

# Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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## Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

It was in the humble Ukrainian village of Okopy (at the time, part of Poland), sometime around the year 1698, when a poor Jewish woman named Sarah, along her husband, Eliezer, welcomed the birth of their only child, to whom they gave the name, "Israel," that the future of Jewish practice was changed forever. By the time Israel died in 1760, this child of poverty (who himself had become an orphan at just 5 years of age, had come to be known and admired far and wide by a new name, the *Baal Shem Tov* ("Owner of a good name/reputation"), or the *Besht* for short, for having introduced an entirely new way of celebrating Jewish life. His innovation, known as Hasidism, captured the hearts and minds of vast numbers of his fellow Jews in his day because it emphasized spiritual uplift over intellectual rigor at a time of enormous national distress. In the aftermath of the Khmel'nitski Massacres (<https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/chmielnicki-khmel'nitski-bogdan-x00b0>) and the religious crisis of Shabtai Zvi (<https://www.britannica.com/biography/Shabbetai-Tzevi>), the Jews of Eastern Europe were in desperate need of joy and optimistic purpose, which this newly formed approach of elation and awesome ecstasy provided. Utilizing the tools of Hasidism, downtrodden Jews began to believe with all their hearts that their actions actually matter, that they have true effect on God.

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## Calendar of Events

### Friday, March 11

7:30pm: Shabbat Evening (Zoom Only)

### Sunday, March 13

9:30am: Sunday School

10:00am: Sisterhood

### Friday, March 18

7:00pm: Shabbat Evening & Purim Service

### Sunday, March 20

9:30am: Sunday School

11:00am: Torah Cantillation

### Friday, March 25

7:30pm: Shabbat Evening Service

### Sunday, March 27

9:30am: Sunday School

### Sunday, April 3

9:30am: Sunday School

### Monday, April 4

7:00pm: Board Meeting

### Friday, April 8

7:00pm: Shabbat Evening Service  
Family Service/Bark Mitzvah

### Saturday, April 9

11:00am: Torah Study

**Note: Most in-person events will also be available virtually on Zoom.**

## Rabbi's Message (continued)

They also came to accept that a sincere heart far out-values years of intellectual preparation, that *niggunim* (wordless songs) have the capacity to move God even more than traditional prayers and blessings, and that God yearns for individual personal relationships with each one of us more than we can possibly understand. In short, the *Baal Shem Tov's* Hasidic approach to Jewish life brought reassurance to a shaken people: "Whenever feeling dejected," he taught, "we must remember, 'For my sake was the entire world created.'"

Upon the *Baal Shem Tov's* death in 1760, his novel approach to Judaism continued to grow in its teachings and influence through the work of his students and descendants, perhaps none less likely – nor more important – than his great-grandson, Nachman, who in 1772 was born in the Polish town of *Mezhibizh* (in current day Ukraine). Nachman was an **unlikely** long-term influence on account of the fact that without having appointed a line of succession before dying himself, Reb Nachman left a movement that in its more-than-two-century history has never had another rebbe other than him. Still, though, after moving to the town of Breslav in 1802, he became one of the most **important** successors to the *Baal Shem Tov* beginning in 1802, when moved to the town of Breslav and began amassing a great following. From then on, he would forever be known as Reb Nachman of Breslav, the founder of Breslav Hasidism.

Like his great grandfather, the *Baal Shem Tov*, Reb Nachman of Breslav emphasized the value of ecstatic worship, but unlike his famous great grandfather, Nachman emphasized even further the value of rapturous joy, even going so far as to teach that it is one of the greatest commandments that we are to be happy at all times. Of course, this does not mean that we can never be sad, but what it does mean is that whenever we have reason to be less than happy, we must never stop seeing the light through the trees with an optimistic heart.

Unlike Chabad Hasidism (founded in the town of Belarusian town of Liozno – at the time, part of the Russian Empire – by Shneuer Zalman of Liadi, the brightest disciple of the *Baal Shem Tov's* brightest disciple), which sought to transform simpletons into scholars Breslav Hasidism actually strove for the opposite: to transform scholars into simpletons. Reb Nachman advocated achieving this goal through the meditative practice of *Hitbodedut*, or self-seclusion, in which individuals are to seek a place of solitude where they can converse one-on-one with God. Ironically, the more learned a person is, according to Breslaver thought, the more difficulty they will have in figuring out to commune with God, because our intellect can get in the way. For that reason, Reb Nachman suggested simplifying our thoughts in *Hitbodedut*, even to the point where we focus on just a single word. The key is learning how to do it with as much passion and dedication as possible, and to approach the encounter with God as if we were

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## Rabbi's Message (continued)

meeting up with a dear friend.

