

## FROM RABBI ZEMEL

### THE WORRYING QUESTIONS IN A HOLY DAY SERMON NOT WRITTEN

DEAR FRIENDS,



The High Holy Day sermon that I did not write this year was "Zionism: Between Seventy and Fifty." Seventy is the Jewish year we have just entered, 5778, during which we will mark 70 years of Israeli statehood. Fifty is the year we just have left behind, 5777, where we marked 50 years since the Six Day War and Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. I fear, increasingly, that one's Zionism is determined by which of these dates and their associated events hold greater sway. Which symbols predominate in your thinking about Israel? Is it "To be a free people in our own land" or "settlements and security?" Is Zionism about redemption or conflict? Is it a philosophy of aspiration, liberation and the undying hopes of an exiled people, or a story of Orthodox religious political parties and untethered, zealous nationalism? These questions too often shape American Jews' views of Israel.

Is there a way out?

I worry about this and I worry about the struggle for the soul of the Israel that I cannot help but love even through what is all too frequently great pain. I think so often of my Rosh Hashanah sermon of just three years ago, "Israel: The Country I Love That Does Not Love Me in Return." I love Israel because Zionism saved the Jewish people from near extinction. I love Israel because it gave Jews a place to live in the world. I love Israel because the Bible and Jewish history feel reborn

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## Sukkat Shalom's Family Settles into Life in America

BY DORIAN FRIEDMAN AND MARTHA ADLER

SEVEN MONTHS AGO a small group of Temple Micah members began exploring what the congregation could do to help refugees seeking to relocate to America.

That handful of people eventually grew to nearly 100 Micah members organized into committees under the umbrella name Sukkat Shalom or "Shelter of Peace." Each committee took on a task (housing, furnishings, food, clothing, transportation, education, employment, and "friendship") without knowing the size of the refugee family they were assisting, where they might be from, or when they might arrive.



The family's living room furnished by Sukkat Shalom.

In mid-October, Sukkat Shalom welcomed a family from Afghanistan. The parents and their children soon plunged into a whirlwind of activities to help them settle into life in America.

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## ONE DAY, BUT WHAT A DAY

BY FRAN DAUTH

THE SUN WAS still struggling to gain control of the sky above Temple Micah one recent Sunday but already three cars were in the parking lot. Inside the synagogue preparations were being made for the busy day ahead.

Twelve hours later, the sun had given up its dominance, and the last cars were gone from the Micah parking lot, which had filled up and emptied more than once that day.

Children and adults had sung and danced. Teachers taught. More than 150 students studied, although some favored turning somersaults. Volunteers sold coffee and bagels. Micah teens got on a bus for a trip to a Virginia pumpkin field. Sandwiches were made for the homeless. Members of committees and groups met. Cameras and microphones were set up to record an evening event

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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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# SPACE: EXPLORING TEMPLE MICAH'S NEXT FRONTIER

BY ED LAZERE

Temple Micah is a growing community, a wonderful sign of our vitality. This blessing brings both challenges and opportunities—the challenge of meeting the need for more space, and



the opportunity to build on (so to speak) Temple Micah's vision for a modern American synagogue. Over the coming year, we will work as a community to figure out what that might look like.

With more families, Temple Micah needs

more space for the Machon, for the office, for meetings, and maybe even a larger sanctuary.

We have a record number of students in the Machon; Boker Tov gatherings to start Sunday Machon sessions are often standing room only. On some Friday nights, the galleria before Shabbat Services feels like being in a rush hour Metro train. During the workweek, 15 staff members work in a space designed for nine. And anyone who has tried knows how hard it is to find a meeting space at Temple Micah on Sunday morning.

Our parking lot has the minimum spaces required by zoning rules, and fills up quickly at many events.

As Rabbi Zemel notes, a little crowding is okay, and perhaps even feels like the way Micah should be. But getting cozy can go a little too far. We don't

want people interested in Temple Micah to turn away because of overcrowding.

So Micah needs to expand. Earlier this year we tried to purchase the house to our north, but another buyer offered a price we thought was not worth it. That means we will need to get creative about other ways to grow. A committee has been assembled to start thinking about it.

The committee will focus not just on the important tasks of having adequate classroom and office space. Ideally, expanding Temple Micah will allow us to develop meaningful new spaces that deepen our communal Jewish experience. That's the opportunity part.

For sure, Rabbi Zemel will have some ideas of ways for us to learn together, contemplate together, and explore being Jewish together. As he has shared with our committee, "Our physical expansion will allow us to be a greater place from which new thinking and activity on the American Jewish future emanates."

We will seek input from all interested congregants to tackle both practical and lofty goals. We will strive to find out what is most important to ensuring meaningful and comfortable experiences at Temple Micah for everyone. We will think about how to build beautiful spaces that can be used for multiple purposes. We will explore where to build—over the parking lot perhaps or maybe a separate space nearby.

I look forward to engaging with you on this important journey.



