

# Garden State Region News - February 27, 2026



**It's Official: WLCJ Convention 2026  
Registration is OPEN!**

**"Jewels in the Crown" Deadline  
extended to March 17.**



**STAND  
WITH  
ISRAEL**



WL Week

Visit GSR Website

## GSR REGION PROGRAMS

- **Mon. Mar. 9, 2026 @ 7:30 pm EST**- Coffee and Conversation on Zoom - Rabbi Stephanie Dickstein compares Vashti to Queen Esther in "Naked Under the Crown: Evolving Views of Esther and Vashti as Role Models for Jewish Women."  
**Registration is OPEN!**
  - **Sun. May 3, 2026 @ 9 am - 4 pm** - GSR Spring Conference and Installation of Officers - "Jewish Latinos - Coming to America" at Congregation B'nai Israel, Millburn
  - **Sun.-Wed. July 12-15, 2026** - WLCJ Convention 2026, Alexandria, VA.  
**Registration is OPEN!**
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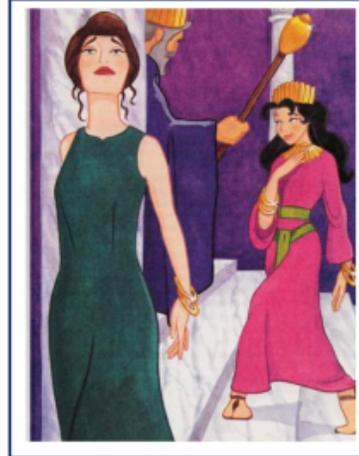
GSR Coffee and Conversation on Zoom

**Monday, March 9, 2026 at 7:30 PM**

## **Naked Under the Crown: Evolving Views of Esther and Vashti as Role Models for Jewish Women**

Speaker - Rabbi Stephanie Dickstein

Once, only wild girls dressed up as Vashti. Then it was Esther who was boring and possibly problematic. Is the pendulum swinging back again? We will explore how assessments of Queens Esther and Vashti as heroines, a villain or even a significant part of the Purim Story have evolved over the centuries and especially in our own times.



Rabbi Stephanie Dickstein was the first woman with young children ordained at JTS to serve as a pulpit rabbi in New Jersey. She also worked as a chaplain, a Rabbinical School Assistant dean and continues to offer Jewish spiritual care and learning.

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

Register at <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/yFWivt0/VashtiEsther>

Register

Garden State Region  
WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

We are  
Women's League  
Empowering, connecting and inspiring Jewish women.  
"Women's League for Conservative Judaism"

JEWISH LATINOS - COMING TO AMERICA

**SAVE THE DATE**

2026 Garden State Region  
Spring Conference & Installations  
Sunday, May 3, 2026 ~ 9:00 to 4:00 pm (TBD)  
Congregation B'nai Israel, Millburn, NJ

## SISTERHOOD AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

Sisterhood Affiliates,

Do you have any programs that you would like others to know about? Either to publicize your event in advance or to share your affiliate program afterwards.

- To publicize your event in advance, send a flyer in jpg or pdf format with Registration link.
- To showcase your affiliate programs post event, submit up to 3 photos with captions and a few sentences to describe your program. (We will shorten if necessary.)

*Please e-mail your programs that you would like posted in this newsletter to both [Ilene Rothman](#) AND [Sheila Kaufman](#).*



Torah Fund supports programs and scholarships at the five Conservative/Masorti global institutes of higher education.



[Click HERE](#) to send a Torah Fund E-Card  
[Click HERE](#) to donate to this year's 2025-26 Torah Fund Campaign  
[Click HERE](#) to donate to the Torah Fund Legacy Society  
[Click HERE](#) for the Torah Fund Chadashot Newsletter

Any questions please e-mail Sindy Manas at [smanas750e@gmail.com](mailto:smanas750e@gmail.com).

**Make a Donation to the Garden State Region to:**

- Honor someone special
- Wish a Mazel Tov to a Bar/Bat Mitzvah family
- Send get well wishes
- Send condolences

Our **Scholarship Fund** helps to send women to WLCJ Convention and Leadership Institute where they learn necessary skills to share with our sisterhoods.

The **Sunshine Fund** supports members of the GSR Board in their time of need.

