



The Centre Call

GERMANTOWN JEWISH CENTRE

www.GermantownJewishCentre.org

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JANUARY 2013

Why Interfaith Dialogue?



By Rabbi Adam Zeff

This year Rabbi Lewis and I have had the privilege of taking part in three separate interfaith dialogue groups that are working hard to bring members of different religious communities together so that we can understand and learn from each other. The first is a group of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish clergy from all over Northwest Philadelphia who have been coming together each month for several years, first under the auspices of NIM and now independently, to get to know each other, study texts together, and explore how we might be able to cooperate with each other. The second is a group of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish teens (GJC's Confirmation Class is providing the Jews) that is meeting as part of the Walking the Walk program through the Interfaith Center of Greater Philadelphia. This program brings these teens together several times a month from October through May to get to know each other, to learn about each other's religious traditions, and to do service projects together. I have a different role in this group, through my study with the Confirmation Class, but I have had a chance to interact with all of the teens when they have visited GJC, first as part of their regular meetings and then again when they attended a special Kol Zimrah service in December and

stayed for dinner and discussion. The third is a group recently organized by the Jewish Community Relations Council and the Presbytery of Philadelphia to bring rabbis and Presbyterian ministers together, again, to get to know each other, to study together, and, in this case, to discuss issues that sometimes divide our communities from each other.

So why are we spending all of this time and effort on interfaith dialogue work? Why are we, your rabbis, squeezing space into our schedules to interact and speak – and sometimes argue with – people from other religious traditions? I think there are three main reasons.

They need to learn about us. We are charged to be “a light to the nations.” But too often we hide that light behind our own walls. The deep and relevant teachings of Judaism about the importance of labor and rest, the need to care for the earth, and the value of justice rarely are highlighted in the public sphere. Unfortunately, as we have seen so painfully throughout Jewish history, ignorance is fertile ground for anti-Jewish sentiment. Although the American Jewish community is strong, and Philadelphia is one of its places of strength, we can't forget that we are an extremely small minority in the U.S. as a whole. Because we tend to concentrate in a few areas, there are many parts of the country where Jews are rare. And even where we are numerous, that doesn't necessarily mean that our non-Jewish friends and neighbors know much about Judaism or what it means to be a Jew.

Indeed, I am continually surprised by the lack of understanding that very well-meaning people of other faiths can bring to our conversations. So we need to help others learn about Judaism both for the world's sake and for our own.

We need to learn about them. A history of oppression can make us fearful to reach out and explore the ideas of the other faiths that surround us. We are sometimes afraid that too much exposure will somehow weaken us or make us more susceptible to assimilation and loss. But time and time again, I have seen the opposite happen. When we have frank and open dialogue with those whose religious ideas differ from ours, we are left with

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Program Highlights

Beit Midrash

*Every Shabbat Morning in
January & February*

Red Cross Blood Drive sponsored by Men's Club

January 6

Kol HaNoar Shabbat Service & Dinner for Grades K-2 and their Families

January 11

Melevah Malkah Fundraiser Concert

January 12

Tot Shabbat

January 18

Ralph Granger Memorial Shabbat

January 19

President's Message

Germantown Jewish Centre 75th Anniversary Campaign Update We have topped \$1 million!

By Mitch Marcus, GJC President

You may be aware that Germantown Jewish Centre launched a 75th Anniversary Endowment Campaign in May 2012. This is our first major fundraising campaign since the 60th Anniversary Campaign in 1996-97. While such campaigns are typically directed at capital improvements, synagogue leadership determined that growing our endowment, to help ensure the Centre's long-term financial viability, was our paramount need at this time. Our heartfelt gratitude goes out to the 69 GJC families that, as of November 30, 2012, have affirmed their support of our community by



pledging over \$1,000,000.

If you were not among the GJC congregants who were contacted during 2012 as part of the 75th Anniversary Campaign's initial phase, you will receive in the mail in January 2013 a packet of succinct documents to better familiarize you with the purpose of the

pledging over \$1,000,000.

We will begin phase two of the Campaign in January 2013. Our total goal for the Cam-

Campaign. These materials will provide you with information you may wish to reflect upon in determining your level of participation (gifts to the Campaign can be paid over a five-year or less period). You will then be contacted by a GJC member to discuss your pledge.

Please join the 69 families that have already so generously pledged their support. We hope that when contacted, you will make as substantial a commitment as you possibly can in order to help ensure that our community will go from strength to strength for generations to come.

Rabbi's Message

Continued from page 1

a deep appreciation for our own tradition, as we see more clearly how and why it is distinct. The ancient rabbis are a wonderful model in this respect. The Talmud records many discussions that the ancient rabbis had with Romans, with anti-rabbinic Jews, with "heretics," with early Christians, and with others, in which the very challenges that were thrown at the rabbis helped them to elucidate what they really believed.

We have work to do together.

Early on in interfaith dialogue, I learned something that surprised me. As much as we, as Jews, sometimes feel ourselves to be an embattled minority in a non-Jewish world, equally

so do people in other religious communities sometimes feel that they are an embattled minority of people of faith in a non-religious world. In the public sphere, the voice of those who embrace religious traditions of any kind can often be drowned out by more strident ideological voices. When we can join our voices as Jews together with the voices of Christians and Muslims who also feel commanded or called to bring transcendent values to bear on difficult social and political issues of modern America, we hold power in our hands. Given the many lines of division that fracture the social fabric of our country and of the world community, religious leaders and religious communities have a special obligation to find a way to unity. It might just change the world.

SAVE THOSE CLEMENTINE BOXES!



GJC will once again partner with Minyan Dorshei Derekh, creating a Mishloach Manot Tzedakah Collec-

tive which will provide tzedakah to five non-profits which work to feed the hungry, as well as providing a beautiful Mishloach Manot basket for each household who attend Purim. Details will be announced soon.





(October 2012 – November 2012)

IN CELEBRATION...

