

October, 2019 (5780)

Mendocino Coast Jewish Community

MEGILLAH

The MCJC shul is located at 15071 Caspar Road, Caspar, CA.
Send mail to P.O. Box 291, Little River, CA 95456. website: <http://www.mcjc.org>

Call the MCJC at (707) 964-6146
email: sarah.nathe@gmail.com

RABBI'S NOTES



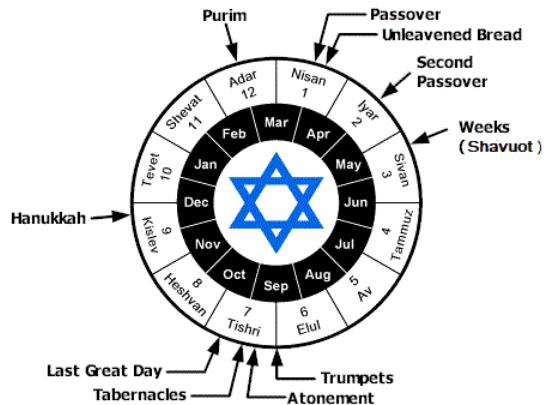
I was recently talking with a friend about the slightly annoying conundrum of mandatory joy during Sukkot--*z'man simchateinu*, the season of our joy. You are supposed to rejoice in your sukkah, surrounded by the bounty of the earth and your friends and community and all the *shefa* (divine abundance) that has flowed from the High Holy Days into this week-long festival. As a person who builds a sukkah every year and loves it, I know that, often as not, it's wet and cold in there, and I'm often too busy to have guests, and if I do, I am running back and forth between the stove and the computer, and friends change their plans, and I'm fretting about not having milk for coffee... you know the drill. Mandatory joy is tricky, even at the mundane level.

That doesn't even take into account the ups and downs of our psyches and the larger sorrows and anxieties of life in these days on this planet. There is something a little presumptuous, if you will, about our tradition commanding us to be joyful on schedule. We are also supposed to mourn on schedule too, at Tisha B'av and Yom Hashoah, and we "semi-mourn" (whatever that is!) through the *omer*, between Passover and Shavuot and during the "Seventeen Days" running up to Tisha B'av. And we get hopeful during Hanukkah and vengeful on Purim and inspired during Passover. Every week, we rest on Shabbat and act like everything is fine.

It's like we're in a play, acting out joy and sorrow, and other emotions, right on cue. The performance goes throughout the year, and the curtain never falls. I've written and taught before more specifically about the idea of acting out Jewish ritual. The metaphor of ritual performance intrigues me, but right now, as I prepare for another cycle of this great play, I am appreciating anew the role that the yearly enacting of all these emotional states plays in my life. To borrow a phrase that comes from somewhere in the Christian world, it's a kind of "spiritual formation." And community formation too. We make this annual circuit through all these moments--each carefully shaped with story and poetry and melody and food and visuals--that call for a specific kind of ritual response as we encounter them. As we walk this circuit year after year, we begin to understand the different stops more deeply. The particulars of that moment illuminate the particulars of our lives in new ways each year. We are transformed.

There is something to trusting the playwright (or Playwright) and performing the lines in the order they're written: Rosh Hashana, the Ten Days, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah, Hanukkah, Tu B'Shevat, Purim, Pesach, the Omer, Shavuot, Tisha B'av, Elul, Shabbat x fifty-two. It's a kind of scaffolding for the next year of our lives. Especially in these days when we have to make so much up, because so much feels unprecedented, it is a gift to have a structure to lean on, especially one which is often beautiful and sometimes fun and frequently challenging, and often sweet and uplifting.

