
















First Grade Consecration 11.1.2020

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Kindling the Light Within

By **RABBI PAUL F. COHEN**

Senior Rabbi

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Beloved Friends,

I write this to you as the results of the November election are becoming clearer. Joe Biden will become the 46th president of the United States of America. We are also about to celebrate Chanukah, our Festival of Light. One of the many lessons we all learned in this election is that we are truly a divided nation in more ways than we might care to admit. The light of this knowledge and understanding must define and bring into focus the path we must travel to bring *shalom*, justice, and equity to all the people of this country.

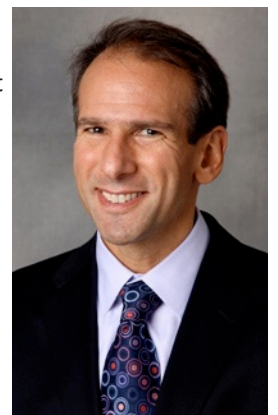
Chanukah comes to us during the darkest days of the calendar year. This holiday has both a historical and theological message but at its core we are commanded to kindle light in our world. This is the light of hope. No matter how you voted in this election, we all must dedicate ourselves to bringing more of this light into this world. We need to instill the hope that we can be better to one

another, we can be more understanding of each other's point of view, we can argue and debate without malice.

Jews have always used light to celebrate new beginnings. We welcome *Shabbat* with light. We begin each of the three Festivals (Sukkot, Pesach, and Shavuot) with light. We begin our New Year with light. We also use light to remember. We light a candle to mark the days of *Shivah* and we light a candle of *yahrzeit*, too. We light candles to mark new beginnings and to remember the past.

In Proverbs 20:27 King Solomon taught: "The soul, the spirit of a person is the lamp of God, the light, the candle of God." Within each and every human there is the light, the candle of God. When we act and speak with kindness, compassion, and generosity we bring God's light, the light of hope, into the

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“ This challenging year has served as an opportunity for Temple Jeremiah’s members to bring light, joy, and caring to our community when it needed it most.

By **KATIE BICK**
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This issue of the Covenant is devoted to the theme of light. To me, this theme seems particularly fitting for December 2020. The month not only observes Chanukah, the Festival of Lights from December 10th-18th, but also closes out a dark year on a hopeful note.

With a worldwide pandemic, political uprisings around the country, and a heated presidential election, 2020 has been a year of immense turmoil. However, November and December have provided glimpses of light at the end of the year’s dark tunnel. This winter featured the announcement of a potential COVID-19 vaccine. It also featured the election of a new president, and, for the first time in our nation’s history, the election of a woman and person of color in the position for vice president.

Here at Temple Jeremiah, it’s also hard not to see light in the

acts of service our congregation has undertaken this winter. In November alone, generous Temple members have contributed to a toy drive, a food drive, and a sock drive, all to give back to the Chicago-area community. This challenging year has served as an opportunity for Temple Jeremiah’s members to bring light, joy, and caring to our community when it needed it most. Although the darkness of the year can feel overwhelming, my heart is warmed, time and again, by the passion and generosity of Temple Jeremiah’s community.

This issue of the Covenant explores some of the light Temple members have brought into the world this winter. I invite you to read about the joyful events like Jeremiah Buddies as well as stories about the work various Temple groups have done to gather resources for underserved children and families.

I hope these stories can bring some light into your December and wish you a very happy 2021.

Leaving the Light On for the Jeremiah Community



By **DANNY GLASSMAN**
Executive Director
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I remember as a child loading up into the family van every weekend for some sort of excursion. My parents' cars were only tuned into two radio stations, 93.9 Lite FM and News Radio 780 AM. I have a great appreciation for the advertisers on those stations. I especially have fond memories of Motel 6’s commercials with Tom Bodett letting America know that "they’ll leave the light on for you." That calm tenor accompanied by a gentle fiddle always made me want to convince my folks to spend the night with Tom at Motel 6. As I got older, I realized Motel 6 might not be the nicest place to stay, but the slogan still resonates with me. It has that “come on home” feeling to me and that you’ll be treated as if you are family.

Over the course of the pandemic, I received countless calls from congregants expressing their shock that someone answered the phone. Except for a two week stretch at the end of March, we have had some combination of staff working in the building consistently. Maintenance is catching up on long awaited projects as well as using new cleaning techniques to make sure our facility is as sanitary as possible. Starting in June, the maintenance

staff has been disinfecting common and worship spaces with electrostatic treatments, which are being used in hospitals to help combat COVID-19. Clergy and staff are regularly in the building meeting, offering tutoring, producing the amazing High Holy Day production, working on getting school started, and a slew of other activities. The only thing we have been missing is you.