Jonathan & Randi Singer, on the naming ceremony of their twin sons, Luca & Maxwell

Peninah Berdugo, on her special birthday

Albert Berdugo, on his special birthday

David & Nahariyah Mosenkis, on the birth of their first grandchild, Yocheved Shalva, born to Eitan & Leah Mosenkis

Abe Barash, son of Josh Barash & Devorah Lissek, on becoming Bar Mitzvah

Aaron Kavesh, son of Bill Kavesh & Karen Levitt, on becoming Bar Mitzvah

Hilda & Paul Minkoff, on their 55th wedding anniversary

Noah Friedman-Nathan, son of Rabbi Marsha Friedman & Rabbi Steve Nathan, on becoming Bar Mitzvah

Ken Weiss, on being named GJC Men's Club Man of the Year

Gordon Kutler, on being the first recipient of the Grace Harrison Award for excellence in long-term care

Albert & Peninah Berdugo, on the engagement of their daughter Michal Berdugo to Arash Sanieoff

Marty Kaplan, on his special birthday

Mindelle Goldstein, on her special birthday

Daniel & Deborah Werlin, on the birth of their daughter Nava

Logan Piatetsky, son of Randi Hoffman, Michael Piatetsky (of blessed memory) & Eli Yaron, on becoming Bar Mitzvah

Marvin Sclan, on his 90th birthday

Leah & Norman Schwartz, on the birth of their great-granddaughter Penina Waitzberg, daughter of Elisheva Schwartz & Ishaia Asher Waitzberg in Jerusalem, Israel

IN MEMORIAM

Lila Gail Morse, cousin of **Alanna Sklover**

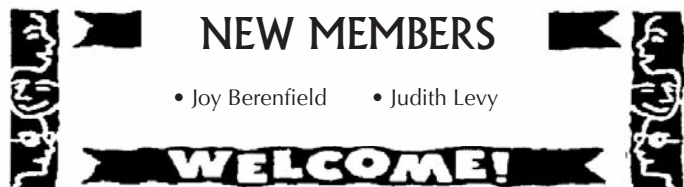
Mildred Magil, a founding member of Germantown Jewish Centre

Esther Abrams, mother of **Rochelle Fellman**

Pearl Weissler, mother of **Chava Weissler**

Elliot Kapstein, father of **Carol Tinkleman**

Terry Shapiro, step-father of **Dina Pinsky**



ISRAELI DANCING

Sundays at 10 AM

\$5 per session

For more info call Tamar Magdovitz
at 215-247-9614



Shabbat Chai-Lites

January 4 & 5

- Carlebach Shabbat
- Beit Midrash
- Kol D'mamah
- Shabbat Chugim

January 11 & 12

- Kol HaNoar
- Beit Midrash
- Parshat HaShavua B'Ivrit

January 18 & 19

- Tot Shabbat
- Ralph Granger Memorial Shabbat
- Beit Midrash

January 25 & 26

- Kol Zimrah
- Dorshei Derekh/Charry Service – 9:30 AM *Mazel tov to Charlie Noam Trey-Masters on becoming Bar Mitzvah*
- Beit Midrash

February 1 & 2

- Carlebach Shabbat
- Beit Midrash
- Charry Service – 3rd Grade Tanakh Ceremony
- Kol D'mamah
- Shabbat Chugim

February 8 & 9

- BBMM Family Shabbat Dinner & Program
- Beit Midrash
- Tot Havdallah

February 16

- Beit Midrash

February 22 & 23

- Kol Zimrah
- Beit Midrash
- Parshat HaShavua B'Ivrit

Kabbalat Shabbat/Carlebach Shabbat/Kol Zimrah

Fridays at 6 PM

Shabbat Morning

"Race Through the 613 Mitzvot" study for adults at 9:30 AM on Saturdays throughout January & February (with Rabbi Zeff & Rabbi Lewis)

Beit Midrash programs for Religious School Students at 9:30 AM on Saturdays throughout January & February
Services at 10 AM (*unless otherwise noted above*)

Kol D'mamah at 10 AM
Parshat HaShavua B'Ivrit at 11 AM

**Solís Family**

Yoel Solís, (rhymes with police) has upended his life in two major arenas, religion and gender. Yoel, 45, is a proud Jew by choice. He has transitioned from being a woman (Yolanda) to being a man. He has been married for 12 years to Matthew and they have 3 children. That major aspect of his life has not changed. Matt and Yoel are still married and are still parents to Erica, 10, and twins Colin and Phillip, nearly five.

Being the “T” in LGBT is often diminished in the push for gay rights, what Vice President Joe Biden called “the civil rights issue of our time.” In November, Yoel, a member of the Masorti minyan and Leah Moser, a member of Dorshei Derekh, spoke about their experiences of transitioning at the annual Stefan Presser Memorial program sponsored by Dorshei Derekh.

At the program, Rabbi Annie Lewis spoke about “covering,” which she said is “defined as the act of downplaying an aspect of a stigmatized identity.” Covering would not be the way to describe Yoel. He is out in every sense of the word. For example, he was asked whether it bothered him to be “outed” as a Jew by choice when called to the Torah with his parents named as “Abraham v’ Sarah.” He replied, “I hate secrets. I find them poisonous. I like that my name carries my history, that it doesn’t give me the space to choose secrets. I like that I’m “ben Avraham v Sarah.” I like people knowing I’m a Jew by choice.”

Solís, by the way, is his great-grandmother’s name. In the 1490s, fleeing the Spanish Inquisition, a

branch of his family went to the Netherlands and remained Jewish. “My branch went to Mexico and had to convert,” he says. Yoel adopted the name in his early 20s so it wouldn’t die out. Another way that Yoel embraces his past is with his English name: Yoel Miriam, reflecting both his male identity and his past life as a woman.

Yoel was born in Chicago and attended nine different schools as he was raised in the Midwest. His father was an academic and his mother got a law degree in midlife. “I didn’t always live with my parents,” Yoel says straightforwardly. “Growing up sometimes I lived with other relatives. My parents had their own issues. The parental relationship I have is more with my aunts and uncles,” including an uncle and aunt who live in Mt. Airy, which Yoel considers home base.

Yoel’s mother died a few years ago. He hasn’t had contact with his father since his teens, “by my choice. I’m in touch with my father’s family because most of them are delightful. I give my aunt and uncle mothers and fathers day cards.”

