

August 2026/Av-Elul 5786 Newsletter



July Song Events with Cantor Linda Hirshhorn at Mount Zion Temple (left) and Rabbi Shefa Gold at Adath Jeshurun Congregation (right)

Hello TCJRC Community,

August brings us to the month of Elul, a time of spiritual renewal and preparation for the deep communal work of *teshuvah*/return. Some mystics interpret “Elul” (Hebrew: אֵלּוּל) as an acronym for “*Ani l’dodi v’dodi li*”/“I am my Beloved’s and my Beloved is mine.” This special time is widely viewed as a unique moment in the year when the Divine Presence makes themselves available to us wherever we are. *Teshuvah*, we are reminded, is always possible.

The first day of Elul (sundown August 13) also brings a beautiful celebration of the fourth of the Jewish New Years, the too little known New Year for the Animals, Rosh Hashanah La’Behemot. You can read more about it from one of the primary leaders [Richard Schwartz](#) or from [Adamah](#) and consider celebrating it with your own companion animals or those in nature.

In this newsletter you’ll find opportunities to connect with the spirit of Elul, Save-the-Dates for new programs beginning in the Fall, and an article about our upcoming **Tribute and Transformation celebration on Sunday August 9.**

We hope to see you there!

Warmly,
TCJRC

August Events



Sherry Stern (left) and Riv Shapiro (right)

TCJewfolk Article

“My goal was to help grow Jewish Renewal within the Twin Cities,” Stern said. “I feel like I achieved it.”

“The overarching vision is that we are a resource for spiritual development for all people who are seeking,” Shapiro said.

[Read the article](#)

TCJRC Celebrates: Tribute & Transformation

Sunday, August 9

3:30-5:30pm

South Minneapolis, location upon registration

Free

[**Register today!**](#)

Join us to honor Sherry Stern’s seven years of service and welcome Kohenet Riv Shapiro as our new managing director. Featuring remarks from Sherry, Riv, and special guest Michelle W. Malkin, Executive Director of ALEPH: Alliance for Jewish Renewal.

Light Refreshments 3:30 pm | Program 4pm

Feel welcome to stay and socialize with more refreshments until 5:30pm.

Please consider **becoming a Host** by contributing financially and/or bringing 3-5 friends or family that you think would enjoy what we are doing. Select the Add-on when you register or email tcjewishrenewal@gmail.com for details and shareable materials. Hosts are invited to stay for a special dinner with Michelle W. Malkin.

Can’t make it? Send a **message of support** to tcjewishrenewal@gmail.com to be included in a slideshow at the event! **Contributions to help secure our future** are welcome [here](#) with the note "Transformation".

Volunteers needed for events - please email Riv at tcjewishrenewal@gmail.com with interest.

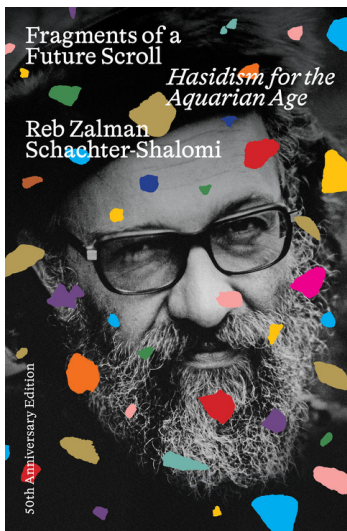
Local TCJRC Events

TCJRC Jewish Spiritual Book Meeting - [Heart of a Stranger: An Unlikely Rabbi's Story of Faith, Identity, and Belonging](#) by Rabbi Angela Buchdahl

Monday, August 10 from 7-8:30 PM CT on Zoom

Please read chapters 20–26 (pages 199–264). If you are new, RSVP with your name and email to TCJewishRenewal@gmail.com for the Zoom link.

We will not meet in September due to High Holidays. **Save Monday, October 12** for our next 7 - 8:30 PM meeting.



Beginning in November - [Fragments of a Future Scroll: Hasidism for the Aquarian Age \(50th Anniversary Edition\)](#) by Rabbi Zalman Shachter-Shalomi

Fragments of a Future Scroll, Reb Zalman's first book, was originally published by a small press in 1975 and, until now, was long out of print. A truly unique book—or “anti-book,” as Shaul Magid refers to it in his new introductory essay—Fragments gathers Reb Zalman's first idiosyncratic attempts at articulating a renewed “Hasidism for the Aquarian Age,” envisioning Judaism's evolving place and role within an emergent “planetary consciousness.” Full of boundary-breaking wisdom and crackling poetic oddity, Fragments of a Future Scroll is a book for people from all religious and spiritual traditions who are looking to experience the world—and consciousness itself—

anew.

