

Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey Journal

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December 2022

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Rabbi's Message

Dear Friends,

This coming Sunday, our Community *B'yachad* participants will put their finishing touches on the *tallitot* they've been creating. It's been a magnificent project in so many ways, including in the questions and curiosities stirred. If the mitzvah (commandment) is simply to don a *tallit* during certain prayer services or when standing on the *bimah* as a prayer leader, why spend so much time and effort to create personalized prayer shawls? We have perfectly good ones hanging in the lobby, kosher and available to anyone who wants to use them. If beauty is only skin deep, of what real value is a thin layer of cotton, or satin or silk intricately crafted, colored and embroidered by the hands of imagination?

For that matter, what difference does it make if our Kiddush cup is a beautifully fashioned masterpiece of sterling silver, or a rinsed out can of Campbells soup? Why do we throw on nicer clothes for temple? Why do we cover the *challot* for *Shabbat* with beautiful cloth? If our work is to fulfill the commandments, are we turning *mitzvot* into a series of vanity projects?

Not for a minute.

(continued on next page)

Calendar of Events

Friday, December 9

7:00pm: Shabbat Evening Service

Saturday, December 10

11:00am: Torah Study (Zoom only)

4:00pm: Chanukah Party & Havdalah
(see Pg. 5 for details)

Sunday, December 11

9:30am: Community B'yachad
Tallit Workshop

Sunday, December 18

9:30am: Sunday School

5:00pm: Menorah Lighting and Music at
Chesapeake Tavern in Long Valley
(see Pg. 6 for details)

Friday, December 23

7:00pm: Shabbat Evening Service
Chanukah observance

Sunday, January 8

9:30am: Sunday School

Monday, January 9

7:00pm: Board of Trustees Meeting

Yoga: Wednesdays at 7:15pm - 12/14, 12/21

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

Rabbi's Message (continued)

Exodus 15:2 reads:

עֲזִי וְזִמְרַת יְהוָה לִי־יִשְׁוֹעָה זֶה אֱלֹהֵי וְאֶנְהוּ אֱלֹהֵי אָבִי וְאֶרְמָמְנֶהוּ:
The Lord is my strength and might;
God is my deliverance.
This is my God whom I will glorify;
The God of my forbearers' [house], I will exalt God.

What exactly does *glorifying God* look like? Is it even **possible** to add further glory to what already is the very definition of glory itself?

Asking the same questions in the 1st and 2nd centuries C.E., Rabbi Ishmael poses that when Exodus 15:2 says “This is my God whom I will glorify,” what it really means is, “This is my God whom I will glorify **in the way I perform mitzvot. I shall prepare before God a beautiful lulav, beautiful sukkah, beautiful fringes (tzitzit), and beautiful phylacteries (Tefillin).**” In other words, the bare minimum just won't cut it. The way we champion God's greatness is to throw our entire selves into the effort. Just as partners beautify themselves in order to show honor and glory to the one with whom they share a chuppah, so too should we Jews beautify our efforts in order to show honor and glory to the God to whom we are so fully committed.

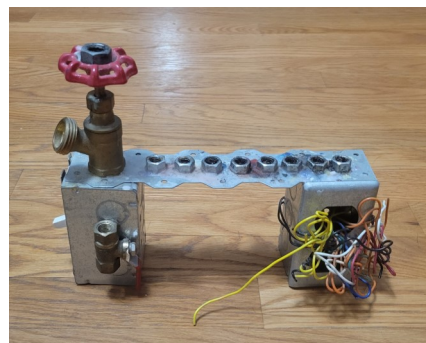
We refer to this practice as הִדּוּר מִצְוָה (*Hiddur Mitzvah*), “beautifying the mitzvah.” It's why our sanctuary windows are made of such extraordinary stained glass. It's why our Torahs jingle with the melodious ring of silver bells as they parade around the sanctuary. It's why we adorn the *bimah* with beautiful flowers. Does God really expect us to accessorize? I doubt it. God sees the truth of our hearts, whatever its fashion.

