


















Tashlich 9.20.2020

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Change and 5781 High Holy Days

By **RABBI RACHEL L. HEAPS**

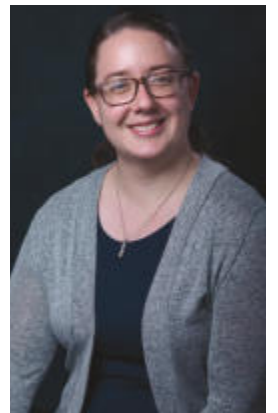
Associate Rabbi

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I've been thinking a lot lately about a class that I took in my final year of rabbinical school. In one class we were discussing secular celebrations and culture and comparing it to our own Jewish experience. Dr. Larry Hoffman was convincing us, one example at a time, of how our American experience is just as religious as our Jewish one. Both civil religion and Jewish religion depend on a core shared narrative, on identity of uniqueness, on holidays remembering a sacred past, and common values informing a communal future. And both religions rely on and refer to a central holy text; a text so fundamental that every action – past, present, and future – is measured against it. In Judaism, that text is our Torah. In America, that text is our Constitution.

The spectrum of practice and religious philosophy becomes especially clear in reference to our sacred texts. Traditionalism attempts to stick to a plain (well, plain-ish) reading of the text, reading it in the context

it was written and applying that context to our own modern lives. For them, the closer a person is in time to the original writing of the text, the more authority they carry. Progressivism reads the text interpretively, taking the spirit of the text and seeing how, or even if, it fits today. For them, each person has the potential for authority, but study and practice are how a person earns it.



Yet, one thing that the whole of the spectrum of religious philosophy believes in is that there is no sacred text that is, can, or ever will be frozen in time. Both our Torah and Constitution have systems to evaluate, add to, and edit the original document. In Judaism, that system is one of commentary, storytelling, and rabbinic law. In America, that system is one of amendments, legislation, and elections. Traditional or

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“Time and again, our leadership and members rise to the occasion to ensure change doesn’t mean sacrifice. For Temple Jeremiah, change isn’t a begrudging response to challenges, but rather it’s an opportunity for growth.”

By **KATIE BICK**
Communications Coordinator
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For Temple Jeremiah, the year 5780 has been filled with change. The temple elected a new president, launched J-Quest as the new brand for our Hebrew and Religious schools, and, of course, adapted to the new, digital landscape of the world of COVID-19.

Needless to say, this year hasn’t looked like others.

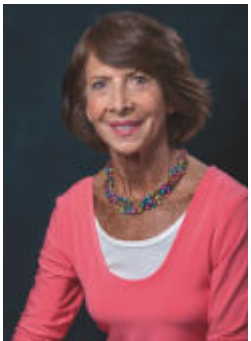
However, while change can be scary (especially when it’s brought about by a global health crisis), I’ve also found it to be inspiring: even in these trying circumstances, our congregation has still found ways to connect, spread messages of acceptance, and give

back to the communities around us.

This issue of the Covenant highlights some of the major changes the temple has experienced over the past few months, including shifting to distance learning and preparing for the physically distanced High Holy Days. For me, the throughline in all of these articles is the resilience of Temple Jeremiah’s community. Time and again, our leadership and members rise to the occasion to ensure change doesn’t mean sacrifice. For Temple Jeremiah, change isn’t a begrudging response to challenges, but rather it’s an opportunity for growth.

As we enter 5781, I look forward to seeing how the temple continues to adapt in these extraordinary times.

J-Quest: Embracing Change in the New School Year



By **DR. ANNE LIDSKY**
Director of Religious Education
anne@templejeremiah.org

We did it! We made the necessary changes to provide a safe and vibrant Jewish education experience for our children at Temple Jeremiah. It wasn’t easy. It was fraught with challenges and concerns the moment we realized that we couldn’t be in temple as we were for all these years...for

the time being. We so wanted to be in-person, but the necessary restrictions would not allow us to be in the Schreiber Sanctuary for *t’fillah*, or music in the Golder Chapel, or in the kitchen for cooking. Israeli dancing, storytime in the children’s library, or making lunches in the lobby simply could not take place...for the time being.

