



Vine

Micah story goes high tech

FROM RABBI ZEMEL

ADVANCING THE HUMAN PROJECT IN 5776

DEAR FRIENDS,

Several years ago, close friends told me a story about a couple who resigned from a synagogue after many years of membership. Their children were adults, so they had no “need” for Hebrew school. They weren’t interested in opportunities to learn, socialize, celebrate Shabbat, pray or engage in social justice. They had no friends at the synagogue. So they left.



“What do synagogues really do?” they asked their friends, who shared the conversation with me. They wondered if they weren’t better off giving their money to service organizations like the Community Council for the Homeless, the House of Ruth and others that help those in need.

My friends asked me how I would answer the question. A long conversation ensued, and I eventually concluded several things:

1. This is a hard question to answer to people who do not intuitively understand what synagogues are about.
2. What I just wrote as reason number one is highly unsatisfying, even to me.
3. Synagogue mission statements or vision statements are usually generic and unsatisfying.
4. We lack the language to accurately capture the role of the synagogue in 21st-century America.
5. I would keep the main question and ancillary challenges rolling around in my head.

After years of struggle, challenge and thought mixed with frustration,

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BY SHELLEY GROSSMAN

THE TEMPLE MICAH story is about to go cyber. The Living History Team has been working quietly since January to develop an interactive, web-based venue to chronicle Micah from the beginning to the present and into the future. After the High Holy Days, the team plans to preview a prototype to illustrate the possibilities of such an undertaking. Preview dates and times are to be announced soon for the prototype, called *Temple Micah—A Living History, 1963 to Today*.

“The Living History Project is a wonderful opportunity to tell our narrative—from our beginnings to our present, in an appealing digital form that can be forever updated,” explained David Diskin, team captain.

The project and its success, Diskin maintains, depend on the temple community’s participation in providing information, slices of history, videos, photos and anecdotes. Comments, suggestions, critiques are very welcome. The team particularly urges members to point out mistakes and omissions. To facilitate active member involvement, every page of the prototype will have a box to click on to respond.

The project grew out of the work of the Member Recognition Task Force that last January recommended to the temple board efforts to, among other things, find ways to acknowledge and pay tribute to Micah members for the work, often unsung, that they have done and do now to make the temple the special community that it is.

“Temple Micah is 52 years old now and is in danger of losing some of its memories,” Mary Beth Schiffman, recognition task force co-chair, told the

board. “It has no official documentation of the people who created Micah and who continue to build the congregation today through contributions of time, energy, creativity, dedication and other resources.”

The new effort will in no way change the synagogue’s “laudable fundamental policy of egalitarianism,” she said. No plaques will decorate the walls. “No member of the community is to receive special respect or exercise undue influence because of personal wealth, prominence or monetary donations to the temple.”

The task force had envisioned some kind of collection of documents, memorabilia, photos, videos, and other artifacts that a temple group—established for the purpose—would carefully curate, edit and vet to avoid a free-for-all community bulletin board. Instead it would produce a carefully edited, coherent temple story.

Diskin immediately took an interest in the project and, being an expert in computers and things digital, came up with the interactive framework for the Living History Project. Soon he was joined by four members who brought varying lengths of Micah experience, and, perhaps more important, expertise in mounting such a project: two professional documentary-makers, Jennifer Gruber and Leslie Sewell; an Emmy-winning television producer, Stu Schwartz; and this reporter, Shelley Grossman, a retired journalist.

The group researched the synagogue’s history, policies, innovations and approaches. For the prototype, so far the team has produced video interviews

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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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WHY WE CELEBRATE MICAH

By JODI ENDA

Put on your dancing shoes!

It's time for a celebration.

Not Rosh Hashanah nor Sukkot,
though those will come first. Not
Hanukkah, though we will strike a match.

It's time to celebrate our building.

Yeah, I know, that
sounds truly boring.

But wait! As of this
year, we have been
in our building for 20
years. And, what's more,
we are about to pay
off the mortgage. (You
got it, that's where the
match comes in. We
will have a ceremonial

mortgage burning!)

So celebrate we will, with a grand
party, complete with dancing and
other forms of revelry, on the night of
Saturday, December 5. Consider this a
save-the-date notice.