## SAVE THE DATE: "BREAD AND TORAH"

Mark your calendars for the Scholar in Residence weekend Jan. 19-21. This year it will feature "Bread and Torah," a hands-on learning experience led by Rabbi Linda

Motzkin (a soferet) and Rabbi Jonathan Rubenstein (a bread maker) that combines traditional Jewish scribal arts and bread making with Jewish spiritual teachings and practices. More information will be posted online later.

## MICAHA PROFILE

'What Does She *Not* Know?'

BY FRAN DAUTH

"TEMPLE MICAHA, may I help you?"

Those may be the words that first brought you into contact with Jeannelle D'Isa who often answers the telephone, the front door buzzer and most of the questions aimed at the Temple Micah office.

But that is just the beginning of her role at Temple Micah. There is a whole lot more to know about the smart, sassy, funny and so very literate 37-year-old Jeannelle D'Isa.

She entered college at 16. She published her first novel at 24. She once edited manuals about the proper operation of federal prisons and humane treatment of offenders. She makes a killer babka, one of the most popular items at Micah's annual auction. She and her wife Nicole have a 7½ year-old daughter, Noel, who also knows her way around a babka.

Here is how Rabbi Josh Beraha

describes her: "Jeannelle is as authentic as they come. She is totally herself and for me that is so refreshing."

With customary bluntness and candor, Jeannelle describes herself as a Jewish intellectual, hothouse flower.

"What does she *not* know?" asks Rabbi Danny Zemel, letting the obvious answer hang in the air.

Jeannelle majored in English Literature, Creative Writing and Near Eastern and Judaic Studies at Brandeis University. From there she went on to UMASS Dartmouth. While she took classes, she also tutored at the Writing Lab. Plus, she tutored at the local community college's writing center.

At one point, her goal was to teach writing at a community college, "but somewhere along the way my desire to stay in academia petered right out," Jeannelle says now.

From there it was on to editing at a

non-profit organization involved in accrediting correction facilities that also produced prison-related manuals and books. Among the titles she worked on were "Responsible Mother" and "Responsible Father," aimed at offenders with children. Her favorite title was "9 to 5 Beats Ten to Life," with the subtitle of "How to Reenter Society."

So how did this bookish editor get to the administrative office of Temple Micah?

Again not mincing words, Jeannelle said that she wanted to work where she could be a "professional Jew and a professional queer, because I didn't want to compromise my values or holidays."

It was after Nicole went to work as a bookkeeper at Temple Emanuel in Kensington, that Jeannelle discovered Temple Micah, finding it "as quirky" as she is. And she found that she really liked synagogue administration "because I'm naturally a yenta and I like knowing everybody's business."

While Jeannelle says her office duties have given her "a hands on course on how the sausage is made," the best part of her job are the people she meets and their various passions, be they "social justice nerds or grammar nerds."

"So many good people with so many good things to say," she adds.

"I like where I am. It suits me."

Cantor Meryl Weiner points out that "Jeannelle always goes the extra step in making sure that whatever you've asked of her is done quickly and correctly. And it would be unusual for her not to add a dash of her marvelous humor."

She has been at Micah three and a half years and was recently named "administrative director," a reflection of her new duties, particularly involving new members. A new employee, Ben Kissin, who started amid the High Holy Days bustle, now fills her previous position.

When she is not at Temple Micah, Jeannelle is often ferrying daughter Noel to ice hockey, baking, and yes, she is still writing, but mostly poetry and short stories these days. The family lives in Montgomery County.

Rabbi Susan Landau may have best summed up Jeannelle:

"If the kitchen is the heart of the home, then the office is the heart of our living space at Temple Micah and Jeannelle is largely responsible for cultivating that energy." ♦



Jeannelle D'Isa (left) with her wife, Nicole, and their daughter, Noel.



# INTERESTING SPEAKERS!

Temple Micah features two monthly lecture series—on Sundays and Wednesdays. For more details, go to [templemicah.org](http://templemicah.org).

## SUNDAY SPEAKER SERIES



**Dec. 3 at 10:15 am – Rabbi David Saperstein on *The Effective Jewish Voice in the Public Square*.** Newsweek Magazine has named Rabbi Saperstein among the most influential rabbis in America several times and the Washington Post once called him the “quintessential religious lobbyist on Capitol Hill.” For decades, he directed the Religious Action Center of Reform

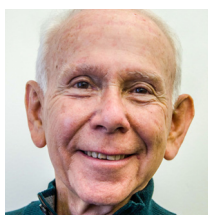
Judaism and for the past two years he held the position of the U.S. Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, the country’s chief diplomat on religious freedom issues.

**COMING SOON: Feb. 4 – Daniel Mach**, director of the ACLU Program on Freedom of Religion and Belief, will address **Church and State Issues in America Today**.

## LUNCH & LEARN

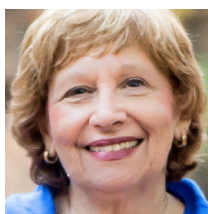
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A monthly program sponsored by the Aging Together Team. Reserve online at [templemicah.org](http://templemicah.org). Contact Cecelia Weinheimer via email, [lunchandlearn@templemicah.org](mailto:lunchandlearn@templemicah.org), or call the temple office, 202-342-9175, for details.



