

# Wine

## Ari Shavit at Micah: Thoughts on Israel, American Jewry and the Jewish Future

BY SHELLEY GROSSMAN

WHEN ARI SHAVIT, the best-selling Israeli author of *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel*, spoke at Temple Micah on Nov. 2, he had just spent several weeks traveling the United States addressing Jewish organizations in every region. He acknowledged the deep impression this experience made on him, which in turn influenced his talk about the history, the current situation and the future of Israel—the themes of his book and the original reason for his tour. His perspective has been broadened, he said.

“The Jewish future. That is my main passion,” Shavit said. And that future intimately involves Israel, North American Jews and the relationship between them.

The book itself is “*the* must read Jewish book of the last 25 years,” Rabbi Zemel said in introducing Shavit a few days before heading to Israel with 34 temple members on the latest Micah Mission to Israel. The rabbi had been in negotiations to schedule Shavit’s talk since last November and was rewarded with a full house of eager and appreciative audience members. And, not everyone had to show up in person. The temple used this event to launch its new program to live stream services and other important gatherings. (An audio tape of the full presentation and a video of the last 45 minutes are available on the Temple Micah website.) The lecture

was a big deal for Temple Micah and Shavit indicated the whole experience has been a big deal for him, too.

“I’m so into your country!” he exclaimed. He had been to Washington many times in his capacity as a journalist—Shavit is a reporter and columnist for *Haaretz*—but he didn’t equate Washington’s mostly liberal Jewish community with other Jewish concentrations around the country. He marveled that American Jews “have managed to create a Jewish home. You maintain a Jewish life on a voluntary basis. I am deeply moved.” Much of the surprise in this revelation is most likely due to how little he—like most Israelis—knows about Judaism in America. Israeli schools don’t teach about Diaspora Judaism and there is no real incentive for Israelis to learn about it on their own, Shavit acknowledged. Indeed, the classic Zionism that built Israel all but dismissed the Diaspora.

But a vibrant Israeli future—in which Shavit believes wholeheartedly, he says—depends on a more equal relationship with America built on two-way understanding and trust. He indicated that American Jews could teach liberal and centrist Israeli Jews a lot about politics and lobbying, for example, and only half-jokingly endorsed the idea of an “Israeli AIPAC” to steer the Knesset toward more favorable U.S. policies. The

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### FROM RABBI ZEMEL

## NEW QUESTIONS TO RECREATE JUDAISM

DEAR FRIENDS,  
New Questions.

Our Judaism will be alive if we learn to ask ourselves new questions. Doing so will help us become what I like to think of as religious artists. Artists are people who ask new questions. How many times have you been to an art gallery or museum and seen the ordinary or mundane turned into stunning art? Think Warhol soup cans, Calder mobiles, Oldenburg... everything. Artists take the everyday and make it into art, causing the rest of us to say, “Why didn’t I think of that?”

An artist learns the disciplines of the past and uses them to create something new. That’s what we need to do with our Judaism.

On Yom Kippur I referred to this as the balancing act between historical fidelity and contemporary meaning. Contemporary meaning is birthed when we ask new questions. As I write this it is Sukkot, which provides a good example. Historically, the sukkah itself was a temporary hut that a farmer built in the field to live in during harvest season. At some point, some creative Jewish mind asked a new question: “Can this hut also be a symbol for the dwellings of our ancestors who wandered in Sinai?” Still later, someone who was not a farmer built a sukkah in a village. What was the meaning of the first urban sukkah? We do not know, but the people who built it were asking new questions.

I long for us to recreate our Judaism in the mold of Adam Two, the spiritual voice that is inside each of us. As you might recall from my Yom Kippur

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**“Every person shall sit under his grapevine or fig tree with no one to make him afraid.”**  
 MICAH, CHAPTER 4, VERSE 4

# Vine

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## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

# B'NAI MITZVAH: ENRICHING EXPERIENCE FOR ALL OF US

By JODI ENDA

The year started last November with Thomas and ends this month with Dylan. In between, another 28 of their seventh- and eighth-grade classmates would become a bar or bat mitzvah at Temple Micah.



My daughter, Ilana, fell somewhere in the middle.

There is a considerable amount of controversy about b'nai mitzvah in the United States these days. There is a fair amount at Temple Micah, as well.