We have a lot to celebrate. Our lovely
plot of land in Northwest DC is our
home, a safe place in which we come
together to share ideas and passions,
emotions and experiences, intellectual
discussions and spiritual growth.

Most of us never knew Micah in any
other spot. Few of us were there when
the congregation was founded, in the
shadows of the Vietnam War and the
Civil Rights Movement, in 1963. And
fewer than half of us were on hand in
1995 to carry our Torahs from our ini-
tial stomping ground, in a church in
Southwest Washington, to our brand
new, very own building on Wisconsin
Avenue. Some of us were around to
inscribe our names beneath the floor-
boards of the sanctuary, but not the
majority.

The foundations of Temple Micah
were laid, figuratively, in Southwest;
the congregation has grown, literally as
well as figuratively, in Northwest. We
have more than doubled in size—and
expanded our building's footprint to
accommodate the larger numbers—and
expanded from one rabbi to three.

We also have matured. We are in the
vanguard of congregations that are forging
a new course for American synagogues,
for American Jews. We have a national

reputation because we like to experiment,
to imagine new ways of doing old things
and even new ways of doing new things—
and then to do them. We also recognize
that we have a lot more to do. We are not
done maturing, learning, trying, grasping,
inventing and, yes, innovating. I hope we
never will be.

But we can celebrate nonetheless. I
wasn't a Micah member when we moved
to our current home. But in 14 years, I've
been around for a lot of highlights.

The first moment I knew, really *knew*,
that I was in the right congregation was
the week of September 11, 2001. Many of
us flocked to Shabbat services a few days
after the terrorist attacks, and as I stood
with hundreds of people I did not know,
crying as we sang "God Bless America," I
felt at home.

This is a place with soul.

The following week, Rabbi Zemel
delivered one of the most powerful
sermons I have ever heard, putting the
attacks in context, intellectually and
morally, helping us come to terms with
this new, scary, incomprehensible world.

This is a place with brains.

If you lived in Washington in the fall
of 2001, you know it was a tense time.
Some people moved away, some sealed
their houses with duct tape. Others left
their mail untouched as anthrax sud-
denly, horrifyingly felled unsuspecting
postal workers. Tourism dried up. Hotel
workers were laid off.

Temple Micah collected rice, tons of
it, to help feed people who lost their jobs.

This is a place with compassion.

I came to Temple Micah at a fateful
time in our nation's history, so some dra-
matic moments stand out. But most of
my favorite memories came later.

The music! Always, always, there is
beautiful music. Every week, Cantor
Meryl Weiner and Music Director Teddy
Klaus elevate our worship services with
songs that are moving and accessible.
(The first thing most new members tell
me is that they joined for this reason.)
We have incredible choirs and bands and,
once a year, an orchestra to help bring
our prayers to life.

But that's not all. For years, Micah-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7 ►



HIGH HOLY DAY SERVICES 5776/2015

Unless otherwise indicated, all services held at Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church, 3401 Nebraska Ave., NW, Washington DC

Selichot

Saturday, September 5

Oneg 10:30 pm; Service 11 pm, at Temple Micah

Annual Memorial Service

Sunday, September 6

10 am, Temple Micah Cemetery (directions on website)

Erev Rosh Hashanah

Sunday, September 13

Main Service at 8 pm, followed by Oneg

Next Dor 20s/30s service at 6:30 pm at Temple Micah

Rosh Hashanah

Monday, September 14

Main Service at 10:15 am

For Children:

- Young Family Service (newborn through 1st grade) 9:15–9:45 am
- Children's Service (2nd–6th grade) 10:30–11:15 am
- Child care and Youth Lounge available (pre-registration required)

Kol Nidre

Tuesday, September 22

Main Service at 8 pm

Next Dor 20s/30s service at 7:30 pm at Temple Micah

Yom Kippur

Wednesday, September 23

Main Service at 10:15 am

For Children:

- Young Family service (newborn through 1st grade) 9:15–9:45am
- Children's Service (grades 2–6) 10:30–11:15 am
- Child care and Youth Lounge available (pre-registration required)

Ask the Rabbis 1:30–2:45 p.m.

