

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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## Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,



A few days ago, I received the most wonderful email. It was a photograph from Howie. There was no text, but the subject line said it all: "*Daffodils are Sprouting.*" Finally, after months of germinating beneath the surface, the bulbs our community planted in memory of the child-victims of Nazi hatred, have finally begun to make themselves known. It may be hard to spot the tiny shoots in the photo, but if you look closely, you

will see them in the bottom portion of the mulch. And once you find them, they will become clear as day, brimming with potential for the future. This makes me happy, because with everything going on in this world of ours, I could use the promise of a better future.

While anti-Semitism has existed pretty much as long as the Jewish people have existed, and while there certainly have been periods that were both better for us and worse, the renewed trajectory of hatred does seem to be on an uptick. Obviously, we are not in 1942 Germany. Overwhelmingly, America remains a safe and hospitable place for Jews. But there is something going on. According to a recent New York Times article, "There were 55 hate crimes reported in New York City this year as of Feb. 17, an increase of 72 percent over the same period last year, the police said. Anti-Semitic crimes made up almost two-thirds of that, for a total of 36 crimes reported so far this year, compared with 21 last year. The steep rise comes after a year when hate crimes were already increasing. Anti-Semitic crimes in 2018 were up 22 percent compared with 2017."

(continued on next page)

## Mark Your Calendar

- **Monday, March 4<sup>th</sup>**  
7:00 pm – Board of Trustees Mtg.
- **Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup>**  
6:00 pm – Reel Theology – *Moonrise Kingdom* – See Pg. 7 for details
- **Saturday, March 16<sup>th</sup>**  
10:30 am – Torah Study
- **Sunday, March 17<sup>th</sup>**  
10:00 am – Sisterhood
- **Monday, March 18<sup>th</sup>**  
7:30 pm – Book Club
- **Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>**  
7:30 pm – Shabbat Service  
Oneg – Shelofsky, Davidson
- **Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>**  
10:15 am – Megillah Reading  
11:00 am – Purim Spiel
- **Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>**  
7:00 pm – Board of Trustees Mtg.
- **Friday, April 5<sup>th</sup>**  
7:30 pm – Shabbat Service  
Oneg – Bauer, Berkowitz, Nathanson
- **Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>**  
6:00 pm – Reel Theology – *Hunger Games* – See Pg. 7 for details

### Sunday School Dates:

3/3, 3/10, 3/17, 3/24, 3/31

## Rabbi's Message (cont.)

Even in the wake of Pittsburgh and Charlottesville, I, for one, have no intention of letting acts of insidious anti-Semitic hatred bar me from living. Even as criticism of Israel is inching closer and closer to hatred against Jews, I continue on. Even as politicians on both sides of the aisle are reverting to old-fashioned anti-Semitic character assassinations ("It's all about the Benjamins baby" or the re-Tweeting of messages penned by notorious Nazi sympathizers), I am confident that exposure to the light will cleanse the air. Yes, I feel safe and confident, partly because I do believe the world is made up overwhelmingly of good people, but also because when I look at history, I see a three-thousand-year story of Jewish survival. Nowhere does this narrative cry out more clearly than it does with Purim.

Even though scholars of history are skeptical about the historicity of Purim (see, for example, [Adele Berlin](#), "The Book of Esther and Ancient Storytelling", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 120. no. 1 (Spring 2001): 3-14), the Book of Esther nonetheless remains one of the seminal chapters of our national book, because every year, when we gather to hear the *Megillah*, we are reminded of the ever-constant drive to survival that has kept our people alive and thriving for three millennia. When I celebrate Purim, as we all will in a few weeks, I am invigorated and inspired to be exactly who I am: A child of Israel with a rich history behind me and a bright future ahead of me.

As we now prepare to enter into Adar Bet, the month during which Jews are literally commanded to be joyful, I am inspired by the daffodil sprouts that have now begun to push through the soil. We planted them to memorialize the past, but we look forward to their continued growth with anticipation for a better tomorrow.

*Ta'anit* 29a of the Babylonian Talmud declares:



Looking forward to celebrating with you all at our Purim Shabbat on March 22 and our Sunday Costume Parade and Purim *Spiel* on March 24,

*Rabbi Dubin*

# President's Message

Excitement.  
Anticipation.  
Hope.  
The Beauty and wonder of Nature.

