

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

Over the course of *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*, I spoke with you about some of the mental health challenges that we all share, whether it is we ourselves or someone we love who is living with the diagnosis.

I began on *Erev Rosh Hashanah* by sharing my discomfort with the notion that God should demand that we pray and live with a joyful heart, because if that truly were the case, then how could anyone affected by depression or anxiety possibly satisfy God? In the end, I concluded that since it can be nearly impossible for those with severe mental illness to do this, it is for them especially, for those whose self-reflections are so distorted they have been rendered incapable of seeing their own true selves, that we say, you are not alone. We are here. No, I said, you do not have to smile if you don't have it in you, because we're here to smile for you until one day, hopefully, you will have it in you to do it for yourself. However long it may take, we'll be patient, I said, because you matter.

On the morning of *Rosh Hashanah*, I shifted the conversation away from mental health challenges that are chemical or biological in nature, inherited and completely natural, to those with mental health challenges that are completely unnatural, in no way part of our DNA, the ones forced on us by emotional or physical trauma. To these people, I said that while forgiveness and reconciliation are indeed core to the meaning of these days, this does not mean that victims of abuse – physi-

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Calendar of Events

Friday, November 8

7:00pm: Shabbat Service &
Kristallnacht Observance

Saturday, November 9

9:45am: Bar Mitzvah - Tanner Kalisher

Sunday, November 10

9:30am: Sunday School

Saturday, November 16

10:30am: Torah Study

Sunday, November 17

9:30am: Sunday School
10:15am: Sisterhood Meeting

Friday, November 22

7:30pm: Shabbat Service

Saturday, November 23

9:45am: Bar Mitzvah - Alex Goldfarb

Sunday, November 24

9:30am: Sunday School

Monday, November 25

7:00pm: Book Club

Friday, December 6

7:30pm: Shabbat Service

Sunday, December 8

9:30am: Sunday School
10:15am: Sisterhood Meeting
4:00pm: Mental Health Film & Discussion

Rabbi's Message (continued)

cal, sexual, mental, or any other kind – should ever be forced to forgive their tormenters until and unless they choose to do so.

During *Kol Nidrei* I shifted focus once again and addressed my remarks not to those of us who suffer from mental illness of one kind or another, but instead to those of us who love and seek to support others who do. In other words, my remarks were directed to every single person in the room. In a nutshell, I suggested that the very best, most loving thing we can possibly do is trust the reality of their pain, offer our presence, and respect the timing of their own processes of healing.

And then on the morning of *Yom Kippur* I narrowed in to speak directly to those of us who actually know from the inside what it's like to live with mental illness. Recognizing how difficult it must be, I nonetheless suggested that it is incumbent upon us to choose life, which sometimes requires that we lower our defenses and allow others to help us when we need it. Choosing life, I suggested, means accepting that some of us will gladly hold the bag for others until they're able to hold it again for themselves. It means having the courage to say we need each other. It means being able to let go of our unearned shame, but it also means having the right to let go of it slowly if we don't have it within us to go any more quickly. It means having the right to put our own needs first without guilt. It means accepting and appreciating the blessings of life. It means being able to bask in the light of the divine spark that dwells within.

And now, having shared my thoughts on Mental Health during *Yamim Noraim*, the days of *Rosh HaShanah* and *Yom Kippur*, I am excited to announce our very special follow-up program, which will take place on Sunday, December 8.

It is my privilege to live next door to a woman named Sandra Luckow who, in addition to being a professor of film at Yale, Columbia, and Barnard, is also an award winning documentarian herself. Sandra's most recent completed work, *That Way Madness Lies*, not only tells the heart-wrenching story of her brother's fall into adult onset schizophrenia, which is challenging enough, but it also paints a stark picture of the challenges that families face when trying to navigate the mental healthcare system in search of help for those whom they love so much.

I am grateful for the opportunity to screen this film at JCNWJ because from the moment I saw it for the first time I have been struck by the masterful and unexpected way it has revealed to me new angles from which to see what the spark of God might look like in different people. This is why we will have clergy as well as a mental health expert and filmmaker sitting on the discussion panel that I will be moderating (see below for the names of our panelists).

Our Sunday program will begin at 4:00 and be followed by a ½ hour intermission (with food available in the Elaine Hirsch Simcha Room) at 5:45. At 6:15 we will regather in the sanctuary for a final 60-

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Rabbi's Message (continued)

minute panel discussion, during which there will be ample time for members of the audience to ask questions and offer comments.

We look forward to seeing you on Dec 8, and **PLEASE BRING FRIENDS!** This is a program you won't want to miss!!!

