

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey

# Journal

PO Box 2, 115 Youmans Avenue, Washington, NJ 07882  
(908) 689-0762  
www.jcnwj.org

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## Rabbi's Message

Exciting things are happening at the JCNWJ on Sunday mornings, and we hope you'll choose to be part of it!

First and foremost, on behalf of our entire team at The Mike Weiner School of Jewish Learning (especially our teachers, Debbie Fesinstine, Suzi Marr, and Jennifer Rosenblum – and our *tireless* Education Chair, Gerri Klein) I want to thank all our parents for entrusting your children with us this year. It is an honor and a privilege that we do not take lightly.

The thematic focus of our upcoming year will be an ongoing response to the question, "What does it mean to be an American Reform Jewish child/person?" To accomplish our goal, we will explore 350 years of Jewish experience in America, with themes being presented each week based on where we stand in both the Jewish and secular calendars. Special attention will be paid towards developing a deep and ongoing discussion of the Jewish ethical mandates that emanate from the various episodes we study.

We will begin each week with a school-wide gathering, during which I will introduce the day's theme. We will then disperse to grade-specific classes where the theme will continue to be explored in age-specific ways.

In the middle of the class day we will reconvene as a whole school for a brief prayer session, accompanied by our music specialist, Debbie Fesinstine.

continued on next page

## Mark Your Calendar

- **Sunday, October 4<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am Sunday School  
9:30 am Read Hebrew America
- **Friday, October 9<sup>th</sup>**  
7:30 pm Shabbat Services (Simchat Torah and Consecration of New Students)  
Oneg: McMullen, Margolin, and Goldfarb Families
- **Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup>**  
10:30 am Jewish Texts and Tunes with Cantor Labow
- **Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am Sunday School  
9:30 am Read Hebrew America
- **Monday, October 12<sup>th</sup>**  
7:30 pm Board of Trustees Meeting
- **Tuesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>**  
7 pm Mah Jongg
- **Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>**  
10:30 am Torah Study
- **Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup>**  
9:30 am Sunday School  
9:30 am Blood Drive
- **Friday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>**  
7:30 pm Shabbat Services (Installation of Rabbi Dubin and New Board)  
Oneg: Onweller Family

## Mark Your Calendar (cont.)

- Saturday, October 24<sup>th</sup>  
10 am Hailey Onweller's Bat Mitzvah
- Sunday, October 25<sup>th</sup>  
9:30 am Sunday School  
9:30 am Read Hebrew America
- Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>  
7 pm Mah Jongg

## Rabbi's Message (cont.)

Finally, we will follow our prayer with dedicated Hebrew study, with attention being placed on developing reading fluency, thematic understanding, familiarity with specific synagogue practices, and appreciation for the value of prayer.

Also on Sunday mornings, we will be welcoming knowledge-thirsty adults into the building to learn at the same time as our children. Marci Braunstein and Alison Shelofsky will be offering five 1.5 hour sessions (October 4, 11, 25, and November 8, 15) for adults who are eager to develop the ability to read Hebrew. This fabulous class is being funded by the Jewish National Outreach Project, and we are grateful.

And finally (for now), there will be a third learning opportunity on Sunday mornings as well. Because I am just so excited about the curriculum we are piecing together for the Sunday School children, I have decided to offer a parallel adult class for congregants who want to address the same themes that our children are exploring. The exact dates for this class have not yet been determined, but our current plan is to begin after the Hebrew Literacy class has come to completion. Stay tuned for more information, including a more detailed list of the planned themes. How beautiful it will be when our whole community, from our children to our retirees, takes the opportunity to focus together!

Yes, exciting things are happening on Sunday mornings at 115 Youmans Avenue, and we invite you with open arms to come join us. And bring your friends!

Wishing you all a most Blessed and Happy New Year,

*Rabbi Dubin*

## CLASSES

### JEWISH TEXTS AND TUNES

With Cantor Labow

An ongoing number of sessions will explore a variety of Jewish texts, secular and religious, and their expression in different styles of music, from popular song to the concert hall. We will explore the ideas and issues expressed by the music, learn songs, and listen to recorded performances. A deeper understanding of the texts and of Judaism will be gained through the wonderful medium of Jewish music. Non-musical study sources include Torah, Talmud, and Hebrew poetry.



