

# Communal Tashlich

Detroit River symbolically accepts individuals' shortcomings at event hosted by The Well.

**O**n a beautiful September afternoon that still felt like summer, nearly 500 people, mostly ages 22-35, joined together Downtown in Hart Plaza and along the Detroit Riverwalk for a Rosh Hashanah celebration and tashlich ceremony.

The Sept. 15 event, dubbed "Rosh Hashanah Rush Hour," was organized and hosted by The Well, Metro Detroit's new pluralistic Jewish community-building, education and spirituality outreach initiative.

The organization is geared to the needs of young adults and those who haven't connected with traditional institutions. Its philosophy is that Jewish ethics, values, spirituality and community can be directly applicable to people's lives and should drive them to positively impact the world.

Rabbi Dan Horwitz, founding director of The Well, set the tone by saying: "We welcome you as the imperfect human beings we all are, constantly striving to become the people we wish to be. We welcome you as the parents, children, grandparents, friends, family, lovers and partners you are in the lives of others."

"And we welcome you with open arms, with song, food, drink and community, to participate in the challenging work of introspection our tradition teaches us we're meant to engage in at this time of year."

He then led participants in a guided meditation, with this primary message: "How you welcome others at The Well determines how your life story is written." Attendees joined together in song, led by Temple Israel Cantorial Soloist Neil

Michaels, heard the blast of the shofar and then symbolically cast away their shortcomings in the form of breadcrumbs, provided by the Detroit Institute of Bagels into the Detroit River. The festival-esque atmosphere included drumming by local band Collision 6, donuts and cider from the Franklin Cider Mill, and samplings from Mitch Albom's new dessert philanthropy Detroit Water Ice Factory.

In addition to casting away their shortcomings, participants were given the opportunity to write down their wishes for the year ahead and to drop them into a makeshift wishing well, and to enter a raffle for dining gift cards courtesy of Townhouse restaurant.

In attendance were a number of elected officials, including State Reps. Jeremy Moss and Robert Wittenberg and State Sen. David Knezek. Event partners were NEXTGen Detroit, Repair the World, the Downtown Synagogue, Hillel of Metro Detroit, BBYO, Temple Israel and the *Jewish News*. Host committee members were Adam Blanck, Allie Sherman, Ariella Raviv, Ben Falik, Dan Cherrin, Danny Samet, Eddie Berger, Ethan Lis, Hayley Sakwa, Jenny Gross, Josh Fishman, Justin Jacobs, Kelly Sternberg, Lacey Cohen, Lauren Cohn, Lindsey Schwartz, Matt Cohn, Rob Sallen, Sam Dubin, Sherrie Singer and Vadim Avshalumov. A number of other young adults volunteered at the event as well. □

*For more information about The Well, a project of the Lori Talsky Zekelman Fund at Temple Israel, and to learn about upcoming events, visit [www.meetyouatthewell.org](http://www.meetyouatthewell.org).*



Lima Rene Photography

Attendees closed their eyes and participated in a guided meditation focusing on how to welcome others to their personal Well.



Brandon Schwartz

Sam Dubin of West Bloomfield, Eli Natinsky of Detroit, Jonathan Abramson of West Bloomfield and Alex Scharg of Detroit



Brandon Schwartz

Wendy Lazar of Farmington Hills, Allison Weiner, 12, of West Bloomfield, Avery Owen, 12, Howard Lazar and Jonah Owen, 9, all of Farmington Hills



Brandon Schwartz

Brandon Schram of Detroit, Gabe Scharg of Royal Oak, Ian Gross of Birmingham and Brett Powell of Detroit toss their bread into the Detroit River during tashlich.



Brandon Schwartz

Rabbi Dan Horwitz welcomes the crowd to the Detroit River.



Lima Rene Photography

Volunteer Steven Hurvitz of Huntington Woods offers Franklin Cider Mill donuts to attendees.