



# Staying Connected at Temple Israel

# (via Zoom)



Erev Shabbat - April 17, 2020

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Nancy & Don Carter Campus

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#### RABBI

Cookie Lea Olshein

### CANTOR

Michael Kruk

### **RABBI EMERITUS**

Howard Shapiro, D.D.

### TEMPLE ADMINISTRATOR/EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Karen Szteinberg

# Thanks to our MEDIA MAVENS for sponsoring our printed bulletin and website:

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### From the Rabbi

Rabbi Cookie Lea Olshein

#### Walking Into the Unknown ... Online

As I always say, "there is never one right way to do things" ... and this includes making the transition from a "brick and mortar" synagogue to creating an online spiritual community, basically overnight in March. Because of this, we consulted lots of experts to determine "best practices" regarding how we should proceed. At the top of the list was creating opportunities to "see each other" and to connect with each other.

Regarding "seeing each other", during our online worship, you will notice that we not only have all of our liturgy online in the service, but there is a balance between seeing the liturgy and seeing each other on our screens. Additionally, you will notice that I am continuing with the practice of making our worship experience interactive, with multiple opportunities for sharing within our worship so it is not completely frontal. (This is one of the benefits of have live "Zoom worship" rather than a prerecorded service, which is what many congregations do.)

Additionally, by now, we hope that every one of you has received at least one call/message from a Board member just to "check in" with you (if you haven't, please call me so we can connect and I can follow up to make sure your best contact information is on our lists provided to our Board members). This is a great opportunity to connect with someone from our community that you might not already know.

Through this process, we have discovered that some of you feel socially isolated and we have been able to connect people up so that new relationships are forming within our sacred community. Not only during this time of physical distancing, but anytime, please let me know if you would like us to do the same for you!

Further, we have not only adapted our in-person programs to becoming online "meet-ups", but we have created several new offerings in response to your requests. For example, by popular request, our "*Kehilah* (Community) and Coffee" on Tuesdays at 11:30am and "Wine and Unwind" on Thursdays at 4:30pm are now beginning with a "check-in" followed by learning on a topic.

By participant request, the Tuesday "meet-ups" now include time for meditation and learning on different topics (think about what you want to discuss/learn about and let me know), while the May Thursday "meet-ups" will focus on four aspects of Reform Judaism and how it has changed (after our check-in time.) No RSVP is required, just check your e-mail for the log-in and password!

Please be in touch with me if you have class ideas/requests ... we want to include YOU in our planning. Becoming an online community has offered us some flexibility in planning which was not available before. In other words, how can you help engage YOUR spiritual community? We'd love to partner with you to find out!

Finally, I want to thank all those working so hard behind the scenes who are helping our spiritual community to not only survive, but thrive during this unusual time. In addition to our lay leaders and administrative staff who do this sacred work, I want to say a personal thank you to all of you who have continued to financially support Temple Israel even in this time of uncertainty. As someone about to make a giant leap into the unknown, I am heartened by the faith you have in Temple Israel and that you are helping keep Temple Israel alive for generations to come. Thank you always for your continued support.

May you be blessed with health and safety ... and with meaningful interactions with family and friends so you can feel fulfilled as we stay home practicing the Jewish value of *pikuach nefesh*, saving lives.



### From the President Marty List

We just finished our week-long celebration of Passover. We have always been so comfortable worshipping in our beautiful Kraft Sanctuary and celebrating together in the Carter Ballroom. It was strange and uncomfortable not to share our 2<sup>nd</sup> night Passover Seder with everyone in one place but our virtual seder was clearly a success. And as we closed out Passover with Yizkor on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, it was nice to share this moving memorial service with almost 30 others on Zoom.

As we have distanced ourselves from each other physically for almost two months now, I am heartened by how creative we have become to restore personal connections in our lives using technology. In many ways, we are having deeper conversations and more serious relationships with our families and friends precisely because we can't be physically present!

I'm very appreciative that more and more of you are joining with us virtually to socialize, study or worship. While I certainly look forward to that day in the not too distant future when we will all be together again at Temple Israel, our worship services and all of our other programs have been wonderful experiences on Zoom.