After high school, Yoel attended Oberlin College for a year, but flunked out because he wasn’t ready. He worked in theater, as a building super and other side jobs for a decade and then returned to college at Buffalo State University, where he met Matthew. He took dual degrees in theater and Spanish literature, achieved a 3.92 GPA and “made up for flunking out.”

Yoel was fascinated with Judaism since his youth. “We had a couple of National Geographic articles about a kibbutz and the ultra orthodox community in Williamsburg. I graduated to reading Chaim Potok’s novels, and in middle school attended community interfaith seders. I was a little Catholic kid whose favorite holiday was Pesach and I knew it was called Pesach, not just Passover.

“My parents were crunchy ecumenical liberation theology Catholics. The

Member Spotlight

by Linda Kriger

American side of my mother’s family are Methodists, the other side Mexican liberal intelligentsia. My father’s family are more devoutly Mexican Catholic, but not terribly hung up on religion in a ‘this is the way to do it’ sort of way.”

Yoel received Catholic religious training and served as a lector – a person who reads scripture at services. “I’ve always been very connected to the performative aspects of spirituality. What I really loved about Judaism was there was really more of that. I love having a kosher home because of the pleasure of having another physicalization of the spiritual. I valued it in Catholicism, but I couldn’t believe the theology. The whole Trinity thing just didn’t do it for me. The more concrete my religious practice and the more abstract my God is, the better it is for me,” he explains. “Judaism offered me both those things. Theologically I’m very Reconstructionist but in terms of practice? Traditional egalitarian, basically Masorti, is what really I find very satisfying spiritually.”

Conversion didn’t seem possible, though. “I thought for a long time that you couldn’t convert to Judaism, that it didn’t take converts. I thought they made an exception for Sammy Davis Junior. I’d heard about people converting when they married a Jew. I converted in my late 20s. When I was in college in the ‘90s, I said let’s get serious about this Judaism thing.” Yoel started to read books including *How to Run a Traditional Jewish Household* by Blu Greenberg.

Matt and Yoel attended a traditional Conservative synagogue for several years during the decade they lived on Staten Island. Yoel made an appointment to see the rabbi, and “He asked me ‘Why Reconstructionism?’ I told him I’d read ‘Judaism as a Civilization’ by Mordecai Kaplan and he said, ‘Usually I turn people away 3 times, but I don’t think I’m going to do that with you.’”

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Member Spotlight

Continued from page 4

At the beginning of his conversion process, Yoel's aunt died, so he started his "Jewish life saying a year of kaddish for my aunt, going to daily minyan and laying tfillin. At that point Matthew and I were engaged before I started formally to convert but I kept saying, 'I'm not converting because of Matthew.'" Yoel wears a kippah all day, but says he is "not as Jewishly educated as I'd like to be." He plans to take a course this spring entitled "Read Hebrew by Pesach" offered at GJC by Naomi Hirsch.

Yoel sees many parallels to being a convert to Judaism and being "a convert to maleness. In the same way I have a Jewish neshamah (soul), I have a male neshamah. As a little kid I wanted to be a Jesuit. I felt myself as legitimately inhabiting the male spaces in spirituality as much as I wanted egalitarianism. We always belonged to congregations that let women do things they weren't supposed to do. I was growing up in 1970's feminism that said there was no difference between boys and girls, men and women. I really liked that particular message. It didn't matter that I was a girl because there was no difference between girls and boys. And at the same time there was something profoundly discomfiting about being in my skin." He felt he "should be standing in the male spaces."

As much as he dislikes the idea of a mechitza – the separation panel between men and women in traditional Jewish congregations, "I very much felt like I was on the wrong side of the mechitza."

He and Matt were friends before becoming a couple and "If you're becoming close friends with someone, you're going to talk about the things that are central to who you are. Back in 1991, I saw a photo spread in a magazine of a transman. I knew about Renee Richards (a doctor and professional tennis player who transitioned from male to female) but I had never

heard you could transition the other way. I felt like I was seeing myself." So Yolanda's decision to transition into Yoel wasn't a shock to Matthew or their children. He began preparing Erica at a young age.

"Erica was about 4 and we sat at the table with a placemat. 'Men are here – at one corner - and women are here – the other corner - and mama,' as I then called myself, 'is mostly over on the male side.' It wasn't one conversation. It was many conversations over time."

When Erica was about 9, she said during one of these conversations, "I have a girl's body and I feel like I'm a girl in my brain. Am I weird?" Yoel said, "No honey, most people are like you. It's fine."

Yoel became serious about transitioning when Erica was two. "We were then on Staten Island and we didn't think it was the right place to do it," he says. "It was one of the reasons we moved to Philadelphia."

Once transition was on the horizon, Matt and Yoel became active in Philadelphia Family Pride. "We needed to give the kids the context of other trans-parents. Also, our kids were going to enter a family situation where the world saw two dads."

For those who are curious, transitioning to the opposite sex can involve top surgery and bottom surgery. The latter is extremely expensive and beyond the reach of most people. Top surgery is financially more accessible, and Yoel had it done so his chest to make it masculine.

"It's very important to me to take testosterone," he says. "I give myself an injection in the stomach every week. I'm in male puberty. My voice may deepen more, maybe not. My skin has gotten coarser. I have a 14-year-old's facial hair: a combination of really advanced peach fuzz, and a few adult beard hairs here and there, because things sprout in bizarre ways. I have a healthy crop of back hair and no chest hair," he says, laughing, adding, "It's a lot less traumatic to go through puberty in your mid 40's and married."

Yoel is a workforce educator and

adult education specialist for Federation of Neighborhood Centers, an umbrella group for settlement houses around the city. He helps them improve their educational programming and does curriculum design and instruction for projects, mostly in math and science. Matt has a Masters in public health and recently has been a houseparent. He plans to go to nursing school.

Asked about acceptance by his and Matt's family, Yoel replies, "Our extended family has been wonderful. I've been very lucky. I did wait for almost an entire generation to die off first, that's how the timing worked out. Partly I had to wait for the world to catch up with me."

