

# ***FJCC FLASH***

Official Newsletter of the Flemington JCC



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Newsletter - דודריגו

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## This Months Contributors:

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# RABBI'S REFLECTIONS

Several months ago, I gave a dvar Torah, a sermon, after I saw the Broadway play Leopoldstadt. Leopoldstadt tells the story of three generations of a Jewish family in Vienna, before, during, and after the Holocaust. I have been thinking a lot about that production. In part, because, just by chance, I saw it on Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Memorial Day. The theme of the day added to the impact of the play. And, in part, because the story it told... is also the story of my family.

When industrialization hit Central Europe, people started moving to larger towns and cities to take advantage of the opportunities there. And, as European society, specifically in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, started opening up, particularly during the reign of Emperor Franz Josef, Jews took advantage of the rights granted to them, and grabbed the opportunity to move to places like Vienna.

Vienna, around the year 1900, was an amazing place. It was a cultural capital that rivaled Paris and London. It had music, art, museums, literary salons, and universities. With the new regime's emphasis on tolerance and ethnic pluralism, Jews seized the chance to take part in this great opening up of society.

We see this clearly in Leopoldstadt. The family had done well in business. They had mastered Viennese culture. They had been accepted by enough non-Jewish Viennese that the children of the second generation had intermarried, some even converted to Christianity. Nevertheless, they still gathered for Chanukkah, albeit with a Christmas tree, and for Passover seders. They did not throw away all their Jewish practices.

It's important to mention, that this degree of assimilation, of intermarriage, could not have happened if there were not a substantial number of gentiles in Austrian society who were open and accepting. The Jews in Vienna had achieved a remarkable status in a rather short period of time.



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Before the rise of Fascism, Jews in many places in Europe, had made great strides, and they had many sympathetic, and even supportive, Christian allies. Nobody in 1890 or 1900 could have foreseen what was going to happen in 1940, certainly not the vast majority of Jews.

My grandmother arrived in Vienna sometime in the early 1900s, a good deal later than the family in Leopoldstadt. The family in the play had already been gone from Galicia an entire generation, when my grandmother, at age 15 or 16, made the decision to reject an arranged marriage in her Shtetl, and to join her two sisters in Vienna.

My grandmother was the youngest of the 15 children who survived to adulthood, and she disliked everything about Shtetl living. She wanted the big city, and she left as soon as she could. My great grandfather was a rabbi and a scholar and was quite respected in the village. He was also very, very poor. My grandmother grew up in a household which gave her a thorough education in Halakhah, Jewish practices and knowledge. She brought this with her to Vienna. Once there, her older sisters registered her in a high school, called a Gymnasium, and made sure she learned both Jewish and secular subjects. Yes, in Vienna at this time, Jewish girls could get an education. Indeed, my grandmother even learned Talmud, something her father would not have approved.

My grandmother experienced a huge transition from village life to life in Vienna. Like the family in Leopoldstadt, she became educated and cultured. Her German was flawless. She dressed in fashionable clothes of the time. She entered the business her sisters had started – yes, women in Vienna, at this time, could start and run a business!

Even with all these changes and innovations, she retained the religion of her parents. To this day, my practice of Judaism is deeply rooted in what she taught my mother and my aunt, and what they passed on to me.





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In some ways she was not like her contemporaries in Leopoldstadt. My grandmother would never have considered intermarriage. She was suspicious of those Jews who had assimilated more than she thought appropriate. And yet, had she come in the 1860s or 1870s, instead of the early 1900s, and had raised a family over that previous generation who knows? Maybe there would have been as much assimilation, intermarriage, even conversion, as happened in the family in Leopoldstadt.

We'll never know, of course. With the rise of Fascism and the Nazi movement, any progress made over the previous century, was wiped away.

But I do sometimes wonder: what if Hitler had never come to power? What if Fascists had not taken over most of Europe? Suppose, my grandparents and their family had remained in Vienna. Would they, or their children, or their children's children, have assimilated, intermarried or even converted?

I look about me, and I see Jews in America who have achieved, not only the level of acceptance that my grandmother's generation had achieved in Vienna, but much more. And I wonder: what will Judaism in America look like in 50 years?

We already to a greater or lesser extent, look a lot like the family in Leopoldstadt. We are Americans through and through, in language, dress, education, popular culture, art and music.

Even with the increase in anti-Semitic acts, and except among fringe elements, our status in America surpasses that of any other ethnic group has come to these shores over the past 150 years or so. Barring a Fascist take-over, Jews have become inextricably woven into the fabric that is America. I wonder what Judaism will look like in the next generation?

Many of us have heard the dire warnings over the past 30 or 40 years about the threat of assimilation, and how the population of Jews in this country will shrink or even disappear. I heard that all through my high school years in the 70s and read these alarmist forecasts when I was in college. It led to a period of outright hostility, and even exclusion of



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interfaith families, that continues even today, in some places. In 2019 a minister in the Israeli government, called intermarriage “the second holocaust.” These alarmist statements go from dire warnings, to outright hostility, to a kind of paranoid hysteria.



Despite all the cries by these Jewish “chicken littles” that the sky is falling, Jews have not only survived in this country, but they have also thrived. Perhaps that is hard to see here, and in other places like Flemington. I will come back to that. Nevertheless, it is a fact for America overall.

In their book, *Awakenings*, Rabbi Joshua Stanton and Benjamin Spratt argue that the reports of Judaism’s demise are extremely exaggerated. We are seeing a decline in attendance at traditional Jewish organizations, like JCCs, synagogues, Sisterhoods, and the like, but that does not mean Judaism is fading away in America. On the contrary, they present solid evidence that Judaism is succeeding in the USA – succeeding even beyond the wildest dreams of our ancestors.

First, they point to evidence from the recent Pew study on Jewish life in 2020, which shows that while Jews are not affiliating with traditional Jewish organizations to the same degree their parents did, their pride in their Jewish identity has actually increased in recent years. Yes, Jewish pride is on the rise.