Yes, we have offered a lot of outdoor activities for our congregational community to gather but it's going to be harder come the long-dreaded Chicago winter. We do have some plans for minimal indoor programs, like supporting Family Promise over the winter break and a Backpack Blessings packing in January. However, most events will move online like last spring.

I have been pondering, even with restrictions tightening, how can Temple Jeremiah keep the light on for you? There is, in my opinion, two ways to answer that question. I start first with the emotional component. That is to continue providing the programs and services that help keep your spiritual light lit. There is a Jewish proverb that states, “a little bit of light pushes away a lot of darkness.” Continued connection and participation in the wide variety of offerings at the congregation helps push away the darkness that seems to be enveloping us in this turbulent time. I give kudos to my colleagues and lay leaders who have continued to put on amazing programs and meaningful worship services since

continued on next page

the start of the pandemic. Short of being together in the building, these activities have filled a void for so many.

The other answer is more physical. I hear from congregants about the struggles of being isolated at home. I also hear from congregants living with family about the tumult of numerous individuals coexisting in a confined home. When I hear these stories, my mind starts problem solving. I know I struggle with concentrating at home and I have made it a point to come to the office just to try to get a semblance of normalcy. What if Temple Jeremiah could offer that to our congregants? What if the temple kept the physical lights on for congregants to get out of isolation or get that much needed time to concentrate.

There are many hotels that have been weathering the travel

downturn by offering daily room rates so you can conduct business in a quiet place with the needed amenities. Well, starting this winter, we are planning on offering the same to our congregation. We have 24 classrooms readily available and open for your use. We want to be there as a support system for our congregation and what better way than having a place you can come and work safely and quietly. There will be more formal information coming out in the coming weeks so please keep your eyes peeled.

At Temple Jeremiah we use the tagline "The joy of Belonging." It invokes many images, but I always resort to the idea that we have each other's backs. We belong to a community that cares and supports each other. In the words of Tom Bodett, "we'll keep the light on for you."

A Hole In Our Family



By BARBARA MILLER
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It has been a very weird, troubling, and uneasy time for my family. Of course, COVID-19, political unrest, and the rise in racism have added to those feelings. But for my family, we feel troubled and uneasy due to the loss of several family members in a span of four weeks.

First, my sister-in-law, Lyn, who had battled Leukemia for over two years, completing two stem cell transplants. Her courage and my brother's dedication to the cause of making Lyn whole was the perfect example of love and that inspired us. Nonetheless, we feel her loss.

Next was my cousin, Randy. The unexpected nature of his loss took us all by surprise. He had not been sick, but felt unwell. In the process of diagnosing and treating his complaints, he caught a non-COVID virus and passed away within a few days. Another hole in our family circle.

And finally, Stephen's father, Bob. He was 92 years old and had lived a full life as a dentist, husband, father of two, and grandfather to three. Although his last few years were difficult while struggling with physical illness, he had many good memories to keep his spirits up. One more hole in the family.

It would be difficult for a family to go through this much loss during a non-COVID time, but COVID added to the feeling of loss and widened the hole in our family circle. We were not able to see our loved ones before they died and could not grieve together as a family.

But, we did have a family supporting us. Our Temple Jeremiah family. We received cards, emails, phone calls, donations, food, offers of dinner, and virtual hugs from so many people in our community. The support has calmed the uneasy feeling, has quieted the troubling thoughts, and made the hole in our family circle a bit smaller.

Thank you to all that supported us during this trying time.

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.



December 5, 2020	Vayishlach	Genesis 32:4 – 36:43
December 12, 2020	Vayeishev	Genesis 37:1 – 40:23
December 19, 2020	Mikeitz	Genesis 41:1 – 44:17
December 26, 2020	Vayigash	Genesis 44:18 – 47:27

For Herb Horn, Change Is the Only Constant That Matters



Herb Horn

By **MICHAEL SHMARAK**

*Communications Committee Co-Chair
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COVID-19 has forced many changes for all of us at Temple Jeremiah. We're learning how to adapt to new circumstances, how to address new challenges that are the result of the pandemic and, yes, how we can learn from the new opportunities afforded us. High Holy Days services on YouTube? Communicating with members via email? A Covenant

online as much as in print? So many changes in so short a time... unless of course, you are Herb Horn.

For those of you who are not long-time Temple Jeremiah members or for those who have not read the annals of Temple Jeremiah lore, chances are you don't know his name. But for those who have walked the temple's grounds since 1980, you not only know Herb Horn, but you also know his impact.

