

Vine

An Encore for Double-Services High Holy Days for Temple Micah

BY SHELLEY GROSSMAN

FOR THE SECOND year, Temple Micah will hold two simultaneous services on Rosh Hashanah morning, Kol Nidre evening, and Yom Kippur morning at the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church, for one good reason. Last year's trial run was a great success.

Years of overcrowding in the 1,100-seat sanctuary of the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church — Micah's High Holy Days home away from home — finally triggered the 2016 experiment to hold a second service in the church's Great Hall.

"Last year went beyond my wildest expectations," Rabbi Zemel said. "The Great Hall service was so well received

that we're making this year's schedule virtually identical."

"Last year there was a lot of anxiety about the second service because for the first time the whole congregation would not be praying together," added Rabbi Beraha, who again this year will lead most of the worship in the Great Hall.

What temple leaders initially anticipated with trepidation has become a crucial part of High Holy Days planning. Their earlier anxiety was natural. Micah has always been identified as a close-knit, egalitarian community. Many feared that the Great Hall services would not only divide the congregation

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FROM RABBI ZEMEL

JEWISH LIFE IS
GUIDED BY CYCLES
AND ASKING
QUESTIONS

DEAR FRIENDS,

My undergraduate teacher and adviser,



Professor Jacob Neusner taught me that religious lives must be rooted in one's own experience. I find that I think increasingly of that simple yet profound idea and never more so than as the Holy Days approach and the beginning of our Jewish year.

With the new year we likewise begin the cycle of Jewish holidays, the biblical agricultural festival trio of Sukkot, Passover, and Shavuot. These three holidays celebrate the fall harvest, the coming of spring and the early summer harvest. Our liturgy makes a subtle yet significant change with Sukkot and Passover as on Sukkot we insert the line praying for rain into the daily and Shabbat service. With Passover, that prayer changes to a plea for dew to fall. The rainy season and the dry season are thus incorporated into our prayer lives. The Israelite farmers of antiquity lived a religious life that was rooted in their real life experience.

We, in America, have yet to fully achieve that. I have written before that for many years Jewish life in America has been held aloft by the twin pillars of remembering the Holocaust and supporting the State of Israel. Neither of these, not the murder of European Jewry or the building of Israel are parts of the daily life experiences of American Jews. That does not mean that these should not inform our Judaism but I don't believe that our future can be rooted solely in these two

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A PASSION FOR MUSIC AND JUDAISM CAME TOGETHER

BY SHELLEY GROSSMAN

ILANA K. GOLDMAN, Temple Micah's first cantorial student intern, is a rising second year student at the Hebrew Union College's Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music. Her first service with the congregation is scheduled for Kabbalat Shabbat service on Friday, Sept. 15, but her primary role is to lead the musical portion of High Holy Day worship in the Great Hall.

She says she is especially looking forward to Yom Kippur at Micah

when she will chant Kol Nidre accompanied by her mother,

cellist Amy Garland Goldman. "It is particularly exciting because this will be the first time we will do Kol Nidre together in public," she said in a recent telephone interview from New York.

During the 2017-18 school year,

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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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UNEXPECTED JOYS OF SUMMER AND TEMPLE MICAH

By ED LAZERE

It's something we hear — and say — a lot at this time of year: "Where did the summer go?" Unlike other oft-repeated phrases, this one feels fresh and real to me every year. Seriously: where did



the summer go? The Temple annual meeting, and our determined but ultimately unfruitful effort to buy the house next door seem like not that long ago, but it's been more than two months.

I hope you all found some ways to enjoy

the beauty and bounty of summer, and perhaps got a break from the state of national affairs that are troubling for so many of us at Temple Micah. And I hope you made it to Temple Micah this summer, or at least found time to connect with fellow congregants. I also hope you made your dues pledge and first payment. Sorry. Board president's job.

I frequently write about how special it is for me to be at Temple Micah, often in unexpected ways. This summer was no different. My wife Suzanne offered to chant Torah at one of the lay-led services, and I then got asked to do the D'var Torah. I said yes without thinking. In the weeks leading up to that Shabbat, I read the portion over and over to ponder its meaning, tried to cheat by searching for sermons online,

and ultimately resigned myself to just start writing something. It was my first Torah commentary in 40 years, so I was rusty. I ended up really enjoying thinking about what lessons the writers were trying to convey and seeing that much of the story still feels relevant today. To top off the day, my sons were there and did an aliyah.

When you get this, Rosh Hashanah will be just around the corner. If that's not a sign that summer is over, what is? I look forward to re-connecting with Micah members around the High Holy Days. This will be our second year of holding services in both the main sanctuary at the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church and in its Great Hall. If you didn't try the Great Hall last year, it's worth checking out this year.

As we look to 5778, I look forward to many special moments and events at Temple Micah. We will have our largest b'nai mitzvah class ever. We hope to soon start supporting a refugee family through a program we're calling Sukkat Shalom. We'll have a cantorial intern coming once a month. And the board and staff leadership will continue to explore options to help Temple Micah as it grows, with the goal of creating new spaces to not only accommodate our size but also deepen our American Jewish experience.

See you soon!

