



Mark Your Calendar!

- Friday, Dec. 3, 6:30 p.m.
Lay Service
- Sunday, Dec. 5:
10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class
- Friday, Dec. 10, 7:45 p.m.
Shabbat Service with our new
Intergenerational Choir -
Chanukah and New Member
Welcome
- Saturday, Dec. 11
9:30 a.m.-Noon,
Pirke Avot & Mishkan T'filah
- Sunday, Dec 12:
9:30 a.m. Men's Club Meeting
9:30 a.m. Choir practice
- Friday, Dec. 17, 7:45 p.m.
Shabbat Service
- Saturday, Dec. 18
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Torah Study
- Sunday, Dec. 26:
No Religious School

Rabbi's Message

The story may be apocryphal, but I heard that the Dean of Harvard Medical School once welcomed the incoming class by saying, "Half of what you learn here will be true – the problem is, we don't know which half." I have felt that way recently about the post-election spin in the media. How do we know what to believe? When I used to write newspaper articles years ago, I was taught to write an interesting lead paragraph so that people would want to read further. The idea was to not to create the story but to engage people in the story. In the immediate aftermath of the election, we were told that the country was sharply divided over something called "moral values." We have since been told that that conclusion was greatly exaggerated, but it made a good story in the moment. We saw maps on television where half the country was colored blue and the other half red; we live in a divided nation, we were told, with the red states on one side of that divide and the blue on the other. Yet shortly after the election, bloggers were already pointing out that that image did not reflect the reality of the election; there were blue pockets in red states and red pockets in blue states.

I am not usually one to jump on the media for distortion. I have great sympathy and respect for journalists; after all, they have to quickly sort out a great deal of information, much of it provided them by politically-biased sources. They have a hard job. That is why we can't accept anything at face value; after all, how do we know which half of what they say is true? In my classroom at the Center, I try and teach my students to analyze current events intelligently. I want them to learn that, as Jews, we have experienced the danger of propaganda gone wild and have a responsibility to be diligent in guarding our American freedoms. We of all people have to make sure that we don't let anyone in any newsroom or political party hijack the issues of "moral values" and "faith" for political purposes. No one party has a monopoly on moral values, nor does any one religion. If anything, we should be

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President's Message

What's going on around here? It seems every time I pick up the phone or read an email lately, someone else in the congregation is having surgery or catching a cold. This has been a tough month around the center. I want to thank everyone who has sent their help and their good wishes to Iris as she recovers from her surgery. I wish a speedy recovery to all of you who have had a tough month, along with their caregivers.

On the positive side, many good things have happened over the last month. We have had our first event for the NFTY high school youth group, we celebrated Emily Stanton's Bat Mitzvah and we had a wonderful time at our cantor-led sing-along last evening. We began our conversational Hebrew class with our wonderful Lisa Braunstein teaching. We are currently taking a break and plan on resuming after the New Year. I hope many will take advantage of Lisa's generosity.

The Thanksgiving/Chanukah season is now upon us, and I hope that we will all take a few minutes out of our busy lives to be grateful for what we have. As I read the other day in Pirke Avot, Who is rich? One who is happy with what one has. My wish for you is that you are all rich this holiday season.

Shalom,
Howie Hirsch

Rabbi's Message, cont.

prouder than ever that our country guarantees a separation of church and state so that we never have to make one national choice of faith. And we should be grateful that we can speak freely and loudly about our choices without fear of repercussion.

The coming years promise to be full of the question of public faith and private morality. If we allow those questions to be coopted by the political establishment, shame on us. We have fought too hard to let that happen. If the message of Chanukah teaches us anything in our day, it is to remind us that we are heirs to those who risked their lives for religious freedom. Our legacy is never to take those freedoms for granted, but to protect them, not just for us and but for all Americans.

May the lights of Chanukah brighten your lives and enlighten your souls.

Rabbi Ellen J. Lewis

Building Update

At the moment, we need to go before the zoning board on December 13th to get approval for the addition. We have completed the mini site plan which will be reviewed that night. If anyone is experienced in writing a grant, I need someone to write up a grant to see if we can get some of the funding for this project from the healthcare fund of New Jersey. Please contact me if you either have experience or are willing to try.

Howie

Hunterdon Developmental Center Gifts

Help the Jewish residents at Hunterdon Developmental Center enjoy Chanukah. We are collecting CDs (easy listening music-nature sounds), DVDs, as well as toiletry items (shower gel, perfume, cologne). We need enough for 46 residents. We need all donations by Sunday, December 5. Please place in the box at the temple. We thank you so much for your donations.

Cantor's Committee

Cantor Karen Neff joins us one weekend a month and graces us at services with her beautiful voice. Please join me in making her feel welcome. We need hosts for various dinners and/or lunches as well as help with transportation. Please call Joanne Weiss at the Temple.