I didn't grow up with a lot of Jewish observance as a child, and really it's been up here with all of you that I have begun to walk that yearly cycle in a committed way. Now that I've been 'round the calendar many times, I am becoming more aware of subtle ways the motifs and ideas of the different holidays call across the year to each other. For a tiny example, we're in the latter half of Elul as I write this. It's that powerful time of looking within, cleaning out the psychic detritus of another year lived, with its inevitable changes and scrapes and troubles. I'm busy these days looking into my checkered soul, thinking about my life and how it has affected and been affected by the lives of other people around me. This coming Shabbat, our Torah portion begins with *arami oved avi*—"a wandering Aramean was my father..."--which is



one of the key texts in the Passover *haggadah*. Why is there a tiny bit of Passover in the run-up to Rosh Hashana? This time of year the days are getting shorter, the light is getting yellower, the air is getting colder. It is an inward, liminal time. I yearn for inner transformation. In the spring, when I am doing Pesach cleaning, the days are getting longer and the air warmer. I am looking outward, yearning for liberation. A week or two before Passover I am usually busy cleaning the crumbs of *hametz* from my kitchen and couch and car. One cleans for Pesach on the physical plane and for the High Holy Days on the interpersonal and inward plane. I note this mirroring of Rosh Hashana and Pesach: somehow they sing to each other.

I don't usually make a pitch, but this time I'm gently suggesting that maybe you would find some nourishment and support in the cycle of the holidays, even if you like some more than others, even if some of them seem kind of arbitrary and demanding. You might think of the whole holiday cycle as one holiday, one spiritual practice, the practice of cycling through the stories and practices and sense experiences and spiritual language of different times of the year and allowing them each to soak into you and draw you into different states of consciousness.

This time of year, as I am preparing to begin the one great holiday again, I am so deeply grateful to all of you for being my community of practice and formation, of joy and sadness and everything else—not even to mention my community of love and friendship. I am grateful that we share this scaffolding to bring us together, to draw us inward and outward and upward, and to help us be alive and strong for another year of life.

SPEAKING OF SUKKOT...



Sukkot starts at sundown and full moon-rise on Sunday, October 13th, and it concludes at sundown on Sunday, October 20th. It would be wonderful if you would like to build a sukkah at your house and invite the community to come share in it in some way. This could be a potluck meal or a poetry gathering or a sewing circle or a time to hang out and eat apples or an invitation for people to give you a call and drop by at your mutual convenience. If you would like to host folks in your sukkah, please let Margaret know at mholub@mcn.org or 937-5673, and she will share your invitation with the Jewish community.

There will be a sukkah at the shul in which you are welcome to hang out anytime during the holiday. Consider dropping by with your lunch or a book or a friend to enjoy a little Sukkot joy. Susan Tubbesing is organizing a shul sukkah-building crew for 10:00 am on Sunday, October 13th and welcomes any and all helpers.

On Friday night, October 18th, Mickey and Margaret invite you to their sukkah in Albion for a Shabbat potluck dinner and the inevitable bonfire and singing. RSVP to Margaret at the above contact info or just come by.

On Saturday, October 19th there will be kiddush and Torah study in the shul sukkah after Shabbat morning services. Services will end a little earlier than usual because there will be Torah study instead of a drash, so kiddush will be at about noon or a little after. Potluck lunch noshes will be most welcome.

SIMCHAT TORAH

The final festivity of the season will be on Monday night, October 21st, from 5:30 to about 8:30 PM at the shul. We'll do our annual EAT, BEAT, ROCK and ROLL format:

- 5:30 — EAT a light *yom tov* supper (You don't need to bring a thing, just come.)
- 6:00 — BEAT the willows and pray for rain for the coming year
- 6:30 — ROCK out to the music of the Klezmishpoche as we hold our beloved Torah scrolls in our arms and dance them around the shul
- 7:30 — Read the last words from the Torah and then ROLL them back to the beginning, and read the creation of the world!



YOM KIPPUR 5780

The MCJC Board wishes you and yours a happy and healthy new year. We hope you will join us at the shul for Yom Kippur.

Yom Kippur:

Kol Nidre—Tuesday, October 8th, 7:30-9:30 PM.

