



Mark Your Calendar!

- Monday, June 5, 7:30 p.m.
Board Meeting
- Friday, June 9, 7:45 p.m.
Shabbat Service - Oneg:
Knobelman, Orenstein and
Hessels families
- Sunday, June 11
Annual meeting
Breakfast 9:30 a.m.
Meeting 10:00 a.m.
- Friday, June 23, 7:45 p.m.
- Saturday, June 24, 10:00 a.m.
Bat Mitzvah
Torah Study
- Sunday, June 25, 9:30 a.m.
“Clean up-Throw out” day

SUMMER SERVICES

- Friday, July 14, 6:30 p.m.
Shabbat Service followed by
Pot Luck Dinner
- Friday, July 28, 7:45 p.m.
Shabbat Service and Aufruf for
Sarah Jordan (daughter of
Rhonda) and Michael Wolf in
honor of their wedding -

Rabbi's Message

Last night, I sat in the audience and listened to the stories of four remarkable women. All were in their mid-forties or younger. Each had experienced a life-altering event: one had risked her life to donate half her liver to her dying sister; one had survived leaving Cuba as a young child, then had survived both World Trade Center attacks; one, a former runner, almost lost her life and her leg in a car accident; and one who has had ten surgeries for breast cancer continues to experience recurrences. They told their stories and then told us what they had learned. To a one, they said: I have learned how to be in the moment. And to a one, they also said: Our faith in humanity was restored due to the acts of kindness we experienced as we healed.

They described neighbors who cooked, who shopped, who ran errands, who helped with children, who left fresh flowers. There were neighbors they didn't even know who helped; there were other neighbors they had known who stayed away. Each of these women nodded forgivingly when they spoke of the ones who stayed away or said foolish things. One woman said, “If you speak from the heart, even saying a dumb thing isn't dumb.” There was no trace of resentment or bitterness in them. They meditate, volunteer as an EMT, do yoga and laugh every day. They are more accepting human beings now than before.

We know that tragedy can elicit the very best from the human community, at least initially. In some paradoxical way, it is harder to function as a healthy human community when life is going along normally. That is what made last Sunday morning in our community so impressive. It was normal. First, there were the nine confirmands whom we have taught all these years and who now have become our teachers. They told us how different they all are.

continued on next page

President's Message

What a past few weeks at the center: Bat Mitzvahs for the Berkowitz, Bauch and Finkelstein families. Followed up by maybe my favorite service ever, a confirmation class of 9 lovely young women, 2 of them being my daughters, along with a Shavuot celebration and a wonderful end of the school year program. There is something wonderful about family celebrations in a synagogue. To me, it seems to be a way to mark special moments in time. Too many times, we are running around doing things and forget that spirituality in our lives helps keep us centered, grounded and more connected with society and the world as a whole. This also marked the end of my children's formal Hebrew education. I have spent the last 12 years being a part of this Hebrew school and I am going to miss the weekly/monthly get-togethers with my friends. I hope that I do not lose contact with the parents of the current school children and I will try and be around at times, but it certainly won't be as much as it has in the past.

If you were lucky enough to be at any of these services, I think it gives a great idea of who we are, and what makes our temple so special. The feel that our Rabbi exudes while leading a service is something I have not felt anywhere else in my many years of attending temples and Bar/Bat Mitzvahs around the area. I hope none of us take our temple and our Rabbi for granted, as they are both very special.

continued on next page

Rabbi's Message, cont.

Those of us who taught them can vouch for that. In the past, they argued and laughed and tattled and interrupted each other when they talked. And yet it is this very shared history that has led them to know that their class wouldn't be complete without them all. They are like the ten commandments, they told us, each different but each necessary to the community.

Every grade participated in that service, from the youngest to the oldest. Our teachers had the joy of listening to their students lead us in prayer and of watching their former students (and in two cases, their own children) become confirmed. Our children's choir sang *Hodu L'Adonai* as Chelsea and Helene Friedlander, after five devoted years of teaching music, turned the musical reins over to Grace Weiner and Sam Kunzman. Lisa Bauch represented the parents in thanking the teachers; the teachers, in turn, can't do it without the parents. Then we all made kiddush together.

When the Jewish people stood at Sinai those many years ago, they weren't a perfect community. They bickered and whined and tattled. They didn't always understand each other. And yet they were able to stand as one, to hear the divine word and to say, "Naaseh v'nishma – despite our human limitations, or perhaps because of them, we will accept our obligations as a community." We, too, stood at Sinai; and over and again, we say: "We, too, will hear and do God's word."

Rabbi Ellen Lewis

President's Message, cont.

The Sunday school looks to be in good shape, as the current group of parents looks to be very committed to ensuring the Jewish education of their children. It was wonderful looking over the assembly on Sunday and seeing so many happy children.

I urge you to attend the general meeting of the congregation on June 11th. Breakfast will start at 9:30 and the meeting will begin at 10AM.

And in closing, I hope you will all join with me in wishing our cantor, Karen, the very best in her future. Karen has been our student cantor for two years and was invested as a full cantor in May. Karen, from the Jewish Center, we wish you all the best in your life and in your cantorial career.