Adult Education

Upcoming Pirke Avot/Torah Study: Saturday, December 11 and Saturday, December 18.

Welcome!

We welcome our newest members:
Stacy and Dan Iacono of Stewartsville

Education Committee and PTO News

Happy Chanukah! We will be having a special Chanukah service on **Friday, December 10**. Our students will be participating in the service as will our new intergenerational choir, which is made up of the Rabbi's class and adult members of the Temple. Students are asked to arrive at the Temple at 7:15 p.m. Sunday, December 12, we'll be making our Chanukah craft – always a special treat for our students.

On **Sunday, December 26**, there will be no Religious School, due winter break.

Students in 6th & 7th grade: mark your calendars for Sunday, 9-11 a.m., January 30. It's the annual Mitzvot of MetroWest program at the Alex Aidekman Family JCC in Whippany. This program introduces Mitzvot to children of Bar/Bat Mitzvah age. Details will be discussed in class.

***Thank you for your Tzedakah each week.
Don't forget to bring it every Sunday!***

News from NFTY

Special thanks to Ken and Mercedes Weiland for chaperoning the NFTY lock-in at the Temple over the weekend of November 13-14. A great bonding experience for the High School youth group. A great time was had by all.

Food Drive Donations

Thank you all for your donations to our annual food drive. The food will be given to the Warren County Armory, which provides food for local families who have a family member fighting in Iraq. Thank you to Jeff & Gina Berkowitz, who found this worthwhile group and for seeing that the food gets to the Armory.

Shoprite/A&P Vouchers

Shop Rite scrip and A&P gift cards are available at the Temple on the following dates:

December 12	March 13
January 9, 23	April 10
February 13, 27	May 1, 15

Contact Sandy Seidorf for any questions or special delivery.

Thank you!

Dear Friends,

I wish to thank all of you who sent your get well wishes through cards, calls and prayers. My surgery was a very frightening time for me, and every single sentiment helped to bring me strength and hope during recovery. I look forward to seeing you all at the Center very soon.

Love,
Gwen

Cancellations Due to Weather

Should bad weather be an issue on a Friday evening and services need to be canceled, a message will be left on the Center's answering machine by 5:30 p.m. Should bad weather be an issue on Sunday morning and Sunday School needs to be canceled, a message will be left on the Center's answering machine by 7:30 a.m. We will also use the snow chain.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Jewish LIFE

- Jewish LIFE presents Professor Azzan Yadin, "Dead Sea Scrolls," **Jewish LIFE** on Thursday, December 2, 7:30 p.m.
- Dr. Steven Bayme, "Israel-Diaspora Relationship, will speak on Sunday, December 5, 10 a.m.
- Mark your calendar for the Jewish LIFE Family Chanukah Program on Wednesday, December 8, from 6-7:30 p.m. featuring Ventriloquist Rick Berger's "Chanukah to Remember" (K & under) and Spiderman's Bar Mitzvah - The Jewish Influence in Comic Books (grades 1-6). Bring your menorah and candles for a family Menorah Lighting Celebration! Chanukah treats! PLEASE RSVP IN ADVANCE!
- A special exhibition: The People of the Comic Book – Superheroes and Jewish Culture will be on display at the JCC from through December 31.
- Looking ahead to January....Rabbi Moshe Herson will present "The Hassidic Journey - from the Baal Shem Tov to the Lubavitch" on Sunday January 23, 2005 at 10 a.m.

All programs will be held at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC, 775 Talamini Road in Bridgewater. For further information and to register for Jewish LIFE programs, contact JCC Assistant Executive Director Laura Friedman at 908-725-6994 x213; LFriedman@ssbjcc.org.

Donations

Rose Schneider, in memory of her parents,
Esther and Chaim Galinsky
Arthur and Phyllis Sirkis, Yahrzeit of Rose Sirkis
Leslie and Murray Heller, Yahrzeit of Walter Sobine
Rona and Stanley Schick, in memory of Linda Albin's father
Gwen and Ed Nagorsky, in memory of Ellen Nagorsky
Daniel Hirshberg, in memory of Mitchell Hirshberg
Judy and Paul May, in memory of John Slavin
Judy and Paul May, in memory of Linda Albin's father,
Nathan Albin
Eric Edelstein in memory of Linda Albin's father

The Seidorf family donation of a DVD Player to the Temple in honor of the NFTY Youth Group

From Your Newsletter Editor

Advertise in the Journal! If you or someone you know would like to advertise, have them call Lisa at the Temple. The deadline for the next newsletter will be December 18.

All committee members: Please send updates to your programs to Wain Schroeder at niaw1@comcast.net for Web posting.

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