And, in terms of our numbers, the percent of Jews in the population of the US actually went up in the last decade from 2.2% to 2.4%. Not a huge jump but even 10 years ago, who would’ve predicted that?

In addition, 71% of children born into households with only one Jewish parent identify as Jewish. I think our grandparents would have laughed in the face if anyone who would have made such a prediction.

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The secret we have found, over the past 20 years or so, is in the face of interfaith marriages to keep the door open. I tell this to so many Jews who come to me for advice on their children's interfaith marriages: keep the door open. That's how 71% happens. Now, don't expect anything immediately. Be patient. But, also, be yourselves. Be honest. Do Jewish things with your kids, and grand kids. Try to find the sweet spot between openness and honesty on one hand, and pushiness on the other. It is hard! We make mistakes. But that's how we got to 71%.

But what about the rise in anti-Semitism we're reading about? Despite the rise in anti-Semitic acts in this country, anti-Semitic rhetoric (remember the line about Jewish lasers from outer space), despite all that, study after study shows: of all religious groups in this country, Jews are the most popular. My grandfather, may he rest in peace, would never have believed someone who predicted that such would be the case.

And, despite high levels of disaffiliating from traditional Jewish institutions, membership in, or identification with, Jewish denominations has remained pretty steady since 2013.

So, with all these encouraging statistics, why does it not feel as if we're doing well? Why does it feel so hard to maintain successful Jewish organizations? It is hard to maintain Jewish organizations. But, the decline we see in affiliating with traditional Jewish organizations does not mean Jews are disappearing. This decline means something else.

Synagogues, JCCs, Sisterhoods, Jewish fraternities, Federations, all these institutions came about at a time and in a place which needed them. These institutions served a specific purpose, had a specific mission. In part a religious one, but also, a communal one.

As Rabbis Stanton and Spratt show, these institutions filled the needs of Jews who were not welcome in gentile clubs, establishments, and organizations. Jews needed places to go where they were accepted as Jews. And these institutions succeeded in filling that very important need. They offered venues where Jews could gather, pray, play, organize, and advocate.

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These Jewish organizations provided a safe space in which Jews could explore how to become Jewish and American. Indeed, they succeeded so well, that Jews began to be accepted in non-Jewish circles, clubs, organizations, fraternities, and the like. These wonderful Jewish institutions did not fail! They became victims of their own success.

I think back to the play Leopoldstadt, and the family it portrays. How like us they are in so many ways, and yet how unlike us they also are (the Jews in Vienna had no future, and we do). We here in America and in Flemington, barring a similar calamity, have a future, and I think a very promising one if we plan it right. Great days lie ahead for us at FJCC! What do they look like? What do we need to do?

The first step in re-inventing ourselves for this new Jewish reality is avoid the trap of nostalgia. “Remember when we had 120 students in the Hebrew School?” “Remember when all our kids went to Sprout Lake, or Camp Ramah, or Young Judea?” Yes, but remember when we were slaves in Egypt? Remember what Haman tried to do to us? Remember the Maccabees? It is important to remember, but we also need to speak to the present moment. Remembering is crucial, but we must not allow memory to become nostalgia for a golden era that was really not THAT golden.

We must also become more relevant. Rabbi Brad Hirshfield said “you can build the best steak-house in the world, but if you build it in a community of vegans, how many will come to eat there?” We need to look at our menu, and tweak it. We are not alone in grappling with these issues, all Jewish organizations are. And, there are Jewish organizations that have learned this lesson.



My rabbinical at Hebrew College in Boston, trains rabbis to serve in synagogues of all denominations, and no denominations. The Jewish Studio project in San Francisco focuses on artistic creativity as the gateway to Jewish experience and has introduced hundreds of programs that offer a new way into Jewish tradition. The Institute for Small Town Jewish Life, The Institute for Southern Jewish Life, The Rising Song Institute, Uri l'Tzedek and Valley Beit Midrash, where our own Julia Sirota worked until she began medical school. These are just some of



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the organizations that are thriving in this new Jewish reality.

As Rabbi Hirschfield noted, when we broaden the menu, more people will come to eat. Our challenge is to become more relevant. We are not here just to perpetuate ourselves, and our synagogue. We are here to celebrate and to pass on a tradition that is 3,000 years old, a tradition that has evolved to such an extent that, Abraham, the first of our people, would not recognize the religion that Moses taught; and Moses, our greatest prophet, would not recognize the religion that Ezra the scribe taught; and Ezra the scribe, who started the rebuilding of the Second Temple, would not have recognized the religion that the great Rabbi Akiva taught; and Rabbi Akiva would not recognize most of the religion that we practice today.

And yet, all of us are Jews, claiming the same tradition, the same sacred texts. We can evolve.

We, at FJCC, have indeed learned some of these lessons. We know not all of our members come for davening or services. Our Sisterhood, under Rachel Rodriguez, and our Youth Group, under Jordan Gelber, are active social organizers. We host Bridge and Mah Jong on a regular basis, thanks to David Goldman and Karen Walsh. We go out to dinner as a community, once a month, thanks to Kim Muller's efforts. The Moskovitz-Fellin Center Series offers activities, events and programming for a wide range of interests, from book club to cooking, genealogy to Grow a Row, to movie discussions and more.

Very few of us need FJCC to teach us how to become both American and Jewish but FJCC CAN enhance Jewish life in Hunterdon County. This place CAN be where we turn to anchor ourselves at a time when the world around us often seems like it is spinning out of control.

But evolution is hard. As hard as we work, it seems our goal of being the heartbeat of Hunterdon County's Jewish experience is illusive. I want to acknowledge that this IS hard. And, I want to express my gratitude: to the Board, to the officers, to all our volunteers and staff. But, this is hard work. Why? Why is it so hard?

