

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

It's now three weeks later, and I'm still walking on clouds over how beautiful and successful our mental health event was on December 8. Thank you to everyone who came out to join us. Thank you to Sisterhood for helping set up the Elaine Hirsch Simcha Room for dinner. Thank you to those who contributed dessert offerings and drinks and plates and cups. Thank you to Shira and Rachel for helping cook the falafel dinner. And thank you to the Board of Trustees for supporting the event so willingly.

As I revisit the evening, there are a number of reasons I believe it turned out to be so meaningful. Without a doubt, That Way Madness Lies is an exceptional film. And of course having Sandra Luckow, the creator and narrator with us in person to give personal perspective on everything that went into this project was quite an honor. As well, giving audience members the chance to see what was in many respects their own stories on the screen – and then being able to discuss it with others who inherently understood – was moving beyond all expectations. But to me, the single most important ingredient to the event's success was the fact that it took place in conversation with others from the larger faith community beyond the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey.

Having the chance to hear Jewish, Christian, and Muslim perspectives (as well as a strictly clinical perspective, too) is what tied the evening together with such passion. Truth be told, were

(continued on next page)

Calendar of Events

Sunday, January 5

9:30am: Sunday School

Monday, January 6

7:00pm: Board of Trustees Meeting

Saturday, January 11

10:30am: Torah Study

Sunday, January 12

9:30am: Sunday School

Friday, January 17

7:30pm: Shabbat Service &
Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration with
Mt. Pisgah AME Church

Sunday, January 19

9:30am: Sunday School
10:15am: Sisterhood
11:00am: Service at Mt. Pisgah AME Church
featuring Rabbi Dubin

Monday, January 20

7:00pm: Book Club

Sunday, January 26

9:30am: Sunday School

Sunday, February 2

9:30am: Sunday School

Rabbi's Message (continued)

this film to have been screened in a strictly secular setting, it still would have opened the curtains to show that those of us who live with the realities described in That Way Madness Lies truly are *not* alone. It is a far more familiar story than we may think, which means that yes, there are others who understand our experience. But our event was *not* held in a secular setting. Our event quite consciously took place in a building of faith, with an audience of faith. And because of that, our event managed to bring the three Abrahamic religions together in common purpose, because even though some of the details presented by our faith-based panelists differed from Judaism to Christianity to Islam, the core reality remained the same each time: *Because every person is created in the image of God, every person, no matter how ill or healthy, is worthy of the same respect from all.* It seems like a simple enough point, but a quick look at the world around us suggests that “simple” doesn’t always mean “easy-to-accomplish.” With so much hatred and distrust among those of differing theologies, having the opportunity to hear from the panelists, unequivocally, that we all agree on the sacred nature of each human being was, for me, the absolute greatest takeaway of the evening.

One of the faith groups that joined us, led by its new pastor, Rev Diana Ortiz Bracy, was the community of Mt. Pisgah AME Church. How wonderful it was to build even further on the friendships we have been establishing over the past few years with our friends “down the street!” Though we have been doing a wonderful job coming together over time, having the opportunity to dig together into such a deep, meaningful, and personal issue as mental health was valuable beyond measure.

On that note, **January 17th and 19th, the Friday and Sunday of Martin Luther King, Jr., Weekend, will mark the 4th annual weekend of joint worship services between our two communities.** In keeping with our established tradition, Rev Ortiz-Bracy will preach from the *bima* during Shabbat on Friday, and I will preach in the church during morning worship on Sunday.

I urge all of us, especially given the scourge of anti-Semitic attacks that took place during Hanukkah, to come together with our friends from Mt. Pisgah AME Church to honor Dr. King’s legacy by saying that people of good faith will always have reason to be together. Let’s not shut ourselves off. Let’s stand tall and be unafraid. Let’s celebrate who we are and share ourselves with others, especially others who *also* know how it feels to be vulnerable and marginalized in society. As I see it, Dr. King hit the nail on the head when he said to an audience of students at Cornell College in Mount Vernon Iowa in October of 1962 that he thinks people “hate each other because they fear each other. They fear each other because they don’t know each other, and they don’t know each other because they don’t communicate with each other, and they don’t communicate with each other because they are separated from each other.”

L’Shalom,

Rabbi Dubin

President's Message

Happy New Year everyone,

As I look forward to the upcoming year, I have a few things on my mind. One is the decision I need to make about whether to stay retired. I have not made a final decision about this yet, so I am contemplating whether I want to return to the work force or not. After 40 plus years of working, it is hard to stop. I have a friend in the congregation who told me that the money runs out sooner than you think and that he wished he had worked longer. On the other hand, I have really been enjoying my time as a grandpa and spending time with Abigail and Jemma, as well as Allison and Iris.

I have not yet figured out how I might volunteer my time if I stay retired, in addition to staying on as President of our congregation. Working on my photos from over the years is going to be one of my priorities, as well as becoming much better as a gardener and a woodworker. I will have my hands full if I stayed retired.

After travelling for so many years, I get the feeling that not travelling is going to be the hardest part for me. I will miss the excitement of visiting new places on a regular basis and meeting new people.

