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Update on
PAST EVENTS

All programs take place at the Chabad Jewish Education Center
at 1311 Fort Washington Ave, Fort Washington, PA 19034 • 215-591-9310 • info@JewishMC.com

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JewishMC.com
Family Events

Holidays are a time when families get together to celebrate. But what happens when your community becomes an extended version of your family? We celebrate as one!

At Chabad we strive to bring the community together, to make everyone feel like family. Across the year, there are celebrations for all holidays as well as activities in between. All are organized to include different age and community demographics. Here is a sampling of some of the family-friendly programs Lubavitch of Montgomery County has sponsored so far during 2017-18.

Sukkot

We were blessed with fine weather for Sukkot 2017 (5778). The only “problem” was that so many joined us in the Sukkah erected in our parking lot that we were quite limited in space. The camaraderie among our community is now a given; furthermore, spirits were unusually high, coming off the High Holidays. Our Simchat Torah double feature (evening then morning) has also become an established community event. This year, over 250 people were in attendance. The dancing with the Torah was contagious; food was delicious, drinks were generous.

Chanukah

Chanukah is our Festival of Lights—a time that Jewish people worldwide bring light into this world. As we recall the miracle that happened so many centuries ago, we also infuse the world with light today. We do so through our acts of kindness, of celebration, of Jewish identity. With our community’s help, Chanukah 2017 was observed at Montgomery, Plymouth Meeting, and Willow Grove Malls. We also held a first-time workshop at the Home Depot in Montgomeryville where the children made their own Chanukah Menorahs.

Friendship Donations

More and more individuals are taking advantage of donation opportunities that let others know they are being remembered. Donations of any amount, small or large, are made for a number of reasons—speedy recovery, in memory of a loved one, sorry to hear of your loss, Mazel Tov for birthdays and graduations, etc. Acknowledgment of your donation is always sent to the person or family for whom the donation was made. It’s a nice way to connect with others and always warms the recipient. It’s really quite simple! Call our Center (215-591-9310) for more information.

Pictures of these memorable events can be found on our website, Jewishmc.com
PURIM

Clowns, ringmasters, acrobats – our Purim at the Circus community celebration on March 1, 2018 gained added fun as children of all ages (who says adults can’t be children at least one day a year?) came dressed up in the spirit of the holiday. A contortionist contorted, and the clangs of our arcade rooms matched the joyous sounds of the groggers. Of course, hearing the miraculous story of Esther and Mordechai remained a highlight and cherished mitzvah. Our Purim Circus Feast offered hamantashen, hot dogs, and more. The crowd for this annual event continues to grow! This year’s attendance edged towards 300 people. We are especially grateful to the more than thirty volunteers, especially the teens, without whose helping spirit (and muscle) this wonderful celebration could not have happened.

CHABAD YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

In response to requests for special programs for the young professionals crowd, Rabbi Hillel and Chaya Sperlin have launched Chabad Young Professionals. Their inaugural event was held in March 2018 with a 1990’s-themed Purim party. It is a great way to meet people, to schmooze, and to network. If you are interested in learning more about CYP, please contact Rabbi Hillel or Chaya at 215-591-9310 or RabbiHillel@JewishMC.com.

JEWSIH LEARNING INSTITUTE

One fascinating aspect of the JLI adult education courses taught at Chabad is the nature of the participants. Coming as they do from a variety
of backgrounds, they bring different perspectives on Judaism, G-d, and Torah to our sessions. Yet they all unite to learn.

Many are not “regulars” at Chabad. Some are members in area synagogues. These factors are no impediment, as we always strive to make everyone feel at home. All that we ask is that you come with an open mind to learn.

Our two courses so far for 2017-18 have been “Great Debates in Jewish History” and “The Art of Communication.” One can read many books on these subjects, but few address the underlying spirituality of them. Fewer still strive to define what these topics mean to us on a day-to-day basis. Classical Jewish texts became our compass for exploring these issues, and finding personal direction, through JLI classes.

Our upcoming course, entitled “What Is?” will challenge participants to rethink fundamental questions about the universe. The course promises to offer lively discussions and friendly debates about the nature of being, especially as viewed through the lens of Judaism. The course begins on Tuesday, April 17, and will run for six weeks.

CTEEN EVENTS

One of the least understood demographic groups is that of teenagers. They have responsibilities to school and family, they deal with peer pressure as never before — all while trying to forge their independence. At the same time, many are struggling to define their spiritual wellbeing but don’t know how to express it.

Over the past year and a half, Rabbi Hillel and Chaya Sperlin have been working with these teens through Cteen of Montgomery County. To date, they have organized many events and classes. Cteen includes a teen board of directors; we have gone “tech” by introducing JText. Twice a week, a Jewish trivia question is texted to the teens. The seventh to respond with the right answer wins a $20 gift card. All who respond also accumulate points with which to “buy” prizes at the year-end auction. In just fifteen months we have grown from having 5 teens participate to more than 180!
This past September, to usher in the New Year and school year, our Cteen Lounge was launched with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The excitement that the teens exhibited at that event was truly rewarding. It is now a place where high schoolers come and chill, play games and study. A special highlight occurs whenever Chaya prepares a delicious dinner or bakes cookies for our Cteens!