The degree to which Yoel and Matt have prepared their daughter for their new family configuration becomes clear when Yoel relates the story of when his daughter told her Masterman classroom about how her mom narrowly escaped being in the Twin Towers on 9/11, where 'she' was supposed to get a pregnancy related sonogram. One kid said, "We thought you had two dads." She said, "Oh, he used to be my mom first."

Yoel is generous and gracious when people are confused about his gender, because his face still has remnants of femininity. "I understand how confusing it is for people. I'm an educator. I'm a very feminine man, which is who I am. I transitioned to be more myself, not less myself."

Save the Dates!

**Join us MLK Weekend
for our 29th Annual
Ralph Granger
Memorial Shabbat
on Saturday, January 19
and a Community
MLK Program on
Sunday, January 20.**

Stay tuned for more details.



Melevah Malkah

* We invite you to a GJC fundraiser concert featuring Germantown Jewish Centre members, clergy and staff! We will begin with a participatory Havdallah and then move right into a musical extravaganza allowing us to hold on to the spiritual high of Shabbat. We will bring in the new week with joyful Jewish music from around the world. The concert features vocalists Rabbi Zeff, Rabbi Lewis & Nina Peskin as well as Mikael Elsila (piano), Jonathan Singer & Yosef Abramowitz (percussion), Elana Hollo (violin) and Cheryl Bettigole (clarinet).

Saturday, January 12 from 7-9 pm

It's fundraiser for GJC! Suggested donation is \$5 per person and up (the sky is the limit), but no one will be turned away for lack of funds*

Advanced registration not necessary, but if you want to let us know you're coming or if you have questions please contact Elana Shaw at 215.844.1507 X19 or program@germantownjewishcentre.org

*Limited number of volunteer opportunities available in lieu of payment. Contact Elana Shaw for details.



Germantown Jewish Centre
A community of communities

400 West Ellet Street

Philadelphia, PA 19119

215-844-1507

www.germantownjewishcentre.org

Hazak

Programming for Adults 55+

By Hazak Co-Chairs,
Cherie Goren & Sonia Dishler

We wish you a happy and healthy secular new year! We recently discovered the vintage Jewish film library available through Gratz College and are very impressed. Please let us know if you are interested in participating in a film series. We are considering adding this to our program lineup and would like your input.

We are busy planning programs for the winter and spring. We hope to repeat our Yiddish concert featuring the Philadelphia Workmen's Circle Chorus on Sunday, March 17. Save the date and stay tuned for more details!

For those who missed our paid up membership brunch and program in October, this is just a friendly reminder that it's not too late to join Hazak. Just \$10 grants you FREE access to more than 6 programs annually as well as our monthly book group discussion. And of course we provide a little nosh at each event. Guests are welcome too, but must pay \$5 per program, so why not join!

Hazak is the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism's organization for Jewish men and women, 55 years and older. The name HAZAK is an acronym. The het stands for Hokhma (wisdom), that zayan for Ziknah (maturity) and the kuph for Kadima (looking ahead). The Rhea Shils Chapter of Hazak at Germantown Jewish Centre has offered programs that appeal to a wide audience since 2003.

**Special Thanks to
the Wolfe Family
Foundation for
generously supporting
programming at GJC**

Early Childhood Program (ECP)



ECP classes of all ages are now visiting the GJC library weekly for story-time!



ECP Native Americans and Pilgrims enjoyed a Thanksgiving feast together in November!

Tot Shabbat & Holidays

at Germantown Jewish Centre

2013 Events

Fri. Jan. 18	Tot Shabbat*
Sat. Feb. 9	Tot Havdallah*
Join us for a craft project and musical Havdallah ceremony to separate Shabbat from the rest of the week. Followed by delicious dinner.	
Sun. Feb. 24	Purim Carnival
Fri. Mar. 1	Tot Shabbat*
Sat. April 13 @ 11 AM	Special Ginat Shabbat
Our weekly pre-school program with Miss Amy Jo moves to the Charry Sanctuary this week. Followed by a special Kid's Kiddush sponsored by ECP.	
Fri. May 10	Tot Shabbat*
Fri. July 19	Tot Shabbat*

Tot Shabbat & Holiday programs are especially geared towards toddlers and pre-schoolers and their families.

It's your opportunity to celebrate and learn while allowing your kids to be kids! Join Rabbi Adam Zeff for food, fun, and learning!

Unless otherwise noted we begin at 6 PM in the Marcus Auditorium with singing, marching and a puppet show led by Rabbi Adam. This interactive program is followed by a simple yet delicious catered meal that begins at 6:30 PM.

Cost is \$5 per person (adult & child alike) and reservations are required.

Contact Elana Shaw at
program@germantownjewishcentre.org
or 215.844.1507 X19
for more info or to RSVP



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*Requires
advanced
registration
& payment

DIVRAY CHINUCH

Beit Midrash - New & Improved!!!

By Chana Dickter, Religious School Director

During January & February, our school transforms itself into a Shabbat school, instead of a "Sunday school," called *Beit Midrash* when we join together for study, prayer and of course, some delicious food! And this year, for the first time, families will be sharing Shabbat *gam yachad* / all together in several ways.

As I write this letter, our Rabbis & I are preparing to add a new dimension to *Beit Midrash*: we are adding an "**E**" for **Engagement**. Engaging the whole family & community in study, prayer and celebration is the essence of Shabbat. Family Education is one aspect of family engagement and is one of the ways in which an educational community, our school, transforms itself into an engaged Jewish community with a sense of shared purpose and values, as well as shared experiences.

There will be adult study every Shabbat during January & February from 9 - 9:30 am, led by our Rabbis: "A Race Through the 613 Mitzvot." All adults in the community, whether you have children in our religious school or not, are invited to these study sessions. You are welcome to attend any or all of the sessions and learn together.

