

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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## Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

Though it feels like we were celebrating Purim and enjoying the spiel only a few days ago (mostly because we were!), Passover is already waiting for us just around the corner. Jews around the world will gather for first night festivities on Saturday, March 27. And for the second year in a row, JCNWJ will join together over Zoom to celebrate the second night seder on (surprise, surprise!) the next day, which is Sunday, March 28. More on that second seder will come to you by email soon).

As we begin to look ahead to our Spring holiday, many of us will soon be cleaning our homes and beginning to rid ourselves of prohibited foods. Normally we would have a collection box for your discards at 115 Youmans Avenue to help fight local hunger, but since Covid has rendered that an impossibility once again this year, we encourage you to reach out to your own local soup kitchens or food pantries and make donations directly to them.

Unfortunately, we Jews have known intimately over the course of history what it feels like to be food insecure. Hunger is why Abraham went to Egypt (Gen 12). It's why Isaac went to Gerar (Gen 26). It's how Joseph's destiny to save the world was realized. And it's why Ruth and Naomi journeyed to Moab (Ruth 1). King David understood hunger (2 Samuel 21). So did King Ahab (1 Kings 18:1-2) and the prophet Jeremiah, too (Lamentations 4:9 – Jeremiah is the traditionally recognized author of Lamentations). Over the course of

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## Calendar of Events

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

### Weekly Events

**Tuesday, March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30**  
6:00pm: Mindful Meditation

**Friday, March 5, 12, 19, 26, April 2**  
7:30pm: Shabbat Service

**Saturday, March 6, 13, 20, April 3**  
6:30pm: Havdalah

**Sunday, March 7, 14, 21, 28, April 4**  
10:15am: Sunday School

### Special Events

**Monday, March 1**  
7:00pm: Board of Trustees

**Saturday, March 13**  
10:30am: Torah Study

**Sunday, March 28**  
TBD: Congregational Seder (2nd night of Passover)

**Monday, April 5**  
7:00pm: Board of Trustees

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

## Rabbi's Message (continued)

time, there have been so many times when we, as a people, have felt the pangs of hunger, either because of physical attack or governmental restrictions regarding the sources of income we were permitted to have. Yes, we know how it feels to be hungry, and it does not feel good, which is why we are commanded in the Book of Leviticus to leave food for the poor and the stranger when we harvest the fields of our land (Leviticus 23:22).

So please, even if ridding your home of all leavened products is not a tradition familiar to your family follows, and even if you don't personally read from the Hagadah during Passover, please do what you can to fulfil one of the most central commandments of this holiday, as presented in the text of the Hagadah, when it instructs us to declare: "לֹא יָחַל דָּכְכִין יִמִּין יֵכֶל" Let all who are hungry come and eat."

No doubt, the challenges of hunger have become especially acute during this time of Covid-19. According to the Jewish organization, Mazon, whose mission is "to fight to end hunger among people of all faiths and backgrounds in the United States and Israel," while there were already a staggering 40 million Americans struggling with food insecurity prior to Covid-19, that number has doubled to 80 million over the past twelve months. 12.9 million of the food insecure among us are children (<https://mazon.org/hunger-in-america/>). This cannot be permitted to continue.

According to the classic rabbinic collection of Exodus Rabbah, "If all the world's miseries were placed on one side of a scale and poverty alone were put on the other, poverty would outweigh them all." (Exodus Rabbah, 31:14) With poverty, of course, comes hunger. Yes, poverty, which leads to hunger, really is that massive a challenge. No, our donations alone will *not* put an end to hunger, not even just in Warren County. Hunger is a scourge that will not only require all hands on deck, it will require all hands on deck for a significantly extended period of time. All the same, if our donations turn out to be that which is needed to keep even just one person alive, what an honor that would be! After all, according to the Talmud, "Whoever saves even a single life is considered by Scripture to have saved the entire world." (Sanhedrin 37a) Wow!

So please, whether you need a place to donate the food you'll be clearing from your homes for Passover or not, whether you'll be reading from the Hagadah, which implores us to feed the hungry, or not, either way, whether it in food or cash, please give what you can to those who are in greater need than we. Because if you do, if *we all* do, who knows? We just might be able to save the very world itself. And who among us wouldn't jump at an opportunity like that?

