



Mark Your Calendar!

- Sunday, January 7
10:45 a.m. Pirke Avot
12:00 p.m. Congregational Meeting
- Friday, January 12, 7:45 p.m.
Shabbat Service
Guest Speaker
- Saturday, January 20
10:30 a.m. Torah Study
- Friday, January 26, 7:45 p.m.
Lay-Led Shabbat Service
- Friday, January 26-Sunday, January 28
Confirmation Retreat

Rabbi's Message

It seems everyone knows someone who might be interested in joining the synagogue. She is the neighbor at the end of the block; they moved next door last year. They have young children; her children are grown. She was raised as a Jew but never practiced; they are an interfaith couple. They might not know we exist. If these people have never been members of a synagogue, they might be a bit leery of making the commitment. They might be unsure they are wanted. They might worry about being excluded because they don't fit some imaginary ideal, because they are single or gay or too young or too old or interfaith.

Yes, we have a Membership committee that can follow up, but you are the best person to do the initial reaching out. You can reassure them that our Jewish Center is a place where everyone is welcome. You can invite them to join you at services or Torah study. You can introduce them to other members.

Why should you bother? Because you care about the future of your own family. Because, just like our founders 60 years ago, you care about the future of this Temple. Because you want to continue their dedication into the future. Because you believe that Judaism has something to contribute to the world. Because you care about the future of Judaism in America and the world. Of the five million Jews in this country, 20% have no connection with Judaism. In a recent article in the Jerusalem Post, Prof. Arnold Eisen, chancellor-elect of the Jewish Theological Seminary, said "We are losing one quarter [of US Jews], one quarter is getting stronger and the middle we have to fight for, and most of them we lose." Eisen is not discouraged: "If I take the 20% that are active and if I turn another

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President's Message

I have this theory that if one person can go out of their way to show compassion then it will start a chain reaction of the same. - Rachel Scott

Rachel Scott was the first person killed at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999. Her acts of kindness and compassion coupled with the contents of her six diaries have become the foundation for one of the most life-changing school programs in America - Rachel's Challenge.

I viewed the Rachel's challenge program at Hackettstown High School this past month with my daughters. It was run by Rachel Scott's father, Darrell. It was one of the most emotional programs I have ever attended. For anyone involved in a school, I would recommend that you bring up this program to your administrators and bring Mr. Scott in to your school to speak.

The program that he brings is one of simple kindness to other human beings. In my opinion, that is what religion is all about to me. All of the rituals and rites that we as Jews perform, as well as all of the other religions of the world, are to prepare you to do one thing, do unto others as you would have them do to you.

Do you see people for who they really are? Can you see through the facades that we all employ and see the real person behind the facade? Do you see that a simple hello, or thank you, or even just a smile can turn a person's whole day around? The next time you are feeling sad or lonely, instead of thinking about what you need, try smiling at another person. They will usually smile back, and if you start a chain reaction of smiles, how many people's

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Rabbi's Message, cont.

20% into active [Jews], I have transformed the Jewish people. That two million out of four million would leave us in better shape than one million out of five million.”

How do people find the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey? Some look us up in the phone book, many more find us on the web. But most of the people who find us do so because of word of mouth. In honor of our 60 years, talk about us to anyone who will listen. Be your own Membership Committee. Remember the words of our tradition: If you save one life, it is as if you have saved an entire world. In this coming new year, be a life saver.

Rabbi Ellen Lewis

President's Message, cont.

lives can you make better? It doesn't take a Herculean effort to engage in this challenge. It just takes the desire to want to make some one else's life a little better.

May you all have a HEALTHY New Year and may you make a difference in someone's life.

I love each and every one of you and we need all of you at the temple to be involved in our community.

Shalom
Howie

January 12 Shabbat

Renee will be our guest speaker on Friday night, January 12. She will share with us her experiences living in Israel last year. Renee grew up at the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey and is now studying at Colgate University. After graduating high school, she took a gap year in Israel on a program through the Zionist youth movement of Young Judaea. She spent the year studying the history of Israel and Jewish studies and volunteering at different places in the country. She developed such a strong connection to Israel that after the Lebanon conflict this past summer, she knew she had to go back and help. She will be participating in a spring break trip in May with the Jewish National Fund to rebuild the North of Israel. In order to be accepted into this program, she is required to raise \$800 dollars by the middle of January to put toward the relief efforts in Israel. If you would like to make a donation, please make it out to:

Jewish National Fund
Attn: Alternative Spring Break
78 Randall Avenue
Rockville center, NY 11570

In the memo section of the check, please include her name, Renee Orenstein, ID# 1445316, ASB.

January 7th Congregational Meeting

This is our 60th year as a congregation!
We are looking forward to this celebratory year with many programs and events that will uniquely mark our simcha.

