

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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www.jcnwj.org

January 2019
Vol. XLIV Issue 5



Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

As many of you know, prior to entering the rabbinate, I spent twenty years as a teacher and administrator. For roughly half those years I taught in general population schools and for the other half I worked in specifically Jewish settings. For most of my teaching career I focused on Religious Studies and Bible, but for two years at one of the Jewish schools where I served, I taught History. It was an interesting experience for me, because while one of my previous non-Jewish schools offered a course called "History of the Jews" (which I myself did not teach), no such course existed in the History Department of this Jewish school. There was American History, European History, World History, etc., but no "History of the Jews." The reasoning behind this curricular decision speaks volumes.

"History of the Jews" was absent from the course catalogue not because Jewish history was ignored, but because Jewish history was never something "separate" or "other" that demanded a unique course to begin with. Jewish history, like all history, was understood to have taken place within a greater context. All history is interrelated and, as such, Jewish history was addressed not in a vacuum, but as an integral part of the world in which we live. Thus, for example, in a course called "20th Century America," we learned about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in order to understand the development of labor unions. When we discussed the civil rights movement, we looked at modern understandings of the Passover story and we examined the contributions of Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman, Abraham Joshua Heschel, Israel Dresner, and others who personified Jewish values in their activism. When we studied American jurisprudence, we traced the judicial philosophy and Jewish activism of Louis Brandeis.

(continued on next page)

Mark Your Calendar

- **Sunday, January 6th**
9:30 am – Sunday School
- **Monday, January 7th**
7:00 pm – Board of Trustees Mtg.
- **Saturday, January 12th**
10:30 am – Torah Study
- **Sunday, January 13th**
9:30 am – Sunday School
- **Friday, January 18th**
7:30 pm – Shabbat Service
Joint Service w/Mt. Pisgah AME Church
Oneg – Apsel, Tucker, Bradley
- **Saturday, January 19th**
6:30 pm – Reel Theology – *The Truman Show* – See Pg. 7 for details
- **Sunday, January 20th**
9:30 am – Sunday School
11:00 am – Joint Service at Mt. Pisgah AME Church
- **Monday, January 21st**
7:30 pm – Book Club
- **Sunday, January 27th**
9:30 am – Sunday School
10:30 am – Sisterhood
- **Friday, February 1st**
7:30 pm – Shabbat Service
Oneg – Tarlowe, Knobelmann, Stanton

Rabbi's Message (cont.)

This, in a nutshell, is how I understand the way Judaism fits into my own life – not as a compartmentalized portion of reality that requires an entirely different course of thought, but an essential integrated part of who I am as a complete human being. There is no “the rest of me” without Judaism, and there is no Judaism without “the rest of me.”

Now, to today... As I began kicking around the idea a few weeks ago of preparing a JCNWJ film series under the auspices of the Adult Education Committee, I began asking friends and colleagues for titles to be included. Not surprisingly, the suggestions were almost all of a similar type: *Fiddler on the Roof*, *School Ties*, *Hester Street*, *The Frisco Kid*, *Schindler's List*, *Chariots of Fire*, *The Chosen*, *Gentleman's Agreement*, *Exodus*, *Crossing Delancey*, *Blazing Saddles*, *Marathon Man*, *Yentl*, etc. While I absolutely, unequivocally recommend each and every one of these fantastic and important films, nonetheless, I found myself unsatisfied with the list, because I kept thinking back to my two year experience of teaching history. My goal was to include popular films that appeal equally to Jewish and non-Jewish audiences alike, but discuss them through a Jewish lens because that is how I live – as a human being who experiences life as a Jew – and this is why I am excited that over the next five months we will watch and engage in Jewish discussion about *The Truman Show*, *Stranger than Fiction*, *Moonrise Kingdom*, *The Hunger Games*, and *A Serious Man*.

I look forward to this exciting series, which we are calling “Reel Theology” (a title chosen by Dr. Wendy Zierler, a professor of mine from Rabbinical School). Please join us for dinner beforehand, and a dessert-discussion afterwards as we consider topics like Truth, Creation, God's Authorship, Coming of Age Sacrifice, God's Absence, Parable, Unearned Suffering, just to name a few.

More information is included elsewhere in this newsletter, but please feel free to reach out to me if you have any further questions or concerns.

Wishing you all a Happy and Rewarding 2019,

Rabbi Dubin

President's Message

I come into the secular new year with high hopes. As always, I wish the congregation good health.

As you read the newsletter this month, note that there are exciting things planned for the month of January. In addition to our normal events of Shabbat services, Sisterhood, book club, Torah study and Sunday School, we have several new events coming up soon.

We start off Martin Luther King weekend with a set of joint services with our brothers and sisters from the AME church in Washington. They have a new pastor, Daniela Bailey, who will give the sermon and share the bimah with us on Friday evening, January 18th. On Saturday night, the 19th, we will begin a 5 part film series looking at films from a Jewish perspective. We will begin with a Havdalah service, followed by dinner. Afterwards, we will watch *The Truman Show*, and then have dessert and discussion led by Rabbi Dubin after the movie. Then, on Sunday morning, January 20th, at 11 AM, we will participate in the Sunday morning service at the AME church with Rabbi Dubin giving the sermon.

For those of you who have attended and become friends with the folks from AME, I am sure you will have a wonderful time. For those of you who have not had the opportunity to share these joint worship services, I urge you to take advantage and join us in showing and knowing that religion can be inclusive and uniting.

In addition to all of that, on Monday evening, January 7th, the monthly board meeting will take place. The number one item on our agenda is Temple security. We have a security committee headed by Dawn Perdon, who will be giving her report based on the most recent meeting of the security committee. If you would like to hear what is going on with temple security and would like to make your opinions known, please come to the board meeting at 7 PM.