They're too much work and too time consuming, too indulgent and waaaaayyyy too expensive. On Saturday mornings, temple members are outnumbered by students' friends and relatives; it doesn't feel like a real Shabbat. American synagogues have become bar and bat mitzvah mills.

To be sure, some of the criticism is valid, in full or in part. And at Temple Micah, we have changed the way we prepare for and conduct b'nai mitzvah services to address members' concerns and, I expect, will continue to do so. We do not want to be a b'nai mitzvah assembly line, a place where people check off a box and move on. We also do not want to lose Shabbat in all the hullabaloo that can surround a bar or bat mitzvah.

But the criticism doesn't tell the entire story. It overlooks the most important part of the whole shebang: the meaning. And I'm not just talking about the meaning for the student or the family. Our b'nai mitzvah services carry a larger meaning for the whole community of Micah and for the greater community of Jews.

Honestly, it's not all about the party. Our kids spend years learning Hebrew and studying Judaism. Most enter Machon Micah, our education program, in kindergarten or first grade. In third grade, they begin one-on-one Hebrew tutoring via Skype, which they will con-

tinue once or twice a week until their b'nai mitzvah. In fifth grade, they begin attending Machon Micah on Tuesdays after school, in addition to Sunday mornings and random other days for all-community events.

Seventh grade is the crunch year, the year many of our kids sacrifice most or all of their outside activities to prepare for their big day. They still attend Machon Micah on Tuesdays and Sundays and other days for all-community events. They still have Skype tutoring once a week. In addition, beginning six months before their bar or bat mitzvah dates, they meet with cantor Meryl Weiner or music director Teddy Klaus once a week to learn their Torah and Haftarah portions. They meet every other week with teacher Ken Goldstein to explore the meaning of their Torah and Haftarah portions. They practice their chanting most every night at home. Starting several weeks before their bar or bat mitzvah, they also meet once a week with one of our rabbis. They pose a question that the rabbi will address in a sermon and discuss other things that they don't necessarily share with their parents. At home, they write their D'var Torah, a lesson about their portions. On top of all that, they attend Shabbat services many Fridays and Saturdays, both to lead prayers and to support their classmates as, one by one, they are called to the Torah.

For that six months, our kids practically live at the temple. It's a whirlwind for the students and for their families, a crazy-busy time—and also an emotional one.

I attended many b'nai mitzvah this past year. At every single one, I either teared up or cried outright when grandparents and parents passed the Torah to their children and grandchildren. I sat with other parents from the class, and many of them were wiping their eyes, too. To us, this was it. *L'dor v'dor*. We knew the kids would chant well, because all our kids do. We knew they would give a good D'var Torah. We knew we'd



# YACHAD HONORS MICAH STALWARTS

BY THE EDITORS

EVERY SPRING FOR TWO decades, Micah volunteers have put on old clothes, picked up hammers, screwdrivers and paint brushes

neighborhoods throughout Washington.

This year, Yachad, the Jewish housing and community development organization that sponsors the program, honored Micah and four other congregations—and their volunteer leaders—for 20 years of hard physical labor in furtherance of the “Jewish commitment to seek justice by engaging in acts of loving



kindness,” according to the Yachad mission statement.

Micah members Roberta Goren, Ed and Shelley Grossman, Doug Meyer and Bill Page were singled out at Yachad’s annual Community Builder’s Bash on November 9, along with *Sukkot in Spring* leaders from Adas

Israel Congregation, Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation, Temple Rodef Shalom and Washington Hebrew Congregation. Congratulations, Micah team, for sticking with the program for 20 years. Your recognition is well deserved! ●



and taken part in *Sukkot in Spring*, a program through which synagogue volunteers help repair the houses of low-income homeowners who aren’t physically or financially able to make their own repairs. The effort not only enables these people to keep their houses, but also helps preserve housing and stabilize



## SEEKING VINE CONTRIBUTORS!

Do you love to find out what’s really going on—and tell others about it? Get a kick out of writing? Seeing your name in print? *The Vine* is looking for contributing reporters like you! Only requirements: an interest in news about

the Temple Micah community, and a little spare time a few months during the year. If you’d like to learn more, please contact Dorian Friedman or Shelley Grossman at [vine@templemicah.org](mailto:vine@templemicah.org) or leave word in the temple office.

## COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here's a sampling of Micah activities on tap during the next two months. For a detailed schedule of all upcoming events, check out [templemicah.org](http://templemicah.org).

