



Vine

First Double-Services High Holy Days Set to Go at Micah

BY SHELLEY GROSSMAN

FROM RABBI ZEMEL

FOUR QUESTIONS FOR 5777

DEAR FRIENDS,

As we prepare to enter the Holy Days and engage in our prescribed period of focused introspection, we might ask ourselves what should command our attention this year. Here are four questions on my growing personal list of issues to consider.



1. Where am I, as an American, and where is America? In his new book, *No End of Conflict: Rethinking Israel-Palestine*, Yossi Alpher writes, "Pluralism and diversity are positive attributes in

any society, but only as long as there exist enough threads of commonality and consensus, preferably spearheaded by a dominant but tolerant majority, to maintain a broadly uniform sense of purpose."

Alpher's book poses tough questions about the current state of Israel's "tolerant majority" and a "broadly uniform sense of purpose."

This year, unfortunately, the issues Alpher raises are particularly applicable to our own country. What "sense of purpose" do we have as Americans? I find I am posing that question to myself a great deal. I vividly remember reading an inspiring op-ed by Archibald MacLeish in the July 3, 1976, *New York Times*. On the day before the nation's Bicentennial, the poet and Librarian of Congress asked the quintessential question: What are we celebrating? MacLeish traced his answer back to the Founding Fathers. Was the American Revolution just for Americans or was the nascent democracy really to be a beacon to the world? MacLeish wrote, "We are as great as our belief in human liberty—no greater. And our belief in human liberty is only ours when

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TEMPLE MICAH'S GREAT High Holy Day experiment is about to begin. For the first time, the congregation will pray both together and apart at its familiar High Holy Day venue, the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church on Nebraska Ave., NW. Everyone will pray together in the church sanctuary on Erev Rosh Hashanah (Sunday, Oct. 2) and Yom Kippur afternoon (Wednesday, Oct. 12). For Rosh Hashanah morning, Kol Nidre and Yom Kippur morning, one service will take place in the sanctuary and another in the Great Hall. The Next Dor service for the 20s-30s cohort will occur on Erev Rosh Hashanah and Kol Nidre at the temple as usual.

The two-service tryout has required a lot of planning by the rabbis, Cantor Meryl Weiner and Music Director Teddy Klaus, Executive Director Rachel Gross and the rest of the staff. New software for ticketing simultaneous services that would allow people to pick and choose which service they wanted to attend had to be developed (and the inevitable attendant glitches had to be overcome). Additional music—and the musicians to play it—needed to be found, in addition to a second portable ark and bimah, more Torah and Haftarah chanters, and extra ushers.

"We have worked so hard to create a positive Micah experience at both services," Rabbi Zemel said.

At press time, all 250 seats in the Great Hall had been reserved, confirming the rabbis' predictions of congregation acceptance of the two-service plan. Meanwhile, 850 of the sanctuary's

1,100 seats were requested. (What prompted the two-service experiment was the necessity in recent years of trying to cram about 1,300 people into the sanctuary.)

In addition to giving members of the congregation more sitting and breathing room, the two-service plan "has a great potential to work out well," Rabbi Zemel said. "For the congregation, it opens up a greater variety of High Holy Day experiences and it provides the younger clergy more responsibility, flexibility and independence. It may be a very positive thing."

Rabbi Zemel, Cantor Weiner, Music Director Klaus and the choir will lead all of the services in the sanctuary. These services are likely to be closest to the time-honored Micah approach to High Holy Day prayer. However, Klaus and the choir have been preparing new and special music for this venue.

Rabbi Beraha will be in charge in the Great Hall. "Much of what we're doing will mimic the sanctuary service—it's still a Micah service," he said. The Great Hall services will begin 15 minutes later than the sanctuary services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur mornings—10:30 am in the sanctuary and 10:45 am in the Great Hall. Both Kol Nidre services will start at 8 pm.

There will also be other differences, he said, the most noticeable probably being the music. Rabbi Landau, who will conduct the two Next Dor services at the temple, will lend her beautiful soprano voice to the Great Hall services that she attends. And Danny

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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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MICAH WORSHIP: A PEEK BEHIND THE CURTAIN

BY ED LAZERE

A lot of people ask me: "So what's it like now that you're board president?" I'm not really sure yet, I say, since the last three months have been the temple's quietest season. Give me some time to figure it out.



But I have learned a few things on the inside, and I want to give you a peek. Not surprisingly, I interact with the rabbis and other staff a lot more now than I did before. That gives me an up-close view on what makes Temple Micah tick.

One pleasant discovery was to find out just how much time, energy, and thought the rabbis, Cantor Meryl Weiner, and Music Director Teddy Klaus spend each week preparing for services. Not just the sermon, but also the flow, who will do what, how the prayers will be sung – even when the board greeter will speak (briefly, I hope). And afterwards, they spend a lot of time reviewing what worked and didn't as they prepare for the next service. It is a major part of every week.

In other words, the beautiful Temple Micah worship services that seem effortless are anything but.

Of course, I assumed that all staff keep busy each week working to keep Temple Micah humming. But I didn't know what that meant day-to-day.

And it's not that I thought Temple Micah's professional leaders don't take our worship experience seriously; it is so obvious they do. I guess I imagined that

planning for services was fairly straightforward, picking from a menu of options to piece together a service. "We'll use this melody for L'cha Dodi and then use this responsive reading, etc."

As I reflect, it makes total sense that Temple Micah's worship leaders put as much energy and thought into each Shabbat service – and other services – as they do for every aspect of our community. Rabbis Zemel, Beraha, and Landau, and Cantor Weiner and Music Director Klaus all want Temple Micah to offer a rich and meaningful Jewish experience, and that has to start from a foundation of meaningful worship. And nothing as beautiful as Temple Micah services could come easily.