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First, it is hard because we can't know what the new Judaism will look like. We have no crystal ball. We must accept that it will not look exactly like the Judaism in which we were raised. We will try to bring in the elements that can enrich the next phase of Jewish life, but we're not always sure what these will be. We will have to try lots of things, and accept that some of them will fail.

Second, the challenges we face in re-inventing our mission and our purpose, confront us at a liminal moment in the evolution of the Jewish people, here and all over the USA. Evolving means being in the midst of transition, and, as a great rabbi once said: "Everything looks like a failure when we're in the middle." When we're in the middle of a project, it's hard for us to see backwards, to see all the good intentions and great preparation that went into where we are now. We are also too far away from the end-goal, to see what wonderful opportunities await us when we are done. We are in the middle; the place of hard work, of obstacles, even failures.

We are in transition from what synagogues used to be, used to do, and what they will have to be and have to do, to survive and thrive in the future. And, make no mistake: plenty of synagogues have not survived. The American Jewish landscape is littered with hundreds of empty synagogues, or synagogue having turned into churches or clubs, because they refused to evolve.

We, at FJCC, realize we are in transition.

If we are really honest with ourselves, we must admit that there have never been many Jews in the Flemington area. Except for the blip of a population bubble in the 80s, when large companies, like Merck, Johnson & Johnson and Verizon were hiring in droves, and lots of families with young children moved in, this area has never had a lot of Jews.

Don't let this demographic and historical data get you down! Even with all these obstacles, we are well positioned for growth. I truly believe that.

Within 20 miles of this synagogue, 2,500 new homes, townhouses, condos and apartments will be going up. Hunterdon County will see a

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boom that will rival that in the 1980s. We don't know who will move into those new homes. But, seeing as we are situated half-way between Philly and New York, and assume we do not have mass migration from, say, West Virginia or Idaho, I think it is safe to say a fair number will be Jewish.

The future for the FJCC is bright! We just have to get through "the middle" the transition. We need to try various things; we need to see what works and what doesn't. All this takes is you. I need each and every one of you to be willing to try something new and to accept that it might fail. And then try something else! I need each of every one of you to commit to a whole series of trial and errors.

We will also need to tread water. Assuming the housing projects which I noted above, will all have permits soon, we'll likely need another 5 years or so of treading water, of trial and error, transition and patience.

As we begin the new year, let us be grateful for great opportunities that lie ahead; let us acknowledge the hard work we'll need to do; and let us proceed gently with ourselves: some of those attempts will not pan out. I am beginning my 7th year as your rabbi, thank you to the Board and to the members. I am eager to tackle that process of trial and error. And, I am confident that we are up for the challenge. With your help, great days lie ahead for us here, at FJCC. Shanah Tovah!

Together  
We Can!





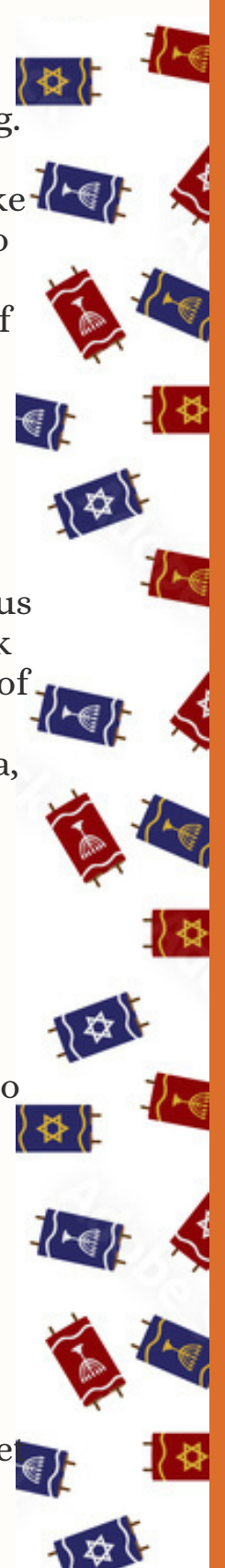
# FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT

It was about 100 years ago that this congregation was founded. It was started by Jewish immigrants, farmers and merchants who convened for friendship, community, support, prayer and learning. Their lives were really hard and they worked long hours to start a new life in Hunterdon County. It was critical to them that they take some of their precious free time and some of their small savings to create a place to gather together as Jews. So, they established the FJCC. Here in our midst are fourth and fifth generations of some of those founding families. We are grateful to the founders' love of Judaism, their vision, their hopes for their children's future, and their sacrifice for future generations. It is thanks to them that we are gathered all together today.

On Yom Kippur, we remember our dear departed ancestors – mothers, fathers, grandparents. We acknowledge them for giving us life. We remember their struggles and accomplishments. We thank them for their love. These Days of Awe are for reflection, so think of your relatives and ask yourself: where did my ancestors get the bravery to travel alone at the age of 16 from their home to America, what if my parents had not met and married, what would Flemington Jewry be like if the intrepid FJCC founders had not sacrificed for me? And, I ask you -- what your forbearers did for you, will you lovingly do for your children, your grandchildren, your family and future FJCC families?

While pondering the past, we also recognize that the FJCC is a vibrant, active place. Please, join me in recognizing the efforts of so many at the FJCC. I want to publicly acknowledge the many people who contribute to the FJCC. And, I want to focus on three individuals.

The first person is **Kim Muller**, who contributes in so many ways but I want to highlight her creation of our extremely popular program “Dinner is Served.” Once a month, she arranges for an outing to a local restaurant, specifically for your enjoyment. The outings have proven to be an excellent way for new members to get connected, for friends to socialize and for you to have a welcome



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night off from cooking. This event started out small but has been growing into quite a party. It is a win-win, a vibrant activity for our members and an opportunity to support a local business.

Next, my thanks to **Barbara Clarin**. She retired from teaching in the Hebrew School but agreed to come back to lead a newish program for youngsters, "Gan Goes to Hebrew School." The gathering has attracted families with young children who meet together one Sunday a month. While the toddlers are having tons of fun with Mrs. Clarin, the parents and younger siblings are getting to know each other. It is thanks to Barbara's caring and engaging manner that these kids love coming to the FJCC.

