview of the board’s work this year, and we took questions on the budget. This year the board worked on professionalizing itself by joining “Maryland Nonprofits,” creating policies and job descriptions, and reviewing the bylaws. We also set a huge fundraising goal of \$100,000 to continue our current organizational model and add a part time executive director and full time director of religious education. We had a banner year of fundraising, thank you! But it was a difficult year for raising such a huge amount. The board will continue move IFFP to the next logical organizational step, which we believe includes creating a Center to market the wonderful products we have created, like our unique curriculum. Finally, at the membership meeting, we divided into small groups to collect feedback on how we can continue to improve the organization, summarized here:

**Feedback on Gatherings:** IFFP band is great! Print readings in the program when possible. Sometimes Gatherings try to accomplish too much, but they should have something inclusive and appealing across ages and something spiritual and educational too, and should include new aspects and recurring touchstones like our Hamotzi blessing over snack and Lord’s Prayer. Members identified that the growing tardiness of congregation and noisy kids are distracting. Latecomers often take seats in the back, leaving empty seats upfront. Suggestions: crayon table for kids, ushers/greeters; occasional break-out sessions just for kids.

Note: The Gathering Committee will review these suggestions, but we do need more members to volunteer for our Gatherings committee. We will continue to use the newsletter to communicate concerns of the community since we aren’t hearing as many spoken.

**Adult Group Feedback:** Favorite part of IFFP; pro-Father Dennis; want more guests. This year’s Adult Groups were based on the theme established by the Gatherings. Suggestions: Topics dealing with practical issues of being interfaith families. Wish for more of a balance of topics, not just scripture, and interest in scripture as it exists based in historical context. Reading in advance of AG was suggested or perhaps forming a book group again. Regarding space, the cafeteria seems too loud and the classrooms seem small. Use the courtyard in nice weather.

Note: The adult group committee will review the many fascinating suggestions, such as adult group sessions on picking Rabbi’s brain! We will - and do - publish Adult Group upcoming topics in the newsletters and weekly email bulletin. Also, we want your feedback on adult group during the year.

**Feedback on Holidays:** Great appreciation was shown for the annual holiday party and the Yom Kippur service. A request for an Easter service on Easter resulted in an informal vote at the membership meeting. The group was split, so the board will take that under consideration. Please weigh in!

### Sunday School

All agreed our music teachers are great. Back to School Sunday could include parents visiting classes at 15 minute intervals. Board should revisit community service during classes, perhaps assign a room parent at the start of the year to organize logistics so teachers needn’t. Designate room parents to help organize such ‘extra’ issues. Community service duties should be announced to parents at the start of the year. In lieu of any gifts throughout the year, the suggestion was made that donations could be made in a teacher’s name to IFFP. Review COA curriculum. At the Teacher Training, have previous year’s teachers provide an overview of personalities in their class to the next year’s teachers to provide an idea of incoming class dynamics.

**Member Retention after Coming Of Age:** Members feel that the disconnect with IFFP begins when the family no longer regularly attends IFFP on Sundays, which the board hopes to address next year by having COA meet on Sundays mornings again. Focus on retaining members needs to begin at the beginning, when families join, as in “chavura” or “covenant” groups at synagogues. Ideas: IFFP night at an event such as Arena Stage or the Nats, regular IFFP community service activities, such as monthly service at a homeless shelter, continued Sunday morning options such as yoga, bring teens back to IFFP to participate in a service, provide a reflection, etc., to keep them and their families more connected.

Note: The board will let members know about pastoral care services and will ask the Worship/ Gathering committee to consider ideas like being more selective regarding persons selected for Bible and other readings.

### **Budget in Detail**

Because the budget was provided the day of the meeting, the Treasurer met with interested members to discuss the budget in detail. This group learned about the many improvements that have been made in the bookkeeping and accounting area of the organization. They were also pleased and impressed to learn that the organization had the appropriate amount of reserves as of the upcoming end of the year. One process that the group discussed was the plans of the IFFP Board to provide members with more frequent notices, via email, of outstanding balances since about \$5,000 in unpaid dues had to be written off by the Board this year. The professionalism of the Treasurer (Robin!) and Board functions were applauded.