The **Evelyn Auerbach Education Fund** to sponsor an annual GSR Region educational event.

To make donations, contact Donna Franklin, GSR Treasurer, at [gstrtreasurer@wlcj.org](mailto:gstrtreasurer@wlcj.org) and include which fund(s) to make the donation to.

Or mail your check payable to "GSR-WLCJ" to  
Donna Franklin, 7 Liddy Place, West Caldwell, NJ 07006  
Donations can also be made via Credit Card.

Donate to GSR using Credit Card

WLCJ PROGRAMS AND MESSAGES

## **Standing Together: WLCJ Leadership Speaks Out on the Kotel Crisis**

The right to pray at the Western Wall according to our traditions is facing an immediate and deeply personal threat. As the Knesset advances legislation that could dismantle the Egalitarian Kotel and criminalize our worship, WLCJ leadership is standing shoulder-to-shoulder with our Movement partners to demand the protection of religious pluralism. Read the powerful joint letter from **WLCJ International President Julia Loeb, Executive Director Rabbi Ellen S. Wolintz-Fields**, and global Masorti leaders, and join us tomorrow for a critical Emergency Briefing on the future of equality at the Kotel.

READ

# Shabbat Message

February 27, 2026 | 11 of Adar, 5786

## Shaping the Sound of Our Future

**Julia Loeb**

WLCJ International President



Last week, I visited a Jewish school in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan, with the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations and listened to children sing.

Their voices were clear and confident singing *Oseh Shalom*, Hebrew words that have traveled across continents and centuries. These were not whispered songs or guarded expressions of identity. They were joyful and strong, as if Jewish life there were the most natural thing in the world.

[Read more](#)

### ORDER YOUR CHARM - MAKING KITS



[REGISTER](#)

### Create Your Own Israel Flag Purse Charm

**Kits must be ordered by February 27!**

Create your own Israel flag purse charm with us on Zoom to show your support for Israel! Kits are available for purchase through Jody Glass at [glass.jody@gmail.com](mailto:glass.jody@gmail.com) for \$15, with a discounted rate of \$9 for any additional kits shipped to the same home. While the event takes place Thursday, March 12, at 7:30 pm, **place your orders via Zelle, PayPal, or check by February 27.**

### WLCJ WORKSHOP: TOOLBOX TALKS SERIES

## SISTERHOOD PARTNERS WITHIN THE SYNAGOGUE COMMUNITY

Thurs | Mar 5 | 7:30 pm ET | Online

Ready to turn your leadership goals into reality? Join **WL Consultants Barbara Ezring** and **Iris Lasky** for our next Toolbox Talks for Sisterhood Affiliates. This dynamic Zoom session will focus on building powerful partnerships within your synagogue community.

[REGISTER](#)



## ALL THAT JAZZ AND MORE: JEWS AND 1970'S HOLLYWOOD MUSICALS



## NO LAUGHING MATTERS—DRAMATICALLY THEMED MUSICALS

Mon | Mar 9 | 3:00 pm ET | Online

Discover the Jewish roots of 1970s Hollywood! In this stand-alone session focusing on dramatically themed musicals, we will use film clips to uncover the Jewish creators behind classics like *Cabaret*, *All That Jazz*, and *A Little Night Music*. A live Q&A will follow the presentation. Even if you missed the first session of the series, you won't want to miss this deep dive into cinema history!

[REGISTER](#)

## WL INCLUSION AND MISHPACHAH

### B'NAI MITZVAH PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES (ADRABA) OF THE MASORTI MOVEMENT

Sun | Mar 22 | 12:00 pm ET | Online

Join the WLCJ Inclusion and Mishpachah Committees to hear from the founders of Adraba, an incredible Masorti program in Israel preparing young adults with special needs for their B'nai Mitzvah. They will share how we can bring this "hidden gem" to our North American communities.

[REGISTER](#)



## UPDATES: PROGRAMMING WITH PANACHE

Searching for new programs to showcase and present? Wondering what kinds of educational programs are available to offer?

The WLCJ Kehilah and Education Committee is preparing a third edition of our program guidebook, aiming to refresh our reservoir of ideas for the first time in three years.

