

# Early Learning Center

Temple  
Israel



Shalom,

The Early Learning Center helped to decorate the temple sukkah with strips of material that were either previously woven on our loom or woven directly into the lattice of the sukkah walls. Rabbi

**Tammy Labonté**  
Director, ELC

Ira came to the sukkah with a lulav and etrog and taught the ELC students about why Sukkot

is a pilgrimage holiday. He said the blessing for dwelling in the sukkah and was happy to see that the children already knew why we shake the lulav and etrog – “to acknowledge that God exists all around us.”



Laura Sher came to the ELC to help us celebrate the harvest with our families. Laura taught us how to make zucchini bread. Then we heard the story Stone Soup, by Marcia Brown, and took turns adding vegetables to the pot to make our own

“stone” vegetable soup. The soup and bread went home to contribute to the children’s family Sukkot celebrations.

For Simchat Torah we made flags and went to the sanctuary to dance to the songs “On Simchat Torah” and “Torah, Torah, Torah,” by Paul Zim. The children learned that, on Simchat Torah, we finish reading the last chapter of the Torah and begin again with the first verses. In the same way that the

children delight in having their parents read a favorite book over and over, the congregation celebrates hearing the Torah read once again from the beginning.

The ELC also has been learning about and practicing fire safety. As a

culminating event, we walked to the Portsmouth Fire Station on Court Street. The children asked some great questions and got to see the inside of a fire truck and ambulance. Thank you Portsmouth Fire Department for talking about fire safety.



**Note to educators: The Early Learning Center is looking for substitute teachers.** If you have an Early Childhood or Elementary Education background and would be interested in substituting in the ELC, please contact Tammy Labonté via email at [preschool.director@templeisraelnh.org](mailto:preschool.director@templeisraelnh.org) or call 603-380-5589.

L’shalom,

Tammy Labonté