Ed



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

New Micah Librarian Has First Book She Ever Read and Years of Experience

BY FRAN DAUTH

THE NEW TEMPLE Micah librarian, Rebecca Mazur, comes to the job with a background as, well, as a librarian, most recently at the Library of Congress.

Mazur replaces Barbara Diskin, who has been the temple librarian since January of 2012. "Rebecca is a librarian with credentials, I was just an imposter with a love of books," Diskin said, modestly, about Mazur's appointment.

Unaware of Diskin's comment, Temple Micah President Ed Lazere noted: "Barbara brought her love of books and of Temple Micah together as our librarian, and we've all been the better for it. I'm grateful for Barbara's many commitments to the vitality of Temple Micah."

Mazur, who has an undergraduate degree in botany from Ohio University, earned a master's degree in library science from Kent State University. She went on to work at libraries at the State University of New York at Oswego and then George Mason University in Fairfax. At the Library of Congress Mazur worked in the Congressional Research Service as a bibliographer, mostly on scientific topics.

Mazur said her love of books began as a child with the first of the Mrs. Piggie Wiggle books by Betty MacDonald published in 1947. She still has the book, and occasionally re-reads it. Today, however, she mostly reads novels, although earlier this summer she read *Last Things: A Graphic Memoir of Love and Loss*, by Marissa Moss, and is currently reading *Cutting for Stone*, a novel by Abraham Verghese.

Mazur said she consults a lot of sources, such as the Jewish Book Council and the Jewish Review of Books to determine what books to add to the library. Currently her focus is on acquiring recently published books, which is reflected in the number of new books on Micah shelves.

Mazur said one of the most popular books in the Micah library, based on how many times it is checked out, is "The Yiddish Policemen's Union" by Michael Chabon. She said circulation of books, however, is "not robust."

There are, however, books on an amazing number of topics in the Micah library, among them: biography, Israeli history, Middle East history, Hebrew literature, Yiddish, literature, Jewish

life, folklore, immigration, geography, Jews in America, theology and ethics, Reform Judaism, and even cookbooks. Currently, the Temple Micah catalogue contains about 3,600 books.

Mazur praised the "wonderful" digital catalogue of Micah's library books. It was begun several years ago by Carol Sweig but then updated and modernized by Diskin and a team of volunteers.

"What I inherited was a good start, but lacked a usable call number system that would allow uniquely identifying each book's location,"

Diskin said. "With the help of several long-time Micah members over a period of several months we did a complete inventory of the library."

The library database of books can be viewed on the Micah website, and on an iPad located in the upstairs library.

Diskin said she enjoyed learning more about Jewish books, and about who actually checked out books on a regular basis. She added that she is amazed at how many Micah members are authors.

For her part, Mazur says she is learning as she goes along. ♦

BOOKS NEW TO MICAH LIBRARY

Here is a list of newly-acquired books. The ones with Micah call numbers (in parentheses) are on the shelves now.

King Solomon's Table by Joan Nathan. Knopf, 2017. (641.5676)

The Bible Doesn't Say That: 40 Biblical Mistranslations, Misconceptions, and Other Misunderstandings by Joel Hoffman. Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, 2016. (220.6)

The Sacred Calling: Four Decades of Women in the Rabbinate edited by Rabbi Rebecca Einstein Schorr, Rabbi Alysa Mendelson Graf. CCAR Press, 2016. (n/a)

The Six-Day War: The Breaking of the Middle East by Guy Laron. Yale University Press, 2016. (956.046)

My Jewish Year: 18 Holidays and One Wondering Jew by Abigail Pogrebin. Fig Tree Books, 2017. (296.43)

Gates of Shabbat (Revised Edition) edited by Mark Dov Shapiro. CCAR Press, 2016. (n/a)

The Book of Job: When Bad Things Happen to a Good Person by Harold Kushner. Schocken Nextbook, 2012. (223.106)

Last Things: A Graphic Memoir of Loss and Love by Marissa Moss. Conari Books 2017. (741.56)

The Weight of Ink by Rachel Kadish. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2017. (n/a)

You Are the Book: A Spiritual Memoir by Micah member Rabbi Tamara Miller. Three Gems Publishing, 2017. (n/a)

INTERESTING SPEAKERS!

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

SUNDAY SPEAKER SERIES

Oct. 22 at 5 pm – Panel Discussion:

The Jewish Voice in the Public Square

Lawrence Hoffman, professor, Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion

Riv-Ellen Prell, professor, University of Minnesota

Rich Harwood, president, The Harwood Institute

Valerie Strauss, moderator, *The Washington Post*



See story on page 7 about this special event

LUNCH & LEARN

Wednesdays from noon to 2 pm

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



Oct. 11 – Stuart Schwartz will speak on Behind the Scenes of Broadcast News. In a time of “fake news” and “media bias” allegations, Micah member Schwartz will discuss how television newscasts are produced, and what constitutes honest and objective reporting. During his 35-year career as a producer for ABC News he garnered nearly 20 national news awards.

