



Thank You Dr. Anne Lidsky Car Parade

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## Learning and Doing: Education with Anne

By **RABBI PAUL F. COHEN**

Senior Rabbi

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In the quotation included as part of the morning blessings for Shabbat in *Mishkan T'filah*, our prayer book, we read that the "study of Torah is equal to them all." The all referenced are the acts that we are instructed to perform, the value of which is infinite. This quotation is from the *Mishnah* in the section called *Pe'ah*, corner. The command from Torah is to leave the corners of our fields unharvested! The portion is set aside for the stranger, the widow, and the orphan. This trio represents those who are most vulnerable in the community who must be protected and cared for by the community.

The mitzvah of *Pe'ah* has no finite measure to it. It seems that each person must determine how much of each corner of the field must be left for those in need. There are other mitzvot of this kind listed that have no finite limit and therefore the merit acquired also has no limit. These include visiting the sick, providing for the wedding couple, attending prayer, and accompanying the

dead for burial. The climax of this teaching is that "Talmud Torah, the study of Torah is equal to them all."

The study of Torah is equal to them all because it is meant to lead to all these acts of loving kindness. Study of Torah is not just an act that should engage our hearts and our minds, it must engage our bodies, as well. Teaching Torah in order for others to be able to learn and then do is among one of the most significant acts that one can perform.

Temple Jeremiah throughout our history has been a beacon of Jewish education. For 40 years, Dr. Anne Lidsky has taught and led by word and by deed the students and families of our community.

We celebrate Anne as we celebrate Torah, learning and doing. We honored our teacher and friend on May 16th and will continue on June 11th and 12th. *continued on page 9*



## Love, Happiness, Kindness, and Lessons from Dr. Anne Lidsky



**By DR. ANNE LIDSKY, PHD, R.J.E**  
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As I write my final article as your Director of Congregational Learning, I cannot help but reflect on these past extraordinary 40 years. I have been so blessed to have found a congregation that has felt like an extended, loving family. As you can imagine, many have questioned my long tenure at one workplace. "How could you have stayed employed that many years at Temple Jeremiah without moving your career to another synagogue or onto something totally different?" I do not need to ponder this question for even a moment. Temple Jeremiah has felt like home from the moment I began my career on July 1st, 1980.

Here my life centers around an incredibly supportive staff team, my amazing teachers, lay leaders, and loving families with whom one can only dream of working. Who gets so lucky to work for all these years alongside a senior staff team of people who are not only colleagues, but are also treasured friends? I do. The office and custodial staff have been by my side. A simple thank you does not do justice for all they have given me and mean to me.

I want to share some thoughts that I've written about in some past articles, but the ideas are so crucial to the well-being of our children that they deserve repeating.

Our tradition teaches that one's student is like one's very own child. This wisdom is true. From the innocent preschoolers at Jeremiah to the spirited members of our Confirmation class, our students have touched my heart and made me laugh, I, in turn, have sought to reach their souls. I have worked diligently to access every window of opportunity to make J-Quest students feel valued and essential to the temple. Our teachers have done the same. The pressure of grades, competitiveness, disappointment, and occasions of thoughtless behavior that our children experience outside of the synagogue make it all the more important that we establish a caring community where *derech eretz* (the most decent way to behave) and *menschlichkeit* are guiding forces in their lives as well as ours.

If, as the commentator, Rashi says, for the sake of kindness, the world exists, then we need to model that. In a warm, embracing climate, we have created joyous, Jewish memories for our children. By showing genuine concern and love for each student, we have focused on the children's self-esteem and well-being. I have always believed that we can most profoundly impact lives by being patient and thoughtful, placing more importance on being kind rather than right, and, showing gentleness in our daily encounters. This is what I have striven to teach from the very beginning, creating I-Thou, caring relationships with one another and with our precious children.

Our children discover the imperfections of the world all too quickly. They know it needs repair, but where does one start? We may turn to the wisdom of Hillel, who said, "in a place where no one behaves like a decent human being, strive to be that mensch." If we as educators and parents can help children understand the true meaning of this quote, then we have accomplished something extraordinarily powerful during our time on this earth. I believe that teaching kindness and integrity is the most important work that we can do, partnering together, parents and teachers, all working toward the same goal.

So much of the future of Judaism depends on our abilities to create proud, passionate, sensitive Jews. We have been taught that we all have a spark of sanctity, a spark of the Divine in us; it's the essence of our soul, of who we are; it's how each of us can be our best self and make this world a better place.

40 years of treasured relationships, of loving your children as if they were my own, helping them develop a pride and love for Judaism; this was my calling, one that filled my life with purpose and joy. I am filled with pride and awe at what we have accomplished together. Temple Jeremiah is known for its warmth and commitment. Our congregation nurtures and educates its children in a welcoming atmosphere. We have created a space in which we teach to the soul.

As I prepare for my retirement, I have three "lessons" to share. They have captured my attention; I think you'll understand why:

### LESSON ONE: THE POWER OF LOVE

Love over hate.  
Love over indifference.  
Love over ignorance.  
Love over ego.  
Love over fear.  
Love over barriers.  
Love over borders.  
Love over  
And over  
And over  
Again.

### LESSON TWO: THE VALUE OF HAPPINESS

Let us teach our children what happiness really means. We need to pay attention to the moments in our lives as they unfold; that is what having real moments means, moments when you are fully present, fully feeling, fully alive; the ordinary moment becomes an extraordinary one, an important lesson to teach our children and teach ourselves.