Howie

Adult Programs

Torah study date for June has been changed from June 17 to June 24. Please check with Sharon for location of torah study (this week only). Summer dates TBA. Contact Sharon Herson after July 1 for July and August dates.

Greetings from our new Cantor

Shalom to all! My name is Marcy Kadin and I will be your new student cantor next year and I wanted to tell all of you how excited I truly am to soon be praying and making music with all of you. I have known Ellen Lewis for close to 20 years. She was my Rabbi when I first moved to Short Hills, we attended school together for a short time, and I have done a service with her at your temple. I feel blessed to be joining her on the bimah soon.

A little about me... I have been singing all my life. At graduate school at the College Conservatory of Music at the University of Cincinnati, I learned about Hebrew Union College and the seed to become a cantor was planted. I have sung all kinds of music including oratorio, opera, jazz, musical comedy, and of course, Jewish music. I began my studies at HUC in 2004, spent the first year in Israel, and have just completed my second with three more to go. In addition, this year, I was the student cantor at Congregation Jewish Community North in Houston. Following a service that I did with Ellen a few years ago, I fell in love with your lovely setting and the people I met. In the back of my mind I had always hoped I might get the chance to work at such a special, intimate place.

And here I am! I cannot wait to meet all of you and sing together with you. I look forward to learning what melodies you love most and to teach you a few new ones (and old, old ones) every once in awhile as well. I will be coming to visit in the near future and look forward to getting acquainted. Until then, if you would like to be in contact with me, my email address is marcy.kadin@gmail.com. See you soon!

Wanted!!!

We need able kids and adults (some muscles would be helpful!) to begin the next step of the building renovation project. On June 25, from 9:30 to 12:30, the Center is having a "Clean up-Throw out" day and individuals are needed to move furniture, pack boxes and drive to the dumpster...there might be some painting involved. If you are available to pitch in, RSVP to Gwen. Bagels, coffee and snacks will be served!

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

From the Jewish Federation of Somerset, Hunterdon and Warren Counties - For more information contact Alina Sindler 725-6994 x204

June 4, 2006 - Salute to Israel Parade, NYC- Annual parade saluting the state of Israel

November 5, 2006 - Pacesetters 2007 – Annual Federation gala, more details to come

Ohr Tikvah Jewish Healing Center

Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center, 775 Talamini Road, Bridgewater. Call Ohr Tikvah at 908-725-6994 for more information or to register, www.ohrtikvahjhc.org

Celebrate Shavu'ot with a Walk in the Park - Sunday, June 4, 10:00 AM. (rain date: Sunday, June 11), Temple Beth-El, 67 Rt. 206 South, Hillsborough and then Duke Farms. Fee:\$ 10. Join us in a community-wide celebration of Shavu'ot and explore the healing power of Torah and its connection to nature. We will meet at Temple Beth-El and open our hearts and minds to the teachings of Rabbi Robin Nafshi, and then caravan to Duke Farms just up the road for a "self-guided" group walking tour, enjoying the abundance of plants and flowers, woodlands and wildlife habitat.

Program Opportunities for Community Organizations - Looking for innovative program ideas in the fall for your Brotherhood, Sisterhood or other community groups? Ohr Tikvah will come to you! Call us to schedule: a speaker on Jewish healing, a program on Jewish meditation, a Jewish drumming circle, and much more.

Support Groups - Please contact Ohr Tikvah if you are interested in joining the following support groups: Coping with Illness, Coping with Loss, and Parents of Children with Eating Disorders.

URJ Weekly Briefing

Want to stay informed of the latest news from the Union for Reform Judaism? You can now subscribe to the Weekly Briefing, an e-mail of news about the Union and the greater Jewish world. Produced in cooperation with JTA: The Global News Service of the Jewish People, the Weekly Briefing is available free of charge.

To subscribe, go to www.urj.org/subscribe.

Summer of Justice 2006

This summer there are two exciting opportunities for individuals and families interested in dynamic activities of Social Justice and Tikkun Olam .The Tzevet Mitzvot: Adult Mitzvah Corps will be based at the URJ Jacobs Camp, Utica, MS, July 2-8, 2006. In addition to working, studying, and worshipping together, the program will include fireworks and a day trip to New Orleans. The Family Mitzvah Corps will take place at the URJ Kutz Camp, Warwick, NY, August 9-13, 2006 .Counselors and staff will offer separate specialized activities for parents and kids. Go to www.rac.org/mitzvahcorps for more information.

New Jersey-West Hudson Valley Council

Join Us On Our Voyage To Sustain The World

As We Welcome:

Robert Heller

Chairman of the Board, Union For Reform Judaism

Rabbi Lennard Thal

Senior Vice President, Union For Reform Judaism

National Scholar Rabbi Mark Washofsky

Associate Professor of Rabbinics, HUC-JIR, Cincinnati, OH

Regional Scholar Rabbi Bennett Miller, D.Min.,

Senior Rabbi, Anshe Emeth Memorial Temple,
New Brunswick, NJ

JEWISH CENTER OF NORTHWEST JERSEY

Name _____ Email _____

Address _____ I/We would like to make a contribution of _____

In honor of _____

In memory of _____

Phone _____ Please contact me/us about membership _____

Make check payable to Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey and mail to:
JCNWJ, c/o Paul May, 57 Philhower Road, Lebanon 08833.