So, we rolled up our sleeves, attended every Zoom training workshop, learned how to create a Kahoot and Flipgrid, truly raising the bar in the area of technology. The entire team of teachers jumped onboard, determined to create a fun-filled, welcoming, warm, and interactive environment.

I joined a national group of educators in June who began to explore a new curriculum, called La Briut, To Life! By the end of July, 200+ congregations made the decision to adopt this curriculum and bring it to the families in their congregations. This was a big change for all of us across the nation. In the past each grade had specific units of study and experiences, taking the

students on a journey through the holidays, *mitzvot*, Israel, life cycles, Bible, Social Justice, and Jewish Identity. Now, we were going to experience a totally new curriculum for our Kindergarten – 6th grade, created by the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland (JECC: La Briut).

Allow me the privilege of introducing the power of this curriculum:

Via five values-focused modules, learners gain a variety of tools that build resilience and supportive strategies for better managing the challenges that life can throw their way, such as the COVID-19 pandemic.

The learning approach is a hybrid of synchronous learning in a weekly cohort-based *mifgash* (“gathering”). At home, children delve into module-related content and concepts with a fair amount of independence from the adults in their lives. Lower elementary age children explore them through a curated box of hands-on activities, while upper elementary learners receive engaging weekly challenges.

Learning is anchored in Jewish texts and tales of our past, offering rich understandings of Jewish values that build resiliency and guide personal and communal health and wellness:

- *sukkat shalom* (a shelter of peace)
- *ometz lev* (inner strength)
- *g’vurah* (courage)
- *k’hilah* (community)
- *hesed* (loving kindness, tying into hope)

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While developed with minimal at-home adult responsibility for learning, resources are offered to encourage informal family conversations.

Our 7th through 12th graders will also be experiencing new and exciting opportunities. Through Israellink, our students will "travel" in Jerusalem with an Israeli guide, while others will participate in the powerful RAC Social Justice Academy, joining other teens from across the country as they explore issues of civic engagement,

racial equity, diversity and inclusion, and action and advocacy.

We rose to the challenge, embraced new opportunities, and are dedicated to making this school year one that will always be remembered as one of the best. Thank you to our loyal, thoughtful teachers, our clergy and staff, and to you, our parents for supporting our efforts and joining us as partners in this new endeavor.

Look Forward to These Social Justice Events

Feed the Hungry

Temple Jeremiah is hosting Feed the Hungry events! Right now, we are seeking delivery drivers and families to prepare lunches on the first Sunday of the month throughout 2020-2021 as well as on Sunday, November 29th!

To get involved, visit: tinyurl.com/FeedTheHungry2020-2021. For questions, please contact Stephen Miller at stephenmiller2854@gmail.com.

Thanksgiving Feed the Hungry

For the past 10 years, Temple Jeremiah has joined forces with other Chicago-area congregations to prepare and serve a Thanksgiving dinner for those in need.

This year, the dinner will take place on Sunday, November 22nd and Temple Jeremiah will be responsible for providing desserts while maintaining safe, social distancing practices.

To get involved or learn more, contact Vicki Stoller at vicki.stoller@gmail.com.

Antiracism Programming

In response to the growing national conversation about racism and institutionalized inequality, Temple Jeremiah has designed a series of antiracism programming for the coming year. All events will take place on the second Sunday of every month. We invite you to attend:

A Discussion of 13th with Rabbi Cohen. On Sunday, December 6th from 4:00 - 5:30 p.m. Rabbi Cohen will facilitate a discussion of Ava DuVernay's *13th*, a documentary exploring the intersection of race, justice, and mass incarceration in the United States.

Unpacking So You Want to Talk about Race with Dana Garbarski and Jill Patano. Join us on Sunday, February 7th from 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. for a discussion of Ijeoma Oluo's *So You Want to Talk about Race* led by Dana Garbarski, Temple Jeremiah member and Associate Professor of Sociology at Loyola, and Jill Patano, Temple Jeremiah member and licensed clinical professional counselor.



"What can I do to fight racism?"

For all of us, for any of us, it starts at home. Join Temple Jeremiah in asserting the importance of antiracism by displaying an antiracism lawn sign.

To show our support for antiracism, Temple Jeremiah has created an 18" x 24" lawn sign reading "Together We Can. End Systemic Racism. Repair the world - Tikkun Olam."

