

May-June 2023
Iyar/Sivan/Tammuz
5783

Phone: 727 847-3814

E-mail:
jccwestpasco@aim.com

THE SCHRIER

THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER OF WEST PASCO
Home of Congregation Beth Tefillah

Shabbat Dinner

Join us on Friday, May 5th for an INDOOR PICNIC!

We'll have a brief Shabbat service at 6:30 pm followed by a speaker. Sue Hutchins will discuss all things Medicare. This will be informative even for those of us WAY too young for Medicare... After our speaker we will enjoy typical picnic fare, hot dogs, hamburgers, potato salad, cole slaw, etc. etc.

All the fun of a picnic (good food, good company, good conversation) without all the annoyances (inclement weather, ants, mosquitoes).

All this for only \$25.00 for members and \$30.00 for non-members.

Please get your reservations and money into the office ASAP.



MAY-JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

- * Monday, 5/8 7pm
JCC Board Mtg
- * Tuesday, 5/9 Lag Ba'omer
- * Sunday, 5/14
Mother's Day
- * Friday, 5/19 Yom Yerushalayim Day
- * Friday-Saturday, 5/26-5/27 Shavuot
- * Monday, 5/29
Memorial Day
- * Monday, 6/12 7pm
JCC Board Mtg
- * Wednesday, 6/14
Flag Day
- * Sunday, 6/18
Father's Day

SHABBAT SERVICES
CONDUCTED BY RON BECKER and ELLIOT SHAPIRO
EVERY FRIDAY EVENING AT 7:30 PM
EVERY SATURDAY MORNING AT 9:30 AM
Alan Goldberg, Rabbi Emeritus

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - by Eileen Hochstadt

Seven Wonders of Jewish History Continued from the March-April Schrier

Shared with us by Rabbi Asher Resnick and Motty Berger, from Aish.Com

WONDER #3: ANTI-SEMITISM

Let's look at the flip side. What are the three factors that cause nations to disintegrate and disappear?

First, they're conquered by another nation and eventually they assimilate into the dominant culture. But what happens between conquest and assimilation? Persecution. The stronger nation comes in and says, "We don't like that you dress differently, speak a different language, worship differently... We think you should be like us." Sociologists call this "*The dislike of the unlike*." Eventually, someone figures out, "Hey, you know why we're being persecuted? It's that 'dislike of the unlike' business! Let's drop our differences and we'll be treated better." And it works. The more they drop their differences, the better they're treated. Before you know it, they've been absorbed into the conquering nation. You ever hear anyone say there's too much Edomite influence in the government nowadays? The Babylonians are controlling the media? Of course not. These nations have long since lost their identities. That's what happens when nations assimilate into the dominant culture. So what happens when the Jews try to assimilate? Where do we find that the Jews, en masse, try to assimilate into the surrounding culture? Germany. In Germany, 150 years ago, we find one of the most concentrated attempts on the part of masses of Jews to assimilate into German society. After generations of intolerance and persecution, the Enlightenment came and many Jews thought they finally had a way out. "Now's our chance to get rid of all this 'dislike and unlike,'" they said. "The Germans say they hate us because we eat differently, dress differently, worship differently, don't marry their daughters. So we'll drop all our differences and become just like them!" And what happens? A historical anomaly. For the very first time in history, instead of the dislike of the unlike, suddenly it's the dislike of the like! The Nazis say, "We don't hate you because you're different; now we hate you because you're trying to become like us!" And they respond with the most vicious brutality the world has ever seen. What's going on here? The more we drop our differences, the easier it's supposed to be to blend in with the dominant culture! The Holocaust was completely contrary to all normal rules of history! Why is it that, in some strange way, all the rules of history are overturned when it comes to the Jews? It's a basic law of physics that the colder something is, the denser it becomes and therefore the heavier. Heat causes molecules to expand and therefore become lighter. For example, hot water rises and cold water, being heavier, falls to the bottom. If you stand in a bathtub, for instance, you'll notice that the warmer water is at the top and your toes are probably colder because the cold water has sunk to the bottom. What's the coldest water possible? Ice. Take a look at the cup of soda when you put ice cubes in. Have you ever wondered why the ice flows to the top? Of course not. It just does. What happens in the winter when a lake freezes over? Where does the ice form? At the top! Isn't that strange? If ice is the coldest form of water, it should naturally be more dense and sink to the bottom. Ask any physicist, why is it that ice floats? And he will tell you that it's a fundamental law of physics. The molecules in water become denser as they get colder, until they reach a degree and a half above freezing, whereupon the molecules suddenly start to expand and get lighter. So when it turns to ice, it naturally floats. But *why* does the law of physics work that way? *Why* does water suddenly become lighter when it was previously getting heavier? And your friendly physicist has an explanation for that too. He will say, "Because it's an exception." We have a different answer. The physicist didn't create the laws of physics. G-d did. Now, G-d may not care if ice floats to the top of your soda cup, but he does care that ice floats to the top of a lake. What would happen if all the ice sunk to the bottom?