Herb Horn has seen a huge number of changes happen within Temple Jeremiah. More importantly, he has devoted a huge amount of his time and energy to supporting Temple Jeremiah, his religious home.

Board leadership has been an important part of Herb's life. Herb served on the temple's Board of Directors from 1982-1998. That's not a typo; Herb spent sixteen years on the temple's Board, serving as its president from 1992-1995. During that time, he saw membership increase from 450 to nearly 650 families. He spearheaded, along with Rabbi Schreiber, Temple Jeremiah's hiring of Rabbi Marla Subeck, our first assistant rabbi in 1993. Furthermore, his tenure as President included the completion of the Golder Chapel and the development of a second long-term plan.

Temple Jeremiah has been a central part of Herb's family. Herb has had many family celebrations at the temple: both of his children celebrated b'nai mitzvah and confirmation at Temple. His daughter was married in the Golder Chapel, and his twin grandsons had their britot in the Golder Chapel as well. Herb even had his own bar mitzvah here just four years ago, proving you are never too old to learn and be called to the Torah.

To this day, Herb is *still* serving Temple Jeremiah. In 2020, you'll see Herb serving on Temple Jeremiah's Spiritual Life Committee and the Past Presidents Council. It was the Spiritual Life Committee that put in a great deal of time and energy to provide guidance for this year's High Holy Days format.

"It turned out to be above all expectations," Herb said. "I really

“We miss in-person education, spiritual and community contact within Temple... But technology has shown us how to make lemonade out of lemons. Younger generations can pass on education to the older folks and newer generations.”

felt that people are so used to remote contact now, that there was enough competency to use YouTube in a way that could still feel meaningful.”

So after all of the changes that have taken place in his life, why does Herb continue to serve the temple? For Herb, the answer is simple: “I feel it is part of my family,” Herb recently shared with The Covenant. “For all of the things that happened in my life with my family, being a part of all of these changes was extra special for me. I have been able to see new people come through our doors, with new leadership and thinking.”

“I am all for change, but I also think change needs to be combined with consistency to be successful,” Herb noted. “In all of the years I have been a part of Temple Jeremiah, there have only been three Senior Rabbis at the temple. That's a pretty strong statement about how the temple operates.”

Above all else, Herb feels the power of Temple Jeremiah's connection in ways that he never knew when he first became a member.

Herb noted that, in spite of the pandemic, people are staying connected, and Temple Jeremiah is finding new ways to keep in touch with its members. “We miss in-person education, spiritual and community contact within Temple,” said Herb. “But technology has shown us how to make lemonade out of lemons. Younger generations can pass on education to the older folks and newer generations.”

Herb is happy the temple has evolved and has become as diverse as it has over the years. “I love to see the new areas that members of the temple's leadership have created. Whether it be the Social Justice Committee, the activities of Brotherhood and Sisterhood, or our support of OSRUI, I love the bastion of Reform Judaism and how we are leading it here on the North Shore.”

Herb said that his leadership experience at Temple Jeremiah has led to further charitable leadership roles. He currently is Board President of the Children's Advocacy Center of North and Northwest Cook County. The agency serves as the leading resource to empower and heal abused children and prevent violence against children. Herb is hoping to make a difference in peoples' lives in the spirit of *Tikkun Olam*.



Finding the Light in a Rainbow



By **DINA BAUWENS**

Member Engagement Director
dina@templejeremiah.org

Many people tell me that my son's smile lights up a room. I have a biased opinion, but Raydon does have an incredible smile. That smile has often become replaced by the pout of a grumpy toddler cooped up at home as the current pandemic has cancelled group activities and play dates or bad weather

keeps us indoors. Before March, we never missed Tot Shabbat or Jeremiah Buddies. Raydon loves the music, the stories, watching other kids play and dance.

Staying safe became our top priority as we shifted to watching worship on Zoom (he still sings along) and seeing a few select friends for outdoor walks. It's hard to explain to a toddler that a global virus is keeping us from doing the activities we once loved. But I got to see Raydon's bright smile return on a chilly Sunday morning in October when we attended an in person Jeremiah Buddies program! We met in the large Slotnick Social Hall where we could all properly spread out. Moms, dads, and little ones sat on the floor, six plus feet apart, wearing masks, ready to sing, make a craft, and hear a story. That week's Torah portion was about Noah, so we sang songs about the animals on the arky arky, then each family received a pre-packed craft bag with everything

we needed to make our very own rainbow. Raydon and his friend from six feet away, Maggie, thought the glue sticks were the highlight of the morning.

