

TZEDEK V'SHALOM

A Reconstructionist Jewish Congregation

Mercy and truth will meet, justice and peace will embrace.
– Psalm 85:11



November 2010

Heshvan/Kislev 5771

Volume 15, Issue 3

TOWARD A JEWISH THEOLOGY OF CREATIVITY

EXCERPTED FROM AN ARTICLE BY RABBI LIZ BOLTON

Julia Cameron's book *The Artist's Way* is one element in a series of highly successful publications and events that offer a serious program of exercises and events designed to release in participants their full creative potential....

The original edition sports an intriguing subtitle: *A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*. This particular combination of nouns and adjectives evokes a connection to the other expressions of search for meaning prevalent in North American culture. In fact, the goals of the program are no less lofty than those of many popular religious or spiritually oriented enterprises, targeting the same seekers...

Creative Genetics

Through my own explorations of theology, Jewish philosophy, and the belief systems of other traditions and disciplines, I have come to the following understanding: each of us, each human being, is born with a spirituality DNA. Just as our traditional DNA is given

to us, waiting to be actualized only by the unfolding of age and time, so it is with our spirituality DNA. As a Jew and as a rabbi, I understand and hope that Judaism is the means through which Jews — by birth, choice, or chance — get to actualize their spirituality DNAs.

Encoded in that DNA, in one's genético-spiritual make-up, is the creativity chromosome. So much of how one is in the world — one's *shelemut*, or wholeness of self — is tied to the unfolding of this feature of our makeup. Creativity, and its principal tool, imagination, enables us to transcend the earthbound-ness of our bodies, or the rest of our DNA.

The various modes of creativity - movement, song, telling tales with prose, poetry or drama, explorations of sound, image and shape - are basic endeavors that people have never needed to learn in order to utilize. Anyone who has children, has taught children, has been around children, knows that the youngest are the most

(Continued on page 4)

Rabbi Anna and Josh moved at the end of October, and so the article above is offered as our TvS News "teaching" of the month. It speaks to two values upon which our school is based: *Hidur Mitzvah* (creativity) and *Kedushah* (spirituality). Rabbi Anna's column returns next month.



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November Services and Celebrations



November 5

Friday Night with TVs: A Special Musical, Family-Friendly Shabbat

5:30 p.m. Community set-up for potluck
6:00 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat: Welcome in Shabbat with this family-friendly song-filled half hour.
6:30 p.m. Potluck dinner
7:15 p.m. Clean-up shared as a community.
7:30 p.m. Ma'ariv program
Location: Newtown Friends Meeting House (NFMH)
219 Court St. (off State St.), Newtown, PA



November 13

10 a.m. Torah Study

Location: at the home of Talia Delone
4300 Church Street, Doylestown, PA 18902
215-862-8059 or sdelone@comcast.net
Directions:

1. North on Route 413, turn left on Route 202.
2. Continue about a mile or less, going slowly, and watch on your right for a street called Burnt House

Hill Road — the second street after you turn from Route 413.

3. RIGHT onto Burnt House Hill. You will go up a hill and as you go down the hill (all of this is under a half to a mile) you will see a yellow traffic sign indicating you are approaching an intersection. Go slowly for again there is neither stop sign nor traffic signal, but the intersection is clearly marked. It will say Church Road. (It is a narrow street).
4. LEFT on Church Road and continue about a quarter to half mile to the mailbox marked 4300. It will be on your right. Turn into the driveway and park by the barn.

Once you get on Church Rd, cell phone use becomes dicey. If you get lost, continue till you can get cell phone service and call Talia.

November 20

Shabbat Meditation and Service

9:30 a.m. Meditation
10 a.m. Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Anna
Location: NFMH



צדק ושלום



Tzedek v'Shalom
P.O. Box 863
Newtown, PA 18940
(215) 860-0119
<http://tzedekvshalom.org>

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Spiritual Life (Committee Co-Chair)
Bobbie Posmontier 215-579-2644

Tikkun Olam (Committee Chair)
OPEN

Past Co-Presidents:
Ralph Posmontier 215-579-2644
Rob Weintraub 215-968-7616

Fund Raising (Liaison): OPEN
Intergenerational Activities/Events/
Adult Ed (Liaison) - OPEN

Please feel free to contact any member of our Board for any additional information.