**Class Dates:** Sept. 26, Oct. 10, Nov. 7, Dec. 5, April 16, May 14, May 21, June 11.

### BEGINNING HEBREW FOR ADULTS

With Marci Braunstein and Allison Shelofsky

JCNWJ Sisterhood Hosts Read Hebrew America

If you've always wanted to learn to read Hebrew but don't have a lot of time, this is the class for you! This course was designed by NJOP (National Jewish Outreach Program). The five-week Hebrew Reading Crash Course will focus on teaching the Hebrew alphabet and basic reading skills to Jews with little or no background in Hebrew. Each of the 5 sessions are 1 ½ hours long, and will meet on the following Sundays: October 4, 11, 25 and November 8, 15 at 9:30 am. The program will focus on the Hebrew alphabet and basic reading skills. For more information about Read Hebrew America, or to sign up, please email Marci Braunstein at marci\_braunstein@yahoo.com or call 908-813-9981.



## President's Message

"New Year's Resolutions"

As Jews in the United States, we get to have a special sort of do-over during this time of year. In January, we make our secular resolutions ("I will go to the gym," "I will lose weight," "I will be better to my spouse," or a variety of other traits that we would like to improve upon). If you are like me, most of these resolutions are short-lived and our best intentions give way to life's realities, and we go back to our old ways. Rosh Hashanah provides us with a second chance. We have the opportunity look at ourselves and, for the second time in a year, ask: What can I do that will make my life better? What can I do that will make a difference in the world? I hope you take advantage of this second chance to make at least one change in your life that will make a difference for you, your family, or your friends. My suggestion is not to bite off too much, but try and focus on the one thing that is most meaningful to you.

My wish for each and every one of you is for your year to be healthy.

L'Shanah Tovah,  
*Howie Hirsch*

### Let the Games Begin... Again.

Mah Jongg at The Jewish Center

October 13<sup>th</sup> and October 27<sup>th</sup>

7 pm

Simcha Room

If you have been playing for years or if you have never played before, there is always a place for you at our tables. Please bring your Mah Jongg card and (if applicable) your game set with you.

For more information please contact Tracey Bauer at [traceysbauer@comcast.net](mailto:traceysbauer@comcast.net) or (908) 876-4451

## JEWISH CONTRIBUTIONS TO AMERICAN SOCIETY

With Rabbi Andy Dubin

Classes will meet on most Sunday mornings from 11 am to noon, starting in November, after the Hebrew Reading class has concluded. The thematic focus will be the same topic that the students in the religious school will be studying: an ongoing response to the question "What does it mean to be an American Reform Jewish child/person?" To accomplish our goal, we will explore 350 years of Jewish experience in America, with themes being presented each week based on where we stand in both the Jewish and secular calendars. Special attention will be devoted to developing a deep and ongoing discussion of the Jewish ethical mandates that emanate from the various episodes we study. A list of the specific themes and class dates will be announced soon.

**Class Dates:** TBD

## TORAH STUDY

Our lay-led Torah Study Group began in September 1998. We started with "In the beginning..." and over the past 17 years, we have delved into the first three books of the Torah and are now in the middle of the book of Numbers. We use several different English translations, keeping the Hebrew text close at hand. Our pace is slow and our discussions lively as we discuss the various levels of meaning, and in particular how the text does or does not relate to us today. New participants are always welcome. The two-hour monthly Saturday morning study sessions begin at 10:30.