Continued on page 4

A Message from Ron Becker

Dear friends, I am happy to report that I am recovering from my illness well and “back in the saddle”. Thank you so much for all of your cards, visits, calls, and other kindnesses throughout this long period---56 days split evenly between the hospital and rehab facility! And special Thanks to all those who continued our religious services so well, To Eileen Hochstadt who coordinated every aspect of the synagogue’s activities and to Perry Wrebel and Elliot Shapiro for leading services on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings respectively. And for the entire time, I was able to participate on Zoom from my hospital bed thanks to Barbara D. Johnson and her efforts to keep us connected to the JCC no matter where we are located physically!

Since I have been back, we have had a very eventful two weeks and enjoyed another wonderful virtual Passover Seder Zoomed from my living room. All were able to participate and lead readings regardless of where they were located. Again, kudos to Barbara for setting this all up! We also received a Yom HaShoah proclamation once again from the Mayor and Council of the City of New Port Richey and continue to participate in cross cultural and interdenominational collaborations with the community at large.

We are planning a synagogue trip to Israel October 30-November 10, and I hope many of you will make this exciting journey with us. I guarantee that it will be one of the highlights of your life, especially if you haven’t traveled to Eretz Yisroel before and if you have been before, you will be struck by the incredible changes that are constantly taking place. The journey will take us to the old and new cities of Jerusalem, Masada and the Dead Sea, the Jordan Valley and Beit Shean’s archeological wonders, a Kibbutz in the valley, the Golan Heights, Akko, Haifa, Atlit and both modern Tel Aviv and ancient Jaffa. This will all be at a pace that we can all (regardless of age or medical condition) participate comfortably. We will be getting a committee of interested people together in May to begin planning the trip.

Below are the remarks that I made at the annual Martin Luther King Day celebration in Pasco County just two weeks before I became ill. My apologies for not getting them into the previous Schrier, but the sentiments still hold true, and I wanted to share them with all who couldn’t attend the annual event. Wishing you all a wonderful Shavuot holiday and hoping to see each of you in the coming weeks!

Ron Becker, Spiritual Leader

Please see page 7 for the MLK Day remarks

DATES TO REMEMBER

5/1	Bingo 11 am
5/5	Religious Services 6:30 pm
5/6	Religious Services 9:30 am
	Bingo 5 pm
5/8	Bingo 11 am
5/8	JCC Board Meeting 7 pm
5/9	Lag Ba’omer
5/12	Religious Services 7:30 pm
5/13	Religious Services 9:30 am
	Bingo 5 pm
5/14	Mother’s Day
5/15	Bingo 11 am
5/19	Yom Yerushalayim
5/19	Religious Services 7:30 pm
5/20	Religious Services 9:30 am
	Bingo 5 pm
5/22	Bingo 11 am
5/25	Erev Shavuot
5/26	Shavuot Day 1
5/26	Religious Services 7:30 pm
5/27	Shavuot Day 2
5/27	Religious Services 9:30 am