Signs cost only \$18. To order a lawn sign, simply visit tinyurl.com/AntiracismLawnSigns.

Weekly Torah Portions

We invite you to join us on Saturday mornings to discuss the Torah portion and how it might apply to our lives. We meet virtually at 9:30 a.m. every Saturday. To join us on Zoom, visit zoom.us/j/132889355.

October 10, 2020	Sh'mini Atzeret - Simchat Torah	Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17	November 7, 2020	Vayera	Genesis 18:1-22:24
October 17, 2020	B'reisheet	Genesis 1:1-6:8	November 14, 2020	Chayei Sarah	Genesis 23:1-25:18
October 24, 2020	Noach	Genesis 6:9-11:32	November 21, 2020	Toldot	Genesis 25:19-28:9
October 31, 2020	Lech Lecha	Genesis 12:1-17:27	November 28, 2020	Vayet	Genesis 28:10-32:2

Julie Weinberg: All-In Volunteer and Community Member



Julie Weinberg with her daughter, Leslie

Julie Weinberg is not someone who sits on the sidelines. “I’ve never been able to just dip my toe into the water,” Julie said. “If I’m in, I’m all in.”

Julie’s committed attitude is clear in her leadership work at Temple Jeremiah. Around the temple, Julie Weinberg has worn many hats: she’s been a member of our Leadership Cohort, she’s served as the editor of the Covenant, and she’s been instrumental in producing Temple Jeremiah’s 60th Anniversary video and digital High Holy Days video services.

However, despite Julie’s deep involvement with Temple Jeremiah, she did not always feel connected with Jewish life on the North Shore. Growing up as a member of B’nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim, religion and her Jewish identity played relatively small roles in her day to day life. “I had my temple friends,” Julie said while describing her experience at BJBE, “but I didn’t feel connected to a Jewish community outside of services and Sunday school.”

When Julie became a parent, though, she knew she wanted her family to be involved in a synagogue. “Community is important,” said Julie. “I not only wanted my children to have a Jewish education, but also to have an understanding of our family’s roots.” After exploring local North Shore congregations, she found Temple Jeremiah to be the right fit. “It was a joy to join such an open and accepting congregation,” said Julie. “Not only does Temple Jeremiah’s community welcome you in with open arms, but it also makes sure you feel connected to those around you.”

“Our community is rising to the occasion to give back and help others, even during this unprecedented time. It feels great to meet Temple Jeremiah members and share stories of their kindness.”

Julie’s first major point of involvement with the temple was on our Leadership Cohort, a group of congregants that convenes every other year to discuss the temple’s innerworkings, hear from the clergy and past presidents, tackle a temple project, and encourage participants to get involved with temple programs and committees. Julie’s experience with the Leadership Cohort inspired her to volunteer her time and video production skills to the creation of Temple Jeremiah’s 60th Anniversary video, which, in turn, led her to join the temple’s Communications Committee.

With a background in television news and a journalism degree, Julie was eager to do reporting work for the Covenant, and soon took over as the newsletter’s editor. “Working on the Covenant was a great experience,” said Julie. “There are so many great stories to tell about Temple Jeremiah’s programs and members.”

When asked what her favorite part of working on the Covenant was, Julie cited the positivity of the stories she got to share. “Editing the Covenant is absolutely a feel-good job,” said Julie. “We could all use some positive stories in our lives.” Julie also noted that during the past six months of COVID-19, positivity has been especially refreshing. “Our community is rising to the occasion to give back and help others, even during this unprecedented time. It feels great to meet Temple Jeremiah members and share stories of their kindness.”

Recently, Julie helped organize and produce videos for the temple’s digital Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur services. According to Julie, one of her favorite parts of making these videos was meeting many of Temple Jeremiah’s past presidents. While shooting a segment in which, though editing magic, the past presidents pass the Torah to one another, Julie was given the opportunity to work directly with many former lay leaders. “They’re the most impressive bunch of people,” Julie noted. “Even though many of them are retired, they’re still active leaders and givers both within and outside of the temple community.”

Outside of Temple Jeremiah, Julie plays an active role in the Chicago-area Jewish community. She is an active member of the JUF Women’s Division and recently joined their board.

“I’m proud to have built my own Jewish network,” Julie said. “I don’t only have my family and my temple, but also I have my own Jewish community.”