I have been thinking a great deal of Reb Nachman these past few days, as his homeland of Ukraine (which, by the way, is where my father's side of the family had lived before emigrating the United States) has been savagely attacked by Vladimir Putin's military forces. Like Nachman understood, it is the case sometimes when we try to speak with God that we fail to find the words. So too – and even more – when we try to make sense of evil. This week is one of those times. I've been trying to follow Reb Nachman's guidance. I've been trying to carve out periods of solitude during which I can reach out to God, undisturbed by all that is going on around me. Unfortunately, I've not yet had the success I'd like. I am nowhere closer than I was yesterday to the clarity I crave as to *why* the massacres in Ukraine are happening. Intellectually, I understand the mechanics of it, but *why* it is happening remains beyond me. And perhaps it always will.

In the meantime, though, I remain grateful to Reb Nachman for leaving us two different works of his heart that continue to provide hope and guidance, which can be found on the next page. The first is his prayer for peace. The second is one of Reb Nachman's most famous teachings (from his masterpiece, *Likutei Moran*), which was put to music by Baruch Chait and recorded by countless artists. This is Israeli singer, Ofra Haza's rendition : [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=438\\_djb52QU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=438_djb52QU)

Wishing you all strength and peace,

Rabbi Dubin

JCNWJ ADULT EDUCATION HEBREW READING & TORAH CANTILLATION	
<b>READING HEBREW</b> TAUGHT BY RABBI DUBIN STUDENTS WILL LEARN TO READ THE HEBREW ALEPH-BET. NO PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE IS REQUIRED. OCTOBER 10, 17*, 24, 31	<b>Sunday Mornings</b> 11:00-11:55 *(10/17 & 11/14 will be after Sisterhood, from 12:05 - 1:00) Every session will include a Zoom option.
<b>SHABBAT IN HEBREW</b> TAUGHT BY RABBI DUBIN STUDENTS WILL LEARN THE FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICE IN HEBREW. ABILITY TO READ HEBREW LETTERS IS A PREREQUISITE. NOVEMBER 14*, 28; DEC 12, JAN 9, 23, 30; FEB 6, 20	 zoom CHOOSE 1, 2, OR ALL 3 CLASSES!
 Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey	<b>TORAH CANTILLATION</b> TAUGHT BY STUDENT CANTOR SHAYNA BURACK STUDENTS WILL LEARN THE ART OF CHANTING TORAH. ABILITY TO READ HEBREW LETTERS IS A PREREQUISITE. NOV 7, 21; DEC 5, 19; JAN 30; FEB 13, 27; MAR 20

## Rabbi Nachman's Prayer for Peace

(Translation by Rabbi Deborah Silver)

May it be Your will,  
Holy One, our God, our ancestors' God,  
that you erase war and bloodshed from the world  
and in its place draw down  
a great and glorious peace  
so that nation shall not lift up sword against nation  
neither shall they learn war any more.

Rather, may all the inhabitants of the earth  
recognize and deeply know  
this great truth:  
that we have not come into this world  
for strife and division  
nor for hatred and rage,  
nor provocation and bloodshed.

We have come here only  
to encounter You,  
eternally blessed One.

And so,  
we ask your compassion upon us;  
raise up, by us, what is written:

*I shall place peace upon the earth  
and you shall lie down safe and undisturbed  
and I shall banish evil beasts from the earth  
and the sword shall not pass through your land.  
but let justice come in waves like water  
and righteousness flow like a river,  
for the earth shall be full  
of the knowledge of the Holy One  
as the waters cover the sea.*

So may it be.  
And we say:  
Amen.

### **Kol Ha'olam Kulo – כל העולם כולו**

Kol ha'olam kulo	כל העולם כולו
Gesher tzar me'od	גשר צר מאד
Veha'ikar lo lifached k'lal.	והעקר לא לפחד כלל

The whole world  
Is a very narrow bridge.  
The key thing is to not let fear stop you.