**Nov. 8 – Arthur Freeman** will discuss **The Evolution of Hanukkah Lamp Design**. Freeman, a Micah member for 50 years and passionate collector of hanukkiot, will cover some historical context of Hanukkah, but will focus largely on the way artists have worked with the basic shapes, and how they have used ornamentation, or chosen to eliminate ornamentation to highlight

the function of the lamp.



**Dec. 13 – Rabbi Tamara Miller** will speak on **The Rocky Road to the Rabbinate: A Modern Day Yentl**. Her recent book, “You are the Book: A Spiritual Memoir,” explores her journey as she fought institutions, ingrained sexism, her personal insecurities, and even her own family to forge a spiritual practice by which she could assist the sick and dying as well as help Jews who

felt lost or wounded find a spiritual path.

**COMING SOON: Jan. 10 – Larry Cooley and Marina Fanning** on **Foreign Aid in the “America First” Era**. Cooley and Fanning are renowned veterans of international development work in numerous countries.

## LESSONS FROM LANDAU

## WHY I VALUE BOTH LAMENTATION AND LAUGHTER

BY RABBI SUSAN LANDAU

Sometimes the news these days can make it seem like the world is coming to an end. But we need to be resilient so we can continue to do the work of tikkun olam. And for days when that task feels impossible, I recommend a good laugh. I recently read this story, and it made me smile:

"Prominent scientists have just announced that, as a result of the global warming phenomenon, an uncontrollable flood would soon devastate Planet Earth and bring death to every living being. There were only three days left before doomsday.

"The Chief Rabbi of Israel goes on international radio and says: 'Fellow Jews, we must all accept the will of God with humility. We must prepare ourselves to meet our Maker and pray that God may receive us with love and compassion.'

"The leaders of the Hasidim address their communities and say, 'Yidn (fellow Jews), let us do teshuvah and repent from our sins, and let us be prepared for the great Day of Judgment, at which time we will appear in the presence of the Court on High.

"The science and biology students of the universities of Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Haifa, the Negev, together with the leading scientists of the Haifa Technion and the Weizmann Institute, immediately go on the air and say, 'Fellow Jews, everywhere, we have heard the terrible news, and we must not waste any time, for we just have three days to learn how to live under water.'"

It's a reminder that, even when things seem awful, we can be resilient, and our hope and our action can be fueled by laughter. In my life, this process has long been fueled by some of my friends, Stephen Colbert, Seth Meyers, Trevor Noah, and most regularly, Jimmy Fallon. I can count on these gentlemen (why do they always need to be men?) to help me remain mindful of the state of the world without drowning in its struggles. Their comedy is not a sign of ignorance or negligence; it is fueled by grim reality, and rendered necessary by it. I believe we, as Jews, are called to do many things when the world is hurting. And I believe that watching late night television

is one of them.

I learned over the summer that when people swear in moments of pain, the act of cursing actually helps human beings endure the suffering. The New York Times article, called "The Case for Cursing," made me think of Eichah, the Book of Lamentations, which we read on Tisha B'Av. There is quite clearly a thematic connection between lamentations and the Jewish holy day dedicated to mourning, but I had never before imagined that there might be a practical relationship between the two as well. Perhaps reciting lamentations actually helps us through the process of mourning.

In my mind's eye, a lament like Eichah—or any time when we feel compelled to focus on our suffering and discuss it—helps us empty ourselves of some of the pain we are feeling. It can help rid us of some of that burden and allow us to carry other feelings as well. Laughter, another coping mechanism for situations like these, feeds that vacuum with something even more sustaining. Laughing through our tears fills us up and strengthens us.



Think of Tevye in "Fiddler on the Roof." He would have been completely depleted had he only lamented his many misfortunes. Sure, he takes a few moments to bemoan disaster, but he primarily subsists on laughter, and through it finds endurance.

In our world today, and in our community, there is so much work to be done, and so many tragedies with which we must come to terms. Each deserves our attention, and elicits from us laments of many kinds. But our Judaism reminds us to never stop there. In order to do the work of repairing the world—to have the focus and strength to make it happen—we need to both create moments of lamentation, moments of silence, reflective, safe spaces, and then we need to build ourselves up again, and keep going. I recommend, among other techniques, inviting "The Tonight Show" into your life, and making friends with Jimmy Fallon.

## Rabbi's Message FROM PAGE 1 ►

in our own land. I love Israel because the Hebrew language lives once again in the land of its birth.

When I say that Israel doesn't love me back, I mean more than rights for Reform Jews—or all non-Orthodox forms of Judaism. I mean much more: the growth of the union between Orthodoxy and Nationalism, the growth in a vehement ultra nationalism,

the growth in an ultra-ultra-Orthodox brand of Judaism which is alien to the historical Jewish experience, the growth in certain forms of intolerance and prejudice, the growth in the insidious ideology of what I will call the settler movement, the growth in insensitivity toward minorities.