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21 • 7:30 PM–9 PM

### Autumn Community Shabbat Dinner

Join friends for a festive Shabbat dinner. See details on page 7.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 23 • All Day

### Temple Micah Book Fair at Politics & Prose

Do some Hanukkah shopping and support Temple Micah at the same time. This year's event features the Temple Micah Youth Choir, performing at 11 AM.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7 • 9:30 AM–2 PM

### Annual Hanukkah Gift & Craft Fair

Beautiful wares by Micah members: Jewelry, glass, pottery, and wearable art. See details on page 11.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19 • Oneg at 6 PM.  
Service at 6:30 PM

### Hanukkah Kabbalat Shabbat

Bring a menorah and four candles for this magical annual celebration.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19 • 8 PM

### Next Dor-DC Hanukkah Dinner

Next Dor connects Jewish adults in their 20s and 30s to each other and to Judaism.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 26 • Oneg at 6 PM.  
Service at 6:30 PM

### Community Kabbalat Shabbat

Welcome Shabbat with members of the wider community as we host members of Temple Sinai, Adas Israel and Washington Hebrew Congregation.

## INTERESTING SPEAKERS!

Temple Micah features two monthly lecture series—on Sunday morning and Wednesday noon. For more details, go online to [www.templemicah.org](http://www.templemicah.org).

### SUNDAY SPEAKER SERIES

*Sundays from 10:15 to 11:45 am*



**December 7 – Diana Butler Bass**, on “Faith and Practice in a Post-Religious World.” Author, speaker, and independent scholar specializing in American religion and culture, Bass is a leading voice in progressive Christianity.

### LUNCH & LEARN

*Wednesdays from noon to 2 pm*

A monthly program sponsored by the Aging Together Team of Temple Micah. Reserve online at [www.templemicah.org](http://www.templemicah.org). Please contact Nancy Raskin, [lunchandlearn@templemicah.org](mailto:lunchandlearn@templemicah.org), or call the temple office, 202-342-9175, for details.



**November 12 – John Hirschmann**, on “Mostly Jewish Genealogy.” Hirschmann, a longtime member of Micah, will discuss the many new dimensions genealogy has taken in recent years. Information now available on the Internet has dramatically changed the way we can learn about known relatives, discover new relations and connections and, most importantly, make actual connections with them

or their descendants. This is not going to be a class on how to “do” genealogy. Rather, Hirschmann will talk about what is possible, what has changed, and the unique ways in which breakthroughs now can occur. He will also share how genealogy inevitably expands your knowledge of the diverse ways in which our ancestors lived.



**December 10 – Jennifer Gruber**, on “Connecting to Our American Story.” Filmmaker, creative director and producer of educational media, Gruber explores the role of media programs in museums across America. Her credits include Academy Award-winning films, immersive media theaters, and interactive touchscreen experiences. Gruber works with institutions to create media that offer the

public ways to connect, think, feel and understand. Join her for this discussion and explore examples of her work for projects including the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Oklahoma City National Memorial and the National Park Service.



## STAFF PROFILE

NEW ADDITIONS TO MICAH STAFF  
BRING TOTAL TO A DOZEN

BY THE EDITORS

THREE RECENT HIRES round out Temple Micah's hardworking staff, bringing the total to 12. Here's some background information on the new faces. Please join in welcoming them to the Temple Micah family.

**Jeannelle D'Isa, Administrative Assistant**

Jeannelle is thrilled to be at Temple Micah. She holds a bachelor's degree in English (Creative Writing) from Brandeis University, was just about equally interested in Near Eastern



**Jeannelle D'Isa with daughter Noel Jane, age 4. A former technical editor, the new administrative assistant is a baker at work on her second novel.**

and Judaic and Women's Studies, and worked as a technical editor in the nonprofit world for many years. She enjoys baking, is always sort of at work on her second novel, and tries to make time for advocacy (marriage and gender equality). Jeannelle lives in Maryland with her wife and daughter.

A Micah favorite: "I really like the Lunch & Learn afternoons, which are a great opportunity to get to talk to some of the most involved people at

Temple Micah. We have such a great spectrum of members with different life paths and talents."

