



Mark Your Calendar!

- Sunday, Nov. 2, 9:30am
Sunday School, (K/1)
PTO meeting
- Friday, Nov. 7, 7:45pm
Shabbat / Kristallnacht Service
Oneg: Rosenblum family
- Saturday, Nov. 8, 10:00am
Bat Mitzvah of Jamie
Rosenblum
- Sunday, Nov. 9,
9:30am Sunday School, Music
10:45am Adult Ed/Pirke Avot
- Saturday, Nov. 15, 10:30am
Torah Study
- Sunday, Nov. 16,
9:30am Sunday School (K/1)
10:45am Confirmation
12:00pm Jews By Choice
meeting
- Friday, Nov. 21, 7:45pm
Shabbat Service
Oneg: Marinich family
- Saturday, Nov. 22, 10:00am
Bar Mitzvah of Scott Marinich
- Sunday, Nov. 23,
9:30am Sunday School, Music
- Sunday, Nov. 30,
No Sunday School
Happy Thanksgiving!

Rabbi Lewis's sermons are
now on our Website!
Visit us at www.jcnwj.org

Rabbi's Message

A Blessing for the Weeders: Benediction for a Small Congregation

“You stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God – your tribal heads, your elders, and your officials, all the men of Israel, your children, your wives, even the stranger within your camp, from woodchopper to waterdrawer – to enter into the covenant of the Lord your God...” (Deuteronomy 1:9-11)

Atem nitzavim hayom kulchem lifnai Adonai Eloheychem

You stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God

From woodchopper to waterdrawer

From weeder to planter

From painter to light installer

From flower arranger to ark curtain hanger

From Torah roller to Torah reader

From webmaster to newsletter editor

From silver-polisher to tallit ironer

From service usher to front row worshipper

From craft-creator to memorial board hanger

You stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God

From student of Torah to teacher of Torah

From balancer of books to payer of bills

From mopper of floors to unstopper of sinks

From teacher of Hebrew to student of Hebrew

continued on next page

President's Message

It is that time of year again. I knew it was when our two cats wanted to come in the house at night. For about six months a year, they live outside. Yes, we feed them, as well as a stray. They are an important part of our farm. They take care of the rodents. They also signal to me that it is time to change the batteries in the smoke detectors. I realize that every animal has a purpose, but other than helping to find a cure for cancer, I cannot fathom the need for rodents.

Then I started thinking. Without getting into the big bang or creationist argument, I note that our Torah says that God said “...bring forth swarms of living creatures...living creatures of every kind that creep...”. That not being enough, on the next day God “...let the earth bring forth every kind of living creature: cattle, creeping things, and wild beasts...”. Continuing, “...and all kinds of creeping things of the earth...”. Noteworthy that man was created on the same day as all of these “creeping things”.

As a lay person, I believe that even in the days of the writing of the Torah, intelligent people knew the interdependence of all of this life.

Portions of what follow are “stolen” from www.urj.org without further attribution. It is a great website, very down to earth. In the Talmud, it is said that a famous Rabbi HaNasi observed a calf as it was being led to the slaughterhouse. The animal broke away from the herd and hid itself under his clothing, crying for mercy. The Rabbi, preoccupied, pushed the animal away. For many years after this

continued on next page

Rabbi's Message, cont.

From maker of coffee to purchaser of cups
From singer of songs to performer of mitzvot
From organizer of oneg to assigner of aliyot

You stand this day, all of you, before the Lord Your God
The one who says yes when asked
The one who say yes before being asked
The one who brings goats for petting
The one who watches for the sun's setting
The one who arrives first and the one who cleans up last
The one who brings snack and the one who picks up trash
The one who sits and the one who stands
The one who convenes and the one who attends
The one who sheds tears and the one who wipes them away
The one who welcomes the stranger and the one who blesses the sick
The one who mourns and the one who rejoices

Atem nitzavim hayom kulchem lifnai Adonai Eloheychem

You stand this day, all of you, before the Lord your God
Those who are standing here with us this day
Those who are not with us here this day.
Those who were here in years past
And those who are yet to be born.
With many thanks to all of you who helped make the high holy days go smoothly and who help this congregation to be what it is.