New Year's Wishes and Wisdom from Rabbi Schreibman



Dear Fellow Congregants,

A few words from my Kol Nidre blessing to share with you, inspired by humanistic values.

We all know that life seems unfair: too many people die young as we face aging and death, just when we best enjoy our accomplishments. Disease, hurricanes, floods, and fire decimate our neighborhoods. The righteous seem so plain and the wicked so attractive.

Some of us seek solace in the past. What was done yesterday takes on a mysterious holiness: yet some of us find meaning by looking to the future. Creativity and hope lie ahead.

Since life is unfair, it is up to us to bring some order to the chaos. In the face of an indifferent universe, we should try to be just and to be our best selves.

May God grant us to be sealed in the book of a good and healthy year. And when we are home, let us raise a glass and kiss our loved ones.

Sincerely,
Rabbi Robert D. Schreibman
Rabbi Emeritus

RABBI HEAPS (*continued from page 1*)

progressive, conservative or liberal – no matter what your religious philosophy is on this, we can agree, having a sacred text is only as important as what you do with it.

“Circumstance and the state of our world forced us to reimagine the application of our sacred text - not by leaving the texts behind, but by remembering what they were all about in the first place.”

I write this article amidst our digital 5781 High Holy Day season. The liturgy and rituals of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur are steeped in history. Some of the prayers we recite come directly from the Torah. But this year, necessity forced us to experience the holidays in a distinctly new way. Never before could we have imagined welcoming the new year and atoning with a television or computer screen in our living rooms, and yet here we are. Circumstance and the state of our world forced us to reimagine the application of our sacred text – not by leaving the texts behind, but by remembering what they were all about in the first place. We made these rituals happen by rereading the Torah portions, studying Kol Nidre, immersing ourselves in the liturgy focused on the holiness, awe, and apprehension of the High Holy Day season. We saw the common themes of covenantal relationships, living up to our highest potential, and accepting our fallible humanity. By doing so, we created a different and deeply meaningful ritual that reminded us of our Judaism.

When our American religion experiences the same threats as our Jewish one, we must also rely on our sacred text to inform our next steps. The common narrative and values present in our Constitution allow all Americans to engage in civil discourse, to discover new ways to adapt and apply the core of who we are to the potential of who we wish to become. I believe that when we focus more on the rituals of our religion (particularly treating competing politicians as savage enemies) than on our core values, our national community falls apart. I believe that unless we rediscover our communal origin story, we will not be able to lessen the unrest, anxiety, spite, and egocentrism that dominate our American experience today. We cannot change without first remembering who we are.

Over the next few weeks, as we approach election day, media and neighbors will get louder and louder: encouraging you to vote and insisting on a party or a person to vote for. But before their voices get so loud that no other message is heard, let me say this – when you go to the polls, remember that your vote is part of our sacred responsibility we have for one another. Remember how a nation of outcasts and misfits banded together to secure their independence. Remember that our ancestors did so to establish justice and tranquility. Remember that we are all a part of a holy history that is still unfolding and that you have the power to change its direction.

Brotherhood Proves: If You Talk Baseball, They Will Come



By **MICHAEL SHMARAK**

Communications Committee Chair
shmaraksmpr@gmail.com

Ron Gieseke knows a thing or two about baseball. While he may be an attorney by day, Gieseke's "side gig" as a baseball blogger is how he relaxes. Give him the chance to talk about baseball and you will see and hear someone who appreciates the history of the game.

That historical knowledge came into play at the last Temple Jeremiah Brotherhood meeting, appropriately titled "If You Talk Baseball They Will Come." The guys swapped kippot for baseball hats, as they virtually hosted Dan Wallach, executive director of the Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum (and former Wrigley security guy, by the way), to talk about the 1919 Black Sox Scandal and Shoeless Joe's contribution to the game.

For those who don't know what happened in 1919 (or are fans of Chicago's North Side baseball team and don't really care what happens in baseball south of Clark and Addison), the Chicago White Sox were accused of throwing the 1919 World Series. Authorities believed several major players on the team were embroiled in a gambling ring, and fixed the game for kickbacks.

There was some serious fallout to these accusations: eight starting White Sox players received a lifetime ban from MLB (including Shoeless Joe Jackson, the museum's namesake), and the league appointed their first commissioner to oversee the morals and ethics of the sport.

