



From Strength to Strength  
1956 - 2006

הקול

# THE VOICE

NOVEMBER 2006 | CHESHVAN/KISLEV 5767



A GUIDE TO THE  
RODEF SHOLOM  
COMMUNITY

## SAVE THE DATES

### Flu Clinic

Sunday, November 5, 1  
1 am - 1 pm

### Jewish Community Federation's Super Sunday

Sunday, November 19  
9 am - 9 pm

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## KNOW WHAT YOUR CHILDREN ARE READING

By Rabbi Stacy Friedman



A few months ago I received a disturbing call from a member of our congregation. Margaret called to tell me that her daughter, a student at Davidson Middle School, had been assigned to read

a book that she, and other parents at the school, found to be unsuitable for public school given that the book deals with explicitly religious material. I told her I would read the book and respond to her and the other parents. So this summer, I found myself reading *The Bronze Bow*, by Elizabeth George Speare, growing more angry and dismayed with each page I read.

*The Bronze Bow* centers on a boy named Daniel who struggles between his Jewish identity and a growing interest in Jesus, who, throughout the book, attracts more and more followers with his charismatic presence and a bright light that surrounds him always. Ultimately, Daniel finds Jesus and his teachings to be compelling and begins to question and denigrate his own Jewish rituals, leaders, and teachings. After reading *The Bronze Bow*, I became immediately con-

vinced that this book has no place in our public schools. Yes, the author, Elizabeth George Speare won a Newberry Medal for her work, and yes, it is well written, but the book strongly promotes a Christian religious view while belittling and misrepresenting the Jewish religion and its practices.

After reading the book this summer, I contacted a number of Christian colleagues, asking for their support and input. They were enormously supportive. The Reverend Doug Huneke wrote these words after reading the book. "It (the book) crosses the barrier intended to prevent one religion from proposing its worth over another and encouraging people to leave their tradition to practice another one." This clearly is not what our public schools ought to be teaching our children.

A few days before Yom Kippur, the curriculum committee met to discuss whether to remove the book from the approved list of books for the school. As of my writing this article, a decision has not yet been made. And I am writing about this critical matter to encourage the following:

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# SHABBAT

By Len Rifkind, Congregation Rodef Sholom Board President



“More than the Jews have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews.” *Ab'ad A'am*

Ever wonder why you joined Congregation Rodef Sholom? The reasons are probably as plentiful as our members.

For an increasing number, I suspect that reason is to find a spiritual connection, to find some meaning in the secular rat race we call life in the United States in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Don't get me wrong, I like the material things our wonderful country provides the opportunity to obtain as much as the next person. But as usual, I want more. And the “more” is a need to find peace, tranquility, quietude, music, meaning, and the social camaraderie that can span a lifetime.

After searching high and low, near and far, my quest has ended in a place right under my nose—Shabbat at Congregation Rodef Sholom. In almost no other setting do I feel as welcomed, accepted and connected with others seeking to

celebrate God's gift of a day of rest every week. Abraham Joshua Herschel said, “Shabbat is a palace in time.” When you really think about it, Shabbat is the core of our faith. Participating in Shabbat, whether at home or at our congregation, strengthens our spiritual muscles, which become firm and robust with practice. Our Sabbath bride fortifies us for the week ahead.

If you have been seeking a little spirituality in your life, a nosh for the soul, then try attending Shabbat services this week, whether on Friday night or Saturday morning. In return you receive replenishment to the spirit, and give to others attending the richness of your soul. See you at Shabbat this week.

B'shalom,  
Len Rifkind

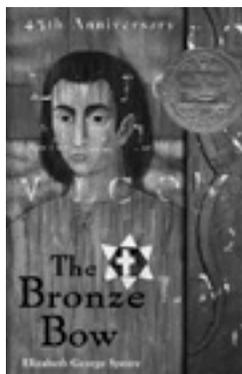
**The membership is invited to attend all open meetings of the Board held on the second Thursday of every month at 7:30 pm at the synagogue.**

## Rabbi Friedman's article (cont. from the cover)

1. If you are a parent, know what your children are reading and help them to understand the material. As Margaret says, before this book came home, she had no idea what her child was reading. I wonder how many of our children have read this book over the years only to feel embarrassed and confused about their beliefs. As parents, if you feel it is inappropriate for your child to read a specific book, the administration and teachers need to hear about it.

2. As taxpayers, we have the right to know what the schools are teaching our children. The schools need to know if people in their neighborhoods are concerned with the subject matter being taught there.

3. Feel free to read the book (or you can find extensive information on line).



I imagine that this conversation will continue for a while and that more and more people become part of it. This book is a religious book promoting a specific point of view, which, as the author said, was written to help her Sunday school students “understand the real

Jesus better.” I am grateful to you, Margaret, and the small group of parents who have stood up for the religious and intellectual liberties of our children by asking that this book be removed from our public school curriculum. I applaud your tenacity and bravery and your deep commitment to Judaism and the souls of all of our children.

PROGRAMS & EVENTS

## STUDY & TORAH

בית מדרש

### Introducing Mishkan T'filah 6 Tuesdays starting November 7, 7 – 9 pm

This six-part class, taught by Irene Resnikoff, Rabbi Lezak and Rabbi Friedman, will focus on several different prayers as reflected in our current prayer book, *The Gates of Prayer*, and the new prayer book, *Mishkan T'filah*. Our goal is to have every congregant to feel familiar with this prayer book by the time it becomes our own. Register with Jerrine at 479.3441 or [jerrine@rodefsholom.org](mailto:jerrine@rodefsholom.org).

November 7 and 14 with Irene; November 21 and 28 with Rabbi Lezak; and December 5 and 12 with Rabbi Friedman.

### Kedusha—A Life of Holiness Sunday mornings,

9:45 to 11:15 am

Join us for this year-long exploration of Holy Time, Holy Words and Holy Work. Come once or come every Sunday. Some classes will have a separate family education component but all are welcome to each class.

**Nov 5, Rabbi Lezak**  
**Tikkun Olam I — A Jewish response to hunger and poverty** (5th Grade): Paul Gafni from the Marin Interfaith Street chaplaincy to teach with the clergy. Co-sponsored by the Tikkun Olam Committee.

**Nov 12, Irene Resnikoff**  
**Family Roots in Torah—Welcome to Genesis** (2nd Grade): Introduction to text study

**Nov 19, Irene Resnikoff**  
**Marking Holy Time - An Overview of the Jewish Calendar** (3rd Grade): Text: Exodus 12