HELP THE HOMELESS START NEW YEAR WITH NEW UNDERWEAR

Help Temple Micah reach the goal of 15,000 pieces of new underwear for the homeless. Our annual Fall drive to collect new underwear for the homeless, in connection with Friendship Place, begins at Rosh Hashanah services. Our 6th graders will be handing out bags for congregants to fill with new underwear for the homeless. The bags will be collected on Yom Kippur or can be dropped off in the box in Temple Micah's lobby through Nov. 3, 2017.

**FRIEND-
SHIP
PLACE**

LESSONS FROM LANDAU

WHEN THE MAGIC OF THE TEXT COMES ALIVE

BY RABBI SUSAN LANDAU

"Ten points to Gryffindor!" I remember my father exclaiming periodically when my sister or I did something admirable. When one of my close friends had a baby I got him a Onesie that says, "Snuggle this Muggle." I have taken both my sister and my significant other to the Wizarding World of Harry Potter theme park in Orlando. In short, Harry Potter has been a topic I have shared with everyone who is most important to me. For twenty years it has meant family time, togetherness, and rich discussion. And for the past year and a half it has also meant a source of spiritual inspiration.

Over the summer I had the opportunity to go to a live show recording of the relatively new podcast, "Harry Potter and the Sacred Text." This podcast is the project of two alumni of the Harvard Divinity School, Vanessa Zoltan and Casper ter Kuile, who utilize techniques of sacred text study from various faith traditions to read more deeply into the beloved Harry Potter series, and their own lives. The show has a robust following of like-minded fans, and even

teachers who have adopted some of the techniques into their classroom teaching.

All this begs the question, of course, of what makes a text sacred in the first place. Which pieces of literature merit to be read through the lens of *Lectio Divina*, for example, or *chevruta* study? Zoltan and ter Kuile operate with the understanding that believing a text is sacred means having faith that its most profound meaning is not always on the surface, but that if you dig deep enough, the text will always have a gem of wisdom to offer.

And they are after more than simply partaking of the gifts that the text has to offer. If engagement with any sacred text is truly effective, then it also influences a person's behavior in the world, pushing us to do better. In an interview with the Jewish Exponent, Zoltan recently explained: "In a perfect world what the podcast is doing is giving people the opportunity to train themselves to be kinder and braver, so that is the goal; and then the other thing is any solace it offers to people through tough times." In Judaism, our relent-

less study of Torah resonates in a similar way. I would add a detail I think is implied within the podcast's definition, but not necessarily explicit: we believe that a sacred text holds us accountable to this sort of reflective behavior and inspired ethical action that we study.

Harry Potter and the Sacred Text is not the first or only offering of its kind. My Passover experience this past spring was enriched by the publication of *The Unofficial Hogwarts Haggadah*. Rabbi Moshe Rosenberg, author of the work, explains in its introduction that he is guided by a philosophy of "reciprocal resonance," which he explains in the haggadah "mean[s] that each will create associations in our minds that will help us better appreciate the other." How much more can I understand and appreciate the Jewish concept of *Korban* (sacrifice), when I place it in the context of self-sacrifice in Harry Potter's life? Would you also gain a new appreciation for the relationship between Moses and God, symbolized by Moses' staff, when it is contrasted to the relation-



ship between a wizard and his wand?

The podcast, Zoltan and ter Kuile confirm, is not an attempt to make space for Harry Potter to replace religion. Rather, they have created a magical outlet for fans to honor the spiritual significance the books have in their lives. For me, using hermeneutics like the PaRDeS structure (our rabbis' technique of extrapolating progressively deeper layers of meaning from the text) as a tool for my Potter reading only helps me connect more deeply to the books I love and the religious lens through which I always strive to see the world.

Which texts have been beacons of the sacred in your life? I would be happy to hear about the sources that add meaning for you. And, of course, if you ever have a *yen* for discussing the loyalty, trust, love, fear, hope, or ethics taught in Harry Potter, I'm always game.

Rabbi's Message FROM PAGE 1 ►

events. In other words, they can neither define nor create our own Jewish lives.

As noted above, Jewish life is guided by cycles. For the ancients the cycle of the seasons yielded the agricultural festivals that anchored the year. Our modern Judaism is to a great extent centered on the life cycle. We celebrate Jewishly over baby namings, *bar/bat mitzvah*, and weddings. We mourn at funerals. For some of us, *yartzeit* and wedding anniversaries are of

special significance. The question we might ask is whether these steps of the life cycle alone are enough to define our Jewish lives. They are infrequent. Yet, I believe that a full American Judaism can be built with the life cycle as a base. The next level we might add is Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. These too are part of our life cycle.

The Holy Days are the time of fierce introspection, potential renewal and even change of direction or change of pace. This is why we take the time to take the prayerbook off of

the shelf. At this season of the year, we confront the most awesome of Human Projects--our individual selves--our own very lives. We are challenged in the most supportive yet direct way to ask ourselves the simplest questions:

How have I spent my time?

In what ways have I been a good friend, family member, neighbor, worker, citizen?

What door would I like to open in the coming year?

What door would I like to close?

How can I be better?

How do I think about a life

lived in covenant with others? With God?

How can I make the coming year different?

This year has been a grueling year for America and the world, both of which seem loosened from their mooring. This year, it seems especially, we want to ask about the Human Project that is our lives and how we create covenantal lives of purpose, meaning and action. How do we engage with each other to reach greater understanding of our world?