On the plus side, the Black Sox scandal served as the basis for *Field of Dreams*, the Kevin Costner movie whose production team built a 9,000-seat baseball stadium in Iowa. We assume everyone who likes baseball has seen it at least once (if you haven't write the editor—maybe we'll get Ron to host a Movie Night!).

According to Ron, the Brotherhood event was designed to help people "have some fun, socialize, and talk about sports." He made sure to emphasize that the event was "specifically held on a night that the Cubs and the White Sox were not playing." Wallach talked about the 1919 World Series and the Shoeless Joe Jackson Museum, "fielding" questions about baseball history and baseball in general.

Ron noted many of the questions centered around the changes baseball is experiencing during COVID-19. "It's still baseball, even if the stadiums look different than we remember." Ron also noted that many people dressed up for the event, with White Sox and Cubs hats and jerseys seen throughout the Zoom meeting.

And yes, there was a spiritual aspect to the event. "Brotherhood is a way for members to connect on all sorts of levels," Ron said. "There is always the spiritual part of being in Brotherhood, but the social part is very important." And in fact, it is events like the one that Ron coordinated that he loves most about Brotherhood.

"We could all use some support and some fun now."

Stay Up to Date on Events with our Calendar
Looking to learn more about upcoming events at Temple Jeremiah?

For up-to-date programming and our full calendar,
visit tinyurl.com/tj-calendar.

Address from Dr. Scott Levin



By DR. SCOTT LEVIN

Temple President
scottamy93@aol.com

L'Shanah Tovah! My name is Scott Levin, and I now have the honor and privilege to serve as your Temple Jeremiah President. I do so with much humility, as the Past Presidents and ongoing lay leadership of this incredible congregation have helped to build a Jewish community filled with meaningful connections. Our amazing clergy, led by Rabbi Cohen, and staff, led by Danny Glassman, live and breathe with the thoughts of what might be best for our community, each and every day.

When my wife, Amy, and I first walked through the door as prospective members in 2006, the parents of 7 and 5-year-old daughters, Hannah and Leah, we felt a connection. Since then, we have experienced two Bat Mitzvahs, two Confirmations, many dinners and gatherings, an unforgettable trip to Israel, and so much more, all within and with this community. We joined with two other families on our neighborhood block and still treasure a pre-Kol Nidre dinner together every year.

At no point during that initial journey did I imagine being President of Temple Jeremiah, nor was it something I aspired to. As a Family Physician, running a family medicine residency program of 30 residents, a father of two school-aged daughters, not to mention husband, how could there be time? Relationships and conversations soon led to being asked to help, to suggest, to contribute in growing ways. Then there was an ask to serve on the Board, the Executive Board, and then be the Executive Vice President, and now here I am. I tell you this, because in my mind, the reason I said "Yes," as our wonderful Immediate Past President Barb Miller would have wanted me to, was this feeling of honor, privilege, and humility. To be recognized as someone who had something to give, something of value, was just too much to decline. This is just a bit of my story.

And this is what I really wanted to speak to you about this evening – the power of stories. Nothing can bind a relationship more than a shared story, and sharing stories. You do not have to look far to see this truth. Whether it is *Breaking Bad*, *Game of Thrones*, *Homeland*, or *Ozark*, the story, the arc of the story, the characters in the story, with all their strengths and flaws, is what creates gravitational pull to the essence. In the finale of *Game of Thrones*, and do not worry, I will not give anything away for anyone who may have been living underground for several years, Tyrion asks, "What unites people? Armies? Gold? Flags? No. It's stories. There's nothing in the world more powerful than a good story. Nothing can stop it. No enemy can defeat it."

Think about it. Is not the Torah, perhaps, the greatest story ever told? I did not always think of the Torah in this manner. Certainly, as a child in Hebrew and Sunday School, I did not. It is only as I

have listened, learned, and heard some of the infinite plots, sub-plots, interpretations, and connections to the present day, that I have even begun to think of Torah in this way. This common story of our beginning is powerful beyond words.

