



## Mark Your Calendar!

- Sunday, April 1  
Sunday School Model Seder
- Tues. April 3, 6 p.m.  
Community Seder
- Sunday, April 8  
No Religious School  
Happy Passover!
- Friday, April 13, 7:45 p.m.  
Shabbat Service
- Saturday, April 14,  
9:30 a.m. Torah study  
11:00 a.m. SHABBATON  
(rescheduled)
- Sunday, April 15, 11:00 a.m.  
Yom HaShoah Service
- Friday, April 20, 7:45 p.m.  
Shabbat Service
- Saturday, April 21, 10:00 a.m.  
Bat Mitzvah
- Sunday, April 22  
9:30 a.m. Yom HaAtzmaut  
Breakfast  
10:30 a.m. Confirmation
- Friday, May 4, 6:30 p.m.  
Shabbat Across America
- Sunday, May 6  
10:45 a.m. Adult Ed. Pirke Avot
- June 3 morning, congregational  
meeting and elections
- June 10 JCNWJ 60th  
anniversary celebration,  
a family event

## Rabbi's Message

It begins the day after Purim. Although Pesach is still a month away, it begins to occupy our thinking long beforehand. Shall I buy that box of cereal now or will I have to throw it out if I don't finish it before Passover? When will I do my Passover cleaning, shopping and cooking? Where will I have seder this year? Whom should I invite? Which haggadah should I use? What recipes should I use if I have guests who are vegetarian, ovo-lactarian or vegan?

Passover confronts us with a question we struggle with on a daily basis: How do we plan for the future and yet not miss the holiness of the moment? The answer seems to be built into the process of preparation. If you plan for the future, then when the moment comes, you will be able to be fully present. If you don't plan for the future, you won't be ready when the time comes. So we find ourselves in a state of getting ready, at least in the concrete ways we prepare for Pesach. We have to be careful not to use these preparations as a distraction from paying attention to our spiritual readiness. We don't want to work so hard that we miss the holiness of the moment.

Pesach offers us an opportunity for holiness on three levels: spiritual, physical and moral. In that holy moment, we can redeem ourselves from our human imperfection on every level. Spiritually: we relive the experience of moving from slavery to freedom, from *avdut* to *herut*. We are required to personally relive that experience. Physically: we eat only foods particular to Pesach. We actually digest our experience of freedom. We have an awareness throughout the holiday of thinking before eating, of elevating the act of eating to a different level. We rid our bodies and souls of the *hametz*, the inflation of the ego and the material. Morally: we are obligated to let all who are hungry come and eat.

And we are obligated to give. While *tzedakah* is always a *mitzvah*, it is felt that on Pesach

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## President's Message

I am writing this message to you after attending (and participating) in the second ever talent show at the Jewish Center. If you did not attend this show, I can not tell you how much you missed. Everyone who was in the audience had a grin a mile wide from the first act to the last. Well, since I was first and last, maybe just the ones in between. The night belonged to the performers and I wanted to thank each and every one of them personally. You were all wonderful. My favorite performer for the night was Edythe, who told a short autobiographical story about wanting to be a blues singer, but her mother told her that it was not an appropriate profession for a nice Jewish girl. Well last night Edythe got her wish and sang a few verses from old songs that she used to sing at weddings and Bar Mitzvahs up in Canada. She followed that up with a rousing rendition of a song made famous by Cab Calloway called Minnie the Moocher, and she had the whole audience participating in the Hi-he-hi-de-ho part of the song. To see the light in her eyes and the smile on her face as she was performing was something I will never forget. And in case you do not know who Edythe is, she is the mother of our past president Sharon. She is also 85 years old. But after watching her last night, 85 years young would be much more appropriate. I will also let you know about one other performer, Jonathon, who at 8 years old was not our youngest performer, but I think our gutsiest. He has been practicing magic tricks for about 4 weeks now, according to what I heard last night, and was able to get on stage last night and amaze and amuse us with a few magic tricks. He was absolutely wonderful. There were so many others that performed that made

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**Rabbi's Message, cont.**

particularly no one should go hungry, and so we make a special Pesach gift called Maot Hittin.