Morning service—Wednesday, October 9th, 10:30 AM-2:30 PM

Yizkor (memorial service)--4:30-5:30 PM

Mincha and Ne'ilah--5:30 PM to sundown.

(potluck breaking-the-fast meals at community members' homes)**



YIZKOR LIST

The yizkor list is a perpetual list of family members and others close to members of our community who have died. Names read last year will be read again. If you have a name that has not already been added to the permanent list, please email Donna at montag@mcn.org or call 877-3243, well in advance of the service. There will be time after the reading of the list to say the names of additional people you want to remember.

CHILDREN

Children are welcome. Even if they do not stay for the rest of the service, children enjoy some parts more. On Yom Kippur, there is the first singing of Kol Nidre. Also consider the closing havdalah and shofar blowing "in the dark" to end the holidays.

GENERAL INFORMATION

We anticipate that the shul will be crowded. We encourage you to come early.

We are suggesting a contribution of \$150.00 for each adult who is not a contributing member of MCJC. This contribution will help cover costs of providing High Holy Day services. We request that this be paid in advance and sent to P.O. Box 291, Little River, CA, 95456. Alternately, you can mail your contribution later to the above address. It is traditional not to handle or discuss money on the holidays themselves. As always, no one will be turned away for lack of funds, so contribute what you can.

If you have any questions, please contact Donna Montag, our treasurer, at montag@mcn.org.

**** Breaking the Fast:**

It is customary to break the Yom Kippur fast with a festive meal. We encourage you to invite friends and family to break the fast with you. If you would be willing to have additional guests, please contact Donna at montag@mcn.org. Locations of break fasts will be announced at Yom Kippur services. Everyone is welcome; please bring a veggie dish to share.

MAKE TZEDAKAH A PRIORITY

As we reflect on the past year and look forward to a year of health and happiness, consider making a tzedakah contribution to the Adele Saxe Tzedakah Fund and the Ella Russell Bikkur Cholim Fund, both of which are very low on funds at this time of the year. The funds are available to members of the community to help them work through short-term emergencies. Funds are made available on a confidential basis at the Rabbi's discretion.

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

Shabbat morning services are held every Saturday morning of the year from 10:30 AM until about 12:30 PM. Members of the community often give the *davar Torah* ("word of Torah"), an interpretation (*drash*) of the weekly Torah portion (see schedule below). The services are led each week by Rabbi Holub, except when she is out of town. Below is the schedule for October:

10/05/19	Vayeilech	Margaret Holub
10/12/19	Ha'Azinu	Raven Deerwater
10/19/19	Sukkot	Margaret Holub
10/26/19	Bereshit	Lew Mermelstein

KABBALAT SHABBAT



In October, we'll celebrate Sukkot in Margaret and Mickey's sukkah on the 18th. To RSVP and get directions, please contact mholub@mcn.org or call 937-5673.

In November, we'll be at the home of Laura Goldman and Dennak Murphy in Mendocino. The joyful gatherings usually take place on the fourth Friday of the month, begin at 6:00 PM, and include a short service with a vegetarian potluck following.

Mina is taking sign-ups for 2020. If you would like to host a gathering, please contact her at 937-1319 or mcohen@mcn.org.

AN IDIOSYNCRATIC INTRODUCTION TO JUDAISM

Margaret will offer a six-session class introducing some of the basic ideas, practices, a bit of history, a bit of vocabulary, a bit of spiritual philosophy, and a bit of the wild and crazy of Judaism, on the first and third Thursdays of November, December, and January, from 5:30-7:30 PM at the shul. We will dip into the Big Books (Torah, Talmud, midrash, kabbalah) prayer and ritual, holidays, some of the great juicy spiritual teachings and personalities and some revolutionary ideas that have shaken the Jewish tree over the millennia. This class welcomes people who are curious about Judaism, who want to refresh their memory about basics, people thinking of stepping more deeply into Jewish life in some way and people who just like to come together and look at interesting Jewish things with their friends and community. If you are interested in being part of this class or have questions, please contact Margaret at mholub@mcn.org or 937-5673.