It felt amazing to have a small return to normalcy. Raydon is so engaged being at the temple, able to observe other kids in person, sing along, and escape screens for a little while. We're very thankful to organizations like Temple Jeremiah who have a COVID Taskforce helping guide staff on how to hold safe programming. The doctors and experts on the Taskforce are able to give concrete advice we use to bring programs to life in these unique circumstances. As the weather cools decreasing our time outdoors and the COVID numbers rise, we know we won't be able to continue many in-person events. However, Temple Jeremiah will keep coming up with creative programs such as Zoom Into Shabbat with Mara Franken, music videos from Cantor Friedman, crafts and scavenger hunts from Shira, and more!

Until we can again gather for Tot Shabbat and other programs physically, I know the songs, activities, and familiar faces will also bring a smile to Raydon's face. If you ever want to join us for a digital program please let me know!



Raydon (and his smile) at Jeremiah Buddies

RABBI COHEN (continued from page 1)

world. This is the way we fulfill the command to kindle light, not just at Chanukah but in every moment.

“We are better people when we can engage with one another in healthy debate based on our desire to learn and grow. It is in these moments when God's light really shines among us and from us.”

My heart breaks when I hear that someone feels unwelcome or ill at ease at Temple Jeremiah because of a Social Justice platform, program, or action. My heart breaks when instead of engaging in discussion and debate people feel silenced. In *Mishnah Avot 3:2* we learn that when two people study Torah together they cause the *Shechinah*, the Presence of God, to dwell between them.

Let's understand what this means. The *Talmud*, which is a commentary on the *Mishnah*, is a compendium of volumes upon volumes of recorded debates. The study of Torah was not for the timid or the faint of heart. Torah study was meant to provoke rigorous debate. Torah study was meant to be challenging and to

generate heat and light, but always much more light. The dynamic of Torah study was meant to be a way of life, not just study. We are better people when we can engage with one another in healthy debate based on our desire to learn and grow. It is in these moments when God's light really shines among us and from us.

We need this now more than ever. We need to engage with one another and especially with those who hold ideas and opinions different than our own. Temple Jeremiah is a diverse community politically, religiously, socially and in so many other ways.

As we look to help heal a fractured and broken world, let us begin here in our own community. Let us commit to not just lighting the Chanukah menorah, but also the kindling of light within each other, talking to each other, debating each other, not to change minds, but to learn, to grow and to heal.

Cathy joins me in wishing you a Chanukah filled with light and hope.

Shalom,

Whittier Elementary - How We're Helping with Remote Learning!

By LORI KASH

Social Justice Member

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As we are all well aware, due to COVID-19 this school year is like no other. And Whittier Elementary School's critical needs changed as well. So as they say, Temple Jeremiah pivoted!

Whittier's principal asked if instead of our annual school supply collection, we could donate 500 small whiteboards so teachers could clearly see their students' work while participating in remote learning. To help, Temple Jeremiah pivoted.

That is only the tip of the iceberg of remote learning issues. Whether or not you have kids e-learning at home, we all know remote learning during these unique times is not easy and may require a little incentive (or a lot!) to help keep a child present as they struggle to stay focused or even stay awake.

Whittier's team developed a plan to offer specific toys as incentives for strong student attendance and participation. The program has proven to motivate kids because they want to earn toys. And you, our fabulously generous congregants, jumped to help fill Whittier's incentive closet to celebrate the children's efforts.

Temple Jeremiah has been Supporting Whittier Students for Over 15 Years

Could you imagine a child you know...

- starting school without a pencil, crayons, or a folder?
- having no one at home to help with reading or schoolwork?
- going into the cold, winter months without a warm coat, mittens, or hat?

These are everyday realities at the Whittier Elementary School in

Waukegan. However, since 2004 Temple Jeremiah congregants have generously given time, donations and their hearts to help these wonderful kids through a needs-driven action plan.

Pre-pandemic, members of Temple Jeremiah have helped support the Whittier children and the staff in the following programs:

Coaching: Every week during the school year fifteen to twenty "Jeremiah coaches" are in classrooms working with children one-on-one or in small groups to help improve their reading or math skills. One of our volunteers has been helping students for over 15 years.

Keeping Them Warm: Each November, Temple Jeremiah families donate new and gently-used coats, gloves, and hats for Whittier children who may have need. One congregant and her friends lovingly knit hats and mittens for the kids, and blankets to help comfort children who are not feeling well while they are in the nurse's office.

