

10.27 Commemorative Days of Service Site Reflection: Civic Engagement / Achdoot



A Message to Facilitators & Site Captains

This service site reflection was created by Repair the World Pittsburgh. Service reflections are an important way to provide context, space for Jewish learning, and meaningful reflection to the volunteer service experience. This is an important aspect to the way that Repair the World does service. As a Site Captain, you should be prepared to share and facilitate this content with the volunteers at your site.

- Reflections can be adapted to best meet the service site and participant needs
- Facilitators should provide framing and context in the beginning of the session. Share about the organization, today's service and the accompanying reflection topic
- Let participants know at what time we will come back together for reflection after project
- Share the topic overview and text study (utilize popcorn-style, reading in pairs, or other)
- Open up space for reflection questions / discussion. Keep track of time and close out.

About The Day of Service: Remember, Reflect, in Spirit, and in Action

We gather today as part of the 10.27 Commemorative Days of Service to strengthen our communities through collective action, because we know that we are better when we work together. We show up in service to honor the memory of the 11 elders we lost on 10/27/2018, to heal, and to take part in repairing our world, *Tikkun Olam*. We understand all of these things to be connected.

There are over **18 service sites** across **four Sundays** in October and November offering opportunities for the community to come together in service. Each site highlights one of the following themes: **Civic Engagement (Achdoot)**, **Community Care (Hitchazkut)**, **Environmental Stewardship (Na'aseh V'nishma)**, **Honoring Loved Ones (Kavod Ha'briyot)**. Many of these projects were planned in collaboration with families and loved ones of those who we lost, to honor the commitments, passions, and service they shared with the community during their lives

About Repair the World and the 10.27 Healing Partnership

Repair the World mobilizes Jews and their communities to take action to pursue a just world, igniting a lifelong commitment to service. The 10.27 Healing Partnership works to foster a sense of community well-being by providing opportunities for reflection, support, and connection for individuals and their loved ones impacted by the October 2018 attack and for others who experience hate-induced trauma.

About B-PEP and League of Women Voters (LWV)

The **Black Political Empowerment Project (B-PEP)** was launched May 21, 1986 to ensure that the Pittsburgh African-American community votes in every single election. B-PEP relies on the dedication of agencies, organizations, religious leaders, and committed individuals who donate incredible amounts of hours to uplift our communities and provide a sense of purpose.

The **League of Women Voters (LWV)** is a nonpartisan, grassroots organization working to protect and expand voting rights and ensure everyone is represented in our democracy. We empower voters and defend democracy through advocacy, education, and litigation, at the local, state, and national levels.

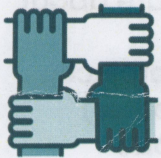
Topic Overview

Today's program is focusing on **Civic Engagement** and the Jewish value of **Achdoot** or **Solidarity**. Throughout the Days of Service, we are engaging in multiple forms of civic engagement and solidarity, such as participating in the following service-learning programs:

- B-PEP + League of Women Voters Registration, in memory of Mel Wax
- UPitt's ACC Unity Week, in memory of Richard Gottfried
- NCJW Book Labeling, in memory of Joyce Fienberg
- PGH Prison Book Project Packing, in memory of Jerry Rabinowitz
- Gun Safety Voter Engagement Phone Bank, in memory of Jerry Rabinowitz

These are just a handful of ways that our community is coming together in solidarity with one another during the four days of service.

Text Study



Solidarity // Achdoot // אהדות (ach-DOOT)

When the community is in trouble do not say, "I will go home and eat and drink and all will be well with me." ... Rather, involve yourself in the community's distress ... |

Babylonian Talmud Taanit 11a Jewish tradition instructs people to "not stand idly" while others undergo hardship. We are obligated to amplify marginalized individual's voices, listen to our neighbors, and actively participate in helping to address the barriers to realizing one's full potential to pursue a just world. Jewish wisdom assumes that we live in community with others, including those we may not know or who live under different circumstances than us. When we consider the relationships we build, offer support, and show-up as a collective responsibility, we see the potential of what we can achieve.

As a method of change-making, **Civic Engagement** allows us to tap into our collective power and impact the structures that govern our lives. Through embodying the Jewish value of **Achdoot** or **Solidarity**, we consider how laws and cultural traditions have historically impacted and continue to affect *both* ourselves and others. This directly involves uplifting the voices of historically marginalized people in our communities.

By engaging with the societal norms that influence the most fundamental aspects of our belief systems, we empower ourselves and others to make every action count, while understanding that we as individuals only have so much influence on conditions that impact countless lives.

We can define **Civic Engagement** as actions that challenge policies and larger structures, to benefit the community and public good. When we prioritize **Solidarity** in our work, our actions are more likely to benefit *all* members of society.

"You achieve immortality not by building pyramids or statues, but by engraving your values on the hearts of your children, and they on theirs, so that our ancestors live on in us and we in our children, and so on until the end of time."

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Discussion Questions

1. What is Rabbi Jonathan Sacks saying about value systems?
2. What are some values or larger structures that relate to today's service project? What are some popular ideas about the values or structures discussed today? How do those ideas sit with you?
3. How do you think values can change the world? What are some examples