ELUL STORIES
Sharing our stories, sharing lives, creating community

Elul is the month leading up to Rosh HaShanah. Each day during the month, a different Temple Beth Torah congregant will respond to the prompt:
This Inspired Me...

The Magic of the Soup Kitchen
Jan Sheinkopf

For me, it is not one person that inspires me, it is a group working together. At the Mercy Inn Soup kitchen, I volunteer with 14 others. Each fellow volunteer, salt of the earth, is special in his, her, own way. We laugh, we argue, and pull together to feed 150 guests each Tuesday. Some of my crew are in their 70's and 80's. They hold their passion for life, to help others and to serve God. We can't do this job alone, we need each other to make this miracle happen every Tuesday, and it does, rain or shine.

I am also inspired by our guests. They have the courage to show up and humbly accept our food. Despite their economic hardships, or any physical or mental disabilities, they show up. They are family to each other and to us. Especially to me. I have known many of them for over 20 years. We the crew cannot do our job without our guests, as they show up rain, shine, snow or sleet.

There is magic in that basement kitchen. Maybe we are all making that manna that God provided for us. In the busy chaos of getting the lunch in order, there is God, allowing for this magic to take place. On Tuesday, after serving and cleaning, I feel bone tired, yet so very alive! Time spent is almost sacred. I love my team, and I love the guest. I feel very blessed.

Jan Sheinkopf is wonderful volunteer. When not at the soup kitchen look for her at her favorite community garden in Rhode Island.

Would you like to share your Elul Story for our This Inspired Me series? Please share a
book, or a movie, or a song, or a TV show that left a lasting impression on you. Send your This Inspired Me to: ravsusie@gmail.com. (This theme is inspired by the fact that this month we are holding a Book Drive for the Brooke Jackman Literacy Foundation. We are collecting new children and teen books which will be delivered to children all over the NY area. Come hear the Jackman's story on Friday, Sept 8th after services.)

If you missed any of the previous Elul Stories you can go to www.tbtny.org (media galleries/elul stories).