



Jewish Community of Amherst

Kolot — JCA Voices | Dec. 2017 | Kislev – Tevet 5778



Hanukkah begins
Tuesday evening, December 12th

Devarim: Words from our Rabbi
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Highlights this Month

JCA Annual Meeting, December 10

**God Loves the Stranger: Book Reading and Reception with
author Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg, December 10**

**Oneg in honor of Bill Zimmer and Michael Burkart and
their years of service to the JCA, December 15**



Dear JCA,

I just finished teaching a class on *Pirkei Avot*, the tractate of the Mishnah known in English as “The Ethics of the Fathers.” This text is a collection of rabbinic aphorisms, containing some of the most famous one-liners of the Jewish tradition (outside the work of Henny Youngman). For example:

“The world rests upon three things: Torah, prayer, and acts of lovingkindness.”

“If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am only for myself, who am I? And if not now, when?”

“Who is wise? The one who learns from all people. Who is strong? The one who conquers his impulses. Who is rich? The one who delights in his portion. Who is to be honored? The one who honors all creatures.”

This is powerful stuff, which has served countless generations ably as words to live by. Still, I had reservations about teaching the class. Aphorisms are nice, but I’m more captivated, intellectually, by the meatier passages of Talmud (a bizarre predilection that leads me to offer lunch & learn sessions on the finer points of Jewish law, now for five years running!) To satisfy myself, I had to present the material in a way that didn’t just feel like browsing in the self-help section of a bookstore.

One of my goals was to demonstrate that these pearls of wisdom were not in fact “timeless”, but had a specific historical, and even geopolitical context. So we spent class time learning about the various waves of empire that had claimed the Land of Israel as their own, prior to and during the period in which *Pirkei Avot* came into being, from the Persians through the Romans (with a few steps in between.) We also familiarized ourselves with the lore of the Pharisees and Sadducees, as exemplars of the ideological battles of the Second Temple period.

The other main goal was to examine how *Pirkei Avot* represented an effort to stake a claim for the validity of rabbinic Judaism itself. It begins, famously, with a semi-imagined genealogy of teachers and students, extending from Moses at Sinai to the formative rabbis of the common era. Every link in this lineage is said to be forged by a passing on of tradition from an older generation to a younger, through reciprocal acts of transmission and reception, which, in one form or another, can be considered ongoing all the way up to our own times.

It was satisfying for me, in the end, to hold this double vision of the text, as immediately relevant in its wisdom, and as the result of such an ancient legacy. I hope my students felt the same way!

b’shalom, Rabbi Benjamin Weiner

Rabbi Weiner wants to make sure the community knows he is available and eager to visit at home, or in the hospital, with people who are unwell or otherwise in need of some spiritual support. The important step is to make sure he knows you are in need!

Please don’t hesitate to contact him directly at rabiweiner@jcamherst.org, or through the JCA office, if you would like a visit.

Programs and Events Calendar

Mark your calendars for community activities, programs, study opportunities, and more. Please see the Ritual Life Calendar for information on Shabbat and other services.

December 6, Wednesday

LUNCH & LEARN WITH RABBI WEINER

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

December 6, Wednesday

INTERMEDIATE MODERN HEBREW WITH HENIA LEWIN

5:45 pm – 7:15 pm

Adult Education class, registration required.

December 7, Thursday

YIDDISH LEYNER'S GROUP

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

We welcome anyone who enjoys reading Yiddish to join us at the JCA the first Thursday of every month.

December 7, Thursday

JCA KLEZMER WORKSHOP

7:15 pm – 8:45 pm

An ongoing workshop for instrumentalists interested in learning how to play Klezmer music. Instructor Brian Bender (Wholesale Klezmer Band, Yiddishkeit Klezmer Ensemble, Little Shop of Horas) teaches Klezmer repertoire and style in a fun, relaxed setting. All instruments welcome. The workshop periodically performs as an ensemble for JCA events. Fee is \$15/class.

