

October 8, 2010/ Tishrei 5771

Dear Dubonim & Pilonim Parents,

A week ago, we celebrated Simḥat Torah, the last Jewish holiday in the month of Tishrei. On Simḥat Torah we experience the joy of completing the final chapter of the Torah (Hebrew Bible) and begin the Torah reading cycle all over again. In synagogues and temples throughout the world, every Saturday morning a parasha or Torah portion is read.

Each year as the new Torah reading cycle begins, we introduce Torah Time as a special part of the Friday morning schedule for the Dubonim & Pilonim classes. Torah Time brings the two classes together for a brief interactive re-telling of the weekly Torah story. In Temple this past Shabbat morning we read the first chapters from parashat B'reishit (story of Creation) and that will be the focus for our first Torah Time together. During the course of the year, Shelley and members of the Dubonim and Pilonim teaching staff act out Torah stories in sequence from the books of B'reishit (*Genesis*) and Sh'mot (*Exodus*).

In planning for Torah Time, we thoughtfully select themes from each week's Biblical portion and tell the stories in ways that are both developmentally appropriate and true to the text. While certain sections within a given Torah portion may raise issues that are too difficult for children of this age, we have found that there is always something to be learned from each parasha that is appropriate for young children.

We recognize that our families at the Billy Dalwin Pre-School of Temple Emunah come from varied traditions, observances, and comfort level with Biblical text. We appreciate and respect the diversity within our program and are committed to presenting Torah Time experiences in a manner that is respectful of all members of our Preschool community.

Torah Time is a dynamic part of our four/five year old curriculum that continues to grow and change based on the interest of our children and the feedback of our families. Last year for the first time we emailed parents a weekly "Torah Time Primer" that included:

- a brief synopsis of the Torah story presented that week
- our learning objectives for the children
- questions that the children may ask about the Torah portion
- questions that you may have about the Torah portion
- additional parent resources

This year, we have edited and reformatted the Primer using written copy in a way that we hope will be more accessible for our families.

One suggestion is to look over the Torah Time Primer before dinner and use it to enhance the experience around your family's Shabbat dinner table. We hope that you will find this useful and we welcome your feedback now and throughout the year!

Shabbat Shalom,
Shelley and the Dubonim and Pilonim Teams