



## Sunday, October 10, 2010

- 6:00pm**            **Tours of Mayyim Hayyim**  
*1838 Washington Street, Newton – shared parking with Temple Reyim*
- 6:40pm**            **Registration begins**  
*Temple Reyim, 1860 Washington Street, Newton – shared parking with Mayyim Hayyim*
- 7:00pm**            **Opening Session - Ordis Hall, Temple Reyim**  
  
Welcome by Dr. Paula Brody  
  
**Why Now? Understanding the resurgence of mikveh in the context of contemporary American Jewish history**  
with American Jewish historian **Professor Jonathan Sarna** in conversation with writer/Mayyim Hayyim founder **Anita Diamant** and Mayyim Hayyim Executive Director **Aliza Kline**. Moderated by **Aaron Katersky**, national correspondent for ABC News
- 8:15pm**            **Telling Our Stories: Breakout groups - Various locations, Temple Reyim**
- 9:15pm**            **Dessert reception**  
**Maariv**  
*Traditional egalitarian led by Rabbi Ben Shalva in the Goldweitz Chapel*  
**Shuttles to Hotel Indigo**

## Monday October 11, 2010

- 8:00am**            **Registration - Temple Shalom, 175 Temple Street, Newton**  
  
**Shacharit**  
*Traditional egalitarian with Rabbi Ethan Tucker in the Sanctuary*  
*Musical service with Rabbi Jenny Solomon and Cantor Jill Abramson in the Rothman Chapel*  
*Yoga with Adina Allen in Room 15/16*

## **Monday October 11, 2010 Continued**

**8:00am**                      **Breakfast - Social Hall**

**9:00-10:30am**            **Opening Keynote - Social Hall**

### **Navigating Ambiguity: Mikveh and transitions**

Exploring the concept of liminality and the way rituals help ease the confusion that comes with change. We will examine how and why water works to transform sexuality, Jewish identity, and even the “identity” of inanimate objects.

**Dr. Erica Brown**, scholar in residence for the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and the Director for Adult Education at The Partnership for Jewish Life and Learning; former CJP Scholar In Residence

**10:45am–12:15pm**    **Workshops (Choose one of six options)**

Honoring Conversion and Affirmation - *Shain Room*

### **The invitation: Talking about conversion with a whole heart**

When is it appropriate to invite someone to convert to Judaism? Who can best make such an invitation and how? This session will explore the Jewish tension between welcoming and discouraging conversion, with practical ideas about creating a culture of welcome in your congregation or community. Interdenominational clergy will share their best practices and panelists will share personal conversion stories.

*Rabbi Leslie Gordon, Rabbi Jonathan Kraus and Rabbi Uri Topolosky, with Gary Bishop and Blake Patridge*

Exploring Contemporary Understandings of Niddah (Monthly Immersion) - *Room 24*

### **Niddah 101: Introduction to Monthly Immersion**

An introduction to terms, concepts, and laws regarding monthly immersion, this session will present essential terms and definitions, examine the basics of niddah observance (such as physical separation during and after menstruation) and its basis in Jewish text. This session may be helpful for those interested in attending subsequent niddah workshops.

*Cookie Rosenbaum and Rabbi Micha’el Rosenberg*

Exploring Contemporary Understandings of Niddah (Monthly Immersion) - *Room 26*

### **Niddah 201: Opening halakhic possibilities**

This session explores the practice of niddah in a way that is both grounded in halakhic tradition and honestly reflects who we are today. Using a case study focusing on bedikot - examinations during the "seven clean days" - we will identify the full range of acceptable halakhic positions. Advanced text study with a scholar and a skilled niddah educator.

*Aviva Richman, Rabbi Ethan Tucker*

Marking Life Transitions with Ritual Immersion - *Rothman Chapel*

### **The power of water in times of change, joy and sadness**

We will explore the power of the mikveh immersion and the elements—in preparation and process—that are critical to a “successful” experience: the water, the ritual, and you, the Jew. How can these forces combine to create psychological, social and even physical change?

*Rachel Brodie, Dr. Vanessa Ochs*

## **Monday October 11, 2010 Continued**

### How to Facilitate Mikveh Guide (Attendant) Training in Your Community - Room 202

#### **The Mikveh Lady has left the building: Training and sustaining volunteer guides**

An exploration of the use of volunteers in the role of mikveh attendant, presenting the advantages of volunteer versus paid attendants and the conceptual framework for training volunteers. We will also cover strategies for marketing / recruitment, interviewing and selection, and faculty selection.

