



*Spirit Soars* by Susan Schwarz (used with the artist's permission)

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**PATHWAYS**

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# Pathways

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# What is a Maggid?

By Jim Brule with Sally Cutler

מַגִּיד

*Maggid Jim Brule is the usual co-leader of Temple Concord's Shabbat-morning minyan and the occasional leader of Shabbat Torah study. Jim shared with Sally Cutler the role of maggidim as well as his path to becoming a maggid.*

"Let me tell you a story." This is how Jim Brule begins our conversation. The story is about how, when Jim was a summer-camp counselor, his boss steered him away from leading the arts-and-crafts component of camp life and toward leading the stories-around-the-campfire component. That boss saw a storytelling spark in Jim. Yet Jim recounts that his memory of that reassignment had faded until a long-ago camper contacted him: "Are you the guy who told stories? Those were the highlight of my camping experience." Jim realized that back at that camp he had begun—albeit unaware—a journey that would become a calling.

We can follow this storytelling talent—like the thread of a story itself—through Jim's three-phase professional career: in family therapy, artificial intelligence, and now healthcare information technology. Jim notes that in each of these professional phases he has needed to "take complex situations, digest them, and communicate them to someone else." And over the past decade, Jim has turned that storytelling spark into a spiritual practice: he is an ordained *maggid*. In fact, he is Temple Concord's own *maggid*.

Maggid: the traditional title for a Jewish inspirational speaker or "preacher"

## The Role of the Maggid

Jim describes the role of a *maggid* this way:

A *maggid* fills a spiritual role: to draw people to a deeper spirituality/closer to God....

Storytelling is only one way to accomplish the *maggid*'s goal: inspirational speaking in the form of preaching, leading scriptural study, and even one-on-one conversations are other means to the same end.... Most [ordained *maggidim*] carry on in the tradition of traveling inspirational speakers, but many also function as pastoral counselors, and some as leaders of congregations. (See [www.jimbrule.com](http://www.jimbrule.com))

*A story can gently and surprisingly stand something on its head so people can discover something new.*

For Jim, the great power of a story is that "you leave behind the world you came from and—if it goes well—you see yourself and others differently." The story enables us to see the world through someone else's eyes—literally, through a different narrative. As Jim says, "A story can gently and surprisingly stand something on its head so people can discover something new."

Those who join Temple Concord's Shabbat-morning minyan—where Jim's inspirational stories help us "discover something new"—would delightedly agree.

## A Brief History of Maggidim

Rabbis and *maggidim* historically filled two roles. Rabbis were typically scholars, and *maggidim* were preachers. For example, in the Middle Ages it was the rabbi who lectured on the laws and the *maggid* who preached—in the vernacular—to the common people.

Later, itinerant *maggidim* took on various roles. They delivered messages of Messianic hope; later, delivered admonishments to moral and religious conduct; and then aligned with the teachings of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of the Hassidic movement. (continued)

# What is a Maggid? (continued)

## The Revitalization of the Role of the *Maggid*

Beginning on the mid-20th century, the role of the *maggid* has been revitalized in the truest sense. Two figures were key: Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach and Rabbi Zalman Schacter-Shalomi. As both sought to bring young, disaffected Jews back to Judaism—Rabbi Carlebach through music and stories, Reb Zalman through what has come to be known as the Renewal movement or mindset—*maggidim* filled an important void. They could be a bridge between traditional Judaism and a new kind of Jewish spirituality.

Rabbi Carlebach is famous as a composer of new Jewish music—we at Temple Concord sing many of his prayer settings—but he also focused on developing *maggidim*. In particular, Rabbi Carlebach gave *s'micha* (ordination) to Maggid Yitzhak Buxbaum (and two others), thus ordaining Maggid Buxbaum to continue the tradition. And Maggid Buxbaum has in turn continued to develop *maggidim*, establishing a school in Brooklyn Heights, New York. Jim reports that there are now about 60 trained *maggidim*.

Jim studied with Maggid Buxbaum and received *s'micha* from him in 2008. This means that Jim has been ordained to carry on this line of *maggidim*.

## A Multi-faith Role for *Maggidim*



The role of the *maggid* is shifting yet again. While firmly rooted in Judaism, the role is broadening to embrace interfaith traditions. And this is central to Jim's own direction. He is not only a traditional Jewish *maggid*; he also explores and teaches the practice of being a multi-faith *maggid*, sharing stories not only in synagogues but also in churches, study groups, and community organizations—even in corporations.

