

Remarks of Sisterhood President, Sheila Zimmerman  
Sisterhood Shabbat  
April 9, 2010

I would like to dedicate my remarks on this Sisterhood Shabbat to a very special woman in my life, My Grandma Jennie.

She was born in Toprower, Poland and arriving in this country with just her courage, tenacity, and the belief that this will be a better place for her family to survive far from the pogroms that plagued her small village. Settling with her family on the lower East Side, they lived on Orchard Street on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of a tenement building.

They rented a stand and sold dairy products in the Essex Street Market. I worked there every weekend for 4 years while I attended High School. My Grandma would pay me one silver dollar each week and to this day, I never spent a single one.

There were many Jewish people that were out of work and had no money to feed their families especially for the Shabbat Dinner. My Grandma developed a routine each week. She would cook for 10 people and, of course, she was kosher and she would wrap it in 10 separate packages. We would carry it down the four flights and we would walk to the store together. She would go over to these very proud people and say, "I can't imagine what I did, I made so much food I will just have to throw it out, and one by one they would say " don't be so upset Mrs. Rosenberg, I'll take some home for my family for Shabbat.

This went on for years and years. At the funeral for my Grandma who passed away at 76 years old they stopped the Hearst in front of the Romanian Synagogue to pay a special tribute to her. The beautiful large wood decorated doors were flung open and the voice of one of the most famous cantors in the world Moishe Oysher chanted a prayer. When I turned around I saw the streets lined up with people for blocks and blocks, many were crying and most were praying. I said to my Mother, who are all these people, she said "they are the people that Grandma feed over the years, they have come to pay their respect to her for all the Shabbat dinners that she made for them in their time of need." After my Grandma died, my mother continued to cook and feed those people in need. In my Grandparents Honor, 50 years ago we started the J. Rosenbergs Cousins Club. We have met every other month for 50 years. Our Passover Seder is a tribute to them having 30 to 40 people attend and even our British cousins have flown in to join us. When we

started we used no prepared foods, there was no Shoprite and we were Kosher so everything was home made. We have invited many outsiders who had no place to go to join us.

Our Cousins Club even had their own family newspaper with all the news columns written by the US and European families. The tradition and lessons that my Grandma taught me all those years ago, are as important today as they were 50 years ago. Helping others less fortunate than yourself and making time to help people in the community is something we need to teach to the next generation and instill in their way of life. The only reward that my Grandmother received, was the respect of the community and I am certain that is more than she ever expected.

Remarks of Sisterhood President, Sheila Zimmerman

Sisterhood Shabbat, April 9, 2010

Page 2

Being part of something that really mattered has always been an important part of my life, so when our children joined Temple Beth Elohim and encouraged us to come to a service, we didn't know what to expect. I can tell you it didn't take long when it felt like family and where I belonged. The people were open and friendly and greeted up warmly.

I joined the Sisterhood and only after 4 years I am honored to be the Sisterhood President. I am represented here tonight by my wonderful board who I would like to thank for all their ideas and hard work. We are of different ages and come from different backgrounds but have the same desire to be part of the arm of the Temple and make a difference.

Thank you Donna Fleischman, Carole Wolfner, Phyllis Abrams, Lisa Kerman, Margaret Benjamin, Marcia Meyers, Barbara Kaplan, and Amy Herman. I would like to thank all the Sisterhood members that have shared my passion for trying new events and programs. I want to thank Ted Firetog for being so supportive and encouraging when I wanted to try some new events. I want to thank Ed Kislik and the Brotherhood for co-sharing events, without your support they would never have worked as well. I want to thank Jackie Rabinowitz for creating such wonderful Socials and making Sisterhood a part of the event. Thank you Susan Naftol for encouraging me and helping me with the growing pains in this first year. I want to thank Rabbi Churgel and Cantor Pilasky for teaching me that the Shabbat Service is where I want to be on Friday nights. I want to congratulate Cameron Krull on the happy occasion of his Bar Mitzvah and the entire Krull family.

Shabbat Shalom

Sheila Zimmerman