### **Communications with Members**

Although all of the information is presented in the weekly bulletins as well as in the newsletters somehow, perhaps because it was presented as text, people are missing out or having a hard time keeping track of the schedule of events. The format of the annual calendar could be presented better visually, i.e. in calendar format. Inform members we have a Facebook page and a calendar on our website ([http://www.iffp.net/events/user\\_calendar.php](http://www.iffp.net/events/user_calendar.php)) Consider allowing members to post on the calendar. Weekly or Monthly calendars, especially the sort of program that people could upload to their Blackberrys or home computers would be great. In addition, the suggestion was made to make greater use of the IFFP website. Perhaps the Newsletter could include links to the website where more detailed information on events could be presented, possibly resulting in smaller newsletters.

An apt sentence with which to wrap up! I am honored to be serving as IFFP Board Chair for another year. Thank you, and please send me any additional feedback, anytime.

--Jennifer Liebreich

## IFFP CALENDAR: MARCH & APRIL

### MAY

**May 17 – Gathering: Baby/Child Welcoming Ceremony**

Sunday school, Session 20  
Adult Group – Family Rituals

**May 27: Community Service & Social Justice Planning Meeting for 2009-2010**

**May 31 – Gathering: Teachers' Appreciation**

Sunday school, Session 21  
Adult Group  
Party for Elizabeth Gelfeld

### JUNE

**June 7: Gathering & Gleaning**

Gleaning at field  
End of Year Picnic at Gleaning Field

**June 14 until September- Break for the Summer!**

**Member sources of information about events:**

Our website, [www.iffp.net](http://www.iffp.net), has a listing of events and dates on the home page as well as a more detailed calendar of events, in calendar format, ([http://www.iffp.net/events/user\\_calendar.php](http://www.iffp.net/events/user_calendar.php)) that members can access at any time. IFFP also has a Facebook page.

## UPCOMING IFFP EVENTS

**Gathering: Baby/Child Welcoming, May 17:** This is a lovely ceremony during which the families whose children are participating, stand before the community. Julia and the Rabbi will bless and welcome each of the children into the IFFP community. If you have not responded and would like your child(ren) to be included, please email Susan with the names and birthdates of the children and their Hebrew names if they have one.

**Adult Group May 17:** Family Rituals with Rabbi White and Ian Spatz. This will be an interactive AG so please be ready to share traditional or newly created rituals that your family observes and especially ones that still hold interest for your teenagers (if you have them).

**Gathering: Teacher Appreciation May 31:** We have wonderful teachers at IFFP, teachers who plan and prepare and who care about your children. Many of the teachers over the years have written the curriculum that they are now teaching. They put time and effort into their Sunday school lessons. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, we are going to take time in the gathering to thank them. Please come and cheer for them!

**Adult Group May 31:** Adult Group May 31: "What We'd Most Like to Learn about Judaism and Christianity". There has been some feeling in Adult Group that it would be helpful to delve more deeply into what each faith tradition teaches, how it has taken its present shape(s), and how to think about the similarities and differences in a deeper and better informed way. This will be an open discussion and also perhaps a basis for Adult Groups for 2009-2010.

**Gleaning & Picnic, June 7, 10-12:00:** This will be our last event of the year and one of our most popular! We will meet at a gleaning field that will be announced around the 1<sup>st</sup> of June. We will have a short Gathering, glean for a local food bank, and enjoy an end of the year picnic together. Chuck Pierret will be in touch with the gleaning fields and will notify us about which field has work for us. Please watch for that announcement in the bulletin and list serve. Also, please bring a picnic lunch for your family, as well as a picnic blanket, gardening gloves, sturdy shoes and plenty of water. Gleanings are always one of our most popular events –especially for the kids!