## **Temple Israel Brotherhood**

Mike Strauss, Brotherhood President

What a strange few months this has been. Normally at this time in the year we would be planning our annual steak dinner and speaking about the wonderful second night Seder we just had. That is not the case this year. As we adjust to the changes that the pandemic has wrought, and this time of isolation, please know that the Brotherhood and I are here for you.

While we are isolating physically, now is the time to reach out socially and strengthen those bonds with our temple family. I would encourage all members of the Brotherhood to reach out to another member and give them a call or send them an email. We will be setting up a virtual happy hour in the next month, so please look out for an e-mail about that. Additionally, once we are able to get together in person, we will plan our annual steak dinner (it is not cancelled, just postponed.)

Please reach out to me if there is anything I can do or if you just need to chat. I can be reached at (561) 847-6630 or MikeStrauss79@gmail.com. Please remember to be safe out there. And thank you to all of the essential workers out there, we truly appreciate you!

*Erev Shavuot* services will be held on Thursday, May 28th at 7:00pm. More information will be announced.



# From the Executive Director

Karen Szteinberg, Temple Administrator/Executive Director

My initial ideas for this Koleynu's article focused on the Coronavirus which has besieged our lives... to write inspiring words of the need to stay strong, the ways in which we have been brought together via new technology and the moving stories of how so many are helping each other in this crisis. We see this in the news, television commercials and even Facebook memes, and we have spoken to each other about this in every conversation. And so I thought, with Passover still fresh in my mind, *dayenu*! (Enough!)

In May we celebrate Mother's Day and so I have decided to write about our four foundational Jewish matriarchs. In the *Hirkat Habanim* traditional blessing on Shabbat, we pray for our daughters – "May you be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah" (*Yesimech Elohim k'Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel, v'Leah.*) Certainly I would want my own daughters to emulate Rebecca's kindness and concern, such as when she offered water to Eliezer and his camels. I would want my daughters to find appreciation in what they have, as Leah did with her children despite not having Jacob's love. But even though our matriarchs had passion and compassion, they did not always exemplify role model behavior. Sarah had her slave Hagar act as a surrogate when she couldn't conceive; Sarah was then resentful, abused Hagar and forced her into exile. Leah conspired with her father so that Jacob married her rather than Rachel with whom he was infatuated; there was rivalry among the sisters. But are being conniving and envious really traits we want for our daughters?

Motherhood is multi-faceted, dictated by emotions, needs and difficult decisions which we may not always comprehend or agree with. Despite their shortcomings, each of our matriarchs maintained faith during her challenges and hardships. Each advised and interacted within her family, understood the grand scheme of her role and made choices which she believed would better bind her extended family. Each used her forceful personality and spiritual inclination, playing an important part in the creation of the Twelve Tribes of Israel. And each did so without commanding recognition for her actions. It is important that we see these matriarchs with their human emotions and attributes as well as their sacrifices and wisdom, and that we acknowledge their significant overall impact on our lives.

It is not by coincidence that my own daughters are named Rebecca and Rachel. Should they examine my maternal decisions, they too would find where my emotions affected my decisions and when I seemed unfair. They may not yet understand that we as mothers often enable our families, with considerable self-sacrifice, or that we have righteous motivation but may require sleight of hand to accomplish our loving goals or needs. The love and bond that mothers possess are undeniably strong virtues. We must overlook and forgive the occasional disputable decisions, and we must acknowledge that our emotions and experiences make us believers in faith and family, compassionate and altruistic, and shrewder and stronger.

I pray that my children will be like their namesakes, independent women who believed in their faith and pursued what was necessary for the growth and well-being of their family. And to all mothers – aunts, grandmothers, step-mothers and all the caregivers who nurture and provide for us – and to their daughters as well, may you all be blessed and be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

Dedicated to my own devoted mother who raised me in the spirt of our ancestors to be a good person and a good Jew. Thank you, mom. I love you.



#### Wow.

This has been a wacky couple of months for many of us.

While I don't want to downplay the concerns that come from physical isolation in a pandemic, I also would like to provide a few positive moments that I have experienced with our students. There has been a significant learning curve for many of us as we transitioned to an online education space primarily through Zoom. However, as you can see in my Top 10 list below, PHYSICAL isolation is not SOCIAL isolation! We are still very much a community and our students have been learning and interacting throughout this time together as one!