December 7, Thursday

JCA ADULT READING GROUP (ARG)

7:30 pm

We will be discussing *The Ministry of Special Cases* by Nathan Englander. His first novel is about Jewish residents of 1970s Buenos Aires who live in fear of Argentina's vicious military dictatorship, and Englander is described as bringing the same historical profundity to his first novel that he did with his first collection of short stories. It is in paperback and available through a library or Kindle. Come join us. Our discussions are lively, and you almost always come away with a deeper appreciation of the book you have read; new participants are always welcome! Any questions, please call Ken Talan at 413-253-2248.



Programs and Events Calendar (continued)

December 10, Sunday

ANNUAL MEETING

10:00 am – 12:00 pm

You are invited to attend and participate in the JCA Annual Meeting when you will vote on the new board and have input into other important issues on the agenda. You will hear updates and have the opportunity to engage in discussion on JCA priorities for the coming year. Coffee and bagels are available beginning at 9:30 am.

December 10, Sunday

GOD LOVES THE STRANGER: BOOK READING AND RECEPTION WITH AUTHOR RABBI SHEILA PELTZ WEINBERG

2:00 pm

Come join us in celebrating the publication of this powerful collection of stories, blessings, poetry, divine teachings, and meditation exercises which conveys a single, powerful message: Let us not be strangers. God loves us all.

December 13, Wednesday

LUNCH & LEARN WITH RABBI WEINER

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

December 13, Wednesday

INTERMEDIATE MODERN HEBREW WITH HENIA LEWIN

5:45 pm – 7:15 pm

Adult Education class, registration required.

December 14, Thursday

GATHERING OF ELDERS

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm

After a long hiatus, the Chesed Committee is once again planning periodic gatherings (previously known as Seniors' Luncheon) for congregants aged 75 and above. Our topic today is *Hanukkah As We Remember It*. This will be an opportunity to enjoy a delicious Hanukkah luncheon, share our stories and thoughts with the rabbi and with each other. Transportation is available for those who need it. We are looking forward to seeing everyone. Questions? Call Judy Davis (413-530-3998) or email judavis@acad.umass.edu

December 15, Friday

ONEG IN HONOR OF BILL ZIMMER AND MICHAEL BURKART

7:30 pm following the Shabbat Ne'imah Service



Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg

Programs and Events Calendar (continued)

December 20, Wednesday

LUNCH & LEARN WITH RABBI WEINER

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

December 21, Thursday

JCA KLEZMER WORKSHOP

7:15 pm – 8:45 pm

December 27, Wednesday

LUNCH & LEARN WITH RABBI WEINER

12:15 pm – 1:15 pm

Our Community

On Friday, December 15, at the Oneg Celebration after Shabbat Ne'imah services, the board of directors will honor Bill Zimmer and Michael Burkart for their years of active engagement and service to the JCA. Bill and Marsha Zimmer are moving to Portland, OR in January. While Michael and Barbara Burkart will continue as active members of the community, Michael is stepping back from his years as treasurer and an officer on the board of directors.

A member of the JCA from 1991-1999, Bill served on and chaired both the former Education Committee (now Youth & Family Education) and the Chesed Committee. He was also part of the Bylaw and Affiliation workgroups. Upon returning to the JCA in 2010, Bill chaired the newly developed Governance Committee, participated on the Fair Share Dues workgroup, and joined the board in 2012. He became the JCA president in 2014.

Michael has been involved in board and committee work for the past six years. He first served on the Governance Committee, and more recently on the Fundraising Committee, helping to coordinate this year's annual appeal. His most extensive work was as treasurer of the JCA for two terms during our recent difficult financial years. He worked tirelessly in this position, and on the board's Executive Committee, to help address the many challenges we faced at that time.

Mazel Tov!

Hans and Phyllis Herda are pleased to announce the birth of our new grandson, Benjamin Philip Herda, born on November 12 to our son and daughter-in-law Joel and Renee Herda.

Thank You to Julius Lester

For some time, JCA member, Julius Lester, has been contributing a page each month to our newsletter Kolot. He chose one of his own outstanding photographs and always made the theme of the page relevant and moving to our Jewish community. We have greatly appreciated his generous and thoughtful contributions and wish him well.



Celebrate And Sustain The JCA! Why We Care

Dear All,

There are probably as many reasons for being part of the JCA as there are members. At the board retreat last year, we had a very interesting discussion as we tried to understand who we are and, perhaps even more importantly, how we flourish and what are our priorities for the future. We wanted to explore how to further support and strengthen our community.