With all this, even today, for me, the Jewish soul comes alive in Israel like no place else. In Israel, the adage "two Jews, three opinions," shortchanges

the number of opinions by at least half. Israel pulsates with ideas, schemes, dreams, life. That is why I go time and again—even with the pain, even with the problems, even with the settlements and the biblical theology that drives so much of the political settlement movement. There is a freshness and a creativity and an exuberance for life along that Mediterranean shore that I feel as in no other place.

Walter Lacquer's words,

written in 1973, still hold true today:

"... if we measure the achievement of Altneuland ... it comes out very well ... Above all, I should mention their terrific dynamism, their vitality, which makes this country so much more lively than almost any place in the world I have seen in my time ... take Israel, this unfinished, exasperating, annoying country ... Compared with Israel

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**One Day FROM PAGE 1 ►**

featuring eminent scholars. Later more than 200 people filed into the sanctuary to hear those speakers.

For one reason or another, hundreds of people passed through the doors of Temple Micah on Sunday, Oct. 22. This is a chronicle of that day, and a glimpse at the energy, enthusiasm, and dedication to learning and social justice that are hallmarks of Temple Micah.

**8:30 a.m.** Rabbi Josh Beraha, director of congregational learning, carries his guitar into the sanctuary before Boker Tov (good morning), the opening session of Machon Micah.

Machon Micah Educator Lesley Levin is busy setting up classes downstairs and printing schedules upstairs in the office.

**8:35 a.m.** Downstairs Greg Caplan maneuvers a rolling cart laden with coffee urns into the elevator. Upstairs his wife Julianna and their 10-year-old twins, Josephine and Norah, are setting up Micah Mocha, also known as the Bagel Table, in the lobby. Bagels, delivered each Sunday from Bethesda Bagels, are piled high on three large, round straw baskets. Cartons of cream cheese are put out.

**9:00 a.m.** Twenty Machon Micah teachers line the walls of the upstairs library for their meeting before Boker Tov.

Jill Berman, who operates Micah's Judaica boutique, is getting settled behind a table set up in front of the glass case of jewelry, mezuzot, and other items for sale.

**9:30 a.m.** It is standing room only in the sanctuary as what looks like a crowd of a couple hundred (students, teachers, and parents) arrives for Boker Tov. As Teddy Klaus, Micah's music director, said afterwards, the most remarkable part of Boker Tov at Temple Micah are the numbers of parents who participate. "We are anything but a drop off school . . . Sunday is rocking."

Klaus and Rabbi Beraha are the bookends of a guitar quartet that accompanies raucous renditions of song

after song. At one point, Rabbi Beraha, his trademark scarf around his neck, dances around the sanctuary, singing the The Alef Bet Song to the delight of kids and parents.

**10:00 a.m.** Bags of frozen challah dough are thawing in the kitchen for fourth graders who will knead and twist the dough for baking. Meanwhile those fourth graders are dancing in a space screened off downstairs.

**10:10 a.m.** In the lobby, one and a half bagels are left on the Micah Mocha table.

**10:15 a.m.** The Parent Discussion Group meets in the quiet room off the sanctuary.

**10:20 a.m.** It is as if the Bagel Table never existed. It's also apparent that an event-jammed day at Temple Micah requires, not just enthusiastic volunteers, but lots of folding tables and stackable chairs. It truly is a day of many moving parts.



**Rabbi Landau explains Mazon Micah.**

**11:00 a.m.** Members of the Gun Violence Prevention Working Group, led by Rabbi Susan Landau, are gathering in the upstairs library to talk of upcoming projects. One member, Elsie Klumpner, urges consideration of attending vigils held throughout D.C. for victims of gun violence.

**12 noon** Classes are over, but not all of the 163 students in classes from pre-k through sixth grade have departed. Some, along with their parents, have stayed to help make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches as part of the Mazon Micah effort to aid the homeless served by Friendship Place. Rabbi Landau, who is the force behind Mazon Micah, sits



**Packing treats for Mazon Micah.**

on the floor with the children to explain how the sandwiches will be made. ("What does mazon mean? she asks. "Food," suggests a tyke. "Yes, mazon is nourishment," she replies.)

Members of Temple Micah's teen group are having their own lunch before boarding a bus for the Cox Farms in Centreville, VA. The MiTY

president, Ilana Samuel, 16, the daughter of Jodi Enda and Terence Samuel, says the pumpkin picking expedition is the season kickoff for the group.

**2:00 p.m.** In the lull after the hubbub of Machon Micah dies down,

Custodian Josue Portillo is working to get everything ready for the 5 o'clock event.

He rolls the grand piano out of the sanctuary into the lobby.

He sets up 234 chairs in semicircles in the sanctuary.

**2:45 p.m.** By now the office, the upstairs library, the galleria, and the sanctuary have been vacuumed by Portillo. Tables needed earlier have been put away.

Soon the grand piano is rolled from its temporary home in the lobby into the upstairs library. The doors to the library are shut.

**3:00 p.m.** Tess Wald, a Micah member who owns Tess Wald Productions, an event management company in Chevy Chase, had arrived earlier to coordinate the filming of the panel discussion. Now her assistants have joined



# The Jewish Voice in the Public Square: Panelists Find Their Voices, Will We?

BY FRAN DAUTH

WHAT'S THE JEWISH voice? Is there a Jewish voice? What is the public square? Do we ignore the time we are in?