**Kelley Kidd, Engagement and Communications Fellow**

Kelley joins us after a year as a corps member of AVODAH: The Jewish Service Corps, when she worked as a Case Manager at Miriam's Kitchen, a local social service

organization dedicated to ending chronic homelessness. During her time in AVODAH, she became deeply invested in social justice, Judaism, and DC as a place to call home and to create change. She is excited to bring all of these things to her position at Temple Micah. Originally from Knoxville, Tenn., Kelley attended Georgetown University, where she studied International Relations and participated in theatre as a designer. When she's not at her desk jamming out to music and writing emails, Kelley loves to explore the free-in-DC scene, particularly learning, music, and good food.

A Micah favorite: "I loved having the opportunity to help create the stunning and moving Next Dor High Holy Days services alongside Rabbi Lederman and (musician/songwriter) Michelle Citrin."

**Rhiannon Walsh, Bookkeeper**

Since starting as bookkeeper in April, Rhiannon has had a fantastic time getting to know the folks in the office



**Kelley Kidd comes to Micah after a year's service in AVODAH, the Jewish Service Corps. An international relations major at Georgetown University, she also worked in theater design.**

and starting to meet some of Temple Micah's members. Originally from Pennsylvania, she has been living in the Washington, DC area for about 2 years. When not punching numbers, she is a professional hair stylist, trained at Aveda. She looks forward to getting to know more temple members in the coming year.

A Micah favorite: "A day at Micah guarantees I will laugh often and learn unexpectedly, so I can easily say it's the highlight of my week." ●



**Rhiannon Walsh, the temple's new bookkeeper, is also a professional hair stylist. Will she include hair fashion tips with your next Micah statement?**

**Shavit FROM PAGE 1** ▶

absence of a deeper understanding of our mutual interests has helped skew Israeli government policies to the right, he argued.

The author's travels have also revealed some discouraging trends within American Judaism, he said. "I am concerned about your youngsters. They see Israel as tribal," a narrow, somewhat distasteful slice of society that is an unfortunate throwback, that they don't need or want. That is a very dangerous development for the future, he said.

The United States and Israel each have made mistakes and suffered losses in the chaotic Middle East over the past decade or so. Correcting the course will require new ideas and approaches in each country. "The old formulas won't work," he said. The invasion and subsequent dealing with Iraq was a major U.S. blunder, and our country is now making similar errors in our attempt to defeat the Islamic State (ISIS), Shavit noted. "The greatest mistake is leaving the perception of being allied with the Shia against the Sunnis," he said. "The only ones who can defeat ISIS are the moderate Sunnis."

Meanwhile, Israel has encountered setbacks in coping with Hamas. Shavit considers Hamas a sophisticated fascist organization which, in combination with its military effectiveness, is proving to be a frustratingly difficult foe.

He spoke about the Gaza war this summer, "Israel's fourth asymmetric war in less than eight years." As he described it, Hamas was "attacking Israel's civilian

population while hiding behind its own civilian population." Three things made the summer of 2014 different, he said: the length of the war—50 days; the psychological blow to Israeli society that Hamas rockets could hit Tel Aviv even though no one was killed there, and the ugly reemergence of anti-Semitic hatred in Europe. "Seventy

# KOL ISHA

## A Woman's Voice

Celebrating Our 15th Anniversary  
2014-2015

### *Nurturing Our Souls*

**November 16, 2014**

Mindfulness and Prayer

Nancy Miller, Mindfulness Practitioner  
and Rabbi Josh Beraha

**December 14, 2014**

**Special Time 1:30-4:00**

**Registration Required**

at [www.templemicah.org](http://www.templemicah.org)

Ethel & Ruthie

A new play by Claire Frankel  
Staged reading by members of  
the Keegan Theater Company

Post-Reading Discussion with Playwright Claire Frankel

**January 11, 2015**

Jewish Women's Literature

Liz Poliner

Asst. Professor of English & Creative Writing, Hollins University

**February 8, 2015**

Telling Our Stories Through Food

Carole Sugarman, Food Editor, Bethesda Magazine

**March 7, 2015**

**Note: Saturday, 4 pm**

Shabbat afternoon with Scholar in Residence

Wendy Zierler

Professor of Modern Jewish Literature and Feminist Studies  
Hebrew Union College/Jewish Institute of Religion

**April 4, 2015**

**Note: Saturday, 6 pm**

Community Seder

**April 19, 2015**

Creating Art for the Soul

**May 17, 2015**

Retreat - Planning for Next Year

For more information check the Temple Micah website, [www.templemicah.org](http://www.templemicah.org)  
or email Lynn Bonde at [kolisha@templemicah.org](mailto:kolisha@templemicah.org) or Cantor Meryl Weiner at [hazzan@templemicah.org](mailto:hazzan@templemicah.org)

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which would have backfired on Israel and its moral authority. Even so, he said, Israel's problem was "not having an elegant solution—so its offense was too heavy handed."