Of course, we flourish because of the participation and engagement of each one of us. We wonder if you are at the JCA because you want to help create and participate in an intentional spiritual community, sustain a nourishing home for Jewish life, explore and experience ritual and worship opportunities, provide a Jewish education for each generation, maintain a cultural environment that is familiar, flexible and safe, or feel called to individual and communal social action by living in accordance with our ethical heritage. Perhaps, it is all of the above.

We are encouraged by the support in the first weeks of this appeal, and we have received some wonderful tributes with the contributions. As we move toward the season of light and celebration, let's also support all that the JCA makes possible for us, and the many ways in which we are sustained in our Jewish lives.

You may make your tax-deductible donation via our website at jcamherst.org/payments-and-donations/donations. Just choose Annual Appeal from the pull-down menu of giving opportunities. If you prefer to pay by check, please write "Appeal 2017" on the memo line and send to the JCA. And, do take this opportunity to honor someone in your life or in our community who makes a difference.

Thank you!

Jeff Roth-Howe, Michael Burkart, Janis Levy

Coordinators, Annual Appeal 2017

New Members

We warmly welcome the following people to the JCA community:

Abby Coren

Leslie & Bryan Lorber

Leah Goldstein & Pearl Mosimann

Emily Hodos

Condolences

We offer our sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the families and friends of those who have recently died:

Leonard Schley, father of Sara Schley and her siblings Martha, Bill, and Dan, father-in-law of Joe Laur, grandfather of Sam and Maya Laura and their eight cousins, and beloved husband for 67 years of the late Harriet Wald Schley

Jeanne Yates, maternal grandmother of Cantor Elise Barber, grandmother-in-law of Rabbi Weiner, and great-grandmother of Efraim

Seeking Your News

We would like to hear from you! Please send us your good news. Maybe a new baby or addition to your family, a wedding, an award, an achievement, public recognition, anything significant you would like to share. We welcome your announcement up to 120 words and an accompanying jpeg photo up to 1MB in size. Please send by the 12th of the month before the publication of the next newsletter to: news@jcamherst.org.

Joining the Jewish Community of Amherst

If you would like to know more about becoming a member of the JCA, we encourage you to get in touch with Tobi Sznajderman of the Membership Committee at membership@jcamherst.org. If you are ready to receive membership application materials, please contact the JCA Office at 413-256-0160 or admindir@jcamherst.org. Shalom, and welcome!



Photo: Emily Bilbao

Change and Continuity

As I reflect back on the past 6 years, I'm aware that the JCA has experienced a dizzying amount of change as we've re-examined assumptions about how we operate on a day-to-day basis, and how we want to function in the future. Some of the changes were the inevitable result of growth in size and complexity, and our recognition that it was no longer possible for us to operate as a "mom and pop" organization. Some were the result of a broader strategic analysis about how healthy organizations need to adapt in a rapidly changing demographic and fiscal environment.

The changes have included an analysis of the staffing needs of the JCA, and the establishment of an employment manual that articulates the expectations we have of employees and they have of us. Each position now has an accurate job description and all staff members receive ongoing performance feedback and written annual evaluations. We have developed numerous protocols and procedures that provide predictability and consistency in how we go about our business, adding immeasurably to the efficiency with which we manage the JCA.

The institution of a formal system of oversight of our permanent committees, embedded in policy and bylaws, creates a mechanism to better integrate the work of those committees into the priorities of the board, and while the system is still a work-in-progress, it incorporates the thinking of leaders of the JCA going back many years about how to create organizational cohesion in the realm of committee life.

New leadership on the board will inevitably bring changes in both style and emphasis, but there are core areas where continuity is both needed and expected.

One of these is in the renewed commitment of the board to manage and oversee our finances in a more focused and transparent manner, entrusting much of the day-to-day oversight to our Administrative Director, but with close collaboration and supervision by the board.

A second area of continuity is our commitment to reinforce a governance culture where we discipline ourselves to adhere to the provisions of the bylaws and policy manual, and to seek input and keep the community informed about and involved in decision-making.

Third, we will need to continue to strategize about how to develop, nurture and sustain a vibrant volunteer culture at the JCA, because enhanced community engagement is our most important resource.