One recent Cteen program was the toy drive, a four-day activity during which toys were collected as gifts for children in hospitals. The effort entailed standing in front of Five Below (in the rain!) and collecting toy donations. The teens were so moved to see how total strangers would just drop off a toy to help us with our cause.

Another highlight was Chanukah. We took a limousine into Philadelphia to join other local CTeen chapters for a Chanukah party. Over 100 Jewish teens packed this party. There was great food and great entertainment, provided by a hypnotist. One doesn’t need to be hypnotized to love celebrating Chanukah!

The 7th night of Chanukah saw a “Latkah Wars” event, complete with three culinary judges, two of whom were professional chefs. The third, Chad Rosenthal, has been featured on TV’s Food Network Allstars Seasons 9 & 10 and Chopped. The teens took their latkah challenge very seriously. Competition was heated in the kitchen. Each team prepared different recipes of latkhs and presented them to the judges. Spiritual sustenance was provided by Rabbi Hillel, who taught the group about the history, meaning, and ongoing legacy of Chanukah.

However, perhaps the major event of the year occurred at the end of February at the annual International Shabbaton. Over 2,500 Jewish teens came together from all over the world to celebrate Shabbat as one. The highlight of the weekend took place in Manhattan’s Times Square. On Saturday evening, a massive Havdalah ceremony & concert unfolded and was displayed on the Times Square screens. Through song and dance and camaraderie, teens from...
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to all donors for enabling us to bring Judaism into so many lives!

Listed from Rosh Hashanah 5778 to Passover 5778

so many countries celebrated Jewish pride together. It was truly an incredible sight. How amazing it was to feel oneself a part of such a big family.

For the holiday of Purim, our Cteens baked hamentashen and joined other Chabad volunteers in helping out with Lubavitch of Montgomery County’s “Purim at the Circus” celebration in March. Each teen ran his or her own game booth and aided in supervising the kids. Their reward was not only the mitzvah of helping but also of feeling themselves a part of the community at large (complete with their very own Purim t-shirts!).

For Passover, we created an Escape Room at the Fort Washington Center. We called it “Escape from Egypt” and turned it into a game, using all the clues they had learned through Cteen about Passover.

As you can see, Cteen has been quite busy. We are bringing Judaism to where the teens are – not only in their communities but also on their smartphones!

To sign up a teen, have him or her text 19002 to 520-477-0770. For more information on teen programs, please contact Rabbi Hillel or Chaya at 215-591-9310 or RabbiHillel@JewishMC.com

GALA & AUCTION CELEBRATION

On February 3, over 180 people came together to celebrate our fifth anniversary in the new Chabad Jewish Education Center. Honorees of the evening were Gil & Candy Beyda, Joseph & Susan Greco, and Neil & Stefanie Ravitz. A special highlight of the catered event was the live auction. As auctioneer, our good friend Harris Gubin kept the crowd royally entertained!

Many galas have one goal in mind: to raise funds. Yet this event was alive with a spirit of simcha and joy. The positive atmosphere that was felt in the room, together with the kind words of the honorees, served as a clear testament to the true soul of LMC. What goes on inside our Center is more about spirit. It is our goal to penetrate hearts and souls in a meaningful, lasting way. This 5th-anniversary celebration was more than a gala and auction. Our community assembled, in pride and pleasure, to celebrate as a family.
HEBREW SCHOOL

Parents interested in registering their youngster(s) for Chabad Hebrew School often ask us: what is unique about your program? Let us answer by viewing the experience through the eyes of a child. The moment a CHS student walks in the door, he or she is greeted by a smile, either from the director, Devorah Deitsch, or a teen volunteer. An “on-time” ticket is noted for each student and included in a lottery. The winner is drawn during “keif (fun) time” at the end of the Hebrew School day when the classes gather for songs and games. This welcoming atmosphere sweetens the experience for those young eyes.

There is, of course, much more to CHS. There is Jewish education — learning Hebrew, from aleph on up; feeling the patriarchs and matriarchs come alive as real people, not just historical personages; absorbing not just the practice of mitzvot but their value. Before every major holiday, the whole school gathers for a different activity to enhance the celebration. For Sukkot, it was a “Sukkah Hop” to four different Sukkahs belonging to families in the community. For Chanukah, classes split into eight groups, each representing one candle on the Menorah. Teen volunteers lined up as the shamesh. We ran a “Cake Wars” competition to determine which “candle” decorated the best cake. Such events not only deliver our students’ educational experiences. They amplify them.