Ironically, it turns out that it's our most human struggles that even allow us to be holy. The rabbis point out that angels can't ever become holy because they aren't human and don't know what it is like to live with imperfection. Holiness would be meaningless to the angels; it is only meaningful to human beings. Angels can only be angelic; human beings can only be holy in humanly ways. At seder, we remember that we are priests in our own homes, our table is our altar, and prayer replaces the ancient sacrifice. We are holy and human, in all our imperfect glory. On this coming Passover, as we retell the story at our seder tables, may we all achieve the goal of being present in that holy moment.

*Hag sameach v'kasher.*  
Rabbi Ellen Lewis

**President's Message, cont.**

our hearts swell with pride as we watched each one of them perform. I believe that last night's show was even better than last year's show and I can't wait to do it again.

Special presidential thanks to Helen, who conceived this idea and has made it come to fruition for the past two years. Mazel Tov, Helen.

Shalom

Howie

**Community Seder, Tuesday, April 3, starting time 6 p.m.**

*Seating is limited for the community seder, so please contact Esther*

For the past several years, we have held a community seder on the second night of Passover. This is a chance to commemorate the Exodus with your temple family, and celebrate with song, prayer, and traditional (and maybe not-so-traditional) food. This year's seder will be led by a member of the congregation.

**SHABBATON has been rescheduled to  
Saturday morning, April 14, 2007  
9:30 a.m. Torah study led by Rabbi and Cantor  
11:00 a.m. Shabbat morning service using the new  
Reform prayerbook Mishkan Tefilah**

**Kiddush of challah and wine following the service**

**(no RSVP necessary)**

**Invite a Potential New Member  
to Shabbat Across America, Friday, May 4**

Shabbat Across America is scheduled for Shabbat Friday, May 4th. At 6:30 p.m. Rabbi Lewis will conduct a short Kabbalat Shabbat service which will be followed by a covered dish dairy or vegetarian meal. This has been an annual national event inviting anyone who wishes to join a temple or synagogue in celebrating Shabbat. This year, Debbie is our chairperson for this event. Our Oneg hosts for that evening are Paul and Laura who are honoring their daughter, who will become bat mitzvah the following day. Plan to come and enjoy the fellowship of other families in a Shabbat dinner and support the Tarlowes in celebrating their simcha.

**Torah Study, Saturday, April 14, 9:30 a.m.**

Before the Shabbaton, read and discuss the Song of Moses and the Song of Miriam (Exodus 15), begun at the February session and to be continued in April. Upcoming dates: April 14, May 12, June 9 (this is a change from previously scheduled June 16), July and August TBA. Check with Sharon Herson if you are coming for the first time or if you missed the last meeting.

**\*\*Join by June 1st\*\***

**Receive 1 year Temple Membership for the Family  
Religious School for the children  
and 4 weeks (2nd session)  
at the NJ YM-YWHA Camp in PA  
(Cedar Lake/Nah-Jee-Wah) for 1 child**

**Total price \$1,800 (A \$4,200 value!)**  
Call for details at 908.689.0762

**JEWISH CENTER OF NORTHWEST JERSEY**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ I/We would like to make a contribution of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me/us about membership \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey and mail to:  
JCNWJ, c/o Paul May at the Temple.

## **Adult Ed. Pirke Avot.**

**Sunday, May 6, 10:45 a.m.**

Take full advantage of our gifted teacher, Rabbi Ellen J. Lewis, who guides us in understanding these rabbinic aphorisms and helps us decide how/if they apply to our own lives. The course, for adult members of the congregation, requires simply a desire to study and participate in lively discussion. No homework is required, though if you are willing to read a little outside of class, you will receive benefits without measure. Rabbi Lewis meets with interested students on Sunday mornings once a month, from 10:45 to noon. If you are new to the class, let Rabbi Lewis know you plan to attend.

