

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

Journal

PO Box 2, 115 Youmans Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882
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www.jcnwj.org

March 2017
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Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

The Jewish month of Adar began on Friday Evening, February 26 . . . and the timing couldn't have been better, because, according to the Talmud (Taanit 29a), "When the month of Adar enters, we increase in joy (בשמחה מרבין אדר משנכנס)." If ever in our recent memory there were a time that we've needed to increase in joy, certainly this would be it!

As anyone can see, we are living in angry times. Regardless of political affiliation or socioeconomic class, we and most of our fellow Americans are angry. We are taking to the streets, posting on the internet, and taking matters into our own hands. It's palpable, it's disturbing, and it has the tendency to get loud and aggressive. Even worse, we have become a society of fear. Some of us fear immigrants, and some fear the rise of xenophobia. Some fear minority religious traditions, and some fear the increasing presence of a single religious perspective in our public discourse. Some fear government overreach into our lives, while others fear there's not enough government involvement in our lives. Some fear we will lose healthcare, while others fear we won't be able to afford the healthcare we already have if things don't change. Some fear the violence being perpetrated by lawless citizens, while others fear the violence perpetrated by those sworn to protect us. Some fear we don't have enough guns in the hands of ordinary people, while others fear we have too many guns in the hands of ordinary people. Yes, we are a polarized society, but if there is one thing unifying us, unfortunately, it seems to be our shared anger, fear, and distrust of others.

(continued on next page)

Mark Your Calendar

- **Monday, March 6th**
7:00pm – Board of Trustees Mtg.
- **Friday, March 10th**
7:30pm – Shabbat Service
Oneg – Orenstein, Tarlowe, Knobelman
- **Saturday, March 11th**
10:30am – Shabbaton (See Pg. 2)
- **Sunday, March 12th**
11am – Purim Spiel
- **Tuesday, March 14th**
7:00pm – Mah Jongg
- **Saturday, March 18th**
10:30am – Torah Study
- **Monday, March 20th**
7:30pm – Book Club
- **Friday, March 24th**
7:30pm – Shabbat Service
Oneg – Seidorf, Gross, Marinich
- **Tuesday, March 28th**
7:00pm – Mah Jongg
- **Saturday, April 1st**
7:00pm – "Fiddler on the Roof" at
Warren Hills Regional HS

Sunday School:

March 5, 12, 19, 26 @ 9:30am

Rabbi's Message (cont.)

Thank Goodness for Adar, the month of Purim, the time when we celebrate our delivery from destruction! For anyone who's had the pleasure of spending time in our building recently and seeing or hearing our Spielers prepare for their Purim performance, you know what happiness looks and sounds like. For anyone who's ever seen our children dress in costume, sing joyous songs of Purim, or come away with sticky hands from hamantaschen filling, you, too, know what happiness looks like. For anyone who's lived the experience of giving or receiving *Mishloach Manot* (special gifts of Purim food) and *Matanot l'Evyonim* (gifts to the poor), as we are instructed to do in Esther 9:22, you as well know what happiness feels like.

Yes, we live in challenging times. Yes, we spend our days navigating the landmines of anger and fear. Yes, we must keep paying attention, and yes, we may have legitimate reasons to be angry or scared, but so too are we the inheritors of a wise tradition. Sometimes, even if we don't know how, we need to make space for joy and happiness. And if you don't know how, just follow the adage, "Fake it 'till you make it." Force a smile. Put yourself in joyous situations. Find reasons to be happy. Mind you, this will be easier for some than others. For some, moving from anger and fear to happiness can be achieved by a mere change in attitude. For others, it is far more challenging and requires the help of medical professionals. But for all of us, it requires a series of conscious decisions. So, whether you already count yourself among the happy or not, I invite and encourage you to join us on Sunday morning, March 12 (the 14th of Adar) to support our Spielers, appreciate our children, eat some hamantaschen, and increase our collective joy.

Be Happy! It's Adar!!!

Rabbi Dubin

PURIM WEEKEND & SHABBATON **March 10-12, 2017**

On Friday night, Rabbi Dubin and Cantor Labow will conduct a Shabbat service in the spirit of the month of Adar—especially joyful and fun. A condensed version of the Megillah will be read.

