

# Garden State Region News - December 12, 2025



**STAND  
WITH  
ISRAEL**

**HAP-BEE CHANUKKAH!**



WL Week

Visit GSR Website

**Wishing all a Happy Chanukkah from the GSR Board.**

## GSR Region Programs

- **Thurs. Dec. 18, 2025** - GSR helping out at NJ Community Food Bank - Closed
- **Sun. Jan. 4, 2026 @12:30 pm** - Coffee & Conversation on Zoom - Volunteer Medical Clowning in Israel
- **Wed. Jan. 21, 2026 @1-3 pm** - GSR helping out at NJ Community Food Bank - [Still accepting volunteers](#)
- **Sun. Feb. 8, 2026 @11 am** - Coffee and Conversation on Zoom - Meet with our Israeli Kehillot counterparts on Joy in Judaism: Family & Community.
- **Mon. Mar. 8, 2026 @7:30 pm** - Coffee and Conversation on Zoom - Rabbi Stefanie Dickstein compares Vashti to Queen Esther
- **Sun. May 3, 2026** - GSR Spring Conference



## GSR Coffee and Conversation on Zoom

**Sunday, January 4, 2026 at 12:30 PM ET**

**Laughter really is the best medicine:  
Volunteer Medical Clowning in Israel**

**Presenter – Lynn Kra-Oz**

Lynn has been a volunteer medical clown for 18 years. She is a retired speech and language pathologist from Highland Park, NJ who made Aliyah.



What does "medical clowning" mean, anyway? Do medical clowns volunteer only in pediatric wards? What is so special about a red nose? How does one train for this unique volunteer role in Israel? Learn about all of this and more...!

Please Register at

<https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/s1/MYS0zeo/clowning>

Questions? Susan Winter at [winter.susan@gmail.com](mailto:winter.susan@gmail.com)

**Register**



**Join the Garden State Region  
as We Volunteer  
with the Community FoodBank of New Jersey  
at their Hillside, NJ location**



**Wednesday, January 21, 2026  
1 pm - 3 pm  
31 Evans Terminal Road, Hillside, NJ  
07205**

**You must individually sign up below for  
the above date/time.  
After you sign up, send an email with  
your phone number to Tova Rothschild  
at [tovacrothschild@gmail.com](mailto:tovacrothschild@gmail.com) .**

**Spaces are limited.**

**Sign up**

Questions: Tova Rothschild, GSR Social Action Chair, [tovacrothschild@gmail.com](mailto:tovacrothschild@gmail.com)

**SHABBAT MESSAGE**

# Shabbat Message

December 13, 2025 | 23rd of Kislev, 5786

## Bonding and Leadership

Debbie Zimmerman

WLCJ Leadership Institute Logistics Chair and International Board Member



I look forward to my weekend as Shabbat approaches. Shabbat is special. It is a time to reflect on my past week and acknowledge all that is great in my life. I take the time to slow down, appreciate my family, friends, and surroundings. Attending shul for services always gives me the opportunity to not only learn about the teachings of the Torah, but to retrieve the warm feeling I get when surrounded by prayer, traditions, learning, and friendships.

I received that same feeling when I attended the Leadership Institute hosted by WLCJ a few years ago. It is again being offered on January 25–27, 2026, at Temple Sinai in Hollywood, Florida. I encourage everyone to attend. This is a fabulous opportunity to meet women from other Regions. You will learn techniques to enhance your leadership skills, goal setting, time management, and conflict resolution while at the same time deepen your knowledge as a Jewish woman. You will leave with a sense of accomplishment and new friends who become very close over the couple days.

[Read more](#)

WL CHANUKKAH BINGO

## Registration closes on December 12th.

 **ONLINE**

**Tuesday, December 16 2025**  
**8:00 pm ET | 5:00 pm PT**



**Let's Play CHANUKKAH BINGO!**  
Join us to celebrate the third night of Chanukkah on December 16th.

After lighting our *chanukiot* we'll celebrate the holiday together by playing bingo! No experience necessary!

Your bingo cards will be sent between December 12-14, 2025. You will download and print the bingo boards from your email to use before we play. It will be your choice to play virtually, online or make paper copies to use in person as we play. Prizes will be mailed to you.

[Register](#)



**QUESTIONS?**

**Fran Hildebrandt**  
WLCJ International Vice President and Kehilah/Education Chair  
[fhildebrandt@wlcj.org](mailto:fhildebrandt@wlcj.org)

**Jeanette M. Brownstein**  
WLCJ Vice Chair of Education  
[jeanettembrownstein@gmail.com](mailto:jeanettembrownstein@gmail.com)

## WOMEN OF THE WALL CHANUKKIYAH LIGHTING

 **ONLINE**

**Tuesday, December 16 2025**  
**11:00 am ET | 8:00 am PT**



The best way to push back darkness is to add more light. Each year, the main golden *chanukkiyah* is placed in the men's section of the Kotel. The Prime Minister, Chief Rabbis, ministers, and other officials are invited to the official lighting - everyone but women. Even though women played an essential role in the Chanukkah miracle, they remain excluded from the national ceremony.

Join us on Facebook Live on December 16 as we offer an alternative: a women-led Chanukkah candle lighting, filled with light, song, and solidarity.