Classical Zionism embedded in Israel a strong morality. "It's part of our DNA," he said. But the occupation

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE ▶



**Shavit FROM PREVIOUS PAGE** ▶

and the Netanyahu government's settlement-building policy has undermined that fundamental tenet. And this loss "is eroding our relationship with the West and the moral foundation of our existence," he said. Israel must freeze settlements and pull out of the West Bank. Gaza needs a "Marshall plan" financed by Saudi Arabia with a political structure supported by Egypt.

But Shavit doesn't see a peace agreement happening any time soon. "There won't be a two state solution," he said. "What we need is a two-state dynamic" to build physical and governmental infrastructure that will lead to the capability to evolve into two states.

"No more White House lawn ceremonies," he said, referring to past handshakes and signing of agreements with great fanfare that ended in disappointment. "We need new ideas that combine reality with idealism." ●

**JOURNALIST ELIZABETH DREW AT MICAH**

Veteran reporter and author Elizabeth Drew regales Micah members on Oct. 12 with her experiences in the early 1970s covering the Watergate scandal and President Nixon's departure from office, sharing highlights from her classic memoir which was newly released, *Washington Journal: Reporting Watergate and Richard Nixon's Downfall*.



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## COMMUNITY SHABBAT DINNER ON NOVEMBER 21

Temple Micah's Community Shabbat dinners, now in their fourth year, have become a wonderful social gathering and a great opportunity for members to connect. All are encouraged to join in the autumn dinner on Friday, November 21.

The formula is simple. Following Kabbalat Shabbat services, everyone gathers in the social hall to eat great food, meet new members, renew acquaintances and catch up with long-standing friends. Dinner will be catered by Lebanese Taverna.

The cost is \$20 for those 13 and over; \$8 for students between 6 and 12; and free for children 5 and under. Come alone, bring a friend, join us with your kids—but do come and stay for dinner. Please make reservations using the link on the temple website or by calling the office at 202-342-9175.

Interested in volunteering? Please email [CommunityDinners@templemicah.org](mailto:CommunityDinners@templemicah.org) or let the office know.

### Rabbi's Message FROM PAGE 1 ►

sermon, Rabbi Joseph Soloveitchik, a prominent 20<sup>th</sup>-century theologian, writes that every person has two distinct parts. He calls them Adam One and Adam Two, based on the two creation narratives in Genesis. Adam One is social and seeks mastery of the world. Adam Two is metaphysical, more concerned with the interior life. (To read the complete sermon, go to <http://www.templemicah.org/aboutus/rabbi/sermons> and look for Kol Nidre 2014).

Finding our spiritual voice will require asking new questions of ourselves and our synagogue, and looking to the synagogue to discover what our lives can—or should—be about. New questions will elevate the importance of meaning over historical fidelity. For instance, we will not ask the old question, “How do we teach

Bible?” Instead, we will ask, “How can we use the resources of Judaism to teach and build character in 2014?” New questions take nothing for granted.

The Adam Two in each of us longs for inner peace, firm moral direction, quiet confidence, meaningful and deep relations with others and a transcendent reality—God. Adam Two wants relief from pressure, commitments and the need to compete, impress and achieve. I personally find myself in wonderful Adam Two space in the days after Yom Kippur, when I can relax and stop pushing myself so hard. For me, as a working congregational rabbi, the sukkah has become my annual symbol for letting go.

Temple Micah can be a place where we can simply be and not strive to do—the case in the rest of our lives. It can be a place where we listen for deep inner voices, a place that will allow us to be so

quiet and secure that our souls will speak to us from somewhere hidden and sacred that lies within. This is the beginning of a life of prayer.

As you read these words, Thanksgiving will be upon us. Thanksgiving traditions include family reunions, turkey, parades and football. Thanksgiving can also be a time for family prayer. The beautiful American images of home and hearth speak to us in this season. The fall colors, the feel of winter at our doorstep can instill in us reverie and a deep appreciation for nature's ceaseless cycles. We can pause and be at peace in the world and in ourselves. This is Adam Two.