Stay safe and healthy.
Happy New Year.

Love, Howie

Sisterhood

NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Our next meeting will be held on Sunday January 27, 2019 at 10:30. We will be stuffing envelopes for the Mishloach Manot Fundraiser and sharing our ideas about the bags. We will also be firming up plans for our spring events. A light breakfast will be served! Please plan to join us in the fun.



PURIM — A TIME FOR GIFT GIVING! The JCNWJ Sisterhood is once again sponsoring the wonderful MISHLOACH MANOT fundraiser for Purim (March 20-21, 2019). This is a great occasion to give sweets and gifts to your friends, family, and co-workers.

Sisterhood is coordinating this fundraiser to have a Purim treat sent to each Temple family. *Every Temple family will receive one gift bag on or around Purim.*

To support this, we are asking each family to make a donation of at least \$18.00 to cover the cost of the Purim gift bags. As in the past, however, families are encouraged to give up to \$180.00.

All proceeds from the fundraiser will go to the JCNWJ. Every family will receive a letter in February explaining the details of the MISHLOACH MANOT fundraiser. So be on the lookout for your invitation to participate.

Updates & Events

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Upcoming Schedule:

- January 6
- January 13
- January 20
- January 27
- February 3

TORAH STUDY

Torah Study continues at the JCNWJ. The next meeting will be on January 12th at 10:30 in the Simcha room. Our remaining schedule for the year is:

- January 12
- February 23
- March 16
- April 13
- May 11
- June 22

FOOD DRIVE

Our congregation continues to donate food all year round to the food pantry. The Jewish Center is collecting non-perishable items such as canned soup, pasta, and cereal on an ongoing basis to help out those in need.

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.

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.

MAH JONGG

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

Updates & Events

ADDRESS CHANGE

Please note that the mailing address for donations and dues payments for the Jewish Center of Northwest New Jersey has changed to:

JCNWJ
c/o Andrew Shelofsky
10 Buttonwood Street
Lambertville, NJ 08530

If you make automated payments through your bank account or charitable foundation, please update the mailing address accordingly.

DONATIONS

In Honor of the High Holy Days
– Iris and Howie Hirsch

In Honor of the High Holy Days
– Jim Arvesen

In Honor of the Hirsch's
– Tracey and William Heisler

In Memory of B. Bernard Ratzman
– Carol and Marvin Eisenberg

In Memory of Ira Kapp
– June Kapp

In Memory of Mildred Weiss
– Carol and Marvin Eisenberg

On the Yahrzeit of Elaine Hirsch
– Iris and Howie Hirsch

On the Yahrzeit of Jack Zemel
– Shelley and Ralph Zemel

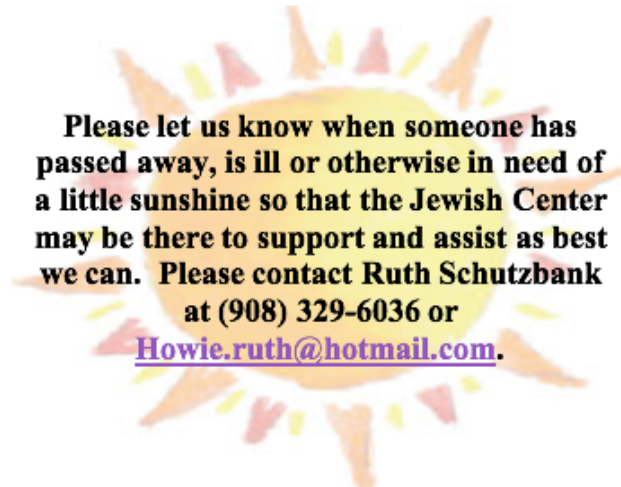
On the Yahrzeit of Jean Siegel
– Rhonda Jordan

On the Yahrzeit of Jessica Hirsch
– Iris and Howie Hirsch

On the Yahrzeit of Ronald Selznick
– Marci and Gil Braunstein

On the Yahrzeit of Sid Goldstein
– Iris and Howie Hirsch

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.

Reel Theology

Come one, come all . . . and BRING YOUR FRIENDS – whether or not they are members of the JCNWJ!

The Adult Education Committee of the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey is very excited to announce a new program of a different kind of Jewish learning!

Over the course of five months, we will share five Saturday nights together of film, food, and discussion.

Dinner will be served prior to the screenings, and structured discussions will follow over dessert. We hope you will join us, and we hope you will bring friends!

RSVP to Sharon Herson by January 12 at sharonherson@comcast.net for the January 19 showing and discussion of The Truman Show. Replies for future showings will be solicited as we come closer to each date.

Reel Theology

A Series of Five Films over Five Months



Come for the films, the food, the camaraderie, and the surprisingly Jewish discussions led by Rabbi Dr. Andy Dubin!

 <p>January 19, 6:30 pm</p> 	 <p>February 16, 6:30 pm</p> 	 <p>March 9, 6:30 pm</p> 	 <p>April 6, 7 pm</p> 	 <p>May 11, 7 pm</p> 
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RSVP to sharonherson@comcast.net (guests are encouraged, but please let us know to expect them).

Dinner and dessert will be served.

Presented by the Adult Education Committee of the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey.

Supporters



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Wanted: Advertisers for JCNWJ Journal

Kindly take note of the ads at the end of our Journal and whenever possible, support these establishments with your patronage. It's also a good idea to mention that you saw their Temple ad. If there are any businesses that you use regularly that might be interested in taking an ad in the Journal, please contact Rita Berkowitz (berk721@aol.com) or Ruth Schutzbank (Howie.ruth@hotmail.com). You can also go to our homepage, print out an advertising form and give it directly to them to mail in.