LEARN TO BE A MENSCH FROM THE INSIDE OUT

A new Mussar group will begin in January 2020! Mussar is the time-honored practice of refining our individual character traits. This practice of focusing our hearts and minds on a well-defined set of Jewish spiritual ethics propels us to strengthen and balance key inner traits such as patience, trust, and lovingkindness. This class is for individuals who are ready to deepen their listening skills and open to the path that a Mussar practice guides us on. We will be working in partner study, both in and outside of class. Group conversation and sharing will be the mainstay of our bi-monthly classes. The methods Mussar provides include guided and contemplative meditations, journaling exercises, and chants. The class will be thought-provoking!



We are looking to begin on January 21st, on Tuesday evenings from 5:30-7:00 PM at the shul, twice a month. It is an eight-week class that will end April 28th. We expect students to commit to the whole class.

Participants will need to obtain a copy of ***Everyday Holiness*** by Alan Morinis. There will be a course fee of \$36 for MCJC contributing members and \$54 for non-members. No one will be excluded for lack of funds.

To sign up, or with questions, please contact Sandra Wortzel at artsplay@mac.com or 520-591-7176. Sandra is a relatively new member of our community who is a Rabbinic Pastor, Spiritual Director, and Expressive Arts Therapist. She has practiced Mussar for over 12 years and is excited to offer this transformational practice to an ever-expanding group of seekers.

ELDERS' CONVERSATION

The Elders continue to reflect and converse, usually every second and fourth Tuesday of the month. However, because of the holiday schedule during October, the Elders will meet on October 15th, which is the third Tuesday of the month, and then the following week on October 22nd. Because it is getting dark earlier, we will meet on our winter schedule: 2:30-4:30 PM at the shul. Topics to be announced.

JUSTICE GROUP

Global Climate Crisis

Members of MCJC, the Justice Group, friends and supporters, in Fort Bragg and Mendocino, joined with over four million people around the world to Strike for Global Climate Action on Friday, September 20th. There were over 2,500 events scheduled in over 163 countries on all seven continents.

Pictured on the right is the Mendocino contingent holding a banner made by Justice Group member Joanna Wigginton especially for the event.



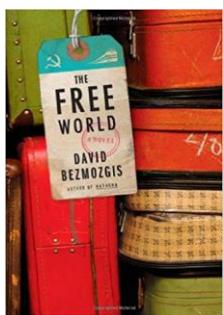
Immigration

At a recent meeting, Judy Stavely spoke about shelters for refugees and asylum seekers on both sides of the southern US border and about her experiences at two of these. Judy put a personal face on the crisis at the border with a first-hand account of her experiences and observations.

On the Mexico side, she helped out for a week at a shelter in Agua Prieta, playing with young children, teaching English to adults, listening to the stories of asylum seekers and refugees, running errands, working with other volunteers, and observing the slow movement of people crossing the border. On the US side, Judy spent a week at a shelter housed in a Benedictine Monastery in Tucson, Arizona. She showed families entering the shelter where to find clean clothes, places to sleep, food, medical services, and the all-important room where volunteers help families get in touch with their American sponsors.

Judy said the most helpful volunteers at this time are those with medical or legal experience. In her opinion, the best way to aid the immigrants is to donate money to involved organizations; she provided a list of them to consider. She ended the presentation with a reading of "Home" by Warsan Shire, a poem that encapsulates the plight of refugees and asylum seekers: "no one leaves home unless home is the mouth of a shark."