*Carrie Bornstein, Rabbi Ilana Garber*

### Mikveh as An Education Center - Room 101

#### **You want to teach about what? Bringing the mikveh to the classroom**

Become an empowered advocate for mikveh education in your Jewish institution. Following introductory presentations, this workshop will include three small-group structured conversations; participants will leave with concrete action steps.

*Lisa Berman, Judy Elkin, Missy Stein*

#### **12:30-1:00pm Lunch in the Social Hall**

##### **Mincha at 12:30**

Traditional egalitarian *led by Rabbi Micha'el Rosenberg in Rothman Chapel*

#### **1:00-2:00pm**

##### **Lunchtime Keynote - Social Hall**

##### **Emerging Mikveh Movement in Israel**

*with Rabbi Maya Leibovich, author Varda Polak Sahm and Rabbi Haviva Ner David, moderated by Rabbi William Hamilton*

#### **2:15-3:45pm**

##### **Workshops (Choose one of five options)**

### Honoring Conversion and Affirmation - Room 202

#### **The Other Conversion Rituals: Beit din and hatafat dam brit**

The rituals preceding immersion for the sake of conversion can be difficult and frightening, particularly for men and boys who undergo milah (circumcision) or hatafat dam brit (taking a symbolic drop of blood). This session will identify best practices for making the beit din (rabbinic court) a safe and sacred experience, and will address challenges inherent in milah and hatafat dam brit.

*Rabbi Braham David, Rabbi Neal Gold, Rabbi Jonathan Kraus, Rabbi David Lerner, Rabbi Claudia Kreiman*

### Exploring Contemporary Understandings of Niddah - Shain Room

#### **Tumah/Taharah: Clean/dirty? Pure/impure? Ready / not ready? What are we really talking about?**

An interactive text study on the meaning of the terms tumah / taharah (ritually impure / ritually pure). Learn the origins of these words and hear three leading scholars discuss the ways they understand them. How do such contemporary interpretations change our approach to the ritual?

*Rabbi Dov Linzer, Rabbi Micha'el Rosenberg, Rabbi Susan Grossman, moderated by Carrie Bornstein*

## **Monday October 11, 2010 Continued**

### Marking Life Transitions with Ritual Immersion - *Rothman Chapel*

#### **Ritual Hazing and Holy Vulnerability: Exploring resistances to mikveh**

Is discomfort a meaningful component of initiation, covenantal, and lifecycle rituals? Since it requires nakedness and total immersion in water, can mikveh be seen as a hazing ritual? This session will question the assumption that the current mikveh revival has erased all anxiety and fear. We will invite a frank discussion of emotional and psychological responses to mikveh, considering such issues as personal boundaries and control and the history of women's relationship to mikveh.

*Rabbi Debra Reed Blank, Dr. Lori Hope Lefkowitz, Dr. Vanessa Ochs*

### How to Facilitate Mikveh Guide (Attendant) Training in Your Community - *Room 23*

#### **The Mikveh Guide Mandate: Creating a welcoming and non-judgmental environment**

What does it really mean to create an inclusive space? How do we help our volunteers to recognize their own "hot buttons" and issues that may be raised when they are guiding?

*Dr. Andrea Jacobs, Sandy Slavet, Lee Butler*

### Mikveh as An Education Center - *Room 101*

#### **Learning, Unlearning, and Re-learning: Tools for teaching adults**

What gets in the way of effective pedagogy, particularly when it comes to the concept of mikveh? This session will include observations on mikveh education -- intellectual versus experiential approaches -- and a presentation of the unlearning and relearning that we, as educators, have done. Also included will be texts and approaches that the presenters have found personally meaningful and helpful in teaching, with time for discussion.

*Rabbi Lauren Berkun, Dr. Erica Brown, Dr. Joseph Reimer*

**3:45-4:15pm**            **Break and Nosh** - *Social Hall*

**4:30-5:45pm**            **Workshops (Choose one of eight options)**

### Honoring Conversion and Affirmation - *Shain Room*

#### **Celebrating Conversion: Respect Beauty and Joy**

How do conversion candidates prepare for immersion? When is it appropriate for friends and family to attend and what is their role? How does the clergy's relationship with the candidate change at the time of the immersion? This workshop illuminates the hopes and anxieties of all participants at a conversion immersion, highlighting the coordination between clergy and mikveh guide, and offering resources and ways to engage family and friends.