Happiness can only come from having enough real moments in your life. Happiness is not an acquisition, but rather it is a skill. We do not experience happiness because of what we get. We experience happiness through how we live each moment.

Having certain experiences do not make us happy – knowing how to live them with full awareness and to mindfully be in each moment will make us happy.

It is mindfulness that transforms the ordinary task into the extraordinary experience. Here is one of my favorite exercises: As you inhale, say to yourself: "Right now, I am breathing in calmness and peacefulness." As you exhale, think "Right now, I am breathing out fear."

We are alive. We are here now. We have another day. That is a blessing. Our intention is to enjoy the ordinary everyday miracles that make up our lives. They will be our most sacred real moments.

### LESSON THREE: THE IMPORTANCE OF KINDNESS

Kindness will keep you sane. Kindness goes beyond pacifying us; it cures us of anger. When we are doing something kind for someone else, it keeps us from thinking negatively. On my most difficult days, when I have felt like exhaustion or lack of motivation is hunting me down, it was kindness towards others that gave me life.

By shifting the focus to others, no matter how tough life gets, you'll catch a wave of hope that will breathe fresh oxygen and tenacity into you. Giving kindness is a reminder that you're put on this planet to shine bright and be someone else's answer. When you provide the emergency raft to someone who is sinking, you are kept safe above the raging waters, too. Kindness keeps you committed to being who you really are, in spite of contrary feelings and down days.

To quote the writer Adrienne Bankert, "kindness is your hidden superpower." According to Adrienne, when we are kind, we provide relief, even if only for a moment, to ourselves and others. We need to make it our aim to be kind, to nurture better health and improve the quality of lives.

Adrienne notes that kindness also produces elevated conversation and gives greater meaning to our interactions. Being kind allows us

to connect deeply with our peers. When we're kind, we become the highest and best versions of ourselves.

When asked who we are, we should all have the same answer: "I am kind." To borrow again from Adrienne Bankert, in our world, kindness is a state of being rather than a mere task or description. Once we adopt kindness as an identity, kindness will increasingly rule our thoughts, actions, and deeds. Kindness is not just what you do, but it is also who you are. Kindness brings out the best in us, and our best selves are our undeniably real selves. When you are kind, the true you shines through.

In my opinion, the best thing you can hear someone say about you is "you make my day better!" When someone comes alongside us to help us make it through the day, there is hope.

Nice is being polite to people, while kind is connecting with people. Here's to all of you who help others shine brightly, exhibiting encouragement every day by being the kind who are kind.

It is indeed an honor to have partnered with you, the kindest people I know at Temple Jeremiah. I am filled with deep gratitude for your children, the kindest children I know.

I have been receiving notes of thankfulness from so many of you and I read them with true humility, for it is me who should be thanking you.

Thank you for your years of support, for your thoughtfulness, and for sharing your beautiful children and grandchildren with me. Their smiles and their genuine hugs have always brought sunshine into my life. It has been a true privilege to serve this congregation.

With enduring gratitude,

*Anne*

Dr. Anne Lidsky, RJE, PhD

## 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 digitally at 9:30 a.m. every Saturday. To join us on Zoom, visit [zoom.us/j/132889355](https://zoom.us/j/132889355).**



June 5, 2021	<b>Sh'lach L'cha</b>	Numbers 13:1 – 15:41
June 12, 2021	<b>Korach</b>	Numbers 16:1 – 18:32
June 19, 2021	<b>Chukat</b>	Numbers 19:1 – 22:1
June 26, 2021	<b>Balak</b>	Numbers 22:2 – 25:9



## Friendship and Partnership with Dr. Anne Lidsky



By **RABBI ROBERT D. SCHREIBMAN**  
*Rabbi Emeritus*  
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Forty Years - How well I remember first meeting with Dr. Lidsky at a restaurant for lunch. I have never been an ardent Zionist except in the Spring and Summer of 1948, and heartily agreed with Rabbi Tarsish and

Temple Jeremiah on their pro-Israel, yet not Zionist, stand. But during that lunch I looked out the window and saw Dr. Lidsky's car with the license plate with the letters JDL. At that time in history Israel was strident in their anti-Arab stance. JDL, Jewish Defense League, was a very violent organization. Nervously I asked her what the letters stood for? "My husband's name, Jerry Donald Lidsky." The joy of her answer further endeared her to me.

During the time both Anne and I worked at Temple Jeremiah, I found a partner who loved and respected Judaism and children. Together, we reached the central idea that each and every student, Kindergarten through Confirmation, would find pride in being Jewish and our shared Jewish identity.

After we went through adversity in finding a cantor, she called my attention to a third-grade teacher, Amy Landau, now Zussman. Amy soon joined the temple's senior staff as a cantorial soloist until we granted her a year off to study at HUC-JIR to become a fully certified cantor. Anne brought with her an excellent Confirmation teacher, her husband, Jerry, and chose another beloved teacher, Mike Kamen.

Anne developed our nascent school into its well-deserved place as a leader in Jewish, religious education.

Nothing was foreign to the teachings of Judaism, as exemplified by the V'ahavta, which talks about Judaism being thought about day and night, waking up and lying down. This was echoed many years later by the chief of the Chickasaw Indians, who was asked if his tribe often thought and called upon their Gods. He answered, "We think about them always, when we talk about them at home, before and after we fight, and whenever and wherever we meet together." Dr Lidsky did this for generations of our students here at Temple Jeremiah. For that alone I loved her, and I know she will be missed. Thank you, Anne, for all you have done for our temple and for being part of that partnership.