We will have three Family Services open to all, during which we will have more informal singing, StorahTelling, perhaps an appearance by our school's Parsha Players, and active participation. Rabbi Annie is our resident StorahTelling expert. StorahTelling is an informal, interactive way of performing any particular text story, easily adapted to groups of all ages. It is an impromptu way of *telling* the story, with some audience participation. If you have never experienced StorahTelling you are in for a treat. Our students also love to

perform short, age-appropriate parsha plays. We call any students who participate, our "Parsha Players." Be prepared for camels crossing the stage or 3 foot tall prophets! On two additional Shabbatot, parents of our religious school students will be invited into our classrooms for family text study. We are calling our family study *L'dor v'Dor*. One class may perform a play (with the parents of course!), one may read a story about the parsha, or one may try developing their own midrash for a particular parsha.

We all realized that writing & implementing curriculum and creating guidelines & expectations for classroom

learning is not enough. In the last issue of the Centre Call, I quoted Joel Lurie Grishaver "Sh'ma is for Real." Well, so is Shabbat - and what better way to REALize that then have families engage with Shabbat together!

I want to thank Rabbis Lewis & Zeff for partnering with me in planning our programs and for their support, our teachers for their efforts & willingness to learn together, and to the Curriculum Committee, for without their hard work over the past year and a half, we would not have reached this point. Our first Beit Midrash is Saturday, Jan. 5. Looking forward to seeing you all then.

Beit Midrash – 9:30 am - 12:30 pm on Saturdays in Jan & Feb **Highlights – What's New & Different**

Saturday, January 5

- 11:00 – 12:00:** Family service for K-7th graders and parents in the Marcus Auditorium
Note: 6th grade / Vav students participate in BBMM until Noon
12:00 – 12:30: Kiddush to follow in the Marcus Auditorium

Saturday, January 26

- 9:30 – 10:15:** Family Torah Study in Religious School Classrooms for Gan/Alef, Bet, Gimel, Dalet, Hei & Zayin
Note: 6th graders/Vav class Religious School students will have a "snack & schmooze" from 9:30 to 10 am, at which time the BBMM programs begins

Saturday, February 2

- 10:30:** 3rd grade Tanakh Ceremony & Family Services in Charry Sanctuary for ALL grades

Saturday, February 9

- 11:00 – 12:00:** Family service for K-7th graders and parents in the Marcus Auditorium
Note: 6th grade / Vav students participate in BBMM until Noon.
12:00 – 12:30: Kiddush to follow in the Marcus Auditorium

Saturday, February 16

- 9:30 – 10:15:** Family Torah Study in Religious School Classrooms for Gan/Alef, Bet, Gimel, Dalet, Hei & Zayin
Note: 6th graders/Vav class Religious School students will have a "snack & schmooze" from 9:30 to 10 am, at which time the BBMM programs begins

Update on GJC's New Area at the Jenkintown Montefiore Cemetery

This summer a number of us gathered with Rabbi Zeff to discuss purchasing burial plots together at Montefiore Cemetery. Though the closest Jewish burial ground to our neighborhood, it did not have a GJC section - although quite a number of people who were active at GJC are buried there. Mitchell Berk, an active member of our community, works at Montefiore and has helped to set up a new area specifically for us.

The large number of attendees at the summer meeting suggested that deciding on a final resting place was important to many of us who are aging in place and consider this our home. Rabbi Zeff stressed how much easier it is for a bereaved family when burial arrangements have been made in advance. The response to the meeting was immediate – Mitchell sold the first plots the fol-

lowing morning! So far 18 burial spots have been purchased. Many more individuals and families are in discussion with Mitchell, so the number is likely to grow. The area will be laid out in the next few weeks at which point purchases will be for a specific plot and those people who already made their purchase can choose their specific spot.

If you would like to learn more about making arrangements, please contact Mitchell directly, by phone, (215-621-7929), by e-mail - MITCHELLJBERK@YAHOO.COM - or leave him a note with your contact information in the Montefiore mailbox in the synagogue office. We have a set price which includes everything needed at the cemetery, including a plot and headstone/s. Mitchell will be happy to send you that information in advance of setting up a meeting.

GJC members are buried in several other area cemeteries as well. Our Religious School students have visited early leaders of GJC at King David Memorial Park in Bensalem, PA. GJC still owns plots there, which we sell to our members, which includes the cost of perpetual care. Please be in touch with Nina Peskin if you are interested in purchasing one or more of these plots.

GJC members who wish to purchase plots at Haym Salomon Memorial Park in Frazer PA (610-644-1100) can call directly to arrange the purchase. When speaking with the cemetery staff, mention your desire to purchase a plot(s) in the section reserved for GJC members. (The cemetery makes a contribution to GJC when our members purchase their plots.) At Haym Solomon, GJC shares a section with two other synagogues.

Men's Club News

By Rod Griffith, Men's Club President



Men's Club regional Man of the Year ceremony on December 2, 2012: Ken Weiss (center) and The Freudian Slips discuss fine points of psychoanalysis. Mazel tov to Ken!



You're never too young to join the Men's Club – Thanks to all of our Hanukkiyah assembly volunteers, as well as to our candle sponsors and those who came out to celebrate.

Win A Trip To Israel!

The Annual Passport to Israel Purim fundraiser drawing will be held at GJC's Purim carnival on Sunday, February 24, 2013.

First prize is a trip for two to Israel — a \$4,000 value — or \$4,000 in State of Israel bonds. Second prize - \$360; third prize - \$180.

Ticket sales are limited to 500. No cash prize in lieu of first prize of Israel trip or Israel bonds. Sponsored by GJC Men's Club. You need not be present at drawing to win. Winning ticket valid for one year.

ENTER TODAY!

Order your Passports before they sell out! Please complete the form below and mail to the Germantown Jewish Centre, Men's Club, 400 W. Ellet Street, Phila., PA 19119 with payment of \$30 per Passport. We will send you a numbered Passport receipt, your chance to win a trip to Israel or \$4,000 in State of Israel bonds!



Please print:

Name _____

Address _____

Email: _____

Telephone _____

Number of Passports: _____ X \$30 each Passport = \$ _____

Send completed form with payment (\$30 per Passport) to: Germantown Jewish Centre, Men's Club, 400 W. Ellet St., Phila., PA 19119. Make checks payable to GJC Men's Club.

Proceeds benefit GJC (including General Fund & Youth Activities), community programs & the State of Israel. Thank you!

