

MEGILLAH

The MCJC shul is located at 15071 Caspar Road, Caspar, CA.
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RABBI'S NOTES



Back in March, when we first locked down on account of COVID-19, I had the idea that this was going to go on for some enormous amount of time, like maybe even six weeks! Pesach was in there someplace, and I was heartbroken to think that we might have to have our Seder online. I was whining about this and said, “For all we know, this could stretch on til the High Holy Days!” I didn’t imagine it would come to be, but here we are.

This will be my 36th year (yes, double CHAI!) leading High Holy Day services with our community. I can hardly believe it! For the past 35 years the services have been essentially similar, even with various changes we’ve woven in along the way: Erev Rosh Hashana, Rosh Hashana morning, with the shofar unless it’s on Shabbat, teachings from community members, the sin buffet, *Tashlikh*, *Kol Nidre*, Yom Kippur all day until sundown, the open ark at *Neilah*, *Havdalah*, your beautiful faces in the candlelight, apples and honey, and home gatherings to break the fast.

When I began to get serious about planning this year’s High Holy Day services, I had to acknowledge that the world has fundamentally changed since we broke the fast last year. At an early zoom gathering of rabbis to begin processing these transformations, one of my colleagues called COVID “a Temple-destroying moment.” By that I think he meant not only that COVID, like the forces that destroyed the ancient Temple, has brought with it great suffering and loss, but also that, because of the ancient cataclysm (which happened twice, but fundamentally and definitively in 69 CE), the whole way of being Jewish had to change.

We don’t know yet how long the changes brought about by COVID will be upon us, nor how lasting will be the social and economic upheaval wrought by this pandemic. But for now, the space that held our Jewish observances, our *mikdash m’at* (“little temple”), is not available for us to be in together. Nor can our community safely gather in numbers outside to sing and pray and embrace and nosh. We must be Jewish differently.

There is a great sadness in this. For me, not being able to sing together all these months has been a heartfelt loss. Our shared song is like fuel—it propels me through the week. The *Shema* at *Neilah* on Yom Kippur with all of you, that alone gets me through to, oh, about July of the following year. To think that we can’t sing *Avinu Malkeinu* together, oy.... But I must confess, I am feeling something else along with the sadness. I find it kind of exciting to deconstruct the High Holy Days as I have always known them, to identify some of the pieces that feel completely essential, or just delightful, and to recompose these pieces into something both old and new.

It has been heartening to me, somehow, to realize that the whole Jewish world faces this challenge at the same time. We’re all in it together. Even the richest, best-educated, most advanced Jewish communities in the world is doing this for the first time. I feel connected to the Jewish people in a different, more practical way than I usually do.

After I talked to my fellow rabbis, I sent around a survey to all of you; thank you to the many who responded! I had long, brainstorming conversations with a number of you. We had a community meeting and shared ideas. After it all shook and rattled, it settled into something like a plan. I reached out to several of you to ask you to take on pieces of the services. Amazingly, almost every person I asked for anything this year has said YES.

I often think these days about Rabbi Benay Lappe and her “crash theory.” Rabbi Lappe is the founder and *Rosh Yeshiva* of SVARA: A Traditionally Radical Yeshiva and a lead teacher of “queer Talmud.” I’ve written and talked about Rabbi Lappe before. She teaches that individual people and cultures always have a “master

story.” Maybe it’s the Chosen People or the greatest democracy in the world or the class clown, but we live it as long as it works. At some point, however, master stories inevitably crash. When they do, an individual or a group can do one of three things: give up the master story and move on to something new; try desperately to shore up the old story against what made it crash; or invent new forms from the shards of the old.

The Talmud and rabbinic texts grew out of the crash surrounding the destruction of the Temple and the priesthood. When the old way crashed, many left Judaism forever and assimilated into the dominant culture. A few tried (and still do) to preserve the priestly practice. And a few ragtag, marginal characters began to meet in little circles and build new practices. Lots of what gets invented in a time of crash doesn’t last, says Rabbi Lappe, but some of it endures. And it is often the marginal people in the old paradigm who, because they are less invested in the master story, have the flexibility and inventiveness to create new forms from the old.