## The Personal and Jewish Value of Education



By **SCOTT LEVIN, M.D.**  
*Temple Jeremiah President*  
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Nelson Mandela once said "education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world."

As I think about the theme for this issue, education, four things come to mind:

- Education is a legacy
- Life-long learning
- Education is asking questions, not answering them
- Dr. Anne Lidsky, Ph.D., R.J.E.

My wife, Amy, has been working as an Independent Educational Consultant (I.E.C.) as a second career after years in Healthcare Consulting. Helping high school students find their path to college has become a passion for her. Her tagline is "Education is Legacy," and this strikes a chord.

Our Jewish culture has long derived great satisfaction in the education of our children. That culture is not centered on degrees or a volume of knowledge, but parents passing on their legacy through the education of their children. Education is legacy. As a physician, being a lifelong learner is not only interesting, but critically necessary. Yesterday's dogma is today's folklore and

today's dogma might be tomorrow's folklore.

As doctors and scientists, we must always be reading the latest literature, evidence, and conclusions to best serve our patients. This drive, of course, is not unique to physicians, or any single profession. Reading the same Torah passages year in and year out always provide new learning points and new interpretations. If it did not, we would read the Torah for one year, and then be done! The process of lifelong learning should be embraced by all.

At first glance, especially as a child, becoming educated is all about having the correct answer. For many, this carries through well into adulthood, and perhaps an entire lifetime. However, as many Jewish stories will describe, education is often much more about asking questions, rather than answering them. Through asking questions we gain a better or new understanding of something we thought we knew.

Having an open mind, considering other possibilities, is often where the most important progress is made. Education is asking questions, not answering them.

Lastly, Dr. Anne Lidsky, Ph.D., R.J.E., is imminently ready to move into her "rewirement" and begin a fresh chapter. Who better embodies the notion of education as a legacy for our children, lifelong learning, and the creativity found within asking and encouraging questions? Thank you, Anne, our friend, colleague, and teacher. Congratulations on all you have achieved during your 40 years at Temple Jeremiah.



*The Morrow Family*

During a year like no other, our boys enjoyed the consistency of meeting with their teachers and cohort each week. Many laughs were overheard from their rooms and computer screens.

Levi's favorite memories include learning about the Jewish holidays through baking with Mrs. Tatar. From matzah that came out of the oven as pita to especially yummy hamantashen filled with jelly and sprinkles.

Ezra enjoyed recording contributions for the Shir Joy video collaborations with Cantor Friedman, and belly laughing with Ms. Ruda during their weeknight sessions about their names on Zoom and Ms. Ruda's zero subscribers on You Tube. On Sundays, Hebrew hangman with Mrs. Tibbits was a fan favorite in our home.

I'm so thankful to Dr. Lidsky and her team for successfully establishing J-Quest programming for this challenging school year.

The shortened, but small-sized Hebrew classes for my 4th grader offered exceptional one-on-one time for the teacher to help each student. His small group always seemed fully-focused and engaged. Of course this success could not be accomplished without the tremendous creativity, energy and enthusiasm from my son's amazing teacher, Mindy Tibbets!

As for my 8th grader, Dr. Lidsky arranged some really thoughtful and interesting programming for the older grades, including multiple live tours of Isreal! Despite all of the challenges faced, I'm so thankful for the Temple's effort in keeping everyone safe and engaged!



*The Winkler Family*



*The Nadler Family*

Our family would like to thank Dr. Lidsky and all of the Sunday and Hebrew school teachers for doing their best to make such an unusual year still so enjoyable when it came to Jewish education!

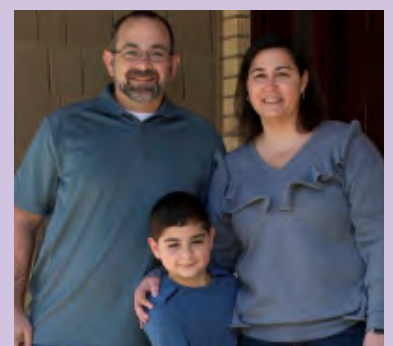
Dr. Lidsky's and the teachers' energy and enthusiasm was still quite evident even over Zoom. Our daughters, Melanie and Lizzie, remained active participants in their classes and the growth that came from the small remote Hebrew classes was an unexpected benefit!

A highlight for Lizzie was baking matzah with Mrs. Tatar and Mrs. Ruda!

Thank you, Dr. Lidsky, for all of your efforts during the 2020/2021 school year. The Jeremiah Sunday and Hebrew school community will certainly miss you!

Though this year has been very different and difficult for everyone involved in the J-Quest program, the Jewish education did not stop! We were so pleased to see how engaged our 2nd grader was, despite most of the learning being at home on Zoom. Each week he belted out the songs (probably helped that he was on mute and no one could really hear him except for us at home!) and was excited to share about what he had learned.

Because he was at home, we as parents were more engaged in his learning as well, and we really enjoyed the activities in the kitchen making challah, hamentashen, matzoh, and candles! Each week we received an enthusiastic email from Dr. Lidsky explaining what the activities were going to be and what supplies were needed (most of which were provided and delivered by Temple). From our perspective, things went off without a hitch, and that is a testament to Dr. Lidsky and all of the teachers: thank you!