**Summer Break-** In the past we have organized a number of summer events, swim parties, hiking, attending ball games, picnics, etc. Members were always interested when we were planning these outings, but then usually too busy (or out of town) to attend. However, if you feel inspired and would like to organize a summer activity, please feel free to do so! It would be wonderful and we would be happy to help you get the word out to the community.

**Party for “Miss Liz”, Sunday School Godly Play Teacher**

When: May 31, 12:20 (right after Sunday school)

Where: Einstein Cafeteria

Please come to help us celebrate Elizabeth Gelfeld (or Miss Liz, as her Sunday school students know her) and her 10 years of teaching Godly Play to first graders at IFFP. This is her last year teaching, so the party is also a retirement party of sorts, and a passing of the torch to Kathy Flitter, who will be teaching Godly Play next year. We are hoping all of Miss Liz's former students and their families can attend. After so many years she has taught nearly every family at IFFP, so all of IFFP is invited to join us!

This will be a potluck-style party, so if you plan to attend, plan to bring something, too. Eileen Kraus-Jakobsberg will be coordinating the potluck menu as things come in.

As our gift to Miss Liz, we would like her former students to help build an IFFP Godly Play scrapbook for her. Please bring to the party any pictures of yourself (then and now). At the party, there will be a table with a box to place your pictures. There will also be some pens and stationery as well as other things for recording Godly Play memories to put in the scrapbook. Of course, you may bring your own cards and drawings from home, if you like. If you have any Response Time artwork, pictures, mementoes, or anything else you can think of to let Miss Liz know how much enjoyed Godly Play, those are welcome as well!

There will be a brief presentation at the party, and we would like a few former students to share their memories of Godly Play. If you are interested in participating in the presentation, please let Karen Jackler know. Please RSVP to Karen Jackler.

**May 27th Planning Meeting for 2009-2010: Community Service and Social Justice Workgroup:**

Please join us on Wednesday evening, 5/27 at 7:30 to begin planning our community service activities for next year. We had a great brainstorming session when a group of us met during the adult group time and now it is time to plan some of those great activities for next year. All who have an interest in IFFP's community service and social justice activities are welcome to attend:

--Wednesday, 5/27 from 7:30-9:00, home of Carol Muskin and Chuck Pierret, 1508 Sharon Dr., Silver Spring, 20910, 301-585-5277.

--We are located just a few blocks west of the Snider's Grocery store (Georgia Ave. and Dale Dr./Seminary Ave.). From DC/TP-- head up 16th St., Georgia Ave., or Dale Dr. Turn left from Georgia Ave. onto Seminary Rd. and follow as Seminary veers to the right and then back left. Head west on Seminary for several blocks. Turn left at Gwyndale (look for the sign on your right) and head up the hill. Follow the road to the left and you are on Sharon Dr. We are the first house on the right. From the North-- take the beltway to the Georgia Ave. exit- towards DC. Turn right as you pass the Staples, which is Seminary Place. Seminary Place will merge with Seminary as it jogs. Then follow directions above. Note-- you will know if you miss Gwyndale if you pass back over the beltway.

We look forward to seeing you!!

Carol Muskin, Acting Chair  
Paul Miller, Board Liaison

## ADULT GROUPS: POSSIBLE TOPICS/QUESTIONS FOR 2009-10

Starting with our May 31<sup>st</sup> Adult Group, here are some pertinent questions, just a starter list that could be used as a foundation for the discussion on the 31<sup>st</sup> and for groups next year. Also, please refer to Jen's opening article from the Membership Meeting and Adult Group topics that were suggested for next year.

Is there a fundamental affirmation or creed in Judaism? In Christianity? What are the core beliefs of each tradition?

The Scriptures of each tradition say a lot about "salvation." What does that mean? What do our traditions teach about that?

How is it that the Torah and the rest of the Tanakh in Judaism, and the Bible in Christianity, have authority? What does it mean to say they're "God's word?"

Christian theology includes belief in the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What does the Trinity mean? How is that compatible with monotheism?

What does Judaism have to say about Jesus?