BOOK GROUP



On Monday, October 28th at 2:00 PM, the Book Group will discuss David Bezmozgis' ***The Free World***. In the summer of 1978, Brezhnev sits like a stone in the Kremlin, Israel and Egypt are inching towards peace, and in the bustling, polyglot streets of Rome we find Soviet Jews who have escaped to freedom through a crack in the Iron Curtain. Among the thousands who have landed in Italy to secure visas for new lives in the West are the members of the Krasnansky family, three generations of Russian Jews. Together, they spend six months in Rome, their way station and purgatory. They immerse themselves in the carnival of emigration, in an Italy full of love affairs and ruthless hustles, with dislocation and nostalgia, with the promise and peril of a new life. Please call Fran Schwartz at 937-1352 for information on location. Gallery Bookstore offers 10% off purchases to MCJC book club members.

MCJC BOARD MEETING

The MCJC board meets monthly at 5:30 PM at the shul. The October meeting will be on the 17th. If you would like to attend the meeting, please leave a message on the phone at the shul: 964-6146.

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>

NEWSLETTER THANKS

The editor would like to thank Susan Tubbesing for cheerfully pitching in to prepare the September **Megillah** for mailing. She's an interesting conversationalist and a very good organizer. If you volunteer for a future folding, stamping, and mailing project, you can do it at home, or another spot of your choosing, in about two hours. Please contact Sarah at 962-0565 or sarah.nathe@gmail.com.

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



Linda Jupiter; Tanya McCurry; Andrea Luna; Tracy Salkowitz & Rick Edwards; Elaine & David Tavelli; Laura Goldman & Dennak Murphy; Kenny & Sandra Wortzel; Dr Jeff Berenson & Mina Cohen; Marinela Miclea; Shira Lee; Cecile Cutler; Stacy Pollina-Millen & Jay Millen.

In memory of Jean Garrett from Jonathan & Annette Lehan; to the Building Fund from Bonnie Saland; to the Adele Saxe Tzedekah Fund from Susan Tubbesing & Sarah Nathe; to the Ella Russell Bikkur Cholim Fund from Susan Tubbesing & Sarah Nathe;

CONTRIBUTING MEMBERSHIP IN MCJC

Everyone who lives on the Mendocino Coast, and desires to be a member of MCJC, is one. The MCJC Board has a goal of having every household become CONTRIBUTING members in 2019. 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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Karen Bowers Studio: Painting workshops and studio gallery. Website: karenbowersstudio.com
Email: hightp@mcn.org Tel: 707 937-3163.

Frankie's Pizza and Ice Cream Parlor: Homemade pizzas, Cowlick's ice cream, and other yummy things to nosh on. Beer and wine available. Live music weekly; all ages welcome. 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.

Phoebe Graubard: Attorney at Law. Wills, trusts, probate, conservatorships. 594 S. Franklin, Fort Bragg, 95437. 964-3525. www.phoebelaw.com Member National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys. Wheelchair accessible.

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Raven Deerwater, EA, PhD: Tax practitioner. Specializing in families, home-based & small businesses, & non-profit organizations. 45121 Ukiah Street, Box 1786, Mendocino. Tel: 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. POB 453, Mendocino CA 95460. Tel: 964-2787. Email: rteplow@mcn.org

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The Witch-n-Wardrobe: Shamelessly second-hand apparel for conscious clothing enthusiasts. \$5 off your first purchase when you sign up at www.poshmark.com/closet/witchn_wardrobe using code WITCHN_WARDROBE

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MCJC Board & Useful Numbers (* = board member)

Rituals and Holidays (including Hevra Kadisha/cemetery)	Joan Katzeff*	964-9161	ikatzeff@mcn.org
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Culture & Education (films/ speakers/ classes/ Women's Retreat)	Harriet Bye*	937-3622	bysawyer@mcn.org
Treasurer (finance and donations)	Donna Montag*	877-3243	montag@mcn.org
Kabbalat Shabbat coordinator	Mina Cohen	937-1319	mcohen@mcn.org
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Rabbi	Margaret Holub	937-5673	mholub@mcn.org