That intense focus also means that the decision to offer second High Holiday services was a huge deal for our worship leaders, in addition to being a serious issue for our congregation. More services means more careful planning. Rabbi Beraha and others have worked very hard this summer to plan the Great Hall services, taking into account the many ways the space is different from the sanctuary, and working to make sure the services there will have that same special Micah feel. The fact that the Great Hall services are nearly sold out means a lot of you know that they will be terrific.

Meaningful and transformative worship services are one of the most distinctive parts of Temple Micah. I appreciate that our worship leaders are not only talented and thoughtful, but also really devoted to making each Shabbat and every other service special.



*Temple Micah wishes
you a happy and
healthy new year in a
world at peace.*

FLY ON THE WALL: KIDS' AUTHOR PUTS MICAH IN A BOOK

BY ERICA PERL

[Editors' Note: Erica S. Perl is an award-winning author of 13 books and novels for young readers, a member of Temple Micah and the mother of two daughters who have studied in Machon Micah.]

My novels are set in specific places. My first novel, *Vintage Veronica*, takes place in a vintage clothing store in the Boston area. To research it, I spent a lot of time (and a fair amount of

money!) hanging out in thrift stores and consignment shops. Since then, Vermont has served as the stage for *When Life Gives You O.J.* and *Aces Wild. The Capybara Conspiracy*, scheduled for publication by Knopf on October 11, takes place here in Washington, DC.

Now I'm working on a book that takes place—you guessed it—right at Temple Micah. Actually, it is sort

of Temple Micah. Many details come from Machon Micah. For example, there's an underwear drive, and each grade rotates through running snack time. There's Israeli dancing as an elective (which was the case when my older daughter attended Machon Micah) and there's a rabbi who travels to Israel on a 'rabbatical.'

To make the novel work, however, I've fictionalized



some aspects of the congregation and anyone familiar with Micah and the Machon (especially the kids) will quickly identify the fictional

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HIGH HOLY DAY SERVICES (5777): IMPORTANT REMINDERS

As in recent years, we will gather for the high holy days at the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church (MMUMC) at 3401 Nebraska Avenue, NW, Washington DC.

Tickets

Register for services. Services are filling up. The Great Hall service is already full for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur day services.

Be sure to *print* a copy of the e-ticket for each person attending services and *bring* your e-ticket to every service, and please attend the service you registered for.

Prayerbooks

Please bring your own prayerbook to all High Holy Day services. We use *Mishkan HaNefesh*. The availability of loaner books is very limited. New members and members who do not have the current prayerbook can place orders through the registration website.

Arrive Early—but Wait Until Ushers Open the Doors

Please allow plenty of time to get to services. Seating is available in the order of arrival, but please wait until the ushers have opened the doors before entering the service and finding a seat. People who arrive before the doors have opened may wait in the vestibule of the lower lobby by the Great Hall.

Please Do Not Save Seats

It's ok to save one seat for a family member or friend who is parking the car, but as a courtesy to other members of the community, please do not try to save whole rows or partial rows by placing books, signs, etc. across seats. If you do, ushers may remove these objects.

Entrances

For Adult Services at MMUMC, there are now two entrances. For the sanctuary service, entry is through the front doors on Nebraska Avenue. Entrance for the Great Hall Service is through the doors facing the parking lot.

Young Family and Children's Services will be held in the Vestry this year and entry is through either set of doors.

There are two special needs entrances. The front entrance has a ramp. The lower level entrance by the Great Hall lobby is off the parking lot; follow signs to the elevator.

No Backpacks

As always, no large bags or backpacks will be permitted into the building for security reasons. Please leave them at home or in your car.

Participate in Our Annual Underwear Drive

Join Machon Micah's 6th graders for one of Temple Micah's most important mitzvah projects: providing dignity to the area's homeless by donating NEW underwear items to Friendship Place, a local community-based organization that works with the District's homeless. Help us meet this year's goal of 10,000 items. Pick up a bag on Rosh Hashanah and return it on Yom Kippur filled with new underwear.

Nutrition Room

On Yom Kippur, we will have a room set aside with food for those who are not able to fast or need to take medication with food.

More Information Available on Website

Consult the Temple Micah website for more detailed information about childcare, parking, the location of specific services, etc. (Note that this year Young Family and Children's Services are in the Vestry, on the ground floor below the sanctuary.)

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Here's a sampling of coming Micah activities. For a detailed schedule of all upcoming events and services, check out www.templemicah.org.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 6 • 10 AM

Musical Mornings

The first Thursday of every month is a "musical morning" at Temple Micah, where you can play a "work in progress" for an audience that doesn't care if you make a mistake as long as you love music. Musicians and audience members of all ages and levels of experience are welcome. Sponsored by Aging Together.

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18 • 10 AM

Sacred Circle Dancing

Come learn moving meditations that embody and integrate mind, body, and spirit. No previous dance experience or partners necessary.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23 • 5 to 7 PM

All-Community Simchat Torah

Join us for a festive service followed by a program on how we connect to our ancient, sacred texts. We'll sing and learn together as we celebrate the ending and beginning of our annual Torah cycle. This event includes dinner. Stay tuned for registration information.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28 • 6 PM

Kabbalat Shabbat and Community Dinner Celebrating Micah House

Oneg at 6 pm. Service begins at 6:30pm with the Musical Ensemble, and is followed by a festive community Shabbat dinner celebrating the mission and residents of Micah House.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5 • 5 PM

Temple Micah Reads: *Tribe: On Homecoming and Belonging*

Join us for a discussion of *Tribe* by Sebastian Junger. "Combining history, psychology, and anthropology, *Tribe* explores what we can learn from tribal societies about loyalty, belonging and the eternal human quest for meaning."