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MOMENT OF MUSICAL MAJESTY ENRICHES NEW SERVICE

By Rabbi Susan Landau

5777 was a year of change at Temple Micah. The congregation whose High Holy Day attendance had outgrown its own sanctuary had also become too numerous for its home away from home in the sanctuary of the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church. For the first time in its history, Temple Micah offered two concurrent worship options. The new service in the church's Great Hall would ensure that every congregant had enough space for a comfortable High Holy Day worship experience, but it also presented challenges and opportunities. One such opportunity was the innovation of the Pop-Up Choir.

Micah's leaders believed that each new experiment in the Great Hall should also bear the hallmark and comforts of a Micah service, and be grounded in some sort of continuity. The Great Hall was meant to be an evolution of a new worship option, rather than a revolution of an entirely new creation. One of the most notable differences in this new service would be a lack of choir. Where our Temple Micah High Holy Day choir is such a hallmark of the Sanctuary service, this new service would have no such sound.

Enter, the Great Hall Pop-Up Choir: one rehearsal, one piece of music, one moment during the service for these singers to "pop up" from their seats and be heard.

The Pop-Up Choir provided a perfect chance to imbue the new service with a moment of choral sound, while also providing an opportunity for congregants who like to sing but were not members of the choir. Congregants who relished the opportunity to sit with their families during the services joined the Pop-Up Choir. Congregants who didn't have the time to commit to countless rehearsals for the regular Micah choir joined. And congregants who might

have felt anxious about a brand new worship experience were able to take ownership and make a contribution in a special way.

But what should the Pop-Up choir sing? Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller, professor of cantorial arts at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, differentiates between the many different faces of Jewish sacred music: momentum, meditation, meeting, memory, and majesty. Momentum, the musical "connective tissue" of the worship would create too much work for the pop-up choir singers, and would likely not showcase their vocal talents. The service leaders decided last year that the new musicians and their instruments (additions included an upright bass and shruti box harmonium) would contribute to the service's meditative moments. And so many of the simple, congregational melodies of the High Holy Days provide moments for meeting, and anchor the service in memory of High Holy Days of the past.

The answer was clear: the Pop-Up Choir would add a moment of majesty to the service, elevating the entire experience to a height it would not otherwise be able to reach. Cantor Schiller describes music of majesty as that which evokes within us a sense of awe and grandeur. Temple Micah services are not usually full of choral "listening moments" that create this space, but the High Holy Days are reserved for this kind of special sound, setting them apart. Last year the Pop-Up Choir sang Robbie Solomon's composition "Eitz Chayim Hi" at the close of the Torah service, and their voices lifted the congregation's prayers as the beautiful new ark doors were closed.

The Pop-Up Choir debut last year was a smashing success, and the congregation is eager for a repeat "performance" to welcome 5778.

High Holy Days FROM PAGE 1 ►

physically, but institute the appearance of a two-tiered, first class-second class dichotomy. Instead, the two services were designed and promoted as different spiritual experiences with the choice of which to attend up to the individual members. Although worshipers have to select which services they want to attend when they sign up for tickets, they are encouraged to mix and match seats in the Great Hall and the sanctuary.

"Last year, we couldn't really picture how everything would work out," Rabbi

Beraha said. "They say that the second time is supposed to be easier. We found that to be true."

The separate Next Dor services for the 20s/30s cohort will again be led by Rabbi Landau at the temple on Erev Rosh Hashanah and Kol Nidre.

While the simultaneous services are a repeat from last year, there are a number of innovations, including the addition of a cantorial intern, more musicians, and more instruments.

A variety of changes are planned for both services, particularly on Yom

Kippur. Ilana Goldman, the student cantor, is one of them. (See story on page 1.) Most of the time, she will lead the music portion of the Great Hall services similar to the way that rabbinical student Danny Moss, now Rabbi Moss, did last year. The Great Hall service will again feature a Pop-Up choir. (See story above.)

Additional professional musicians will play new and different music. "The professional ensemble adds so much to Friday night services, we're hoping they

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Oct. 22 Panel to Weigh Jewish Voice in the Public Square

BY FRAN DAUTH

WHAT ROLES DO Jews—and Judaism—play in shaping public policy, or even dissent, in this, one of the most troubling times in American life in recent years?

That is the topic that a panel of distinguished scholars will take up Oct. 22 at 5 p.m. at Temple Micah in the second program financed by the Innovation Fund.

The Jewish Voice in the Public Square, as the event is called, will feature Prof. Lawrence Hoffman of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, Prof. Riv-Ellen Prell of the University of Minnesota, and Rich Harwood of the Harwood Institute. Valerie Strauss, a reporter for *The Washington Post*, will be the moderator.

Rabbi Hoffman, a prominent scholar of Jewish liturgy and the author of more

than 40 books, has been called “One of contemporary Judaism’s most perceptive and creative teachers.” Among other things, he writes a blog called “Life and a Little Liturgy.” In a posting on Aug. 24 he compared the concept of separation of powers laid out in the U.S. Constitution to checks and balances in ancient Israel. “...anticipating history’s need for independent conscience, the Rabbis gave us an alternative to prophets: every single citizen, you and me.”