Thank you to **Deborah Kesselhaut**, a "jack of all trades." She is T-shaped --she has deep and quite valuable skills in dealing with our congregants, while also handling a wide variety of issues that come up in any given day. In one day, Deborah engages her social worker hat and converses with congregants about their health, their children, their program registrations etc. Then, she puts on her business hat and negotiates a reduced fee from a vendor. Five minutes later, she is a handywoman and deals with a leak from our roof. Next, she is managing the staff so our building is in tip top shape. In between, she is fielding the multitude of emails that come in each day. Sometimes, at 3 am, she is awakened to deal with our alarm ringing. She handles it all. Deborah, you have my gratitude. We at the FJCC are fortunate to have an administrator who cares so deeply about her work, and cares so deeply for our members, their engagement and their happiness.

Hopefully, you read my column in the recent FJCC newsletter where I thanked the Executive Board, the Sisterhood, the Center Series, the Security Committee, the Building and Grounds Committee and the Ritual Committee. To **Jeff Doshna** and **Cheryl Schutz**, I need to apologize that your names were left out of that column.

During the High Holidays, we davened to the melodious and uplifting voice of our joyous cantor, Akiva Nelson. The blasts of the shofar, seemingly

# FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT

effortlessly blown by **Judge Rubin** and **Scott Gursky**, awakened us from spiritual slumber and reminded us to examine our deeds and contemplate how to improve them. Thank you. I want to convey my appreciation to **Sharon Zimmerman** and **Jeff Doshna** who annually take on the task of arranging the seating chart for the holidays, despite the numerous last-minute changes due to registrations made beyond the deadline and to **Bruce Moskovitz** for putting together the Memorial book. The flowers for our holidays were lovingly donated by the **Kesselhaut and Stern families** and the delicious break-fast meal is supported by the **Doshna family**. As they say “it takes a village” and “many hands make light work.” Our holiday celebrations are so beautiful because of you – all of you - and the collective involvement of our community.

To those I named and to the many others in our community whose volunteer efforts were not publicly acknowledged, my genuine thanks. You are contributing today to building a greater FJCC for tomorrow. In the coming year, we look forward to spending time together for prayer, programming and celebration.

As Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of a new year, so too, it marks the beginning of what we at the FJCC hope to accomplish in the year ahead. Last year, I expressed the hope for your health and happiness and to ensure the longevity of the FJCC for future generations. This year, I have the same hopes and a perfect vehicle for us, together, to do just that.

The FJCC is turning 100! Later in 2024, we will embark on our “100 weeks to our centennial.” This is an opportunity for us to celebrate our connection to the past, to enjoy our commitment to Judaism, to show our strength to those who aim to defeat us, and to help forge a strong FJCC for future generations. We want fun and creative ways for the membership to commemorate this momentous occasion. Among the list of ideas to date: creating a path with

THANK YOU  
THANK YOU



# FROM THE DESK OF OUR PRESIDENT

personalized bricks, burying a time capsule, planting 100 flowers and a gala celebration. I am asking for your ideas, your help, your contributions and for your participation in the celebrations.

We offer services three times or more a week, we have an excellent array of fun activities, we provide a wide variety of meals, we provide high level training for our youth, we offer interesting educational programs and soon we will have our 100th anniversary celebration. All of these things require resources. With ever rising prices for everything from building maintenance to food to salaries, your membership pledges pay for only a portion of our basic operational costs. We depend on you, our members, to provide the additional resources needed for the FJCC to be such a wonderful retreat. So I am calling on you to offer your expertise, your time and your contributions through this Yizkor appeal.

As you open your pledge envelopes, think about your ancestors from past generations, think about your current FJCC friends, and think about your children, grandchildren and the future generations of Jews to pass through our doors. Please remember the sacrifices that others made for us. Give generously so that all those in the coming years will have similar opportunities to pray, convene and celebrate together as Jews at the FJCC.

I urge you to be exceptionally generous. Whatever you were planning on giving, please consider stretching and pledge a higher amount. This is your community. Please support this community and all that it has planned for the coming year and the 100th celebration. A successful Yom Kippur Appeal is vital for us to remain the open, welcoming, engaging, thriving congregation that we strive it to be.

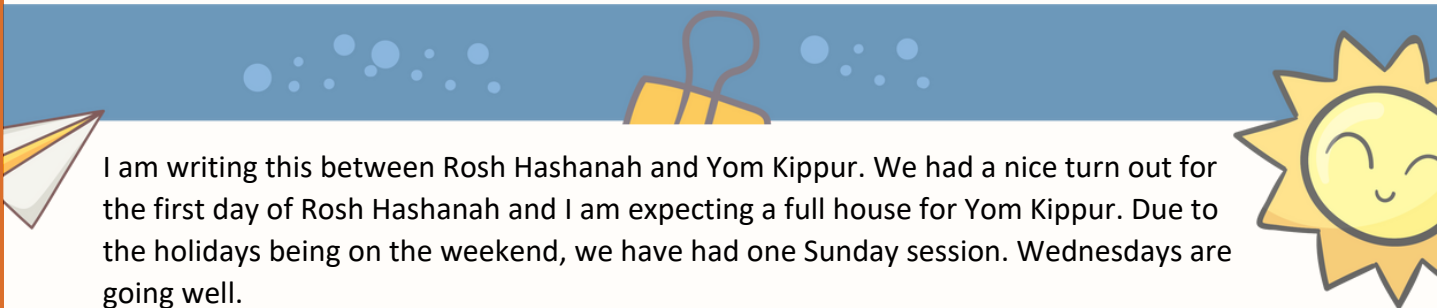
May your experience this holy season give you enhanced human connections, spiritual and physical strength, and ikigai -- joy and fulfillment of your hopes and dreams. G'mar Chatimah Tovah! May you be sealed in the Book of Life for a sweet, healthy New Year.