Afternoon Break and 25-Year Club Readings 2:45–3:30 p.m.

Afternoon and Neilah Services 3:30 p.m.

Break the Fast following Neilah service

Wise Aging Groups Launch October 2015

BY HARRIETTE KINBERG AND THE WISE AGING COMMITTEE

WOULD YOU LIKE to join other Micah members to explore issues of aging, gain insights, and enhance your awareness of the possibilities inherent in today's unprecedented prolongation of old age?

The Wise Aging program, designed by the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, creates a safe space to explore issues related to aging within a small, trusting community. Neither therapy nor grief counseling, each session uses Jewish and other sources to help us examine this stage of our lives, learn from each other, and share optimism, laughter, tears and new insights.

The program consists of a series of nine workshops based on the book, *WISE AGING: Living with Joy, Resilience, & Spirit*, by Rabbi Rachel Cowan and Dr. Linda Thal. Topics include:

What is special about this life stage?

Life review

Becoming one's authentic self

Developing a positive relationship to our changing bodies

Revitalizing and nourishing healthy relationships

Forgiveness and reconciliation

Cultivating spiritual qualities for well-being

Learning to live with loss

Change and death

Cultivating wisdom

Leaving a legacy

Starting this fall, Temple Micah will launch three groups: Group schedules will vary, but all groups will cover the same material. Groups will meet: Tuesdays (10 am–noon), Thursdays (1 pm–3 pm), and Sundays (1 pm–3 pm). Each group is limited to 12 participants and will meet for nine sessions. Each session will include contemplative listening, text study, mindfulness meditation, movement exercises, reflection and journaling. Two facilitators will lead each group. All the facilitators are

Micah members who took professional training from the Institute. They are Peg Blechman, Jane Kerschner, Francie Schwartz, Rabbi Herb Schwartz, and Harriett Stonehill.

There is no charge, but all participants must buy the Wise Aging book, priced at \$16.95. Participants will be asked to commit to regular attendance, as it is important for members to establish and maintain rapport with each other. If there are more than 36 applicants, participants will be chosen randomly, taking into consideration their preferred meeting times.

To learn more, please come to an information meeting at Micah on Sunday, September 27, from 4–5:30 pm, email wiseaging@templemicah.org, or leave a message at the Temple office for a facilitator to call you. And to register, please visit the temple's website or submit a paper registration form you'll find in the Micah lobby. ●

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here's a sampling of Micah activities (beyond High Holy Day-related events) on tap this fall. For a detailed schedule of all upcoming events and services, check out www.templemicah.org.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27 • 9:30 AM
Machon Micah: First Sunday of 5776

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 27
Sukkot Preparation and Celebration

Help Build our Sukkah from 10 am to noon; Erev Sukkot Service at 6:30 pm

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 2 • 6 PM
Welcome and Installation of Rabbi Susan Landau
 With Youth Choir and special guest speaker to be announced. Oneg at 6 pm; service at 6:30 pm.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4 • 6 PM
All-community Simchat Torah service

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15 • 9:30 AM
Annual Hanukkah Gift & Crafts Fair, in the Social Hall

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20 • 6 PM
Micah House Shabbat
 Oneg at 6 pm; service at 6:30 pm; Community Shabbat Dinner with Micah House panel from 7:30 to 9 pm.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5
20-Year Building Anniversary and Mortgage-Burning Party

Living History FROM PAGE 1 ►

of the rabbis, a temple founder, one of its architects (also a member) and two other long-time members. In addition, the prototype includes still photos, lists, and explanatory text. In all, it currently envisions 17 sections on such topics as origins, the Micah Way, the rabbis, lay leadership, education, worship, staff, groups, unsung heroes and having fun. And every team meeting comes up with new ideas to capture a well-rounded image of Micah and its community.

Diskin said, "It will also provide a medium for anyone in the congregation to tell their own Micah story." ●

INTERESTING SPEAKERS!

Temple Micah features two monthly lecture series—on Sunday morning and Wednesday noon. For more details, go online to www.templemicah.org.