Contact Riv at tcjewishrenewal@gmail.com by September 1 to reserve a copy with our discounted group order at 30%-off list price.

TCJRC Membership

Please join us or renew as a [TCJRC/ALEPH Member](#)!

Your \$72 yearly (or \$6/month) membership includes immediate family members and enrolls you in both [TCJRC](#) and [ALEPH](#) (our national organization). We are able to bring in talented national leaders and grow with your support. Plus, you get a discount on many of our events and activities while helping us offer even more.

Be Part of Our Future - Get Involved with TCJRC

This is an exciting moment for TCJRC as Kohenet Riv Shapiro leads us into a new chapter rooted in intergenerational village-building, relational spaces that center curiosity and compassion, and earth-based ritual practice. **We need support in various roles such as event setup and take down, accounting assistance, membership engagement, leadership support, and more.** Email Riv at tcjewishrenewal@gmail.com to learn more.

Save the Dates: New Programs for the New Year!

Led by Kohenet Riv Shapiro

October 1, 7-8:30pm - Intergenerational Council Fire/Sukkot Celebration, location TBA

The "Way of Council" is an ancient and modern practice of gathering in a circle to share personal truths, guided by four key intentions: speak from the heart, listen from the heart, be spontaneous, and be lean of speech. (Source: School of the Wild).

These quarterly gatherings bring us together around the fire, an ancient element of Jewish spiritual practice, to witness one another in authenticity and empathy.



October 11, 6:30-8:30pm - Rosh Chodesh Gathering location TBA

New monthly Rosh Chodesh/New Moon gatherings start up in 5787. Open to all genders, these gatherings emphasize creative exploration as a tool for spiritual inquiry.

Local Events

Elul Lake Immersion with Maayanot and TC Jewfolk's FolkLab

Thursday, August 13

5:00 – 6:30 PM and 6:30 – 8:00 PM (two sessions)

Minneapolis (location shared with registrants)

\$36 (no one turned away for lack of funds)

The introspective month of Elul sets the stage for the work we do over the High Holy Days. It is a time of self-reflection, spiritual preparation, and intention setting. The ritual of mikveh immersion is deeply rooted in Jewish tradition and is a powerful way for us to prepare ourselves for renewal and transformation.



Join TC Jewfolk's FolkLab and Maayanot at the lake on Thursday, August 13 to experience the transformative power of natural water. [Register here](#)

Aug. 16: Art Materials Swap & Heritage Judaica Pop-up

**Minnesota JCC Capp Center, St. Paul
2-4pm**

Join Heritage Judaica, J-Pride, and Rimon at the Capp Center in St. Paul for a FREE community art materials swap and Heritage Judaica pop-up! Bring your gently used supplies to donate, or come find something new to spark your creativity—no need to bring anything to take something home.

Drop in for a collage workshop led by Hunter from JPride—no cost, no experience needed. Just come create! All ages welcome. [Learn more](#)

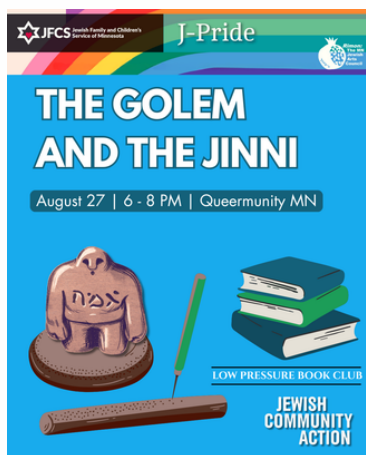


Aug. 27: Make your very own Golem: A book club and crafting mash up

**Queermunity MN, 6-8pm
Presented by JPride and JCA**

Join other LGBTQ+ Jews and allies as we dive into the realm of Golems, legendary protective creatures from Jewish folklore, through our book club discussion of *The Golem and the Jinni* by Helene Wecker. You'll have the chance to get your hands dirty and create your own clay golem.

[Register here!](#)



SOUL SUPPORT FOR A NEW YEAR with LIVING MUSSAR



LIVING MUSSAR

Join a Living Mussar Va'ad!

Groups meet bi-monthly starting in mid-October unless otherwise noted. Open to new and continuing participants.

Jumpstart your new year with inspiration, learning, and real-world practices to align your actions with your core values. Join a Mussar va'ad to enhance everyday life and deepen your connection with self, others, and Jewish wisdom.

