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**RABBI'S NOTES**



One day back in early 2016 I was visiting with a rabbi friend who's a bit older than I am, and she was looking down the road toward retirement. On the national front, Merrick Garland had been nominated to fill a vacancy on the Supreme Court. Garland and my friend are the same age and, as it happened, had competed on neighboring debate teams back in high school. My friend was ruminating: what would it be like to start a whole new act (as a Supreme Court justice in this case) at their age? I was captivated by the question of "whole new acts" and spent some time talking with people my age about this notion. My friend retired a couple years later, Merrick Garland got a different role than he had been auditioning for in 2016, and I'm still kicking the question around.

I'd frame the question a little differently now: not so much concentration on "whole new acts," but rather "in what direction(s) should I focus my energy?" Coming out of COVID isolation I hear this conversation all around me. What should I be doing with myself? What's important? Life changed in unexpected ways for us all. For many it contracted drastically; for others it got more intense and demanding. For some, both were true. All of us who were lucky enough to do so got three years older. And we are all more aware than ever that life is fragile and temporary. As COVID for many of us becomes more endemic than catastrophic, the parameters of our commitments seem up for renegotiation. As Mary Oliver put it perfectly, "Tell me, what is it you plan to do with your one wild and precious life?"

Life is wild. Life is precious. Life is finite. Life is lived in the midst of many demands, pleasures, opportunities and crises, global and personal. Each of us lives our own life, with our own natures, our own bodies, our own limitations and passions. At the same time, we are part of families, communities, cultures and landscapes. So many moving parts! Meanwhile we wake up each morning. What direction should we point?

One day years ago I was puzzling to Mickey about how much of my life should be pointed in the direction of the world's huge problems. I think I asked, "What percentage of my energy should be devoted to seeking justice?" (Such a Margaret question!) And Mickey responded sagely. "There is no right answer; you just have to decide." But how to decide? I went back recently and looked at the psychosocial stages of life proposed by the psychologist Erik Erikson back in the 1950's. I remember studying them long ago and liking what he had to say. As with many things back in my distant memory, they're more interesting than I remember. Erikson proposes eight stages of development in life, five of which occur during childhood. Each stage is characterized by a conflict. The three adult stages of adulthood are characterized by intimacy vs. isolation (ages 19-40), generativity vs. stagnation (ages 40-65), and ego integration vs. despair (ages 65-death.)



If I understand this right (and I am no expert in any of this), in young adulthood we begin to bond with others, and also with community and world, in meaningful ways. As we get a little older, we enter the life of home and family-making, community-building, and "making a living." At the last stage, we take stock of our lives, reflect on what we have done and not done, and perhaps feel at peace with how our lives have turned out, what we've accomplished. Reb Zalman Schacter-Shalomi speaks similarly of "sage-ing" and "Decembering" in his beautiful late-life writings.

I like the idea that there is a season to be all-in, to throw oneself passionately into work, love and service. Then there is a season to be practical and constant. And finally there is a season to step back from passion and generativity and to gaze over it all, hopefully with appreciation and satisfaction. At least I sort of like this

idea. But what about that “next act?” Isn’t it always possible to cook up something new and beautiful and meaningful? Isn’t there always something new to offer up to our world? With all our finitude, shouldn’t we each try to manifest our unique gifts and passions however we can at every phase of life, maybe even especially as we get older?

I think what I am reaching for here—acknowledging the hubris of cobbling a new stage onto this venerable eight rung ladder of Erikson’s—is a stage called something like expansion vs. contraction. In this new made-up stage, we endeavor to understand more, to perceive more deeply, to connect more meaningfully with all of reality. And maybe to articulate what we know in new ways, through art, through service, through prayer, through hospitality, through contemplation, through learning. At the same time, our stride gets shorter, our mind more porous, our physical bodies more demanding. We rest in our limitations.