ELECTION POSTMORTEM

Micah member and CNN chief political correspondent Dana Bash discusses national election results at December's Lunch & Learn session, Wednesday, December 14, at noon. Details coming soon.

INTERESTING SPEAKERS!

Temple Micah features two monthly lecture series—on Sundays and Wednesdays. For more details, go online to www.templemicah.org.

SUNDAY SPEAKER SERIES



Sunday, October 16, 6 pm – Rabbi Tamir Nir, until recently Deputy Mayor of Jerusalem, explores key social and political issues facing Israel. An advocate for religious freedom and an environmental activist, he helped found two environmental groups, the Yeled Teva Project and Kehilat Achva B'erem. Erev Sukkot service follows Rabbi Nir's talk.



Sunday, November 6, 10:15 am – Paul Goldberg, temple member, discusses his debut novel, *The Yid*, about a Stalin-era plot to wipe out the remains of Soviet Jewry. Described in glowing reviews as "a screwball farce about atrocity" and "darkly playful and generous," the book is drawn from Goldberg's personal story as a Russian émigré to the US. He is the author of two previous books on the Soviet Union and co-author of a book on the American healthcare system. He edits and publishes a health newsletter, has written for national publications and appeared on radio and TV news shows.

Coming soon: Milton Viorst on Sunday, December 4, and **Alan Cooperman** on Sunday, December 11. Watch this space for more details.

LUNCH & LEARN

Wednesdays from noon to 2 pm

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



October 19 – Bob Dorfman, a physicist and professor emeritus at the University of Maryland, is mostly known around Temple Micah as the guy who can make the Talmud understandable and sometimes funny. But he is also a serious student of the arts, especially 17th-century Dutch and Flemish painters. He'll talk about those paintings at the National Gallery of Art, explaining hidden messages in them, pointing out illustrations of biblical stories and discussing two paintings with close ties to recent Jewish history.



November 9 – Robert Weinstein, Micah member and, with wife Judith Capen, co-architect of the temple, shares the back story of the 1995 building and 2000 addition. Learn about the forces that shaped our building—from historical precedents to the use of Hebrew *gematria*—and the many symbols incorporated into the building's fabric.

LESSONS FROM LANDAU

BATHROOMS TO REFLECT THE VALUES OF OUR COMMUNITY

BY RABBI SUSAN LANDAU WITH KIT WHEATLEY, CHAIR OF THE GENDER NEUTRAL BATHROOM COMMITTEE

There is a new addition downstairs at Temple Micah. It isn't very large, and it didn't cost us any money to install. But it carries a very big message for the Micah community. Many people might not notice it, but we hope it speaks to everyone. It is a small sign next to each bathroom door, which reads: Gender diversity is welcomed here. All are welcome to use the restroom that best fits their identity.

Why did the temple affix these signs? As the "bathroom wars" erupted all over the country this past year, a group of us gathered in late May to explore what Micah can do as a community to be more welcoming of transgender members and visitors, and ultimately many others as well. In addition to the two of us, the members of the Gender Neutral Bathroom Committee are Jamie Gardner, Ed Lazere, Sarah Schooler, Josh Seidman, Ed Wendel, and Rabbi Zemel.

It took us only one meeting to agree to an initial plan.

We discussed the pain that some transgender people experience when confronted with gender-segregated facilities, and the need for some action to reduce their discomfort. At the same time, we were aware of concerns that might be raised by some of those who are used to the more traditional approach of having strictly gender-segregated bathrooms. After looking around the building to see if there was an obvious space for a gender-neutral bathroom—and finding none—we agreed that at this point, the best solution was also the simplest: to declare that all are welcome. The signs were posted next to the bathroom doors the very next day. As the task force members remarked afterwards, this must have been the shortest time from meeting to action in the history of the temple, if not

the planet!

The banner in our lobby proclaims that "Temple Micah is a welcoming Jewish home where you can bring your whole self and be your best self." The new bathroom signs are a small gesture to make that message explicit and let people know that we really do welcome everyone's whole self.

While the term "transgender" was not a part of common speech and conversation until our more recent history, a recognition of gender diversity has been part of Micah since its beginning and of Jewish tradition since ancient times. Rabbinic Judaism goes far beyond a traditional male/female binary, and actually refers to six different genders! And we at Temple Micah are not the only ones who seek to elevate this diversity again.

It is encouraging to know that we are part of a larger effort to continue to make



all Reform communities as inclusive as possible. Last year, the Union for Reform Judaism adopted an official Resolution on the Rights of Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People providing guidance for the entire Reform Movement in its effort to uphold these rights, including a recommendation that, to the extent feasible, URJ congregations should ensure the availability of gender-neutral restrooms. (The full text of this resolution and the Jewish values supporting it can be found on the URJ's website.)

Temple Micah will continue to explore whether there are other solutions, including a gender-neutral bathroom or renovation of our existing facilities to enhance privacy for everyone. In the meantime, we welcome your thoughts as we continue on this journey of inclusiveness.

Fly on the Wall FROM PAGE 3 ►

parts. At Micah, they'll point out, we don't usually have students team up to do b'nai mitzvah with partners. And at Micah, they'll note, the seventh grade doesn't do a community event as a communal mitzvah project (correct—though I secretly hope this idea takes hold and becomes a reality!). They may even be dismayed that even though some of their first names might be in the book—no promises!—I did not "put" any specific Micah kids in the book. But, like I tell the kids, that's what's fun about writing realistic fiction. You can study people and places and use the parts that are most helpful in creating a believable setting and characters. And then you can invent the rest!