Providing School Supplies: At school year end, Jeremiah kids donate their gently-used school supplies. Each year two vehicles full of school supplies arrive at Whittier's doors.

Providing Uniforms: During the summer our congregants purchase school uniform pieces which the Social Worker at Whittier gives out in situations of need.

Collecting Box Tops for Education: (Please keep scanning during remote learning!) Congregants scan their grocery receipts for Box Tops for Education so Whittier can earn dollars to be used for computers, books, special events, and much more.

We are honored to, in our small way, help the children and families of Whittier in partnership with the fabulous, hardworking Whittier school team.

WE INVITE YOU TO ATTEND THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

Exploring the Pretrial Fairness Act. Join us on Sunday, January 17th from 4:00 - 5:30 p.m. to discuss the Pretrial Fairness Act, proposed legislation that calls for the end of cash bail, moderated by Dawn Projansky Lavin, J.D. and featuring Sen. Robert Peters, the author of the bill, and Civil rights and criminal attorney, past president of the Chicago Bar Association, Victor Henderson, J.D.

Unpacking So You Want to Talk about Race with Dana Garbarski and Jill Patano. Join us on Sunday, February 7th from 4:00 - 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.

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.

To learn about our antiracism programming, visit: templejeremiah.org/antiracism-programming.

Jeremiah Teen Leaders Planning Safe and Fun Events!



By SHIRA BRANDHANDLER
Youth Engagement Director
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When the world seemed to turn upside down in March, Temple Jeremiah became a key point of connection for many. People tuned into events like digital worship, virtual lounges, and other online programs. This new form of connection was also key to our temple youth as well! Our imaginations of how we could connect and have fun together grew and we enjoyed crafting, playing games, and hanging out online. However, when we were able to begin safely gathering in person this fall, it was so wonderful to physically be together and regain a sense of normalcy that had been missing since March.

Our teen leaders worked hard during the summer to plan fun, engaging, and socially distant events for their peers and it was clear at their kickoff event in August that it paid off.

At our JeTY fall kickoff event, we had a blast reuniting with friends for our first in-person event since March. We had a great evening tie-dyeing t-shirts, playing games, and making s'mores over a bonfire. My favorite part of the evening came as the sun set and we all sat 6 feet apart in a large circle for Havdallah. Some of the teens were giddy and remarked how excited they were to celebrate Havdallah after missing out on celebrating at camp each week in the summer. This was a chance to reconnect with the rituals that were meaningful to them.

Rabbi Heaps asked our teens to think of one thing they would like to keep from the past months and one thing they were looking forward to. I was impressed with their self-reflection and positive outlook on months of chaos and change. The answers varied, but it was clear that everyone was looking forward to more moments of real connection, like we shared with each other that night.

After a successful kickoff, the JeTY Teen Council continued planning fun and safe events that could provide those moments that we all cherished in August. Since then, we have gotten creative with a drive-in movie, Rosh Hashanah picnic, spooky season Shabbat and more!

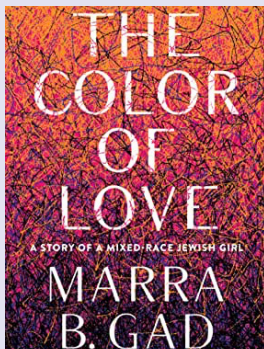
While we have needed to stretch our creativity in order to plan fun events that follow all of our COVID-19 guidelines, we have also been able to continue to host some of our annual favorites! Each year Club 345 watches a movie in the Sukkah, this year we gathered outside the Sukkah to celebrate Havdallah and Sukkot together as we watched SharkBoy and Lava Girl. We had so much fun watching and being together and celebrating in our traditional way. We are also planning for new and exciting youth events, like a scavenger hunt across Old Orchard, an online escape room, and more!

Every time we are able to gather safely in person I am so excited for the opportunity to be together; and while this fall was definitely a little different, the fun, friends, and Jewish connections that we made, made it a wonderful season. I can't wait for all of our upcoming exciting events. Follow us on Instagram @jeremiah youth to keep up and see all of the fun!

Sisterhood Book Club

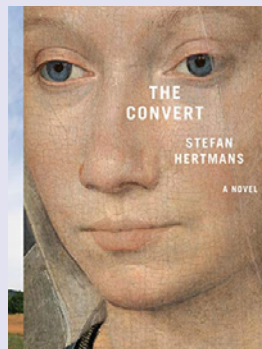
NOTE: We will be meeting through Zoom! Join us online at zoom.us/j/3417454169.