And finally, we have a very special and unusual collaborative partnership with our rabbi, and that partnership is essential to the well-being of the JCA and our strength as a spiritual community.

The JCA is strong and it will continue to thrive. I am proud to have been part of its history.

b'shalom, Bill Zimmer

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

December 4, Monday

Chesed Committee
7:00 pm

December 6, Wednesday

Ritual Life Committee
7:00 pm

Youth & Family Education Committee
7:00 pm

December 7, Thursday

Board Meeting
7:00 pm

December 8, Friday

Adult Education Committee
12:15 pm

December 21, Thursday

Executive Committee
7:00 pm

Tikkun Olam Committee
7:15 pm



Shabbat Vayishlah, Genesis 32:4-36:43

December 1, Friday

NO FAMILY SHABBAT THIS MONTH

December 2, Saturday

SHABBAT YOGA

9:00 am in the social hall

RENEWAL SERVICE

10:00 am in the small sanctuary

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

10:00 am in the main sanctuary

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner

D'var Torah: Rabbi Weiner

Shabbat Vayeshev, Genesis 37:1-40:23

December 8, Friday

KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICES

6:15 pm

Service Leaders: Rabbi Weiner with Danielle Kadinoff, guitar

December 9, Saturday

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

10:00 am

Human Rights Shabbat

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner

D'var Torah: Rev. Vicki Kemper, First Congregational Church, as part of the Tikkun Olam Committee's observation of Human Rights Shabbat. The church is currently providing sanctuary to Lucio Perez, an immigrant from Guatemala who is facing deportation.

Shabbat Hanukkah, Parashat Miketz, Genesis 41:1-44:17, Numbers 7:30-35

December 15, Friday

SHABBAT NE'IMAH

6:15 pm

Service Leaders: Rabbi Weiner and our musical daveners

**ONEG CELEBRATION: IN HONOR OF BILL ZIMMER AND MICHAEL
BURKART AND THEIR YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE JCA**

7:30 pm following services



Candle Lighting

December 1 ~ 3:58 pm

December 8 ~ 3:57 pm

December 15 ~ 3:58 pm

December 22 ~ 4:01 pm

December 29 ~ 4:06 pm

Times shown are 18 minutes before sunset for Amherst, MA

Hanukkah begins

Tuesday evening,
December 12.

Rosh Hodesh Tevet

December 18/19,
Monday/Tuesday

Asara b'Tevet (10th of Tevet)

December 28, Thursday

A minor fast day commemorating the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar

Ritual Life Calendar and Notes (continued)

December 16, Saturday

SHABBAT YOGA

9:00 am in the social hall

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

10:00 am

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner

D'var Torah: Rabbi Weiner

Shabbat Vayigash, Genesis 44:18-47:27

December 22, Friday

KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICES

6:15 pm

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner

December 23, Saturday

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

10:00 am

Service Leader: Rabbi Weiner

D'var Torah: Rabbi Weiner

Shabbat Vayhi, Genesis 47:28-50:26

December 29, Friday

KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICES

6:15 pm

Service Leader: To be announced

December 30, Saturday

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

10:00 am

Service Leader: Catherine Madsen

D'var Torah: To be announced

Torah Reading Coordination

If you are interested in reading Torah and would like to schedule a time to read, please contact: Eliza Gouverneur, elizagouv@msn.com, 413-256-6145 for reading in January. For other times, please contact Aaron Bousel, abousel@comcast.net, 413-253-3544.

If you would like to learn to read Torah or would like help choosing or preparing a reading, please contact Batya Perman, 549-4853, or Jane Myers, 401-451-6020.

Shacharit Minyan

Tuesdays at 7:30 am in the small sanctuary

Meditation Minyan

Wednesdays at 7:30 am in the small sanctuary.

Ma'ariv Minyan

Thursdays at 5:30 pm in the small sanctuary



Check the JCA website at: <https://jcamherst.org/calendar/month/> for updated information on services.