Take time to allow Adam Two to grow this year. Look for every opportunity. Be an artist. Create. Bring this spirit to Micah. Sincerely,  
Rabbi Daniel G. Zemel

### President's Column FROM PAGE 2 ►

eat well later and maybe even take to the dance floor. But passing the Torah from one generation to the next? This was what tore at our heartstrings. This was what it was all about.

As a temple board member, I have been lucky to be able to serve as a Shabbat greeter, to go up to the bima toward the end of a service and address the bar or bat mitzvah and his or her family. I love looking into their faces – beaming, proud and, in the case of the kids, relieved. I like to talk about how the students have grown and matured. I like to say something personal about each

one's individual journey, and sometimes that, too, elicits parental tears.

Yes, the parties are overblown. They don't have to be but, often, they are. And, yes, it certainly is a lot of work. It should be. The pressure along the route is intense, and it is not for everyone. That's OK, too.

But I don't believe that our b'nai mitzvah services take away from Shabbat, no matter how many guests fill our seats. In fact, I would argue that they enhance it. On a very basic level, the Shabbat experience is enriched by the glorious music of our choir and the generous Kiddush lunches provided by the b'nai mitzvah families, allowing us not only a

more beautiful worship experience, but a chance to get to know each other better afterward. On a deeper level, these services offer us the opportunity to welcome young people into the Jewish community, to continue a very long and significant tradition, to move it—and us—into the future. They are joyous, moving and, yes, meaningful experiences—for the students and their families, of course, but for the rest of us as well.

Our year in the whirlwind is almost over. It's another group's turn to study, to panic, to hug, to cry, to eat and to dance. It's their turn to pass the Torah from one generation to the next. I will be there still, tissue at the ready. I hope you'll join me.



# TZEDAKAH

## 50TH ANNIVERSARY FUND

IN MEMORY OF

Robert Lewis, by Alan Carpien

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IN HONOR OF

The occasion of their marriage, by Melissa Attias and Guillaume Simard-Morissette

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IN HONOR OF

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IN MEMORY OF

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IN HONOR OF

Miriam Grotte on the occasion of her marriage, by Jeff Passel

IN MEMORY OF

Laurel Bergold, by Steve Klitzman  
Suzanne Blotner, by Jeff Passel  
Louis Levenson, by Brenda Levenson  
Pearl Levenson Simmons, by Brenda Levenson, Michelle Sender

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IN HONOR OF

Rachel Diskin, daughter of Barbara and David Diskin, on her marriage, by Nancy Lang, Nancy Raskin  
Sarah and Jonathan Feuer on their graduations, by Michael Feuer  
Yom Kippur, by Susan Roberts, mother of Jocelyn Roberts

IN MEMORY OF

Laurel Bergold, by Stuart Brown  
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IN HONOR OF

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Laurel Bergold, by Ed and Shelley Grossman

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Beverly and Daniel Yett's 50th anniversary, by Barbara and David Diskin

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Beverly and Daniel Yett's 50th anniversary, by Martin L. and Elizabeth G. Cohen

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IN HONOR OF

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IN MEMORY OF

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Florence Dickelman, by Jeff Passel  
Walter Page, by William Page

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IN HONOR OF

Rabbi Esther Lederman, by Ed and Shelley Grossman

## ONEG FUND

IN MEMORY OF

Bob Lewis, by Ed and Shelley Grossman

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IN HONOR OF

Peggy Banks on the naming of her granddaughter, by Rhoda Hyde

Shelley Grossman and Dorian Friedman for their work on the *Vine*, by Judith Hurvitz

Zach Howell and Whitney Kasle on their engagement, by Ed and Bobbie Wendel

Jane and Chaz Kerschner's grandchildren, by Susie and Harvey Blumenthal

Rabbi Daniel G. Zemel, by Debra Willen and Lawrence Fullerton

IN MEMORY OF

Laurel Bergold, by Susie Blumenthal, Debra Knopman and David Weightman

Robert and Arlene Kamin, by Harriet and Louis Weiner

Robert Lewis, by Rhoda Hyde

Robert Morgenstein, by Susan Morgenstein and family

Lew Warshof, by Judy and Doug Warshof

## RABBI BERAHA'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

IN HONOR OF

Rabbi Joshua Beraha's installation as Director of Congregational Learning, by Robert, Jennifer, Elisabeth, and Matthew Keller