I don’t think COVID will be a crash on par with the destruction of the Temple, though it is hard to know what the next years will be like, but it is putting a big dent in the smaller paradigm of our shul’s High Holy Day services and, for that matter, in our good old ways hugging, kissing, sharing meals and raising our voices in song.

With inspiration from all of you and hands-on help from many, we have a plan that looks in some ways like “regular” High Holy Day services and in other ways looks pretty peculiar. I hope, of course, that every moment of it will be completely transporting and wonderful, but it will probably be bumpier than that. It has already been thought-provoking to participate in “The World as We Knew It No Longer Exists,” the art installation for *Tisha b’Av* (huge gratitude to Sandra Wortzel). I look forward to quiet time in the shul during Elul, in the presence of Luna’s artwork, and to Laura’s Sunday morning meditations.

I remind myself that what is essential will endure, even if the vessels holding it look different. I anticipate more than I can say welcoming in a VERY New Year with all of you, celebrating our capacities to change and invent when life calls for it, relying on our good humor and generosity with each other as we venture into the unknown, and understanding our kinship with Jewish people and with people of faith and practice throughout the world who find new ways to live wisely and courageously in new times. *L’shana tova!*

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

It’s a full Shabbat service led by Rabbi Holub, with much singing, chanting and silence, Torah teaching and reading, blessings for healing and peace, and time for mourners to say Kaddish. You are welcome to join in on Zoom for any or all of the service from 10:30 AM until about 12:30 PM. The rabbi and members of the community give interpretations of the weekly Torah portion (see schedule below for September).

08/29/20	KI Teitzei	Margaret Holub
09/05/20	Ki Tavo	Fran Schwartz
09/12/20	Nitzavim–Vayeilech	Raven Deerwater
09/19/20	Rosh Hashana 5781	Margaret Holub
09/26/20	Ha’Azinu	Janet Sternburg

ZOOMING ALONG

We will continue to have MCJC gatherings on Zoom. In addition to Shabbat morning services at 10:30 AM, meetings and classes, and **Chai on The Coast** activities, the Wednesday morning Cup of Coffee and the Friday evening candle-lighting and Kiddush go on. Zoom invitations to these gatherings are sent by e-mail and posted on the MCJC web page. To get the invitations, let Margaret know at mholub@mcn.org or 937-5673.

Cup of Coffee—a time to connect and check in and talk about anything at all every Wednesday morning at 10:30 AM. There will be no cup on July 1st, but tune in every other Wednesday.

Candle-Lighting—a half-hour of schmooze with Margaret and Mickey followed by Shabbat candle-lighting and Kiddush. Schmooze begins at 6:30 PM, candles are lit at 7:00 PM. Gather with members of your community for a little conversation, a short teaching from the rabbi, and then *bentsh likht* with everyone.

HIGH HOLY DAYS 5781

This is a tentative calendar, but this schedule will help you to chart your path through the Days of Awe. As always, but maybe even more so than in years past, please feel free to participate as little or as much as you wish.

We are currently finalizing some scheduling and preparing Zoom invitations. There will be a full calendar with all the Zoom information very soon. You will receive it by email, and it will be updated by email as needed. If you are not an email user, please contact Margaret at 937-5673 and she will see to it that you get the updated information.

HIGH HOLY DAY MACHZORS are available for pick up at the shul, in the shed nearest the kitchen (padlock combo 1818). If you are unable to get to the shul and would like a machzor, please contact Kenny and Sandra at kwortzel@aol.com or artsplay@mac.com.

YIZKOR LIST—If you have names to add to our community list, please send them to Donna Montag at montag@mcn.org.

ELUL began August 21st. You are invited to make an appointment to spend time alone in the shul with the Torah in prayer and contemplation. There will be an art installation by Andrea Luna to deepen your connection. To reserve time, please go to https://www.meetingbird.com//AdinaM/shul_visit. Select the time you'd like to visit and you will get a confirmation and information on entering the shul. You can also change or cancel your appointment at the same address. If you have a question about making an appointment, or you can't access the website, please contact Adina Merenlender for help at adina.merenlender@gmail.com

DAILY SHOFAR AND PSALM 27—Every day of Elul except Shabbat 9:30-9:40 AM on Zoom.