*The Swartz Family*

## Reflecting on 40 Years of Education with Dr. Anne Lidsky



By **BARB KITE**

*Celebrating Dr. Anne Lidsky Committee  
Co-Chair*

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On any given Sunday, what do you see at Temple Jeremiah? It's Dr. Anne Lidsky entering the building at 8:15 a.m. with more energy than you or I could ever muster! She's wearing a joyful smile and carrying bags of goodies and supplies, which will ensure that each child's J-Quest experience that day will be as wonderful as possible.

For 40 years Anne has worked endlessly to create outstanding Hebrew and Religious Schools for the children of Temple Jeremiah. Anne's goal was always to create Jewish memories for the children in attendance so they will come back for more!

Anne created so much during her 40 years. She planned family retreats at OSRUI. She dressed in character for the Magic Door and Purim Spiels. Anne loved to share her love for Israel by teaching Israeli dancing and providing opportunities for tasting different Israeli foods.

Anne has also excelled at creating celebrations and programs for J-Quest students. There was something special for every grade from Boker Tov Breakfast to 5th grade weddings. She made Shabbat dinners special at each grade level. Anne even created

opportunities for eighth graders to gather with seniors in the Sparks Program.

Through Anne, students had the opportunity to walk in someone's shoes by participating in Facing Forward. Similarly, students have learned to give to others participating in the Linus Project and making lunches for those in need.

Overall, Anne poured her love for Judaism into each and every one of the students at Jeremiah. Anne knew every child in the school by name. Everyone was always welcome to come into Anne's office whether it was to get a sweet treat, share some news, or just chat. Those who needed extra support could always turn to Anne for one on one help.

In her time at Temple Jeremiah, Anne supported families and taught us all how to bring Jewish traditions out of the temple and into our homes. Anne is a teacher and a leader. Moreover, Anne has been a mentor to all of the teachers on her staff. Everyone loved working for Anne and, thanks to Anne, most teachers stayed and taught with J-Quest for years.

I worked with Anne for 30 years, and I know how hard she worked to create a school that felt safe and inclusive for all. I've proudly seen how Anne gave the children of Temple Jeremiah a lifetime of learning opportunities. As Anne enters her well deserved retirement, it's time to reflect on how she has inspired us all. Thank you Anne for all that you have done!

## Dr. Anne's Lidsky's Excellent *Doogma*

By **RABBI DEBBIE HELBRAUN**

*Hebrew School Principal*  
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There is a midrash told that when the people of Israel stood on Mount Sinai ready to receive the Torah, God said, "Give me guarantors who will guard my Torah and I shall give it to you." The Israelites responded, "Our ancestors will be our guarantors." God said, "Your ancestors are not sufficient guarantors. Bring me better guarantors, and I shall give you My Torah." The Israelites answered, "Our prophets shall be our guarantors." "No," God said again, "they are not sufficient guarantors. Bring me better guarantors and I shall give you My Torah." "Our children," responded the Israelites, "they shall be our guarantors." God said, "Yes, the children certainly are excellent guarantors. For their sake will I give you my Torah." And so it was that the Torah was passed down from generation to generation, ensuring new groups of children were taught by those who came before them.

We have been lucky enough to have Dr Anne Lidsky as a teacher and a mentor. Anne has loved and inspired our children and young people for 40 years. That's no small task, but for Anne, it is a part of her DNA. She takes to heart what it means for the children to be



the guarantors of the Torah and the future of the Jewish people. Whether it is jumping around to teach a new Hebrew song, tucking first time campers into bed at OSRUI, or visiting college students on nearby campuses, Anne has been a "mother hen" and an inspiration for our Jewish youth. And I have been lucky enough to work alongside Anne for the past 16 years.

Yet, that is not where our personal story begins. We actually met in Israel some 30 years ago when Anne and a colleague needed a place to stay and my Jerusalem apartment fit the bill. Little did I know that this was just the beginning of our adventure. You never know how one path will lead to the next.

*continued on page 9*



## Growing As a Temple With Dr. Anne Lidsky



**By FERN KAMEN**

*Executive Director Emerita and Celebrating Dr. Anne Lidsky Committee Co-Chair*  
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40 years ago, I was sitting in the temple library with the other members of the selection committee to interview a candidate for the position of Director of

Religious Education. Dr. Anne Lidsky walked into the room and we began to talk. It wasn't long before we all began to look at each other, smiling as we realized that we had just met our new Director.

Shortly later, I was hired by Rabbi Robert Schreiber and the Board of Directors as the new Executive Director of Temple Jeremiah and Anne and I began a long professional and personal relationship.

40 years ago, Temple Jeremiah was in a growth spurt. Families were moving out of the city into the suburbs and the recognition of the need for temple membership and school for their children was at the top of their minds. Temple Jeremiah was young, energetic, and welcoming, and families were drawn into membership.

Between Anne as the Director of Education, me as the Executive Director, and Rabbi Schreiber, the combination of our personalities was hugely attractive to these new member families...and Jeremiah grew by leaps and bounds.

Anne met these families, talked about school and her goals for their children, and they were drawn to her warmth, her caring, and her enthusiasm for being Jewish as well as learning about what it means to be a part of a Jewish community.

As the temple grew, the relationship between staff and our enthusiastic lay leadership developed a warm, caring, inviting, high-quality environment for our new families. When our staff team was joined by Cantor Amy, we were ready to move forward with even more joy and enthusiasm.