**Class Dates:** Oct. 17, Nov. 14, Dec. 12, Jan. 16, Feb. 13, March 12, April 23, May 7, June 18.

# High Holiday Greetings

- ✧ To our temple family from the Marinich family
- ✧ To Jeffrey Fenton and family from Wendy and Richard Fenton
- ✧ L'Shanah Tovah to the entire congregation from Robin and Colson Hall
- ✧ To JCNWJ friends from the Gross family
- ✧ Shalom, peace, and joy to all. L'Shanah Tovah from Risa and Al Smith
- ✧ To the JCNWJ congregation from the Parson family
- ✧ To the congregation, L'Shanah Tovah from the Goldner-Post family
- ✧ To our congregation, L'Shanah Tovah from Sharon, Daniel, and Edythe Herson
- ✧ To Rabbi Dubin and Cantor Labow, welcome and L'Shanah Tovah from Sharon, Daniel, and Edythe Herson
- ✧ To all from the Margolin/Weiner family
- ✧ To all members, L'Shanah Tovah from Jerry and Rita Berkowitz
- ✧ To the congregation of JCNWJ from the Shelofsky family
- ✧ L'Shanah Tovah from the Bauer family
- ✧ L'Shanah Tovah to our congregation from Ed, Roseann, and Sarah Weinstein
- ✧ L'Shanah Tovah to the JCNWJ congregation from the Tarlowe family
- ✧ L'Shanah Tovah to the JCNWJ congregation from Rhonda Jordan
- ✧ To temple members from Howard and Ruth Schutzbank
- ✧ To Rabbi Dubin, Cantor Labow, and the congregation from the Braunstein family
- ✧ To the entire congregation, L'Shanah Tovah from Helen and John Mattson
- ✧ To the congregation from Rabbi Lewis
- ✧ To the JCNWJ family from the Hirsch family
- ✧ To our family at the JCNWJ, L'Shanah Tovah from Bernie and Nancy Robins

## Blood Drive

We will be holding our annual blood drive on **Sunday, October 18<sup>th</sup>** from 9:30 am until 2 pm. If you are a regular blood donor and wish to donate at the temple, the last date that you can donate and be eligible for the JCNWJ Blood Drive is August 23<sup>rd</sup>. Saving a life is one of the purest mitzvahs you can perform, and donating a pint of blood can save up to three lives.

To make an appointment, please copy and paste this link into your browser:

[https://donor.cbsblood.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/39622](https://donor.cbsblood.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/39622).

If you have any questions, please contact Howie Hirsch at [howheee@comcast.net](mailto:howheee@comcast.net).



## Birthright Registration Is Now Open!



If you're 18-26 and have at least one Jewish parent, then you might be eligible for this free trip. There's so many ways to customize your experience with special interest trips, college credit, community trips, and more!

Start your 10-day adventure at [www.BirthrightIsrael.com/Go](http://www.BirthrightIsrael.com/Go). It's so much more than a free trip to Israel.

# “Rabbi focuses on ‘authenticity’ in new pulpit”

Reprinted with permission from [NJ Jewish News](#)

With his own books in boxes piled high on one side of his office and “inherited” books in the bookcase behind him, Rabbi Dr. Andy Dubin is beginning to make his small office at the Jewish Center of Northwest NJ in Washington a part-time home.

When he started rabbinical school at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York, Dubin said, he thought he would end up at a more “typical” full-time pulpit; but, he added, this one fits him well.

He spent the first year after his ordination in 2014 creating his own rabbinate in New York City, working with unaffiliated Jews. Although he loved being in a position to offer private classes, mostly to interfaith couples looking for a rabbi to marry them, what he was missing, he said, was community. “Now, I have it. The Jewish Center finishes the puzzle for me.”

Dubin, 49, replaces Rabbi Mary Zamore, who arrived in 2013, and Rabbi Ellen Jay Lewis, who preceded her for 19 years. He will serve part-time as religious leader.