To pursue and expand this multi-faith dimension, Jim has established a Multi-faith Spiritual Storytelling School. The school is rooted in what Jim calls “the deep tradition” of Jewish *maggidim*. Yet, we know that every faith tradition relies on stories to help convey its values. As Jim explains, sometimes these stories overlap from one tradition to another. Sometimes they run in parallel, requiring a bit of untangling to reveal the parallel threads. Yet other times they appear to stand in opposition to each other, conveying what seem to be contradictory messages and values. Jim stresses, though, that there is rich territory in all three cases.

In taking this multi-faith approach, our own *maggid* promotes spiritual storytelling as having the power to “[shift] our perception both inward and outward, higher and deeper, and...help begin an ongoing transformational process that never ends.”

*Want to experience the power of story? Join the Shabbat-morning minyan (11 AM). Want to know more about multi-faith spiritual storytelling? Visit [www.jimbrule.com](http://www.jimbrule.com).*

## Maggid By Marge Piercy

Marge Piercy is an American poet, novelist, and social activist. Her work includes *He, She and It*, which won the 1993 Arthur C. Clarke Award, and *Gone to Soldiers*, a *New York Times* Best Seller and sweeping historical novel set during World War II.

The courage to let go of the door, the handle.  
The courage to shed the familiar walls whose very stains and leaks are comfortable as the little moles of the upper arm; stains that recall a feast, a child's naughtiness, a loud blattering storm that slapped the roof hard, pouring through.

The courage to abandon the graves dug into the hill, the small bones of children and the brittle bones of the old whose marrow hunger had stolen; the courage to desert the tree planted and only begun to bear; the riverside where promises were shaped; the street where their empty pots were broken.

The courage to leave the place whose language you learned as early as your own, whose customs however dangerous or demeaning, bind you like a halter you have learned to pull inside, to move your load; the land fertile with the blood spilled on it; the roads mapped and annotated for survival.

The courage to walk out of the pain that is known into the pain that cannot be imagined, mapless, walking into the wilderness, going barefoot with a canteen into the desert; stuffed in the stinking hold of a rotting ship sailing off the map into dragons' mouths, Cathay, India, Siberia, *goldeneh medina* leaving bodies by the way like abandoned treasure. So they walked out of Egypt. So they bribed their way out of Russia under loads of straw; so they steamed out of the bloody smoking charnelhouse of Europe on overloaded freighters forbidden all ports— out of pain into death or freedom or a different painful dignity, into squalor and politics.

We Jews are all born of wanderers, with shoes under our pillows and a memory of blood that is ours raining down. We honor only those Jews who changed tonight, those who chose the desert over bondage, who walked into the strange and became strangers and gave birth to children who could look down on them standing on their shoulders for having been slaves. We honor those who let go of everything but freedom, who ran, who revolted, who fought, who became other by saving themselves.



The title of Piercy's poem refers to the *maggid* section of the *Pesach* (*Passover*) *haggadah*, where the story of the Exodus is told in response to the Four Questions.

# Stand with the CNY Jewish Community and Against Bigotry

InterFaith Works' March 14, 2017 Letter to the Editor of *The Post-Standard*

*Reprinted with the permission of InterFaith Works and The Post Standard.*

**InterFaith Works shares a unique bond with the Central New York Jewish Community. As just one example, one of our founding members, Rabbi Theodore S. Levy of Temple Society of Concord, generously gave the agency its first home at the temple.**

Over the years, our work to reach across the divides of faith, culture and ethnicity have been strengthened by a vibrant Jewish community working hand-in-hand with us and with other faiths on the critical social justice issues of the times. Jews have stood together with Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Baha'i's, seeking understanding of each other's experiences of the Holy, and teaching about their own traditions.

Today, the Jewish community is under attack and needs our community's support. There have been three separate bomb threats directed at the local Jewish Community Center, as well as other JCCs across America. These threats are psychologically unnerving, striking fear in the seniors who come to the center to enjoy friendship, lunch and to break down the isolation that plagues our elders. These threats affect parents and children in the day care center and school at the JCC, wreaking havoc as the center temporarily closes, so that police can come in with search dogs and equipment, and families must rush to pick up a loved one. These threats are an act of cowardice and must be condemned.