- 1. We have kept much of our original programming and shifted it to an online space.
- 2. We have been able to add additional opportunities for gathering as a school and have had more Youth Group activities.
- 3. There has been space for individual interaction with students as we moved toward smaller learning groups.
- 4. Our teachers are amazing! They rose to the challenge of the learning curve and made sure they were prepared to teach our students about Jewish life, identity and values in a very short time period. Truly Amazing and No Easy Task. They deserve a round of applause.
- 5. It's really nice to see everyone's smiling faces on a giant laptop screen.
- 6. I have very rarely needed to use the mute button on a student, though I have needed to turn off the entertainment of annotation! (Now when I share my screen to show the lesson, my students can no longer draw a smiley face or otherwise write on it.)
- 7. Our pre-B'nai Mitzvah students are handling these changes like champs and I am so proud of our three students this spring who have had to go with the flow very quickly to stay on target for their very special occasion.
- 8. Our High School students were able to attend a Teen Leadership training program online through NFTY STR (North American Federation of Temple Youth Southern Tropical Region), which they might not have been otherwise able to attend in person.
- 9. Our parents have been phenomenal advocates making sure our students have access to the technology that allows them to learn!
- 10. It is truly a joy to hear multiple students singing *Pesach* Songs during a school *seder* online.

We have been quite busy at Temple Israel Youth and Learning. We are continuing with this school year while at the same time preparing for next year, ensuring that our registration is ready to be sent via mail for all to sign up for 2020/2021 Religious School and Youth Group.

Please reach out to me regarding any families who might be interested in learning more about our program or simply share my contact information with prospective parents. I very much look forward to seeing all of our Temple Israel community in person as soon as we can.

L'Shalom.



### The Mussar Moment Barry Horowitz, M.D.

The following is an excerpt from "Mussar in a Time of Crisis" by Alan Morinis.

The truth is that the vast majority of us are suffering more from anxiety about the Covid-19 pandemic than we are from virus infection itself. And that is good, because while the virus cannot be treated yet, anxiety can. Worry, which is that like every *middah* [soul-trait], is neither positive nor negative in itself. In other words, there is a way in which worry is a positive trait and a way in which it can be negative.

When worry falls into the category of active concern, it is positive. That's the quality that reminds us to wash our hands frequently, to maintain our 6 feet distance from other people, to give up unnecessary trips out of the house. It keeps us alert, attentive and cautious. But when worry gets blown up to the point of sending us into endless, fruitless handwringing and spirals into wild imagining of "what-if" scenarios, then worry is a spiritual obstacle that detaches you from truth. We want to encourage the first manifestation of worry and overcome the second.

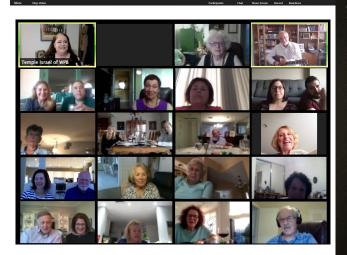
And how are we to do that? The Mussar teachers have a principle, which is that it is usually pointless to try to reduce a *middah* that has a high negative charge. In other words, their guidance is not to set goals like, "I am going to be less angry," or "I'm not going to worry." They just know from experience that strategies like those are not going to be effective because the emotion is just too powerful to be restrained by resolutions. Instead, they encourage us to practice and strengthen another trait that will have the effect of reducing or resolving the hot one that is plaguing our inner lives. In the case of worry, that countervailing trait is "trust," or in Hebrew, *bitachon*.

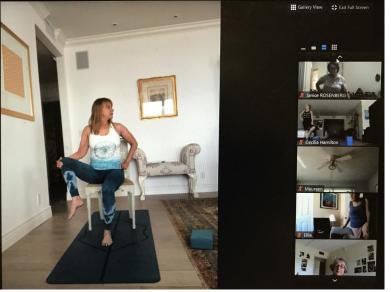
The roots of *bitachon* as a Jewish concept go back to the Torah, where it shows up strongly in the book of Psalms, and it features in the siddur as well. Although the word translates as "trust," the concept really involves trusting God. And that is a very important qualification. When we introduce God into the picture – whatever you may hold that to mean – what we are pointing out and underlining is that each of us human beings is not the one in charge. We may control some of the factors that go into determining the course of our lives, but we do not control all of them. We have not written the script, we are not the directors of the play, nor can we control all the actors that influence most of what happens to us.