Any of these topics and questions could open up into a very rich and interesting discussion, but they are just a beginning list. During the adult group on the 31<sup>st</sup> we will brainstorm others, and Julia and the Adult Group Committee will wrestle them into some kind of shape for 2009-2010.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL & COA NEWS

### **A Note from the Interim Director of Religious Education**

In our Sunday School, we have been exploring the meanings behind Purim, Passover and Easter. The younger grades have been singing and dancing to celebrate the holidays. The 2<sup>nd</sup> grade learned about marriage in the Jewish and Christian traditions, and they learned the 4 questions for the Passover Seder. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade presented a wonderful Purim play. Several of the older classes learned about communion, and many of the kids in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade class got their feet washed just like Jesus' disciples did during Holy Week.

I am sure many of you have been expressing appreciation of your children's teachers all year long. But at the end of the year, please remember to let them know how thankful you are for their work with your children. You can help your child make something for the teachers, write a letter, get them a gift (like a gift card or movie tickets...). It doesn't have to be expensive, just something to make them feel appreciated.

And, consider joining our amazing teaching team for the 2009-10 Sunday school year! It is an opportunity to contribute significantly to this community and to help kids explore their faiths. And if you choose to work in a class that your child is in, it is also an opportunity to spend time with your child, and help them in their spiritual, religious and intellectual growth. Co-teachers and lead teachers get a full waiver for one child in Sunday school and assistant teachers get a half of a waiver.

Please contact Karen Jacker or Beth McCracken-Harness if you're interested.

### **Important Message from the DRE Assistant**

Just a quick note to let the IFFP Community know how much I enjoyed working as the Assistant to the Director of Religious Education for the past year or so. I took the position shortly after coming to IFFP in the fall of 2007 as a way to start meeting people in the community I had just joined. As it turns out, I was able to meet and get to know many, many families. I now feel very much a part of the IFFP community and look forward to seeing my friends at the Gatherings.

I have been fortunate to be able to take some time off from work to be at home with my children while they were infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. But, in another year both my children will be in elementary school and I am starting to plan for my eventual return to the working world.

After much thought, I have decided to give up the position as Assistant to the Director of Religious Education. While this has been a transitional year, the Sunday school is in the very capable and caring hands of Beth McCracken Harness. I have truly enjoyed getting to know her and working with her. She has a great commitment to and enthusiasm for the IFFP community that has made working with her a joy. She has an extraordinarily open mind and heart, embracing both our Jewish and Christian traditions.

I will be staying as Assistant to the DRE until the end of June. Once the permanent DRE is in place, that person will interview and hire for the new Assistant.

Thank you again for the experience of being the Assistant DRE. I will still be active as ever at IFFP, but just in different ways. See you at Gathering!

--Karen Jackler

### **Coming of Age Ceremony 2009**

**“It was a grand day! As I sat there listening to these young adults, I knew there was nowhere else I would rather be than right there!”** – Rev. Julia Jarvis

Founded by four mothers with a yearning to provide more of a balanced Jewish and Christian foundation to the lives of their children, IFFP proudly celebrated its 11<sup>th</sup> Coming of Age Ceremony and graduation on May 3, 2009.

Joined by family, friends, and a supportive IFFP community, fourteen amazing young adults took the stage to express their insights into four compelling spiritual questions: What do you believe about G-d? What happens after we die? How do you live a meaningful life? Why do bad things happen?

Coming of Age (in both Jewish and Christian traditions) is a rite of passage that encourages, develops and celebrates a young person's growing ability to make mature, well-balanced and compassionate decisions for their lives.