SUNDAY SPEAKER SERIES

Sundays from 10:15 to 11:45 am

November 1 – Diana Butler Bass returns to Micah to discuss her forthcoming book, *Grounded: Finding God in the World—A Spiritual Revolution*. Author, speaker, and independent scholar specializing in American religion and culture, Bass is a leading voice in progressive Christianity.

November 15 – Former Congressmen Tom Davis and Martin Frost discuss their new book, *The Partisan Divide: Congress in Crisis*.

LUNCH & LEARN

Wednesdays from noon to 2 pm

A monthly program sponsored by the Aging Together Team. Reserve online at www.templemicah.org. Contact Livia Bardin, lunchandlearn@templemicah.org, or call the temple office, 202-342-9175, for details.

September 9 – Dr. Thomas M. Hyde, on "Mental Illness and Violence."

October 14 – Livia Bardin, on "The Family of Abraham: A Social Worker's Perspective."

Temple Micah's Annual Underwear Drive – 2015

Once again this year, Micah members are invited to donate new underclothing (underwear, bras, t-shirts and socks) to support neighbors in need. (For a detailed list of most requested items, please see the temple's website.) Just pick up a shopping bag at Rosh Hashanah service—and return it with your donations at Yom Kippur services on Wednesday morning, September 23. The Temple Micah 6th-grade class will count and deliver the items to benefit the clients of Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place.

Mazal Tov to Martha Adler!

The annual Underwear Drive was launched 16 years ago by longtime member Martha Adler, and it has since become the temple's most important annual mitzvah project. In recognition of her "visionary leadership," the Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place has chosen Martha to receive its 2015 Partnership in Mission Award at a special ceremony on Thursday, October 29th. Details to follow. All Micah members are warmly welcome. Please come and help Martha celebrate. Congratulations, Martha!



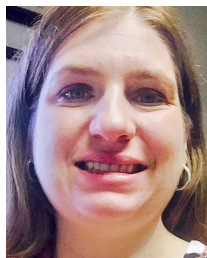
Warm Welcome: New Additions to Micah Staff

Three talented individuals joined the temple staff over the summer. Please join us in welcoming them to the Temple Micah community.

MAGGIE HEIDEMA Assistant Education Director

Born in Mississippi, Heidema always considered the nation's capital her "home away from home" because her grandparents and extended family were in the area. Her family eventually settled in Little Silver, NJ where she completed high school. "We attended Monmouth Reform Temple and I am proud to say that Rabbi Sally Priesand helped me to become Bat Mitzvah."

No surprise that she ended up in Washington, attending American University from which she received a degree in Jewish Studies with a secondary focus on education. She went on to attend Baltimore Hebrew University, where



Heidema

she earned a Master's degree in Jewish Communal Service. She also received a Master's in Social Work from the University of Maryland—Baltimore.

In the last several years, Heidema has taught and worked as a social worker. She and husband Roy Vinnik

are the proud parents of David Edan, 18 months. In her spare time (really!?), she enjoys opportunities to be creative—doing crafts, gardening on her balcony, and cooking. "I look forward to helping Machon Micah continue to grow and helping its members learn new and exciting things," she says.

LINCOLN SKLAR
Communications and Engagement
Fellow
Sklar graduated from Ohio



Sklar

University in 2014 where she majored in Journalism with a specialization in Strategic Communications, PR, and Advertising with a minor in Theater. At Ohio U, she was president of the campus Jewish Women's group. She spent the last year as a Fellow at the American Hebrew Academy—a Jewish, pluralistic boarding school in Greensboro, North Carolina.

While at the Academy, Sklar worked in Campus Life, Jewish Life, and Academic life while also helping teach theater and swing dancing. Previously, she held a summer internship at

Washington Jewish Week.

Sklar—who grew up in Bridgeport, WV—loves theater, cats, crafting, and her fiancé, Caleb. She and Caleb are very

excited to transition to the DC area and to join the Temple Micah community.

NOAH WESTREICH

Director of Youth Engagement
Also increasing our "Micah and Mississippi" quotient like Heidema (above), Westreich comes to us from the Institute of Southern Jewish Life in Jackson, where he spent the last year as an Education Fellow. In that position, he crisscrossed the South, delivering a Judaic Studies curriculum and inter-generational Jewish programming to communities.