☆ ☆ ☆

Non-Board Committee Chairs and Coordinators:

Acts of Caring -
Debbie Chong 215-504-9268
Jeannie Ryersbach 215-943-4565
Spiritual Life
Diane Gold 215-295-2028
Shammus Coordinator
Ralph Posmontier 215-579-2644
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Teen Advisor - OPEN 215-801-2005
Newsletter Editor: Naomi Mindlin 215-757-8921

To submit news to the newsletter:
email: nsmindlin@photoreview.org
News Deadline: 22nd of the month. Any submissions after that date will be included in the next newsletter.

Board News

Unfortunately, Jennifer Paget needed to resign her board position as Secretary due to work pressures. Let's have a vote of thanks to Jennifer for her hard work on the Board!

The new Board secretary is...(drumroll)...Cindy Weiss Fisher!!!!!! We are so grateful that she stepped in so graciously. Thank you Cindy.

The next TvS Board meeting will be November 10, 2010, at Ruth Jampol's house, 456 Lafayette Street, Newtown, PA 18940. Please contact any board members for information or with your ideas. Contact information is always on page 2 of the newsletter.



Spiritual Life News

The next Spiritual Life Committee meeting will be Sunday, November 7 at 7:00 p.m. We will meet at my house at 1 Eton Rd, Yardley Pa. 19067.

See you then.

– Diane Gold
Spiritual Life Chair
agoldn1@aol.com or 215-295-2028

Hebrew with Morah Devorah (aka Debbie Chong)

Adult classes on Thursday evenings

New! Beginners' prayer book Hebrew:

If you want to learn to read and write Hebrew in a serious yet non-stressful setting, this is the class for you. We'll start with *aleph*, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet; move to *bet*, the first letter of the first word in the first book of the Torah; then to *shin*, the first letter of the word *sh'ma*; and end with *taf*, the last letter of the aleph-bet. That is the plan for class #1 on October 14 at 4:30 p.m..

(Continuing) Reviewing prayer book

Hebrew: If your Hebrew reading skills are a little rusty, come to the 5:30 class.

(Continuing) Studying the siddur: Last year, this veteran group decided to read the Shabbat siddur, start to finish. We're reading every word on every page. Drop in or come every week at 6:30.

These classes are held at the home of the Chongs and are free to members of Tzedek v'Shalom.

Please call for more details.

Debbie Chong 215-504-9268

Rabbis for Human Rights - North America Presents

THE THIRD NORTH AMERICAN CONFERENCE ON JUDAISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS

HUMAN RIGHTS

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A JEWISH CALL TO ACTION

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Visit www.rhr-na.org for details.

(Continued from page 1)

uninhibited about artistic expression. They dance at the drop of a hat, or at the sound of music being played, even those who have physical or developmental impairments. They delight in arranging colors, shapes, and textures, all with great enjoyment and intentionality. They are budding songwriters, rearranging the words of songs they know to tell a new story.

While we may delight in witnessing these outbursts of creativity in children, we also have come to expect that they will be increasingly limited as the maturation process unfolds. We who accept that as adults we lose this spontaneous and natural creativity seem complacent and comfortable in this self-knowledge. But the consequences of this loss are encoded in cultural modalities that should be regarded with indignation, rather than accepted with resignation....

Providing a Religious Context for Creativity

The Reconstructionist model of Jewish life holds that culture is not a separate rubric for artists and their wares, nor is creativity to be relegated to the province of the pros. Rather, culture and creativity are our primary vehicles for our deepest, most intimate expressions of connection to a lived Judaism.... Art is about the transformation through representation, in time and space, of the human experience. Religion is about the transformation through representation, in time and space, of the human encounter with the Divine.

Our struggles with Judaism are about a search for meaning in life through a lived tradition, involving exploration at countless levels of learning, teaching, thinking, and experiencing. Art renders the search visible and tangible, communicating what is discovered through dancing, singing, drawing, creating, designing, building.

Both art and religion address transmission and transformation. The intersection of art and religion, creativity and spirituality, is fundamentally *about* transmission and transformation. Since the source of what we are transmitting is a centuries-old evolving tradition, the foundation must be firm in order for the enterprise to flourish. I am, for example, simultaneously a teacher of traditional *nusah* and transcriber of freshly composed melodies for our new prayerbooks. This is not a contradiction, but rather an integration, since the core of my mandate as a religious person is to nurture my spirituality and let my creativity chromosome work to its utmost capacity to create holy sparks. Both Judaism and creative expression share the goals of discovering and situating oneself in the world....