There is a curious word in one of the verses of **Pirkei Avot** that has always interested me. The sage R. Yehuda ben Tema (probably second century CE) is describing his own ladder of psychosocial development:

*Ben Hei Hei used to say: At five years old, Scripture; at ten years, Mishnah; at thirteen, the Commandments; at fifteen, Talmud; at eighteen, the bridal; at twenty, pursuits; at thirty, strength; at forty, discernment; at fifty, counsel; at sixty, age; at seventy, hoariness; at eighty, power; at ninety, decrepitude; at a hundred, it is as though he were dead, and gone, and had ceased from the world (Avot 5:21).*

“At eighty, *gevurah*,” a word that means both expansion and containment. Power. Concentration of energy. Distillation. Refinement. Depth charge.

Right now I hover somewhere between “age” (*zikhah*) and “hoariness” (*seivah*). That sounds about right for me! But I like the idea very much of moving in the direction of *gevurah*. Maybe, if I am blessed to have any “next act,” it will be in the direction of depth and concentration, some kind of refinement of all the wild, precious time I’ve been privileged to live so far. And I hope that for all of us, at whatever age and stage we find ourselves right now, we have the possibility to grow.

## **TISHA B’AV SERVICE**

Tisha B’av begins this year on Wednesday night, July 26<sup>th</sup>, and moves through Thursday, July 27<sup>th</sup>. We will observe this day of mourning and contemplation on Thursday, July 27, 5:00-6:00 PM at the shul. The service will offer a powerful time to contemplate historical and social violence and destruction, to lament, and to turn our hearts in the direction of renewal. Tisha B’av has historically been the day on the Jewish calendar on which we mourn the destruction of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem. But it can also be seen as a day to sit with the horror and grief of all times of violence, enslavement and genocide, to feel their weight in the company of community and to lament together. It is said that the Messiah will be born late in the afternoon of Tisha B’av, which is why it is our community’s custom to gather at that intersection of despair and hope.



## **SHABBAT CELEBRATION WITH MOROCCAN MUSIC AND JOY**

MCJC welcomes our friend, Dror Sinai, Moroccan Jewish musician extraordinaire, to celebrate Shabbat with us on Friday night, August 11th, at 6:00 PM in the shul. Dror is a joyous and beautiful singer and percussionist who will bring us festively into Shabbat. He writes: ““Rhythm is all around us, in everything we see, we touch, we breathe. With rhythm, we shall achieve better communication and understanding among ourselves and with all people.” Rabbi Paula Marcus wrote after one of Dror’s concert/services, “When Dror chants, we are transported through space and time.” He has shared his music and love with our community over the years, and we are happy to welcome him back! We will follow the service/concert with a veggie potluck dinner.

## **ELUL, 5783**

The holy month of Elul begins at sundown on Wednesday, August 16<sup>th</sup>, the eve of the first of two days of Rosh Chodesh, and continues to Rosh Hashana. Plans are afoot for various kinds of gatherings during Elul. Look for further news in the coming month.

## SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

A full Shabbat service is led by community members, with singing, chanting and silence, Torah teaching and reading, blessings for healing and peace, and time for mourners to say Kaddish. The teachers for July and August are listed below. We now have hybrid services, so come to the shul or Zoom from 10:30 AM until about 12:30 PM.

07/01/23	<i>Chukat – Balak</i>	Fran Schwartz
07/08/23	<i>Pinchas</i>	Andrea Luna
07/15/23	<i>Matot-Masei</i>	Margaret Holub
07/22/23	<i>Devarim</i>	Raven Deerwater
07/29/23	<i>Va'etchanan</i>	Paige Lincenberg
08/05/23	<i>Eikev</i>	Bob Evans
08/12/23	<i>Re'eh</i>	Andrea Luna
08/19/23	<i>Shoftim</i>	Mina Cohen
08/26/23	<i>Ki Teitzei</i>	Raven Deerwater

If you would like to give a Torah teaching during Shabbat services, or want more information about what's involved, please contact Raven Deerwater at [raven@taxpractitioner.com](mailto:raven@taxpractitioner.com) or (707) 937-1099.

## ZOOM ADDRESS

We are using the Zoom address below for many MCJC events. You may or may not be asked to type in a password, which is *shalom*. Disregard the numeric passcode at the bottom of the invitation unless you're dialing in on a landline. If you have questions or problems, contact [susan.tubbesing@gmail.com](mailto:susan.tubbesing@gmail.com).