Ritual Life Calendar and Notes (continued)

Thank You

The Ritual Life Committee would like to thank those who have given their time and expertise in service to the ritual life of the community:

- Recent Torah/Haftarah readers: Michael Ash, Aaron Bousel, Sam Gladstone, David Mednicoff, Jane Myers, Elissa Rubinstein, Yosef Rumshiskiy, Randi Stein, Danny Valitt, Howard Vigderman
 - D'var Torah givers: Yossi Charette, Danny Valitt
 - Service leaders: Yossi Charette, Felicia Mednick and Sara Schley
 - Musicians: Our musical daveners, Danielle Kadinoff
 - Todah rabah to Madeline Berkowitz for her service on the ritual life committee
-

Kiddush & Oneg Sponsors

December 15-
The JCA, in honor of
Bill Zimmer & Michael
Burkart for their service
to the community

If you would like to
help with or sponsor a
kiddush, please contact
Ann Wetherbee, our
Administrative Director, at
admindir@jcamherst.org

Youth and Family Education

Money. Concern about money has been at the forefront of much of the JCA discourse over the last two years. I began my job as JCA School Principal just before the financial crisis presented itself, and the job I had undertaken, to reimagine and reinvigorate our school, was all of a sudden eclipsed by budget concerns.

Despite this, I continued with my work to bring this community the newest and best in supplementary Jewish education. Based on years of existing research in many communities around the country, I have put together a program that envisions an educational program that challenges and supports students in ways that nurture pride in achievement and helps them find their authentic Jewish selves. At the same time, we balance the needs of individual families and students with our traditions, and honor our diversity including what defines our Jewish identities.

While much of my time is spent interacting with families, working in classrooms with kids, and creating fun and exciting technology and art projects, I have found myself, over the last two years, also spending a significant amount of time finding and applying for grants, to help fund this new program in the midst of an institutional belt tightening. I would consider my endeavor to pursue a variety of grant opportunities a success, and, in large part because of this success I have been able to execute my vision for Jewish learning. However, many grants can only be used for specific purposes, they cannot be used to cover existing costs.

Among the grants we have received in the last year is a large, two-year grant from the Better Together program to fund our teen volunteers in The Arbors (a local assisted living facility for seniors). The grant covered the cost of new technology to use with the residents of the Arbors that will allow us to help them document their oral histories and personal stories. It also provided funds to cover the cost of an instructor working with students to understand how important the Jewish value of taking care of the elderly is, and how to live out that value in our day to day lives.

continued on next page

Youth and Family Education (continued)

A second grant we received from the Federation of Western MA specifically covered additional technology upgrades that will allow us to provide laptops in all our classrooms for both teacher and student use. We are creating a flexible set up in which individual classrooms have computer and internet access, but when needed, all the laptops can be moved into one room to create a “computer lab” type set up. This new setup will allow the school and students to take better advantage of the many new, and fantastic web-based educational materials that are now available.

Finally, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (a long time financial supporter of education at the JCA as well as other Western MA institutions), has significantly increased the funding available to us to run our teen programs and family programming. This increase has helped to fund our JV corps cooking initiative, our expanded family fun days at school, and many other programs that have not yet taken place this year.

Even as the JCA financial situation has stabilized and improved, I will continue to be on the lookout for new and appropriate grant and funding opportunities to help support and improve our school and community in every way that I can.

B'shalom, Keren Rhodes
Director of Youth and Family Education

Youth and Family Education Calendar

December 3, Sunday

SHALOM TOTS: MUSICAL SERVICE

JCA SCHOOL: MIDOT AND B'NAI MITZVAH CLASS

10:00 am

JCA SCHOOL: HEBREW SESSION 2

11:45 am

December 6, Wednesday

JCA SCHOOL: ELECTIVES

4:00 pm

December 10, Sunday

SHALOM TOTS: MUSICAL SERVICE

JCA SCHOOL: MIDOT AND B'NAI MITZVAH CLASS

10:00 am

JCA SCHOOL: HEBREW SESSION 2

11:45 am



Buy Your Dean's Beans Coffee through the JCA and support the JCA School!