I want rabbis who can enable their congregants and communities to deepen their connections to their

Jewish souls through artistic expressions and activities; more religious-school programs that integrate arts into their curriculum; more chaplains comfortable with singing at a bedside and creating *Mi Sheberakh* prayers. And I want more: communities fostering Jewish artists, reading Jewish poetry, debating how to define Jewish art in all its forms, bringing in folks who know themselves as creative people, but who do not yet know their Jewish selves....

I want us to join in the endeavor of understanding Isaiah's message [of *shiru ladonay shir hadash*, sing to Adonay a new song], through whichever artistic medium bubbles up from within or challenges us from without, thus, "tearing the blinders from our eyes, by inventing and involving us in new kinds of art of unprecedented spiritual meaning" It is an imperative that is central to our understanding of our religious civilization: to foster the human creative impulse, in order that we may "illuminate who we are as Jewish human beings."*...

There is no doubt that creativity is a key to our search for godliness. We yearn to participate in the perpetual renewal of creation, as we pray in the first blessing before the Shema: *harnehadesh betuuo bekol-yom tamid ma'aseh vereyshit*, the One who renews Creation's work each day. Julia Cameron offers what could be a *kavanah* (focus) for this prayer: "Because creation is always an act of faith and faith is a spiritual issue, so is creativity. As we strive for our highest selves, our spiritual selves, we cannot help but be more aware, more proactive, and more creative."**

Amen selah.

* quoted from Jo Milgrom, "Art and Spirit in Contemporary Jewish Life," *The Reconstructionist* (Vol. 60, No. 2, Fall 1995), 53. Available online at <http://www.bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=4576>.

** quoted from Julia Cameron, *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*, New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1992.

Rabbi Elizabeth Bolton, a graduate of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC), has also worked as a cantor, voice teacher, and opera singer. This article first appeared in the Spring-Fall 1997 issue of *The Reconstructionist*. It is available online at <http://bjpa.org/Publications/details.cfm?PublicationID=4395/>.



Schools News

The 5771 TvS Religious School Curriculum is centered around the Reconstructionist framework based on “The Values of Spiritual Peoplehood.”

One of the values is described this way: **Kedushah** (spirituality) takes us to a different realm — a way in which we can encounter the Divine. For many of us, prayer has been offered as the first step in finding a spiritual connection, but it need not be the only path. Community expression, nature and environmental immersions, music and meditation, rhythm and dance — all of these vehicles can have a mystical approach for the individual and the group. It is an essential (yet not always easy) journey to find that spiritual chord.

Another value is “**Hidur Mitzvah** (creativity), which reminds us of a time in our observant past when the fine arts could be used only in beautifying a mitzvah. The creation of ritual art for centuries was the major product. Ritual objects from menorahs to kiddush cups, wimples to tallitot, mizrahs to ketubot, Torah mantels to Shabbat tablecloths were all beautiful ways to enter into the world of the fine arts. It is now our joyous task to open these avenues and many more to informal learning, enhancing the connection to our heritage in the modern and ancient world.”

The essay excerpts that begins on the front page of this newsletter brings further insight to these values.

For more information about our school, contact Marc Bloom, our Education Committee Chair, at 267-364-5438 or marc6868@verizon.net, or Rabbi Anna, our Education Director, at 215-287-5128 or rabbianna@gmail.com.



Community Announcements

PARENT POWER: Robin Kevles-Necowitz “Effective, Peaceful Discipline Strategies for Children 2–16” - Tuesday, November 9, 2010, 6:30–9 p.m. at The Peace Center, 102 West Maple Ave, Langhorne, PA 19047 - \$125 pp, \$175/couple, Early Registration (deadline 10/8) \$100 pp, \$150/couple - A portion of the proceeds will be donated to The Peace Center. Only a few slots are left.

The 43rd Biennial Convention of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation is November 11–14, 2010, in Newport Beach, CA. The overall theme of the Convention is “California Dreaming: Visioning Our Jewish Future.” JRF Conventions offer inspiring speakers, pre-

sentations, workshops, services, and Reconstructionist ruach (spirit). The Convention includes programming for those interested in every aspect of Reconstructionist congregational life and contemporary Jewish life in general. To register or get the latest updates about the JRF Convention, visit www.jrf.org/convention.