Saturday will be "THE WHOLE MEGILLAH," the third Shabbaton conducted by Cantor Labow. We will read and study the *Megillah*; feast on hamantaschen (and other things) for lunch, and later continue in the spirit of Purim for post-luncheon study and break; concluding in the early evening with a Broadway sing-along: Broadway tunes with Purim lyrics. Come in costume Saturday and Sunday if you can. The day will end with a Havdalah service.

Sunday is the annual Purim spiel, this year "A MOTOWN PURIM," directed by Debbie Fesinstine, with a cast of characters you won't believe.

All events are for EVERYONE. *RSVP to Sharon Herson for the Saturday Shabbaton (since food purchase is involved).*

President's Message

Purim spiel 2017

This month, I am going to use my column to suggest that the entire congregation come and see the reading of the Megillah as well as Debbie Fesinstine's direction of the Purim Spiel players on Sunday March 12th. As someone who has participated in the spiel for a number of years, I can assure you that the play is not only for the Sunday School students. The cast takes our parts very seriously as you will see when you come out to watch. Not only do we convey the story of Purim in an interesting and slightly less than straight forward manner, there are lots of laughs to be had. This year, the part of Queen Esther will be played by, well you will have to come and see. Some of our performers are incredibly talented and some of them are not quite as talented, but those of us in the second category make up for that with spirited performances.

Purim is a FUN holiday and I encourage you to come and celebrate with us. Look elsewhere in the newsletter to find out what time the service will begin.

In addition, look in the newsletter for upcoming events and become involved in the temple activities. As I have found out, you get more out of volunteering for the temple than just a good feeling. You get to interact with the nicest people that I know of in the area. In addition, you get to help me fulfill my mission, which is to ensure that there is a Jewish presence in Warren County for the upcoming generations.

I wish you all a wonderful month of March and I look forward to seeing you around the temple this month.

Love, Howie

A Reminder from the Sunshine Committee



Please let us know when someone has passed away, is ill or otherwise in need of a little sunshine so that the Jewish Center may be there to support and assist as best we can. Please contact Ruth Schutzbank at (908) 329-6036 or Howie.ruth@hotmail.com.

SISTERHOOD



All Ladies of the congregation and their guests are invited to bring gently used jewelry to display, try on and exchange with friends

Register to save your spot before Friday April 1st

Email a picture of your pieces to post on the FB page for this event.

Saturday April 8th at 7pm

Simcha room at JCNWJ

JCNWJ use of the Proceeds TBD

Send \$18 pp payable to JCNWJ Sisterhood and indicate in memo line "JEWELRY FUNdraiser"

To: Marci Braunstein
3 Middlesworth Farm Road
Long Valley, New Jersey
07853

Chocolate Desserts will be served

Bring your own wine or soft drink

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Upcoming Sunday School Dates:

- March 5th
- March 12th
- March 19th
- March 26th

Purim Celebration on March 12th

Confirmation on March 5th

Updates & Events

FIDDLER ON THE ROOF

Join us on a JCNWJ outing to see Fiddler on the Roof!

Saturday, April 1, 2017 at 7:00 p.m.

Warren Hills Regional High School Auditorium
41 Jackson Valley Road, Washington, NJ

- Support the Warren Hills Drama Club
- Enjoy a great musical
- Hang out with JCNWJ friends

The cost is \$12 for Adults and \$8 for Students/Seniors

RSVP: Please get your money to Marsha Gross, 18 Jackson Valley Road, Washington, NJ 07882 **by March 17th** so she can reserve a block of seats together.

(Checks should be made payable to "Warren Hills Student Activities".)

If you can't join us at the 7:00 p.m. show on Saturday but want to see it, there are also performances on Thursday, March 30th and Friday, March 31st at 7:00 p.m., and Saturday, April 1st at 1:00 p.m.

Hope you can make it!

MAH JONGG

Mah Jongg at the Temple on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month continues. We start at 7:00pm. No experience needed! Contact Rhonda Jordan at helpmerhonda171@yahoo.com if interested!