So, how did I do my research? Well, last year, while my younger daughter, Bougie Sewell, was preparing for her bat mitzvah, I attended Machon Micah on many Tuesday afternoons. Rabbi Beraha and Music Director Klaus explained I was there to research a book and I tried to be a fly on the wall, observing and taking notes. At first, the kids alternated between being on their best and worst behavior for my benefit. Then, they all asked me to put them in the book. Finally, I think they forgot I was there—which was the most helpful for my purposes.

The book, *All Three Stooges*, which won't come out for more than a year, is about two seventh grade boys, Noah and Dash, who are best friends and are

preparing for their bar mitzvahs at a reform congregation in Washington, DC. The plot revolves around the sudden and unexpected death of Dash's father, and the ways the boys' friendship changes in the wake of that event. Lest this sound like a sad book, let me quickly point out that the title comes from Adam Sandler's Hanukkah song and reflects the boys' obsession with Jewish comedy and comedians.

Initially, I was a little nervous about having my book take place in a religious school setting. I've written books with Jewish themes before, but I always strive to make my stories accessible to kids from a wide range of backgrounds and experiences. I would never want

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MEMBER PROFILE

Micah's New President: Social Justice Advocate and Baker

BY DORIAN FRIEDMAN

A FAMILIAR AND quiet presence at Temple Micah, Ed Lazere's low-key bearing belies a passion for the Micah community, for his adopted city, and for repairing the world at large. Lazere became president of the Board of Directors this summer after serving three years on the board, and more than

a dozen years in leadership roles at Micah House, our transitional home for women in recovery from substance abuse. He says his primary goal at the temple's helm is simple: making sure Micah stays healthy and vibrant. "We are financially strong, have an amazing staff, and boast a committed

membership. I want to make sure the board keeps its eye on ways to support each of those things (finances, staff, members), and that we do our part to support innovation in Jewish life," he says.

The Lazere family has been a part of the Micah community since 1997. Ed's wife, Suzanne Griffith, also

served on the Micah House board and was its treasurer for seven years. She was a member of the b'nai Torah class of 2011. Their sons David and Adam celebrated becoming bar mitzvah, and later graduated from Micah's religious school in 2012 and 2015. These transitions

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Temple Micah Just Got Even Greener

You can't see them from the street, but 88 solar panels are now in place and turning sunlight into energy on the Micah roof. With them, the congregation will save as much as \$4,200 a year on electricity, a significant contribution to the temple's bottom line. But to Paul Shapiro, head of the temple's Green Team and tireless advocate for the environment, there's an equally important reason for installing them. "For me, the panels are a statement," he said. "Temple Micah is in the forefront of using renewable energy to slow climate change."

The panels are expected to provide up to 25 percent of Micah's electricity. The other 75 percent also is environmentally friendly. Through a consortium of local faith-based institutions, the Community Purchasing Alliance, the temple employs wind power to save money and the environment by using another source of renewable energy. *(For a story on the Community Purchasing Alliance, see the March-April 2015 Vine.)*

The Green Team and the House Committee have been studying solar power for several years, but it didn't become practical for Micah until about three years ago. Then installation had to wait for the roof replacement this spring. The panels were constructed and installed by the Green Brilliance/PEAR team, which will benefit from federal and DC renewable

energy tax credits. (As a non-profit, Micah isn't entitled to tax credits.) Under a 15-year Power Purchase Agreement, Micah put no money up front for the panels and the company will continue to own and operate the system

for 15 years. During that time, Micah will pay Green Brilliance/PEAR six cents per kilowatt hour to use the electricity generated up top, about one-third the rate Micah is currently paying for electricity.

"The Green Team has been working for many years on four goals—achieving a green building, including environmental concerns in our educational program, tying the environment into holiday celebrations, and taking environmentalism to the broader community," Shapiro said. With the installation of the solar panels, "we're seeing more of our goals fulfilled."



See more solar panel photos on page 12.

Kirby Awarded French Legion of Honor

BY SHELLEY GROSSMAN

TEMPLE MICAH'S OWN Dorothy Kirby has been awarded the French Legion of Honor medal for her work as an Army nurse during World War II.

In presenting the award at the French Embassy on September 1, Michel Charbonnier, French consul general in Washington, said, "It's a very special day because we are here to celebrate the strength of our two countries' relation by expressing our appreciation to you, Dorothy Kirby, a veteran of WWII whose courage, determination and self-sacrifice made possible the liberation of France more than 70 years ago."

The green and white medal hanging from a bright red ribbon joins seven other ribbons and medals awarded to Kirby for her World War II service in

the liberation of the Philippines, as well as the campaigns in the Asia-Pacific, European, African and Middle East theaters.

Kirby joined the Army in 1941 upon graduation from nursing school. She shipped out to Europe in 1944 (while German submarines still plied the Atlantic) and was a member of the first nursing unit on Omaha Beach after the Allied landings in France. She witnessed the liberation of Paris and helped to treat the wounded after the Battle of the Bulge.

Following victory in Europe in May, 1945, Kirby was shipped to the Philippines and finally to Japan. Before arriving there, she witnessed the dropping of the atom bomb from



the deck of the transit ship.

The Legion of Honor is the highest French decoration and distinction, established by Napoleon in 1802. Wow! The heartiest mazal tov, Dorothy! (For a profile of Kirby, see the August-September, 2013 issue of the *Vine*.) ♦

Lazere FROM PREVIOUS PAGE ►

have provided some of the most poignant moments for Lazere. "The graduates gathered with the youth choir to sing songs that David and Adam had sung when they were in the choir years earlier. It brought tears to my eyes and reminded me what a warm place Temple Micah is and how it has been an integral part of the fabric of my family's life."

