

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

As I sit to write this message on October 27, 2020, I do so with a heavy heart, with my thoughts racing back exactly two years, to Shabbat morning October 27, 2018. It was on that morning, in Pittsburgh that 11 innocent Jews were murdered as the Tree of Life Synagogue was transformed into a site of horrifying death when a gunman fueled with hate and vitriol entered the sanctuary, screaming anti-Semitic statements and opened fire. What resulted was the single most deadly anti-Semitic attack in the history of our nation.

As I wrote to you back then, the ironic calamity of the massacre was palpable. Not only was the mass murder committed in the heart of Square Hill – one of the flagship American Jewish communities – and not only did it happen in a holy sanctuary on the holiest day of the week as holy words were being sung, but even worse, it happened just as a family was celebrating the act of introducing a new life into the Covenant of Israel.

That was two years ago, but the pain lingers. We continue to mourn with the families shattered, and we pray for the day when violence and anti-Semitism are no more.

Following events like these, we often hear people say that “there no words,” but of course the Jewish community does have words:

We have words of peace: *“Grant abundant peace to Israel
Your people forever, for You are Sovereign God of all
peace.” (Shalom Rav)*

We have words of comfort: *“May the Omnipresent comfort*

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Calendar of Events

**All Events are on Zoom until further notice
due to the continuing COVID-19 Pandemic**

Weekly Events

Thursday, November 5, 12, 19
6:00pm: Mindful Meditation

Friday, November 6, 13, 20, 27
7:30pm: Shabbat Service

Saturday, November 7, 14, 21, 28
6:30pm: Havdalah

Sunday, November 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
10:15am: Sunday School

Special Events

Monday, November 2
7:00pm: Board of Trustees

Monday, November 16
7:00pm: Book Club

Saturday, November 28
10:30am: Torah Study

Please Note: Calendar events are subject to change, which will be announced by email.

Rabbi's Message (continued)

you among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.” (Epilogue to Mourner’s Kaddish)

We have words of strength: *“Praise to You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who girds Israel with strength.” (Nisim b’Chol Yom – For Daily Miracles)*

We have words of protection: *“Grant, O God, that we lie down in peace, and raise us up, our Guardian, to life renewed. Spread over us the shelter of Your peace. Guide us with Your good counsel; for Your Name’s sake, be our help. Shield and shelter us beneath the shadow of Your wings. Defend us against enemies.” (Hashkiveinu)*

We have words of tenacity: *“Though I walk through a valley of the shadow of deaths, I fear no harm, for You are with me.” (Psalm 23)*

And we have words of love: *“Everlasting love you offered Your people Israel.” (Ahavat Olam)*

Yes, there are people in our midst driven to evil by the sin of anti-Semitism. They represent the worst of our country. But we are strong. We have the strength to move forward. We know this, unfortunately, because it is a strength on which we have had to call before. And I’m sure we will have to again in the future. But it is a strength nonetheless, and it is a strength born from the fact that we are a community that inherently loves more than we fear.

All the same, we recognize that in the context of the ongoing reality of anti-Semitism, the prudent thing is for Jewish communities everywhere to show heightened vigilance regarding our physical safety. And that is exactly what we’ve been doing over the past year, ever since our federal security grant application (drafted primarily by Debbie Kahan) was approved. Howie Hirsch and Jeff Berkowitz have been busy investing that money in ways that have improved the security of our building tremendously, and we are grateful. In keeping with protocols developed by security experts nationwide, I won’t itemize those improvements in this bulletin article (which is available on our website to the general public – including those that may wish us harm), but please do rest assured that a detailed communication regarding our improved safety measures will be made available to the congregation prior to our eventual return to 115 Youmans Avenue.

In the meantime, I wish you continued safety.

And finally, to our extended Jewish family in Pittsburgh, you remain in our hearts. To the murdered – to Joyce Fienberg (75), Richard Gottfried (65), Rose Mallinger (97), Jerry Rabinowitz (66) Cecil (59) & David Rosenthal (54), Bernice (84) & Sylvan Simon (86), Daniel Stein (71), Melvin Wax (88), and Irving Younger (69) – to all of you, we make this solemn promise: We promise to do everything we can to ensure that your names will be remembered for blessings. Your lives mattered, and you will not be forgotten. And to the survivors, we offer our deepest care and support. We are your family, and we love you.

L’Shalom,

Rabbi Dubin

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Rabbi's Message (continued)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

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FINAL

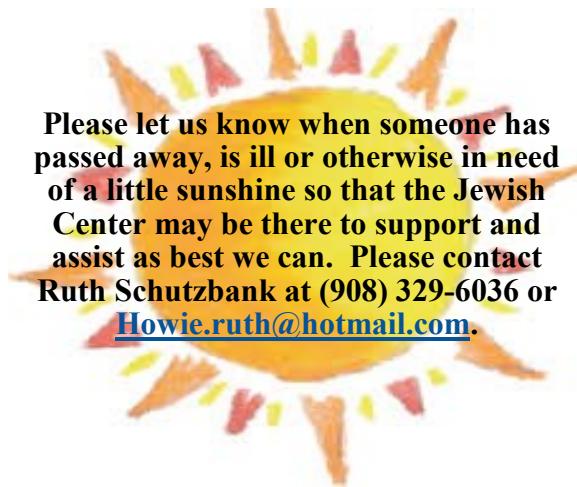
יתגדל ויתקדש שמה רבה...

