

Garden State Region News - January 30, 2026



**STAND
WITH
ISRAEL**



WL Week

Visit GSR Website

GSR REGION PROGRAMS

- **Sun. Feb. 22, 2026 @11 am** - Coffee and Conversation on Zoom - Meet with our Israeli Kehillot counterparts on "Joy in Judaism: Family & Community."
REGISTRATION OPEN
 - **Mon. Mar. 9, 2026 @7:30 pm** - Coffee and Conversation on Zoom - Rabbi Stefanie Dickstein presents "Naked Under the Crown: Evolving Views of Esther and Vashti as Role Models for Jewish Women."
 - **Sun. May 3, 2026 @ 9 am** - GSR Spring Conference and Installation of Officers; Congregation B'nai Israel, Millburn. **SAVE THE DATE**
 - **Sun.-Wed. July 12-15, 2026** - WLCJ Convention 2026, Alexandria, VA
-



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**



GSR Coffee and Conversation on Zoom

Sunday, February 22, 2026 at 11 am EST

Joy in Judaism: Family and Community

What does "Joy in Judaism" mean to Israeli families and communities and in the Garden State Region?
Discussion will be led by our Masorti Kehillot (congregations)
- Moreshet Avraham and Torat Hayyim.
There will also be a speaker from the Garden State Region.



Topics and speakers are:

Moreshat Avraham, Jerusalem

Joy in Israeli "Family Day" (Henrietta Szold) - Rabbi Amirit Rosen
The Joy of Chesed - Natalie Mendelsohn

Torat Hayyim, Herzliya

Joy and Judaism: Community - Tahel Ilan Ber
Joy and Judaism: Family - Iris Sadeh Rosler

Garden State Region, NJ

Community: Inside and Out - Orly Prince, Oheb Shalom
Congregation, South Orange



Questions? Susan Winter at winter.susan@gmail.com

Register at <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sl/UMnEPpK/joy>

Register

SISTERHOOD AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

Temple Beth El of Somerset

presents

A Women's Seder

A Celebration of the Women in Our Lives

*Sunday,
March 8, 2026*

4:30 pm

\$36 pp

*Be a part of this event with
Special Guest Chef, Naomi
Lasky and Special Guest
Leader, Sherri Morris.*

See below for details.



A dedicated Haggadah has been written for this very special event.

All women are invited, and you do not need to be a temple member or Jewish. To make this event memorable, we do ask for just a few things from you to help us prepare.

Submission for Haggadah: Think of a woman in your life you would like to celebrate by having her picture and a dedication in our personalized Haggadah.

\$5 - Please email or bring to the temple a picture of her, with a 1-2 sentence dedication written below.

\$3 - If you would like to do just a dedication **or** just a picture.

*Please provide this information ***no later than Jan. 30th***: Complete the information below, email this form and the picture you've chosen to Lisa, tbesomerset@gmail.com. You can also come by the temple during office hours and provide this form, payment and your picture will be scanned and returned to you.

Your name: _____

Your email: _____

Name of pictured person: _____

Their relationship to you: _____

**If you are doing a dedication, please provide 1-2 sentences about this person: _____

Your submissions will become part of the Haggadah, making this event even more special and memorable! Please join us!

An email invitation will be sent separately. Invite and bring your family, friends, neighbors!

TO PRINT FORM

Questions? Lisa at tbesomerset@gmail.com

Please send your programs that you would like posted to both [Ilene Rothman](#) AND [Sheila Kaufman](#).

- Do you have any programs that you would like others to know about? Easy way to publicize your event! Let us know. Send a flyer in jpg or pdf format.
- Starting in January, we will also showcase affiliate programs. Submit up to 3 photos with captions and 2 sentences to describe your program. (We will shorten if necessary.)

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

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 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

Shabbat Message

January 30, 2026 | 13th of Shevat, 5786

The Courage to Keep Going

Julia Loeb

WLCJ International President



There is an old story about a group of frogs who enter a race. The course is difficult, and almost immediately the crowd begins to shout discouragement. "It's too hard!" "You'll never make it!" "Why even try?" One by one, the frogs drop out until only one remains. Against all odds, that frog reaches the finish line. When the crowd asks how she succeeded when everyone else failed, they discover the truth. She was deaf. She couldn't hear the naysayers telling her she couldn't do it.

It's a cute story, but also an uncomfortably honest one. How often do we abandon good ideas not because they lack merit, but because we allow doubt, our own or someone else's, to derail us? How often do we convince ourselves that the risks are too great, the obstacles too large, or that we are simply not capable?

[Read more](#)

WLCJ EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO BE HONORED AT JTS CONVOCATION

 **ONLINE**

Monday, February 23, 10:30 AM–12:00 PM ET



Please join us as **WLCJ Executive Director Rabbi Ellen S. Wolintz-Fields** receives an honorary doctorate from JTS.

[Register for the Livestream](#)

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS



New Feature: Why WLCJ Individual Membership?

WHY ALMOST INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP?