ELUL MEDITATION with Laura Goldman—Every Sunday (August 23rd and 30th, September 6th and 13th) 10:00-10:30 AM on Zoom.

SELICHOT SERVICE—SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th, 8:00 PM on Zoom.

MIKVEH—This year we will not gather together for our women's *mikveh*, which customarily happens on the morning of erev Rosh Hashana (this year September 18th). We encourage people of any gender to take intentional time in water, even if it is washing your hands or drinking a cup of tea. You will receive *mikveh* prayers and *kavvanot* by email.

ROSH HASHANA EVENING SERVICE—FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 18th, 7:30 PM on Zoom

ROSH HASHANA MORNING AND DAY—SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th on Zoom
10:30-11:30 AM: a sharing of beautiful songs and chants to lift our souls.

11:30-12:30 AM: Torah study—Sarah and Hagar, Insider/Outsider, Power and Privilege

12:30 PM: Virtual apples and honey; a chance to wish each other a good Yom Tov.

3:30-5:00-ish PM: Community teachings and a chat about the sin buffet cards.

SECOND DAY ROSH HASHANA SHOFAR SERVICE—SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20th, 3:30-4:00 PM on Zoom
Traditionally, the shofar is not blown on Shabbat and crumbs are not brought to the water for *Tashlikh*, so we will hold a second-day Rosh Hashana shofar service. We encourage you to make your way to a river or pond or beach that same day, or whenever it works for you, and cast your crumbs of bad old behavior into the water.



over

THE TEN DAYS OF TESHUVAH

We will have several different offerings during the ten days for you, to heighten your inwardness during this sacred time. Details and schedule TBA in the near future, but for now see below:

- ♦ Mina Cohen will offer a self-guided walk in the redwoods at her home by appointment: *Bein Adam La'Chavero and Bein Adam La'Makom* (between people and between us and God) invites us to contemplate how we relate to each other and how we relate to God. This will require a reservation and the walk should take about 30 minutes.
- ♦ Zo Abell will offer an experience connecting these Days of Turning with the Fall Equinox and other elements of nature. Date TBA, probably on Zoom.
- ♦ Bob Evans will guide people in a visit to the Jewish cemetery to honor the dead and remember our loved ones who have passed on (whether or not they are buried in the Mendocino Jewish Cemetery). Date and format are TBA.
- ♦ Reverend Tansy Chapman (an Episcopal priest and dear friend of MCJC) will offer a time of contemplative prayer on Thursday, September 24th, 10:30-11:30 AM on Zoom.

EREV YOM KIPPUR - KOL NIDRE—Sunday, September 27th, 7:30 PM on Zoom.

YOM KIPPUR DAY—Monday, September 28th on Zoom.

10:30-11:30 AM: extended meditation and chant: *Avinu Malkeinu / Eleh Ezkerah*

11:30 AM-noon: study of Yom Kippur *haftara*.

4:30-5:30 PM: *Yizkor*—remembering those who have gone before us.

5:30 PM til sundown: entering the Holy, *Mincha* and *Neilah*.
We encourage you to let your space get dark as the sun sets.

CONTRIBUTIONS—We are suggesting a contribution of \$150 for each adult who is not a contributing member of MCJC. As always, our services are open to anyone and we ask you to contribute what you can. Please mail a check to MCJC, P.O. Box 291, Little River, CA 95456, or make a donation through PayPal on our website (<http://www.mcjc.org>). If you have any financial questions, please contact Donna Montag, the MCJC Treasurer, at montag@mcn.org. Thank you.

ELDERS' CONVERSATION

The Elders' Conversation usually meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, 3:00 PM to about 4:30 on Zoom. We will **not** be meeting on August 25th and will substitute a meeting on September 1st. Other September dates will be the usual: the 8th and 22nd. We always have a topic for conversation selected at the meeting before. People of all ages are most welcome.