## President's Message

Don't sweat the small stuff

Everyone at some point in their lives runs into a time when many things seem to go wrong all at once. When this happens, it is easy to get dejected and look at the negative things that are happening. I try to look at the bigger picture and try to realize that life isn't perfect, things will go wrong, and the only thing that you really control is your attitude.

I also try to compartmentalize what is going wrong. Is it a mechanical failure of an object that I immediately need to fix or replace (and if I need to replace it, can I afford to do that), is it something that can wait or is it something that I even need. Once you figure that out, you can prioritize which of the things that broke you take care of first.

These to me are the easy issues. The harder issues are when it is your health or the health of your family and friends is involved. Once you get into the health related issues, things become more critical and you deal with those more urgently than when objects are not working.

But even with health related issues, you still have control of your attitude. I have watched people with minor illnesses complain bitterly about their health issues. And I have seen many people who knew they were dying complain either very little or not at all. I go back to my friend Mike Weiner, who when diagnosed with inoperable brain cancer, had the most optimistic outlook on life. He said "I don't take any day for granted. Maybe this is a lot to ask, but here's what I look for every day: I look for meaning, I look for joy and I look for beauty: and I welcome any interaction with people that helps to support that."

Mike was a natural teacher, from the day I met him until the day he died, I learned something of how to live my life from Mike. And if Mike could be optimistic in the face of a terminal illness, how can I be anything other than optimistic with whatever life deals me.

My family has been through many health crises over the years, and when I have watched Iris in the past, face the issues that she has dealt with and the dignity that she has shown in the face of illness, I consider myself a very lucky man to have married someone with as much strength as Iris.

Let's all hope that in the near future, we can get back to a more normal existence and pray, celebrate and console our temple family in person.

LET'S PRAY FOR PEACE!!!

Shalom,  
Howie

# Updates & Events

## BUILDING UPDATE

Shalom temple members and friends,

The board of trustees has voted to re-open the temple. The rules that we determined that will work for us are as follows:

- 1) We will continue to zoom our services and classes.
- 2) Vaccination is not required but recommended.
- 3) If you are vaccinated, mask wearing is optional.
- 4) If you are not vaccinated, mask wearing is required.
- 5) We will social distance during services to the best of our ability.

Sunday School on March 13 will be our first in person event, and our first in-person service will be our Purim service on March 18.

I hope to see many of you in person at Sunday School or services on March 18.

If you would like to discuss this with me, feel free to email at [jcnwjprez@gmail.com](mailto:jcnwjprez@gmail.com) or call me at 908 -295-0073.

## DONATIONS

In memory of Gertrude Weil  
- Ruth Schutzbank

In memory of Jules Katz  
- Marsha Gross

## TORAH STUDY

We will continue our exploration of the Book of Joshua on Saturday, April 9 at 11:00am on Zoom. We are continuing from Joshua 10:28.

Future meeting dates are as follows:

- May 7
- June 4

Anyone is welcome to join, and it is not necessary to read the text ahead of time. It is helpful to have a copy of the Tanakh (Bible) so that you can follow along. We appreciate Rabbi Dubin's continued participation and insights.

Please watch your email for the Zoom links, which will be emailed out the week before each meeting.

## FOOD DRIVE

Although we are not collecting food at the Temple right now, we encourage all members to give to charities helping those in need.

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 JCNWJ Sisterhood is sponsoring the annual Mishloach Manot fundraiser for Purim (March 16-17, 2022). Please participate in this happy mitzvah by giving sweets and gifts to your temple family!

Every temple family will receive a gift bag filled with delicious hamantaschen and a card wishing them a Happy Purim. We ask all families to donate to this important fundraiser helping to raise money for enhanced audio visual equipment and capabilities at our Center.

Mishloach Manot will be delivered this year by your local sisterhood member.

Directions for Participation:

Please send your donation to Ruth Schutzbank, Attention Purim Project / 25 Stewartsville Road, Stewartsville, NJ 08886. Although a minimum donation of \$18 will cover the cost of the gift bag, please consider a generous donation of up to \$180 (as we have suggested in the past).

If you have any questions or want information about joining Sisterhood, please contact Suzi Marr at [suzology.sm@gmail.com](mailto:suzology.sm@gmail.com) or 908.343.1135.