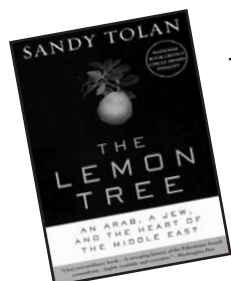
PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

GJC's Jewish Book Reading Group

We meet at Germantown Jewish Centre in the Quitman Library. We read fiction and nonfiction books of Jewish interest written mostly, but not solely, by Jewish writers and chosen by the group. Volunteer group members lead the discussion.

For more information, contact Dena Lake at 215-233-1414 or email denareva@comcast.net.

Tuesday, January 8
The Arrogant Years:
One Girl's Search for
Her Lost Youth, From
Cairo to Brooklyn
by Lucette Lagnado



Tuesday,
February 12
The Lemon Tree
by Sandy Tol

Adult Education 2013/5773

Please review the chart below for our courses at a glance. Advanced registration is requested for all courses. Contact the office to register.

TITLE	INSTRUCTOR(S)	TIMING	DATES	COST MEMBERS/ NON MEMBERS
CENTER CITY LUNCH & LEARN: LAW AS RELIGION, RELIGION AS LAW	Rabbi Adam Zeff	Wednesdays 12:15-1:30 pm	Monthly—Jan 2, Feb 6, Mar 6	\$150/200 (CLE credit can be obtained for additional fees)
RACE THROUGH THE JEWISH HOLIDAYS	Rabbi Adam Zeff & Rabbi Annie Lewis	Sundays 10-11:30 am	Jan 6, 13, 20, 27	\$50/65
WITH AN EAR TO THE EAST: THE ROLE OF "EASTERN" MUSICAL INFLUENCES ON ISRAELI CULTURE	Yosef Goldman	Sundays 10:30 am—12 noon	Feb 3, 10, 17; Mar 3	\$50/65
LET MY PEOPLE KNOW . . . LEARN TO READ HEBREW BY PASSOVER	Hazzan (Cantor) Naomi Hirsch	Sundays 9:30-11 am	Feb 3, 10, 17, 24; Mar 3, 10, 17	\$100/125
A MAGICAL MYSTERY TOUR OF MIDRASH	Ellen Frankel	Mondays 7-8:30 pm (Living Room Learning)	Feb 25; Mar 4, 11, 18	\$50/65
AS IF WE HAD COME OUT OF EGYPT: EXPLORING THE HAGADAH	Rabbi Adam Zeff & Rabbi Annie Lewis	Sundays 11 am—12:30 pm	Mar 3, 10, 17	\$40/50
SPIRITUAL TREASURES OF EARLY HASIDIC LITERATURE	Rabbi Joshua Bolton	Tuesdays 7-8:30 pm	Apr 9, 16, 23, 30	\$50/65



Join the
Ner Tamid
Society
by Making a
Planned Gift to
GJC

Please consider making a planned gift to the Germantown Jewish Centre's endowment fund. Planned gifts come in many forms, including for example – charitable gift annuities, life insurance, trusts, or even a bequest in your will.

For more information about how you can join the Ner Tamid Society please contact the office.



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February Special:
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(Usual Exclusions)

Sunday: 9:30 – 12:30
Monday: Closed
Tuesday: 12:00- 5:00

Wednesday: 12:00 – 8:30
Thursday: 12:00- 5:00
Friday: 12:00 – 4:00

Women's Club News

By Barb Menin & Maxine Feldman, Co-presidents of Women's Club

Best wishes for the year, 2013.
Good health and peace to all.

We hope Women's Club exciting events and programs will help make the winter months fly by and before you know the trees and flowers will be in bloom. So "let's get together."

January 13th All you baseball fans, come listen to Dr. Rebecca Alpert talk on "Out of Left Field: Jews and Black Baseball." You don't have to be a sports fan to attend!

January 30th The Women's Club along with the Religious School is sponsoring the Butterfly Project. The Wolf Performing Arts Center honors the memory of the 15,000 children who passed through the Terezin Camp during the Holocaust (less than 100 survived). The artwork, poetry, and music, done by the children is amazing. Having personally visited this camp, this is a "must see" program.

February 3rd Women's Clothing Exchange. Please donate your nearly new clothing to the Women's Exchange. Thank you to Genie Ravital and committee, who graciously will donate a percentage of the income to Women's Club this year. To quote them, "Germantown Jewish Centre has been helpful to our cause over the years. In return, we want to help the Women's Club who work hard to raise funds for the Synagogue and School". Todah Rabah!

February 16th "Wild West" Purim Bash excitement is stirring (See ad and photos)

February 27th Northwest Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network presentation with Milt Cohen and (tentatively) Rabbi Annie Lewis

March 9th Scholar in Residence and Women's Shabbat featuring Rabbi Ruth Sandberg

More information to follow...Keep tuned to Women's Club!

GJC Women's Club Presents

Purim Bash

THE WILD WEST

February 16th, 2013

7:30 – 11:30

- LIVE MUSIC BY HAL MARTIN •
- PURIM SPIEL •
- LIVE AUCTION •
- DANCING • SILENT RESTAURANT AUCTION •
- 50-50 RAFFLE •
- GREAT FOOD •
- COSTUME CONTEST •



Tickets are \$45 •
\$36 if you're 36 or under
Save the date – Invitations
coming out soon!



7th Annual GJC Women's Clothing Giveaway Sunday February 3, 2012

- Clothing donations will be accepted between Sunday, January 27 and Friday, February 1.
- Bins will be located in the Chapel Lobby (near the office) and outside the Charry Lobby doors (just drive right into the parking lot).
- Access to the bin outside the Charry Lobby doors varies by the day, please contact the office for details.
- Please only donate clothes that are still in good condition.
- Volunteer sorting party will take place on Saturday night 2/2/13, from 6:30pm till 10pm.
- If interested in volunteering, please email Genie Ravital: geniebud@gmail.com
- This year's event proceeds will be split between Women's Club and Women to Women International

Don't miss the fun!

The Centre Call GERMANTOWN JEWISH CENTRE

The fastest way for your contribution to be processed is for you to fill out a Contribution Form (available in the office or on our website) and return it to the office along with a check. Or just send in a check with a note.