Rediscover the power of community in our new series highlighting the diverse journeys of our Individual Member. We begin with **Doreen Bornfreund**, who reveals the personal experience that sparked it all: how she *almost* became an Individual Member.

[READ THE FIRST INSTALLMENT](#)

Submit your stories (300 words max) to:

Doreen Bornfreund
WLCJ Membership Chair
dbornfreund@wlcj.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS



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 are putting together a third edition of program ideas. We have not updated our reservoir of ideas in almost three years. Our hope is to create a new and updated guidebook that will not only provide you with spectacular program ideas but will also give you a plethora of information and resources that you can use in your Region and with your Sisterhood Affiliate.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Please send us program ideas and descriptions that we can include in our guidebook. There is no restriction on topic nor is it only Officers that can submit; this is open to anyone! These can be programs that have already been presented over the last few years or will soon be presented. Please include the following in your submission:

- The name of the program
- A brief description of what the program is about
- Any other pertinent information you would like to include (name of the presenter/s, necessary materials, what made it such a great program, etc.)
- The name and contact information of someone for more information

All submissions must be sent to Fran Hildebrandt at fhildebrandt@wlcj.org by March 15. If you have further questions, contact Fran via email or Whatsapp 248-318-8301.

SPECIAL ONLINE BRIEFING | IRAN: A TURNING POINT... BUT TO WHERE?

ONLINE

Sunday, February 1, 2026

1:00 pm ET | 12:00 noon CT | 11:00 am MT | 10:00 am PT |



SPECIAL ONLINE BRIEFING

Iran: A turning point... but to where?

We've all closely followed developments from Iran. Join Masorti/Conservative leaders and communities from around the world for a special Zoom briefing with

SIMA SHINE | Senior Researcher at INSS and ex-senior Mossad official
Former Mossad Research Chief and Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Affairs

zoom | LIVE EVENT

Sunday, February 1st
20:00 Jerusalem Time

Los Angeles 10 AM | London 12:00
New York 1:00 PM | Berlin 13:00
Toronto 1:00 PM | Budapest 19:00

* The briefing will be conducted in English with translation to Spanish and French
Register Here: <https://bit.ly/311228> | For more details: mercaz@mercazolami.org

Join us for a special Zoom briefing on developments from Iran with **former senior Mossad official and Deputy National Security Advisor Sima Shine.**

[Register](#)

For more information or questions:
mercaz@mercazolami.org



ONLINE

Learning Hebrew

Prayerbook Reading
For Women's League Members



SPRING
Classes start
**February
2026**

Registration for
**ALL Levels is
NOW OPEN!**

Registration Is Open for All Spring Semester Classes

If you would like to expand your Jewish literacy skills, and/or improve your ability to read Biblical Hebrew, you should take one of our classes.

Classes begin on February 4, 2026.

Our **Level 2+** is for students who have previously taken this class before and do not yet read smoothly. Prayers from Shabbat and holidays will be used to improve reading fluency and understanding.

Our **Level 3+** class is for students who have taken this class before and wish to continue at this level.

Our **Level 4 - Chumash** class is for proficient Hebrew readers who want to strengthen their skills and learn vocabulary through the weekly Torah and Haftarah portions.

Our **Level 4 - Advanced Siddur** class is for students who previously took our Level 3 Grammar class and members with strong Hebrew reading ability. This class will delve into prayers by examining word roots, prefixes, suffixes and essential grammar.

A minimum of 6 students is required for each class.

[Register](#)



QUESTIONS?

Rachel Ferber
rferber@wlcj.org
Hebrew Course Chair

WLCJ WORKSHOP: TOOLBOX TALKS SERIES



Announcing: Toolbox Talks for Sisterhood Affiliates a dynamic Zoom series open to all Women's League members

Are you looking for solutions to today's leadership challenges?
Would you like to learn the difference between having a title and being an effective leader?
Do you want to turn goals into accomplishments?

If you said yes, then Toolbox Talks for Sisterhood Affiliates is for you!

Join us for one session, all six, or however many work with your schedule.

[Register](#)

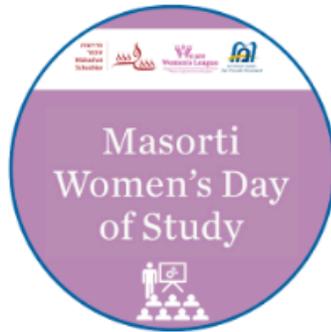
Upcoming Toolbox Talks sessions:

February 5, 2026
March 5, 2026
May 7, 2026
June 4, 2026

Anise Parnes
WLCJ International Vice President and
Consulting Services Vice Chair
aparnes@wlcj.org

 **ONLINE**

Sunday, February 8, 2026
16:50 Israel Time | 9:50 am ET



Schedule Update for February 8
This program is moved to Zoom. Please join us online!

A screenshot of a Zoom meeting link and details. The link is "https://us02zoom.us/j/9111111111". Below the link, there is a table with columns for "Name", "Email", and "Phone". The table contains several rows of names and contact information. At the bottom, there are logos for "Masorti Movement", "Women's League", and "AI".