Join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7071836183?pwd=NzFaTkpjOXVYMDNnNnprOXlnZjVhQT09>

Meeting ID: 707 183 6183

Passcode: *shalom*

Numeric Passcode: 776001

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## PAIGE NOTES



Chodesh tov / Happy new "moonth!"

As we find ourselves in the longest, brightest days of the year, our Hebrew calendar knows how to balance us out. Chanukah comes in the darkest, shortest days of the year, right around the Winter Solstice, in order to bring us extra light and warmth when we need it most. Similarly, these Hebrew months of Tamuz and Av, around the Summer Solstice, greet us with darker, more mournful holidays, because the wisdom of our tradition knows we can handle it now more than any other time.

Tisha B'Av, literally "the ninth day of Av," traditionally mourns the destruction of the Temple. With the option of fasting to fully embody the loss, this can be a day to grieve for whatever loss you feel. Some perceive one's own body as a temple, the place our soul dwells, and I have attended some Tisha B'Av gatherings that focus on eating disorders, cancer, and other body-centric pain. Others see Tisha B'Av as a day to mourn all the destruction in our modern world, from shootings to racism to wildfires. This can be a powerful way to sit communally with our grief, rather than in the quiet suppressing many of us are compelled to practice due to the frequency of these disasters.

During this liminal time, when many wildflowers are past their primes yet the rivers still run clear, the abundance of sunlight fortifies us with the time and capacity to sit with the darknesses of life, knowing we have one another for support and for reminders to put on our sun screen.

with blessings for healthy, well-balanced mourning,  
erev rabbi paige lincenberg

## KABBALAT SHABBAT



On July 21<sup>st</sup> we will be at the home of the Cohen Berensons on the Comptche-Ukiah Road. Following a Shabbat service, we will share a vegetarian potluck meal. The gathering will be outdoors and they would like all to be vaccinated. Call (707) 937-1319 to RSVP and get directions. In August, on the 18<sup>th</sup>, Benna Kolinsky and Danny Mandelbaum will host us in Boonville. This get-together will also be outdoors and they request that all be vaccinated. Call (707) 895-3883 to let them know you are coming and for directions. Parking is limited; carpool if you can.

We need hosts for the fall. If you do not wish to invite people into your home, you can be a host at the shul. If you are interested, please contact Mina at 937-1319 or [mcohen@mcn.org](mailto:mcohen@mcn.org).

## ELDERS' CONVERSATION

The Elders meet every second and fourth Tuesday of the month, 3:00-4:30 PM on Zoom. In July, they will meet on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. In August, on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>. The conversation is always provocative and enjoyable. People of all ages are most welcome. Use the MCJC Zoom address on page 3, above. If you need more information, please contact Linda Jupiter ([jupiter@mcn.org](mailto:jupiter@mcn.org)) or Joy Lancaster ([ajoylancaster@gmail.com](mailto:ajoylancaster@gmail.com)) and they will be happy to fill you in.

## HAVE ANOTHER CUP



Tune in on Zoom for a virtual cup of your favorite beverage every Wednesday at 10:30 AM. Check in with community members and chat about anything and everything from the weather to the state of the nation, or from your garden to the cost of propane. We also talk about health and wealth, and share wisdom. Leslie Krongold is the host and welcomes your questions and comments any time at [elkrong@yahoo.com](mailto:elkrong@yahoo.com). To attend, use Leslie's Zoom address:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9815687150984636>  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/tZMscumhpj8sGdLc3-fEePz6ycDwaULk1p6h/ics?icsTokKaen=98tyKuGvrz4qE9yRthqBRpwEBY\\_4c\\_PxiCldjadxn0yoBQVWUhmGL-FmJbNKPNOb](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9815687150984636). Meeting ID: 871 5098 4636; by phone: 1 669 444-9171.