Thank you!

### Sisterhood Schedule

3/13 - Meeting and Mishloach Manot assembly - 10am

4/9 - Anything You Can Carry Fundraising Swap Party - 7pm

5/22 Mother's Day Tea at Suzi's - 1pm

June - Skip

July - Pool Party at Beth's / date TBD

TBD - Paint 'n Sip Fundraising Party

This zoom link is good for all Sisterhood meetings -

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89160376912?pwd=Smh5dDFZY3lWWlg3cTY2eTdRdWtmZz09>



# Updates & Events

## SUNSHINE COMMITTEE

To Temple members:

We would like to expand The Sunshine Committee. To make this work, we need enough members to be part of this effort.

The Committee would offer some or all of the following for members who need assistance.

1. Food shopping
2. Providing rides for medical visits
3. Visiting hospitalized members (when Covid is more under control)
4. Sending cards to members when there is any kind of hardship *or* happy occasion. This would include not only condolence and get-well cards\* but ones for:
  - a. birthdays; retirement; moving to a new home (if it's a happy move), etc.
  - b. mazel tov on a wedding, birth of a child/grandchild/great-grandchild, etc.
  - c. supportive "thinking of you" cards when there are other life events besides loss of a loved one, i.e. loss of a job, loss of a beloved pet, etc.

\*Ruth has been in charge of sending out condolence and get-well cards, and this has not changed. For cards of a light-hearted nature, Sandy Polsky has offered to create a personalized card with a cartoon drawing (as time allows); and, if not a personalized card, a Jacquie Lawson e-card. (see <https://www.jacquielawson.com/>).

For more information and/or to join the committee, please contact Sandy Polsky, 908-451-6758, or [sandypolsky05@gmail.com](mailto:sandypolsky05@gmail.com).



# Updates & Events

## ZUMBA

One of our new Temple members, Sandy Polsky, is a Zumba instructor. She is offering Zumba classes *through Zoom*, **FREE for Temple members**. Classes are every day except for Wednesdays, beginning at 10:30 am, for one hour. **You do not have to attend the entire session!** It is a stand-up class (as opposed to a “chair” class where you sit while doing the moves).\*

If you are interested, please email Sandy at [sandypolsky05@gmail.com](mailto:sandypolsky05@gmail.com). Please put “Temple Zumba classes” in the subject heading so that Sandy knows that it isn’t spam.

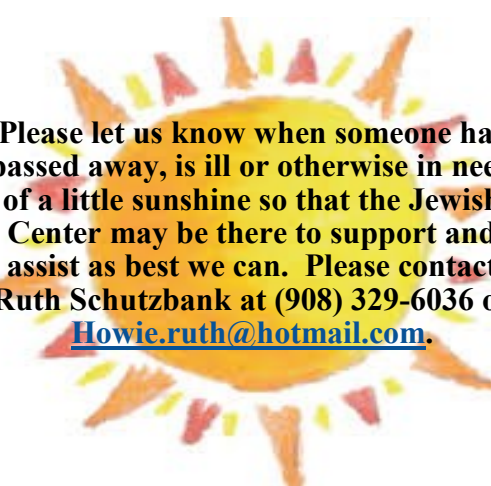
\*For in-person chair classes, Sandy teaches weekly at the following locations (Classes are free, through Warren County, and are for Warren County residents):

Wednesdays 11:15 am – Hackettstown, 293 Main St  
Thursdays 10:30 am – Phillipsburg, 310 Firth St  
Fridays 10:30 am – Washington, 33 Brass Castle Rd

## **THURSDAY NIGHT YOGA**

Please let Suzi (908.343.1135) know if you are interested in a 4 class yoga series - Thursday nights at 7pm in April. Includes chair yoga and multiple pose options to meet groups needs. Will need a minimum of 5 people at \$36 each. Please let me know as soon as possible. Must be vaccinated, masks until we are on our mats.

## 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).

## UKRAINE RELIEF

The board of trustees has voted to make a donation to Ukrainian relief using temple funds.

Through March 11, congregants may add to this donation through the DONATE button on the JCNWJ website. Donations will go to the World Union for Progressive Judaism to their Ukrainian relief fund.

Pray for peace but ACT to help the people who are suffering.

Love, Howie

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