Simultaneously, Jewish cemeteries have been vandalized recently in St. Louis and Philadelphia. We are gratified to note that Muslim activist Tarek El-Messidi started a fund-raising campaign to help clean up the St. Louis cemetery, and sprang to action again after the Philadelphia attack. As of Tuesday, the campaign had raised \$161,333 -- eight times the original goal of \$20,000. El-Messidi said he immediately visited the Philadelphia Jewish cemetery and offered his support after hearing the news. After all, Muslims can relate to the feeling of racial intolerance. "We must stand together against these acts of racism, anti-Semitism and Islamophobia," he wrote.

On behalf of all of us at InterFaith Works, and the faith communities we represent, we offer our support for the JCC and for the Jewish community. We reach out to you as brothers and sisters and we stand together with you against this bigotry. We pledge to work for your safety and for security of Jews everywhere for generations to come.

Louise Thurlow

Board Chair

Beth A. Broadway

President/CEO

InterFaith Works of CNY

Rabbi Levy served on the board of the Syracuse Interfaith Committee on Religion and Race. In the mid 1970s, he was named the founding president of the Syracuse Interreligious Council.

- Source: American Jewish Archives

## Meet a Temple Member: Aaron Frishman



Aaron and his wife, Lisa Fasolo-Frishman, and their then three-year-old son moved to Syracuse from Denver, Colorado in 2013, primarily to be closer to family. They had been involved in the Jewish community in Denver and connected with the community here in Central New York through Federation events and the JCC.

With their son in the JCC pre-school program, they began making friends with other young families, many of whom were looking for a synagogue home. For the Frishmans, an interfaith family, Temple Concord seemed a good fit. And Aaron notes that, once they had met with Rabbi Fellman, "We were hooked."

Aaron is an attorney with Bousquet Holstein, and Lisa is the Senior Program Officer at the Health Foundation of Western and Central New York. Aaron currently serves on the Temple's Board of Trustees.

For the Frishmans, Temple Concord is the place to connect socially with the Jewish community, especially other young Jewish families. Aaron and Lisa recognize Concord's long history and great potential in the Syracuse community. "We're here for family-friendly events and services and to celebrate traditions." As Aaron says, "Concord is a great catalyst of identifying and bonding with like-minded Jews."

### Temple Concord Links

[www.templeconcord.org](http://www.templeconcord.org)



[Temple Calendar](#)



[Rabbi Fellman's Weekly Videos](#)



[Make a Donation to "Generations"](#)



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## Corrections

In the Volume II, Quarter 1 (January – March 2017) issue of *Pathways*, Eleanor Hayman's name was misspelled, Lucille Markson was incorrectly identified as Lucille Johnson, and Jim Brule was incorrectly identified as a nephew of Git Radin. *Pathways* regrets the errors.

## Recent Deaths

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the families of those recently departed.

**Kenneth Gale – January 12, 2017** He is survived by his wife Catherine A. Gale of Manlius, NY; children Kathy Rocklin (Donald) of North Haven, CT, Frederick M. Gale (Cathy) of Boston, MA, Patricia Kigar (Daniel) of Ridgway, CO, Jacob D. Gale of Bangkok, Thailand, and Max D. Gale (Kristen) of Cazenovia, NY; grandchildren Zachary Rocklin (Gabrielle) of New York, NY and Sharon, CT, Lucas Rocklin (Meredith) of Cheshire, CT, William Rocklin of Brooklyn, NY, Julianne Gale of Los Angeles CA, Jessalyn Gale of Chicago, IL, Jasmine Gale of Boston, MA, Samuel Kigar (Lila) of Ann Arbor, MI, Nathaniel Gale of Cazenovia, NY, Ella Gale of Cazenovia NY; great grandchildren Noah and Eli Rocklin and Shailesh Kigar; and several nephews.

**Sandra Idonna Waldman – January 21, 2017** She is survived by her brother and sister-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. Harvey Cohen; three children, Eric (Karen), Jodi (Dustin) and Josh (Andrea); six loving grandchildren, Madison, Noah, Sarah, Jacob, Emma and Charlotte; and nieces and nephews.

**Karen Deene Guttermann – February 4, 2017** She is survived by her husband, Robert; two sons, Roy (Lucy) of Syracuse, NY, and Jeff (Gina) of Scotch Plains; and one grandson, Samuel.

**Margaret A. Tarnow – February 8, 2017** She is survived by her sons, Ronald and Douglas (Bellevue, WA).

**Pola Fagut – February 12, 2017** She is survived by her son Kenneth Fagut, daughter Janine, six grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

**Donna Rothfeld – March 2, 2017** She is survived by her husband, James; children Suzanne (John) Steven, Michelle Rothfeld, and Michael (Melissa) Rothfeld; sister, Patricia Ingersoll; grandchildren, Arthur, Sophia, Madison, and Jacqueline; and several nieces and nephews.