Contributions For the period of October 2012 through November 2012

Todah Rabbah!

Sincere thanks and appreciation to those who remember to honor their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

FUND	BY	OCCASION
Adult Education Fund	Yona & Howard Dansky Judith Sussholtz	in memory of Elliot Kapstein, father of Carol Tinkleman
Beck Scholar-in-Residence Fund	Rose Beck	in honor of Connie & Sam Katz, on the marriage of their son Phil Katz to Leah Greenberg
Bess Schick Memorial Fund	Clementine Brodsky Bob & Sheila Chamovitz Rabbi Jonas & Chelly Goldberg Peter & Peshe Kuriloff	in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC in honor of Linda Kriger, on her birthday in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond
Camp Scholarships Fund	Peter Kuriloff Norman Newberg Samuel & Helene Feinberg Carol & Marty Kaplan	in memory of Arthur Kuriloff, father in memory of Mildred Mitchell, sister in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of our granddaughter Ariel Feinberg in honor of Devorah Lissek & Josh Barash, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Abe
Chesed/Kesher Fund	Patricia & David Binder Fredie & Heshie Cooper Joan Silver	in memory of Esther Abrams, mother of Rochelle Fellman in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC
Children's Services Fund	Phyllis Kauffman	in memory of Esther Reitman Tatarsky, mother
Dorshei Derekh	Mitchell Berk & Beth Stearman	
Early Childhood Program Fund	Beth Stearman & Mitchell Berk Joshua Bolton Mindy Brown & Richard Stern Ronald Weber	in honor of Sherry & Bob Pomerantz, on the birth of their grandson in memory of Vade Bolton, father in memory of Terry Shapiro, step-father of Dina Pinsky in memory of Martin Weber, father
Floral Fund	Helene Feinberg Ellen Wolin	in memory of Frank Rosenberg, father in memory of Louis Wolin, father
General Fund	Louie & Steve Asher Roy & Janet De Ambrogio Ramy Djerassi Dena Lake Jim & Sandy Meyer Joyce Norden Harriet Segal Beth Stearman Sid & Bunny Stein	in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC in memory of Isaac Djerassi, father in memory of Eva Lamar, aunt in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC in memory of Myrtle Manheimer, mother in memory of David Segal, father in memory of Irving Stearman, grandfather in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC
Hazak Fund	Sidney & Rosalie August Mitchell Berk & Beth Stearman Cherie Goren Lucille & Aaron Weber	in honor of Sidney's special birthday in memory of Marvin Weiss in memory of Mark Fields, brother in memory of Judith Fleischman, mother in honor of Jeanette Dudnick, on her granddaughter Emma Dudnick's becoming Bat Mitzvah
Interfaith Hospitality Network	Louie Asher Alex & Sheila Avelin Gisha Berkowitz	in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond in memory of Stan Diamond, Jerry Bernstein & Barbara Porges, long-time volunteers from the earliest days of the Interfaith Hospitality Network in honor of Devorah Lissek & Josh Barash, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Abe in memory of Fanny Seligman, mother

Contributions *Continued*

	Sylvia Lifschitz	in memory of Joseph Lifschitz, father
	Cecile Merion	in memory of Isaac Kopstein, father
	Daniel Piser	in memory of Louis Piser, father
	Frieda Sanders	in memory of Solomon Goldenberg, father
	Milton Sanders	in memory of Anna Sanders, mother
	Joan Silver	in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond
	Michael Spear	in memory of S. Andrew Spear, father
	Hyman Zelkowitz	in memory of Tillie Zelkowitz, mother
Israel Affairs Fund	Carol & Marty Kaplan	in memory of Dorothy S. Kripke, mother of Ned Kripke
	Samuel Merion	in memory of Manya Merion, mother
	Cyrilla Rosen	in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC
		in memory of Henry, brother of Marianne Wallach
		in honor of Jeanette Dudnick, on her granddaughter Emma Dudnick's becoming Bat Mitzvah
	Judy Schwartz	in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC
	Dveera Segal	in memory of Gedalia Segal, father
Israel Garden Fund	Louie & Steve Asher	in memory of Jay Furman, a founding member of GJC
		in memory of Avriel Keogh
	Carol & Marty Kaplan	in memory of Esther Abrams, mother of Rochelle Fellman
		in honor of Sam & Helene Feinberg, on the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughter Arielle
	Judy Schwartz	in honor of Jeanette Dudnick, on her granddaughter Emma Dudnick's becoming Bat Mitzvah
		in memory of Esther Abrams, mother of Rochelle Fellman
	Joan Silver	in honor of Jeanette Dudnick, on her granddaughter Emma Dudnick's becoming Bat Mitzvah
	George & Debbie Stern	in memory of Jay Furman, a founding member of GJC
Kiddush Fund	Carol Kaplan	in memory of Ruth Pinn, mother
	Michael Robinson	in memory of Elaine Robinson, mother
	Michael Rodin	in memory of Alexander Rodin, grandfather
	Joan Silver	refuah shleimah to Marcy Landesberg
		in memory of Esther Abrams, mother of Rochelle Fellman
		in honor of Paul & Hilda Minkoff, on their 55th wedding anniversary
	Joan W. Stern	in memory of Meyer Winderman, grandfather
		in memory of Esther Abrams, mother of Rochelle Fellman
Men's Club	Bonnie Buyum	in memory of Sam Buyum, grandfather
Minyan Masorti Memorial	Louie & Steve Asher	in memory of Israel Eisenberg, father of Ron Eisenberg
Shabbat Fund	Norman & Adina Newberg	in memory of Pearl Weissler, mother of Chava Weissler
		in memory of Katie Zimring
Refuat HaNefesh Healing Service	Mindy Brown	in memory of Hilda Brown, mother
Music Fund	Maxine & Maurice Feldman	in honor of Ken Weiss, on being named Men's Club Man of the Year
	Mitchell Hirsch	in memory of Robert Hirsch, father
	Ruth Rosenthal	in memory of Abraham Wernick, father
	Judy Schwartz	in honor of Ken Weiss, on being named Men's Club Man of the Year
	Joan Silver	in honor of Ken Weiss, on being named Men's Club Man of the Year
	Bev & Ira Somerson	in honor of Ken Weiss, on being named Men's Club Man of the Year
Prayerbook & Ritual Items Fund	Alan Furman	in memory of Klara Furman, mother
	Bernice A. Goldstein	in memory of Milton G. Goldstein, brother