Thursday, December 10, 2020 ~ 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
The Color of Love, By Marra B. Gad



A Jewish girl is adopted in 1970s Chicago, wonderful news, yes? Oh, forgot to mention, she's mixed-race. Well now, some of the relatives are singing a different tune. "In beautiful, fearless prose, Gad tells a story...that is alternately heartwrenching and heartwarming" -JUF News

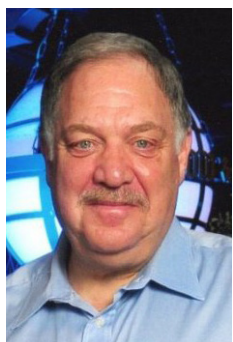
Thursday, January 14, 2021 ~ 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.
The Convert, By Stefan Hertmans



Historical fiction takes us to 11th Century France, an aristocratic noblewoman, a Rabbi's son, romance, love, antisemitism, the Crusades...will they escape it all? Based on information from the Cairo Geniza this fascinating story will carry you away!

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

Bringing Exciting Programs for Members



By JERRY TATAR
Israel Action Committee Chair
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The Israel Action Committee ("IAC") has been quite busy—and will be bringing some exciting programs for all to enjoy.

As many congregants know, the IAC has presented two virtual tours. The first was a history of Jews in Rome and a tour of Rome's Jewish Ghetto. This was presented by Micaela Pavoncello, owner of Jewish Roma Tours. We followed this virtual tour up by having Yael Rosen, Director of International Programs Department at The Museum of the Jewish People at Beit Hatfutsot in Tel Aviv, lead us on the marvelous "Live! Hallelujah! Assemble, Pray, Study—Synagogues Past and Present" exhibit at the museum. These tours were very well attended with members asking for more.

Given that response, how could we say no? So—starting in the spring, the IAC will be presenting what should be an exciting series about daily life in Israel. Fittingly, this series will start at the Yom Haatzmaut service with the inclusion of modern Israeli music and poetry. The following programs in the series will include renowned speakers and panelists on topics such as:

- The geography of Israel, the historical and modern day significance of cities, holy sites,

and other features, and how they affect life in Israel;

- Water insecurity, scientific developments and potential solutions in Israel and the Middle East;
- Equal rights/civil rights in Israel among Israelis of color and in the LGBTQ community;
- Economic issues including poverty, education, and technology; and,
- The multicultural tapestry of Israel including educational and other programs with Israeli and Arab citizens and more.

This will be an exciting series. The IAC is reaching out to experts in these areas, both in the United States and Israel, to be with us virtually for these sessions. They will not only share their knowledge but also answer your questions on these issues.

Details on this exciting series and how members can participate will be coming out over the next few months leading up to the program. Please look for details so that you can join us for all these exciting programs.

In addition, be sure to look for regular "Did you know..." sections in The Covenant as well as in the temple's Weekly E-Newsletter. These will test your knowledge of Israel while bringing you interesting facts about life and events in Israel.

As you can see, we are quite busy with many exciting programs. If you are interested in being involved in these or other programs, please contact Jerry Tatar at jerrytatar1@gmail.com.

IAC Israel Fun Fact:

Did you know...

The IDF (Israel Defense Forces) is a leader in saving people trapped by natural and man-made disasters. On short notice, its search and rescue unit has operated in many countries (including Mexico, Kenya, India, Turkey and the U.S.) following earthquakes, train wrecks, collapsed buildings and terrorist attacks.

Look Forward to These Social Justice Events

Feed the Hungry

Temple Jeremiah has been providing lunches for the hungry on the first Sunday of the month for years, and the need is greater than ever. We need volunteers to drive the lunches downtown as well as families to make the lunches at home and drop them off at Temple Jeremiah.

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

Backpack Blessings

Backpack Blessings will be packing lunches on Sunday, January 10th at the temple. We plan to pack 500 lunches! All safety protocols will be followed. Thank you for helping to ensure that children have meals to take home.

To get involved, visit: tinyurl.com/BackpackBlessingsJanuary2020. For questions, please contact Dina Bauwens at dina@templejeremiah.org.





First Grade Consecration 11.1.2020 (above)



JeTY ShaBOOt 11.7.2020 (above)



The Zimmermans celebrating Sukkot

The Zimmerman's freshly baked Challah

Find Your Light: Practicing Mindfulness and Meditation



By **JUDY CRAVEN**

Licensed Meditation Instructor
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December's Covenant theme is "Light." We ask, how can we find any light right now? It all seems dark!

