

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

# Journal

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www.jcnwj.org

May 2015  
Vol. XXXX Issue 9



## Rabbi's Message

### Tearing Down the Invisible Wall

Recently, we had a guest speaker at the Jewish Center and before her presentation I invited her to sit on the bima. She looked like a deer in headlights. Her discomfort with the bima was clear and every time there was a transition in the program, she kept asking if it was time to move and sit in the congregation. While it was clear that she was an experienced and engaging speaker, it was equally clear that she shared the view that the bima is the sole realm of rabbis and cantors. Knowing that many Jews are raised with this attitude, I have worked throughout my rabbinate to tear down the invisible wall which seems to exist between the congregation and the bima.

One of the things that I love and respect about Judaism is that we are all equal. There is no king or queen, no high priest. No one has more access to our tradition or community than another. Rabbis, cantors, educators and other Jewish professionals are just Jews who have studied and dedicated their work and personal lives to Judaism and the Jewish community. Therefore, every Jew is encouraged to learn what we have had the privilege to learn and to lead in the manner in which we are honored to lead. Ridding ourselves of the invisible barrier that stands between the congregation and bima starts that process of empowering all Jews in their ownership and participation in Judaism.

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## Mark Your Calendar

- **Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>**  
7:30 pm Shabbat Service  
Oneg: Fitzsimmons Family
- **Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
10 am Nina Fitzsimmons' Bat Mitzvah
- **Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
9:30 am Sunday School  
10:30 am Adult Education
- **Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>**  
7:30 pm Board Meeting
- **Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**  
7 pm Mah Jongg
- **Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup>**  
No Sunday School
- **Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>**  
7:30 pm Shabbat Service  
Oneg: Santillo Family
- **Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>**  
10 am Matt Santillo's Bar Mitzvah
- **Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am Sunday School  
9:30 am Confirmation Rehearsal  
9:30 am Congregation Meeting

## Rabbi's Message (cont.)

To create an open bima I have instituted several practices over the last two years. First, for my sermon, I leave the bima and speak from the center aisle, walking around while talking. I purposely use the informal voice, while addressing our sacred text, in order to make it more accessible to all. I leave the bima in order to extend the bima, blurring the boundary between congregation and bima. I have shared my philosophy with Student Cantor Lilah and challenged her to reconstitute our choir and to invite individuals to sing with her during services. The results have been wonderful. I have encouraged our b'nai mitzvah families to invite more of their relatives to join in the candle lighting on Friday nights. I added English readings to the High Holiday honors to allow more members to participate from the bima. Helping train them, I have encouraged members to read or chant Torah, because the Torah is available and accessible to all of us (with some learning). At the b'nai mitzvah services I publicly answer a question raised by the young man or woman of the day. Again, I am hoping to teach with this ritual that every Jew has the honor of asking challenging questions and working to seek satisfying answers. The concept that Judaism belongs to all of us starts with the bima.

I hope each member of our congregation will feel a little closer to the bima and, therefore, to Judaism as a result of these efforts. May you each find a way to connect to our rich tradition.

L'Shalom,

*Rabbi Mary Zamore*

If you, a family member or temple friend is ill or facing a life challenge, please know that Rabbi Zamore is here to help.

Please contact in confidence Rabbi Zamore at [zamorem@comcast.net](mailto:zamorem@comcast.net) or call her at (908) 317-0417.

### The Choir

Please contact Student Cantor Lilah Sugarman at [lilahsugarman@gmail.com](mailto:lilahsugarman@gmail.com) if you would like to join our growing choir.



## Mark Your Calendar (cont.)

- Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup>  
7 pm Book Club
- Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>  
7 pm Mah Jongg
- Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>  
10:30 am Torah Study
- Sunday, May 24<sup>th</sup>  
No Sunday School
- Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>  
7:30 pm Shabbat Service  
Oneg: Rosenblum, Jordan, and Heller Families
- Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>  
9:30 am Confirmation Service with Sunday School

### **Adult Education Continues – Sunday, May 3 at 10:30 am**

#### Bible to Buber and Beyond: God in Jewish Thought

Join the monthly Sunday morning study group led by Rabbi Zamore to learn more about and to discuss "the Jewish God." How has the idea/meaning of God in Judaism changed from Biblical times to today? Come and explore together.



Come to one class or come to all. Open to adults and teens.