Prell, who has a Ph.D in anthropology, specializes in gender and ethnicity, and is the author of “Women Remaking American Judaism.”

Harwood, a member of Temple Micah, is the founder of The Harwood Institute, which works with communities and organizations to propel change. The institute

most notably known for having worked with residents of Newtown, Conn., to decide the fate of Sandy Hook Elementary School, where 26 children and adults were killed in December 2012.

Strauss, also a member of Temple Micah, writes about education for *The Washington Post* and is the author of the Post’s Answer Sheet blog.

The Micah board of directors began the Innovation Fund two years ago as a way to pay for outstanding speakers and creative ways to address new ideas.

The first event was a panel of journalists that earlier this year examined “Reporting the Truth in a Post-Truth Era.” The standing-room only session featured Elisabeth Bumiller, Washington bureau chief of the *New York Times*, Dana Millbank, *Washington*

Post columnist, and Naftali Ben David, an editor in the *Wall Street Journal*’s Washington bureau. Jodi Enda, assistant managing editor for special projects at CNN, was the moderator.

A video of that discussion can be found on the Temple Micah website by going to the education tab, and then Innovation Fund, Spring 2017.

Enda, a past president of Temple Micah, said the Innovation Fund was created to enable the temple “to more nimbly do the key thing that makes Micah different and special: innovate.” She added that while Micah has been a trailblazer among synagogues nationwide, until the fund was launched “every time Rabbi Zemel had one of his visionary ideas, we had to scrape month money together to turn them into reality.” ♦

Passion FROM PAGE 1 ►

Goldman will return to Micah once a month. “To be the first cantorial intern is really an honor,” she said. “I am very excited to be coming back to Washington and Temple Micah.” Goldman got to know Micah and Washington several years ago when she interned at the Religious Action Center with Micah member Emily Aronson. The two spent last year together in Israel. Aronson is now a second-year rabbinical student at HUC.

In early August, Goldman spent some time at Micah to begin going over the High Holy Days material. “Already I felt welcome,” she said.

“I’ve been looking forward to working with and mentoring Ilana since finding out that she would be our cantorial intern,” Cantor Meryl Weiner said. “Her love of Judaism and music was so evident during the interview process and was even more so as we began preparing for our first Shabbat together and the High Holy Day services.”

Goldman’s home life in Asbury Park, NJ, has been steeped in music. Her mother is a professional cellist. Her father, who plays the accordion, and her tuba-playing brother are avid amateurs. She studied voice and, at Lawrence University in Appleton, WI,

double-majored in music and religious studies. Early on Goldman was interested in becoming a psychologist. “But my passion for music and Judaism were much stronger,” she said.

After graduation, she returned to Washington as a development associate at Hillel International, while she decided on her next career move. “But I missed the music,” she said. “I really like being in front of people and working with people. Worship was always central along with music. I first started singing at the temple.” So, becoming a cantor seemed the perfect combination.

Initially, Micah was only

looking for someone to lead the music in the Great Hall, but that search was broadened to find a cantorial intern. “We decided that having a monthly student would enrich the Micah experience,” said Rabbi Zemel. “We have had such positive success with the rabbinical summer interns, why not try a cantorial monthly program?”

Meanwhile, Goldman saw Micah’s name on the list of congregations looking for an intern. She loved DC and “remembered going to Micah. I had never seen a service accompanied by a grand piano before.” So she signed up. “I think it was *bashert*,” she said. ♦

TZEDAKAH

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Zev Natan Goldstein, by Maxine Schiffman Rabbi Zemel and his contribution to the wedding of David Mantell and Elie Lauter, by Michael and Maxine Mantell

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Marvin Broder, by Roberta Aronson and Paul Goldberg, Ann Sablosky and Stephen Rockower; Lucette Cohen, by Martha and David Adler; Sara Ehrman, by Martha and David Adler, Susie Blumenthal, David and Barbara Diskin, Jodi Enda, Carole and Dave Wilson Mandy Ourisman, by anonymous

RABBI BERAHA'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

IN MEMORY OF
Harry J. Luterman, by Ronna and Stan Foster

RABBI LANDAU'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Dana Milbank

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Paul Goldberg

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Harold Berman, by Lew and Ricki Karp Marvin Broder, by Gwen and Marc Pearl Evelyn Goldberg, by Susie Blumenthal T. Hartley Hall, IV, by Aurie Hall

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IN HONOR OF
David Wentworth, by Ann Sablosky and Stephen Rockower

IN MEMORY OF
Marvin Broder, by Sid and Elka Booth, Roberta and Peter Gluck, Susan Goda, Carolyn Shanoff

Sara Ehrman, by Gwen and Marc Pearl; Ethel Fargotstein and David Micah Booth, by Sid and Elka Booth; Leon David Freedman, by Jean Freedman and Jonathan Pollock; Ruth Gruenberg, by Mark and Myra Kovey; Jan Townend, by Sid and Elka Booth

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B'NAI MITZVAH



SARAH EMMA PENN THAU

SEPTEMBER 2 / 11 ELUL

PARENTS: Anna Penn and Stephen Thau
TORAH PORTION: Ki Tetze

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Sarah is sharing her love of music with toddlers at the Mazique Early Childhood Center by raising funds and donating new musical instruments.