The first of these is scheduled for

**Sunday, January 7th, at noon
(snow date: Saturday, January 13th)**

and your participation is needed!
The Board, with your help, wants to look at where we are and where we're going with regard to

Our mission
Our membership
Our spiritual life
Our building
Our programs

We'll start by sitting down to lunch together, so please rsvp to the Temple ASAP

We'd like to have at least one member from every family, and want to include college & confirmation students as well.

**LET US KNOW
YOU'LL BE WITH US!**

Adult Programs

Adult Education classes taught by Rabbi Ellen Lewis will continue to discuss the wisdom found in *Pirke Avot*. All adult congregants are welcome to attend and participate. There is no "homework" and you don't need to have come last year. Classes meet Sunday mornings from 10:45 to noon: January 7, February 11, March 18, and May 6.

Torah study: Monthly discussions are held from 10:30 to 12:30 or so. New participants are welcome. The group studies at its own pace, not following the schedule of the weekly portion, and will be studying the Book of Exodus during 2006-2007. The following Saturday mornings are the expected dates: January 20, February 17, March 24, April 14, May 12, June 16.

To All of our Friends at the Temple,

We have been members of the Jewish Center for nine years and are now busily preparing for our move to central PA. We want the congregation to know that it was wonderful being a part of this Jewish Community. Over the years, we've served on various committees and helped at many functions. It was always a pleasure. Wain found it an honor to maintain the web-site and swab the decks when the water poured into the basement. Judy was quite reluctant to serve on the Board but ultimately found it to be lots of fun and very rewarding. Who wouldn't have fun working with Howie! We will miss all of the people who touched our lives, and are sorry we will not be able to meet new members just joining.

Jeff feels he had a wonderful experience in Sunday school and preparing for his Bar Mitzvah. He will never forget the Rabbi, who had such a positive impact on his life. We couldn't have found a more comfortable and caring religious community. Our wish to all of you is to have a safe and healthy 2007!

Talent Show on March 31st

The Second Ever Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Talent Show will take place on Saturday, March 31st at 7:00 pm. Please begin planning your song, dance, music, dramatic reading, poetry etc. now so that you are ready to perform at the Talent Show. Last year, the First Ever Jewish Center Talent Show was quite a success and enjoyed by those who attended. Parents, tell your family members today so they can be in the show. Confirmation students, here is your chance to "do your thing" before family and friends. Auditions will be held in the New Year. Watch for future notices. We have room for all age groups, both genders, no talent is too small. Let's fill the sanctuary with song and laughter.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Make Jewish LIFE part of your Winter 2007 calendar! Upcoming programs include: Paul Lipz, Eastern European Jewry, Tuesday, February 6 at 7:30 p.m.; Rabbi Neil Gillman, What Happens After We Die? Jewish Teachings on the Afterlife, Sunday, February 11 at 7 p.m.; and our Second annual Rabbis' Night of Learning, Saturday, February 24 at 8 p.m. Save the NEW date for Passover University: Sunday, March 25th at 7 p.m. All programs will be held at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC in Bridgewater. To register, please call

the JCC at 908-725-6994 x201. Additional program details, including fees, are posted at <http://www.ssbjcc.org/Jlife.htm>.

New Jersey-West Hudson Valley Council Regional Shabbaton

Saturday, January 27

Spend Shabbat in study, worship and song! Congregants from throughout the region will spend Shabbat in study, prayer, song and sociality, forming a community whose impact lingers long after the day is concluded. Join us at Temple B'nai Or, 60 Overlook Road, Morristown. The cost is \$45/person. For more information, call the Council at 888-750-8242.

OHR TIKVAH JEWISH HEALING CENTER

Call Ohr Tikvah at 908-725-6994 for more information or to register, www.ohrtikvahjhc.org

Losses and Grief

Sunday, February 4, 2007, 10:30 to 12 noon
Flemington Jewish Community Center, 5 Sergeantsville Road, Flemington. Free of Charge
Rabbi Evan Jaffe, spiritual leader of the Flemington Jewish Community Center, and Norman Poppel, Professor Emeritus of Psychology at Middlesex County College, will present a talk on the losses we experience in life and the grief that accompanies them. The synagogue is located directly across from the Raritan Township Municipal Building. For directions, call (908) 782-6410, or visit: www.flemingtonjewishcenter.org.

Jewish Drumming, Chanting and Music Making with David Malchman

Sunday, February 25, 2007, 3:00 to 4:30 PM
JCC, 775 Talamini Road, Bridgewater
\$ 5.00 donation

Need to release stress or tension? Want to chase away the winter blues? Come drummers and non-drummers alike, and join us as we create rhythm and energy together. We'll start with an easy Jewish chant to lift our spirits in song. No musical experience necessary!! Percussion instruments will be available.

JEWISH CENTER OF NORTHWEST JERSEY

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____ I/We would like to make a contribution of _____

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

Phone _____ Please contact me/us about membership _____

Make check payable to Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey and mail to the Temple.