*Karen Kushner, Susan Opdyke, Rabbi Michelle Pearlman, Rabbi Andrew Vogel, Rene Katersky, Rebecca Ledig*

### Honoring Conversion and Affirmation - *Room 202*

#### **The Halakha of Welcome**

An interactive text study exploring the religious and halakhic mandate of welcoming a conversion candidate from the first phone call to the mikveh. We will study sources that reflect a less welcoming attitude and see how this tension has played out over history. We full focus on rabbinic sources that show sensitivity to the ritual of conversion in the mikveh, from modesty concerns to the question of whether a parent has to completely "let go" of his or her infant for an immersion to be complete.

*Rabbi Dov Linzer*

## **Monday October 11, 2010 Continued**

### Exploring Contemporary Understandings of Niddah - Rothman Chapel

#### **Teaching Niddah: 21<sup>st</sup> century best practices**

This session will offer best practices for teaching niddah in a variety of settings. Panelists will describe their approach to teaching as well as how to deal with difficult questions and issues.

*Rachel Kohl Finegold, Jennifer Meltzer, Rabba Sara Hurwitz, Rabbi Miriam Berkowitz*

### Marking Life Transitions with Ritual Immersion - Room 24

#### **A place to dance: Celebration at the mikveh**

An opportunity to learn about the creation of mikveh immersion rituals for celebration, including enhancing existing life cycle events (e.g. bat mitzvah) and marking new life cycle events (e.g. simchat hochma - celebration of wisdom). We will analyze different types of rituals being created today, and hear about some exceptional mikveh experiences.

*Rabbi Hara Person, Rabbi Geela Rayzel Raphael, Rabbi Michelle Robinson, Rabbi Sue Ann Wasserman, Nancy Cahners*

### Marking Life Transitions with Ritual Immersion - Room 101

#### **A Place to cry: Honoring times of sadness at the mikveh**

This session includes an examination of Jewish healing texts and psychological insights on grief, illness, and trauma. Immerses and guides will talk about their experience of mikveh as a way to find meaning, solace and transformation during sad and/or life-changing transitions. We will explore personal prayer and provide tools for participants to create their own healing ceremonies.

*Rabbi Naomi Levy, Rabbi Margaret Frisch Klein, Marjorie Sokoll, Janet Yassen*

### How to Facilitate Mikveh Guide (Attendant) Training in Your Community - Room 26

#### **Continuing Education for Mikveh Guides: Training in issues of domestic violence and cancer survival**

This workshop will present two case studies for continued sensitivity training. In these circumstances, what are the particular needs or concerns for the immersee and the mikveh guide? What resources are available? How do we build relationships with partner organizations?

*Shera Dubitsky, Carol Schnitzler, Julie Youdovin*

### Mikveh as An Education Center - Room 23

#### **The Family Mikveh: Programming for young couples and bat mitzvah girls and their moms**

A presentation about programs that use mikveh as a way to focus on relationships during transitional times. The role of art and music will be featured.

*Penina Adelman, Judy Elkin, Rabbi Haviva Ner David, PhD, Sarah Tasman*

### Mikveh as An Education Center - Room 25

#### **OMG: Tools for Teaching Mikveh to Teens**

Teens face a myriad of transitions --personal, social, emotional, physical, Jewish and non-Jewish. Can mikveh be a Jewish ritual to help them acknowledge and respond to these changes? The session will present and elicit creative ideas about teaching mikveh to teens.

*Judy Greene, Tamar Cytryn*

**Monday October 11, 2010 Continued**

- 6:00-7:15pm**      **Dinner - Social Hall**
- 7:15-7:30pm**      **Buses leave for Leventhal-Sidman JCC**
- 8:00-8:45 pm**      ***Colors of Water – An African American Jewish Journey  
Musical and Theatrical Performance***  
Featuring Yavilah McCoy and Josh Nelson, written by Anita  
Diamant, Janet Buchwald and Yavilah McCoy  
*Leventhal-Sidman JCC, 333 Nahanton Street, Newton*
- 8:45-9:00pm**      **Talk Back with Yavilah McCoy and Janet Buchwald**
- 9:00pm**              **Book Sale Book Sale and Dessert reception  
Maariv**  
Traditional egalitarian *led by Rabbi Elyse Winick*
- 9:30pm**              **Bus shuttles to Hotel Indigo**