Lazere's own upbringing in Sioux City, Iowa, was an interesting experience for a young Jew, too. While the community was large enough to support Reform, Conservative and Orthodox synagogues, Jewish families gathered at their own swimming club each summer because they weren't welcome at the local country clubs, he recalled. However, the kosher bakery that his father ran

"served the whole Sioux City community," Lazere said. "It had rye bread, kichel, bagels, and other things the Jewish community liked."

His cultural Judaism was enhanced by another profound influence: his mother, a Holocaust survivor. "No doubt my experience growing up the child of a survivor—my mom, who was a strong voice for social justice in our house—fueled my interest in social justice. As an adult, I appreciate the fact that Judaism focuses so much on what we do in this world—and especially that the prophet Micah said that doing justice is one of the things God expects."

Indeed, the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Professionally, Lazere has built his career around these values. As a newly minted Harvard graduate (he also holds a Master's in Public

Policy from the University of Maryland), Lazere came to Washington in 1986 and spent his first three years at Higher Achievement, which supports tutoring and enrichment programs for students in low-income communities. He soon transitioned into the policy world, joining the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Since 2001, Lazere has led the DC Fiscal Policy Institute, the primary source for independent information on the DC budget, one of the most influential policy organizations focused on District affairs. He is recognized for his expertise on the District's budget and tax system as well as poverty and affordable housing, and is often cited in Washington media on these issues. In addition, he has served on several local nonprofit boards, including the Consumer Health

Foundation, Children's Law Center and the DC Primary Care Association.

Notwithstanding his serious policy chops, Lazere has plenty of extracurricular interests. He's an enthusiastic bicyclist, usually commuting to work from his Brookland, DC, neighborhood, and remains active in youth scouting from the times that David and Adam were involved. And true to his heritage, Ed wields a mean rolling pin. "I do love to bake and spoil my family," he admits. "There's always home-made dessert in our house." As many a Micah member can confirm, his famous carrot cake—a popular item at the temple's auction each year—is a delicious testament to his skills.

The Micah membership welcomes its new president, and thanks him for all his service. ♦

TZEDAKAH

BUILDING FUND

IN MEMORY OF

Albert Sherwat, by Beverly and Harlan Sherwat

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The Wedding of Matt Cutler and Jessica Katz, by Mark Gruenberg
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IN MEMORY OF

Dora Bender, by Carole Hirschmann
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Donald Rothberg, by Lynn Rothberg and Jen Tanzi
Elsie Sherwat, Malcom Sherwat, by Harlan and Beverly Sherwat

MICAH HOUSE

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Class, by Ari Krupkin and Andrew Bowen

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Judy and Jack Hadley

IN HONOR OF

Morton and Roberta Goren's 50th Anniversary, by Dianne Berreth and
David Kobrin, David and Lorna Melendy, Kathy Spiegel and Richard Fitz
Mara Simone Mantell, by Shirley Mantell Friedman

IN MEMORY OF

Hyman Foster, by Ronna and Stan Foster
Eva Jacob, by Susie Blumenthal
Vivian Liebenau, by Gerald Liebenau
Robert S. Morgenstein, Sam Morgenstein, and
Nathan Weinstock, by Susan Morgenstein

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

IN HONOR OF

The Wedding of Matt Cutler and Jessica Katz, by Marcia Bordman
Morton and Roberta Goren's 50th Anniversary, by Sharon and Joseph Salus
Susan Turnbull receiving the JCRC Community
Leadership Award, by Judy Hurvitz
Robert Weinstein and Judith Capen, for their decades of good
works for the Micah community, by Sid and Elka Booth

IN MEMORY OF

David Micah Booth, by Sid and Elka Booth
Ethel Fargotstein, by Elka Booth
Thomas Hartley Hall, IV, by Sara Morningstar and Philip Katz
Hallene Marks, by Elka Booth
Abner Mikva, by Else and Dan Moskowitz, Harlan and Beverly Sherwat
Harry E. Rockower, by Steve Rockower and Ann Sablosky
Morton Schussheim, by Amy Schussheim
Steven Mark Stein, by Janice Meer and Michael Bodo

WORSHIP FUND

IN HONOR OF

Morton and Roberta Goren's 50th Anniversary, by Jeffrey and Bette Doranz,
Sheila Platoff and Robert Effros, Learita Scott and Robert Friedman
Cantor Meryl Weiner, Music Director Teddy Klaus, Ken Goldstein,
Rabbi Josh Beraha, and Rabbi Susan Landau, with gratitude for all the
efforts and encouragement toward Alexi Weinberg becoming bar
mitzvah, by Jeremy Weinberg and Sophia Coudenrove-Kalergi

IN MEMORY OF

Abner Mikva, by Robert Rackleff
Walter Page, by William Page
Diane Sager, by Nancy Raskin
Marian Shroot, by Rachael Fleurence
Rebecca Socolar, by Milton and Marilyn Socolar
Robert Sugarman, by Carole Sugarman

THE RABBI DANIEL GOLDMAN ZEMEL FUND FOR ISRAEL

IN HONOR OF

Arthur Frank, by Kenneth Liberstein

IN MEMORY OF

Rolly Muiltz, by Peg Blechman and Paul Shapiro

B'NAI MITZVAH

Editors' note: The new b'nai mitzvah class will be launching individual learning projects later this fall.



ZACHARY ASHER BLUMENFELD

SEPTEMBER 10 / 7 ELUL

PARENTS: Elizabeth and Lane Blumenfeld

TORAH PORTION: Shof'tim

INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECT: Zachary is raising funds for Children's Hospital to help build cardiac care centers and train local doctors in sub-Saharan Africa.



BENJAMIN LANGSAM

SEPTEMBER 17 / 14 ELUL

PARENTS: Carrie and Howie Langsam

TORAH PORTION: Ki Teitzei

INDEPENDENT STUDY PROJECT: Ben collected and donated soccer balls and air pumps to a primary school in White House, Jamaica. He was able to hand deliver them to the school's principal. He also plans to use a portion of his bar mitzvah money to donate another shipment of balls.