The power of a story is what drew me to Family Medicine. Having been in practice for 27 years now, the relationships I have with patients, accompanying them through birth, health, wellness, sickness, and death, is the gift of being their physician. Sure, I love the science, the medicine, the problem solving, the procedures. But the relationships and the stories are what binds that together in something meaningful. The diversity and breadth of challenges within the stories are simply awe inspiring, humbling.

I cannot help but remember that I was born in Brooklyn. My mom was born in Brooklyn, as were her parents. My wife was born in Brooklyn, as were both her parents. So, when someone asks me where I am from, I say, "I was born in Brooklyn." I have a certain pride in saying this – not just because of the family history, but also because of how many incredibly talented and gifted people were born there. How could one borough have been the breeding ground for so much? There is something very special about the culture of Brooklyn roots. There is also something very egocentric about being born in, and living in, New York. Growing up, one can feel as if New York is actually what the sun revolves around, and not the reverse. As I grew older and was exposed to other cities, and other roots, I felt almost silly at times, thinking back to when New York was the true center of my universe. Now, do not get me wrong. New York is very special, but so are so many other places, people, cultures, and roots.

As a Family Physician, caring for patients who live in Oak Park, River Forest, Austin, Belmont Cragin, and several other neighborhoods, one quickly learns there is no single item that can define an individual. Whatever one thinks about where one comes from, what they look like, how they speak, or the education they received, every individual is just that, a unique set of life circumstances coming together in a single person. One could never fully appreciate another's set of life circumstances, but only seek to understand. In my work, we speak of this endeavor as "Cultural Humility." One can never be culturally competent, just culturally humble. I want to think I have moved from a place of cultural egocentrism, towards cultural humility. One can never fully arrive, but it is an incredibly interesting and fulfilling effort, and all driven by story.

So, as we enter the year 5781 of, perhaps, the greatest story ever told, let us be open to sharing, and listening to, our individual stories within the larger one. Let us be open to learning about Torah and the myriad lessons within. Let us connect with each other in meaningful ways, sharing our stories of what brought us to this community, even to Temple Jeremiah. Stay tuned for opportunities to share YOUR story and hear more about your fellow congregants. Thank you for the honor, the privilege, of serving as your Temple Jeremiah President. L'Shanah Tovah.

Temple Jeremiah Celebrates With A Physically Distant Sukkot



While describing Temple Jeremiah's Sukkot Festival, Shira Brandhandler, Temple Jeremiah's Youth Engagement Director, kept returning to one feeling: joy. "It was a joyous celebration of Sukkot," said Shira. "It was a joy to reconnect with Temple Jeremiah families and a joy to see all the kids again."

Due to the physical distancing required by the COVID-19 pandemic, the holidays at Temple Jeremiah have looked a little different. Although Sukkot is largely spent outdoors, Temple Jeremiah still had to make major adjustments to observe the holiday in-person this year. Drawing inspiration from summer events like Sunday in the Park(ing) Lot and JeTY's drive-in movies, the temple decided to celebrate Sukkot spread out in the parking lots.

The festival featured several family-friendly arts and crafts projects, including pumpkin decorating and sukkah decoration making. It also featured carnival games manned by teen volunteers, an inflatable slide, donuts and hot chocolate from local bakeries, and the opportunity to shake the lulav and the etrog with Dr. Anne Lidsky.

Temple Jeremiah's Social Justice Committee also had a presence at the event. In honor of Sukkot, the committee and volunteers

prepared lunches for Feed the Hungry and backpacks for Backpack Blessings. Notably, these Social Justice programs were the most ambitious packing events to date. With the help of civic-minded Temple Jeremiah members including almost 70 volunteers, the temple was able to prepare over 780 backpacks and more than 300 lunches for those in need!

The star of the Sukkot Festival, though, was undoubtedly the sukkah. "As promised, we had a giant, drive-through sukkah," noted Shira. "We wanted to make sure people could participate in the mitzvah of visiting the sukkah in the safest way possible."

Shira also noted that the Sukkot Festival reminded her a bit of Temple Jeremiah's Purim Carnival, one of the final youth events held in-person before we began a period of physical distancing. "It was nice to see everyone celebrate like they did at Purim," said Shira. "I'm proud of how far the temple has come and how much we still have to celebrate."