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OCTOBER 2023 | 16 TISHREI 5784 - 16 CHESHVAN 5784

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# HEBREW SCHOOL



I am writing this between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. We had a nice turn out for the first day of Rosh Hashanah and I am expecting a full house for Yom Kippur. Due to the holidays being on the weekend, we have had one Sunday session. Wednesdays are going well.

We have a busy year ahead and you may ask yourself “what is my child learning at Hebrew School?”

## **Alef-Bet: Mrs. Walsh, Kylei and Charlotte:**

☑ Hebrew letter recognition, Bible stories, Jewish Holidays, mitzvot and Shabbat.

## **Gimel -Dalet**

- ☑ Hebrew and Siddur – Mr. Katz and Kylei
- ☑ Jewish Holidays – Mrs. Quinn and Zoe
- ☑ Enrichment – Mrs. Quinn and Zoe (stories from Chelm)
- ☑ Bible – Mrs. Walsh

## **Hay – Vav**

- ☑ Hebrew and Siddur – Mr. Katz and Kylei
- ☑ Jewish Holidays – Mrs. Quinn and Zoe
- ☑ Enrichment – Mrs. Quinn and Zoe (Coming to America)
- ☑ Environmental Judaism, Holocaust and Torah Stories– Mrs. Walsh

## **Seventh Grade – Rabbi Cohen**

- ☑ Significance of the B’nai Mitzvah
- ☑ Synagogue and Bima rituals
- ☑ Brachot and Siddur
- ☑ D’var Torah exploration
- ☑ Bible Stories
- ☑ Jewish Holidays

## **Hebrew High 8-11 – Rabbi Cohen**

- ☑ Various topics throughout the year.

Please email me if you have questions about Hebrew School or programs at [kwalsh@flemingtonjcc.org](mailto:kwalsh@flemingtonjcc.org)



Sunday, October 8th 9:30 - 11:30

*Simchat Torah  
Family Service*

Sing, Dance, Snack  
Participate in a Family Aliyah

# MONTHLY CALENDAR



BOOKING CALENDAR, HEBREW SCHOOL CALENDAR, HOLIDAYS IN UNITED STATES, JEWISH HOLIDAYS

OCT 2023 (EASTERN TIME - NEW YORK)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Sukkot (Day 2) 9am - Sunday Morning	2 LT Meeting Sukkot (Day 3) 10:30am - Bridge 7pm - Book club	3 Sukkot (Day 4) 7:30pm - Genealogy	4 Sukkot (Day 5) 4:30pm - Hebrew School 4:45pm - 7th Grade 6pm - Pizza in the Hut	5 Sukkot (Day 6) 1pm - Mah Jongg 7:30pm - Bridge	6 Sukkot (Day 7) / 7:30pm - kabbalat shabat	7 Shemini Atzeret / 9:15am - Shabbat service
8 Beyachad Family Simchat Simchat Torah Family 9am - Alef - Vav Hebrew 9am - Sunday Morning	9 Columbus Day Indigenous Peoples' Day 10:30am - Bridge 1pm - Parshat Hashavuah	10 CS Meetin	11 4:30pm - Hebrew School 4:45pm - 7th Grade 7:30pm - EB Meeting	12 1pm - Mah Jongg 6pm - HH 7:30pm - Bridge	13 7:30pm - Sisterhood 7:30pm - kabbalat shabat	14 9:15am - Shabbat service
15 Liam's Clothing Drive 9am - Alef - Vav Hebrew 9am - Sunday Morning 10:30am - EB Meeting	16 10:30am - Bridge 1pm - Parshat Hashavuah 2pm - Set Up Senior	17 Showcase Hunterdon	18 4:30pm - Hebrew School 4:45pm - 7th Grade 7:30pm - BoT Meeting	19 11am - Adult Ed 1pm - Mah Jongg 6pm - HH 7:30pm - Bridge	20 Winner Winner Chicken 6pm - Winner Winner 7:30pm - Dalet Hay Class 7:30pm - kabbalat shabat	21 Lunch and Learn 9:15am - Shabbat service
22 9am - Alef - Vav Hebrew 9am - Sunday Morning	23 10:30am - Bridge 1pm - Parshat Hashavuah	24	25 4:30pm - Hebrew School 4:45pm - 7th Grade 5:30pm - Bar Mitzvah	26 11am - Adult Ed 1pm - Mah Jongg 6pm - Dinner is Served 6pm - HH 7:30pm - Bridge	27 Bar Mitzvah - Hunter Kawas Bar Mitzvah - Hunter Kawas 7:30pm - kabbalat shabat	28 9:15am - Shabbat service
29 Israel Trip 9am - Alef - Vav Hebrew 9am - Sunday Morning 11:30am - Maybe YG	30 LT Meeting 10:30am - Bridge 1pm - Parshat Hashavuah	31 Halloween	1 First Day of American 4:30pm - Hebrew School	2 1pm - Mah Jongg 7:30pm - Bridge	3 7:30pm - kabbalat shabat	4 9:15am - Shabbat service



# THIS AND THAT



Photo of a  
rainbow over  
the FJCC taken  
by  
Liam Byne



Have news to  
share?

Email your article,  
idea or pictures to Garry at  
[Rodriguez060803@gmail.com](mailto:Rodriguez060803@gmail.com)

# GIVING GARDEN





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OCTOBER 2023 | 16 TISHREI 5784 - 16 CHESHVAN 5784

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# DINNER CLUB



# SISTERHOOD

Sisterhood Rosh Hashanah speeches have a long history. Most of them were spent getting you excited for upcoming events, talking up the gift shop, charity work and funds we've raised for scholarships and projects within the temple. We've told you about our Sisterhood executive board, all of which have lots of projects, work and things to keep us busy.