5/27	Bingo 5 pm
5/29	Memorial Day
5/29	Bingo 11 am
6/2	Religious Services 7:30 pm
6/3	Religious Services 9:30 am
	Bingo 5 pm
6/5	Bingo 11 am
6/9	Religious Services 7:30 pm
6/10	Religious Services 9:30 am
	Bingo 5 pm
6/12	Bingo 11 am
6/12	JCC Board Meeting 7 pm
6/16	Religious Services 7:30 pm
6/17	Religious Services 9:30 am
	Bingo 5 pm
6/18	Father’s Day
6/19	Bingo 11 am
6/23	Religious Services 7:30 pm
6/24	Religious Services 9:30 am
	Bingo 5 pm
6/26	Bingo 11 am
6/30	Religious Services 7:30 pm

Candle Lighting Times



May 5	7:50 pm
May 12	7:54 pm
May 19	7:58 pm
May 26	8:02 pm
June 2	8:06 pm
June 9	8:09 pm
June 16	8:12 pm
June 23	8:13 pm
June 30	8:14 pm

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE continued from page 2

All plant and animal life in the seas and oceans would freeze and die, and when the ice defrosted in the spring, the waters of the earth would be putrid and vile. So G-d says, "I did not make a world to be uninhabited. In the case of ice, I'll just overturn the natural law." Similarly, G-d says to the Jews, "I did not make a world for the Jews to become extinct. You are to be an eternal nation. So, in your case, the laws of history are going to be overturned. For every other nation ever persecuted, there will be 'the dislike of the unlike.' They'll drop their differences and disappear. But when you Jews try to shed your national identity, I will not allow it to happen. Instead of assimilation easing your persecution, you'll be hated all the more for it." G-d controls history the same way He controls physics, science and nature. If G-d promises the Jews that they will be an eternal people, then the laws of nature will just have to cooperate. How would you fill in the following blank? "The Wandering ____." Did anyone write "The Wandering Italian"? "The Wandering Ecuadorian"? We Jews are known throughout the world as the nation that wanders. We've lived most of our national life in exile, dispersed throughout the globe. Can you think of anything less conducive to being an eternal nation?

We're intelligent people here; let's try to figure this out logically. What characteristic could this nation have that will keep them unified despite their dispersion? How about this: The Jews will be so beloved in the eyes of the entire world that the nations will make sure they continue to exist, no matter where we are. "Ah, those wonderful Jews, we must keep them alive and well, forever." Oh, yeah? This reminds me of a story. A new electronics store opened up in Texas and announced that it would give away free TV sets to the first hundred people who walked into the store. Already the night before, there were about three hundred people in line. At the front of the line was this huge Texan, so excited he could hardly wait. Suddenly this little Jew comes walking up from the back of the line and, without so much as a glance around, goes right up to the front. The Texan looks at him and says, "Where the heck do you think you're going?" The Jew says nothing; he just keeps walking. The Texan picks him up, punches him in the face and knocks him out on the floor. The poor little Jew struggles to his feet, dusts himself off and again starts walking towards the front. The Texan says, "I said, where do you think you're going?" The Jew doesn't say a word. The Texan picks him up and knocks him down again. Suddenly, a policeman comes by. "What's goin' on here?" he says to the Texan. And the Texan says, "Ah been waitin' heah all night. I'll be darned if I'm gonna let this little Jew get in front of me!" The cop turns to the Jew and says, "And what's your story?" The Jew says, "If this guy knocks me down one more time, I don't open up the store." Are we so beloved by the world that they've made sure of our continuing existence? I don't think so. No matter where they go, the Jewish people suffer from a hatred the likes of which the world has never seen. It's not just: "We don't want these people in our country club." It's not just: "We don't want them in the front of the bus." It's: "We don't want these people *alive*." Not only is anti-Semitism *intense*, it is also *irrational*. We're the only religion that absolutely prohibits the eating of any kind of blood, yet we are plagued with blood libels. They say we're poisoning the wells of Europe, yet they completely ignore the fact that we're drinking from the same wells! Anti-Semitism is a hatred unbelievably intense, totally irrational and *absolutely universal*. In Israel, in 1987, there was a colloquium on anti-Semitism, commissioned by President Chaim Herzog. Professor Michael Curtis of Rutgers University spoke on the irrationality of anti-Semitism: *"The uniqueness of anti-Semitism lies in the fact that no other people in the world have ever been charged simultaneously with alienation from society and with cosmopolitanism, with being capitalistic exploiters and also revolutionary communist advocates. The Jews were accused of having an imperious mentality, and at the same time they're the people of the book. They're accused of being militant aggressors, at the same time as being cowardly pacifists. With being a chosen people, and also having an inferior human nature. With both arrogance and timidity. With both extreme individualism and community adherence. With being guilty of the crucifixion of Jesus and at the same time held to account for the invention of Christianity... Everything and its opposite becomes a reason for anti-Semitism."* This is how irrational anti-Semitism is. Whatever you hate, that's what the Jew is.