Westreich graduated from Macalester College in 2014 with a degree in Sociology. There, he was a leader of the

Macalester Jewish Organization, overseeing campus Jewish life and celebrations, and founded the school's J Street U, an affiliate of J Street. Throughout



Westreich

CONTINUED NEXT PAGE ►

Rabbi's Message FROM PAGE 1 ►

impatience and dissatisfaction, I finally arrived at a vision statement that for me sets forth what I believe Temple Micah is about at its core. It comes closest to capturing why I am a rabbi. It is this:

The mission of Temple Micah is to advance the Human Project.

Near the dawn of human history, a group that came to be known as Israel and, later, as Jews conceived of a definition of what it meant to be a human being that forever helped to set the course of human life.

This conception was enshrined into our most ancient and holy book, a narrative called Torah. It can in a sense, and only in a sense, be captured by Cain's biblical question, "Am I my brother's keeper?" It is to commit

oneself to the understanding that the most fully lived life is lived in a covenant that carries this message.

The Human Project compels us to understand and fully embrace the demand that our lives have deep, resonant meaning—a meaning that matters to the world. In a word, our lives are sacred. We are each a symbol of an eternal holiness that Jews call God.

The mission of Temple Micah is to inspire us to live within the ever re-animated Jewish narrative and thus be a covenantal community dedicated to advancing the Human Project.

For me, this is what Temple Micah is about. It is an attempt to translate Torah's greatest aspiration into a language that resonates in the 21st century. Our collective challenge is to make this manifest in everything we do. It should be our watchword.

We should have it on our "gates and doorposts." It should inform our decision-making as well as what we teach and learn.

The High Holy Days are a celebration of the Human Project. Rosh Hashanah is the birthday of humankind, the symbol of holiness that reflects God's image. The Holy Days are our annual opportunity to recalibrate our own lives, take stock and measure ourselves against the great aspiration of the Human Project.

The Holy Days remind us that our work on ourselves and our work on the world is not yet complete. We can each add—this year as every year—a bit of beauty, learning, grace, soulfulness or peace.

God bless you for an inspirational 5776. Come to Temple Micah. Help us engage in the Human Project.

Shalom,
Rabbi Daniel G. Zemel

TZEDAKAH

ENDOWMENT FUND

IN MEMORY OF
Irving Freedman, by John Franken
Jeannette Vale, Samuel Vale, and
Nathan Valasky, by Michelle,
Jason, and Todd Sender

GENERAL FUND

IN HONOR OF
Teddy Klaus, by Nina Rutzen
Teddy Klaus and Rabbi Lederman,
by Randy and Harriet Tritell
Rabbi Esther Lederman, by David
and Lucy Asher, Mary Haber
Learita Scott and Robert
Friedman, on their marriage,
by Randy and Harriet Tritell

IN MEMORY OF
Anna Hadley, by David
and Lucy Asher
Cecil Levinson, by Stephanie Baker
Diane Sager, by Nancy Raskin
Thelma Sugar, by Judith Capen
and Robert Weinstein
Benjamin Sterenfeld, by Greer
and Gerald Goldman

HINENI FUND

IN MEMORY OF
David Green, by Barbara Green
Anna Hadley, by Skip and
Barbara Halpern

INNOVATION FUND

IN HONOR OF
Teddy Klaus, Rabbi Landau, and
Rabbi Lederman, by Michelle Sender

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IN MEMORY OF
Anna Hadley, by David
and Barbara Diskin
Sheldon Seissler, by Douglas
and Hiromi Grob

MICAH HOUSE

Livia and David Bardin

IN MEMORY OF
Anna Hadley, by Richard
and Susan Lahne
Shirley Springer, by Victor Springer

MUSIC FUND

Daniel and Beverly Yett

IN HONOR OF
David and Barbara Diskin, by
Daniel and Beverly Yett
Teddy Klaus, on behalf of
the Temple Micah Choir