IN MEMORY OF

Amy Keller, by Robert, Jennifer, Elisabeth, and Matthew Keller

## SOCIAL ACTION FUND

IN HONOR OF

Jonathan and Grace Westreich on the birth of their son, Nathan, by Ed and Shelley Grossman

IN HONOR OF

Pessia Green's marriage to Aryeh Dannenberg, by Barbara and Isaac Green

## THE RABBI DANIEL GOLDMAN ZEMEL FUND FOR ISRAEL

Elliot Cafritz

IN MEMORY OF

Adolph Blumenfeld, Sarah Blumenfeld, by Norman Blumenfeld

Harry E. Rockower, by Stephen Rockower and Ann Sablosky

Steven Sotloff, by Marilyn and William Paul

# B'NAI MITZVAH



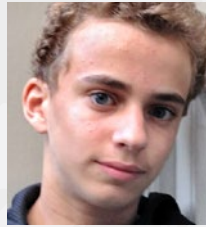
**JANA WARNER**  
**NOVEMBER 1 / 8 CHESHVAN**  
**PARENTS:** Gail and Seth Warner  
**TORAH PORTION:** Lech-Lecha  
**MITZVAH PROJECT:** Jana is volunteering with the Montgomery Soccer program, helping disabled children play soccer. She serves as a "buddy" to several youngsters, assisting them in learning the game and having fun. Jana is having fun too, since she loves soccer and loves working with children.



**ELLA ROSE CHOTINER**  
**NOVEMBER 8 / 15 CHESHVAN**  
**PARENTS:** Melissa and Michael Chotiner  
**TORAH PORTION:** Vayera  
**MITZVAH PROJECT:** To be decided



**JACK MUOIO**  
**NOVEMBER 15 / 22 CHESHVAN**  
**PARENTS:** Karen Mandel and Alberto Cerda; Reid Muoio  
**TORAH PORTION:** Chayei Sara  
**MITZVAH PROJECT:** Jack has been troubled by the homeless veterans he has seen around DC and in the media, and wanted to help them. While he is too young to work with them directly, he is contributing by creating "comfort kits" for the DC VA Medical Center to distribute, including hotel-size shampoo, conditioner, liquid soap, and other toiletries. He welcomes donations in the collection box in the temple lobby.



**DYLAN WALDNER**  
**NOVEMBER 22 / 29 CHESHVAN**  
**PARENTS:** Elizabeth Thompson and David Waldner  
**TORAH PORTION:** Toldot  
**MITZVAH PROJECT:** Dylan is collecting donations for Doctors Without Borders, a highly regarded organization delivering emergency medical aid to people affected by conflict, epidemics and disasters around the world, including the Ebola epidemic.



**DANA HERRNSTADT**  
**DECEMBER 6 / 14 KISLEV**  
**PARENTS:** Stacey Grundman and Owen Herrnstadt  
**TORAH PORTION:** Vayishlach  
**MITZVAH PROJECT:** Dana is volunteering with Friendship Circle to help provide friendship and fun for children with special needs when they celebrate their birthdays.



**EMILY GOULD**  
**DECEMBER 13 / 21 KISLEV**  
**PARENTS:** Jon Gould and Ann Springer  
**TORAH PORTION:** Vayeshev  
**MITZVAH PROJECT:** Emily will be helping provide food for the homeless through the Arlington Street People's Assistance Network.

# CONDOLENCES

The Temple Micah community extends its deepest condolences to:

**MIRIAM AND Zachary Lynch** on the passing of their mother, Micah member Laurel Bergold

**LAURA FERGUSON** on the passing of her uncle, Robert David Allender

**LINDA SCHULTZ** on the passing of her father, Stephen Schultz

**THE TEMPLE Micah** community on the passing of Micah member Bob Lewis

**CAITLIN BRAZNER** on the passing of her grandmother, Barbara Donerkiel

**MARY MALGOIRE AND BEA BIRMAN** on the passing of Mary's mother, Marguerite Malgoire

**PEG BLECHMAN** on the passing of her aunt, Rolly Mulitz

**SARA MORNINGSTAR AND PHIL KATZ** on the passing of Sara's mother, Jane Morningstar

May their memories be for a blessing.