Our goal is to create an updated, comprehensive resource filled with spectacular programming and valuable tools to support your Region and Sisterhood Affiliate.

We need your help to fill these pages! Submissions are open to everyone—not just officers—and can cover any topic from recent years or upcoming plans.



Use the form below to submit program ideas. Send any questions to Fran Hildebrandt at [fhildebrandt@wlcj.org](mailto:fhildebrandt@wlcj.org) or WhatsApp 248-318-8301.

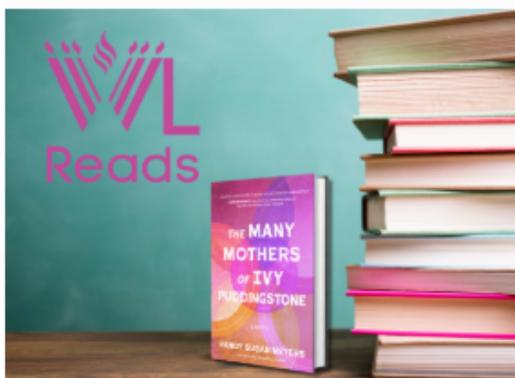
**The deadline to submit programs is Wednesday, March 25.**

[SUBMIT A PROGRAM HERE](#)

## WL READS

 ONLINE

**Sunday, April 12, 2026  
at 1:00 pm ET**



Join WL Reads for a lively conversation with international bestselling author Randy Susan Meyers. Known for her compelling voice and acclaimed novels, Meyers will discuss her latest book, *The Many Mothers of Ivy Puddingstone*, a thought-provoking exploration of altruism, justice, and sacrifice. **Registration is now open.** Read along and join us on Sunday, April 12 at 1:00 pm ET—even if you haven't read the book yet.

[REGISTER](#)

 QUESTIONS

**Karen Block**  
WL Reads Chair  
[kblock@wlcj.org](mailto:kblock@wlcj.org)

## WLCJ CONVENTION 2026

**[It's Official: WLCJ Convention 2026 Registration is OPEN!](#)**

**"Jewels in the Crown" Deadline  
Extended to March 17!**



**VISIT THE  
CONVENTION 2026  
WEBSITE**



**Shabbaton:** Friday–  
Saturday, July 10–11, 2026  
**Convention:** Sunday–  
Wednesday, July 12–15,  
2026



**The Hilton Alexandria  
Mark Center**  
5000 Seminary Road,  
Alexandria, VA 22311



[Click here](#) or on the image  
to go to the online  
application or

[here for PDF](#) version.

**NEW** - [Click here](#) to view  
the video of the application  
procedure.

### **PURCHASE YOUR AD FOR THE CONVENTION 2026 VIRTUAL AD JOURNAL TODAY!**

Don't let the moment pass without honoring the people who make our community shine. Whether it's a thank you, "*mazel tov*," or a personal note of appreciation and gratitude, now is the time to secure your spot in the Virtual Ad Journal!

**PURCHASE YOUR AD**



The WWOT, the Weekly Words of Torah, each week through the end of June 2026, will connect to the **2025-2026 / 5786** Torah Fund general campaign, *Oseh Shalom* – Maker of Peace. To read more Weekly Words of Torah, [click here](#).

### ***Parashat Tetzaveh***

In a Torah portion where Moses' name mysteriously recedes into the background, the spotlight falls entirely on the detailed blueprints for the priestly garments. But what is the deeper significance behind the specific rows of jewels on the High Priest's breastplate? Rabbi Margie Cella explores a beautiful, centuries-old commentary that connects this ancient uniform to our ancestors, challenging us to look closely at whose shoulders we stand on today.

**READ THIS WEEK'S WWOT**

### **OTHER WLCJ PROGRAM REMINDERS**

**Click the image to explore each program series and to register.**



MATHILDE'S  
MASTER CLASS

Sessions will meet on a Tuesday night each month over Zoom at 7:30PM ET Nov 11, Dec 9,  
Jan 13, Feb 10, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9

MAKOM B'YACHAD



**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



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Office: (405) 870-1260



**Garden State Region**  
WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



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Ilene Rothman  
GSR Secretary Communications / Newsletter Editor  
[gsrcommunications@wlcj.org](mailto:gsrcommunications@wlcj.org)

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