Each member of our team, Anne, Amy, Rabbi and me, developed a sense of inclusion, mutual respect, and welcoming that created unique and wonderful relationships between temple members and our staff. Anne's open-door policy encouraged parents and children to interact with staff, and the feelings of openness and enthusiasm brought even more families into membership and active participation.

Thanks to Anne's dedication, our school became a model for other Jewish organizations to pattern their own school structures. When Rabbi Schreiber retired, and Rabbi Cohen became our new Senior Rabbi he inherited our team and we continued to grow under Rabbi Cohen's new leadership.

Now, 40 years later, Anne has decided to retire. We will all miss her style, enthusiasm, and caring. Her school, which has become an extension of her own quality, will continue to serve our children. It will continue to serve as a model for our Jewish community here and throughout the country.

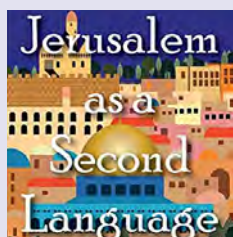


### Stay Up to Date with Our Calendar

To learn about upcoming events, visit:  
[tinyurl.com/TJ-Calendar](https://tinyurl.com/TJ-Calendar)

## Sisterhood Book Club with Guest Speaker Ellen Distelheim

NOTE: We will be meeting through Zoom! Join us online at [zoom.us/j/83947774073](https://zoom.us/j/83947774073), Password: BookClub



***Jerusalem As A Second Language*, By Rochelle Distelheim**

Thursday, June 10, 2021 - 10:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Join the Sisterhood Book Club for a very special discussion of *Jerusalem As A Second Language* by Rochelle Distelheim. We will be joined by Ellen Distelheim, Rochelle's daughter who helped her edit and compile the novel while Rochelle struggled with illness. Ellen will offer insight into her mother's writing process and give us an inside look into the text. All are invited to attend this special Sisterhood Book Club meeting!

Contact Vicki Siegelman at [vsieg@gralynn.org](mailto:vsieg@gralynn.org) for more information or to join.

## You're Not Behind!: Hebrew Education That Works for Your Family



**By DINA BAUWENS**

*Member Engagement Coordinator*  
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As the Member Engagement Director of the temple, I'm usually the first conversation a prospective family has when considering joining Temple Jeremiah. I love being able to tell them all about us, our values, our Social Justice platforms, our adult learning programs, youth events, and of course the school: J-Quest.

When we go through the typical questions, one question comes up often: "My child is entering fourth grade, are we behind because we haven't started Hebrew School yet?"

For those less familiar, the Hebrew School component of J-Quest begins in third grade. Therefore, technically, a child who does not begin Hebrew School until later in their third grade year or in fourth grade or later has "missed" some of that education. I can see (or hear) the panic in some parents' eyes as they consider that they are behind and wonder if their child will still have their B'nai Mitzvah on time. I assure every family that all will be fine! We work with every family to ensure that their child will feel comfortable and we will find an approach that will get them up to speed with their peers quickly and easily.

Our typical recommendation is to begin tutoring to bridge the gap. We recommend using our own Hebrew School teachers as tutors as they know exactly what has been covered in the classes, what the student needs to focus on, and what will set them up for success when they join the temple Hebrew classes and continue to prepare for their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Families can coordinate with

the tutors and find a day and time that works best for everyone. In almost every case, the tutoring goes so well that the child is caught up very quickly.

I want to assure families that you are not behind, the Temple Jeremiah clergy and school staff are here to find a system that will work for your family. Whatever unique needs you, or our incoming prospective families, may have, we will meet you where you are and come up with a solution.

The last year magnified this subject as some families postponed joining the temple or took a break from participating in J-Quest during the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, our answer remains the same, you are not behind!

Additionally, we have created a special opportunity that will be taking place this summer. For anyone who has "missed" Aleph Hebrew, Hebrew classes that typically take place during the third grade year, we invite you to sign up for our Aleph Hebrew Summer Session. Taught by Alexis Ruda, Hebrew teacher and tutor extraordinaire, this summer session intends to catch up incoming fourth graders who missed taking Aleph Hebrew this past year. Working in small groups with students at the same level, Alexis will cover all the basics of beginning Hebrew ensuring that attendees will feel prepared and confident going into Bet Hebrew in the fall. More information about this program is forthcoming. We invite you to check your email and our website this summer for specific details.

As always, if you know of any families looking to join Temple Jeremiah please connect them with us! Invite them to fill out the short interest form at the bottom of our homepage, templejeremiah.org, and we will be sure to reach out to them. Afterall, we are all about spreading the Joy of Belonging!

## The *La Briut* Curriculum: A Year in Review

Over the past year, J-Quest has adopted a new style of learning: the *La Briut* (To Your Health and Wellness) curriculum.

*La Briut* is a values-based curriculum designed for learners in kindergarten through sixth grade. Through five, values-focused modules, our students have gained a variety of tools that build resiliency and supportive strategies for better managing the challenges that life can throw their way. During the past year of COVID-19, these tools have been extremely valuable.

The learning approach of *La Briut* is a hybrid of synchronous learning in a weekly cohort-based *mifgash* ("gathering") and at home, self-guided study.

Remotely, J-Quest students explored into module-related content and concepts with a fair amount of independence from the adults in their lives. Lower elementary age children explored Jewish topics through a curated box of hands-on activities, while upper

elementary learners received engaging weekly challenges. All of this year's *La Briut* learning was anchored in Jewish texts and tales of our past, offering a rich understandings of Jewish values to help promote emotional strength and guide personal and communal health and wellness.