So no, I really don't believe God needs it. But we do. We need to take those extra steps, because in doing so, we prepare ourselves to appreciate the magnificence of God through the commandments we follow.

One of the Shabbat services I most treasure is on Chanukah, when families bring their favorite Menorahs so we can light the festival lights together. So that the lights shine brightly and, of course, beautifully. The beauty matters. Whether your tallit or your channukiah, our creativity is an expression of our love for community and how we glorify our God. I hope you will join us with your *chanukiah* on December 23, as we come together as a community to increase the light with immense beauty.

L'Shalom,

Rabbi Dubin



President's Message

Chanukah vs Christmas

This year, we get to celebrate Chanukah and Christmas together, although we do get a head start on our Christian brethren, as Chanukah begins on the evening of the 18th and ends on December 26th.

Please remember to include those less fortunate than we are in your holiday gift giving. If you plan to use Amazon to purchase gifts, you have the opportunity to help fund the temple by using smile.amazon.com as the site that you go to instead of amazon.com. From there, you can designate a charity of your choice. Since we are a 501(c)(3) charity, we are able to participate.

I thought I would leave you with a little comedy about the differences between Chanukah and Christmas.

Differences Between Christmas and Chanukah

Christmas is one day, same day every year. December 25. Jews love Dec. 25th. It's another paid day off work. We go to movies and out for Chinese food, and Israeli dancing. Chanukah is 8 days. It starts the evening of the 24th of Kislev, whenever that falls. No one is ever sure. Jews never know until a non Jewish friend asks when Chanukah starts, forcing us to consult a calendar so we don't look like idiots. We all have the same calendar, provided free with a donation from either the World Jewish Congress, the kosher butcher, or the local Sinai Memorial Chapel (especially in Florida).

Christmas is a major holiday. Chanukah is a minor holiday with the same theme as most Jewish holidays. They tried to kill us, we survived, let's eat.

Christians get wonderful presents such as jewelry, perfume, stereos.... Jews get practical presents such as underwear, socks, or the collected works of the Rambam which looks impressive on the bookshelf.

There is only one way to spell Christmas. No one can decide how to spell Chanukah, Chanuka, Chanukkah, Channukah, Hanukah, Hannuka, Hannukah. Christmas is a time of great pressure for husbands and boyfriends. Their partners expect special gifts. Jewish men are relieved of that burden. No one expects a diamond ring on Chanukah.

(continued on next page)

President's Message

Christmas brings enormous electric bills. Candles are used for Chanukah. Not only are we spared enormous electric bills, but we get to feel good about not contributing to the energy crisis.

Christmas carols are beautiful. Silent Night, O Come O Ye Faithful.....Chanukah songs are about dreidels made from clay or having a party and dancing the horah. Of course, we are secretly pleased that many of the beautiful carols were composed and written by our tribal brethren. And don't Barbara Streisand and Neil Diamond sing them beautifully?

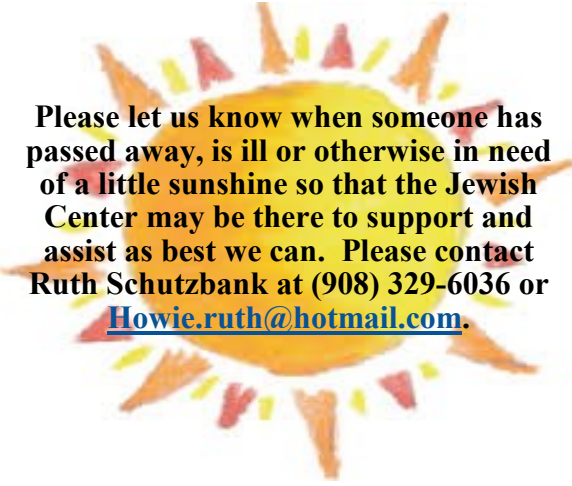
A home preparing for Christmas smells wonderful. The sweet smell of cookies and cakes baking. Happy people are gathered around in festive moods. A home preparing for Chanukah smells of oil, potatoes and onions. The home, as always, is full of loud people all talking at once.