MIRANDA GENTIN

OCTOBER 22 / 20 TISHREI

PARENTS: Andrew and Kim Gentin

TORAH PORTION: Chol HaMo-eid Sukkot



BENJAMIN THOMPSON WALDNER

OCTOBER 29 / 27 TISHREI

PARENTS: Elizabeth Thompson and David Waldner

TORAH PORTION: B'reishit

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Shary Adams & Colleen Powers
Sean Alpert
Lisa Gordon & Nicholas Brooke
Jodi & Jonathan Gilbert
Andrea & Todd Goren
Kate Julian & Andrew Weiss
Anne & Jacob Karabell
Dara Goldberg Kaye & Jonathan Kaye
Elizabeth Klee & Robert Stang
Leesa Klepper & Mario Mancuso
Ilana Kowarski
Violet & Joshua Mantell
Lori Mihalich-Levin & Jason Levin
Colleen Prior & Matthew McNevin
Nicole Rabner
Deborah & Adam Raviv
Paula Rubin
Helen Schwartz
Robin Shaffert & Dean Brenner
Claudia Trezza & Jason Horowitz
Rachel & Andrew Zuraw

MAZAL TOV!

Nicky Goren, on her 2016 "Women to Watch" Award by Jewish Women International (JWI)

Dorothy Kirby, on having been awarded the French Legion of Honor

Violet and Joshua Mantell, on the naming of their daughter, Mara Simone Mantell

Gwen and Marc Pearl, on the marriage of their son, David Pearl, and Amy Yazdian

Jocelyn Roberts and Joey Sima, on the birth of their son, Micah Hiro Sima

CONDOLENCES

The Temple Micah community extends its deepest condolences to:

JAN GREENBERG, on the passing of her brother, Matthew Greenberg

AURIE HALL, on the passing of her father, Thomas Hartley Hall, IV

TOM HEINEMANN, on the passing of his mother, Patricia Ann Schwarz

BERNHARD KLUGER, on the passing of his father, Salo "Sal" Kluger

ZOE MIKVA AND RABBI RACHEL MIKVA, on the passing of Zoe's husband and Rachel's father, Abner Mikva

MARSHA SEMMEL, on the passing of her father, Edward I. Klein

May their memories be for a blessing.

Rabbi's Message FROM PAGE 1 ►

it is larger than ourselves.”

Today we sadly seem to find ourselves embroiled in narrower, more restrictive conversations: Was the American Revolution a victory solely for those who are already here, or also for those who wish to come? Does the Statue of Liberty remain a symbol of who we are? Is the American Dream still for all of us? MacLeish should be required reading for all Americans.

The American Jewish experience itself can contribute mightily to this conversation. For me, and I know for many others, the American Jewish success story obliges us to advocate for a broad understanding of the American Revolution. We all need to read (and reread) George Washington's letter to Moses Sexias and the Newport, Rhode Island Synagogue in which he quotes the prophet Isaiah and famously writes “to bigotry no sanction.” Its words are our own American Jewish mandate to advocate for MacLeish's broad reading of the Declaration. Washington, Jefferson and MacLeish are examples of how our American experience contributes substantively to a deeper understanding of our own Jewish religious inheritance.

2. Do we have a particular role as Jews? “The stone the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.” (Psalm

118:22) This text captures an important American Jewish lesson. The psalmist was referring to the People of Israel, exiled and defeated, who became God's chosen cornerstone. But the text means so much more. In America, we have become a people blessed with unprecedented success in every field: education, science, law, business, medicine, media and the arts. Our success should impel us to advocate for others who have yet to feel the full glory of the American Revolution. Our Jewish heritage demands that we do so. We are the voice for every rejected stone so that it, too, can become a cornerstone of our nation and our world. This is the Jewish lesson we might rededicate ourselves to these Holy Days.

3. Where do we learn the most essential ethics and principles of life? I believe these are the lessons we learn as youngsters and need to re-learn throughout our lifetimes. These are the basic values of love, compassion, justice, forgiveness and generosity. We learn them by watching others, by reading stories that stay with us, doing the right thing in our everyday lives. While we acquire these values from our families, they require a greater connection to become enduring and real. They must be echoed and absorbed in community clusters—what Sebastian Junger calls “tribe” in his book by the same name. *Tribes: On*

Homecoming and Belonging is an argument for synagogue life as the book establishes the importance of rituals that convey moral messages, liturgies that connect to a past creating attachment and identity and role models from whom we quietly learn.

4. What calls to us now? In this Holy Day season, I find myself thinking about violence—gun violence, to be sure, but all violence, including violent language. Civility seems to be in short supply now, and I wonder if in some way I contribute to what feels like a general diminution in our society. I long for a way for each of us to embrace the most basic and seemingly most challenging Jewish teaching—that every single human being is a symbol of God's presence in the world. To be a Jew is to be part of a group with a universal vision. Everything we wish and pray for, we wish and pray for all humankind.

These are a few of the weighty issues I am thinking about this season. We are a small people with a large agenda and as American Jews we are privileged to live in a place and time that is unparalleled in our history.

My thoughts as we approach the New Year. I wish you and those you love a blessed 5777 in a world that will know peace.

Shalom,
Rabbi Daniel G. Zemel

High Holy Days FROM PAGE 1 ►

Moss, formerly Micah's teen fellow, now a fifth year rabbinical student at Hebrew Union College, will assist Rabbi Beraha, speak at the Great Hall services on Rosh Hashanah morning and Kol Nidre, in addition to playing his guitar and leading singing. The bassist from the Kabbalat Shabbat musical ensemble that plays at Friday evening services as well as a pianist well known in the Jewish community complete the Great Hall's instrumental complement.