While developed with minimal at-home adult responsibility for learning, J-Quest offered resources to parents and students alike in order to encourage informal family conversations about topics touched on in classes as school-wide discussions.

Our J-Quest teachers went above and beyond to ensure that our small, group sessions were as productive as possible, and we're thankful that they were a wonderful resource to our community.

Temple Jeremiah was one of many temples around the country to embrace *La Briut* curriculum. Around the United States, more than 10,000 students engaged in this new, Jewish experience!



## Rabbi Cohen (*continued from page 1*)

Torah learning and doing is a lifetime commitment and pursuit.

On Shavuot, the third of our three pilgrimage festivals, we celebrate the giving and receiving of Torah. And, just as we are commanded for Sukkot and Passover, we place ourselves in the very moment our ancestors stood at the foot of Mt. Sinai. We celebrate this moment as if we were personally given Torah, as if we personally received it. This gift is the instruction book, the owner's manual for being human.

When we study Torah, we learn more and more how to use the

gift of life – of body and spirit – to create a better world.

Talmud Torah, learning, is equal to all other mitzvot that have endless blessing because it guides us to do them. In Pirkei Avot we read: "Make for yourself a teacher; acquire for yourself a friend." Temple Jeremiah has been so fortunate, I have been so fortunate, to have done this with Dr. Anne Lidsky. Let us all continue to make for ourselves teachers that strengthen our learning and our relationships so that we can do the work that is essential to fulfilling the messianic dream of Shalom: wholeness, well being and peace throughout our world.

## Rabbi Debbie Helbraun (*continued from page 6*)

Fifteen years later, I became Hebrew School Principal at the temple. Anne has allowed me to be creative and innovative. She always listens to my ideas, even if they are far fetched, and allows me to try them out. I am grateful for the chance to have worked with such a fine educator and an excellent *doogma* (example).

Here are some things that Anne has taught me through the years:

**The Power of Love:** Love the children as if they are your own and they will love you back

**Perseverance:** Even ten minutes of your time can help students to improve their output

**Dedication:** The more you put in, the more you get out

**Adventure:** Try new things, don't be afraid to take risks

**Professionalism:** Talk to people kindly, take your work seriously, show respect to others

**There is a reason why pencils have erasers:** Mistakes happen, don't let them deter you from the end goal

**Teamwork:** Two heads are better than one, working together often provides better results than working alone.

**Have fun:** Laugh a lot, act silly, be playful. Not everything is meant to be serious.

I have no doubt that Anne's legacy will be felt years after her retirement, for the wisdom and impact of a good leader pops up at unexpected times and in unexpected ways. Yes, our children are our guarantors. Anne has dedicated her work to making sure that the future of Judaism is bright for many generations to come. What a gift she has been to all of us.





### IAC Israel Fun Fact:

*Did you know...*

*Much of what is now Israel was originally covered in woodland, but in the early 1900s, many of the trees were cut for timber and the land was cleared to make way for fields.*

*Israel is now replanting trees to bring back the woodlands. Over 200 million trees have been planted in the last 60 years. Nature reserves have also been created to protect wolves, foxes, leopards, ostriches, and other species, as well as to breed threatened animals.*

## Staff Spotlight: Anne Richtman-Kaplan

Each issue, Temple Jeremiah highlights one of our wonderful staff members with a profile in *The Covenant*. This month's Staff Spotlight is Anne Richtman-Kaplan, our Center for Learning Administrative Assistant. We invite you to learn more about her by reading the interview below:

### TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF

I'm originally from Omaha, NE. My parents, Rosa and Dave Richtman, both were Holocaust survivors who relocated to the United States. I'm the youngest of their three children, and I have two older brothers who have always taken care of me as their "little sister."

My father remained close with his four surviving brothers, and, eventually, they all followed him to Omaha. Growing up, I was extremely close with my uncles and cousins. We all lived near each other and spent a great deal of time together. When my cousins and I were younger, our goal was to graduate high school and leave Omaha (almost all of us did). Today, as I look back on my childhood, Omaha was a great place to grow up.

Now, I live in Highland Park with my husband Bob. We have two wonderful adult children, Stephanie and Benjamin. Stephanie lives in Savannah, GA with her 8-week old, adopted puppy, Sofonisba (Sof for short) and is a professor of Art History at the Savannah College of Art and Design. Benjamin lives in Skokie with his wife Kimberly and their two sons, Dylan who is nearly 6 years old and Levi who is 3 years old. Being a Grammie is the *best* job ever! Bob and I are very fortunate that they live very close to us.

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE JEWISH TRADITION?

I love all of our holidays! Holidays offer special ways to spend time with family. Bob and I enjoying seeing Dylan and Levi and teaching them all about Jewish traditions.

Adorably, Dylan now associates holidays with matzah ball soup. This year, when his school teacher announced that a holiday was coming up, Dylan immediately instructed his mother, "we have to tell Grammie to get matzah ball soup." The holiday the teacher was talking about turned out to be St. Patrick's Day.

### WHAT BROUGHT YOU TO TEMPLE JEREMIAH?

I was at a temp agency when I learned that Temple Jeremiah was looking to fill a three month position helping Rabbi Cohen while his assistant, Phyllis Burg, recovered from knee surgery. When I was brought in for an interview, I was told it would only take a few minutes. However, I ended up spending three hours at the temple, getting to know Rabbi Cohen, Danny Glassman, and Phyllis. The connection was immediate, and I was hired.

