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Issues of life and death confront our society every day. In Florida, the case of Mary Schiavo and whether she should remain on life support in her persistent vegetative state has garnered the attention of the governor and the nation. One of the issues of the presidential campaign is the federal funding of research on embryonic stem cells. In countless other cases and places we have to ask ourselves what are the limits to technology and where do we draw the line when something becomes ethically questionable.

Judaism, with its commandment to choose life and its commitment to healing the ill, ought to have a voice on these issues, and it does. The Union for Reform Judaism's Department of Jewish Family Concerns has published a dozen bio-ethics study guides. It has also released publications on eating disorders, mental illness, sacred aging, and end-of-life issues. The man behind all of these publications is Rabbi Richard F. Address, the director of the Department of Jewish Family Concerns. Rabbi Address knows all the relevant Jewish texts but, more importantly, he understands people and the anxiety involved in making a difficult medical decision.

I am pleased to welcome Rabbi Address to Temple Emeth on Friday night, October 8 at 8:00 p.m. to deliver this year's Rabbi Joshua Trachtenberg Memorial Lecture. Drawing on his vast experience Rabbi Address' lecture is titled, "Making Sacred Decisions in Light of Emerging Medical Technology."

It is sure to be a memorable evening made more special by the fact that our Renaissance group is sponsoring a congregational dinner prior to Shabbat services.

Rabbi Address' lecture is certain to provide much food for thought. Sacred aging and end-of-life issues, especially, require us to discuss our views and our fears with our loved ones. This isn't easy, but Temple Emeth is offering a resource to help.

Beginning on Tuesday, October 12, our Adult Education Committee is offering a class called "Life, Death and What's for Dinner?" The instructor, Stephen Sidorsky, is a social worker whose experience working with Jewish families makes him well-qualified for this program. Over three sessions he will talk about the values that define a family's character, how to communicate with your loved ones, and how to write an ethical will. In other words, he will help you take the ideas presented by Rabbi Address and incorporate them into your life and the life of your family.

The advances that science makes in the laboratory are at times nothing short of awesome. It is the responsibility of Judaism to ensure that these advances are for the ultimate good of society. Thanks to teachers like Richard Address and Stephen Sidorsky, we all can learn to comprehend the technology and its moral limits, and use it so that we always choose life, that we and our children may live.

MESSAGE from the Rabbi



**RABBI
STEVEN
SIRBU**

Rabbi Steven Sirbu

Among our Temple Emeth family...

Harriet Hyams

With this column, we hope to start a tradition of featuring our many talented and distinguished members in our bulletin, much as we do in our Jewish Experiential Museum and through the Institute for Living Arts performances. If you have or do something special that we should know about, please send word to jguttman@nj.rr.com. Ed.

Harriet Hyams, a member of Temple Emeth for many years, is known to long-time congregants as the person who designed and installed the vibrant stained glass windows in our sanctuary. As a member of the building committee at that time, she also coordinated the ark

doors by Efreim Weitzman and the Ten Commandments, *ner tamid* (eternal light) and candelabra, all by Alvin Cooke; she later designed our sanctuary memorial walls and yartzeit light as well.

Harriet is an accomplished and widely recognized artist whose work can be seen at many locations including the Jewish Chapel at the United States Military Academy at West Point, for which she was commissioned to produce two three-story windows. The 32-foot-high windows, which depict David and Joshua in an expressionistic symbolic style, are constructed of antique glass that has been painted and

sandblasted. Although the project dates back to 1998, it was dedicated just recently, on September 19th, when Harriet was honored for her work and invited to speak. Why did it take so long? As the artist puts it, "Life has a way of zigzagging, and it is one of its mysteries that the windows are just now being dedicated."

Harriet Hyams was also cited in a recently published book, *Women Working in Glass*, by Lucartha Kohler. It traces the history of glass design from ancient times to the present. For examples of Harriet's beautiful and extraordinary work, visit her website: www.harriethyams.com,

Jack and Helen Lazar Educational Enrichment Fund

Virtually every member of Temple Emeth has benefited from a project funded by the Jack and Helen Lazar Educational Enrichment Fund since this endowed fund was established in 1990.

Religious School students have been enriched by programs such as the "Shofar Factory," a computer and Judaic software, a video library, and a resource room teacher. Early Childhood Center students have enjoyed toys, books, blocks, playground equipment and exciting special programs such as a visiting petting zoo. Adults have learned from additional classes and speakers. In addition, grants from the Lazar Fund have paid in part for Children's High Holy Day services, the cost of educating our students at the Bergen Academy of

Reform Judaism (BARJ), the printing costs for our own prayerbook, *Siddur Emet*, new shelving and furniture in our library, and youth awards to our children attending Reform youth, camping and Israel programs.

Jack and Helen Lazar pledged \$100,000, payable over three years, in response to Temple's 1989 Annual Giving Campaign. In January of 1990, Jack Lazar passed away and, based upon the wishes of the Lazar family, these monies were used to endow an educational enrichment fund in their name. The principal of this Fund is held by the Temple Emeth Endowment Foundation (TEEF). Each year, 85% of the interest from this Fund is returned to the Temple for making educational grants and 15% of the interest is added

to the Lazar Fund's principal. The interest payment for the current year is \$4,218. Grants from the Lazar Fund are made by the Education Endowments Allocation Committee. This Committee consists of five members, three of whom are appointed by the respective chairs of the Adult Education, Early Childhood Center, and Religious School Committees; the other two members, one of whom serves as chair, are appointed by the President. The Committee meets at least twice a year, in the fall and spring, to review congregational grant proposals.

Helen Lazar passed away in 1997, but the wonderful projects made possible each year through the Lazar Fund are a living memorial to both Helen and Jack. Their generosity to Temple Emeth is also visible through their donation of the social hall, the bema and ark, and the administrative offices of our schools.



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