Hebrew School doesn’t always stop when the final bell rings. Imagine this scenario. Although school ends at noon, we have occasional “Youth Zone” days when children stay for another hour, for a special activity. Our “problem” is that kids don't want to leave!

J BABIES

On Friday mornings, mothers with their youngsters come together at our Center for an hour of music and movement, stories and fun. Kids up to three years old explore new worlds in this nurturing social environment while moms have a chance to mingle in a supervised setting. One highlight of our time together is the Challah that the JBabies bake with their moms. JBabies sessions run year-round. Call Devorah Deitsch 215-591-9310 for details.

FRIDAY NIGHT #SHABBATCHABAD

Join us the second Friday of every month at 6:30pm for Kabbalat Shabbat services. Enjoy the camaraderie as we say L’chaim while we taste and celebrate the foods and traditions of the Jewish people from around the world.

FRIDAY MORNING PARSHA CLASS

Every Friday morning, we take an in-depth look at the weekly Torah portion (over bagels and lox) — which allows us to delve into deeper meanings of the week's Torah reading as well as to explore applying them to our own lives. Friday morning sessions begin at 7:30 and last up to an hour.

TOT SHABBAT

Parents of preschool age children have been giving rave reviews to our monthly Tot Shabbat. While our Kippa’d Elmo is certainly the star of the show, the parents and children alike enjoy the Shabbat circle time & fun and delicious food craft. After a mini Kiddush of grape juice and challah, we join the main service where the children enthusiastically kiss the Torahs in the Aron Hakodesh (Ark). A sumptuous Kiddush luncheon rounds out a meaningful and enjoyable Shabbat morning for all. This program is open to all.

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PRESCHOOL

Chabad Garden School parent Lisa Barry said it best when she shared her feeling that CGS is not a “factory” but a “family”. All the members involved—kids, parents, even grandparents—are connected.

CGS is not simply a drop-off service for child care. It is, to be sure, a place where children are cared for— that is a given. But CGS is much more than that. It is a place where parents and teachers get to know each other and care for one another; where there are Mom Nights Out and Dad Nights Out; where couples dine together away from home; where adults, not just children, make friends. There are organized programs like Spaghetti in the Sukkah and social gatherings for holidays like Chanukah, when families simply hang out with each other. On a daily basis (when the weather is nice!) parents chill out during pick-up time while their kids roll down the hill alongside the Center or have a blast running around the yard.

CGS community action doesn’t stop with parents and children. It extends to grandparents as well. On Tu B’shvat in January, all three generations joined us to celebrate this “New Year of Trees.” Grandparents shared drawing, decorating, reading, and singing activities with their grandkids. They saw firsthand what these youngsters are learning and how they are “shepping some nachas” (gaining pride and joy) from CGS activities.

In only five years, Lubavitch of Montgomery County’s Chabad Garden School has grown from one class with seven students to six classes with seventy students. If you have a child ages 3 months to 5 years, give us a call 215-591-9310 for more information!
It is a question that many young Jewish married couples – many of them new to parenting - ask as they struggle with whether or not to swim against the tide of assimilation in the diaspora. Two years ago, three leading Jewish organizations – the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, the Avi Chai Foundation, and the Kohelet Foundation – united to launch Yaldeinu, a program aimed precisely at filling this void in modern Jewish identity. Its goal is to engage this population and deepen their connection to Judaism. Our Chabad Garden School is just one of ten country-wide preschools chosen to take part in the pilot stage of this program. Now in its second year at our Fort Washington Center, Yaldeinu is truly providing a resource through which participating parents find more meaning in their Judaism. More than that, many of these parents are becoming ambassadors to others in our preschool family.

Yaldeinu parents meet monthly. During this time they have the opportunity to socialize, to get to know others in their own situation. Through activities, discussions, and the simple act of being together, they sample the richness, the wisdom, the spirit of strength and joy that have kept our faith thriving for thousands of years. We are proud to say that we have seen our Yaldeinu group’s appreciation deepen for who they are as Jewish people. Yaldeinu supplies not only a support system but also a conduit through which these now-enlivened young Jewish parents share Jewish values with their preschool-age children... and grow with them, as a family, in their Judaism.

To paraphrase the Lubavitcher Rebbe, every Jew possesses a temple within himself or herself. Yaldeinu is helping its participants to fortify those temples!

For more information about Yaldeinu, please contact Education Director Devorah Deitsch at 215-591-9310.
what is?

RETHINKING EVERYTHING WE KNOW ABOUT OUR UNIVERSE

A fascinating, new six-session course by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute

what is?


LOCATION
Chabad Jewish Education Center
1311 Fort Washington Ave.
Fort Washington, PA 19034

WHEN
Six Tuesdays
7:30–9:30 p.m. Beginning April 17th

FEE
$90
10% discount for two or more people

MORE INFO/REGISTER
215-591-9310
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UPCOMING family EVENTS

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Friday, March 30