For me, the light has been meditation and mindfulness. These practices have not so much brought light into my life, but helped me to access all the light that is here, even amidst the dark. When I can source the light in myself, in my life, I can more easily see the light that is outside myself and share it with others.

Meditation and mindfulness are practices of paying attention to this moment, without judging the moment or ourselves - essentially filling our minds with this moment.

This is totally unlike what our brains are accustomed to doing, wandering to distraction, the past or the future, replaying old stories, our opinions, or making predictions about the future, often, in the form of worrying.

Our minds have a million-year-old negativity bias, habitually trying to keep us safe by looking for what is wrong. People always think they are alone in this habit. It is human and biological. We all do it, especially in challenging times like where we are now.

Mindfulness helps us create a new habit: paying attention to this moment. Paying attention is a skill that we can all cultivate. As we practice this skill we can see what is here, how we feel, and allow ourselves to be just as we are. Once we do this, we can then choose where to place our attention. Consequently, what we pay attention to grows. For example, when we hear two sounds, the one we pay attention to seems louder because we attend to it. It is the same with thoughts: the thoughts we feed with our attention grow.

We may be furious, scared, and sad about COVID-19, politics, a person, or whatever triggers us most! We can let ourselves feel how we feel, and then decide how to handle it. We must understand what we can and cannot control, and then choose

where to place our attention. That is the light we have within us: choice, in any given moment.

Once we can acknowledge that there is light and dark, we can then free up our energy and share that energy to create change. To begin changing the way we relate to stressors in our lives, consider employing the following practices:

Presence: Bring your attention to the present moment. Notice what you see, hear, touch, smell, and taste. This practice also helps us be grateful for the most basic gifts in life.

Focus: Focus on something happening here and now, like your breath. Notice the mind wanders immediately then bring attention gently back to the breath, over and over. We can see, and even laugh, at how often our minds wander, which is about forty-seven percent of the time! After doing this, return attention to what is here now. Take things one moment at a time.

Gratitude: Create a list of at least three things a day that you are grateful for. Focus on each for at least three breaths or eleven seconds. Note: it takes longer to process positive than negative, thanks to our high alert brains!)

Compassion: Embrace unconditional loving-kindness, first for ourselves because that makes it easier to send it out to others. These are hard times; we are doing our best. Be kind to yourself. Neuroscience studies tell us these practices make us happier. According to Holocaust survivor and neurologist/psychiatrist Viktor Frankl: "between stimulus and response, there is a space, in that space is our power to choose our response. In that response lies our growth and our freedom"



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Signs cost only \$18. Order yours at tinyurl.com/AntiracismLawnSigns.

A Report From the Treasurer

By **SUE WEITZMAN**

Temple Jeremiah Treasurer

sgweitz@gmail.com

The temple's fiscal year 2019-2020 came to a screeching halt in March when we were forced by the pandemic into a lockdown. All temple programs transitioned from in-person to digital in a blink of an eye. Fortunately, in addition to receiving a PPP loan, we were able to project and collect revenue from community commitment and school fees while doing our best to hold the line on expenses. At the close of the fiscal year, the congregation had a minimal shortfall of approximately \$18,000, which was covered by the PPP funds that the temple received. The PPP funds will also help us offset some expenses for the 2020-2021 fiscal year.

Going forward, the congregation approved a contingent budget in May of this year. The plan has been to revisit the budget once more when we learned about the COVID-19 pandemic and the guidelines for a safe reopening of the temple and our programming. The budget committee met in August and looked at the three main sources of income, Community Commitment, building rentals, and Sunday and Hebrew school.

Community Commitment, which was budgeted for \$1.44 million for the fiscal year 2020-2021, is on track to exceed that figure based on the current membership renewals. Your commitment

to Temple Jeremiah is so important, this year especially, as it will allow the temple to continue to keep health and safety as a priority as our building remains closed to any rentals, which has always been a source of additional revenue. Your commitment will also allow the temple to continue providing meaningful and creative digital programming that we have been experiencing since March.

And finally, the temple's Center for Learning has had to reimagine how to execute its mission of providing a warm, welcoming, and interactive in-person environment where students enjoy learning about Judaism and the Hebrew language. As a result of experiences with our public schools and the uncertainty of when children can safely return to school in a normal manner, we have seen a drop in our projected school enrollment.

The budget committee will meet again soon to have a better understanding of our revenues and expenses and to see where additional expense reductions may have to occur for the remainder of the year.

Temple Jeremiah is in the fortunate position of being part of such a kind, caring, and fiscally responsible community and we know we will get through these unprecedented times in the best way possible.