The questions were aimed at Rabbi Larry Hoffman, a professor of liturgy at Hebrew Union College and the author of more than 40 books; Riv-Ellen Prell, a leading ethnographer of the American Jewish experience from the University of Minnesota; and Richard Harwood, founder of the Harwood Institute, an expert on Main Street in America, and a member of Temple Micah.

The occasion was pure Temple Micah: gather some of the most distinguished thinkers on American life to discuss how we as Jews should respond to the current cacophony of political conversation. Ask a Micah member, Valerie Strauss, a Washington Post reporter, to moderate.

The event, The Jewish Voice in the Public Square, one that Rabbi Daniel Zemel began thinking about at least nine months ago, was made possible by donations to the Temple Micah Innovation Fund. The 90-minute panel discussion Oct. 22 attracted an audience of more than 200 in the sanctuary.

And what about those questions, which Strauss asked the panelists at the beginning of the evening?

These were not people who talk in sound bites. Each panelist, in turn, was passionate and eloquent. At times they agreed. At other times, they disagreed, even got a little contentious. Often they strayed off the subject. (What could be more Jewish?)

If there was consensus, it was that there is a Jewish voice. The panelists were not fully in agreement on how to use that voice.

Harwood led off by saying that in his travels across the country “the thing I hear most from fellow Americans is a deep yearning that we can come together.” In the past, he said, the message he heard had been about politics,

now it is about how “society has been ripped apart.”

Many people “have lost faith in our institutions. When we lose faith in our institutions, we lose faith in ourselves,” he said.

The “Jewish voice,” he said, speaks to “dignity, regardless of where you are from.” Such voices are needed to “pierce the noise and confusion,” he added. And, he contended, people can be taught to talk together about how to solve problems, not to argue about who caused them. He said people talking together to address local problems are the foundation for solving problems on a larger stage.

Professor Prell's main theme was much more specific. She declared we “find ourselves in a moment that requires great human courage,” one she likened to when Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel joined Martin Luther King in marching across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Ala., in 1965.

She advocated finding the “right fight for justice,” as Heschel did in “crossing that bridge.” Heschel asked, she said, “what his Jewish voice demanded of him.”

She advocated finding the “right fight for justice and the common good,” as Heschel did in “crossing that bridge.”

For her that “right fight” now is to combat voter suppression, a theme she came back to repeatedly. “Let’s talk about the right to vote,” Prell said, declaring herself a “hard-nosed social scientist.”

Rabbi Hoffman, characteristically philosophic, suggested that while religion has always had a voice in the public square, religion “does not offer truth as much as it offers conversation about



Moderator Strauss and Panelists Hoffman, Prell, and Harwood.

truth,” he said. Those conversations about truth can be found in the “Koran, the Gospel of Mark, and the Talmud,” he noted.

Moderator Strauss asked Rabbi Hoffman what was the synagogue's voice in all this. “We are a religion that matters,” he said. Having a voice in the public square “allows us to act in ways an individual can’t . . . To be a part of a congregation, that is the definition of the public square.”

But “How we are going to talk with one another” matters, he said.

Citing conversations he has had with academics at Notre Dame where he was a visiting professor, and with colleagues with whom he developed a continuing education course for U.S. Navy chaplains, he said he often heard religious comments that stunned him.

“What does it mean to be saved?” he would ask, not “What the hell does that mean?”

The first question is part of a conversation, the latter, the start of an argument, he said.

Harwood made a similar argument when he said finding common ground to look for solutions means getting in a room and talking about issues, not pointing fingers.

Near the end of the evening, Rabbi Hoffman strayed from the topic at hand to declare: “Nothing is more profound as taking your life seriously.”

The comment prompted a quick round of applause from the audience, and maybe was exactly on point. ♦

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Ruth Gruenberg, by Mark Gruenberg,  
Stuart and Nancy Schwartz  
Walter Page, by William Page

## ONEG FUND

Hannah Gould

## RABBI BERAHA'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Ken Simon

IN HONOR OF  
Jane's naming, by Dan and Mimi Steinberg

IN MEMORY OF  
Joel Steinhauer, by Jennifer Steinhauer

## RABBI LANDAU'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Amanda Demczuk

IN HONOR OF  
Rabbi Landau's engagement to Rabbi Danny  
Moss, by Dr. and Mrs. George Beckman  
Laura Lorenzo's conversion, by  
Becky and Bill Komisar

IN MEMORY OF  
Hannah Lipman, by Jack Schwarz

## RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Jodi Cohen  
Paul Feinberg  
Melanie Franco Nussdorf  
Ruth Henoch  
Judith Levin

IN HONOR OF  
Corinna Ferrini's conversion, by Ron Weiss  
Todd Jasper and Emma Spaulding,  
by Lorraine Berkowitz

IN MEMORY OF  
Harold Berman, by Rose Berman  
Richard Coffman, by Lynn and Robert Coffman  
David A. Feldman, by Howard Feldman  
Ruth Gruenberg, by Mark Gruenberg  
Jerome Hahn, by Susie Blumenthal  
Robert Kamin, by Harriet and Louis Weiner