Last year there was a history lesson about how Jewish sisterhoods. Rabbis turned to women to "save" Judaism from American assimilation. We discussed one of the definitions of the word Sisterhood as "a community or society of sisters, especially: a society of women in a religious order."

After last year's speech so many of you reached out to us with support, which really energized us. So many of you came out to Sisterhood Shabbat for Friday night services and even more came out for the first ever Sisterhood Shabbat on Saturday!

We tried some new things, making crafts and decorations for the Sukkah, karaoke and Chinese food in December to honor the great Jewish tradition going to the only 2 places open on Christmas Day. We also hosted game night with the Bridge and Mahjong clubs. We tried making our own latkes and a few other new events. At the end of the year we crowned a new Woman of the Year, Pam Nemeth.

By the end of the year, all that excited energy for Sisterhood seemed to slowly wane, like air from a balloon. As we took stock of the past year and planned for the next, we asked ourselves why?

In one of the Rabbi's High Holiday speeches, he discussed the concept of being a victim of our own success. A lot of institutions were created by Jews and for Jews in response to antisemitism and being banned from mixing in with non-Jews. This concept really struck me. Was Sisterhood too a victim of its own





# SISTERHOOD

success? Is a “Sisterhood” unnecessary in an Egalitarian shul?

Throughout my time here I’ve heard stories of the fun events Sisterhood used to plan, all the women (and men) who attended, and how full the volunteer roster was. Imagining that time makes me nostalgic for the Sisterhood my own mother was a part of. When I was younger, I envisioned it as a group of (much) older ladies who hung out and kibbitzed. As a child, I didn’t understand the impact of having a group of strong women willing to jump in and help out where necessary. I took for granted that they would be there when I came of age.

Fast forward to my adult years. I’m now that (much) older woman longing to hang out with friends. My days though look a little different than my mother’s Sisterhood did. Instead of working a part time job while the kids were in school, or being a homemaker, we work a full-time jobs away from the home. Instead of only shuffling the kids to Hebrew school twice a week, and allowing the kids to play until the streetlights came on, we’re shuffling our kids to Hebrew school, play dates, practices, vocal lessons, after school activities and so much more. We’re also taking care of an older generation of parents who are living longer, while caring for our own children.

A lot of these changes are a result of our success as women and our demand for change. Where our own mothers worked hard to show us we could “have it all” we actually are having it all. We’re successful in our careers, still making brownies for the bake sale, and requiring our partners to help with child rearing and housework. Sisterhood is no longer something we need to fill our days while the kids and hubbies are at work.

But is it really unnecessary? Over the last few years I’ve heard some women say “well I was active when I was younger, now it’s your turn.” This thought assumes that Sisterhood is only something for young women. Are we supposed to “age out” of Sisterhood? Just like a child will always need her mother no matter how old she is, can’t we also always need a group of supportive, strong women, no matter our age?

# SISTERHOOD

While I certainly appreciate the position of those who have walked before me, I can't help but feel robbed of the blessed experience they shared. The beautiful friendships that blossomed, the kids who grew up together from babies is witnessed nearly every time I come to shul.

Now that we are supposed to be everything to everyone all of the time, one could argue that the support of a Sisterhood is needed now more than ever. Sisterhood needs to be nurtured and tended to in order to ensure that future generations of women can walk into temple knowing that they have a place there. Even if they also have a place everywhere else. The passing on of knowledge and shared experiences is crucial, not only as a woman, but also as a Jew.

We are so very grateful to the women who made Sisterhood what it was in past and what it is today. Sisterhood would not be the institution it is without the tireless support of our past presidents and volunteers. But we need your help, your guidance and your support to ensure that the girls who are now looking at me as a (much) older woman have a Sisterhood they can rely on when they grow up.



If you attended one or two Sisterhood events last year, please come to 2 or 4. If you attended 2-4, how about 3-6? If you attended all of them, please consider chairing an event or volunteering to help out! Please don't let the success of our gender be the downfall of an organization that does so much for the community. Sure, you can see the plaques, the new kitchen items and the scholarships. What you can't see is the lifelong friendships, the support of women who truly become family and the laughter that ensues. Those things are timeless.

Our hope for you is that 5784 brings good health, peace and prosperity to all.



# Sisterhood

Schedule at a glance

**2023**

**Sunday, Aug. 20th:**  
Silver Polishing 10am

**Sunday, Sept. 10th:**  
Gen. Meeting 10:00am

**Friday, Oct. 13th:**  
Sisterhood Shabbat

**Sunday, Dec. 3rd:**  
Make & Take Latkes,  
11am

**Monday, Dec. 25th:**  
Chinese Dinner & Karaoke  
5:30pm

**2024**

**Sunday, Jan. 28th:**  
Gen. Meeting 10:00am

**Saturday, Feb. 3rd:**  
Progressive Dinner

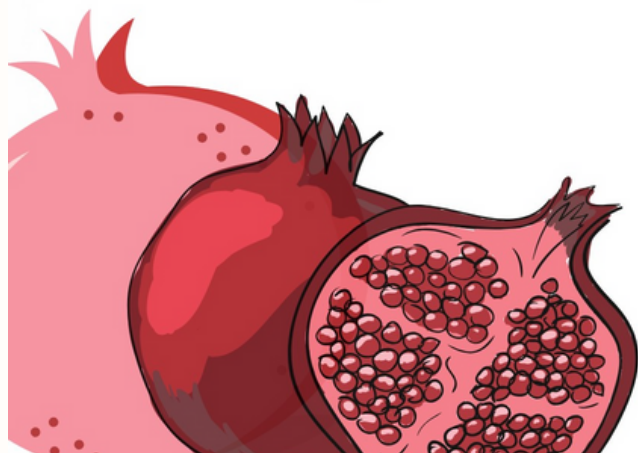
**Sunday, Feb. 11th:**  
Gen. Meeting 10:00am