HEAR THE MEGILLAH

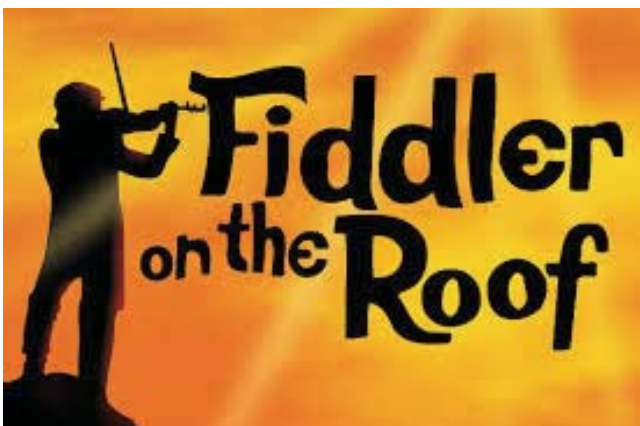
According to the Shulchan Aruch (the preeminent code of Jewish law, which was written by Joseph Caro in 1563 and published in 1565): *"A person is obligated to hear the reading of the Megillah – once at night and again the next day."*

We at the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey will add a third reading, just to make sure every member has an even better chance of fulfilling the obligation.

The first reading will be of a condensed version during Friday Night services (March 10), the second reading will be during an adult learning session with Cantor Labow on Saturday Morning (March 11th), and the final reading will be a children's version at Religious School on Sunday morning prior to the Purim Spiel.

Wanted: Advertisers for JCNWJ Journal

Kindly take note of the ads at the end of our Journal and whenever possible, support these establishments with your patronage. It's also a good idea to mention that you saw their Temple Ad. If there are any businesses that you use regularly that might be interested in taking an ad in the Journal, please contact Rita Berkowitz (berk721@aol.com) or Ruth Schutzbank (Howie.ruth@hotmail.com). You can also go to our homepage, print out an advertising form and give it directly to them to mail in.



Updates & Events

DONATIONS

In Memory of Max Gross

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- Jeannette & Bud Wagner
- Lillian Schwartz
- Klaire Katz & Family

In Memory of Jackie Spinner

In Memory of Ellis Golub

- Helen & John Mattson

TORAH STUDY

Upcoming dates for Torah study are the following Saturday mornings, promptly at 10:30: **March 18, April 15, May 13, and June 10**. The “regulars” always welcome new participants. On March 18, we will be reading toward the end of Numbers. We will study the passages relating to the recapitulation of the wanderings in the desert and the boundaries of Canaan (Num. 33:1–34:29). After that, the cities of refuge (Num. 35:1–34); and, finally, the daughters of Zelophehad (Num. 36:1–13). That means we should finish Numbers by June, if not earlier. For those who haven’t been to a Torah study session, some explanation may be in order. The group moves at its own pace; therefore, we don’t know exactly how far we will get in any given two-hour session. (We are not reading the portion of the week—maybe next time around . . .)

YOU MIGHT HAVE MISSED

The Shabbaton That Was: On Saturday, February 25, a small but cheerful group of congregants, led by Cantor Labow, rejoiced in a Saturday morning service that was followed by a fascinating (and fast) overview of Hebrew poetry, from biblical forms to contemporary—this was a prelude to the poetry and music of Leonard Cohen. The Cantor read some early poetry from a collection of Cohen’s works that was published in 1961—very moving, highly recommended (even if you’re not a big poetry fan). Besides singing along to Cohen’s stimulating lyrics, the group was treated to a magnificent solo by Celeste Siciliano. Her rendering of Cohen’s “Song of Bernadette” and Cantor Labow’s “Hallelujah” brought tears to the eyes of more than one participant—that’s what happens when something is so beautiful that it really gets to you. A very wonderful day—good food, too.

A New Teacher for All: I was perusing the Members Page a few days ago—you just never know what you’re gonna find there. What I found was help in studying several of our most important prayers, read and chanted by our newest teacher, Adam Tucker. Go to the Members Page, click on YouTube Videos for Students—BUT this is not just for students—and then you get to each of the three prayers thus far available: Avot, G’vurot, V’ahavta. Anyone who needs a review in pronunciation or chanting will find this helpful; and it’s also helpful for parents to study with your kids. Adam reads each prayer, the cursor follows along underneath the Hebrew on the screen; then he chants the same prayer, and again the cursor follows. Take advantage of this resource. Thank you, Adam.

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