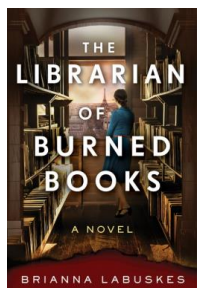
## THE MCJC GEMACH

Don't forget to use the MCJC GeMaCh (that's an acronym for *gemilut chesed*, deeds of lovingkindness). It's the growing list of items you might wish to borrow from, or lend to others in our community; currently it has about 40 items, from gardening tools to kayaks to baby gear to books and beyond. Find the GEMACH at <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/18VpVqbopG399GSnu6ScwR2R3PZqbfiENAobPaQ4gAil/edit#gid=0>. Once you open it, feel free to contact someone who has offered something you're interested in and make arrangements to borrow it. Or you can add your own offers.

## MCJC JUSTICE GROUP

The Justice Group usually meets on the fourth Thursday of the month, 5:30 to 7:30 PM on the MCJC Zoom (see page 3), but in July they will meet on the 20<sup>th</sup>. In August, they will be back to the 24<sup>th</sup>. Watch the announcements for information about each meeting. If you would like to be on the Justice Group mailing list or attend meetings, please contact Donna Medley at [dmthebeez9@gmail.com](mailto:dmthebeez9@gmail.com).

## BOOK GROUP



We will meet Monday July 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss *The Librarian of Burned Books* by Brianna Labuskes. *Berlin, 1933*: Following the success of her debut novel, American writer Althea James receives an invitation from Joseph Goebbels to participate in a cultural exchange program in Germany. To a girl from a small town in Maine, Berlin seems sparkingly cosmopolitan, blossoming with its charismatic new chancellor at the helm. When Althea meets a beautiful woman who promises to show her the real Berlin, she's drawn into a group of resisters who make her question everything she knows about her hosts—and herself. *Paris, 1936*: Hannah Brecht may have escaped Berlin for Paris, but she discovers the City of Lights is no refuge from the anti-Semitism and Nazi sympathizers she thought she'd left

behind. Heartbroken and tormented by the role she played in the betrayal that destroyed her family, Hannah throws herself into her work at the German Library of Burned Books. She believes she can help counter the tide of fascism she sees rising across Europe and atone for her mistakes. But when a dear friend decides actions will speak louder than words, Hannah must decide what stories she is willing to live—or die—for. *New York, 1944*: Since her husband was killed fighting the Nazis, Vivian Childs has been waging her own war preventing a powerful senator's attempts to censor the Armed Services Editions, portable paperbacks that are shipped by the millions to soldiers overseas. Viv knows just how much they mean to the men through the letters she receives—including the last one she got from Edward. She knows the only way to win this battle is to counter the senator's propaganda with a story of her own, at the heart of which lies the mysterious woman tending the American Library of Nazi-Banned Books in Brooklyn. As Viv unknowingly brings her censorship fight crashing into the secrets of the recent past, the fates of these three women converge.

At our August 21<sup>st</sup> meeting, ***The Art of Leaving: A Memoir***, by Ayelet Tzabari, will be the featured book. An intimate memoir in essays by an award-winning Israeli writer who travels the world searching for love, belonging, and an escape from grief following the death of her father. This collection opens with the death of Tzabari's father when she was nine years old. His passing left her feeling rootless, devastated, and driven to question her complex identity as an Israeli of Yemeni descent in a country that suppressed and devalued her ancestors' tradition. Tzabari tells of her early love for writing and words, and her rebellion during mandatory service in the Israeli army. She travels from Israel to New York, Canada, Thailand, and India, falling in and out of love with countries, men and women, drugs and alcohol, running away from responsibilities and refusing to settle in one place. She recounts her first marriage, her struggle to define herself as a writer in a new language, her decision to become a mother, and finally her rediscovery and embrace of her family history.

If you are not currently in the Book Group, contact Fran Schwartz at [franbschwartz@gmail.com](mailto:franbschwartz@gmail.com) to get the Zoom invitation. Books are available at Gallery Bookshop.