The Search for Harmony: Text, Prayer, Song

Schedule (via ZOOM)

Welcome (16:50): Rabbi Diana Vila

First session (17:05-18:15)

Class in English with Rabbi Diana Vila

Class in Spanish with Vila Balter

Second Session (18:25-19:35)

Class in English with Dr. Shana Mauer

Class in Spanish with Rabbi Diana Villa

Final Words (19:45-19:50): Rabbi

Ellen S. Wolintz-Fields

The Masorti Women's Days of Study were created and directed by Women's League for Conservative Judaism, in cooperation with the Schechter Institutes of Jewish Studies and the Masorti Movement.

[Register](#)



QUESTIONS?

Diane Friedgut

friedgutdiane@outlook.com

WORLD WIDE WRAP

 **ONLINE**



FEBRUARY 8, 2026

Registration form for U.S. and Canadian Clubs [here](#). Information and registration for other 2026 International participation here – [English](#), [Español](#), [Français](#).

[Register](#)

For more information or questions:
FJMC WWW Committee

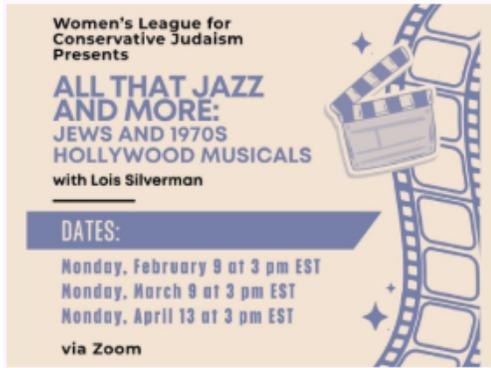
www@fjmc.org



ALL THAT JAZZ

 ONLINE

**Monday, February 9, 2026
at 3:00 pm ET**



Women's League for
Conservative Judaism
Presents

**ALL THAT JAZZ
AND MORE:
JEWS AND 1970S
HOLLYWOOD MUSICALS**
with Lois Silverman

DATES:

Monday, February 9 at 3 pm EST
Monday, March 9 at 3 pm EST
Monday, April 13 at 3 pm EST

via Zoom

All That Jazz and More—Jews and 1970s Hollywood Musicals
Explore the Jewish connections behind iconic 1970s Hollywood musicals. Through film clips and visuals, these stand-alone sessions highlight the Jewish actors, composers, writers, and directors who shaped films like *Cabaret*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, *A Star Is Born*, and *Saturday Night Fever*. A must for movie and music lovers alike.

Session One—Monday, February 9, 2026
—*Fiddler on the Roof* and Tradition—
Traditional musicals

REGISTER

Upcoming sessions:
Session Two—**Monday, March 9, 2026**—
No Laughing Matters—Dramatically
themed musicals

REGISTER

Session Three—**Monday, April 13, 2026**
—Not Your Parents' Kind of Musicals—
Rock and contemporary musicals

REGISTER

 QUESTIONS

Lois Silverman
lsilverman@wlcj.org

WL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

 ONLINE

**Sunday, February 22, 2026
at 7:30 pm ET**



Health &
Wellness

Join us for an engaging conversation with **Nina Manolson, M.A., NBC-HWC**, Body-Peace Coach, as we explore the complicated relationship Jewish women have with food, body, and tradition. Discover why it's so complex—and how to create more ease, nourishment, and peace for yourself and your legacy.

REGISTER

 QUESTIONS

Debbie Bettan
Health & Wellness Chair
dbettan@wlcj.org

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

WLCJ CONVENTION

Visit the Convention 2026 website!

WLCJ Convention 2026



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 the image to go to the online application or [here for PDF](#) version.

Online Application

Download PDF Application

Click here to view the video of the Jewels in the Crown 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 Beshalach 5786

January 26, 2026

This week we read the story of the nation of Israel leaving Egypt, pursued by a reluctant Pharaoh and his army of six hundred chariots. Paralyzed with fear, the people turned to Moses for guidance when they were entrapped by the waters of the Red Sea in front of them. God instructed Moses to raise his rod over the waters, splitting the sea and allowing the people to walk through on dry ground. Afterwards, the waters closed in on Pharaoh and his men, drowning them. Moses led the people in the words of *Shirat haYam*, the Song of the Sea, familiar to many of us from the *Psukei deZimra* part of the *shacharit* service. In the Torah text, the song is followed by these two verses:

And Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand; and all the women went out after her with tambourines, dancing.

And Miriam answered them, Sing to the Lord, for God has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider God has thrown into the sea. [Exodus 15:20-21]

Siddur Lev Shalem adds these verses to the liturgy, something never done before in any *siddur*.

[Read more](#)

OTHER WLCJ PROGRAM REMINDERS

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



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



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



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

WL WEEK

DONATE TO WLCJ

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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Ilene Rothman
GSR Secretary Communications / Newsletter Editor
gsrcommunications@wlcj.org

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NY 10027 US

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