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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Discretionary Funds: Rabbi Paul F. Cohen • Rabbi Rachel L. Heaps • Cantor Susan Lewis Friedman

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-Randi and Jim Mayer

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-Michele and John Maeglin

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-Elan Adler and Bill Johnson

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-Susan and Jules Joffe

IN HONOR OF

Bill Brown
On the occasion of his 92nd birthday
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-Marla and Steve Brown & Family
-Randi and Charles Gurian & Family
-Gayle Malvin & Family

Shamir Burg
Grandson of Phyllis Burg, on the occasion of him becoming a Bar Mitzvah
-Liz, Scott, and Sarah Mendel

The Clergy, Staff, Board, and Volunteers of Temple Jeremiah
For producing amazing High Holy Days services
-Bonnie and Herb Horn
-Gail and Mark Pierce

Rabbi Paul F. Cohen
For a beautiful, meaningful, and wonderful High Holy Days experience
-Sue and Joel Kaufmann

Nancy Eisenberg
On the occasion of her special birthday
-Randi and Charles Gurian

Nancy and Arnee Eisenberg
On the occasion of being honored as New Trier Democrats Volunteers of the Year
-Judy and Jerry Tatar

Cantor Susie Lewis Friedman
For her outstanding efforts for High Holy Days 5781
-Sue and Joel Kaufmann

Liam Gillespie
Son of Randi and Tom Gillespie, on the occasion of him becoming a Bar Mitzvah
-Caren Brown

Avi Greenfield
On the occasion of his special birthday
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Rabbi Rachel Heaps
For meaningful and beautiful High Holy Days services
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Sue Kaufmann
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-Randi and Charles Gurian

Barbara Kite
On the occasion of her special birthday
-Jamie and Bruce Hague

Landon Jones
Grandson of Susan and Sheldon Isenberg, on the occasion of him becoming a Bar Mitzvah
-Susan and Sheldon Isenberg

Aaron Kaplan
Son of June Mayor and Ronald Kaplan, for his beautiful music during the High Holy Days
-Ellen and Alan Toban

Scott Levin
On the occasion of the beginning of your Temple Jeremiah Presidency
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Carol Maxon
On the occasion of her 90th birthday
-Judy Lazar

Barbara Miller
For all her work as Past President of Temple Jeremiah
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Joshua Rosenthal
Son of Lisa and Michael Rosenthal, on the occasion of him becoming a Bar Mitzvah
-Lisa and Michael Rosenthal

Rabbi Robert Schreiber
On the occasion of his 85th birthday
-Joan Golder
-Judy Homer
-Emmy and Ed Rothschild
-Vicki Weisenberg and Barry Goldman

Ernie Schubert
For donating his time and expertise for our High Holy Days Services
-Ellen and Alan Toban
Linda and Gary Stolberg
On the occasion of their special anniversary
-Randi and Charles Gurian

Jordan Rae Taitel
On the occasion of her engagement to CJ Clark
-Muriel Kaplan

IN MEMORY OF

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-Muriel Kaplan

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-Esther Brown

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-Phyllis and Jim Klapman

FOR THE SPEEDY RECOVERY OF

Jessie Abrahams

-Randi and Charles Gurian
-Mara and Gerry Lane

Hershhy Pappadis

-Caren Brown
-Randi and Charles Gurian
-Susan and Ken Lorch
-Liz and Scott Mendel

Jeff Sacks

-Karen Gitles and Michael Jablo
-Randi and Charles Gurian
-Bonnie and Herb Horn
-Susan and Ken Lorch

Correction: In the last Covenant edition, we mistakenly referred to Helene and Bob Berger as Helene and Bob Boyer. We regret the error and send our condolences to the Bergers during this difficult time.

SEND US YOUR HOME PHOTOS!

TYPICALLY we showcase activities and events happening lately around Temple Jeremiah on a full page. While the physical building is not filled with everyone's smiling faces, we know the warmth and connections amongst our congregation still exist. How about taking a photo of what's going on at home as you stay in touch with Temple Jeremiah? We'd love to see you celebrating Shabbat, your kids interacting online with youth events, or the challah that you baked. Please send your pictures our way so we can continue filling these pages with the images that remind us all what a wonderful, vibrant, and caring community we have created.

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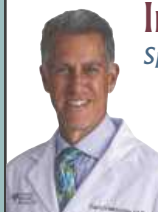
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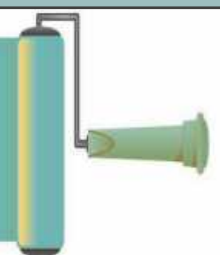
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