MCJC JUSTICE GROUP



The Justices meet on the second Thursday of each month, 5:30-7:30 PM. All meetings are online via ZOOM. The next meeting is Thursday, September 10th. If you would like to be on the Justice Group mailing list, please contact Rabbi Holub at mholub@mcn.org or 937-5673. She will send out an email Zoom invitation for the meetings. *Everyone* is welcome to attend.

The campaign to raise funds for **Safe Passage** has brought a positive response. Thank you to the following: Helen Jacobs, Judy Stavely, Linda Jupiter, Claire Ellis & Chuck Greenberg, Marnie Press,

Sandy Berrigan, Tansy Chapman, Lillian Cartwright, Suzanne & Stephen Whitaker, Cynthia Hoffman, Jeannette Rasker & Robert Cutler, Merry Winslow, Jean & Otto Graham, Mary Alice Bastian, Harriet Bye & Larry Sawyer, Mary Ittner & Robert Rutemoeller, Karen & Michael Moreland, Susan Larkin & James Ehlers, Susan Tubbesing & Sarah Nathe; Anonymous.

Safe Passage has been inundated with families that need help buying food and paying rent. To make a contribution, please send a check to MCJC, PO Box 291, Little River CA 95456 and put "Safe Passage" in the memo. Or go to the website: <http://safepassagefortbragg.org/>

Voting Rights

Many members of the group will be writing postcards for the non-partisan organization Reclaim Our Vote. Launched in 2018 by the Center for Common Ground of Virginia, ROV is a new black-led organization whose mission is to restore voting rights to the more than 16 million voters of color purged from voting rolls since 2014 and to the millions more who have been kept from voting due to voter ID laws and other technicalities that disproportionately disenfranchise voters of color.



<http://centerforcommonground.org/main/index.php/campaigns/reclaim-our-vote>

From the Climate Crew

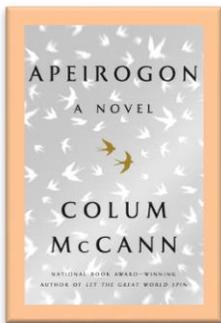
Hazardous Waste: Labor Day weekend, Friday and Saturday, September 4th and the 5th, at Pudding Creek facility, 9 am to 1 pm, closed for lunch from 11:30-12 noon, more information at mendorecycle.org

Hubs & Routes, a community resource website of supply hubs and rescue alternative routes throughout the Mendocino Coast Health Care District developed by Jennifer Kreger, provides a set of tools that coastal residents can use in emergency preparedness and climate repair efforts. Jennifer will soon host a Zoom meeting to train residents and 911 leaders to use the site: <https://hubsandrouten.net>

Postal Service

Everyone is urged to contact Congressman Jared Huffman with concerns about the administration's dismantling of the US Post Office: <https://huffman.house.gov/contact>

BOOK GROUP



We will discuss *Apeirogon*, a novel by Colum McCann, on Monday, September 21st at 2:00 PM. Named for a shape with a countably infinite number of sides, Apeirogon is about friendship, love, loss, and belonging. Bassam Aramin is Palestinian; Rami Elhanan is Israeli. They inhabit a world of conflict that colors every aspect of their daily lives, from the roads they are allowed to drive on, to the schools their daughters each attend, to the checkpoints, both physical and emotional, they must negotiate. Their worlds shift irreparably after ten-year-old Abir is killed by a rubber bullet and 13-year-old Smadar becomes the victim of suicide bombers.

When Bassam and Rami learn of each other's stories, they recognize the loss that connects them and attempt to use their grief as a weapon for peace. McCann crafts his novel out of fictional and nonfictional material, stitching together time, art, history, nature, and politics in a tale both heartbreaking and hopeful.

You can order a copy of the book from Gallery Bookshop and request a 10% discount as a book club member. Please contact Fran at franbschwartz@gmail.com for a Zoom invitation.

MCJC BOARD MEETING

The MCJC board meets monthly at 5:30 PM, these days on ZOOM. The September meeting will be on Monday, the 14th. To attend part of the meeting, please contact board member Susan Tubbesing at 962-0565 or susan.tubbesing@gmail.com, and efforts will be made to patch you in.

