



<http://www.charteroakcenter.org>

Charter Oak Cultural Center in Hartford, CT., is a rare and wonderful place. Built in 1876, the state's first synagogue has always been a symbol of the sacred struggle for the freedom of religious and cultural expression. Restored by a group of Hartford-area residents, Charter Oak Cultural Center is now a non-profit arts resource for the exploration of the world's cultures, especially those strongly represented in the Hartford region. It is home to a beautiful gallery and an extraordinary performance space. Through exhibitions, performances, in-school programs, lectures and workshops, the Center is providing the residents of the neighborhood, the greater Hartford area and the state with the opportunity to learn, celebrate, and understand a diversity of cultures.

Mission

The Charter Oak Cultural Center, long an arts showcase for Hartford's diverse communities, offers multicultural arts and education programming in its restored landmark building, Connecticut's first synagogue.

The mission of Charter Oak Cultural Center is actually three-fold:

- To preserve and celebrate the Jewish heritage of the building
- To be a place known for making readily available performing and visual arts that reflect the multi-cultural community in which Charter Oak is blessed to be located
- To do the work of social justice, which we see as not being separate from , but part and parcel of, both the Jewish heritage of the building and of the desire to make sure that the arts are accessible to all who wish to enjoy them.



THE FOOD STAMP PROJECT

Charter Oak, along with Center City Churches, is about to launch a very important program called "The Food Stamp Project." The Food Stamp Project is designed to raise consciousness about the reality of hunger in Hartford. Our goal is to make sure that Center City Churches' MANNA program has enough food and supplies to meet the needs of the growing number of hungry people they serve. Right now this food pantry, one of Hartford's largest, runs out of food each month and has to turn people away.

Here's what The Food Stamp Project entails: Participants will agree to live on a food budget of approximately four dollars per day, the maximum allotment provided on food stamps. They will have the option of living within these constraints for either one week or for an entire month. The program will take place in March, the month leading up to Passover and Easter, the month during which Lent will be observed, the month when the Jewish and Christian communities are thinking about liberation, new life and the commitment to the oppressed which is required of us.