

MACHAR ADULT EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY SUNDAY CALENDAR—SPRING 2014

Adult Ed sessions are on select Sundays from 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM; Community Sundays begin at 11:30 AM
at Jewish Primary Day School, 6045 16th St. NW, DC 20011

Community Sundays follow at JPDS unless noted; we share details by email, newsletter, and at www.machar.org.

Sessions are open to all. There is parking on 16th Street and in the back. All talks will be in the gymnasium.
(If you have trouble climbing stairs, use the rear entrance.)

January 12 *Barry Dancis – Secular Expressions of Jewish Culture*

Dr. Barry Dancis, retired bioinformatics consultant and former chair of the Education Committee of the Jewish Children's Folkshul of Philadelphia, will explore the richness of secular expression of Jewish culture and how that is broadening and transforming Jewish forms of community. He will also discuss basic Jewish beliefs in the context of Jewish affiliations and the significance for our secular Jewish communities.

January 26 *Andy Thomson – Why We Believe in God(s)*

Dr. Andy Thomson is a psychiatrist in Charlottesville, Virginia, a Trustee of the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason and Science, and the author of *Why We Believe In God(s): A Concise Guide to the Science of Faith*. Thomson will discuss some groundbreaking research done at our National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, that advances a comprehensive psychological science of religious belief. Like Darwin's theory of natural selection, this knowledge requires no specialty training in science.

Community Sunday: Tu B'Shevat Seder

February 9 *Darwin Day/Michael Prival – In the Beginning, God Created...Twice*

As a young man, Charles Darwin believed in the literal truth of the Bible. This Darwin Day, Michael Prival will explore the Bible's creation narratives to help us understand what biblical literalists, including today's creationists, base their views on. The Bible starts with two different, contradictory creation stories by different authors with different purposes. We will review what Bible scholars have revealed about these stories and focus on what the stories say about the relationship between women and men and what makes humans different from animals. It would help to read these Bible stories in advance, Chapters 1-3 of Genesis.

Community Sunday: Pete Seeger Sing-along

February 22 *Challah Havdalah Potluck at UU Congregation of Rockville, 100 Welsh Park Drive, 5 to 8 p.m. (with Rabbi Candidate Nehama Benmosche)*

February 23 *Im l'et kazot (Perhaps for a Time Like This): The Story of Purim, Pema Chodoron and the Ambiguity of the Present Moment*

Rabbi Nehama Benmosche is visiting the Machar community as a candidate for our rabbinic leadership position. In anticipation of Purim, Rabbi Benmosche's presentation will look at one of only two Biblical texts that do not mention the name of God. She will discuss the intersection of the Purim story with the teachings of Pema Chodoron, a well-known Tibetan Buddhist nun.

Community Sunday: Music with Rabbi Nehama Benmosche and guitarist/song-leader Naomi Gamoran

March 9 *Sendak Day/Hildie Block – Maurice Sendak and the Wilde Khaye (Wild Thing)*

Sendak, SHJ's Humanist Jewish Role Model for 2013-14, perhaps best known for his book *Where the Wild Things Are*, was an artist obsessed with bringing out the hidden truths in society. After years on the fringe, a child confined to bed, an adult who made window dressings for FAO Schwartz in NYC and who drew the backgrounds in for comic books, Sendak embraced the truths as he saw them: he was gay, people you love die, adults lie to children, and there is no god. Join us to find out more truths about this courageous artist and his role in humanism. The Washington Post called Machar member Hildie Block a "book expert," but when she's not lecturing about writing at American University's Literature Department, she's a "book midwife." (More info at www.hildieblockworkshop.com)

Community Sunday: Children will perform "Where the Wild Things Are"

March 16 *Purim Carnival at Schweinhaut Center, 1000 Forest Glen Road, Silver Spring, MD, 10 a.m. to noon*

April 6 *Group Discussion – Wholeheartedness and Humanism*

A discussion about embracing authenticity, self-compassion, play, and other guideposts of Brene Brown's research, which Rabbi Miriam Jerris introduced many of us to during the High Holidays this year. Led by Marlene Cohen and Danielle Leff.

Community Sunday: Good Deeds Day

April 20 (Easter Sunday) *Passover Seder at Cedar Lane UU Church, 9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda, MD, 4:30 p.m.*

April 27 **MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Members' input is valued. Please attend to hear from the Board what we have been doing in the past year and discuss plans for the future.

Community Sunday: Yom Ha Shoah (Holocaust Remembrance)

May 4 *Sherry and Bob Jason – City Hearts: Kids Say Yes to the Arts...Transforming At-Risk Children through the Arts*
Sherry and Bob Jason (Darlene Basch's sister and brother-in-law), both former Los Angeles County Public Defenders, established City Hearts in 1984 to provide free visual and performing arts classes to the most-at-risk children in economically distressed neighborhoods in Southern California, enabling children and youth to be confident, imaginative, tolerant, generous and cooperative, as well as productive, contributing participants in their communities.

May 18 *Debby Brennan – Jewish Education: Exposure or Commitment?*

Machar's Jewish Cultural School Director, Debby Brennan, will talk about the JCS curriculum, the model SHJ curriculum, and will lead a discussion on members' expectations about children's Jewish education at Machar. What would Machar parents and members like children to learn? What Jewish experiences would they want children to have? She will also share with members her own reflections and questions about "exposure" versus "commitment" as different goals of a Jewish education. Would Machar parents like their children to be "exposed" to Judaism? Or do they expect their children to learn "how to be a Jew" with the goal of a Jewish identity?

Community Sunday: Lag B'Omer Picnic