AYLA KEYNES-LEVINSON

SEPTEMBER 9 / 18 ELUL

PARENTS: Renana Keynes and John Levinson
TORAH PORTION: Ki Tavo

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Ayla is having her Bat Mitzvah on behalf of Ana Levinson, a 12-year-old girl from Pskov, Russia, who was murdered in the Holocaust. In preparation, she has read books, watched movies, visited the Holocaust Museum and heard stories of survivors to learn as much as she can. She also plans to make a donation to Yad Vashem to help ensure that everyone who died in the Holocaust is remembered and further the mission of education and remembrance.



EVAN GERSTENBLITH

OCTOBER 14 / 24 TISHREI

PARENTS: Bart and Stephanie Gerstenblith
TORAH PORTION: Bereshit

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Evan is planning to contribute 10% of the money he receives in bar mitzvah gifts to support Spacell. The Israeli non-profit organization's vision is to "inspire children in Israel to be scientists and engineers, and to engage Jewish children around the world to connect with Israel in new and exciting ways."



ADAM EZIEL LEDERMAN

OCTOBER 21 / 1 CHESHVAN

PARENTS: Laura and Robert Lederman
TORAH PORTION: Noah

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Adam is learning how his grandparents survived the Holocaust in Poland as well as about the family that saved them. He plans to host a book group with some fellow temple classmates to read and discuss his grandparents' book describing their experience.



SAM BLUMENTHAL

OCTOBER 28 / 8 CHESHVAN

PARENTS: Mark Blumenthal and Helen Burstin
TORAH PORTION: Lech-Lecha

INDEPENDENT PROJECT: Sam is learning about the U.S. military unit that liberated his grandfather from a concentration camp at Mauthausen-Gusen during World War II.

MAZAL TOV!

Mace Broide and Beverly and Stan Frye, on the birth of Mace's great-granddaughter and Beverly and Stan's granddaughter, Pacey June Frye, born to Mitchell and Nikki Frye

Amanda Nover and Alex Barbag, on the blessing of their wedding

Judy and Doug Warshof, on the naming of their granddaughter, Leah Abigail Warshof

Sarah Feuer, on making aliyah to Israel

Laura, Ron, and Shoshana Ferguson are delighted to welcome Matan JiNuo Ferguson to their family

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Craig and Sheryl Aaron

Bjorn Beam

Rose Berman

David Burstein and Lindsay Gordon

Rebecca DeSantis

Michael Froman and Nancy Goodman

Whitney Mulhauser and Eamonn Donnelly

Joseph and Karen Sandler

Ariel and Sam Vorhees

CONDOLENCES

The Temple Micah community extends its deepest condolences to:

ROSE AND HOWARD BERMAN, on the passing of Rose's husband and Howard's father, Harold Berman

JANET HAHN, on the passing of her father, Jerome Hahn

RUTH AND MARGARET HENOCK, on the passing of Ruth's husband and Margaret's father, William Henoch

RICHARD TOWNEND, on the passing of his mother, Jan Townend

May their memories be for a blessing.

Tzedakah FROM PREVIOUS PAGE ►

IN HONOR OF

Susan Bandler and Joel Korn, by the Gordon-Mallory Collaborative; Debra Knopman and the 2017 Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class, by Marcia and Clark Silcox; Esther Moring, by Robert Rackleff; Meryl and George Weiner, by Marina Fanning and Larry Cooley; Martin Zatz, by Marcia Bordman Ilan and Isabella Ziv, by Gil and Blanche Ziv

IN MEMORY OF

Sakhidad Afghan, by Kate Kiggins and Jared Blum; Eva Benda, by Susan Benda; Harold Berman, by Martha and David Adler; Morton Bobowick, by Marla Bobowick; Marvin Broder, by Debra Knopman, Marcia and Clark Silcox; Lucette Cohen, by Debra Knopman; Judy Cohen, by the Alexander family; Peter Feuer, by Debra Knopman; David Green, by Barbara Green; Miriam Kalter, Sarah

Remes and Seelig Sinton; Edward I. Klein, by Marsha Semmel; Sally Schumacher, Olivia Wagenheim and Joseph Wagenheim, by Peg Blechman and Paul Shapiro; Jan Townend, by Martha and David Adler; Maurice Weiner, by Gil and Blanche Ziv; Maurice Yodido and Boris Schwarz, by Joseph Schwarz

This list reflects donations received as of August 29, 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.

Micah Gets Musical on a Thursday Morning

BY KAREN ROSENBAUM

ON THE FIRST Thursday morning of every month at Temple Micah the sanctuary is filled with music made by a small band of serious amateurs. The brainstorm of Barbara Diskin, who chairs the Aging Together committee, Micah Musical Morning offers a chance for retirees and others available on a weekday morning to perform for an eager and sympathetic audience of fellow amateurs and friends.

The group first played together in July of 2016 and often presents solos and duets. Among the musicians: Barbara Diskin, Martha Adler, Karen Rosenbaum, Jack Hadley, and Teddy

Klaus (piano); David Adler and Nancy Lang (violin); Stuart Brown (flute); Deborah Edge (bass violin); Robert Seasonwein (guitar); Maurice Singer (recorder); and Sonia White (nyckelharpa, a Swedish fiddle). Mostly classical pieces are featured, but we have had ragtime, bluegrass, folk, and Beatles music.