- PRIDE va'ad: A Mussar learning group for members of the LGBTQIA+ community. (All Living Mussar groups are open to all people.)
- Online Community va'ad: The Shabbat Effect with Luke Weisberg.
- Mussar for Parents
- and more!

For more information, please go to livingmussar.org or contact Isaac at ijennings@livingmussar.org

Looking for High Holidays services? TCJewfolk offers free [High Holiday Matchmaking!](#)

Fill out the form by August 28, receive a match September 1.

Needs not met? Email Riv for more options at tcjewishrenewal@gmail.com.

ALEPH and National Events

Congregation Shaarei Simchah Shabbat Services

Second and Fourth Shabbat mornings of the month, Gather at 9 AM CT and begins 9:15 AM

Join us in the cloud for a spiritually infused, musical service. Please contact Riv at tcjewishrenewal@gmail.com for Zoom details. All are welcome to attend. Service leaders include Rabbi Miryam Wolfson, Rabbi/Chaplain Leon Olenick, Jackie Olenick, and a host of other talented Jewish Renewal leaders such as our own TCJRC member, Chaiya Isenberg.

Two Upcoming Trainings with ALEPH

Applications are now open for Cohort 8 of Aleph's [Hashpa'ah: Jewish Spiritual Direction Training](#), beginning in January 2027 and a new [Trauma-Informed Leadership Training for Spiritual Leaders](#), beginning November 2026.



Hashpa'ah:
Jewish Spiritual
Direction Training

Training Jewish Spiritual Directors
Awakening the Sacred Path of Jewish Spiritual Direction

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE
SEPTEMBER 10, 2026

→ Limited scholarships available for early applicants. →

COHORT 8 LAUNCHES
JANUARY 2027 | STUDIES BEGIN IN
JANUARY 2027

What is Hashpa'ah?

Hashpa'ah (Hebrew for "being in the Divine Flow" or "consciousness of God's Presence") is a traditional Jewish term for the relationship with a Jewish spiritual director/companion or *mashpia'h*.

Our program carries this practice forward in direct line from Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi's own work as *mashpia'h ruchani* to his earliest students.

→ A 2-YEAR TRANSFORMATIVE JOURNEY →
GUIDE OTHERS • DEEPEN YOUR SPIRITUALITY • SERVE THE WORLD



APPLICATIONS NOW OPEN

**Trauma-Informed
Leadership Training
for Spiritual Leaders**

*An eight-month training for Jewish clergy and educators
meeting a post-October 7th world*

A rigorous program offering Jewish clergy, cantors, educators, and chaplains the inner and outer tools to cope with the complexities of the post-October 7 world in our communities.

FOUR INTERWOVEN MODULES

- Refuat Hanefesh** — healing of the soul
Introduction to trauma healing
- Bakshu Fanai** — seek My face
The quest for direct experience and the expansion of awareness
- Darkhei No'am** — ways of pleasantness
Training in meditation and group facilitation
- Tikkun Olam** — repair of the world
Global Social Witnessing — a technology for transforming the issues that divide us into issues that unite us

COHORT LAUNCHES
November 2026

APPLICATIONS DUE
End of August
Space is limited

8-MONTH COHORT • STARTING NOV 2026

The deadline to apply is August 31, 2026.
Contact us through the inquiry form or begin your application below.

LEARN MORE & APPLY
aleph.org/leadership-training

[Weekly Virtual Jewish Renewal Connections - ALEPH: Alliance For Jewish Renewal](#)



*Silence is Praise:
Meditva-Style Morning
Meditation Service*
Led by Rabbi Anne Brener

Wednesdays
11:30am ET / 8:30am PT

**Friday
Healing Circle**
Led by Rabbi Diane Elliot

A weekly virtual gathering to prepare for Shabbat through song, movement, Torah study, and prayer. A supportive space for healing, reflection, and community, including a Kaddish prayer for mourners.

Fridays
11:30am ET / 8:30am PT

Live on Zoom

All are welcome.

LIGHT YOUR CANDLES AT HOME,
SHARE IN THE BLESSINGS,
AND EXPERIENCE THE WARMTH OF TRADITION,
EVEN FROM AFAR.

Virtual Candle Lighting
Fridays | 6-6:30pm

TORAH OF AWAKENING
The Jewish Path of Presence

YOM RISHON
Sing, Pray, Meditate
Journey through the Tree of Life & Shkharit
Sundays: PT: 9:30am, MT: 10:30am, CT: 11:30am, ET: 12:30pm

Nechamah Minyan
Every evening (except Friday)
9 pm Eastern | 6 pm Pacific
Led by Rabbi Geela Rayzel Raphael and friends

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