## **News from the Ritual Committee**

First, thank you to all the b'nai mitzva families who joined the ritual committee and Rabbi Lewis for brunch and information regarding their upcoming simchas. The following families will celebrate b'nai mitzvah in the spring of 2008: Fesinstines, Kestechers and Tarlowes.

Thanks to all who participated in the Second Annual Talent Show March 24th. Without you we would not have a night to celebrate your talents.

## **Education Committee and PTO News**

**April 1st** is our Model Seder which will begin at 10:30. PTO always prepares a great Seder.

There will be No Hebrew School on **April 8th** due to Passover.

**April 15th** is Yom Hashoah. The service will begin at 11:00 a.m. and we have the pleasure of Esther Bakonyi as our speaker, "My Gift to You: Personal Recollections of a Hungarian Jewish Child from the Holocaust Years."

**April 22nd** we will celebrate Yom HaAtzmaut with an Israeli Breakfast at 9:45.

## **Missing Email Addresses**

Occasionally we will send timely announcements to the congregation via email. Currently we have an address for everyone except the following people:

- Maureen & Martin Baeck
- Jerrold Berkowitz
- Janice Finkelstein
- Murray & Leslie Heller
- Lorraine Kaplowitz
- Robert and Linda Margolis
- Rochelle & Tom Ostenfeld
- Ben Schneider & Rose

If you've got a working address for any of the above or if you change your own email address, please send it to Laura Tarlowe.

## **Thank You!**

I wanted to thank you again for helping me raise enough money to go on the Jewish National Fund's Alternative Spring Break. In total, our group of students raised \$200,000, which is

going to Operation Northern Renewal, a 10-year, \$400 million campaign that is rebuilding and restoring the ecosystem and communities destroyed by rocket attacks. In Israel this past week, our group cleaned up the Naftali Forest, which was susceptible to forest fires caused by rockets. We also restored bomb shelters in villages that were affected by the Lebanon war. The bomb shelters had not been renovated or painted in many years, so we spent two days cleaning and painting these places. We also restored a park so it could be a nicer place for children to play after the events they experienced over the summer.

I had the opportunity to hear the stories of residents, soldiers, and friends that went through the war. After this dramatic War, being able to participate in this project gave me an even stronger connection to the land of Israel that I hold very close to my heart. It is so important to contribute to a place that helps define our Jewish religion and history. MTV News decided to cover our trip as part of a segment called "Amazing Break," which aired in March.

Thank you again for your help and your support of Israel.

## **COMMUNITY PROGRAMS**

The Jewish LIFE community-wide Yom Hashoah Observance takes place Sunday, April 15, 7 p.m. at Temple Sholom, Bridgewater (908-722-1339). The evening will include the showing of the documentary, *Surviving Auschwitz, Children of the Shoah*. A discussion will follow with Tova Friedman and her daughter, Taya Friedman, whose visit to Auschwitz is featured in this documentary.

The final Jewish LIFE program of the season will feature headliner, Rabbi Joseph Telushkin on Sunday, April 22, 7 p.m. at the JCC. Rabbi Telushkin is the author of several books that have made Jewish philosophy, theology and history accessible to the broad public. The fee is \$15/Jewish LIFE members and \$20/Guests. A reception for Jewish LIFE Patrons & Benefactors, and program sponsors will take place at 6 p.m. (The program Sponsor fee is \$100 and includes two tickets to the vent, preferred seating and the Reception with Rabbi Telushkin.)

## **OHR TIKVAH JEWISH HEALING CENTER**

Call Ohr Tikvah at 908-725-6994 for more information or to register, [www.ohrtikvahjhc.org](http://www.ohrtikvahjhc.org)

**Healing Waters: The Mikveh as a Source of Renewal for Men and Women**, Thursday, April 26, 7:30 to 9 PM, Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center, 775 Talamini Road, Bridgewater, donations welcomed.

Rabbi Robin Nafshi will provide an overview of the ancient Jewish ritual of immersion in sacred water, and lead a discussion about ways we can mark significant life transitions with traditional and new immersion ceremonies. In the months ahead, Ohr Tikvah will sponsor a visit to a local mikveh.