If you look at anything that has happened in your life, as well as things that did not happen, you have to admit that you as an individual did not have control over every factor that came into play that determined the outcome. Other people's wills and actions, the weather, chance happenings ... so much goes on that has an effect on our life that we do not control. To take a pertinent present-day example, the vast majority of people who have come down with COVID-19 did nothing more blameworthy than sit on the subway, go to the grocery store, help an elder, attend a class, go to the office, and the like. To an extent, we do shape our lives, and to a different extent, life happens to us. Having *bitachon* means that you recognize and accept that a significant part of your life is not in your hands to determine. And it has always been so for human beings.

And so, while it is incumbent upon us is to make the best effort we can, with sincerity and diligence, when that is done, we are to bow in recognition of the fact that you and me, we are not the Master of the Universe, not even the master of our own lives, and we recognize and accept that there is "One" who does know the script in which we have, to the best of our abilities, just played our part. And so, in reflecting on the teachings and also the actions of our wise ancestors, I urge you to do what you can to help yourself and others in this time of great need. And I also urge you to put your trust in God. As the Psalm says (55:22): "Cast your burden on the Lord, and God will sustain you." I send my wishes for blessings to you and all people, that we should emerge soon from this challenging situation. And when we do, I hope you will be able to look back and say, "I did what I could. And as for the rest, I trusted God."

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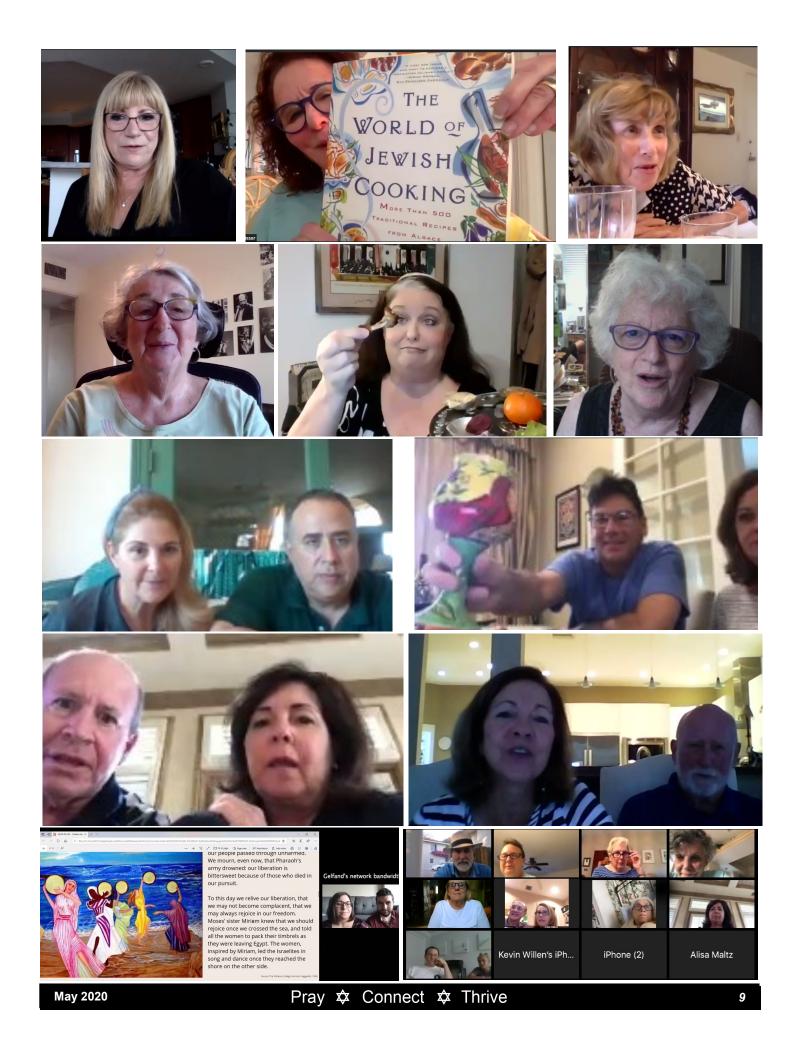




### Religious / Hebrew School and Youth Activities Continue Via Zoom



Koleynu





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#### Wednesdays at 10:30am

Check your emails for the Zoom ID!