IN MEMORY OF
Anna Hadley, by Jeff Passel
Bee Schwartz, by Herbert Schwartz

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

IN HONOR OF
Learita Scott and Robert
Friedman, by Roberta Aronson
and Paul Goldberg
Harold Sharlin's 90th birthday,
by John and Trudy Saracco

IN MEMORY OF
Anna Hadley, by Jack and Judy
Hadley, John and Trudy Saracco,
Roberta Aronson and Paul Goldberg,
Peggy Banks, Susie Blumenthal, Helen
Herrnstadt, by the Werbel family
Benjamin Lazar, by Learita Scott

Rebecca Socolar, by Milton
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Brian Stonehill, by Harriett Stonehill

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

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Rabbi Esther Lederman, by
Laurie and Dan Brumberg
Harold Sharlin's 90th birthday,
by Skip and Barbara Halpern

IN MEMORY OF
Helen Herrnstadt, by Steven
and Elisa Weinstein
Ben Wattenberg, by Jeff Passel

THE RABBI DANIEL GOLDMAN ZEMEL FUND FOR ISRAEL

IN MEMORY OF
Anna Hadley, by Lora Ferguson,
Celia Shapiro and Bob Dorfman
Ben Wattenberg, by David Bardin

B'NAI MITZVAH



NATAVAN MIRIAM KARSH

OCTOBER 17 / 4 CHESHVAN

PARENTS: Aaron Karsh and Joanne Zamore

TORAH PORTION: Noach

MITZVAH PROJECT: To be decided



BENNY WEINBERGER

OCTOBER 31 / 18 CHESHVAN

PARENTS: Joy Grossman and Steven Weinberger

TORAH PORTION: Vayera

MITZVAH PROJECT: To be decided

MAZAL TOV!

Teri Husfloen and Jonathan Berman, son of Howard and
Jill Berman, on their marriage

Abiole Oyewole and John Mosheim, on their engagement

Nichole and Jed Seifert on the naming of their son,
Darwin Mark Seifert

Caralyn Spector and Allen Kalman on the birth of their
daughter, Sadie Elle Kalman

Bruce and Susan Turnbull on the birth of their grandson,
Nakoa Robert Turnbull

CONDOLENCES

The Temple Micah community extends its
deepest condolences to:

DIANE AUGUST, on the passing of her mother,
Flora August

ELEANOR CORREA, on the passing of her father,
Barry Pessin

JACK HADLEY, on the passing of his mother,
Anna Hadley

OWEN HERRNSTADT, on the passing of his mother,
Helen Herrnstadt

ANDREW FREEDMAN, on the passing of his father,
Irving Freedman

DANIEL WATTENBERG AND RUTH WATTENBERG, on
the passing of their father, Ben Wattenberg

JANE YAMAYKIN, on the passing of her grandmother,
Larisa Itina

May their memories be for a blessing.

Warm Welcome FROM PREVIOUS PAGE ►

college, he also taught fourth grade Judaic Studies at Mount
Zion Temple in St. Paul. Westreich spent a semester at the
University of Haifa, and attended a summer ulpan at Tel Aviv
University.

"My philosophy as a Jewish educator is to help people get to
a place where their deepest passions are their proudest ways of
living Judaism," he says. Speaking of passions, Westreich is a
student pilot, currently training for his private pilot license. ●

BERAHA'S BLACKBOARD

LEARNING AND LIVING IN 'JEWISH TIME'

BY RABBI JOSH BERAHA

Hanging in my office next to a picture of my family is the Machon Micah Mission Statement. This document pre-dates my time at Micah but still animates the Machon I want to build and the vision I seek to uphold. Among the many sentences that give me pause each time I read this thoughtful, inspiring document is: "Jewish learning should take place within Jewish real time."

What is "Jewish real time" and what does it mean that Jewish learning should take place within it?

In *Basic Judaism*, rabbi and author Milton Steinberg beautifully writes about the festivals in the Jewish calendar. "So the year is adorned with many colors and much poetry: rams' horns sounding alarms to lethargic souls; white robes on the scrolls of the Torah in symbol of purity and rebirth; palm branches and citrons; wide-branching eight-armed candelabra illumined each night with increasing light; noise-makers drowning out a persecutor's name; doors being opened for Elijah, forerunner of the delivering Messiah; the sad intonation of the Book of Lamentations;

the seven prophetic lessons of consolation; the eerie midnight service which inaugurates the season of penitence.... So too is the year transmuted into a round of sacred occasions gay and austere reflecting Israel's past, man's timeless aspirations, and the hopes of both for the future."