Dean's Beans Order Form:
<https://goo.gl/forms/nIJBTBuDxWbjfjDI2>

Youth and Family Education (continued)

December 13, Wednesday

JCA SCHOOL: ELECTIVES

4:00 pm

FAMILY & SHALOM TOTS: HANUKKAH DINNER & CANDLE LIGHTING

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Parent/Guardian attendance required

December 15, Friday

TEENS: JV CORPS COOKS/SHABBAT NE'IMAH

5:00 pm – 9:00 pm

**FAMILY: SHABBAT NE'IMAH FOLLOWED BY DINNER MADE BY OUR
JV CORPS TEENS**

6:15 pm

December 17, Sunday

JCAT & B'NAI MITZVAH CLASS: BETTER TOGETHER

9:45 am – 1:00 pm

Meet at the Arbors

**FAMILY, JCA SCHOOL, & SHALOM TOTS: HAVDALAH & LEARNER'S
MINYAN**

10:00 am – 10:45 am

Parent/Guardian attendance required

JCA SCHOOL: SHALOM TOTS, MIDOT - FAMILY FUN DAY!

10:45 am – 11:45 am

Parent/Guardian attendance required

JCA SCHOOL: HEBREW SESSION 2

11:45 am

December 20, Wednesday through January 3, Wednesday

WINTER VACATION – NO CLASSES

For updates and complete
school calendar listings
go to: <https://jcamherst.org/calendar/category/youthcalendar/>

Spotlight on Committees

Chesed Committee

Thank You, Volunteers!

The Chesed Committee thanks all who have recently provided compassionate support to others in the community.

In particular thanks to Shiva Service Leader Felicia Mednick; to Judy Davis and Robin Diamond, for helping at a funeral: and to Lisa Pack, Ellen Middleton, Diane Gnepp, Anna Robbins, Rosalie Eisen, Marilyn Blaustein and Ken Bernstein for preparing and delivering meals.

And thanks, again, to everyone who has made a meal, provided a ride, lent a sympathetic ear, visited a person in need of companionship, or performed other acts of chesed (loving kindness).

Tikkun Olam Committee

Craig's Doors

The JCA Tikkun Olam Committee has supported Craig's Doors for several years by spearheading a volunteer effort during the holiday weeks, when student volunteers are in short supply. Volunteers can sign up to help with shelter set up, meal service and clean up.

Tikkun Olam or "repairing the world" is a key Jewish value. Our efforts to support this invaluable resource help repair our local world; Craig's Doors provides warmth, shelter, sustenance and welcome to our vulnerable homeless neighbors. Volunteering at Craig's Doors is important, rewarding, and eye opening.

Please join in our effort by signing up to help now or especially during the holiday weeks of Dec. 24-29 and Dec. 31-Jan 5. This Tikkun Olam opportunity is not appropriate for teens or younger children.

To sign up directly online, please click on <http://signup.com/go/eGjrfYe>. If you would like more information along the way, go to <http://www.craigdoors.org> - hover over "Volunteer & Fundraising", click on "Volunteer", and then on the "SignUp" button. It's multi-step but doing good often is. Please be sure to enter "JCA" in the "Organization" field.

Not Bread Alone

Each year at this time (though the month of December) the JCA Tikkun Olam Committee collects food to be used for meal preparation at Not Bread Alone, a wonderful program in Amherst that has been providing food and support for the hungry in our community for over a quarter-century. As you enter the JCA, please place the following non-perishable food items in the box marked "Not Bread Alone":

CANOLA AND OLIVE OIL - TOMATO PASTE - DICED TOMATOES - LONG GRAIN WHITE AND BROWN RICE - PASTA (PENNE OR RIGATONI) - EGG NOODLES - COFFEE - SINGLE SERVE COCOA - SALAD DRESSING

Paper towels and napkins are also needed. Many thanks for your contributions!

A Compassionate Community

The Chesed Committee assists JCA members in times of joy, sorrow, and need, coordinating volunteers to help with meals, rides, errands, visits, shiva minyans, etc. We also welcome babies to the community.

Please let us know if you, someone in your family, or someone in the community is ill, hospitalized, or in need of assistance. We can't help if we don't know.

Contact the Chesed Committee by email at jcachesed@gmail.com or by calling the office at (413) 256-0160.

We encourage you to be part of the JCA's growth as a compassionate community. New committee members are welcome at any time to participate in this mitzvah.