*Chag Pesach Sameach – Happy Passover (in about three weeks)!*

Next year in person,

*Rabbi Dubin*

## President's Message

I heard a term today that I had not heard before, called "vaccine envy". Over the past few weeks, I have been thrilled to see people in our congregation getting the covid-19 vaccine. Not being a person who gets jealous very often, I think I have felt vaccine envy. Even though I was out of state and was unable to apply for the vaccine, I really wanted to get my dose of the vaccine for me and Iris. Over the last week both Iris and I were able to receive our first dose of the vaccine.

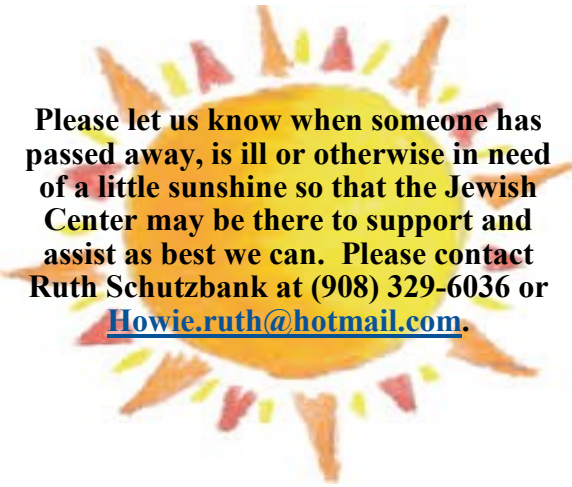
I truly hope this is a step in getting back to our normal lives. While I think I have made the best of being cooped up in my house for the better part of a year, and not seeing many people, I miss you all very much. Hugless Howie is not as happy a person as Howie the Hugger.

As a congregation, we are starting to think about how to open up again and be able to hold services and classes in person. We will be using all the guidelines that we can find to make the best decisions to keep all of you safe. I look forward to the day when we will be able to embrace, pray, sing, console and rejoice with one another.

Be on the lookout for announcements regarding a second night Zoom Seder led by Rabbi Dubin. I wish you a zissen Pesach and much health.

Love, 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](mailto:Howie.ruth@hotmail.com).**

# Updates & Events

## 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](mailto: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, now with Rabbi Dubin participating, is nearing the end of Deuteronomy. We are currently reading and discussing the Song of Moses (Deut. 32:1-52). The next meeting will be on March 13. Please join us via Zoom.

Upcoming dates for Torah Study:

- March 13
- April 17
- May 15
- June 19

All meetings start at 10:30 a.m.

-Sharon

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Sunday School continues online. Check the WhatsApp for the latest updates and schedule.

# Updates & Events

Dear Friends,

Many of you remember long-time JCNWJ member, Debbie Berk. Unfortunately, poor health and multiple hospitalizations have kept her from joining us for JCNWJ activities recently.

Debbie is ok now, so there are no current plans for her to return to the hospital, but since her illness rarely gives forewarning, she is looking for someone – or someone<sup>S</sup> – to care for her precious one-year-old shih tzu, **Corrie**, on a temporary basis should she ever need rehospitalization. If this sounds like you, or if you know someone who might be interested, please contact me ([RabbiDubin@jcnwj.org](mailto:RabbiDubin@jcnwj.org)) so I can help set a time for you and Debbie and **Corrie** to meet up and discuss.

Thank you,

*Rabbi Dubin*



While I don't have a picture of Corrie himself,  
here is a sample shih tzu for your viewing pleasure...

## DONATIONS

In Memory of Elaine Hirsch  
- Iris and Howie Hirsch

In Memory of Mary Primrose Sayler Kalb  
- Rita and Jerry Berkowitz

In Memory Lesley Apsel  
- Rita and Jerry Berkowitz

In Memory of Edward Lewis  
- Rabbi Ellen Lewis

In Memory of Theodore Jay  
- Rabbi Ellen Lewis

## DONATIONS

In Memory of Sanford Rems  
- Delores Rems

In Memory of Rebecca Goldenthal  
- Bernie Robins

In Memory of Ellen Field  
- Andy and Alison Shelofsky

Thanks for Zoom Shabbat  
- Edward and Roseann Weinstein

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