This article will continue in the next issue of *The Schrier*.

Celebrating Mary!

On Friday, March 3rd, a roomful of friends and family joined together to wish Mary Gaines a most happy 105th birthday!

Photos by Dr. Kenneth Wolf



The Birthday Girl!



Mary with her son, Joel, and daughter-in-law, Marla.



Mary FaceTiming with her great-grandchild.



PURIM 5783

Photos by Barbara D. Johnson



“And thou shalt tell thy son in that day, saying: It is because of that which the Lord did for me when I came forth out of Egypt.”

PASSOVER 5783

Pictures from Ron and Chris' Seder which was Zoomed to the congregation



Remarks at the annual Martin Luther King Day celebration on the 94th anniversary of his birth given at the Booker T. Washington School, Port Richey, Florida January 16, 2023

Friends, I am honored and thankful once again to represent the Jewish Community Center of West Pasco at this important observance of Martin Luther King Day.

In Judaism, we read and study from the Torah, our Bible, the Old Testament. Coincidentally, this Sabbath just two days ago, we began reading the book of Exodus. It is fitting that we launch a two-month period of prayer and study devoted to the struggles for freedom and the escape from slavery at the same time that we honor the one person in the history of this nation who exemplifies the character and leadership of the prophet Moses. Though over 3,500 years have elapsed since the exodus from Egypt. We continue to study it over and over every year at this time so that we will never forget. The memory of the Exodus has helped forge an alliance of all freedom loving people to fight racism, hatred, and bigotry whenever and wherever it occurs.

On this day, when we remember civil rights and humanitarianism's greatest leader, Martin Luther King, we reflect upon how our people have historically fought for human rights and will always continue to do so. It is only fitting that Dr. King has been compared to the Prophet Moses time and again and it is this comparison that has helped bond the Jewish and African American communities together to take us further on the road to freedom. No matter how many gains are made, and we have made many over the years, especially after 1964 with the Civil Rights Act and the other pieces of Great Society legislation, we must guard those freedoms which are constantly under attack and continue the march to the Promised Land. Dr. King himself constantly compared the road to that promised land to the Hebrew march through the desert enroute to their entry into that land. It wasn't easy and Moses was faced with a herculean task of fighting off enemies from without and from within. And ultimately, Moses brought the children of Israel to the brink, but could not enter the land with them.

The similarities are striking. Moses had to struggle with his people, many of whom had been made to think so little of their potentials, that they were afraid of freedom and often demanded to go back to Egypt. He fought off insurrections from those who wanted to give up as well as attacks from the outside. Dr. King, with his messages of non-violence and civil disobedience, also faced opposition on these methods from within at the same time that he and his movement were physically attacked by violent mobs encouraged by state and local government leaders. And just like Moses who endured forty years of struggle, Dr. King exhibited incredible patience. He, like Moses, knew that freedom cannot be accomplished in a day but is a struggle that must constantly take place from one generation to another. Just like Moses, Dr. King had a premonition that he told his audience at his last public appearance in Memphis just hours before his death that he himself would not personally enter the Promised Land. Like Moses, he stood at the top of the mountain to survey the Promised Land and he dedicated his short life to be cut down so tragically by violence to help him and all people understand what it takes to enter that land.