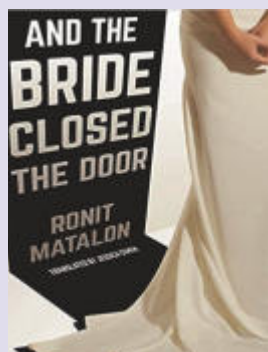


Sisterhood Book Club

NOTE: We will be meeting through Zoom! Join us online at zoom.us/j/3417454169.

Thursday, October 8, 2020 ~ 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

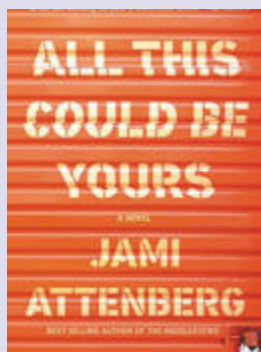
And the Bride Closed the Door, By Ronit Matalon



Berlin, 1941, a desperate mother trying to save her young daughter. But wait! This is not just another Holocaust novel. This is Hoffman with her magical realism and, according to Kirkus Reviews (starred), a "spellbinding portrait of what it means to be human in an inhuman world."

Thursday, November 12, 2020 ~ 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

All This Could Be Yours, By Jami Attenberg



Their husband and father lay dying, and we are silent spectators to this sad day. But the truth is, this is a horrible man. Attenberg is said to write dysfunction better than anyone else, and the fabulous starred reviews attest! So if you enjoy wonderfully written family dysfunction, this is your book!

Contact Vicki Siegelman at vsieg@gralynn.org for more information or to join.



J-Quest Meet & Greet 9.13.2020



Sukkot Festival 10.4.2020



Sukkot Festival 10.4.2020



J-Quest Meet & Greet 9.13.2020



Backpack Blessings 10.4.2020



Backpack Blessings 10.4.2020



Sukkot Festival 10.4.2020



Sukkot Festival 10.4.2020



Sukkot Festival 10.4.2020



Tashlich 2020



Tashlich 2020



Shofar ShoGood 9.23.2020



Tashlich 2020

Temple Jeremiah: Shaping Our Country Through Our Votes



Now more than ever, it's important for us to shape our country through our votes. However, voter registration requirements create barriers for voter participation, particularly for the elderly and in communities of color.

To address this problem, Temple Jeremiah's Social Justice Committee partnered with The Illinois Religious Action Center (RAC-IL) on two voter registration drives in the summer and early fall. Using addresses provided by RAC-IL, Temple Jeremiah volunteers sent over 3,000 postcards to unregistered, eligible voters. These postcards provided information about voter registration and urged their recipients to participate in the upcoming election.

"We call ourselves the Temple Jeremiah Postcard Collective," said Nancy Eisenberg, a member of the Social Justice Committee and the leader of the Postcard Collective. While Nancy is happy that the Temple Jeremiah Postcard Collective was so popular among the congregation this year, with over 60 members volunteering, she's most proud of the message the Postcard Collective helped

“Our country is shaped by its people, and we want to make sure all their voices can be heard.”

get out. “The need for civic engagement is at an all time high,” said Nancy. “I’m glad so many Temple Jeremiah members stepped up to get out the vote.”

According to Nancy, the Jewish tradition itself teaches us the importance of voting. “The Torah instructs us to work with God in order to create a better world,” said Nancy. “Encouraging civic engagement and elevating disenfranchised voices seems like a great way to better the world around us.”

Postcard Collective volunteers echoed Nancy's sentiment. “So many voices are disenfranchised in our elections,” said Katie Bick, Temple Jeremiah's Communications Coordinator who participated in the first Postcard Collective voter registration drive. “Voter suppression undermines the democratic process, and I feel good about combating obstacles that block many people from the voting booths however I can.”

Although the Temple Jeremiah Postcard Collective is done sending out voter registration postcards for now, its members are still invested in voter participation.

“Even after the upcoming election, we’d love to keep spreading the word about how important it is to vote,” said Nancy. “Our country is shaped by its people, and we want to make sure all their voices can be heard.”

Shanah Tovah Chicago! A Jewish Chorus to Celebrate 5781

To ring in the New Year, Rabbi Cohen and Cantor Lewis Friedman participated in a Rosh HaShanah video project with Kol Zimrah Jewish Community Singers, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot, and clergy from a dozen congregations across the Chicagoland area, including Am Shalom, North Shore Congregation Israel, and Congregation Beth Shalom.