These are the first words of the Jewish mourners' prayer, 'Magnified and sanctified be Your name,' to be recited tonight on the first Sabbath since the tragedy at Tree of Life



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.



President's Message

Shalom,

What utterly amazes me about this congregation is how resilient we are. As a community, even though we are small, we truly do watch out for each other. We are also able to adapt to the most bizarre circumstances that have ever arisen in my life. Instead of folding up shop and waiting for a new normal to arrive, we have been conducting services via Zoom since we were unable to have people in the sanctuary. This led us to a new round of services that occurred over the High Holidays.

We realized during our first high holiday service that the quality of the pre-recorded music and readings was problematic. Rabbi Dubin, his video consultant, Sandra Luckow, and I worked for hours after that first service to come up with a better way to show the pre-recorded segments. I thank the Rabbi and Sandra for the extra time and effort that went into making the recordings for the remaining services go smoothly. But I also want to give a huge thank you to the people who attended the Erev Rosh Hashanah service for coming back the next morning for our Rosh Hashanah morning service. The fact that we were not technically proficient did not stop you from coming back the next day, and that shows resilience. The Rosh Hashanah services went smoothly, and we were relatively confident that Yom Kippur would as well.

Well, we know the saying "Man plans, and God laughs." So, during the Kol Nidre service, as Rabbi Dubin was leading a prayer, the power went out in Washington. Since we did not know what happened to the Rabbi, I took over and led one prayer. Meanwhile, the Rabbi and his son Ari came up with the idea to join the Zoom service on the Rabbi's phone. From there, the service continued flawlessly. Then on Yom Kippur morning, as I was presenting the videos, my internet connection, which had not gone down in years, decided to go down in the middle of the service. The Rabbi continued and we did not present the videos until I was able to get back online. In my efforts to get back into the service and then back into my computer, I accidentally ended the service. To my surprise, within minutes, everyone was back, and we were able to complete the morning service and Yiskor. The morning service included a wonderful video of the story of Jonah, starring the Sunday School students

The morning service included a wonderful video of the story of Jonah, starring the Sunday School students. If you have not seen it, I would urge you to visit our Facebook page and watch this creative, heartwarming presentation here: <https://www.facebook.com/jcnwj/videos/1584105635079887>.

Everything about the participation in these services confirms to me the resilience of this congregation.

I wish you all a healthy and happy new year, and please remember to reach out to folks who might need some cheering up in this time of isolation.

Love,

Howie

Updates & Events

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Sunday School will be continuing online in the Fall. Check the WhatsApp for the latest updates and schedule.

ZOOM LESSONS

If you would like to learn how to use ZOOM, Howie is willing to help you get familiar with this technology.

Please contact him at jcnwjprez@gmail.com or call him at 908-295-0073 to set up a time for assistance.

FOOD DRIVE

During this time when our building is closed, we encourage members to donate to relief organizations and food pantries online. We will resume collecting food at the JCNWJ after we reopen.

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

TORAH STUDY

The Torah Study Group, which began in the fall of 1998 with the reading of Genesis 1 (In the beginning . . .), will soon (probably by the end of this calendar year or early in 2021) reach the end of Moses' last speech in Deuteronomy. This twenty-two year exploration of the Pentateuch has been inspiring and eye-opening for all who have been participating.

This year, since the start of the pandemic, we have been meeting, successfully, on Zoom, and have had the pleasure of Rabbi Dubin's participation for the past several months. All of us are hoping that he will be able to continue with us as we go forward—even after we resume in person—as his presence and his knowledge contribute greatly to the group's efforts.

The group is now considering what we will read next: Start over again with Genesis? Move "forward" into the histories—Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, etc.? Jump to the Prophets? We want to encourage potential new participants at this time to help us decide. Please call or email Sharon if you would like to make a suggestion or two and would consider joining the group. Folks are welcome to come in at any time, even now—or perhaps especially now, as we read Deuteronomy 30 next time, which instructs us to "CHOOSE LIFE!"

Upcoming Schedule (meetings on Zoom):
November 28 and December 19 at 10:30.

-Sharon

Updates & Events

DONATIONS

In Memory of Neche Rachel Fleckles
- Sharon Herson and Daniel Fleckles

In Memory of Leonard. Moskowitz
- Rene Marinich

On the Yahrzeit of Philip Weinstein
- Edward and Roseann Weinstein

In Memory of Gloria Jacobs
- Howie and Iris Hirsch

In Memory of Beattie Felberbaum
- Iris and Howie Hirsch

To the Building/ Education/ Membership/
General Fund
-Roy and Claudia Loomis

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.

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Thanks for Mindful Meditation
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Howie and Iris Hirsch

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