**“It was a lovely celebration -- serious, challenging, inspirational and funny by turns.”** - MT and Dan, parents of Coming of Ager Gabriel Kohrman

Rabbi White challenged each Coming of Ager to use their newly earned responsibility to make the world a better place. This group took action on April 24<sup>h</sup> with the first ever IFFP Coffeehouse Fundraiser where over \$900 was raised for Viva Ayiti, a Haitian not-for-profit, and over 120 cans of food were collected for local food bank Shepherd's Table. Four bands played, including two that prominently featured Coming of Age participants (Bad Sauce and Frank/Aaron), and another that featured a Coming of Age Mentor. And the location of the event, Pyramid-Atlantic, generously donated by IFFP member Jose Dominguez, was a perfect setting for the evening.

Coming of Ager expressed how grateful they were for the support the IFFP community provided them. Several teens stressed that the influence of IFFP teachers over the years established within them an appreciation and comfort level in different faith traditions. Our founding mothers, and every person affiliated with IFFP, should feel extremely proud of the accomplishments of this year's Coming of Age class. It took and continues to take a community, and for that we join our young adults in thankfulness for what IFFP offers each of us.

## JOYS & CONCERNS

Congratulations to Gayle & Andre Parraway who celebrated their 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary May 2.

Many blessings to Lis, Eric & Leo Maring on the birth of Julian Rey on Easter!

Congratulations to Peter Gray & Adria Zeldin on the Georgetown University graduation of his son Jordan Gray this weekend.

We are grateful that Julia's surgery is over. Julia & Randy would appreciate your thoughts and prayers for her recovery.

## ANECDOTES/STORIES ABOUT HOLIDAYS NEEDED FOR PR

The IFFP PR Committee is looking for anecdotes concerning "dilemmas" that you may have encountered during holidays other than Christmas/Hanukkah: issues attendant to the High Holidays (e.g., issues of one partner fasting and the other not), Passover/Easter (e.g., issues relating to the events of Good Friday and Easter or concerning Passover, the Seder, eating matzoh vs. bread). We are planning to develop a couple of articles, one for local media that we would try to get placed late summer/early fall as IFFP restarts (and timed to the holidays), and the second for placement in a magazine for next spring. Although it may seem early to work on these, especially the latter, we need to pitch the articles to the different publications and there's a significant lead time for the magazines we're looking at for next spring.

In addition, if your experience doesn't include holiday-related conflicts because you've figured out how to handle these potential problem areas, please let me know about that as well.

FYI: Rosh Hashana begins at sundown, Sept 18; first Seder is March 29, 2010; and the next Easter is April 4, 2010 (which means that Easter dinner occurs during Passover: has this ever led to dilemmas?).

In sending the anecdotes, let me, psgray13@msn.com, know whether you would like or not object to having your name(s) included in either article.

--Peter Gray

## NURSERY

Our Nursery is a vital part of our Sunday program. It allows parents of very young children to enjoy the Gatherings alone if they wish and to have the opportunity to teach or attend Adult Group discussions or Yoga classes. Many thanks go out to Diane Jentilet who has coordinated the nursery for three years, to Lisa Gabriel who has scheduled our teen workers for two years; to Rob Liebreich for co-coordinating before becoming the COA teacher; to Rob & Jen for carting the toys when Diane isn't there and to Danny Weiss and Rebecca Weiss (both past board chairs) for subbing when needed. Also to all the nursery parents who co-oped and helped this year.

We are very pleased to announce that Marina Chevier, a very new member, has volunteered to coordinate the nursery with Diane next year! Her son Thomas is in the nursery and Marina and Sylvain have already become very active members of IFFP.

We also want to thank our teen workers who have done such a good job of caring for our youngest members: Michelle Vistnes, Rachel Rosenberg, Eric Gabriel, Drew Thieme, Elana Gold, Abigail Burman, Leah Muskin-Pierret, Rosalie Fischer and Amye Gulezian.

--Susan Ryder

## COMMUNITY SERVICE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

The Kids' Community Service Day April 26 was a big success. Many thanks to Beth, Erica Ferguson and Rich Shegogue for the lovely Gathering they created. Also to the COA Prep students & teachers, Jessica Stevens and Bob Schwartz, Carol Muskin, COA Prep parents, children and other volunteers who helped make cards for the Springvale Terrace residents and beautiful tissue paper flowers in decorated flower pots to be centerpieces for Springvale Terrace dining room tables. We are grateful to Johnson Brothers Nursery for donating 50 flower pots. Bob Schwartz brought his video equipment and filmed the COA Prep students singing, dancing, telling jokes, etc. as well as the younger children playing under the parachute, so that the ST residents will be able to see a DVD of all the children who made these beautiful things for them.