As it turns out, I not only served as Rabbi Cohen's administrative assistant during these three months, but I also became his temporary chauffeur! Early into my tenure in the position, Rabbi Cohen broke his right foot and was no longer able to drive. As I

lived relatively close to him, I found myself driving him to and from the office. It was a fun, albeit unusual, way to get to know my new boss at Temple Jeremiah!

I loved my time at Temple Jeremiah, so, when the position of Center for Learning Administrative Assistant became available, I knew that I wanted to return on a permanent basis. The rest is history, and I couldn't be happier!

### WHAT DO YOU DO AT JEREMIAH?

Day to day, I handle the administrative needs of J-Quest, sending emails, coordinating families and information, etc. In short, I help our youth education program run as smoothly as possible. I also help facilitate various temple projects.

I really feel like I hit the jackpot by being an employee at Temple Jeremiah! It's been an honor and a privilege to work for and with Dr. Anne Lidsky for the past two and a half years.

### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE TEMPLE JEREMIAH MEMORY?

I have so many wonderful temple memories, but the one that has left the biggest impact was the 2020 High Holiday season. It was the first time that Bob and I attended services at Temple Jeremiah, as we spent the previous 34 years attending a Conservative synagogue. The service was beautiful, and we loved connecting with temple members, including Bob's old camp friend that he hadn't seen in years! We look forward to being in person at High Holiday Services again one day.



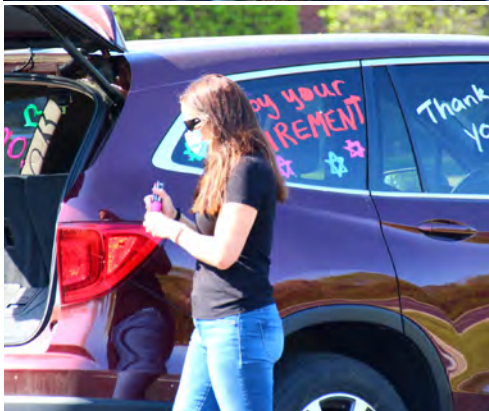
Anne Richtman-Kaplan and family

### WHAT DOES THE "JOY OF BELONGING" MEAN TO YOU?

The Joy of Belonging at Temple Jeremiah is a world of deep friendships and connections. The many people that I have been fortunate enough to meet and develop relationships with at Temple Jeremiah are like an extended family to me.

The past year of physical distancing has underscored how important these connections are. During a period when so many people were isolated, my temple family and I have kept in touch to support each other. I can't wait to hug everyone and share space with all the wonderful members of our temple again.





Thank You Dr. Anne Lidsky Celebration 5.16.2021

*Send Us Your Home Photos!*

While the physical building is not filled with everyone's smiling faces, we know the warmth and connections amongst our congregation still exist. We'd love to share pictures of what's going on at your home as you stay in touch with Temple Jeremiah!

Email your photos to: [katie@templejeremiah.org](mailto:katie@templejeremiah.org)



Jr. JeTY Camp Out 5.1.2021



### **IN HONOR OF**

#### **Rabbi Paul Cohen**

*On the occasion of his special birthday*

-Evelyn and Henry Neu  
-Rachel and Marvin Siegel

#### **Ross Harris**

Son of Jani and Steven Harris

*On the occasion of his engagement to Nicholas Teddy*

-Lori and Gary Kash

#### **Logan Ira Levy**

Grandson of Sue and Dan Weitzman

*On the occasion of his birth*

-Caren Brown  
-Patty and Fred Lurie

#### **Dr. Anne Lidsky**

*On the occasion of her retirement*

-Kay and Bart Gordon  
-Sari and Michael Montgomery  
-Jen, Noah, and Louis Schnepfer

#### **Reid James Lucas**

Grandson of Arden and David Brenner

*On the occasion of his birth*

-Judy and Jack Craven

#### **Max Ross**

Son of Susan and Brad Ross

*On the occasion of his marriage to Audrey Jones*

-Patricia and Fred Lurie  
-Susan and Brad Ross

#### **Dawson Siegel**

Grandson of Rachel and Marvin Siegel

*On the occasion of his second birthday*

-Rachel and Marvin Siegel

#### **Theodore Myles Siegel**

Grandson of Rachel and Marvin Siegel

*On the occasion of his birth*

-Lori and Gary Kash

#### **Ryder Tiplitsky**

Son of Jamie and Scott Tiplitsky

*On the occasion of him becoming a Bar Mitzvah*

-Jamie and Scott Tiplitsky

#### **Sara and Alan Turover**

*On the occasion of their golden wedding anniversary*

-Randi and Charles Gurian  
-Mara and Gerry Lane

### **IN MEMORY OF**

#### **Lois Abrams**

*Mother of Alan Jacobs*

-Avrie and Alan Jacobs

#### **Samuel Alexander**

*Father of Chuck Alexander*

-Kenneth Freedman  
-Patricia and Richard Geline  
-Karen Gitles and Michael Jablo  
-Sue and Joel Kaufmann  
-Susan and Ken Lorch  
-Jane and David Shapiro  
-Ellen and Alan Toban  
-Cantor Amy Zussman and David Fell