## SOCIAL JUSTICE FUND

IN HONOR OF  
the birth of Leah Abigail Warshof,  
by Judy and Doug Warshof

IN MEMORY OF  
Phyllis Appel Bell, by Harriette Kinberg  
Ida Weinstein Schotz, by Ellen and Stan Brand  
Herbert Waldner, by David Waldner

## SUKKAT SHALOM

The Robert S. and Susan Morgenstein Fund  
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Aaron M. Kaufman  
Chris and Mary Mahle  
Michelle Sender  
Beverly and Harlan Sherwat  
Richard Fitz and Kathy Spiegel  
Muriel Wolf  
Marjorie Zapruder

IN HONOR OF  
Susan Bandler and Joel Korn, by the  
Gordon-Mallory Collaborative

IN MEMORY OF  
Arlene Kamin, by Harriet Weiner  
Elsie Sherwat, by Beverly and Harlan Sherwat

## THE RABBI DANIEL GOLDMAN ZEMEL FUND FOR ISRAEL

IN HONOR OF  
Marcia Bordman and her activities in forming  
the Hebrew Short Story group, Richard  
and Susan Lahne, and Geri Nielsen, by  
Ed Grossman and Rochelle Stanfield

*This list reflects donations received  
August 30–October 24, 2017. Every effort  
has been made to ensure its accuracy, but  
if there are any errors or omissions please  
accept our apologies. For corrections or  
clarifications, please contact Rhiannon  
Walsh in the temple office. Thank you.*



## B'NAI MITZVAH



### NINA DIWAN

NOV. 4 / 15 CHESHVAN

PARENTS: Kristin and Roger Diwan

TORAH PORTION: Vayera

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Nina will be collecting books on Judaism for inclusion in a theological library in Beirut, Lebanon.



### ALEXANDER RUDICK

NOV. 11 / 22 CHESHVAN

PARENTS: Jonathan and Shayna Rudick

TORAH PORTION: Chayei Sara

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Alex participated in a "twinning" ceremony at Yad Vashem during his trip to Israel this past summer. Alex was twinned with Alexander Motiovitz, an 11-year-old boy from Chust, Hungary (modern day Ukraine), who perished at Auschwitz. Alex has adopted the memory of Alexander Motiovitz for his Bar Mitzvah, and upon returning home researched the Holocaust with a focus on what his twin's experience would have been like. In honor of the children who perished in the Holocaust, Alex plans to donate a share of his gifts to Save The Children.



### BENJAMIN STERN

DEC. 2 / 14 KISLEV

PARENTS: Jennifer Klein and Todd Stern

TORAH PORTION: Vayishlach

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Ben is working with two friends on a project to help animals in need. They are setting up a drive at school and at their b'nai mitzvah to collect food and toys to donate to animals at the Humane Rescue Alliance.



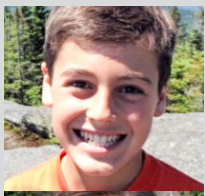
### MILO RAPPOPORT

DEC. 9 / 21 KISLEV

PARENT: Philippa Rappoport

TORAH PORTION: Vayeshev

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Milo was a counselor in training at the DC Jewish Community Center camp this past summer.



### MAX BENJAMIN POSNER

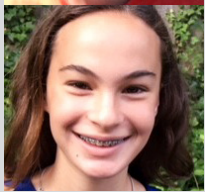
### ZOE VANESSA POSNER

DEC. 16 / 28 KISLEV

PARENTS: Steve Posner and Robin Rudowitz

TORAH PORTION: Miketz

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Together, Max and Zoe will support A Wider Circle through a number of activities throughout the year. They plan to volunteer around Thanksgiving and Hanukkah, they will be organizing a team to run the 5k Race to End Poverty in April, and they'll also be collecting donations. A Wider Circle is in the family's neighborhood and has a simple mission: to help one individual and one family after another to rise out of poverty.



## MAZAL TOV!

Christine Beresniova and Rokas Beresniovos, on the naming of their daughter, Eva Ruth

KateLyn Claffey Smith and Joshua Smith, on the naming of their son, Theo Burke

Susannah Nadler and Zachary Weingarten, on the birth of their son, Allen Gabriel

Rachel Levin and Michael Buckler, on the birth of their daughter, Maya Rose Levin-Buckler

Benjamin Rubenstein and Catherine Salsman, on the blessing of their marriage

Jed and Nichole Seifert, on the naming of their son, Everett

Dan and Mimi Steinberg, on the naming of their daughter, Jane

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Ryan and Stacey Band

Aaron Bielenberg and Karen Young

Joseph and Katharine Blumenthal

Carrie Budoff Brown and Thomas Brown

Juliet Eilperin and Andrew Light

Corinna Ferrini and Ron Weiss

Seth Goldin and Lindsay Larner

Sofi Hersher

Jon and Kim Hymes

Danielle Jacobs-Irwin

Leah Kaplan and Linh Cunnion

Joanna and David London

Susan Nathan and Martin Stalman

Ethan Porter

Phyllis Posner

Noah Rosenberg and Shannon Roche

Susanne Salkind

Michael Saracco

Reva Schwartz and Tom Millar

Zainab and Daniel Schwartz

Ari Silber and Elizabeth Rosner

## CONDOLENCES

The Temple Micah community extends its deepest condolences to:

RUTH SIMON, on the passing of her sister-in-law, Hannah Lipman

DAVID WALDNER, on the passing of his mother, Sylvia Pessa Waldner

DAVID WENTWORTH, on the passing of his mother, Jean Wentworth

May their memories be for a blessing.