Project Rehovot Committee

Dear Friends,

Amid the anxiety and chaos swirling around us nationally and internationally which often leaves me feeling powerless, I have come to rely on Project Rehovot for a bit of hope and solace. Our Project Rehovot, which helps immigrant children and children of immigrants adjust to their lives in Israel, shows that in incremental ways it is possible to effect change. Project Rehovot provides children struggling with behavioral, cultural and language issues with a way forward. In small group sessions with an experienced teacher, and in a room designated for Project Rehovot in the Ma'alot Meshulam School in Rehovot, Israel, the children make concrete progress and are better able to function in their regular classrooms.

Project Rehovot works and has been working since 1991! We are helping very poor mostly Ethiopian children whose parents cannot afford special services. Our part-time teacher, Tal Kahane, who has been with us for four years, uses the arts to help the children develop. During the 2016-17 school year, she worked with 42 children, one of whom was a 2nd grader we will call Efrat.

Efrat has problems keeping up with academic subjects; though she is tiny in stature and looks gentle, she can be very aggressive. She trusts no one. According to Tal, "Drawing and taking photos calms Efrat. She is very artistic and this is her language to express herself." As the school year progressed, Efrat began to tame her aggression and her behavior improved. Efrat is of Ethiopian heritage; her parents are divorced and her father is very ill with kidney disease.

Please think of the children and make a generous gift to Project Rehovot. It is through your tax-deductible donations that we pay the salary of "our" teacher Tal. You may send your check made out to Project Rehovot to the JCA, or make your donation online at our website: jcamherst.org/payments-and-donations/donations choosing Project Rehovot from the menu of designations. You may make your gift in honor or in memory of someone.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Kushick, Chair, Project Rehovot (sub-committee of the World Jewish Concerns Committee), Neta Bolozky (treasurer), Yaffa Gunner (founder), Karen Loeb, Helena Donovan

Project Rehovot Catering Group: Karen Loeb, Chair, Libby Arny, Christine Marglin, Alison Ellis, Hadar Gabel, Zahava Koren, Judith Loischild, Naomi Peleg, Meira Penchina, Tamar Shaddur, Jan Silver, Jody Wax

Planning a Wedding, Party or Bar/Bat Mitzvah Kiddush? Please hire the Project Rehovot Catering Committee. The food is delicious and proceeds go to Project Rehovot. For information: Karen Loeb, 413-253-0336 or kloeb@comcast.net. References and menu options are available.



JCA Hall Gallery

Art Walk and Opening, December 7, Thursday, 5:00pm – 7:00pm

The JCA Hall Gallery presents the work of Louise T. Currin beginning November 2 through January 31. Louise T. Currin is a native of North Carolina and now lives in Hadley, Massachusetts. She spends part of the year in Clayton, New York. She is a former member of the Virginia Watercolor Society and the Garden State Watercolor Society, and a member of the Southwestern Watercolor Society, the Academic Artists Association and a Signature member of the Central New York Watercolor Society. Her awards include a Merit Award from the Garden State Watercolor Society, the David Gates Memorial Award from the Western Federation of Watercolor Societies, Best Landscape in the Central New York Watercolor Society exhibit in Cooperstown, N.Y., and the Juror's Award from the Thousand Islands Art Center and Museum. During the summer months she paints with the Plein Air Painters Thousand Islands Region (PAPTIR) and her work can be seen at the Breakwater Gallery in Cape Vincent, N.Y.

During my journey of painting, I have always been interested in landscapes, perhaps because I grew up on a farm and had views of open land. I continue to be drawn to the landscapes because of the patterns of light and atmosphere. I paint with the medium of watercolor because of the transparency and its ability to convey mood. It is sometime uncontrollable and it still surprises me.

In The Valley

Shabbaton at Smith College with Rabbi Benay Lappe

The Smith College Jewish Community and the Smith Center for Religious and Spiritual Life invite the JCA to a Shabbaton on December 8th and 9th with Rabbi Benay Lappe, founder and Rosh Yeshiva of SVARA: a Traditionally Radical Yeshiva. Rabbi Lappe is the 2016 recipient of the Covenant award for excellence in Jewish Education and teaches Queer Talmud, which employs traditional Talmudic study with a radical viewpoint. The Shabbaton is free. For more information and to register, find us on Facebook: Queer Talmud Shabbaton with Rabbi Benay Lappe.