Women have fun baking Christmas cookies. Women burn their eyes and cut their hands grating potatoes and onions for latkes on Chanukah. Another reminder of our suffering through the ages.

Parents deliver to their children during Christmas. Jewish parents have no qualms about withholding a gift any of the eight nights.

The players in the Christmas story have easy to pronounce names such as Mary, Joseph and Jesus. The players in the Chanukah story are Antiochus, Judah Maccabee, and Matta whatever. No one can spell it or pronounce it. On the plus side, we can tell our friends anything, and they believe we are wonderfully versed in our history.

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.



Greetings Sisterhood Members!

Sisterhood will host a Chanukah Party on Saturday, December 10. See the flyer below and RSVP to Suzi at suzology.sm@gmail.com.

The next Community B'yachad will take place on Sunday, December 11 at 9:30am. We will continue working on the tallit. Bring your machines and supplies if you have.

Meeting Schedule -

December 10 – Chanukah/Ms. Apsel 60
– w/Havdalah

December 11 – Community b'Yachad
Tallit Workshop

January 15 – Community b'Yachad Tallit
Workshop

February 26 - Mishloach Manot
Assembly & Meeting

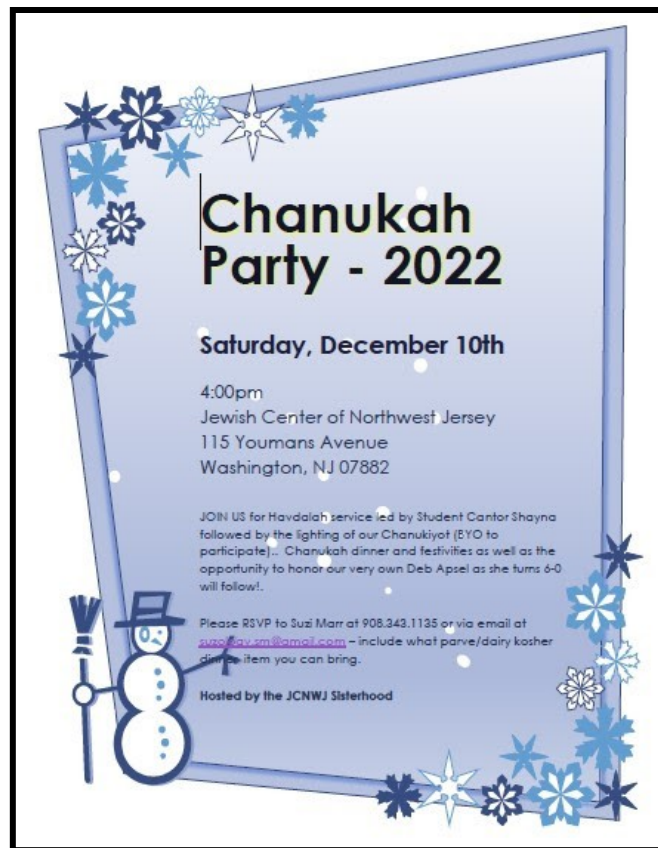
March - TBD meeting

April 15 – Judaica SWAP & Fundraiser
w/Havdalah

May 21 – Annual Mother's Day Tea Party

June – skip

July – Annual Sisters Only Pool Party



Updates & Events

TORAH STUDY

Torah Study is continuing to explore the book of Judges. The next meeting will be on December 10 on Zoom at 11:00am. The January meeting will be January 14 at 10:30am.

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 link.

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



JOIN US IN CELEBRATING THE 1ST NIGHT OF HANUKKAH!

Date: Sunday, December 18th

Time: 5:00 - 5:30 pm

Location: Outside Porch of Chesapeake Tavern

Live music by Debbie Apsel and company

The Menorah will light for the eight nights of Hanukkah on the corner of E. Mill Road and Route 517.