The video features a performance of *Hayom T'amtzeinu*, a prayer composed by Noah Aronson with English lyrics by Ben Tisser. In the video, Chicago-area Jewish leaders ask God to give us strength to face the challenges and opportunities that we will encounter in the year 5781. The prayer also stresses the importance of community: it does not ask that God grant us strength individually, but rather together, as a community.

“The video was intended to show the spiritual power of the Chicagoland Jewish community,” said Cantor Lewis Friedman. “During this crazy year of 2020, we wanted to stand together as a community to offer some beauty and hope.”



As Mayor Lori Lightfoot notes in the video, despite the trials of the year 5780, Chicago's Jewish community still found ways to nurture our values of faith, leadership, and community. The performance of *Hayom T'amtzeinu* in the video serves as a testament to this resilience.

To watch the video, visit:
tinyurl.com/HayomTamtzeinuCommunityChorus.

Thread, Pennies, & Convenience Fees: The Power of Small Things

By BY LESLIE LANDMAN & JENNIFER HECTMAN ROSEN
Director of Philanthropy and Bookkeeper
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Although they may seem miniscule, items as small as threads and pennies are substantial enough to change and transform their worlds.

This idea is explored in a Talmudic passage in Bava Batra 9a. In the passage, the Rabbis discuss the meaning of two verses in Isaiah (59:17 and 64:5.) These verses compare charity to a coat-like garment, drawing the Rabbis to conclude that “just as with regard to this garment, each and every thread in it combines to form one large garment, so too with regard to charity, each and every [coin] combines to form a great sum.”

The fibers of thread, when woven together, can become a coat. Individual coins, when collected, can build a building, help cure disease, and feed the hungry.

Recently, we found ourselves revisiting the power of small things while discussing the impact of voluntary contributions of convenience fees in connection with credit card transactions at the temple. Like many nonprofits and businesses, Temple Jeremiah has made credit card payments an easy and accessible payment option for our members. However, over time, financial institutions demanded higher and higher fees for credit card transactions. Consequently, many nonprofit organizations, including the temple,

found themselves paying significant amounts of money to the banks for the transaction costs. It came to the point that our annual transaction costs, meaning money the temple was paying to financial institutions, regularly exceeded over \$25,000!

A few years ago, to combat these growing fees, Temple Jeremiah began to offer members the opportunity to add an additional convenience fee to their transactions. Many members noticed this option and generously added the transaction fees to their payments and donations. Coin by coin combined, resulting in a massive reduction of the transaction fees Temple Jeremiah paid to financial institutions. Now, thanks to the convenience fees contributed by congregants, the temple’s transaction expenses are reduced by nearly \$16,000 annually.

We invite those looking to avoid transaction fees to mail checks directly to the temple, contribute to the temple through a Donor Advised Fund, or use ACH to transfer donations directly from your bank account. However, we know credit cards are many’s primary tool for payment, and they continue to remain a payment option at Temple Jeremiah. For your convenience, we accept a full range of cards, including VISA, Master Card, Discover, and American Express.

Next time you notice the convenience fee, we hope you will think of the Rabbis, the coat and the coins, and consider opting to add the convenience fee to your payments and contributions. Each and every coin will continue to combine to form a great sum.

Donate to Temple Jeremiah

Making a donation to Temple Jeremiah is a wonderful way to honor a friend or family member on their happy occasion or to memorialize a loved one. You can make a donation in two easy ways:

1. Click on “Make a Donation” at templejeremiah.org or visit the Member Login section and click on “Donate” to donate online via credit card or ACH/eCheck.
2. Mail a check to Temple Jeremiah, 937 Happ Road, Northfield, IL, 60093. Be sure to include a note as to what the donation is for and which fund you prefer.

* Please note that the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) gives additional tax advantages to those making cash donations to the temple in 2020. For those who do not itemize, an “above the line” deduction up to \$300 may be claimed. If you do itemize, this year you may be able to deduct charitable contributions equal to as much as 100 percent of AGI. (Consult your tax advisor for details and specific rules about what constitutes qualified contributions.)

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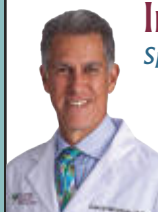
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