Written with love by Rabbi Ellen Lewis

Guest Speaker for Kristallnacht Commemoration, November 7

Our annual commemoration of Kristallnacht will be part of the Shabbat evening service on November 7. Our guest, Dr. Susan Lederman, Professor of Public Administration at Kean University, will speak on the topic "Broken Glass and a Broken World: Reflections of a Hidden Child on the Holocaust." Dr. Lederman has served as Director of Kean's Master of Public Administration Program and as the founding Executive Director of the Gateway Institute for Regional Development. She has been on the faculty at the University since 1977. Dr. Lederman is also a past president of the League of Women Voters of the United States (1990-92) and served as the president of the New Jersey League of Women Voters. She holds leadership positions in various civic organizations and is serving or has served on several state commissions. She is a past president of Temple Sinai (1993-94). Susan Lederman holds an A.B. degree in Political Science from the University of Michigan and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Political Science from Rutgers University. Born in Bratislava, Slovakia, she survived the Holocaust as a hidden child and immigrated with her parents to the United States in 1948. She and her husband reside in New Providence, NJ.

President's Message, cont.

act Rabbi HaNasi suffered a series of painful illnesses. One day, the Rabbi's maid was sweeping the house. She was about to sweep away some young rodents that she found on the floor. "Leave them alone," the Rabbi spoke. Subsequently, they spoke of this Rabbi in heaven "Since he has shown compassion to these rodents, we will be compassionate with him".

Very interesting. The Talmud notes there is a heaven, and that our deeds really do go punished or supported.

On a more timely note, Rabbi Eric Yoffie, the President of the Union for Reform Judaism writes (<http://urj.org/Articles/index.cfm?id=22820>) on the Agriprocessors role in a controversy over their allegedly inhumane practices in producing kosher meat. The fact that PETA is also involved makes this material that no one could make up, and will probably lead to a major motion picture. These flippant comments on my part do not speak as powerfully as Rabbi Yoffie. "The Conservative movement deserves praise for its strong stance in favor of strengthening the bond between social justice and Jewish law. Its new Heksher Tzedek initiative is working to create an additional certification for kosher products that would take into account our ethical considerations." Rabbi Yoffie then goes on to blast others in the Jewish community, that for whatever reasons, are turning a blind eye to what has be a series of violations at these kosher (and non-kosher) meat packing plants.

The owners of these plants which are in the Midwest, are members of Chabad in Brooklyn. Chabad has been silent on these issues. Rabbi Yoffie ends his discussion saying that "...O.U. Kosher threatened to withdraw its kashrut certification unless Agriprocessors changed its management". Additional information on this controversy can be located at

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Agriprocessors>.

It is noteworthy that our Confirmation students are contemplating ways to make our Temple "green". Please help them in this noteworthy endeavor. It is my belief that this type of activity is the best training for our future leaders to know that cutting corners to make a buck is not part of our way of life.

Please contact me at arvesen@att.net or by phone at 917-941-4332 for any questions or comments.

Shalom,
Jim Arvesen

Non-Jews by Birth, Jews By Choice

Sometimes our non-Jewish members mention to me in passing that you want to learn more about Judaism. I'd like to know how I can help, but I can't do that without *your* help. I am scheduling a time for all those interested to come talk on Sunday Nov. 16 at noon. The only agenda is for you to talk and for me to listen. Do let me know in advance if you plan to come or if you want to come but can't make it that day. rabbijnwj@gmail.com

Birthday Invitation

On December 7, one of our oldest congregants and teacher, Charlotte Fels, will be a nonagenarian "90." The congregation, friends and family of Charlotte are invited to join in a celebration of her birthday at the Center. She will read from her new book (not yet titled) at noon (after Sunday School), and a pot luck lunch will follow. All are invited. Please RSVP to Teri Stanton by December 1st. Please let Teri know if you can bring a salad or main dish (dairy).