**Gloria Katz – March 2, 2017** She is survived by her daughter JoAnn (Marty) Gorman, son Gary, five grandchildren, Matthew Gorman (Allison), Stacy Gogarty (Shane), and Lauren, Samantha and Joshua Katz. She is also survived by three great-grandchildren, Tyler, Savannah and Riley and her loving daughter-in-law Jackie Katz.

**Edward Green – March 2, 2017** He is survived by his wife, Joan; children Jill (Bill Johnson) of Napa, CA; Bill (Diane Whitney) of San Francisco, and their two children Alexander and Whitney; and Nancy (Tony Marshall) of Cazenovia, and their two children Zachary and Ted.

**Gail Weiss – March 2, 2017** She is survived by her husband, Alfred; their sons Frank and Mitchell; her brother Dr. Stephen Presser; and 5 grandchildren.

## B'nei Mitzvah

**Mazel Tov to the b'nei mitzvah and their families.**

*Upcoming b'nei mitzvah*

April 1: Jack Saterlee

May 20: Max Newman

June 3: Benjamin Orbach

April 22: Madeleine David

June 17: Maxon Oppedisano

April 29: Hania Zames

# Recent Fund Donations

We appreciate all donations given to support Temple funds. Listed are those who have given \$18 or more from January 1, 2017 through March 21, 2017.

## ADAM FRANK FUND

*In memory of*

**Adam Frank**

Mark & Judy Frank  
Lammey

## BUILDING & CEMETERY IMPROVEMENT FUND

*In memory of*

**Rhea Holstein**

Alexander & Charlotte Holstein  
**Rosalind Sagar**  
Laura Stevens

## CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

*In appreciation of*

**Cantor Kari Egash**

Brian & Stephanie Fay

## FLAH ADULT EDUCATION FUND

*In memory of*

**Albert Flah**

Betty Granatstein

## LAWRENCE H. GINGOLD HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBILITY FUND

*In memory of*

**Adah Koran**

Suzan Gordon

**Sandra Idonna Waldman**  
Sandra Gingold

*In honor of*

**Richard Gingold (75th Birthday)**  
Sandra Gingold

## FOOD PANTRY

*In fund support*

Gary Dunner

*In memory of*

**Barbara Oppenheim Eisenstein**

Paul & Lesley Newman

**Patricia Hutton**

Ernest & Suzanne Wass

**Adrienne Wyckoff**

Alan Wyckoff

*In celebration of*

**John Brule (90th Birthday)**

Jim & Jill Brule

**Chet Machlin (70th Birthday)**

Laura Lavine & Don Fitzgerald

## LOIS ARNOLD GALE LIBRARY FUND

*In memory of*

**Dr. Kenneth Gale**

Ann (Bladen) & Ronald Rudolph

## MUSIC FUND

*In memory of*

**Joe Feitler**

Eleanor Feitler

## RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

*In appreciation of*

**Rabbi Fellman**

Brian & Stephanie Fay

## TEMPLE CONCORD ENDOWMENT CAMPAIGN

*In memory of*

**Hy & Anne Miller**

Philip & Barbara Miller

## TEMPLE CONCORD GENERAL FUND

*In memory of*

**Jacob & Ida Benderson**

Benderson family

**Herbert Finer**

Edward Finer

**Florence Grody**

Roger Grody

**Stella & Morton Lucas**

Adele Lucas

**Florence Phillips**

Robert Phillips

**Donna Rothfeld**

Susan Reittinger

Eileen Parker

Paul Drescher

Robert & Christine Nolin

Glenna & Addison Steven

Richard & Lynn Greene

Maloff family

Sanford & Marlene Holstein

Clifford & Joyce Millian

Judy Combs

**Martin Sage**

Gloria Sage

**Fanny Seidberg**

Phyllis Salzman

**Gladys Weber**

Sharry Doyle

Your donation to a Temple Concord Fund can memorialize, honor, or express appreciation for someone dear to you.

Your donation to a Fund or for a leaf on our *Simcha Tree* can celebrate a *simcha*—a joyous event.

Donations may be made through the *Donations* tab on the Temple's website ([www.templeconcord.org](http://www.templeconcord.org)) or to the Temple office.

Contact the Temple office for information at 315.475.9952.