These performances are not the polished perfection of professionals, but done for the love of doing. Some performers have years of playing for pleasure under their belts, but others are beginners, taking up an instrument for the first time or perhaps returning

to one not played for 30 to 40 years. The discipline of preparing for performance is valuable stimulus to their practice, and the audience is always enthusiastic, even if there are occasional wrong notes.

We were thrilled to have the New Horizons Band present a concert at Micah for our monthly program in May. New Horizons is associated with Levine Music and its members are adults who enjoy making music together. Bob Dorfman, a Micah member, plays trombone in the band.

Micah Musical Mornings always welcomes new performers and audiences. ♦

High Holy Days FROM PAGE 6 ►

will add variety and make these services livelier, too," Rabbi Zemel said.

"In the main sanctuary we'll be adding Pepe Gonzalez, the upright bassist from the Friday evening service ensemble, along with Adam Mason, a percussionist, Dan Mack who plays both guitar and mandolin, and a cellist, Dorotea Racz," Cantor Meryl Weiner explained. "Another cellist, Amy Garland Goldman, is the mother of Ilana, the cantorial student. They will pray Kol Nidre together" in the Great Hall.

Pianist Madezda Mijatovic-Sekicki, new this year, will accompany the choir in the main sanctuary. Micah's own musicians, flautists Liz Poliner and Ruth Simon, clarinetist Lora Ferguson, and cellist Eli Blum will be at their usual stations next to the piano in the sanctuary. Eighth-grader Natalie Sipress will play the violin. "She is a great violinist," Rabbi Beraha said.

In addition to the players, the services will feature new music. The editors of *Mishkan Hanefesh*, the new two-volume High Holy Day prayer book, commissioned an anthology of original music as a companion to the *Mishkan Hanefesh* text. Cantor Weiner and Music Director Teddy Klaus have chosen several pieces for the choir to

sing at the services. Also, singer-songwriter Elana Arian, daughter of Micah's most recent scholar-in-residence, Merri Arian, has composed several new melodies that Cantor Weiner and the choir will introduce. Goldman, the cantorial intern, has brought some of her favorite High Holy Days music.

The Yom Kippur afternoon Haftarah chanting of *Jonah* also will get a fresh take. Instead of Machon Micah students taking turns chanting the whole book, they will chant selections in Hebrew while a rabbi relates the Jonah story in English.

Meanwhile, the rabbis are working to enliven the service later on Yom Kippur afternoon before Yiskor. "None of us loved the afternoon service," Rabbi Zemel said. "We're all tired by then and there are so many pages of words. We're looking to inject more energy into it, make it more participatory, less formal and more conversational."

The 25-Year Club's long-established poetry reading following the Ask the Rabbis session will become more interactive. Instead of simply reading a long list of poems, members of the Hebrew Poetry Group will read a few poems from the Yom Kippur prayerbook and engage the congregation in conversation about them in an effort to pull greater meaning from the poetry.

However, most of the distinctive components that make Micah services so special will remain. "The things we do well — like Yiskor — I don't want to tamper with," Zemel said. He also mentioned two particularly Micah traditions that won't change: first, the practice on Rosh Hashanah morning of group aliyot honoring new members, people who enjoyed a simcha, those who were ill and their caregivers and those who suffered a death, and on Yom Kippur morning Micah groups that provide service to the temple like Micah Cooks, Hineni and the choir; second, the custom to keep the ark open during the concluding (N'illa) service so individuals can pray privately in front of it. And of course, the Ask the Rabbis session will continue its 50-plus year stretch.

The long-running creative "Liz Lerman" movement service will also continue, but without Lerman, who moved to Arizona last year. Rabbinic Intern Samantha Frank, who created this fall's Elul readings, which form the basis for the dance created each year by temple members, will participate in that service.

"We're feeling more freedom this year to let the second service evolve in its own way," Rabbi Zemel said. "But both services will still be distinctively Micah services." ♦

BERAHA'S BLACKBOARD

MAKING A WAGER ON JEWISH EDUCATION

BY RABBI JOSH BERAHA

Dear Parents,

Summertime offers ample time and headspace for deep thinking. Here are some of my thoughts on Jewish education as we prepare to enter the new year.

A question I ask myself often is: What counts for success in Jewish education? The question is a difficult one for several reasons. For one, learning is notoriously hard to measure, and all the more so for *religious* and *cultural* learning. A student of Judaism might know the Shema prayer, for example, but fail to understand its translation, its deeper textual meaning and its context in Jewish learning and living.

Second, success is subjective. What one might consider a fruitful result, another might deem a flop.

And lastly, certain successes are only realized later in life.

I ask myself what counts for success in Jewish education because the answer—if I knew it, definitively—would help shape Jewish education at Temple Micah, and the answer, if we knew it, would transform Jewish education for every synagogue and school across North America.

But without a clear answer, we persist—as we must—but therefore make involuntary decisions as to what consti-

tutes success by focusing on the B'nai Mitzvah ceremony as a goal, all the while knowing that B'nai Mitzvah usually signifies an end, even if just temporarily, to serious Jewish study.