NEWSLETTER THANKS

We are grateful to Kath Disney Nilson for preparing the July-August *Megillah* for mailing. Volunteer for a future folding, stamping, and mailing project, and you can do it at home, or another spot of your choosing, in about two hours. If you want to do this *mitzvah*, please contact Sarah at 962-0565 or sarah.nathe@gmail.com.

ONLINE MEGILLAH

The *Megillah* is available in a format suitable for online viewing. The format will adapt itself to any screen size, including smartphones. It is posted on the MCJC website on the newsletter page: <https://www.mcjc.org/newsletter>

MEGILLAH SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Mendocino *Megillah* is published in three formats: hardcopy, emailed PDF, and online web page. You can subscribe to the hardcopy version and have it mailed to you, you can subscribe to the email PDF/ online version, or you can receive both. The *Megillah* is posted on the MCJC website www.mcjc.org/newsletter. Any information on changes in mailing address, changes in email address, and changes in email notifications should be sent to Sarah Nathe at sarah.nathe@gmail.com. If you choose not to be a contributing member of MCJC, we request a \$25 annual fee for the *Megillah* hardcopy or email.

GREAT THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING DONORS



Rosalie & Art Holub; Ruth Rosenblum & SA Ephraim; Michelle Lucafo; Cecile Cutler; Laura Goldman & Dennak Murphy; Lisa Frederickson; Madeline Lansky; Don Hall; Tracy Salkowitz & Rick Edwards; Kath Disney Nilson; David Minkus; Ronnie James; Lew Mermelstein; Eric Labowitz & Kathy Bailey; Eva Strauss-Rosen; Clare Bercot Zwerling; Marilyn Rose & James Blackstock; Dawn Hofberg & Bob Schlosser.

From the family of Jerry Davis in memorium by Shelley Martin.

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Everyone who lives on the Mendocino Coast, and desires to be one, is a member of MCJC. The MCJC Board of Directors has a goal of having every household become CONTRIBUTING members in 2020. We have memberships at Regular, Limited Income, and Family levels, as well as any level possible for you. Please mail your donations to MCJC, Box 291, Little River, CA 95456, or use PayPal on the MCJC website. When you contribute in memory or honor of someone, an acknowledgment card will be sent to the individual or family. Please include their name and mailing address. Contact Donna Montag at montag@mcn.org

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Mendocino Megillah* is published monthly. The deadline for article submission is the 15th of the month before publication. The editor will include all appropriate material, space permitting, with the exception of copyrighted material lacking the permission of the author. Divergent opinions are welcome. Material printed in the *Megillah* does not necessarily represent the policy or opinions of the MCJC Board of Directors.



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Frankie's Pizza and Ice Cream Parlor: Homemade pizzas, Cowlick's ice cream, and other yummy things to nosh on. Beer and wine available. Open daily from 11:00 am - 9:00 pm at 44951 Ukiah Street, Mendocino, 937-2436. www.frankiesmendocino.com

Out of this World: Telescopes, binoculars, & science toys. 45100 Main Street, Box 1010, Mendocino. 937-3335. www.OutofThisWorldShop.com. Serving all your interplanetary needs since 1988.

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Rainsong Shoes: Shoes & accessories for men & women. Two locations: Mendocino and Healdsburg. 937-4165 (clothing), 937-1710 (shoes), 433-8058 (Healdsburg). www.rainsongshoes.com

Raven Deerwater, EA, PhD: Tax practitioner. Specializing in families, home-based & small businesses, & non-profit organizations. 45121 Ukiah Street, Box 1786, Mendocino. 937-1099. Email: raven@taxpractitioner.com Website: www.taxpractitioner.com

Rhoda Teplow Designs: Original jewelry created with beads from around the world, specializing in brass from Ghana, silver from Israel, and lapis, turquoise and coral from Tibet/Nepal. Box 453, Mendocino CA 95460. 964-2787. Email: rteplow@mcn.org

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MCJC Board & Useful Numbers (* = board member)

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