



## Mark Your Calendar!

- Friday, June 1, 7:45 p.m.  
Shabbat Service,
- Saturday, June 2, 10:00 a.m.  
Bat Mitzvah
- Sunday, June 3 morning,  
9:30 a.m. Religious School  
closing day ceremony  
10:30 a.m. Congregational meet-  
ing and election
- Sunday, June 10, 3 p.m.  
JCNWJ 60th anniversary picnic
- Monday, June 11, 7:30 p.m.  
Board Meeting
- June 13 at 7:30 p.m.  
Membership planning meeting
- Saturday, June 16, 10:30 a.m.  
Torah study
- Friday, June 29, 7:45 p.m.  
Shabbat Service,
- Saturday, June 30, 10:00 a.m.  
Bat Mitzvah
- Saturday, July 14  
10:30 a.m. Torah study
- Monday evening, July 16,  
Teachers Meeting - Workshop
- Monday evening, July 23,  
Teachers Meeting - Planning  
meeting for next year
- Friday, July 27, 7:45 p.m.  
Shabbat Service

## Rabbi's Message

I heard some disquieting information the other day. Dr. Steven M. Cohen, who is Professor of Jewish Social Policy at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion /New York, spoke to an assembly of rabbis at the MetroWest Jewish Federation in Whippany. Dr. Cohen is a sociologist who focuses on American Jewry. Of late, he has focused on Jewish identity and Jewish continuity as it relates to Jewish education. What the studies have found is what disturbed me.

It turns out that, while different kinds of Jewish educational experiences can help form strong Jewish identities and build Jewish continuity, the one kind of educational experience which actually has a negative impact is the one-day-a-week Religious School. I don't recall how the statistics measure continuity and identity, although I do know that intermarriage is one of the parameters. Since we operate a one-day-a-week school, I paid particular attention to Dr. Cohen's theory about this phenomenon. He offered the possibility that there is a community reinforcement of minimal observance. Whatever the reasons, the statistics stand.

We have a terrific group of teachers, kids and parents who are enormously dedicated to our school. I would like to think that we are the exception to the rule quoted by Dr. Cohen, but I don't think that should be an excuse for our avoiding the hard questions. We do meet only one day a week. Yes, we tell the children they are expected to come to services as an additional part of their education, but we can't require that of them. Are our kids very well prepared for their b'nai mitzvah? Yes, they are. Do almost all of them continue on to Confirmation? Yes, they do. But what we don't know is how those experiences shape the Jewish future.

Our obligation is not just to educate our children for the moment but to educate them to be leaders of the Jewish future. Are we giving them the idea that being a Reform Jew is being minimally Jewish? Do they take seriously the idea that marrying within Judaism, while not guaranteeing a Jewish household, does offer a better chance of creating a Jewish

*continued on next page*

## President's Message

Shalom everyone. After four years of being your president, I will be stepping down when my term ends in June. I think that I am leaving the temple in better shape than when I took over in certain respects and not as good in others. During the past four years, we have been able to "dream the impossible dream" and make our building (except for the Bimah) handicapped accessible. We have been able to hire a student cantor for the past three years, we have had a second night Passover Seder, our co-op Sunday school is still in great shape and for the last four years we have been able for our Jewish community to finance the teaching of our young adults, and our finances are not in bad shape. We also held a wonderful celebration for Rabbi Lewis' 25th year of being an ordained Rabbi. The only place that I see us in some trouble is that our membership has dwindled to a number that is too low. We need to find new members. We need all of you to try and recruit members to the temple.

As far as saying goodbye, I will not do it. I am not going anywhere and I will continue to serve on the board of directors and be actively involved in the temple. But I do have a number of people to whom I owe a special gratitude for all of their hard work during my presidency. These thank-yous are in no particular order, and I love all of these people very

*continued on back page*

**Rabbi's Message, cont.**

family? Do they think going to Religious School fulfills their Jewish obligation so that they don't have to observe Jewishly at home? How many of them live in homes, interfaith or same faith, that take Shabbat observance seriously? Dr. Cohen's words reminded me that there are serious conversations we have yet to have.

I often find myself telling the sixth and seventh graders that we can't teach them everything there is to know about Judaism, that in fact, we can only scratch the surface. And so I tell them that when they go to college, they should take courses in Jewish History and in the Hebrew language. I tell them I expect them all to go to Israel. That way the choices they make as Jewish adults will be educated choices and the observances they choose will be meaningful and serious. In the meantime, however, we as individuals and as a community need to take our Jewish lives seriously in the present.

Rabbi Ellen Lewis

**June 3 General Meeting of the Congregation**

This is the time for you to have your say, ask questions, learn what has been accomplished over the past year, and what is planned for next year. It is important that everyone attend and vote. Please familiarize yourself with the new slate of officers and board members listed below when you come on June 3. We will also be voting on dues for the 2007-2008 year. New dues are proposed to be \$995 for family dues and \$500 for singles. Come for the Sunday School assembly at 9:30 and stay for the general meeting. Brunch will be served at 10:00 a.m. There will be child care so that parents and teachers can attend.