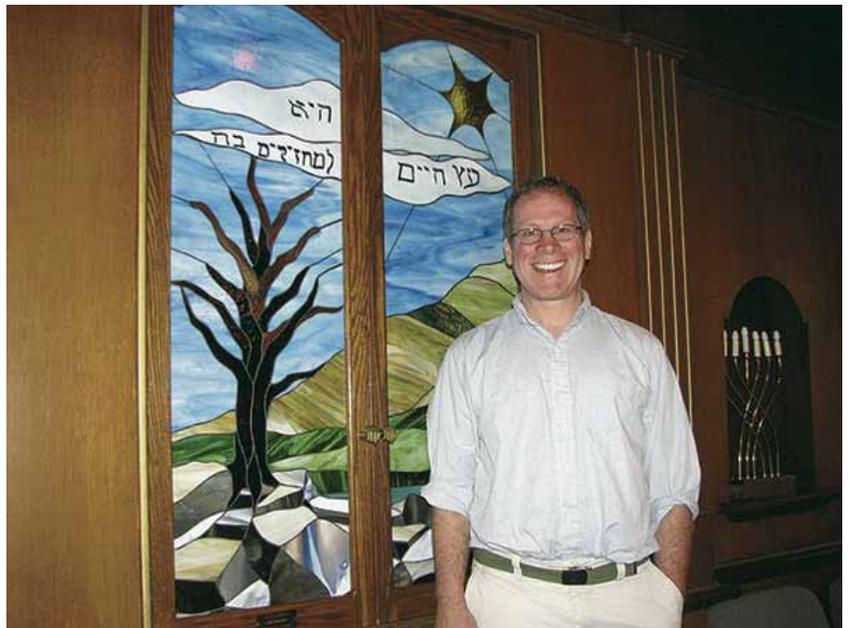
Dubin said he plans to continue teaching in his native New York City, where he and his wife, Nancy, a cantorial student, are raising their four children. Twice a month on Friday nights, Saturday mornings for simchas, and every Sunday morning, he makes the drive from the Inwood neighborhood in upper Manhattan to Washington, where a small building built in 1947 on a residential block houses the community of 68 member families and fewer than 10 religious-school students.

Dubin is even considering creating a new kind of Jewish community in New York with his wife, once she is invested as a cantor — but he plans to stay at the Jewish Center “for a good long time.”

The Jewish Center community is a small but “capable” Reform congregation, he said. “The leadership is so strong. This community takes responsibility for itself. You don’t find that in too many places.” The religious school works as a cooperative, with members serving as teachers and leaders. And when there is no clergy, members of the congregation run Shabbat services.

He loves the center’s family-friendly approach. Already, the congregation has extended itself to his own family in a way, Dubin said, that made him feel “overwhelmingly supported and hugged.”

Although he is still learning his way around New Jersey, the job feels anything but foreign. He’s been teaching Jewish subjects and/or working in the Jewish community since the beginning of his 20-year career as an educator. Dubin holds a PhD in Bible from the Jewish Theological Seminary, and has taught in secular environments, from the Trinity School in Manhattan (his alma mater) to Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire, as well as in Jewish environments like Gann Academy in Waltham, Mass., and the American Hebrew Academy, a Jewish boarding school in Greensboro, NC. He also spent four summers as head-of-tours for National Federation of Temple Youth in Israel, which led to a position at the Union for Reform Judaism as director of college education and founding director of the Meitav Fellowship for Teen Leadership.



*Continued on Next Page*

## “Rabbi focuses on ‘authenticity’ in new pulpit” (cont.)

The Amherst College graduate had long thought about becoming a rabbi, but didn’t make the leap until he was living in North Carolina and joined Al-Anon to work through addiction issues in his family. Group members were mostly Southern Baptists. “Until I was involved with Al-Anon, God to me was a character in a book,” he said. “With Al-Anon, God became real. I credit those fundamentalist Baptists for steering me to the rabbinate.”

That’s because a basic premise of the group, which follows the 12-step model, is that you have to build a relationship with a power greater than you. “Until then,” Dubin said, “The God I didn’t believe in was the God I thought I was supposed to believe in but didn’t. They helped me see that I didn’t have to define God in a pediatric way.” In the end, he said, “I developed a whole new relationship to God.”

He tries to share this authentic approach in his rabbinate. In a “Humans of NY” interview, posted in February, he was quoted as saying, “I don’t try to provide any answers. I tell people what tradition says, and if they find meaning in it, and it works for them, then they are welcome to apply it. If not, we’ll look at other possibilities. I think that every generation has a responsibility to create its own understanding of religion.... I think that if it has no relevance to people’s lives, Judaism will cease to exist.”