**Sunday, March 10th:**  
Stuffing Mishloach  
Manot Bags

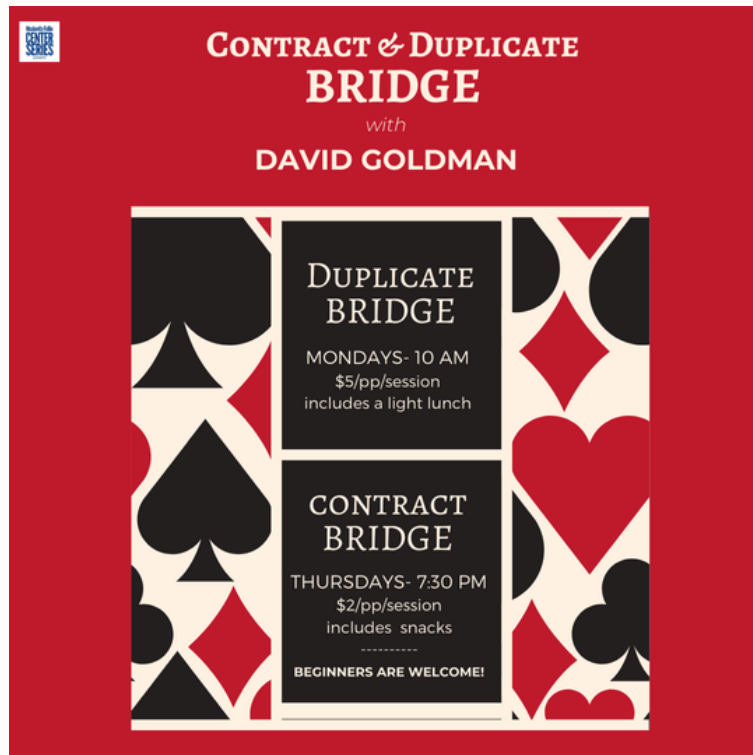
**Sunday, March 24th:**  
Purim Carnival 11:00am

**Saturday, April 13th:**  
Sisterhood Shabbat

**Sunday, May 19th:**  
Woman of the Year  
12-2pm  
Social Hall



# WEEKLY EVENTS



**CONTRACT & DUPLICATE  
BRIDGE**  
*with*  
**DAVID GOLDMAN**

**DUPLICATE  
BRIDGE**  
MONDAYS- 10 AM  
\$5/pp/session  
includes a light lunch

**CONTRACT  
BRIDGE**  
THURSDAYS- 7:30 PM  
\$2/pp/session  
includes snacks  
-----  
BEGINNERS ARE WELCOME!

The poster features a red background with a central white box containing black and red playing card symbols (spades, hearts, diamonds, clubs). The text is in white and black fonts.



**Mah Jongg**

Thursdays, 1-3:30  
\$5 cash at door

*New & Experienced Players Welcome!*  
Members can bring friends  
Light snacks served

Contact Karen Walsh: [kwalsh@flemingtonjcc.org](mailto:kwalsh@flemingtonjcc.org)

The poster features a white background with a red border. The text is in black and red fonts. At the bottom, there is a photograph of Mah Jongg tiles.



# UPCOMING EVENTS

Register for events on Shulcloud. Links are posted where applicable.

## FJCC BOOK CLUB

Who by Fire by Matt Freidman

October 2nd 7:00

The little-known story of Leonard Cohen's concert tour to the front lines of the Yom Kippur War.



## Grow-A-Row Dates

Our members "stick together" as we take one side of a row of vegetables, pick, chat, and feel good, knowing these vegetables go to people in need. Sign-up links will be posted prior to each date.

Please join the FJCC Grow-A-Row volunteers from 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM. You don't have to stay for the entire time.

- Tuesday, Sept. 19
- Monday, October 2
- Wednesday, Oct 11



Contact [Monajudith@aol.com](mailto:Monajudith@aol.com) if you are considering volunteering

## Sisterhood Shabbat

Friday, October 13th at 7:30pm

Sign up to lead your favorite prayer or blessing. You can even introduce a new tune!

Register by email to [Sisterhood@flemingtonjcc.org](mailto:Sisterhood@flemingtonjcc.org) or come to a meeting!



## Liam's Bar Mitzvah Clothing Drive

DROP OFF BAGS OF CLEAN CLOTHES AT  
FLEMINGTON JEWISH COMMUNITY  
CENTER  
5 SEARGENTSVILLE RD, FLEMINGTON, NJ

SUNDAY,  
OCTOBER 15

10AM - 2PM



# UPCOMING EVENTS

Register for events on Shulcloud. Links are posted where applicable.

<b>OCTOBER 20</b> <b>6:00 PM</b>  <b>WINNER, WINNER, SHABBAT DINNER</b> 	<b>Early Bird</b> Before October 13	<b>After</b> October 13
	<b>\$18.00 Adult</b> Kids are Free	<b>\$25.00 Adult</b> Kids are Free
	<b>Chicken, Salad Chicken Tenders Vegetables &amp; Potatoes</b>	
<b>Contact Karen</b> for Vegan Options	<b>Dalet, Hay &amp; Vav</b> Classes will lead Services at 7:30 PM	



**LUNCH AND LEARN**

Tackling Hunger  
October 21st

*Learn about hunger in Hunterdon County with representatives and volunteers of Flemington Food Pantry and Grow a Row.*

**DINNER IS SERVED**  
JANINA BISTRO - LEBANON  
Thursday, October 26  
6:30 PM - Prix Fixe



RSVP IS REQUIRED BY OCTOBER 22  
TO RSVP OR FOR QUESTIONS,  
CONTACT: [KIMFMULLER@YAHOO.COM](mailto:KIMFMULLER@YAHOO.COM)  
\*ADULTS ONLY

**\$5 DO NOT DESTROY**

**10/29 11:30-1:00**

The mitzvah ba'al tashchit teaches us to not destroy the items in our world. Join our FJCC Youth Group as we build a lego city and practice ba'al tashchit to keep the city from being destroyed.