# MAZAL TOV

The congregation wishes a hearty mazal tov to:

**Melissa Attias and Guillaume Simard-Morissette** on their marriage

**Emily Warheit and Lee McClure** on their marriage

**Marilyn and Bill Paul** on their eldest granddaughter becoming Bat Mitzvah

**Jonathan Westreich and Grace Mitchell Westreich** on the birth of their son, Nathan Mitchell Westreich

**David and Barbara Diskin** on the marriage of their daughter, Rachel

**Zach Howell and Whitney Kasle** on their engagement

**Kit Wheatley and Tom Sahagian** on the birth of their granddaughter, Leah Rivka

**Gene and Helene Granof** on the birth of their grandson, Isaac David Granof

**Barbara Green** on the marriage of her granddaughter

**Yair Inspektor and Amanda Stone** on their engagement

**Ruth Schimel** on the publication of *Choose Courage: Step into the Life You Want—Step into the Success You Want: Sparking Your Powers*



## BERAHA'S BLACKBOARD

# "REASON TO BELIEVE": MACHON MICAH'S NEW POST-B'NAI MITZVAH INITIATIVE

BY RABBI JOSH BERAHA

Being Jewish should enable us all to stand on firm ground and look out upon the world with a sense of sacred purpose. Armed with a vibrant history, culture, language, compelling texts and evocative rituals, we Jews should be empowered to elucidate and refine what it is we believe about the nature of the world, about God, about why there is something as opposed to nothing. In exploring our beliefs, we learn to make sense of our personal story. We clarify where we stand.

In the words of the educator Parker Palmer, "...when my little story, or yours, is our only point of reference, we easily become lost in narcissism." And so, he argues, the bigger story must be told, "stories that are universal in scope and archetypal in depth, that frame our personal tales and help us understand what they mean." To refine our beliefs is to ultimately attach them to something more than the autonomous self.

As I begin my tenure as Director of Congregational Learning here at Temple Micah, one of my goals is to ensure that our older students, following b'nai mitzvah, feel they have a secure path on their way to defining what it is they believe about themselves and the world around them, and that they find a deep purpose in all their endeavors. But most of all, it is my prayer that students find hope in the future, a reason to believe.

This year's ninth-grade class is the pioneer group in our new "Reason to Believe" program, with this year's eighth grade also participating. By the 2015-2016 school year, the initiative will be fully implemented, and the pioneers of Reason to Believe will participate in a unique ritual in which the entire Micah community will offer those tenth grade students a public blessing during one of our worship services. Each year, we hope to send off a new class of Reason to Believe students, prepared to walk on a course of righteousness, justice and faith.

In the program's current iteration, each class meets monthly—sometimes at Micah, often offsite in locations that serve to strengthen relationships as well as Jewish identity and knowledge. Eighth grade focuses on the practical aspects of Jewish ritual, while ninth explores what it means to be Jewish in the modern world. Next year, the tenth grade will focus on deepening our sense of social mission, and

identifying our moral obligations to the Jewish world and beyond.

As I watch this new endeavor take shape at Micah, I am excited to work with parents and students to bring it to life for families. In the words of the Psalmists, "*L'dor v'dor*: let one generation to the next extol Your deeds." May our children know great blessings and recognize the bounty of God's great world.



## TEMPLE MICAH SIXTH ANNUAL HANUKKAH GIFT & CRAFT FAIR

SUNDAY DECEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>  
9:30 AM TO 2 PM

CRAFT ART BY MICAH MEMBERS

JEWELRY, GLASS,  
POTTERY, WEARABLE ART

HANUKKAH ITEMS  
MENORAHS, CANDLES,  
GELT, GIFTS FROM ISRAEL

ISRAELI FOODS

PORTION OF ALL PROCEEDS  
GOES TO THE TEMPLE.

FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT ELLEN SOMMER  
JUDAICA@TEMPLEMICAH.ORG

מִיכָה  
TEMPLE  
MICAH



**10,000... and counting!**

Temple Micah's annual Underwear Drive, led once again this year by Machon Micah's sixth-grade class, has brought in more than 10,000 items of clothing for our homeless neighbors at the Community Council at Friendship Place. The drive was recently featured in an inspiring article in *Washington Jewish Week*. See: <http://washingtonjewishweek.com/17004/dedicated-donations/>



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