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## OUR OWN SINGER-SONGWRITER

"Eat Your Triceratops," Holly Tannen's new CD, will be released and celebrated at a concert/party on Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup> from 1:00-3:00 PM at the Slacktide Café in Noyo Harbor. Holly will be joined on the lovely riverside deck by musical guests, Marianne Steeger and Susan Archuletta. And maybe some sea lions. The Slacktide is at 32430 North Harbor Drive. Admission to the concert is free, but you might want to purchase coffee or beer from the counter to double your listening pleasure. Don't miss this melodious party!

## MCJC BOARD MEETING

The MCJC board meets monthly. In July the meeting will take place on Wednesday, the 12<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM on Zoom. The August meeting has not yet been scheduled. If you wish to attend part of a meeting, please contact board member Susan Tubbesing at (707) 962-0565, or [susan.tubbesing@gmail.com](mailto:susan.tubbesing@gmail.com), and she will give you the address.

## VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH



Many thanks to Nona Smith and Art Weininger for preparing the June ***Megillah*** for mailing. They're fast, and they're efficient, and they live nearby! All who perform this task are left with a great sense of accomplishment. If you would like to get that sense, contact Sarah at 962-0565 or [sarah.nathe@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.nathe@gmail.com)

## MEGILLAH SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Mendocino ***Megillah*** is published monthly as an emailed PDF and an online version. The online ***Megillah*** is posted on the newsletter page of the MCJC website: [www.mcjc.org/newsletter](http://www.mcjc.org/newsletter). Any information on changes in email address or in email notifications should be sent to Sarah Nathe at [sarah.nathe@gmail.com](mailto:sarah.nathe@gmail.com). If you choose not to be a contributing member of MCJC, we request a \$36 annual fee for the ***Megillah***.

## SUMMERTIME, AND THE GIVING IS EASY

We appreciate all your support for the many programs MCJC offers throughout the year. When you make a donation in memory or honor of someone, an acknowledgment card will be sent to the individual or family if you include their name and mailing address with your message. Please mail your donations to MCJC, Box 291, Little River, CA 95456, or use PayPal on the MCJC website.



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Andrea Luna in honor of my new grandson, Peter Edward Matlin, born on May 1st to Moses and Kat Matlin.  
Sandy Berrigan in appreciation of Tu B'Shevat and Passover in the shul.  
Annett & Jonathan Lehan in memory of Bill Garrett.  
Meadow with gratitude for the strength of your collective voices in our community and the world.  
dobby sommer in appreciation of Rabbi Margaret, Kenny Wortzel, and Scott Green, for all their help.

## EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Mendocino Megillah* is published monthly, except for August. The deadline for article submission is the 20<sup>th</sup> 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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# July, 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						12 Tammuz 1 Shabbat Minyan 10:30 am <i>Chukat-Balak</i>
13 Tammuz 2	14 Tammuz 3	15 Tammuz 4 	16 Tammuz 5 Cuppa 10:30 am	17 Tammuz 6	18 Tammuz 7 Shabbat candle lighting 6:30 pm	19 Tammuz 8 Shabbat Minyan 10:30 am <i>Pinchas</i>
20 Tammuz 9	21 Tammuz 10	22 Tammuz 11 Elders Converse 3:00 pm	23 Tammuz 12 Cuppa 10:30 am MCJC board meeting 5:30 pm	24 Tammuz 13	25 Tammuz 14 Shabbat candle lighting 6:30 pm	26 Tammuz 15 Shabbat Minyan 10:30 am <i>Matot-Masei</i>
27 Tammuz 16	28 Tammuz 17 Book Group 2:00 pm	29 Tammuz 18	1Av 19 Cuppa 10:30 am	2 Av 20 Justice Group meeting 5:30 pm	3 Av 21 Kabbalat Shabbat Berenson-Cohen 6:00 pm	4 Av 22 Shabbat Minyan 10:30 am <i>Devarim</i>
5 Av 23	6 Av 24	7 Av 25 Elders Converse 3:00 pm	8 Av 26 Cuppa 10:30 am	9 Av 27 Tisha B'Av 5:00 pm shul	10 Av 28 Shabbat candle lighting 6:30 pm	11 Av 29 Shabbat Minyan 10:30 am <i>Va'etchanan</i>
30 MCJC Youth Group 3:00 pm shul	31 12 Av 13 Av					