RSVP by 10/23 to [youthgroup@flemingtonjcc.org](mailto:youthgroup@flemingtonjcc.org)

**Grades 1-6**

**BRUNCH AND LEARN**

**How to Build a Child's Jewish Library**

with  
**Adah Radzin**

**Sunday, Nov 5**  
**10:30**

# BIRTHDAYS

October 1

Lois Butt  
Kylei Mittler  
Howard Spinowitz

October 2

Nancy Rumore  
Lucy Shor

October 3

Elaine Stern

October 4

Adah Radzin

October 5

Abby Forman

October 6

Rebecca Mondshein  
Robin Mason  
Jack Nahama

October 7

Lindsey Rodriguez

October 15

Ethan Mehrlust

October 19

Carter Glacken

October 20

Evan Pollack  
Jacob Clarin  
Richard Goodman  
Eliot Friedman

October 23

Mitchell Clarin

October 25

Benjamin Spinowitz

October 26

Kari Gursky

October 27

Steve Kesselhaut  
Karen Stirberg

October 29

Joseph Muller  
Scott Berk

October 30

Benjamin Goldstein

October 31

Kimi Mittler

# ANNIVERSARIES

October 2

Zelic and Marsha Gerstein

October 11

Diane and Stuart Naar

October 13

Barry and Kimi Mittler

October 17

Jeremy Silberman and Alisa Grossman

October 18

Deborah and Steve Kesselhaut

October 19

Scott and Jeanne Berk  
Kim and Joseph Muller

October 26

Bruce Davidson and Marsha Goldstein



# YAHREZEITS

October 1

Alvin Farber  
Gloria Barak

October 2

Frank Stolpen  
Avram Benari

October 4

Ritalou Rogow Harris

October 5

Joy Ronald  
Reuben Billowitz

October 6

Daniel Shor  
Abraham Chaiken

October 8

Sylvia Goodman  
Edward Alan Cohn  
Harvey Goldstein  
Raphael Zackowitz

October 11

Barnett Kamich  
Irving Waskowitz  
Sol Daniels

October 12

Loretta Grossman  
Rubin Kaplan  
Edward Stern  
Jerome Goodman

October 13

Rosalyn Zackowitz

October 14

Lucille Waskowitz  
Manfried Wolf  
Eileen Wortman

October 15

Gershon Dvoor

October 17

Janet Sugar

October 18

Eloise (Polly) Kawarsky  
Thelma Kaplan  
Ina Lee Young  
Frank Rapp  
Stanley Lefkow

October 20

Elly Ezra

October 22

Lawrence O. Gross

October 23

William Doyle  
Juliette Wolf  
Samuel Atlas

October 24

Ann Borman  
Gerald Kahansky  
Bernard Gould

October 25

Edwin Matzkin

October 26

Samuel Lonsk

October 29

Lillian Friedman

October 30

Benjamin Neustadt  
Freda Fox

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OCTOBER 2023 | 16 TISHREI 5784 - 16 CHESHVAN 5784

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# CONTRIBUTIONS

## Kiddush/Oneg/Nosh

Austin and Sharon Rednor  
In Honor of Akiva Nelson

Matthew and Cheryl Schutz  
For the Yahrzeit of Bertha Kahansky

Garry and Rachel Rodriguez  
In Honor of Garry's Birthday

Seth and Dana Cohen  
For the Yahrzeit of Seth's beloved father, Jerry

Kenneth and Sharon Brooks  
In Honor of Frieda Frant, Tilla Frant and uncle Jacob Frant

## Family Promise

Jerrold and Linda Atlas

## Rabbi Discretionary

Jerrold and Linda Atlas  
In Memory of uncle Joseph Ritwe

## General Donations

Anonymous  
In Memory of Bernard Stein

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OCTOBER 2023 | 16 TISHREI 5784 - 16 CHESHVAN 5784

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# CONTRIBUTIONS

## Ukrainian Refugee Fund

FJCC Sisterhood, Amy and Seth Rubenstein, Beverly Landstrom, Mitchell and Barbara Clarin, Gerald Grossman and Connie Mitchko, Howard and Anneliese Nifoussi, Bruce and Josy Kestenbaum, Amy Cook and Scott Hornick, Diane and Stuart Naar, Frederick and Suzanne Rothstein, Marvin and Shellie Jacobson, Keremy Silberman and Alisa Grossman, Eric Sirota and Cara London, Erica Mandell, Bruce Moskovitz and John Fellin, Jerrold and Linda Atlas, Patience Anderson, Edward and Rosemary Mehrlust, Nancy Shatkin, Ellen and Michael Lennick, Jack and Nomi Forman, Kenneth and Sharon Skowronek, Kim and Joseph Muller, Harry and Laurie Rapkin, Nadine Milecofsky, Harris and Ariela Rutbeck-Goldman, Frank and Nancy Rumore, Richard Goodman and Stacey Gould, Lesley Cohen-Lee and Cliff Lee, Salena and Allen Kern, Malka Goodman, Stephen and Joan Rogow, Lois Butt, JFS of Somerset, Warren & Hunterdon, Loren Hurwitz and Florence Friedman Hurwitz, Dein and Mona Shapiro, Jonathan and Jodi Weitz, Joel and Sharon Goldstein, David and Carolyn Goldman, Jonathan Greif and Tamar Small Grief, Adam and Larissa Wolf, Richard Goldstein, Rosemarie Kramer, Ray and Liz Slavin, Janet Matts, Lauren Wright, Rev. Ann Holt, Roberta Maas-Wester, Diane Hrozencik

**Thank you to all those who have donated in support of our efforts to bring a Ukrainian family to Hunterdon County. We're expecting the family to arrive in November and are in continued need of funds to sustain this effort. Thanks again for all your financial support. It's very much appreciated!!**

**The Hunterdon County Welcome Circle - At Home in Hunterdon**



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