## **Tuesday October 12, 2010**

**8:00 am**

**Breakfast  
Shacharit**

Traditional egalitarian *led by Rabbi Ilana Garber in the Sanctuary*  
Meditation *led by Rabbi Dan Liben in the Rothman Chapel*

**9:00-10:30am**

**Workshops (Choose one of five options)**

Honoring Conversion and Affirmation - Room 101

**“The Wet Hair Moment” A welcome of song, prayer, and community**

The "wet hair moment" occurs after a person has emerged from the mikveh, has dressed, and is greeted by clergy and/or family and friends. This session offers tools for sanctifying this moment with meaningful and engaging rituals, and suggests ways to engage the congregation in welcoming the newest Jew with sensitivity, honor, and warmth. This workshop focuses on the power, potential, and responsibilities of clergy, educators, lay leaders, and communities in welcoming / supporting the individual as he / she becomes part of the Jewish people.

*Rabbi Lev Ba'esh, Dr. Paula Brody, Rabbi Daniel Liben, Rabbi Jay Perlman*

Exploring Contemporary Understandings of Niddah - Shain Room

**Sanctifying Sex: Personal perspectives on niddah**

This workshop will present first-hand accounts of how niddah observance impacts relationships - what is meaningful and what is challenging. Hear men and women talk about how they make decisions and how their approach and practice can change over time.

*Moderator Dr. Amy Friedman, Panelists: Lieba Savitt, Dan Savitt, Ben Shalva, Sara Shalva, Jeff Berman, Lisa Port-White*

Marking Life Transitions with Ritual Immersion - Rothman Chapel

**A Place to Sing: Music at the mikveh**

Participants will show how music can be a healing modality and a way to create sacred space. We will discuss the use of music and song for healing and transition, offer an experience of immersion in music and sound, teach participants how to choose appropriate music, and empower their creativity.

*Eshet Hazon Matia Rania Angelou, Mashpi'ah Ruchanit: Spiritual Director and Pastoral Counselor, Dr. Suzanne Hanser, Cantor Louise Treitman*

How to Facilitate Mikveh Guide (Attendant) Training in Your Community - Room 24

**Making it Work for You: Mikveh guide models in the Bay Area and Chicago**

The method of training of mikveh guides as developed by Mayyim Hayyim is not a one-size-fits-all approach. If *Guide My Steps* is the training "bible," every community needs to provide the "midrash" and adapt it for its own needs. Based upon the experience of groups in the San Francisco Bay Area and Chicago, we will discuss how to make it work for you.

*Rachel Brodie, Amy Chartock, Rachel Kohl Finegold*

## **Tuesday, October 12, Continued**

Mikveh as An Education Center - Room 202

### **At the Water's Edge: Middle school lesson plans**

Learn about Mayyim Hayyim's Lesson Plans for Middle School Students -- which are easily adaptable for all ages. We will present activities for educators to use in their classrooms before, during, and after their visit to (or discussion about) a mikveh. Copies of the Lesson Plans will be available for a nominal fee.

*Lisa Berman, Cindy Shulak-Rome*

### **10:45am-12:15pm Open Space! Social Hall**

Even after 24 intensive workshops, we know that there will be plenty left to talk about. We will take a full 90 minutes on the last day of our gathering for an Open Space session. This is meant as time for you to raise a topic, question, concern, or vision and talk with others who want to delve more deeply. Possible topics: Men and Mikveh; Sex Education for Teens and Mikveh; Inclusion at the Mikveh: Where do we draw the line?

You propose the topics and choose the conversation that's right for you.

*Facilitators Idit Klein, founding Executive Director of Keshet and a trained Open Space Facilitator and Aliza Kline, Mayyim Hayyim Executive Director*

### **12:15-12:30pm Closing Ritual** *Social Hall*

### **1:00-6:00pm Post-conference consultation session for those looking to build a new community mikveh**

Lunch will be served

*Aliza Kline, Anita Diamant, Mayyim Hayyim Founders*

*Temple Reyim, 1860 Washington Street (Offit Room), Newton, MA*

*Mayyim Hayyim, 1838 Washington Street, Newton, MA*