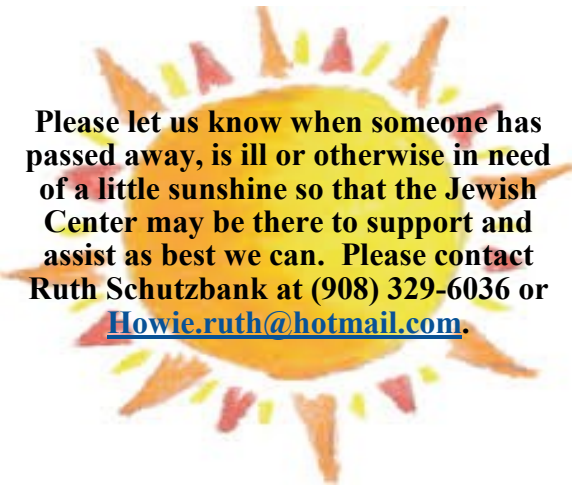
For those of you who have retired, what are your thoughts?

Please let me know via a phone call or email.

Love to all of you and I wish you a VERY HEALTHY NEW YEAR,

Howie

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.

Updates & Events

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Upcoming Schedule:

January 5
January 12
January 19
January 26

"When I reach out to you and you to me,
we become B'tzelem Elohim.
When we share our hopes and our dreams,
each one of us B'tzelem Elohim."

- *B'tzelem Elohim* by Dan Nichols

TORAH STUDY

Consider joining the monthly Saturday morning Torah study group, ongoing for more than twenty years, freewheeling and always thought-provoking. We are nearing the completion of Deuteronomy—likely later this year. Come when you can.

The next meeting is January 11 at 10:30am.

Upcoming Schedule:

January 11	February 15
March 14	April 18
May 16	June 20
July 25	August 15

WEBSITE

Members Only!

The JCNWJ website has a section for temple members only. Here you'll find the latest membership list and other documents not for public consumption.

To access, go to www.jcnwj.org/members/ and enter the user name jcnwjmember and password. Forgot the password? E-mail website@jcnwj.org.

FOOD DRIVE

We continue to collect non-perishable food items for the local food pantries.

The food pantries are in dire need of supplies to fill their shelves as more and more people are in need and your generosity will help fill that need.

Thank you for your continued support!

-Iris

Updates & Events

PURIM SPIEL

Happy New Year! Better yet, Happy future Purim and happy to have Purim Spielers ready for fun!! This year we are doing a Queen inspired Shpiel—Shushan Rhapsody, and I already have ideas churning!!

Let me know if you'll join in, no talent, no Queen familiarity needed! Just the desire to be in a super fun group of adults that love to laugh out loud!

The fun begins Sunday January 5th, 10:30am-12 (time is subject to change). We rehearse every Sunday until the performance on March 8th.

I can't wait to hear from you!

Your dedicated Spiel director,
Debbie Apsel
debapsel@gmail.com

MAH JONGG

Mah Jongg continues at the JCNWJ. Contact Rhonda Jordan at helpmerhonda171@yahoo.com if interested!

BUILDING UPDATE

Kitchen and Bathroom supplies

If you notice that any kitchen or bathroom supplies are getting low, please email Iris Hirsch at irishirsch@comcast.net.

JCC EVENTS

Shimon and Sara Birnbaum Jewish Community Center

The Amusement Park: 900 Years of Thrills, and the Dreamers and Schemers Who Built Them, with Stephen M. Silverman. Thursday, January 23, 12 Noon at the JCC, Bridgewater. Fee: 18/Person includes lunch. To register visit ssbjcc.org or call 908-443-9018.

Chronicles of the Last Jewish Gangster: From Meyer to Myron, with Myron Sugerman, Sunday, January 26, 9 AM at Temple Beth-El, Hillsborough. Program includes Brunch. Free to all. To register call 908-722-0674.

The Kindness Advantage, with Dale Atkins & Amanda Salzhauer. Tuesday, January 28, 7 PM at the JCC, Bridgewater. Fee: \$10/Person. To register visit jfedshaw.org/kindness or call Lauren Edelman at 908-758-2003.

Renegade Women In Film & TV, with Elizabeth Weitzman. Sunday, February 9, 10:30 AM at the JCC, Bridgewater. Fee: \$25/Person includes Brunch; \$36/Person includes Brunch and Book. To register visit ssbjcc.org or call 908-443-9018.

Updates & Events

DONATIONS

November:

In honor of the High Holy Days
Robin and Colson Hall
Helen and John Mattson

On the Yahrzeit of Belle Shure
Helen and John Mattson

On the Yahrzeit of Doris Tarlowe
Laura and Paul Tarlowe

In Honor of Abigail Thurber's First Birthday
Rita and Jerry Berkowitz

In Honor of Abigail Thurber's First Birthday
Helen and John Mattson

On the Yahrzeit of Sally Zemel
Ralph and Shelley Zemel

December:

On the Yahrzeit of Sarah Fromer Zeiden
Helen and John Mattson

On the Yahrzeit of Frances Bauch
Lisa and Richard Bauch

In Memory of Marvin Koral
Doreen and Rory Webb

In Memory of Max Weil
Ruth and Howard Schutzbank



Sunday School Hanukkah Celebration
12/15/19



Hanukkah at the Temple
12/27/19

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