Our special guest, Rabbi Erica Rosenkranz, at our April 17th Erev Shabbat Service, discussing our community's new program for Holocaust survivors



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Let's share our experiences and listen prayerfully, raising each other up. We look forward to sharing this time with you!

### TUESDAYS AT 11:30AM A NEW TOPIC EVERY WEEK!

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2020	MAY					
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
25	27	28	29	30	01 6:30pm Erev Shabbat worship service	02 9:30am Torah Study
03 9:30am Religious School	04	05 11:30am Kehilah & Coffee	06 10:30am Chair Yoga with Ellen Goldenson Hebrew School	07 4:30pm Wine & Unwind: Reform Judaism - The God Idea	08 6:30pm Erev Shabbat worship service	09 9:30am Torah Study
10 11:30am <i>Kehilah</i> & Coffee	11	12 11:30am <i>Kehilah</i> & Coffee	13 10:30am Chair Yoga with Ellen Goldenson Hebrew School Make-Up Day	14 4:30pm Wine & Unwind: Reform Judaism - Jewish Peoplehood	15 6:30pm Erev Shabbat worship service /Education Shabbat	16 9:30am Torah Study
17 9:30am Religious School Make-Up Day	18	19 11:30am Kehilah & Coffee 5:30pm Social Action Committee Meeting	20 10:30am Chair Yoga with Ellen Goldenson 7:00pm Taste of Judaism	21 4:30pm Wine & Unwind: Reform Judaism - Torah as Instruction	22 6:30pm Erev Shabbat worship service	23 9:30am Torah Study
24	25 OFFICE CLOSED	26 11:30am <i>Kehilah</i> & Coffee	27 10:30am Chair Yoga with Ellen Goldenson 7:00pm Taste of Judaism	28 4:30pm Wine & Unwind: Reform Judaism - Religious Practice 7:00pm Erev Shavuot service	Yizkor service	30 9:30am Torah Study

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as of 4-17-20

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# May Birthdays

- 1 Wendy Miller
- 2 Zachary Duncan
- 2 Fredric Weissman
- 3 Barbara Horowitz
- 4 David Aronberg
- 4 Elliott Edelman
- 4 Sydelle Neustein
- 5 Zachary Stewart
- 6 Susan Rieser
- 7 Teresa Aaron
- 7 Naomi Kaslow
- 8 Helen Mudrick
- 9 Harriet Miller
- 9 Lindsey Sachs
- 10 Sophia Feuer
- 10 Adrian Sandoval
- 12 Dale Rands
- 14 Nolan Frederiksen
- 15 Lori Ackerman
- 15 Herman Robinson
- 16 Edith Belilty
- 16 Manuel Matias
- 16 Tracy Simkowitz
- 17 Maureen Katz
- 17 Seth Schwartz
- 18 Eric Lieberman
- 18 Samara Vilca
- 19 Logan Jonas
- 19 Elyse Weissman
- 20 June Kleinwaks
- 21 Benjamin Devore
- 21 Lewis Kapner
- 21 Adam Matias
- 23 Ann Kritzer
- 24 Howard Green
- 25 Suzette Gingold
- 26 Rachel Fendrich
- 26 Alison Goldberger
- 28 Scott Bentolila
- 29 Douglas Kern
- 30 Jourdan Escobar
- 31 Bernard Kandel

8

14

15

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24

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go and unwind from the day! MEMBERS, join us for our ONLINE Check-in and Sharing ... look in your e-mail for how you can

look in your e-mail for how you can connect via Zoom (or telephone)!

### How do we "Wine and Unwind"? Join us on Thursdays at 4:30pm via Zoom to find out!

We begin with a "check in" to see how we are all doing and continue with a new discussion topic each week. In May, we will discuss Reform Judaism through four different lenses of our movement's four ideological pronouncements (1885, 1937, 1976, and 1999), as well as consider where we are today.

May 7<sup>th</sup> – Reform Judaism: The God Idea May 14<sup>th</sup> – Reform Judaism: Jewish Peoplehood May 21<sup>st</sup> – Reform Judaism: Torah as Instruction May 28<sup>th</sup> – Reform Judaism: Religious Practice



Join us via Zoom, chat with your peers and enjoy the discussion!