We in the Jewish community are well aware of the lessons of Moses and Dr. King and we must strive to protect the gains we have made while we try to repair the world and make those gains available to all. Even though we did indeed enter the Promised Land immediately after Moses's death, we were exiled from that land by foreign conquerors and have endured several thousand years of subjugation and anti-Semitism culminating in the Holocaust of which my own father was a survivor. Thus, it is not enough to gain freedom initially, but we must hold on to that freedom not only for ourselves but for all on earth.

The discourse in our nation has descended into one that gives a platform for those who would divide us: citizen against immigrant, straight against gay, white against color, nationalism against globalism and so forth. On this Martin Luther King Day, we must recommit ourselves to fighting injustices whenever and wherever we see them and to practice the Hebrew Tikun Olam, the repair of the world so that generations of all faiths and colors can reach their own promised land. As I have thought about this year's AAC Martin Luther King Day's theme



The Time is always right to do what is right. I have decided to stick with love, Hate is too great a burden to bear.

I think of perhaps the greatest similarity between Moses and Dr. King. They taught us to hate the ideologies but not hate human beings. They both possessed love for all, not only for the people they are leading and ministering to, but for all including those who would mock them and stand in the way of what they were trying to accomplish. If we follow their leads and fight the ideologies of bigotry and injustice rather than attacking those who hold differing views, we too will travel along that long road to the Promised Land. May the memory of Dr. King and all that he accomplished during his all too short life be a blessing and an inspiration for all that we do during our own brief times on this good earth.

Ronald Becker, Spiritual Leader, Jewish Community Center of West Pasco, Congregation Beth Tefillah





MAY 2023



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Bingo 11am	2	3	4	5 88 7:50 pm Shabbat Services/ Dinner 6:30 pm	6 Religious Services 9:30 am <i>Emor</i> Bingo 5 pm
7	8 Bingo 11am JCC Board Mtg. 7 pm	9 Lag Ba'omer	10	11	12 88 7:54 pm Religious Services 7:30 pm	13 Religious Services 9:30 am <i>Behar + Behukotai</i> Bingo 5 pm
14  Mother's Day	15 Bingo 11am	16	17	18	19 88 7:58 pm Religious Services 7:30 pm Yom Yerushalayim	20 Religious Services 9:30 am <i>Bamidbar</i> Bingo 5 pm
21 Rosh Chodesh	22 Bingo 11am	23	24	25 88 8:02 pm Erev Shavuot	26 88 8:02 pm Religious Services 7:30 pm Shavuot	27 Religious Services 9:30 am & Yizkor Shavuot Bingo 5 pm
28	29 Bingo 11am  Memorial Day	30	31			

JUNE 2023

**HAPPY
FATHERS DAY**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 88 8:06 pm Religious Services 7:30 pm	3 Religious Services 9:30 am <i>Naso</i> Bingo 5 pm
4	5 Bingo 11am	6	7	8	9 88 8:09 pm Religious Services 7:30 pm	10 Religious Services 9:30 am <i>Beha 'alotekha</i> Bingo 5 pm
11	12 Bingo 11am JCC Board Mtg. 7 pm	13	14  Flag Day	15	16 88 8:12 pm Religious Services 7:30 pm	17 Religious Services 9:30 am <i>Shelah lekha</i> Bingo 5 pm
18  Father's Day	19 Bingo 11am	20	21  First day of Summer	22 	23 88 8:13 pm Religious Services 7:30 pm	24 Religious Services 9:30 am <i>Korah</i> Bingo 5 pm
25	26 Bingo 11am	27	28	29	30 88 8:14 pm Religious Services 7:30 pm	