



St. Vincent de Paul hosted its annual Grandparents Day. Grandparents attended Mass with their grandchildren. Afterwards, the children performed songs led by Music Director, Preston Smith.

New AA Group Formed

Named as one of the 10 best sober-living cities by the Huffington Post in 2012, Houston is home to more than 580 Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups of which hold 2,400 meetings a week.

Missing amongst this number is a group addressing those in recovery with Jewish backgrounds.

On Wednesday, Dec. 10 at 6:30 p.m., an AA meeting for those from every spectrum of Judaism will take place at The Council on Alcohol and Drugs (303 Jackson Hill Street, Houston, TX 77007).

The intent of this group is to encourage and assist Jewish alcoholics and chemically dependent persons to explore recovery in a

nurturing Jewish environment.

“Greater Houston has precious few resources for Jews in recovery,” said Rabbi Marc Disick of Congregation Emanu El, the synagogue backing the launch of this AA group. “Rightly or wrongly, Jewish alcoholics and those with other chemical dependencies feel stigmatized and judged by their synagogue families if not the organized Jewish community itself.”

The goal in taking the venue away from being hosted at a synagogue and Jewish agencies in the greater Houston community is to allow anonymity to exist and provide a safe place to explore and maintain sobriety.

New Shaliach Joins the J

Evelyn Rubenstein JCC of Houston welcomes Niv Prager to the JCC as the new shaliach on staff. He is part of the Jewish Agency Young Shaliach Program, which allows a young Israeli to work in different parts of the world as a legal emissary trained to promote dialogue about Israel.

Prager is 24 years old and is from the town of Kadima. He will spend a two-year term in Houston talking mostly to teen groups, young adults, Jewish and non-Jewish schools, synagogues and youth movements in Houston.

“I’m not here to tell people what is right or wrong,” said Prager. “I am here to create a conversation and dialogue about Israel or being Jewish.”

During his time in the Army, Niv served in the Nahal Infantry brigade of the IDF. He has also volunteered with the Ethiopian Jewish Community. He has led delegations of young people twice to Germany and one summer camp in Ukraine.

Prager is the second shaliach to come to Houston in recent years. Having never been to the United States, the J is his home away from home.

Prager loves music, arts, culture and architecture. He likes to draw and paint. But there is no mistaking his passion for his homeland.

“I find my country fascinating and think that we have a lot to offer to the world.

It’s not about me. It’s about continuing that connection that already exists at the J to connect Jewish people here with Israel.”

Prager is available to speak to groups and will be involved in J Camps this summer. He may be contacted at nprager@erjchouston.org.

Advent at St. Paul's

DAY OF PRAYER WITH LABYRINTH: 9 A.M. - NOON, DECEMBER 6
 FAIR-TRADE ALTERNATIVE GIFT MARKET: 9 A.M. - 1 P.M. DECEMBER 7
 ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS: 6 P.M. DECEMBER 7
 AN ENGLISH CHRISTMAS CONCERT BY SOPRANO & HARP: 7:30 P.M. DECEMBER 12
 GINGERBREAD HOUSE AND BAKE SALE: 9 A.M. - 2 P.M. DECEMBER 13
 CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CANDLELIGHT SERVICE: 4:30 P.M. DECEMBER 21
 SERVICE OF THE LONGEST NIGHT: 6 P.M. DECEMBER 22
 CHRISTMAS EVE: NOON, 4, 6, 8, & 10 P.M. DECEMBER 24

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