



# TU B'SHEVAT CELEBRATION

at Brattleboro Area Jewish Community  
151 Greenleaf Street Brattleboro, VT



**Friday, February 10, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.**

Come meet our members, friends and Hebrew School students for a journey into the social, environmental and mystical dimensions of Jewish life.

**BRING A SMALL AMOUNT OF FRUIT TO SYMBOLIZE YOUR CONNECTION TO THE "TREE OF LIFE" (See instructions below)**

*Tu b'Shevat* is a holiday celebrated each year on the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the Hebrew month of *Shevat*. In ancient times, the date marked the beginning of the agricultural cycle for trees. The holiday later became an occasion to remember the trees and plants native to the Land of Israel. Many observe the day by planting trees, raising money to plant trees in Israel, or honoring the environment in other ways.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century, *Tu b'Shevat* became an occasion for kabbalists to develop a ritual *seder* meal to symbolize the "re-fruit-ification" of our world from the Divine "Tree of Life." Four cups of wine and categories of fruits represent four levels or stages through which the Divine energy flows as it connects us with the universe in a complete, continuous cycle. We can learn more about these "four worlds" through the kabbalistic prayers, meditations and fruits we enjoy on this occasion.

At our celebration on Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, BAJC's Hebrew School students will depict, through story and song, how the "four worlds" are each distinct yet interdependent. After the service, we will partake of wine (and juice) and fruits that symbolize these four worlds. In addition to a dessert to share, please bring something (enough for 5-10 people to taste) from any of the following categories:

The world of *Assiyah* has an outside shell that must be discarded and an inside that can be eaten, such as: almonds, bananas, brazil nuts, chestnuts, coconuts, grapefruit, hazelnuts, oranges, papayas, pecans, pine nuts, pineapples, pistachios, pomegranates, pumellos, sabras, starfruit, and walnuts. (PLEASE - NO PEANUTS!!)

The world of *Yetzirah* has pits inside, but the outside can be eaten. Its fruits include: apricots, avocados, cherries, dates, hackberries., jujubes, loquats, olives, peaches, persimmons and plums.

The world of *Beriyah* is symbolized by fruits that have neither pits on the inside nor shells on the outside (Seeds are considered edible in this system.) They include: apples, blueberries, carobs, cranberries, etrogim (citrons), figs, grapes, kiwis, lemons, pears, quinces, raisins, raspberries and strawberries.

The world of *Atzilut* is purely spiritual and cannot be represented by anything physical. Fragrance may be the closest we'll come to symbolizing this world-beyond-the-senses.

For more information, contact [rabbi@bajcvermont.org](mailto:rabbi@bajcvermont.org) or call (802) 490-0231