Contributions *Continued*

Program Fund	Sherman Aronson Polly Berman Jane and Larry Magne	in memory of Stanley Aronson, father in memory of Maryana Zavadviker, mother in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC
Rabbi Lewis's Discretionary Fund	Beth Stearman & Mitchell Berk Margaret Shapiro	in memory of Arnold Segel, father in appreciation of Rabbi Adam Zeff & Rabbi Annie Lewis, for making Abe's Bar Mitzvah so meaningful for our family
Rabbi's Discretionary Fund	Josh Barash & Devorah Lissek Nan Daniels Naomi Druckman Elaine & Lee Dushoff Frances Friedmann Neiman Richard Menin Cecile Merion Jeffrey Needleman Gloria Salmansohn Alex & Stefanie Seldin Bev & Ira Somerson	in memory of David Shapiro, father in memory of Leon Druckman, husband in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond in memory of Joseph M. Goldberg, uncle in memory of Elinor Menin, mother in memory of Nechama Naomi Kapstein Rosenbach, sister in memory of Nathan Needleman, father in memory of Herman Salmansohn, father-in-law in memory of Lena Salmansohn, mother-in-law in honor of their son Max becoming Bar Mitzvah in memory of Esther Abrams, mother of Rochelle Fellman in honor of Paul & Hilda Minkoff, on their 55th wedding anniversary
Religious School Fund	Mary Weinstein Mindy Brown & Richard Stern	in memory of Pauline Federman, mother-in-law in memory of Carol Schwartz, wife of Eliot Schwartz and mother of Wendy Schwartz in honor of Alex & Stefanie Seldin, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Max
Social Action Fund	Gisha Berkowitz Joyce & Sheldon Eveloff Maxine & Maurice Feldman Betty Ann & David Fellner Carol & Marty Kaplan Judy Schwartz Bev & Ira Somerson	in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond in memory of Carol Schwartz, wife of Elliot Schwartz and mother of Wendy Schwartz in gratitude to Rabbi Annie Lewis, for joining the GJC community in honor of Josh Barash & Devorah Lissek, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Abe in honor of Robert Dudnick & Anna Herman, on the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter Emma refuah shleimah to Matti Hollo in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of Beverly Diamond
Special Education Fund	Sandra Gafni	in memory of Bernard Adler, father
Torah Restoration Fund	Maxine & Maurice Feldman Eve Pinkenson Yale Pinkenson	in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC in memory of Elliot Kapstein, father of Carol Tinkleman in memory of Abraham Blumenthal, grandfather in memory of Jane Blumenthal, mother in memory of Joseph Pinkenson, father

Contributions *Continued***Women's Club**

Ruth Rosenthal
Women's Club

Beth Stearman & Mitchell Berk
Frances D. Gold
Marge & Lew Hirsh
Carol & Marty Kaplan

Youth Activities Fund

Bev & Ira Somerson
Josh Barash & Devorah Lissek

Lynne and Art Ellis
Norman & Adina Newberg

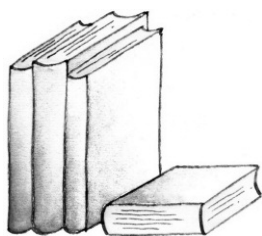
Curt & Leslie Pontz

Leslie Pontz
Judy Schwartz

Bunny Stein
Lucille & Aaron Web

in memory of Anna Rosenthal, mother-in-law
in honor of Sam Katz, for his great contribution to the
Women's & Men's Club Paid-Up Membership Brunch
in honor of Peninah Berdugo, on her special birthday
in memory of Samuel Munder, cousin
in honor of Mindelle Goldstein, on her special birthday
in memory of Barbara Ann McCracken, mother of
Carol Robinson
in honor of Jeanette Dudnick, on her granddaughter
Emma Dudnick's becoming Bat Mitzvah
in honor of Maxine & Maurice Feldman, on the Bar Mitzvah
of their grandson Adam Gregory Mermelstein
in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC
in honor of Mindelle Goldstein, on her special birthday
in appreciation of Judd Livingston & Hillary Kruger, for their
hospitality during Abe's Bar Mitzvah
in appreciation of Betsy & David Teutsch, for their hospitality
during Abe's Bar Mitzvah
in appreciation of Michael & Shelley Spear, for their generous
hospitality during Abe's Bar Mitzvah
in appreciation of Nini Engel & Neil Actor, for their warm
hospitality during Abe's Bar Mitzvah
in appreciation of Gavi Miller & Minna Ziskind, for their
hospitality during Abe's Bar Mitzvah
in honor of Aaron Kavesh, on becoming Bar Mitzvah
in honor of Aaron Kavesh, on becoming Bar Mitzvah
refuah shleimah to Matti Hollo
in honor of Dorshei Derekh's Presser Memorial
Shabbat program
in memory of Dr. Stanley C. Diamond, husband of
Beverly Diamond
in memory of Mildred Magil, a founding member of GJC
in memory of Esther Abrams, mother of Rochelle Fellman
in memory of Sawyer Pontz, grandson
in memory of Ezekiel Levinson, father
in honor of Devorah Lissek & Josh Barash, on the Bar Mitzvah
of their son Abe
in memory of Rita & Jacob Weinstein, parents
in honor of Andrew & Ellen Mermelstein, on the Bar Mitzvah
of their son Adam
in honor of Josh Barash & Devorah Lissek, on the Bar Mitzvah
of their son Abe

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Susan is a committed GJC member since 1999

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Questions?

Contact the Office.

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Please submit all articles via email to

program@germantownjewishcentre.org.

Deadline for the March Issue is February 1.



Save the Dates

Women's Clothing Giveaway
February 3

Tot Havdallah
February 9

Women's Club Purim Bash Fundraiser
February 16

Purim
February 23-24