“What's going to make the service is the new music,” Rabbi Beraha said. “We have a new Psalm 150 (the psalm

that lists the musical instruments played in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem) that is really great, and new niggunim (songs without words). One of the three renditions of Kol Nidre will be played on the bass,” he continued and added, “With the younger clergy, the new musicians and music—we think there will be a freshness to the service.”

Furthermore, Rabbi Landau has been gathering a “pop up” choir—volunteers “who can read music and feel confident as singers,” she said. “I think they will add a little more majesty, an artful moment.”

The two-service plan

gives the two younger rabbis the same opportunity as Rabbi Zemel to give multiple sermons. Rabbi Zemel will speak in the sanctuary on Rosh Hashanah morning and Kol Nidre, Rabbi Beraha will give the sermon in the sanctuary on Erev Rosh Hashana and in the Great Hall on Yom Kippur morning and Rabbi Landau will speak in the sanctuary on Yom Kippur morning in addition to the two Next Dor services.

New opportunities to participate have also been made available to congregants. Instead of assigning post-B'nai Mitzvah teens all of the Torah and Haftarah

chanting slots, two adult graduates of the B'nai Torah class, a member of Next Dor and a Machon Micah teacher will join the youngsters on the bimah.

“I think the deeper message is that this is our service—the congregation's—and there will be a sense of ownership around the community,” Rabbi Landau said.

However, Rabbi Beraha added, “At the end of the day this is all about Jews at prayer. You are a Jew who has come to pray on the High Holy Days.

“The High Holy Days are about life and death,” he continued, “not about the Great Hall and the sanctuary.” ♦

BERAHA'S BLACKBOARD

FIVE IDEAS ON JEWISH EDUCATION

BY RABBI JOSH BERAHA

As summer is coming to a close and the school year has begun, here are the top five ideas (in no particular order) that are animating my thoughts about Jewish education.

1. Parker Palmer, author and educator, writes in his now-classic *The Courage to Teach* that “good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher.” This statement may seem obvious, but it is too easy to be concerned only with the *what* of education—curriculum—and the *how*—pedagogy—and pay too little attention to the *who*—our teachers! For children especially, Jewish learning comes to life not because of the subject but because of the container in which the subject is delivered. A teacher who brings passion to his or her teaching can make the driest of subjects attractive. While I certainly value a solid curriculum and sound pedagogy, I know that what gives Machon Micah life is the relationship between teacher and student. In the words of Rabbi Zemel, the teacher is the text.

2. James K. A. Smith, a professor of philosophy at Calvin College, argues in *Desiring the Kingdom* that religious education should be *forma-*

tive and not merely *informative*. By this he means that education should be about the “formation of hearts and desires” rather than focus on “the absorption of ideas and information.” He asks, “What if we began by appreciating how education not only gets into our head but also (and more fundamentally) grabs us by the gut...? What if education was primarily concerned with shaping our hopes and passions—our visions of ‘the good life’—and not merely about the dissemination of data and information as inputs to our thinking? What if the primary work of education was the transforming of our imagination rather than the saturation of our intellect? And what if this had as much to do with our bodies as with our minds?” A famous debate in the Talmud asks, which is better, study or action? The answer is study, because it leads to action. If we only absorb information and never allow it to transform who we are, to affect our behavior, we miss the point of Jewish learning. Our faith is one that must compel us to right action.

3. In the *Amidah*, a central prayer in Jewish worship, we declare, “*L’dor vador nagid godlecha, ul’netzach n’tzachim k’dushat’cha nakdish*,” “For all generations

we will tell of your greatness and for all of eternity proclaim your holiness.” The transmission of religious identity for families with young children is a driving force for synagogue membership. What my parents provided for me (or failed to give me), I want to provide for my children. But a question I continually ask is: what are we passing on? The *Amidah* makes clear the *what* of transmission. It is our obligation to tell the next generation that the world is a magical place, that life is worth living. At Temple Micah, education should be about establishing for ourselves and providing for our children a sense that the world is full of wonder.

4. Lisa Miller, professor of psychology and education at Teachers College, Columbia University, explains in *The Spiritual Child* that spirituality is innate and, just like any other human component, can and must be nourished. She defines spirituality as “an inner sense of relationship to a higher power that is loving and caring.” She defines the “higher power” loosely as “God, nature, spirit, the universe, the creator, or other words that represent a divine presence.” I want the experience of being at Temple Micah to be one that opens us up to the experience of transcendence. Unlike other places in our community, Micah should provide its guests and members a feeling that there is more to this world than we see, that there is a love beyond that in our realest, truest moments, we can sense and make real. I know that spirituality is somewhat of a buzzword at the moment, but having a higher power is as old as the human



experience. If nothing more, Jewish learning should lead us beyond individualism.

5. In the last issue of the *Vine* I wrote about the importance of Hebrew in Jewish education. I received more email about this column than any other *Vine* column I’ve written in my two years at Micah. Every response was essentially the same—“I agree! Hebrew is important!” One congregant shared with me a book, *Hebrew: The Eternal Language* by William Chomsky, and her favorite passage from the book, “Every language... has a stock of words which are charged with the emotional and intellectual experiences of the people employing it... such words are not mere linguistic units; they are cultural deposits.” I truly loved hearing a chorus of support! But my question remains: without being fully immersed in Hebrew the way we would be if we studied ancient texts daily, or lived in Israel, how can we come to know Hebrew intimately, the way one needs to in order for it to fully resonate and bring Jewish learning to a new level? Though this question remains, I look forward to our new Hebrew Through Movement program beginning in the fall, and to our newly hired Israeli teachers, who will add so much to our Sunday and Tuesday Machon program for youth.