Next Class: June 7 at 10:30 am (last session of the year)

### **Confirmation Class**

Next Class: Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 am – 12 pm. Full rehearsal (bring your shoes)

Confirmation: Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>  
Invite your family and friends!

# Contributions

- ✧ In honor of Derek Fenton for stealing the afikomen at the religious school seder  
- Rabbi Mary Zamore
- ✧ In memory of Norma and Herbert Shifrin  
- Laura and Paul Tarlowe

## Join the Game

Mah Jongg  
Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup> and May 19<sup>th</sup>  
7:00 pm  
Simcha Room

Beginners Welcome



## Torah Signing Opportunity June 14<sup>th</sup>

We are offering a unique experience: the chance to be able to write part of a letter in our new Torah. Sofer Jay Greenspan will be coming to our shul on June 14<sup>th</sup> to lead a ceremony where we will be able to write in our Torah.

In order for us to prepare an appropriate program, we need a count of whether you plan to participate or not. To be able to participate, you must be a member in good standing of the congregation. People who are eligible to participate include men, women, children, and especially lefties.

Please respond to Howie at [howheee@comcast.net](mailto:howheee@comcast.net) by May 7<sup>th</sup> letting him know if you plan on being part of this mitzvah. Writing your own Torah is mitzvah number 613 in the Torah, and being a part of this ceremony fulfills this mitzvah for a lifetime.

## *A Message From a Congregant*

Dear Temple Family,

Special thanks to Rabbi Zamore, our Temple Family, and the Bauer, Marinich, Herson/Fleckles and Weinstein families for your cards and prayers in memory of Sandy's dad, Angelo Pentimone. We said goodbye in a personal service led by a longtime family friend, Father Ed Russell. The service included a military honor guard and was a special celebration of an extraordinary man! We have been overwhelmed by the cards, calls, gifts, food, flowers, and the donations to a local Scholarship fund, ORT and Hadassah, in honor of Dad. And, we are happy to share that Sandy and her sister Tina will be presenting two \$1,000 scholarships to deserving High School students at the May 18<sup>th</sup> Leisure Village West Italian American Club meeting her Dad's memory.

With sincere appreciation,  
The Seidorf Family

## Thank You

To all who helped make the 2015 Shabbat Across America such a huge success. The 80 in attendance enjoyed delicious soup, chicken and delectable side dishes, a pitch perfect performance by The Muhlenberg Chaimonics and joyous Shabbat together! Thank you to our friends at Maple Kosher for their generous discount.

# MAZEL TOV

From the JCNWJ to the Fitzsimmons Family  
on Nina's Upcoming Bat Mitzvah.

From the JCNWJ to the Santillo Family on  
Matt's Upcoming Bar Mitzvah.

## Israel Day Parade

There will be a community bus going to the Israel Day Parade in New York City on **Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>**. The bus will pick up parade goers at 8:30am at the **Flemington Jewish Community Center** (5 Sergeantsville Road, Flemington) and at 9:00am at the **Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC** (775 Talamini Road, Bridgewater). The bus will bring spectators to the parade and will pick them up at the same location at 4pm. The bus will then drop off parade goers first to the JCC in Bridgewater and then to the Flemington JCC. The cost is \$5/person for the Coach Bus. All reservations/payment must be made by May 20. There are only 48 seats on the bus...first come first served. Please call the Birnbaum JCC to register at 908-725-6994 x201.

### June Journal Deadline

The deadline for submitting articles and advertisements to be included in the June Issue of the JCNWJ Journal is **May 19, 2015**. Please email articles, photographs, or news items to the Journal Editor, Abby Bauer, at [abbybauer@comcast.net](mailto:abbybauer@comcast.net).

### Save the Dates

**Sunday, June 14<sup>th</sup>**

Summer Social

Live entertainment poolside, BBQ, and fun for everyone!

**Friday, June 26<sup>th</sup>**

Shabbat Dinner in Honor of Rabbi Zamore  
Formal invitation and more information to follow.

Any questions, contact Jeannie Berkowitz at

[berkowitz18013@yahoo.com](mailto:berkowitz18013@yahoo.com)

## 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](mailto:Howie.ruth@hotmail.com).

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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](mailto:berk721@aol.com)) or Ruth Schutzbank ([Howie.ruth@hotmail.com](mailto: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.