Religious School/PTO Events

October was an exciting month for Sunday School with our Sukkot and Simchat Torah/Consecration services. November is a quiet month. We have a PTO meeting scheduled for November 2 ... our next confirmation class meets November 16 ... and there is no Hebrew School on November 30 (Happy Thanksgiving.) Have a nice November!

Marsha Gross & Karen Finkelstein (Education co-chairs)

Thank you!

The Religious Practices (aka Ritual) Committee thanks all who worked so hard in planning and implementing the many aspects of our beautiful High Holy Day services: Rabbi Ellen Lewis, Cantor Marcy Kadin, Helene Friedlander, Jim Arvesen, Sharon Herson, Iris and Howie Hirsch, Debby and Glenn Knobelman, Helen Mattson, Judy and Paul May, Gwen Nagorsky, Cheryl Orenstein, and Jennifer Rosenblum. (If we have inadvertently omitted someone by name, please forgive us.) We also acknowledge with thanks all the ushers and the Torah readers. We are grateful to all members of the congregation for showing your commitment through your presence and your pledges.

The Committee is pleased that Debbie Fesinstine and Tracey Bauer have agreed to join us in our work. If other members of the congregation would like to participate in this committee's endeavors, please contact either of the Committee's co-chairs, Sharon Herson or Debby Knobelman.

Anyone who wants to read a *new* Torah or Haftarah portion next year should contact Rabbi Lewis.

The new prayer books, Mishkan T'filah, have arrived. We expect to introduce them early in 2009.

Adult Education

Rabbi Lewis's Adult Education class, studying *Pirke Avot*, will meet Sunday mornings from 10:45 to noon on the following dates: Nov. 9, Dec. 7, Jan. 11, Feb. 1, March 22, and April 26. The class is open to all members. This is your opportunity to exchange ideas with other congregants under the leadership of a superb teacher. You don't have to have been in the class last year to join now. Contact Rabbi Lewis before the first class if you would like to come.

Torah Study

Torah study meets monthly on Saturday mornings for

about two hours, starting at 10:30. We are a lay-led group. Discussion is always lively. Everyone is welcome: Nov. 15, Dec. 13, Jan. 17, Feb. 21, March 14, April 25, May 16, June 20.

Save the Date

Our next blood drive will be February 22, 2009.

Welcome New Members

The Schaffer Family
The Koch Family

Donations

Donation to Rabbi's Discretionary Fund by Arthur and Barbara Stiskin in honor of the naming of Dominik Loiacono

Jamie Fesinstine, Bret Kestecher, Scott Marinich, Jamie Rosenblum, Ezra Tarlowe, and Autumn Webb have given a gift to beautify the Temple in honor of their b'nai mitzvot.

Lynn Kestecher, Mishebeirach for Robyne Wexler
Lois and Stuart Goldberg, in memory of Sophie Zaret and Isaac Merein

Bernard Robins, in memory of Celia Robins
Laura and Paul Tarlowe, in memory of Steve Tarlowe

Congratulations to Mike and Cecilia Alper on the occasion of their wedding!

The Jewish Center extends its condolences to Jeannie Berkowitz for the loss of her father.

Community Events

JEWISH LIFE

Nov. 12 at 1 p.m., Rabbi Ron Isaacs' topic will be Talking to G-d, the Art of Prayer. Save the date for food critic and author Arthur Schwartz, who will present Jewish Food in America on Nov. 16 at 10:30 a.m. All programs will be held at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC, 775 Talamini Road in Bridgewater. To register for programs, call the JCC office at 908-725-6994 x201.

RJ Insiders Guide to College Life: 2008 Guide Now Available!

Every fall, Reform Judaism magazine publishes "The RJ Insider's Guide to College," a resource for your high school students looking to obtain information about how to best maintain their Jewish lives during college. In the latest issue, you can find articles about The College Search—On Your Own Terms, Travel Adventures for All Seasons, The Top 60 Schools Jews Choose & the Top 20 by Percentage of Jews, and much more. To view the latest version of the magazine, visit www.reformjudaismmag.org.

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