#### **Esther Berman**

*Mother of Leslie Berman*

*Grandmother of Rachel Newman*

-Leslie Berman

#### **Susan Blinderman**

*Daughter of Sandra Marks*

*Sister of Patricia Lurie*

*Former wife of Steve Blinderman*

-Patricia and Fred Lurie

#### **Herman Bluestein**

*Father of Rachel Siegel*

-Rachel and Marvin Siegel

#### **Norma Brown**

*Wife of Bill Brown*

*Mother of Randi Gurian*

-Joyce and David Brown  
-Marla and Steven Brown  
-Randi and Charles Gurian  
-Gayle Malvin

#### **Sheldon Cogan**

*Father of Michael Cogan*

-Deborah and Michael Cogan

#### **Bruce Cohen**

*Son of Doris and Ronald Cohen*

-Doris and Ron Cohen

#### **Allen Fishbain**

*Father of Arnie Fishbain*

-Carol and Arnie Fishbain

#### **Mark Friedman**

*Son-in-Law of Doris and Ron Cohen*

*Brother-in-Law of Shelley and Jay Cohen*

-Doris and Ron Cohen

#### **Max E. Goldberg**

*Father of Jeff Goldberg*

-Stacey and Jeff Goldberg

#### **Robert Goldy**

*Father of Jill Goldy*

-Jill Goldy and Mark Holtzer

#### **Herbert Goodman**

*Uncle of Phyllis Mitzen*

-Phyllis and Michael Mitzen

#### **Allen Hirschfield**

*Husband of Nancy Hirschfield*

*Father of Jill Meltzer*

-Jeanne and Gabe Angres  
-Randi and Charles Gurian  
-Ira Hirschfield  
-Barbara and Bruce Taylor

#### **Jack Hirschfield**

*Nephew of Nancy Hirschfield*

-Nancy Hirschfield

#### **Carol Kaplan**

*Mother of Bob Kaplan*

-Anne and Bob Kaplan

#### **David Klitsky**

-Phyllis and Michael Mitzen

#### **Pearl Kotz**

*Mother of Lisa Bockenek and Mark Kotz*

-Mark Kotz

#### **Sydney Lieberman**

*Brother-in-Law of Phyllis and Michael Mitzen*

-Phyllis and Michael Mitzen

#### **Dean Lustig**

*Husband of Laura Lustig*

-Laura Lustig

#### **David Mayer**

*Father of Avrie Jacobs and Marc Mayer*

-Avrie and Alan Jacobs

#### **Tillie Schneiderman**

*Grandmother of Arnie Fishbain*

-Carol and Arnie Fishbain

#### **Michael Razar**

*Father of Lauren Matles*

-Ros Wolfe

#### **Richard Rhodes**

*Cousin of Michael Mitzen*

-Phyllis and Michael Mitzen

#### **Marion Rukin**

*Mother of Barbara Dickstein*

-Judy and Jack Craven

#### **Rose Shore**

*Mother of Susan Slutsky*

-Susan and Allen Slutsky

#### **Herman Simon**

*Father of Jeff Kost*

-Jamie and Jeff Kost

#### **Harry Haische Strom**

-Kathy and Marc Mayer

## Checking In: The Israel Action Committee

By **JERRY TATAR**

*Israel Action Committee Co-Chair*

jerrytatar1@gmail.com

The Israel Action Committee has certainly lived up to its name, developing and presenting a very timely program on Daily Life in Israel. Through the Committee's efforts, the program has brought speakers from throughout the world to Jeremiah via Zoom on many topics impacting daily life.

Orin Hefetz with the Jewish National Fund discussed Israel's efforts of *Tikkun Olam* through sharing knowledge and development of water resource management programs with countries all over the world, including Arab countries with whom it has only recently established a relationship.

Rabbi Josh Weinberg, the Executive Director of ARZA, led a discussion about diversity among Jews in Israel and what it means to be a Jew in Israel today.

Dr. Daniel Aschheim, Consul for Public Diplomacy at the Consulate General of Israel to the Midwest will address current economic and political issues within Israel. This was followed by Dr. Sarah Bernstein, Executive Director of the Rossing Center for Education and Dialogue in Jerusalem who will discuss relations between Jews, Muslims and Christians in Israel.

The final program in this series will be presented on June 21 at 9:30 a.m. when Rabbi Michael Myers from Ida Crown will lead a

discussion of the historical ties of the land for Christianity, Islam and Judaism. He will speak to the historical importance of Hebron, Jerusalem, Beer Sheba, Shechem (Nablus) and the diversity to all three religions.

The Committee feels that it is very important to bring to the synagogue the day-to-day positive interactions between people of all backgrounds and religions in Israel as they deal with sharing the land and its resources.

In the future, the Committee looks forward to bringing many other speakers from throughout the world to Temple Jeremiah as we explore Israel and its significance in the world and to American Jews.

The IAC is a very exciting Committee filled with a group of people who look to expand our knowledge and the knowledge of our fellow synagogue members about Israel. We truly welcome others to join us in this journey.

If you have ideas for topics and/or speakers, if you would enjoy the exploration of ideas and people to bring to the synagogue so that we all can increase our knowledge, if you would just enjoy getting together with people to discuss these and other topics related to Israel, join us!

Feel free to contact me at jerrytatar1@gmail.com, and I will be happy to discuss the IAC and how you can help us and the synagogue grow and expand our knowledge.

### 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.

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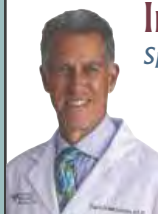
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