--Susan Ryder

## HELP WANTED!

### **Committee Chairs & Volunteer Positions for 2009-2010**

We are very grateful to all the many members who volunteer so much of their time and energy to making IFFP a wonderful community. Some of our members have been doing the same job for several years and are ready to pass it on to others.

Please think of the area that you are most interested in or that simply fits from a time & commitment standpoint. There are many other opportunities but we are focusing on the following at present. If you're considering one of these positions, please contact Susan:

**Newsletter Editor:** Format our bi-monthly newsletter for print, email & web. Work with Susan Ryder re: compiling articles and editing. (Susan solicits for articles, prints & emails for distribution to members.) .

**Coffee Mavens:** Brew, transport and set up coffee for Sunday Gatherings. Marika & Larry are retiring from this after many years. Marika: "It's a great way to contribute something important without giving tremendous amounts of time. People love you for bringing the coffee - so you get lots of praise and good vibes. The operation is professional and easy with the big percolators and two huge carafes. You can set it up the night before and flip a switch in the morning. We heat the water in two pots on our stove and we set them up the night before too"

**Refreshments Committee:** This is another great opportunity for folks who want to volunteer on Sunday mornings only. Arrive by 9:45 to set up tables with tablecloths, napkins, etc. for snack. Take turns carting and storing supplies.

**Sound System Mavens:** Alternate transporting and setting up the IFFP sound system & panels for Sunday Gatherings & Celebrations. Another chance for Sunday volunteering!

**Greeting Table Co-Worker:** Work with Heidi Friedman and be the welcoming face of IFFP! Welcome visitors, set up the Greeting Table, bring the name tags. This is a great way to meet our members and it can all be done Sunday morning!

**Prospective Member Greeters:** Welcome visitors at the Greeting Table, have them make name tags & sign guest book (email info to Susan) & try to introduce them to a member. This is great for someone who enjoys talking to new people and wants to do volunteer time Sunday morning.

**Community Service & Social Justice Committee Chair:** Organize and coordinate the community service and social justice activities of the community along with a very involved committee. **Carol Muskin** will continue to coordinate activities with the Sunday school classes.

— **Susan Ryder**, Program Coordinator

## NEW MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome our newest family, Marina & Sylvain Chevier and their sons Nicolas, K, and Thomas in the nursery. They moved to the DC area about two years ago from France and are very happy to find our community. Sylvain is from France and Marina from Spain, where she and the boys spent spring break with her family while Sylvain helped us set up for the Seder. Marina has agreed to be the Nursery Co-coordinator next year!

### **The Schwartz Family**

Interestingly, Barry and Jennifer grew up in the same town (Colesville, MD) and went to the same junior high school, but didn't know each other (Jennifer knew Barry's twin brother, Jeff, but not Barry.) Jennifer moved to Paris, France during high school, and about a year after college graduation, they finally met. They dated a long time before getting married. In fall 2000, Jennifer took Barry to Paris as it's her favorite city and he had never been to France. On their first night there, he proposed at the top of the Eiffel Tower. Barry and Jennifer have two children, Geena (6) and Ethan (4) who both participate in IFFP's Sunday school program. Barry is Jewish and Jennifer is Catholic.

Jennifer and Barry came to IFFP because they wanted to provide a place for their children to learn about both cultures/religions without having to choose one over the other. They also wanted them to meet other children like themselves who are growing up in this unique circumstance. Many of Geena and Ethan's cousins are either in Catholic religious classes (CCD) or Jewish Sunday School. IFFP is a way for their children to have their own religious education.