**60th Anniversary Celebration of the JCNWJ**

**Date: Sunday, June 10 at 3:00 p.m.**

There is still time to sign up for the JCNWJ 60th Anniversary Celebration Picnic Sunday, June 10, rain or shine. Join in the celebration at the home of Mike Weiner and Diane Margolin. Food, music, games, swimming, fishing and fun. Picnic (catered by Brian's Butcher and Deli) begins at 3 p.m. Dinner served at 5 p.m. (Bar-B-Que chicken, eggplant parm, hot dogs, hamburgers, potato salad, pasta salad and MORE!) Please bring a snack or dessert to share.

Please mail your response slip with check made out to JCNWJ to Jean Berkowitz at the Temple. Price (includes set up, servers, paper goods/utensils & cleanup): Teen/Adult: \$25, Child 6-12: \$5, Children under 6: free.

**Spring is Here . . . Time to Start Cooking (and Reading)**

On June 13 at 7:30 p.m., a membership organizational meeting will be held at the home of Esther Bakonyi to brainstorm and plan activities for the coming year: cooking classes, book discussions, and anything else that attendees think would be enjoyable and stimulating. Membership committee people should come, and any other interested folks are welcome. Call Esther for directions and to let her know you are coming.

*The Temple wishes a speedy recovery to Esther Bakonyi.*

**Community Programs**

**INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM**

Summer Class offered by the Union for Reform Judaism NJ - West Hudson Valley Council at Temple Emeth in Teaneck. beginning Thursday, July 5. The class will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. through August 28. Please contact Jane Young, Program Coordinator, at [jyoung@urj.org](mailto:jyoung@urj.org) or 201-679-6895. Download a registration form: <http://urj.org/njwhvc/outreach>

**SYNAGOGUE BULLETIN BLOOPERS**

All the mistakes in spelling and typing were left in. These announcements were found in shul newsletters and bulletins. Even spell check wouldn't have helped.

- Don't let worry kill you. Let your synagogue help. Join us for our Oneg after services. Prayer and medication to follow. Remember in prayer the many who are sick of our congregation.
- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- We are pleased to announce the birth of David Weiss, the son of Rabbi and Mrs. Abe Weiss.
- Thursday there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All women wishing to become Little Mothers please see the rabbi in his private study.
- The ladies of Hadassah have cast off clothing of every kind

**JEWISH CENTER OF NORTHWEST JERSEY**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ I/We would like to make a contribution of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ In memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me/us about membership \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey and mail to:  
JCNWJ.

and they may be seen in the basement on Tuesdays.

- A bean supper will be held Wednesday evening in the community center. Music will follow.
- Weight Watchers will meet at 7 PM at the JCC. Please use the large double door at the side entrance.
- Rabbi is on vacation. Massages can be given to his secretary.
- We are taking up a collection to defray the cost of the new carpet in the sanctuary. All those wishing to do something on the carpet will come forward and get a piece of paper.
- If you enjoy sinning, the choir is looking for you!
- The Associate Rabbi unveiled the synagogue's new fundraising campaign slogan this week: "I Upped My Pledge. Up Yours."

## ***\*\*Join by June 1st\*\****

**Receive 1 year Temple Membership for the Family  
Religious School for the children  
and 4 weeks (2nd session)  
at the NJ YM-YWHA Camp in PA  
(Cedar Lake/Nah-Jee-Wah)  
for 1 child**

**Total price \$1,800 (A \$4,200 value!)**

***Enjoy your summer everyone!  
The next newsletter will be in September.***

### ***President's Message, cont.***

much. Let's start with Helen Mattson, who has been such a major influence on this temple for as long as I have been here. Her attention to detail is unparalleled. Helen is leaving the board in June and her leadership will be impossible to replace. My next thank you is to Gwen Nagorsky. Gwen has taught me how to be President and has guided me from before I took over the presidency and has been one of the people I look to for advice. She ran the Rabbi's Shabbaton and is instrumental in improving our building with her talent as a decorator and her heart as someone who really cares about our shul. Paul May has been the treasurer for my term and is another of my resources whom I go to when I need advice. Paul has been instrumental in coming up with ways to finance the types of improvements that the board would like to do to the building. He is not afraid to speak up and disagree with me when he thinks I am wrong. I may not always appreciate the fact that we disagree, but Paul has the synagogue's best interest firstmost in his heart. Sharon Herson has been what I would consider a co-president. Sharon makes sure that when I forget to do something that it is taken care of. It is sort of like having someone who knows what has to be done looking over your shoulder and not only offering advice, but diving in and getting the work done. Lisa Bauch has been the newsletter editor for my entire term and is the most patient person in the world. When I couldn't think of another thing to write, Lisa has the patience to wait for my muse to strike, but also the tenacity of an editor to gently remind me that it is time to write again. Without her gentle ways, I would have been a basket case. Mike Weiner has been my trusted vice-president and again someone on whose advice I relied heavily. Mike has also been teaching in the Sunday school for a very long time and his sense of humor and love of Judaism is something that is being passed onto our children. For the last of my major thank-yous I need to say thank you to Rabbi Lewis, whose warmth, caring and love have helped sustain me on the days when the job seems overwhelming, like having to postpone a Bar Mitzvah because of inclement weather.

In addition, I want to say thank you to all of the people who have served on the board with me, my fellow members of the Men's club, all of the teachers in the Sunday school, all of the PTO parents and everyone else in the congregation who has taken me into your heart and let me be the kind of president that I have been. I hope that you are proud of the work we have done and I want each and every one of you to know that you are special to me. And as a final gesture of my presidency, I leave you all with a great big hug.

Shalom  
Howie the Hugger