Rabbi Benay Lappe

Donations to the JCA

Adult Ed

Phyllis Herda
Judy Davis
Hattie Nestel
Richard Cohen
Leslie Lorber
Jane Trigere
Ken Schoen
Marcia Gagliardi
Judy Glaser
Linda Terry

Annual Fund

Michael & Barbara Burkart
Emily Bloch
In honor of the engagement of Ilana Cohen & Mike Peth
(Lori Holder-Webb & Jeffrey Cohen)
In memory of David Stein & Morton Harmatz (Ruth Love Barer)
In honor of the founders of the JCA, and all the members who volunteer to keep our community alive and well
(Randi Stein)
Amanda Walling & Boris Wolfson
Linda Sinapi
Jean Krogh & Bob Solosko
Barbara & Jim Pistrang
In memory of Larry Levine (Karen Levine)
Joyce Duncan & Sam Gladstone
In honor of Bill Zimmer for his enormous contributions to the JCA
(Judith Souweine)
Janis & Steven Wolkenbreit

Building Fund

In memory of Louis Greenbaum for the JCA steeple repair (Kevin Jekanowski)

Chesed Fund

In honor of Reed Alper
(The Chesed Committee)

General Fund

With gratitude
(Peggy & Murray Schwartz)
In honor of the Michael Ash Family
(Dr. Arlene Ash)
Elizabeth Pryor & Lilli Stordeur
In memory of Karen Harper
(Marilyn & Jeff Blaustein)
In memory of our fathers, William Hecht & Harry Blaustein
(Marilyn & Jeff Blaustein)
In memory of Phyllis Machta, Jon Machta's mother
(Joan & Monroe Rabin)
Nancy Pick & Lawrence Douglas
In honor of Daniel Vallitt's Bar Mitzvah, son of Rachel & Robert Vigderman
(Caden & Lewis Mainzer)
Joanna & Clay Ballantine
In honor of Josette Henschel's 70th Birthday (Joan Saperstan)
In memory of Leonard Schley
(Amy Rothenberg & Paul Herscu)

High Holiday Donation

Oran Kaufman
In memory of Benjamin & Stella Speiser
(Anne Speiser)
Gail Kainen
In gratitude welcoming our daughter and son-in-law to High Holiday Services
(Gail & Michael Perlman)
Peter Sterling
Virginia Brewer

Project Rehovot

In memory of my friend Martin Wilder
(Helena Donovan)
In honor of Mort Heafitz's birthday
(Barbara & Marty Winn)
In honor of Hollie Kalkstein & Bob Weitzman (Rose Foster)
In memory of Ari Wetzman (Rose Foster)
Charles Jacobson
Janet Klausner-Wise & Jeremy Wise
Christine & Steve Marglin
In honor of Miriam Zamansky
(Caden & Lewis Mainzer)
In honor of my children (Natalie Jarmon)
In memory of my parents Lee & Isadore Zipkowitz (Fay Zipkowitz)
Linda Sinapi
Reed & Arnie Alper
In honor of Rabbi Yechiael Lander's 90th birthday (Marilyn & Joe Kushick)
In honor of Yaffa Gunner (Anna Markus)
Netta Bolozky
Susan Zarchin

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Susan Zarchin
In memory of my father, Norman N. Gill
(Roslyn Heafitz)
In memory of Phyllis Machta
(Betsy Brooks & Jonathan Machta)

Ritual Life Objects Fund

In honor of Merle Feld's 70th Birthday
(Jordene Hale & David Rabinovitz)

Tikkun Olam

In honor of Arnie Alper
(The Tikkun Olam Committee)



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Office Hours:
Monday and Thursday: Office Closed
Tuesday and Wednesday: 10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Friday: 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
When the JCA School is in session on Wednesday, the office remains open until 6:00 pm.

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Kolot — JCA Voices

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An archive of previous editions may be found at:
<https://jcamherst.org/our-community/newsletter-kolot-jca-voices>

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Have you checked out the JCA Judaica Store lately?
The Judaica Store features books by JCA members and others, siddurim, chumashim, tallitot, mezzuzot and many lovely gift items.
You can shop whenever the office is open.