Gratz College Courses - B’nai Jacob evening section of “Revelation & Revolution,” opening Wednesday, November 3 with Rabbi Michael Ross; Adath Israel hosts “Talmud, Trades and Trust,” opening Monday morning, November 29 with Rabbi Beth Janus; and BZBI Center City hosts “A 21st Century Ethics of Money,” opening Wednesday morning, January 19 with Rabbi Margot Stein - Contact Liz Nover, Director, at 215-635-7300, ext. 143 LNover@gratz.edu for further information.

Jewish Reconstructionist Federation News: Ma Nishma (“What’s Happening?”): Register at the JRF website at <http://jrf.org/user/register> then click “Manage your JRF e-newsletter subscriptions” at the top left of the home page to subscribe.

Jewish Federation News: to get email news about the Kehillah of Bucks County, contact mgeorge@philafederation.org or visit www.jewishphilly.org.



In Our Shul...

Member News

Update alert: Please change your records: **Howard Blumenthal** has a new email address: howardblumenthal@verizon.net. He no longer uses his old one at voicenet.com.

Fran and Bernie Heyman are now in Texas for the winter. Their address down there is 2727 E. Main Street, Box 154, Uvalde, TX. 78801, and their phone number is 830-278-8838. Please don’t send anything to their Newtown address during that period. Their email addresses move with them.

Robin Kevles-Necowitz wrote a Guest Opinion about bullying that was featured in the October 10th *Bucks County Courier Times*. Mazel tov to Robin! You can read it now at this website: http://www.phillyburbs.com/opinions/courier_times_opinion/guest_opinions/courier_times_guest_opinion_details/article/577/2010/october/10/bullying-starts-at-home-its-parents-responsibility-to-stop-it.html

Contributions

High Holiday Contributions

Norman Blumenthal
Susan and David Rattner
Marlene Mendez, for our Prayer Book Fund
Jennifer and Marc Bloom
Robert and Lynne Blumenthal

General Operating Fund

Linda Gold, in memory of her mother, Betty Gold.
Fran and Bernie Heyman.
Sandra Berg, in loving memory of Coleman Berg, Rae
and Herman Berg, Irv Soltroff, and Lillian and Harry
Soltroff.
Ron Goldstein, in memory of Linda Goldstein.
Bonnie Lieb of The Sage Agency, in memory of
Carolyn Bacher.
Bobbie and Ralph Posmontier, in memory of Carolyn
Bacher.

Carolyn Bacher Children's Machzor Fund

Robert and Jennifer Abrahamson

Lifecycle Events at TvS

Anniversaries:

Julie and Charles Gromer	November 7, 1999
Anna Kitces & Seth Fishman	November 10, 1991
Elana Braz & George Reese	November 15, 1986
Stan and Jenny Ornsteen James	November 17, 1994
Ruth Jampol & Eric Lifson	November 17
Janis & Dan Gemelfarb	November 21
Bonnie and Aaron Lewis	November 25

Birthdays:

Bernie Heyman	November 3
Marc Fisher	November 6

Al Bossio	November 7
Amanda Posmontier	November 10, 1982
Jean Ryersbach	November 12
Joy Wallis	November 13
Jennifer Bloom	November 13
Barb Goldman	November 16
Ben Kall	November 21, 1983
Julian Bacher	November 21, 2004
Matthew Adler	November 16
Ben Kall	November 21, 1983
Larry Kennedy	November 23
Ruth Jampol	November 23
Zachary Bloom	November 27, 1999

Yahrzeits:

Yahrzeit dates are listed here by the Jewish death day (according to the Jewish calendar) and its Gregorian equivalent this year. The original death date follows in parenthesis when available.

Samuel Blask	14 Cheshvan/October 22 (11/4/60)
Anne Sanders Grand	15 Cheshvan/October 23 (11/4/98)
Jordan Wallis	20 Cheshvan/October 28 (11/15/03)
Morris Berkowitz	22 Cheshvan/October 22 (11/17/03)
Harold Schwartz	27 Cheshvan/November 4 (11/6/99)
Rheta Pinsky	1 Kislev/November 8 (11/28/08)
Hilda Rosenthal	2 Kislev/November 9 (11/27/03)
Gertrude Kauffman	2 Kislev/November 9 (12/2/78)
Bernice Jampol	10 Kislev/November 17 (11/15/02)
Henry Blask	19 Kislev/November 26 (11/30/07)



Mmmm... Latkes @ the

TvS Hanukkah Party!