Thank you to the owners of Chesapeake Tavern for allowing us to light the Menorah on their premises.

If you have any questions, please reach out to Iris Kadosh
Phone: 908-693-1930 Email: neighbourhouse@comcast.net

Updates & Events

Yahrzeits

Sarah Fromer Zeiden	Aunt of Helen Mattson
Pory Margolis	Mother of Bob Margolis
Myra Novy	Aunt of Robin Hall
William Kalb	Relative of Jerry Kalb
Maxwell Gross	Son of Marsha Gross
Mike Weiner	Husband of Diane Margolin
Charlotte Rems	Mother of Linda Margolis
Klaire Katz	Mother of Marsha Gross
Marvin Koral	Father of Doreen Webb
Phillip Peck	Cousin of Edythe Herson
Max Weil	Father of Ruth Schutzbank
Jean Siegal	Mother of Rhonda Jordan
Dora Melnick	Barbara Simons's Mother
Elaine Lavine	Grandmother of Teri Stanton
Mary Saylor Kalb	Wife of Jerry Kalb
Nannette Hoffman	Cousin of Edythe Herson
Lisa Greene	Sister of Sandy Kahan
Richard Herson	Husband of Edythe Herson
Shelley Herson	Brother-in-law of Edythe Herson
Molly Finkelstein	Mother of Shelley Finkelstein
Art Lavine	Grandfather of Teri Stanton
Jackie Sprinner	Mother of Robin Hall

Note: If any Yahrzeit information is missing or incorrect, please notify the Temple.

DONATIONS

In memory of Mary Saylor Kalb and William Kalb
- Jerry Kalb

In memory of Marvin Koral
- Doreen & Rory Webb

In memory of Jean Siegel
- Rhonda Jordan

In memory of Jessica Hirsch
- Howie and Iris Hirsch

BUILDING UPDATE

Now that we are back to in person services and using the facilities, if you notice that something is running low and needs to be replaced (either in the bathrooms or kitchen), please let me know.

You can either call or email me at
irishirsch@comcast.net or 908-850-1030.

Thank you.

Iris

COMMUNITY B'YACHAD



SELECT SUNDAYS

- Coffee with friends
- Adult arts and crafts
- Music & songs
- Jewish & Hebrew learning
- Feel good schmoozing!



9:30-12:00

RUN BY:
SHIRA, DEBBIE A., RABBI DUBIN, &
STUDENT CANTOR SHAYNA

DATES

CB = COMMUNITY B'YACHAD (ADULTS ONLY)
DOR L'DOR = INTERGENERATIONAL

DOR L'DOR - SUKKOT
(4:00-6:30)** OCT 9, 2022

DOR L'DOR - PARSLEY PLANTING
(9:30-12:00) FEB 5, 2022

CB - PHILLY WALKING TOUR
(9:30-12:00) OCT.16,2022

CB - HAVDALAH SCENT BOXES
FEB 12, 2012 (9:30-12:00)

CB - KRIISTALNACHT GLASS ART
(9:30-12:00) OCT 30, 2022

CB - PURIM PANTRY GROGGERS
FEB 26, 2023 (9:30-12:00)

CB - TALIT WORKSHOP DAY 1
(9:30-12:00) NOV 13, 2022

CB - RECLAIMED WOOD MEUZOT
MAR 12, 2023 (9:30-12:00)

CB - TALIT WORKSHOP DAY 2
(9:30-12:00) DEC 11,2022

CB - CERAMIC SEDER PLATES
MAR 26, 2023 (9:30-12:00)

DOR L'DOR - MT. PISGAH
(9:30-12:00) JAN 15, 2023

DOR L'DOR - ISRAEL PARTY & BBQ
APR 23, 2023 (12:00-2:30)**

CB - TW DAY 3/JWISH LEARNING
(9:30-12:00) JAN 29, 2023

DOR L'DOR - SATURDAY BONFIRE
MAY 6, 2023 (TBD)

So much fun! איזה כיף!

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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.