L'Shalom

Rabbi Dubin

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey
115 Youmans Avenue
Washington, NJ

4:00-5:45
Screening

5:45-6:15
Intermission (food available)

6:15-7:15
Panel Discussion



**THAT WAY
MADNESS LIES...**
A Sandra Luckow Film

**SUNDAY
DECEMBER 8, 2019**

**"ONE
WOMAN AND HER FAMILY
TREK THE BROKEN MENTAL
HEALTH SYSTEM IN AN
EFFORT TO SAVE
HER BROTHER AS HE
DESCENDS INTO MADNESS."**

**Admission & Refreshments
by Voluntary Donation**

Discussion Panel

Sandra Luckow (Filmmaker)
Eric Harris, LCSW (Jewish Family Service)
Rabbi Kara Tav (Board Certified Chaplain)
Pastor Diana Ortiz Bracy (Mt. Pisgah AME Church)

Moderator: Rabbi Dr. Andy Dubin (Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey)



President's Message

I have lived in New Jersey my entire life. One of the things that I love best are the fall colors. I love the way Warren County looks so picturesque in October. Although I am not crazy about how many leaves I have to move each fall, that is one of the prices for living in this beautiful area.

Our Simchat Torah service last month was one of the best services that I have attended at our synagogue.

Simchat Torah is a holiday of rejoicing. We were singing and dancing with Debbie on guitar, Noa bouncing up and down and leading the singing and the Religious School children marching (or running) and singing along to the songs as we paraded the Torah around the sanctuary. I think we got the spirit of rejoicing just perfect.

Thank you to everyone who helped with planting the daffodils this past Sunday. The blood drive has been postponed due to blood center's lack of workers.

Following Rabbi Dubin's heartfelt sermons on the High Holidays, I want to ensure that everyone knows about our Mental Health day on Sunday, December 8 at 4 PM.

Please mark your calendar and bring friends with you, as this event is open to the community. There will be a panel with other religious leaders and mental health professionals to discuss the current state of mental health care, what is available, and what can be done to help others with mental health challenges.

See you at the temple.

Love Howie



Updates & Events

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Congratulations to Tanner and Alex on their upcoming Bar Mitzvahs this month.

Upcoming Schedule:

November 3
November 10
November 17
November 24

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.

Upcoming Schedule:

November 16 December 14

Tentative 2020 Dates:

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

SISTERHOOD

The next Sisterhood meeting will be on November 17 in the simcha room, starting promptly at 10:15am (note: NO food will be served). We will end by 11:15am.

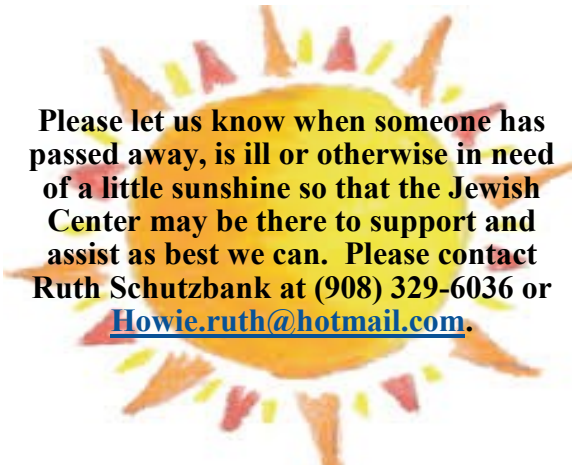
Several of us are going to see *Kvetches of 1932*'s matinee at 2pm (also on 11/17). Please join us (all are welcome!). You can buy your tickets at: <http://www.centenarystageco.org/fringe-kvetches-of-1932>. See the ad on this page.

Whoever is attending the play can either car-pool from temple or meet us there at 11:30am. We will have brunch (cost is approx \$10-12 per person) at the Cyclone Dining Hall at the Lackland Center at Centenary University.

Any questions can be directed to Suzi Marr at 908.343.1135.



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.

DASACC New Gift & Used Clothing Collection through Sunday, 12/8:

We are collecting for a "new gift drive" (toys/games, books, sports balls/equipment, toiletries, scarves/gloves/mittens, art supplies etc) and a "clothing drive" (gently used business casual to dressy (no jeans or sneakers) including shoes & accessories.

Both collections to benefit DASAAC. Drop items off by Sunday, December 8. Rack and box located in simcha room. Any questions, ask Suzi 908.343.1135.

Updates & Events

DONATIONS

In Honor of the High Holy Days

- Tracey and Mo Bauer
- Paul and Judy May
- Jerry and Rita Berkowitz
- Ruth and Howard Schutzbank
- Richard and Lisa Bauch
- Adam Tucker
- Rene Marinich
- Laurie Post and Steven Goldberg
- Paul and Laura Tarlowe
- Edward and Roseann Weinstein
- Daniel and Susan Hirshberg
- Rhonda Jordan

In Honor of Beattie Felberbaum

- Iris and Howie Hirsch

In Memory of Esther Newman Lewis

- Rabbi Ellen Lewis

On the Yahrzeit for Celia Robins

- Nancy and Bernie Robins

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.

MAH JONGG

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



Photos from Daffodil Planting

11/3/19

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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.