Sunday, December 5 @ 5 p.m.

Newtown Friends Meeting House
Court Street, Newtown, PA



Stay tuned for details!

Mitzvah Corner

October Thank You's to...

Marilyn Silberfein who hosted Torah Study in November.

Everyone who helped with our first "Friday Night with TvS" Shabbat program.

Ruth Jampol who lead the meditation session before our Shabbat morning service. Participants enthusiastically (although in a very mellow tone) endorsed the new program.

Naomi Mindlin, who lead the Torah Study discussion and hosted our Shabbat morning kiddush later in the month.

Ralph Posmontier who shlepped for Torah Study and served as Shammus for our morning service.

One More Sukkot Thank You

We forgot to thank the Leitners — Lee, Kina, Nora, and Ethan for helping to put up the Sukkah.



More Volunteers Needed!

We still need more people to volunteer for a variety of tasks at TvS. If you have not signed up yet, please choose one of these and let Fran Heyman know at gramfram@gmail.com)

SHAMMUS FOR MONTHS OF... December February April May

SHABBAT MORNING ONEG... March 26 April 23 June 18

TORAH STUDY HOST... May 25

TORAH STUDY SHAMMUS... November 13 December 11 March 12 April 30 June 25

CO-ORDINATOR - SHABBAT FAMILY SERVICE POTLUCK... November 5 December 3
December 23 January 21 February 4 March 4 April 1 May 4 June 3

Job descriptions are posted on the TvS website.

(Choose "Membership" from the top banner; then click on "Volunteer Jobs" on the right.)

Any other questions?

Please contact Fran Heyman at gramfram@gmail.com



Baby Sitters Available!

We're certified by the Red Cross.

Do you want to go out and have fun, but don't have anyone to watch your kids?

We can help you with that! Just give us call at 215*504*5571.

If you have friends who are looking for baby sitters, please tell them about us! Thanks,

Michela and Hannah Lewis, TvS teens!

TvS Calendar — November 2010 • *Heshvan/Kislev 5771*

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3 5:15 p.m. Religious School	4	5 5:30 p.m. Friday Night with TvS @ NFMH — A Musical Shabbat!	6
7 9:30 a.m. Religious School @ Goodnoe School 7 p.m. Spiritual Life Committee @ Gold's home	8 1 Kislev	9	10 5:15 p.m. Religious School 7 p.m. Board meeting @ Ruth's house	11	12	13 10 a.m. Torah Study @ the home of Talia Delone
14 9:30 a.m. Religious School @ Goodnoe School	15	16	17 5:15 p.m. Religious School	18	19	20 9:30 a.m. Meditation 10 a.m. Shabbat Service @ NFMH
23 9:30 a.m. Religious School @ Goodnoe School	22	23	24	25 Thanksgiving	26	27
28	29	30	December 1 5:15 p.m. Religious School	2	3 5:30 p.m. Friday Night with TvS @ NFMH	4
December 5 5 p.m. TvS Hanukkah Party						

Friday Night with TvS

November 5 @ 5:30 - 9 p.m.

A Musical, Family-friendly Shabbat

Tzedek v'Shalom Tzedakah Opportunities

Donor (s) _____ Telephone _____

Address _____

Date _____ Enclosed is a contribution of \$ _____ to the following fund:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Operating Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbi's Discretionary Fund |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jordan Wallis Memorial Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Torah Fund |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prayer Books Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Tzedakah Fund |

Please make checks payable to Tzedek v'Shalom.

Send to: Joel Bacher, Treasurer

**Tzedek v'Shalom
Post Office Box 863
Newtown, Pa. 18940**

Some suggested occasions you may wish to commemorate with your donations:

☞ With Gratitude to: _____

For _____

☞ Mazel Tov to: Name(s) _____

On the birth / naming / adoption

On his/her graduation / birthday

of: _____

On their wedding / engagement
/ wedding anniversary

On becoming a bat/bar mitzvah

☞ Condolences to: _____ on the recent

death of _____

☞ In memory of _____

☞ Get well wishes (Refuah Shelemah) to: _____

☞ Special message: _____

Please send an acknowledgment to:

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

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