Dubin is looking forward to making the center a place “that attracts and offers what people want.” Because the local Jewish population is small, he said, “We need to represent the Jewish people well and have good, friendly relations” with the community.

“Elections are coming up. I’d love to have a forum here for local candidates,” he said. He’s planning mitzva projects — a serious focus, he said, on bringing the shards of the world back together — and intends to have his congregation participate in interfaith events. He’s already excited about taking part in an interfaith music project with a nearby Catholic church.

“I want this to be a place where the community knows that in this building, good stuff happens, and that the larger community is richer because of our presence.”

## Contributions

- ✧ In honor of Sharon Herson, Woman of the Year
- Edythe Herson
- Helen Mattson
- Ruth and Howard Schutzbank
- Ed, Roseann, and Sarah Weinstein
- Gwen Nagorsky
- Roxana Peck and Sid Krane
- Claudia Shacter-Dechabert
- Rita and Jerry Berkowitz
- The Shelofsky Family
- The Onweller Family

## MAZEL TOV

From the JCNWJ to the Onweller Family  
on Hailey’s Upcoming Bat Mitzvah.

### 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).**

## *Save The Date*

Installation of Rabbi Dr. Andy Dubin

Friday, October 23, 2015

Shabbat Dinner at 6 pm followed by Installation Service at 7:30 pm

Additional Information to Follow

### **November Journal Deadline**

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

### **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](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.



Jewish LIFE (Learning Is For Everyone) is pleased to begin its new season of Jewish learning for our community. The year is filled with a wide variety of programs, classes taught by our area Rabbis and Professionals, and special events. There is truly something for everyone! We are pleased that due to popular demand, The Melton School of Adult Learning and iEngage are both returning to Jewish LIFE. This year The Melton School is offering both the Core Class Curriculum (begins October 20) and Melton Graduate School (begins October 13) – both taking place at the Birnbaum JCC in Bridgewater. The Core Curriculum will be taught by Rabbi Dan and Karen Selsberg and the Graduate School will be taught by Rabbi Richard Fagan. iEngage, a video and lecture series from the Shalom Hartman Institute, Jerusalem, kicks off on November 15 at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough with Rabbi Arnie Gluck. This year's curriculum is Engaging Israel: The Tribes of Israel: A Shared Homeland For a Divided People.

Anat Hoffman, Executive Director of the Israel Religious Action Center will be in our community for a Scholar-in-Residence Weekend Friday, September 4 at 6pm (Shabbat Dinner and Services) and Saturday, September 5 at 7:30pm (Program and Selichot Services) at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough. The Jewish Film Series hosted by Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough begins Saturday, September 19 with the showing of *Green Chariot*. We are pleased to bring back the popular Irma Horowitz Film Series. The first of three series events is scheduled for Sunday, October 25 at 10am when we screen the film *Havana Curveball* at the JCC. Q & A and discussion with the film makers will follow the film (via Skype). There are special events including: Jewish New York: A History and Guide to Neighborhoods, Synagogues and Eateries with Paul M. Kaplan on Thursday, October 1 at 12 Noon at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater; and Then Came Life: Living with Courage, Spirit and Gratitude After Breast Cancer with Geralyn Lucas, Tuesday, October 20, 7pm at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater. The Jewish Federation's Women's Philanthropy Division presents their annual Imagine event Tuesday, October 27, 9am at Raritan Valley Country Club, Bridgewater. Stephen M. Silverman leads a discussion on The Catskills, Its History and How it Changed America on Thursday, October 29, 12 Noon at the Birnbaum JCC, Bridgewater.

## MAKE COMMUNITY MATTER

You can gather with your community to take pride in and celebrate being Jewish. Through Federation, there is a wide choice of cultural programs and activities. Bake challahs for our food pantries, attend a Jewish film, celebrate Israel, explore Jewish history, and more.



Volunteer. Give. Do Good Today.



## Joel A. Kobert

COUNSELLOR AT LAW  
 jkobert@ckclaw.com

1001 ROUTE 517  
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