This is how I felt this Friday. We were having trouble with the lift and I was at the temple to meet the technician. As I approached the temple, something caught my eyes. It was a sign of spring, a sign of hope and a sign of survival. What was it? It was the daffodils that we planted in October starting to push through the rocks. Right now, there is maybe an inch showing and not all of them are starting to show themselves. This is what leads to the hope and anticipation. With 500 daffodils planted, I am hopeful that almost all of them will bloom. I am anticipating having some sort of commemoration when they are blooming, and I am looking forward to being able to enjoy the beauty which so many of you helped to create.

As we go through the shortest days of the year when we have less daylight, any sign that the days are lengthening, and the warmth of spring is on its way brightens my days. In addition, spring training is alive and that means baseball will return soon, and you all know how much I like baseball. Even if I will have to listen to Rabbi Dubin gloat about his team winning last year, I will still enjoy the smells and sounds of going to Yankee Stadium with my cousin Erik and my good friend Price. I have been a regular at Yankee Stadium for opening day. I have been a regular at Yankee Stadium for opening day for many years - this will be my 38<sup>th</sup> out of the last 41.

Lastly, the Purim Spielers are rehearsing our hearts out under the direction of Debbie Apsel to put on a wonderful Beatles themed show for you on Sunday March 24<sup>th</sup>. I look forward to seeing all of you there to support our brave actors who have the nerve to sing and act on stage in hope of entertaining you. **Please be there!!!**

PLAY BALL!!!!

Love Howie

# Sisterhood

## NEWS & UPCOMING EVENTS

Mishloach Manot - There is still time. We are extending the due date for Mishloach Manot donations until **March 11, 2019**. Please feel free to send in donations up to that date. Please let me know if you for some reason did not receive the MM letter with information about the fundraiser. Please remember that all proceeds will go to security updates at JCNWJ.

**Sisterhood Members:** Please join us on March 17 at 10AM at the Temple. We will be packing the MM bags-which is always fun. I will bring breakfast!!

Bags will be distributed Friday night, March 22 and at our Purim celebration on Sunday, March 24.

Thank you in advance for all of your support for this fundraiser which will help the Temple implement important security updates.



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:

- March 3
- March 10
- March 17
- March 24
- March 31

## TORAH STUDY

Torah Study continues at the JCNWJ. The next meeting will be on February 23<sup>rd</sup> at 10:30 in the Simcha room. Our remaining schedule for the year is:

- 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](mailto: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/](http://www.jcnwj.org/members/) and enter the user name jcnwjmember and password. Forgot the password? E-mail [website@jcnwj.org](mailto:website@jcnwj.org).

## MAH JONGG

Mah Jongg continues at the JCNWJ. Contact Rhonda Jordan at [helpmerhonda171@yahoo.com](mailto: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 Memory of Rebecca Goldenthal  
– Nancy and Dr. Bernard Robins

On the Yahrzeit of Rose Schutzbank  
– Ruth and Howard Schutzbank

Wendy and Lawrence Steinhardt

## 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](mailto:Howie.ruth@hotmail.com).



# Reel Theology

We are now up to Film #3 of Reel Theology, having already enjoyed *The Truman Show* and *Stranger than Fiction*. For each of these film nights, we enjoyed a delicious dinner (thank you, Sharon), a short Havdallah service, seeing the movie on the big screen, and dessert/discussion afterwards.

The next film is *Moonrise Kingdom*. Join us at 6:00 pm on Saturday, March 9<sup>th</sup> for a fun evening including dinner, dessert, and the movie. Rabbi Dubin will lead the discussion as we analyze Jewish themes within the film. Please RSVP to Sharon ([sharonherson@comcast.net](mailto:sharonherson@comcast.net)) if you are planning to attend.

## 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!

Film	Date	Time
 JIM CARREY <b>The Truman Show</b>	January 19,	6:30 pm
 Will Ferrell Maggie Gyllenhaal Dustin Hoffman Queen Latifah Emma Thompson <b>Stranger than Fiction</b>	February 16,	6:00 pm
 Carey Mulligan Ben Stiller Edward Norton Bill Hader Frances McDormand Tilda Swinton Jason Schwartzman Josh Wootton <b>Moonrise Kingdom</b>	March 9,	6:00 pm
 <b>THE HUNGER GAMES</b>	April 6,	6:00 pm
 THE NEW FILM BY JOEL AND ETHAN COEN <b>A SERIOUS MAN</b>	May 11,	6:30 pm

RSVP to [sharonherson@comcast.net](mailto: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](mailto:berk721@aol.com)) or Ruth Schutzbank ([Howie.ruth@hotmail.com](mailto: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.