While we at Temple Micah may not be on our way, at least quickly, to an answer to what counts for success in Jewish education, we have made three wagers in the past three years on what might lead us to some version of what one might deem a successful Jewish learning institution. The wagers are as follows:

1) Jewish education should be *formative* more than *informative*, that is, it should attempt to shape one's hearts and desires rather than attempt to disseminate trivial facts.

2) Jewish learning is sustained, in the younger grades especially, through the creation and health of an emotional matrix in which cognitive learning can be lodged later in life. Without a rich, thick connection to, and deep love of Jewish life, there can be no true absorption of Jewish learning. Judaism is about the lived-life, outside a classroom.

3) Jewish education is created and sustained, first and foremost, in the home. Only when the synagogue works in conjunction with the home,

and the home in conjunction with the synagogue, can true Jewish living blossom.

These three ideas have shaped my thinking and therefore shaped Machon Micah over the past three years and over that time we have built an engaging, lively and warm setting for Jewish education to take place within. The emotional matrix is strong. Parents are tuned in. All eyes look up at Boker Tov with glee and admiration and mouths sing out "Modeh Ani" as together we create and uphold sacred space.

But.

There is still work to be done, lots of work, for within the secure and inviting context that provides for the formation of hearts and desires, there is something missing.

Thank you to God, I do not do my work alone. I am in a community of invested, learned individuals who are in healthy communication with me about how to continually improve what we do at Temple Micah in order to bring us closer to finding what might constitute success in Jewish education.

Thank you to everyone who over the past three years has given me feedback, expressed frustration or simply engaged me in a conversation about Jewish life in America. Through you, I now see that the next step for Machon Micah is to marry the positive atmosphere that exists on your average Machon Sunday, with a greater depth of learning.

But please do explain, Rabbi, what you mean by a greater depth of learning!

To be sure, I do not know what I mean, exactly, but I have a new wager I'm ready to make, that is, I have a slightly



new direction forward I'd like to take the Machon, and it begins with a revamped curriculum.

Starting in the fall of 5778, we have six new gates of learning—all with a specific Jewish focus. While the emphasis of the old gates (Unity, Wisdom, Honor, Compassion, Faith and Vision) was more universal, the new gates (Kehilah, Torah, Tefilah, Tzedek, Zicharon and Tziona) are more particular, zeroed in on the Jewish experience.

Within each gate, students will study specific vocabulary words related to the theme of the gate along with three Torah or rabbinic texts that also relate to the theme of the gate. In addition, in an attempt to link the Micah experience with a family's home—the true center of Jewish education—we will be creating take-home discussion guides for families for each gate. Finally, although we still emphasize experiential learning especially when it comes to understanding Jewish holidays, I plan to provide students with a greater understanding of some of the fundamentals of Jewish holidays as they occur throughout the year.

I value our community's ongoing commitment to Jewish education and look forward to another great year as we attempt to make Jewish learning and living as successful as we can!

B'shalom,
Josh

Rabbi's Message FROM PAGE 5 ►

These are the questions I find myself thinking about this year.

As a way to discover some answers, I want to take this opportunity to call your attention to a singularly special event that we will be holding at Micah on Oct. 22. (Details at top of page 7.)

How do we engage the world as Jews holding the strength, durability, and insights of Jewish wisdom with us as we live through these hectic days? Let this year be a year of exploration and renewal.

Shanah Tovah,
Rabbi Daniel G. Zemel

INTRODUCING MAZON MICAH

Our teacher, Hillel, urges us not to separate ourselves from the community (*Avot* 2:5), and Temple Micah's newest program will help us heed his advice on multiple levels. Introducing: Mazon Micah.

Once a month volunteers from Temple Micah will gather on Sunday afternoon to break bread together, and then assemble *mazon*, food, for our neighbors in need at Friendship Place. This sandwich-making and donating initiative will help us deepen relationships within the Micah community, and simultaneously remind us to turn our awareness outwards.

We who congregate at 2829 Wisconsin Ave. can always count on having *mazon* to sustain ourselves, but not everyone in our greater community is so lucky. We can truly fulfill Hillel's injunction when we work together to take care of others.

Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria taught, "Without Torah there is no social order; without social order there is no Torah." (*Avot* 3:17) In other words, Torah teaches us how to care for each other and what

is demanded of us as human beings, on the most primal level. Like food, Torah sustains us. And it guides us one step further, into the social network and proper way of conduct to which we aspire. Join us!

The first Mazon Micah is Sunday, Sept. 17. All were are welcome to volunteer. Eventually, we hope to target specific cohorts within the community that would not normally have contact with one another to work together in Mazon Micah. Mazon Micah co-chairs, Rielle Miller Gabriel and Beverly Frye, volunteer Martha Adler, and Rabbi Susan Landau look forward to continuing to develop the program and deepen our bonds as a community. It can only happen with all of your help. The details are below:

Who: Temple Micah

What: Lunch time, text study, and sandwich making

When: 12 p.m. on a Sunday, approximately once a month. Check the calendar each month.

— Rabbi Susan Landau



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