I look forward to a great year of learning together!

MICAH TRIP RESCHEDULED

Micah’s trip to Berlin and Israel, originally scheduled for March 12-24, 2017, has been postponed until November 5-17, 2017.

The four-day Berlin segment will focus on “Where Judaism Met the Enlightenment,” and the eight days in Israel will explore “The Modern Miracle: Achievements and Challenges.” More info to come.



MICAH JOINS WARD 3 FOR ALL

BY LIVIA BARDIN

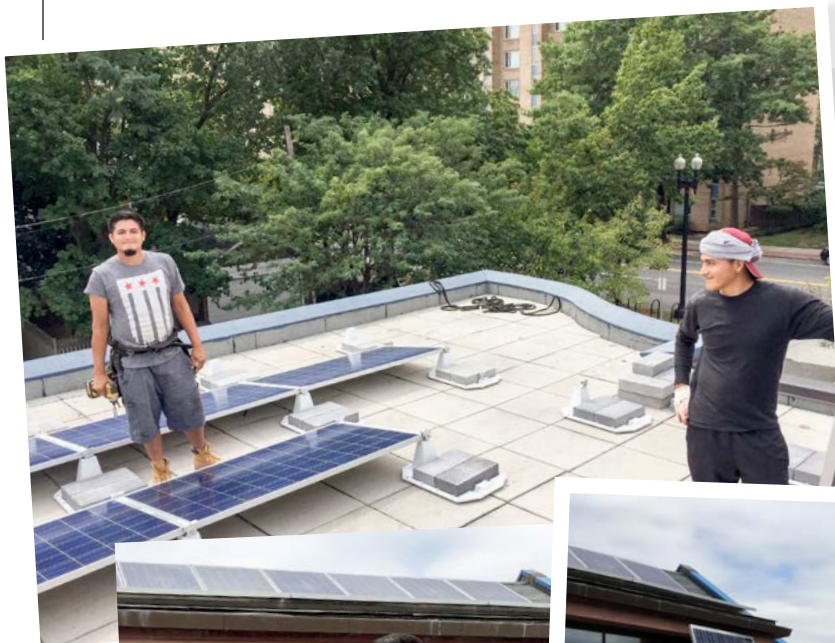
TEMPLE MICAH HAS joined Ward 3 for All, a coalition of congregations supporting the construction of short-term housing for homeless families behind the Second District Police Station on Idaho Ave., NW. The facility is to provide temporary homes for up to 50 families, most of them single mothers with children, as part of the city-wide move to replace the antiquated and dilapidated DC General shelter—formerly a large city hospital—with smaller, purpose-designed facilities in each of the city's eight wards. The coalition is a joint effort of Washington Interfaith

Network and Good Faith Communities Coalition. Coalition members are working to educate the community about the facility, address neighborhood concerns, and ensure that it ends up a well-built and well-managed accommodation.

Micah Board member Jeffrey Davis has been appointed by Ward 3 City Council Member Mary Cheh to serve on the Community Advisory Committee that will bring together representatives from the communities and organizations affected by the facility to assist in planning the project. "The Advisory Committee

establishes two-way communication between city agencies and residents that many felt was missing from the City Council's approval process. Members include neighbors from McLean Gardens and Cleveland Park, plus representatives from the ANC, John Eaton Elementary School, religious institutions, and support groups for the homeless," explains Davis.

For more information on the proposed project and responses to some of the community concerns, please visit www.ward3forall.com. ♦



Micah Getting Greener

With the aid of a crane and other large equipment, workers install 88 solar panels on Micah's roof, which are expected to provide up to 25 percent of the temple's electricity.

Fly on the Wall FROM PAGE 5 ►

anyone to say “that’s just a book for Jewish kids” about my work. Thankfully, my non-Jewish editor encouraged me to proceed with the book and not change the setting. I was grateful because I feel that Machon Micah offers something truly rare: a non-home, non-school “third space” where students can

explore serious and important subjects while also having the freedom to just be kids. I also find it fascinating to watch adolescents adopt and own their religious identity while they are simultaneously questioning and critiquing it. (For example, #jewcrew is the social media hashtag the kids proudly use to refer to their group

of Micah friends.) It seemed to me the perfect setting for a book about friendship and growing up and loss and grieving and laughter and seltzer and bananas.

It also offered me the opportunity to better understand the b’nai mitzvah preparation process. And, I confess, to spend a little extra time with Bougie and

her awesome Micah friends... time that felt all the more special and fleeting as her bat mitzvah date came closer and closer.

So, for all of that, I thank you, Temple Micah (and staff, especially the Machon Micah teachers) for welcoming me and allowing me to immortalize you (sort of) in the pages of my book. ♦



HELP THE HOMELESS WITH NEW UNDERWEAR

Since 2000, the Temple Micah community has provided socks, underwear, and t-shirts to our homeless neighbors through **Friendship Place**, a local organization that works with the District’s homeless citizens. The need continues to grow and we are seeking underwear and socks for both adults and children for the first time this year.

We will distribute bags on Rosh Hashanah with a shopping list of items most needed. Please fill the bags with **NEW** items from the shopping list and bring your filled bag(s) with you to **Yom Kippur services on Wednesday, October 12, 2016** or to the temple throughout October.

This is a longstanding project of the 6th graders in Machon Micah, who will collect, count, and deliver the items to benefit the clients at Friendship Place. It is a remarkable opportunity for our kids to make a difference and see Tikkun Olam in action.

Help make this year’s Underwear Drive a success!

Underwear brings dignity!

Many thanks for your contributions!
Questions? Email: underwear@templemicah.org



Ending homelessness
Rebuilding lives