What Steinberg describes from the rams' horns to the eerie midnight services of *selichot* is Jewish real time—the times of year when the rhythm of the Jewish calendar grabs our entire selves and ushers us into rituals that captivate our senses.

To live in Jewish real time is to experience the colors and poetry that Steinberg so eloquently describes.

Experience is everything! The American philosopher William James, in his 1904 essay "Does 'Consciousness' Exist?", attempts to show the lack of difference between *thought* and *things*. James affirms "that there is only one primal stuff or material in the world, a stuff of which everything is composed"—and that stuff can be called "pure experience." In other words, if you want to know something,

you have to immerse yourself in it completely and *experience* it. Consciousness is constantly in flux and is composed of our thoughts and the physical world.

When we say that Jewish learning should take place within Jewish real time, we are standing on James' (and many others, to be sure) philosophical foundation. Do you want to learn *about* Judaism? Impossible—unless what you desire are facts without a coherent context. To learn *is to experience*. Judaism cannot be known apart from its practices. Within our worship and rituals lie what Professor James K. A. Smith calls "a kind of irreducible genius." Practices, as opposed to doctrines or beliefs, explains Smith, bear "an understanding that elude articulation in cognitive categories." In Machon Micah we emphasize Jewish real time with the understanding that to learn is to live within the beauty of our sacred occasions, to have our deepest desires and fears aroused by the truths that are at the core of each holiday.

We are currently in the



Hebrew month of Elul. In a few weeks we will stand together before the ark and consider who we are. With the gates open and the high court adjourned we will declare that we are "like withered grass and like a faded blossom, like a passing shadow and like a vanishing cloud..." It is in these chilling moments that we fully experience Jewish time and in doing so, become true Jewish actors in the drama of our tradition.

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

Christine Beresniová and Rokas Beresniová, Gregory and Julianna Caplan, Benjamin and Eleanor Correa, Ruth and William Henoach, Peter Lovenheim, Herman and Mary Schwartz, and Sara Swatzburg

President's Column FROM PAGE 2 ►

member-folk singer-lawyer Doug Mishkin put on concerts that raised money to help send students to Israel or Jewish camp. When he wasn't performing himself, Mishkin brought in big-name talent, such as Debbie Friedman and Tom Chapin.

This is a place with spirituality and spirit.

We at Micah take our task seriously. Rabbi Zemel talks about nothing less than advancing the human project. The human project!

But we don't take ourselves seriously. In other words, we have lots of fun.

From Bowling Together to Baseball Simchat Torah, from Purimspiels to magic

by the Great Loudini, we are never short of laughs.

This is a place with a sense of humor.

Did you love your religious school? Most adults did not. We re-envisioned ours, shifting it from a traditional classroom-oriented series of Sundays to an experience for kids and adults. Rabbi Josh Beraha is re-working it still, bringing fresh ideas for our youngest and oldest members (and everyone in between).

Did you drop out of synagogue life as you entered adulthood? Me, too. Through Next Dor, we're creating a new way to meet young adults where they live. Launched by Rabbi Esther Lederman and now captained by Rabbi Susan Landau, Next Dor has energized a new generation of people who will

help us chart a fresh American Jewish path in this young century.

This is a place that is forward looking.

There is much more—so much more—that makes Micah special to me. Micah House, Micah Cooks, our listening campaigns and all that grew out of them, visits to the MLK Memorial, the Pete Seeger memorial Shabbat, the People of the Book Fair, dinners and parties that I have purchased at the auction, Kol Isha, Shabbat Shalom Around Town. The Yom Kippur blessing to honor non-Jewish spouses. B'nai Mitzvah. Underwear Month. Friendships.

I hope each of you has your own list.

Because... this is a place that is worth celebrating.

לשנה טובה



We wish you a happy and healthy new year in a world at peace.



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WASHINGTON, DC 20007-4702

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