

MELROSE B'NAI ISRAEL EMANU-EL



shofar



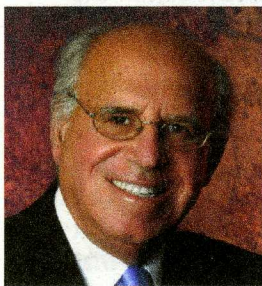
A Conservative congregation, traditional and egalitarian, dedicated to perpetuating Judaism by supporting the religious, spiritual, educational, social and cultural life of our community.

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Does Faith Take A Vacation? by Rabbi Charles S. Sherman



Many years ago, I had an experience on a Saturday morning, in my home, which has always stayed with me. I was a young Rabbi then, and Leah and I had four little children. I had just begun a two-week vacation and was looking forward to some rest and relaxation, a change of pace, days without a set routine.

It was the first Saturday morning of my vacation and I decided to “sleep in,” planning on giving services a pass. I heard my wife down the hall, talking to the older children, who were up and apparently putting on their *Shabbat* clothes. “We’re not going to services this morning,” Leah told them. Her comment was met with questions.

My kids were good kids—but it was not that they were “angels.” The point is they were perplexed. “Why?” one of them asked. “Abba is on vacation,” Leah answered. And then it hit me, that if you follow that line of logic, being on vacation also meant being on vacation from my faith, my community, from teaching my children through setting a good example.

I’ll be honest, it was not a proud moment for me. What it was, though, was a powerful, learning moment. And the teachers were my own children, who did not understand why vacation and going to services were somehow incompatible. Some of what we learn, we know because others have learned it and found a way to teach it to us.

That morning I jumped out of bed, dressed quickly, and we all went to services together.

Enough said. See you this summer in *shul*!



Cantor Joshua Gordon Retires

I cannot visualize Josh Gordon as a seven-year old Yeshiva bucher. I keep seeing our mature white-haired school psychologist, dressed in the clothing of a yeshiva bucher, or I visualize a dark-eyed traditional Jew, who somehow bears no resemblance to our retiring cantor. When I asked Josh over beer about the origins of the man we know today, he remembered going on Shabbat to a different synagogue every week in Newark, NJ where he came into the world, or in New York City, where he grew to be a young man. His father would demand to know the melodies of all the prayers, and later, demanded that he prepare the *Haftarah* every week. Josh still takes pride in knowing every *Haftarah* by heart, and even more pride in the congregants he has taught to cantillate.

Josh joined Melrose when it was just Melrose-B’nai Israel, and developed a great relationship with Rabbi Moseson. He had graduated Yeshiva University in New York, in 1962. He followed this with a Masters degree in School Psychology

from Queens College, and another Masters degree from Dropsie College in Jewish Education. With feet firmly planted in Judaism and Education, Josh went on to be a Cantor at Ne’er Tamid in Delaware County, a post he held for 14 years, and practiced school psychology with distinction.



Somehow he made his way to his cantorial position at Congregation Melrose, and School Psychologist and Advisor in the Philadelphia Public Schools. Seeking ways of bringing people together, Josh worked to bridge the gaps in his Jewish community as *hazzan*, and to bridge the gaps in the schools as psychologist and union steward. All of the melodies he learned as a seven-year old, he has brought to us to enrich our Jewish experience. Josh views his 36 years at Melrose B’nai Israel, as it amalgamated to become MBIEE. He joined

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