



# The Torch

December 14, 2016 • 14 Kislev 5777



## This Week

### Friday, 12/16

7:30 pm  
Shabbat Service

### Saturday, 12/17

9 am  
Hevrah Torah

## Hanukkah Service Times

### Friday, 12/23

5:30 pm  
Pre-Hanukkah Shabbat Service  
*Oneg Shabbat will include Hanukkah cookies!*

### Friday, 12/30

5:30 pm  
Shabbat Hanukkah Evening Service  
*Oneg Shabbat will include latke and sufganiyot!*

## Zichronam Livrachah



**Jack Lewis**, uncle of Amy Madnick (Leo)

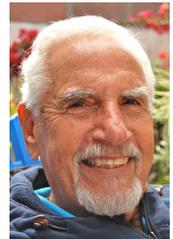
**Marilyn Friedman**, aunt of Rabbi Morley (Margarete) Feinstein

## Gift Card Challenge 2016



## Reflections on 50 Years in the Rabbinate

### Rabbi Emeritus Allen I. Freehling



Because my classmates and I are celebrating our 50th year in the rabbinate, it's not at all surprising that I find myself in a reflective mood.

After all, a half of a century seems to be a very long time in most of our lives; and, thinking about so much which has happened to us - individually and collectively - since Dr. Nelson Glueck declared that we were ready to serve as rabbis during our unforgettable Ordination Service at Cincinnati's Plum Street Temple in 1967, it is only natural that most of us are experiencing a torrent of memories washing over us right now.

Ever since we were advised that the Central Conference of American Rabbis plans to honor us during its annual gathering this coming March in Atlanta, over and over again two related questions have surfaced from the depths of my very being:

*"Have I used the rabbinate as a vocational vehicle to propel me from one opportunity to another in my determined desire to serve God, our unique Jewish people, and so many of God's other wondrous peoples?"*

*"Or, did the rabbinate use me to play a number of extraordinary roles in a quest to enhance the totality of my own life while I have been engaged in trying to lift up adults and children whom I've encountered in those congregations I've led and in communities which have been allowed me to shine a light into some very dark places throughout this journey that has thus far spanned 50 years?"*

I may have thought that I was in total control of my career/vocation; however, when I carefully consider its constant twists and turns I am left with the realization that nothing has happened either solely under my direction or merely by happenstance.

Instead, the road which I've traveled was really not only of my own choosing but it has been influenced by a confluence of sacred and secular forces, as well as by a variety of challenging situations that I've encountered along the way.

During this half-century - particularly when my heart and mind have been open to all kinds of possibilities - the rabbinate has permitted me to emotionally, intellectually and spiritually grow and to clearly see the world as it really is.

It has been then when I have enthusiastically responded to the needs of a vast array of persons and groups, and when I have been constantly emboldened by the ultimate realization that I have been doing work assigned to me by God.

Have there been times of confusion, of disappointment, of exhaustion? Of course!

But, most often they have occurred at those times when I have failed to energize my better self or when I have tried to satisfy some superficial ego need instead of being totally in touch with my reality and remembering that what I must do is to actualize some potential - mine and/or other folks.

Of uppermost importance have been those young people and adults who have

St. Joseph Center's mission is to provide working poor families, as well as homeless men, women, and children of all ages, with the inner resources and tools to become productive, stable and self-supporting members of the community. We have set a goal to provide their clientele with 360 gift cards for the Holidays. We have made this simple. Go to the [link](#)\*\* and with just a click you will be able to make someone's holiday brighter.

**\*\*For the Safeway gift card, we encourage you to purchase as many gift cards as you are able to, but please make sure each Safeway gift card is no more than \$25 each. The recipient email is [EGoldfarb@stjosephctr.org](mailto:EGoldfarb@stjosephctr.org).**

## COOK WITH US & MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN PEOPLES' LIVES



### LOOKING FOR A GREAT TIKKUN OLAM PROJECT FOR YOUR FAMILY, HAVURAH OR TEENAGER?

You don't have to be a master chef or even a good cook - just someone looking for a great way to help our fellow community residents at OPCC/The People Concern. Our **LIFE SKILLS COOKING WORKSHOPS** are incredibly fun and rewarding. We are now booking for these dates: **JANUARY 11 & JANUARY 25**, and **FEBRUARY 8 & 22nd**.

The Cooking Workshop meets from **5:30 pm to 7:30 pm**, at the Cloverfield Services Center in Santa Monica. Our theme is "**5 Ingredients for \$5 Dollars Or Less**", and the meals have been delicious. We are preparing, cooking and eating together. We are building community, and making a difference in people's lives. Please email Susan Corwin ([susan@sjclaw.com](mailto:susan@sjclaw.com)) or Ellen Dorros ([ellendorros@gmail.com](mailto:ellendorros@gmail.com)), for more information and to secure a date.



### Towels and Toiletries Drive

As we have done in the past, we are asking our University Synagogue families to please donate a set or two of towels (wash cloth, face towel, bath towel) to the ladies of OPCC as a holiday gift that will be given to them on **December 24th**. If you can please put them in a decorative gift bag that would be wonderful. Other toiletries being collected include travel size lotions, tooth paste, makeup, soaps, shampoos, etc. Towels can be dropped off at the Synagogue office from now until December 20th. Then, join us at the **Annual Holiday Party at the Cloverfield Service Center on December 24 from 2:00 - 4:00 pm**.

turned to me for guidance, support, and a clear vision of what they and I are able to achieve when we keep our cooperative efforts viable and exclusively focused on an assortment of worthy end goals.

At the heart of what I began to become 50 years ago was essentially the beginning of an evolving affirmation; it has been rooted in the belief that all of us, dear colleagues, have been ennobled by the teachings and demands of Judaism's biblical and contemporary prophets - those consistent advocates of human rights and social justice, who - according to Abraham Joshua Heschel - taught those who would listen to them that "the self is not the hub but the spoke of a revolving wheel."

I have witnessed how that wheel is constantly propelling all of us towards a better tomorrow. And, I have been reminded over and over again that ours is the responsibility to make sure that - without exception - it is used to convey each and all of God's progeny to a place where an abundance of blessings awaits us whenever we give evidence that we deserve them.

So, reflecting on everything that has occurred during this span of a half-century - even when I never for a moment ignore those losses which I have been forced to sustain - if you were to ask me: "Allen, how are you?" without hesitation, my instantaneous response is: "I am blessed!"

## HEROES AMONG US



### HELP WITH OUR AUCTION

The Auction Committee needs every family's help with securing donations! Please bring (or email) the [solicitation letter and donation form](#) to the businesses you patronize (restaurants, beauty salons, gyms, etc). Remember, all proceeds generated from the Auction will directly benefit children's education. Thank you so much for your help. Together we can make this happen!

Silver Generation presents:  
**Did Jesus Spin the Dreidel?**  
with Rabbi Feinstein

December 28 from 12 - 1:30 pm\*

\*followed by latkas and schmoozing



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