Jennifer is a vice president and group publisher at Access Intelligence. She has a Bachelor of Science degree in marketing. Barry owns a land development business and has a Bachelor of Science degree in business/real estate. With Geena in elementary school, Ethan in daycare and parents working, vacations become a treasured time for the Schwartz family to all re-group and relax. Barry is very handy around the house and enjoys taking on home-improvement projects. His latest project included a basement renovation. Jennifer enjoys singing in her church choir. She is also in a monthly book club and of course enjoys spending most of her free time with the family.

### **The Beinhacker Family**

Christine grew up in Boston, MA and came to the DC area after college. David was a military brat, living in a number of places but spending the most time in Heidelberg, Germany, where he lived from 4<sup>th</sup> grade through high school graduation. David was born in Washington, and made his way back to DC after college. Christine and David met while in graduate school at American University, got master's degrees in Public Administration, and got married in 1999. Their daughter, Helena, was born in August, 2004. Helena is in the 4 year old Sunday school class – and is loving every minute of it. The Beinhackers live in Alexandria, VA with their cat, Dusty.

Christine is currently working as a stay-at-home-mom, but before that had a variety of jobs working for the EPA, a management consulting firm, and most recently at PBS in technology and operations.

As for David, after a couple of positions where he found out what he *didn't* want to do with his life, he found his niche with market research and is the Chief Research Officer of a local firm that specializes in customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Helena was the catalyst behind Christine and David seeking out IFFP. From David's perspective, he wanted to find a spiritual community where Helena could be with other kids "like her" (partially driven by the fact that growing up there were few other Jews in his community, so he always had the sense of being "other"). David is happy to say that not only has IFFP met this initial objective, but they have found a very warm and welcoming community as well. They initially heard about IFFP from Josh and Andrea Herman – who are friends of one of Christine's college roommates.

In her free time, Christine is an avid quilter and sewer. David plays squash and racquetball, tries his best to win his rotisserie baseball league every year, and plays in a semi-regular neighborhood poker game.

### **The Backhorz-Morros Family**

Pam was raised Catholic in upstate NY, and Jason, who is Jewish, was raised in St. Louis in an interfaith family. Jason is a marketing director for Choice Hotels and previously worked at Disney World. Pam is a writer—her novel for teens, CANDOR, comes out in September 2009—and she also works as a manager for an educational publishing company. They met at Boston University, where between them they earned 7 degrees! Pam picked up one more, her MLS, at Simmons College. Their son, Noah, is four and attends the Pre-K 3s class at Sunday School.

When they moved to the DC area from Florida, they knew they'd have a much better chance of finding a community that accepted their interfaith family without judgment or attempts to convert somebody! They googled "interfaith DC" and IFFP popped right up. They're so happy to find a place where they and their son are the "norm".

Pam and Jason knew one family before joining, though they weren't aware of it. Before coming to our first gathering, Pam made a bargain with G-d: "If we see someone we know there, we'll join." This would be pretty tricky since they hadn't lived in the area for even a year, yet. But before even sitting down, she ran into Cheryl Leanza, who grew up in the same small town as Pam. The Leanza girls and the Bachorz girls go way back!

Pam and Jason are on a never-ending project of home improvement and repair to their beloved 1937 cape. Pop culture addicts, they watch far too much TV and read far too many trashy magazines. They enjoy traveling, reading, going to museums and historical sites, and exploring the amazing DC metro area.

As a fabulous extra tidbit – Pam and Jason lived just outside of Disney World for 6 years—ask them any question you like before you visit there!

--Mary Beth Cisneros

## **JOIN THE LIST SERVE**

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](mailto: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.

**When you change your email address**, please unsubscribe from your defunct address, [iffplistserve-unsubscribe@yahoogleroups.com](mailto:iffplistserve-unsubscribe@yahoogleroups.com) then re-subscribe from your new email address, [iffplistserve-subscribe@yahoogleroups.com](mailto:iffplistserve-subscribe@yahoogleroups.com).

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— **Susan Ryder**, Program Coordinator

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