[Tune In Here](#)

## NEXT WLCJ LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

## IN-PERSON

**Sunday, January 25 - Tuesday, January 27, 2026**



Women's League for Conservative Judaism – committed to developing skilled and dedicated leaders – invites you to attend an inspiring Leadership Institute that will expand your skills as a leader and enhance your knowledge as a Jewish woman while strengthening your connection to Women's League, your Sisterhood Affiliate, your community, and *Klal Yisrael*.

The next Women's League Leadership Institute is scheduled for **January 25-27, 2026 at Temple Sinai in Hollywood, FL**.

### **WHAT IS LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE?**

A multi-day workshop that will enhance your personal style of communication with interactive exercises and role-playing, and will help you discover tips and techniques for using language that motivates, stimulates and encourages women to volunteer. An opportunity to network with other women, master goal-setting, time management and team-building. Learn the secret of keeping yourself challenged.

### **WHAT MAKES IT DIFFERENT THAN OTHER LEADERSHIP WORKSHOPS?**

The Leadership Institute's unique format allows participants to build a personal program to expand **Jewish knowledge and leadership skills**.

### **HOW MUCH WILL IT COST?**

\$299 includes materials, programming, and meals. This fee does not include hotel or transportation to Temple Sinai in Hollywood, FL.

Registration for the hotel is \$134/single and \$144/double + tax per night. [Click here](#) to reserve a room in the Leadership Institute room block at the **LaQuinta Suites by Wyndham in Hollywood, FL**.

Make sure that your check-in/check-out dates are listed appropriately. According to WLCJ guidelines, please do not travel on Shabbat. These rooms can be accommodated into double occupancy. Before booking, please let us know who you will be sharing the room with for our records and explain how split payment will be handled.

The learning and sense of community created during the Institute comes both from the shared experiences during the formal program and the unstructured time together at the hotel. To facilitate this, we strongly urge local participants to stay with the rest of the group at the hotel.

[Register](#)



### **QUESTIONS?**

**Debbie Zimmerman**

WLCJ Leadership Institute Logistics Chair

[dzimmerman@wlcj.org](mailto:dzimmerman@wlcj.org)

**WLCJ SHABBAT JANUARY 17, 2026 - MATERIALS AVAILABLE**



2026/5786 – January 17/28 Tevet  
Parashat Vaera

You are invited to tailor the following texts to meet the needs and goals of your Women's League Shabbat committee. We are pleased to offer a collection of poems, songs/music videos, articles, rabbinic excerpts, and readings based on the current Torah Fund theme of *Oseh Shalom*.

A generic *D'var Torah* is also included for those communities scheduling their Women's League Shabbat on a date other than *Parashat Vaera*.

**Please stay tuned for additional materials that may be read at your services:** letters of greeting from Women's League International President Julia Loeb, Women's League Torah Fund Chair Lori Snow, and Women's League Executive Director Rabbi Ellen Wolintz-Fields, as well as a dedicated *D'var Torah* for *Parashat Vaera* to be used specifically on January 17, 2026.

[Learn More](#)

## WLCJ CONVENTION - JEWELS IN THE CROWN

### Applications are open!



We are excited to announce that the next Jewels in the Crown award ceremony will take place during our upcoming **WL Convention in Alexandria, VA in July 2026!**

This signature award recognizes and celebrates Sisterhood Affiliates for their outstanding accomplishments in education, cultural programming, social action, and WL engagement.

#### WHO MAY APPLY?

Every WLCJ Sisterhood Affiliate is encouraged to complete a Jewels in the Crown 2026 (JIC) application.

#### HOW TO APPLY?

Please complete the application form linked below.

Although the online application is preferable, Sisterhood Affiliates may print/scan/email an application to [jewels@wlcj.org](mailto:jewels@wlcj.org) or mail an application to our WLCJ offices at:

Jewish Theological Seminary  
Attn: **Women's League for  
Conservative Judaism**  
3080 Broadway, Suite K900  
New York, NY 10027



### QUESTIONS?

For questions or assistance completing an application, please email [jewels@wlcj.org](mailto:jewels@wlcj.org)  
You may also contact . . .

Anise Parnes, [aparnes@wlcj.org](mailto:aparnes@wlcj.org)  
Edna Schrank, [eschrank@wlcj.org](mailto:eschrank@wlcj.org)  
Rachel Ferber, [rferber@wlcj.org](mailto:rferber@wlcj.org)

**Sisterhood Affiliates will be honored during WL Convention 2026 in Alexandria, VA!**

[Online Application](#)

[Download PDF Application](#)



**Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday**

**12 noon ET, 9am PT, 10am MT, and  
11am CT**

A virtual service for our WLCJ Sisters to recite *Mishaberach* (the Prayer for Healing) and Psalms, and study *Kaddish*.

<https://zoom.us/j/630830287>

Meeting ID: 630 830 287

Password: 875936

## We are Women's League

Engaging Enriching and Empowering Jewish Women  
Women's League for Conservative Judaism

WL WEEK

DONATE TO WLCJ

3080 Broadway Suite K900 | New York, NY  
10027 | Phone: 405-870-1260 |  
[info@wlcj.org](mailto:info@wlcj.org)

### SHARE YOUR SISTERHOOD HAPPENINGS WITH US!

Look for all the info both here and on our Website & Facebook pages.



#### Follow the Garden State Region!

If you would like to contribute a flyer or picture to upload please forward to [Ilene Rothman](#) and [Sheila Kaufman](#).

Click [here](#) to connect with the Garden State Region Facebook page.

Click [here](#) to visit the Garden State Region website.

Make sure to click both **Like** and **Follow**. It's another great way to learn about everything happening in our Region.



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