**Family FROM PAGE 1 ►**

In their first week, the family signed a lease for their apartment in Silver Spring, enrolled in English classes, applied for Social Security cards, learned about Head Start and educational play groups, and much more. Micah members took them to a nearby Giant supermarket, to a halal market for meat and traditional Afghan bread, and to a Target for winter clothing, often accompanied by a translator.

During one recent outing, the family was schlepped from one appointment to another, with a welcome stop at a halal kabab shop for lunch. As the kids devoured plates of rice and bread and chicken with Coca Cola, the parents pointed out a mural of Kabul on the café wall. Afterward, they waited patiently at a busy refugee office to apply for food stamps, while the children played with other immigrant kids nearby.

Sukkat Shalom members said it has been a privilege to spend the first few days with what they called “our” family. “We don’t fully understand the circumstances that led them to leave

behind family and friends,” one of the Micah volunteers said, but “clearly they sought the promise of a safer and brighter future in America.”

As the father begins to search for a job and learns English, Sukkat Shalom members are optimistic his work history will serve him well.

Representatives of Lutheran Social Services, the official refugee resettlement agency in the DC metropolitan area, suggested Sukkat Shalom raise \$45,000 to support the family in the first year. Nearly 200 Micah families donated much more in response to a single, eloquent appeal from Rabbi Zemel. In addition, many congregants have stepped forward to donate myriad supplies and personal expertise—from furniture and

clothing and the full-time use of a minivan to free medical and dental care to English tutoring, and more.

The Sukkat Shalom leaders are indebted to the committee chairs Deborah Raviv, Hannah Matthews, Alex Zapruder, Ricki Green, Jessica Kaplan, Karen Mark, Yael Traum, Leesa Klepper, Sunny Kaplan, Robin Shaffert, Janet Gordon, Jim Hamos, Norma Lerner, Diane August, and Aaron Pollon.

Questions, suggestions or offers of help may be made by email at [sukkatshalom@templemicah.org](mailto:sukkatshalom@templemicah.org). ♦



**Leaders of Sukkat Shalom effort celebrate family's arrival.**

**One Day FROM PAGE 6 ►**

her and they're talking about microphones and camera angles.

**4:30 p.m.** People begin arriving for the panel discussion, the second program made possible by the temple's Innovation Fund.

**5:10 p.m.** The crowd has settled down, the panelists and the moderator are in place, and Rabbi Zemel goes to the microphone.

**6:40 p.m.** Ninety minutes later the panel is over, but many people are lingering.

**7:15 p.m.** The security guard hired

for the evening checks out.

**7:30 p.m.** Most of the cars have left the parking lot. But the lights are still on inside as there are chairs to stack once again, and another round of cleaning to undertake.

**8:30 p.m.** Another busy Sunday has come and gone at Temple Micah. ♦

**Rabbi's Message FROM PAGE 5 ►**

much of the rest of the world seems to be half dead, or at least in a state of somnolence . . . There is such liveliness here, such enthusiasm and dynamic energy—never a dull moment.” (Life Magazine, May 1973)

Even with the variety and the thriving of American Jewish life today, I believe that our connection with Israel remains a driving and sustaining force for us. Israeli literature, archaeological finds, new Hebrew music, Israeli ingenu-

ity all combine in different ways to inform, expand and enrich our own Jewish horizons and vitality. The connection to Israel animates that critical aspect of the Jewish experience that makes us both a people and a faith. Without Israel, where do we derive the strength of Jewish peoplehood? How do both peoplehood and faith remain firm pillars of our Jewish lives?

I therefore worry much more about the American side of the equation. What is the future of American

Zionism? Can we sustain a robust Zionism that is rooted in human rights for all people? Can we sustain a robust Zionism that truly honors the traumas that are etched into Israeli memory—both distant and recent—and nonetheless supports a vigorous politics that is active for peace? Can we sustain a robust Zionism that can be a sort of “his majesty’s loyal opposition” to Israeli governments that are increasingly Nationalist Orthodox? Can we sustain a robust Zionism that

is a Zionism rooted in a Jewish soul that combines universalism and particularism, love for Israel and critique of Israel? Can we maintain a Zionism that is unceasingly energized to support those Israelis who work passionately and daily on behalf of pluralism, minority rights and a state that is both Jewish and democratic?

These are the questions of the Holy Day sermon not written. These are questions of the coming years.

Shalom,  
Rabbi Daniel G. Zemel

## BERAHA'S BLACKBOARD

## COMPETING NOTIONS OF CLOCK TIME AND GOD TIME

BY RABBI JOSH BERAHA

Reading Genesis, as we do every year at this time, I'm astounded by the book's profoundness—to state the obvious. In many ways, the greatness of Genesis should come as no surprise, for our people have returned to its words for generations, and in each, have seen the reflection of our own lived experiences. Rabbi Ben Bag Bag was right when he said of Torah, “everything is in it.” There is a good reason we call Torah our *eitz chayim*, our “tree of life,” for when studied, and considered—seriously—it truly can provide insight into life's greatest questions, which helps us to feel rooted and secure.

This past year I became taken with the concept of time. Maybe this new fascination is a function of life stage, as I've watched my children grow, physically and emotionally, at a pace that will be unmatched for the rest of their lives. Or, possibly, to be fascinated by time and how things change is a basic human curiosity, one that ebbs and flows throughout our conscious days as we perceive the transformation of ourselves and the world around us.

I find that the study of Torah can be a portal through which I can ruminate on the myriad complex issues to which I seek answers, the concept of time being top among them. And top among the books of the Hebrew Bible through which to learn about time is Genesis. For contained within the opening chapters is no less than the invention of time itself, and what follows provides a surplus of means through which to contemplate what the OED defines as “the indefinite continued progress

of existence and events in the past, present, and future regarded as a whole,” but to which Jewish thinkers, from the writers of the creation story to thinkers like Nachman of Bratslav, have offered numerous, intricate definitions. An example par excellence, of course, is Shabbat, holiness in time, which we know from Friday evening services, via Abraham Joshua Heschel, is a taste of eternity in the duration of a single day.

With thanks to my rebbe for the introduction, this summer I studied the late, provocative thinker Neil Postman, who launched his book career out of his profound obsession with how particular tools have the possibility to change a culture. The tools he chooses to investigate range from items as old as the telescope to newer inventions like television.

Of interest to me in Postman's many works is his study of clocks, a tool that in Postman's view transformed humanity's perception of time, and in doing so—he boldly claims—enabled the development of capitalism.

“Tools are not integrated into a culture,” he writes in “Technopoly” (1992), “they attack the culture. They bid to become the culture.” How well many of us know these consequences to which Postman refers! One need only walk down Wisconsin Avenue during the morning rush to notice how nearly every person who waits for a bus does so while scrolling through a phone or has ear buds in each ear.

Reading Genesis in this new year, with questions about the nature of time heavy on my mind, I slowly began to see, thanks to Postman, that there

is a vast difference between what I might call “God time” and time in the world we mostly live in, which I'll call “clock time.” God time begins when God transforms *welter and waste (tohu va'vohu)* into light on day one and sets the natural rhythms of the universe into motion. Night turns to day, and day turns to night.

Clock time began with the desires of 14th century Benedictine monks to regulate the routines of their monastery. But ironically, what began as a means of tracking hours in order to give of oneself slowly, became a tool that “brought a new and precise regularity to the life of the workman and the merchant.” The clock, says Postman, quoting Lewis Mumford, “made possible the idea of the regular production, regular working hours and a standardized product.”

In an earlier work of Postman's, and probably his most famous—“Amusing Ourselves to Death” (1985)—he writes, “moment to moment, it turns out, is not God's conception (of time), or nature's. It is man conversing with himself about and through a piece of machinery he created.” And so, while once we sought to merely keep time, now we serve time.

To read the Bible's account of creation is to notice exactly what Postman points out. God's world is one in which there are six days to toil, and one to rest. Six days to build, to earn, to live in clock time, and one to simply exist.

For the educated Jew, it is certainly a truism to praise Shabbat for its different dimension and sense of time, and to guard its holiness. But who among us takes the com-



mandment to heart, week in and week out? Maybe our lived experience of modernity, with all the activities and choices of entertainment, makes the challenge of keeping Shabbat one that is too great to overcome? If Postman claims we're amusing ourselves to death, I might claim that today, 30 years later, we are distracting ourselves to death. How companies like Apple, Google, and Facebook manipulate our attention is at this point well documented, but hardly well considered by the average user. Instead, we plug into the Internet and give of our attention willingly, with almost no protest or questions asked.

It strikes me that—with all the strategies and techniques from parenting experts (an oxymoron, if I ever saw one), life coaches and the like—maybe the answers are simpler than we imagined. Maybe the answer begins with how we think of time. “Clock time,” it seems, is too far removed from nature and therefore forces us into unnatural rhythms of manufactured, constructed time, and pushes us further from “God time.” Maybe living more simply, without a watch, but with the flow of the earth, even if only for a brief moment each week (if not for all of Shabbat), would help bring us closer to that mystery that lies so far removed from us when we rush to work, then home, then back to work. For at the end of the day, which world would you rather inhabit—God's world or the world we've built for ourselves?





## A RECORD-BREAKING DRIVE!

Machon Micah sixth graders launched their annual Underwear Drive during the High Holy Days, and by Nov. 1 they had broken the record for the number of pieces collected for homeless people served by Friendship Place.



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