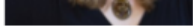


spirit. B'nai Tikvah is a true shining star!

It's an educationally rich season for our congregation as well. Our lay led Mussar group continues to meet and find its way towards regular study together, and new congregants are always welcome. The first session of "All In The Jewish Family" facilitated by Dawn Kepler of Lehrhaus Judaica was held on January 30. Attendees ranged from members to guests, parents of school age children to congregants with tales of grandparenthood to share! It was a remarkably open and honest session during which we all had the opportunity to learn more about the challenges and opportunities that go along with being a non-Jew involved in Judaism and synagogue life. By the time you read this, our second session on February 28 will have come and gone, but we hope you'll join us for the third and final one on Sunday March 13 from 10-11:30am in the Library, which will address issues of Jewish identity from a Reform perspective. (These sessions are free to CBT members, and \$5 each for the public).

And speaking of Lehrhaus, as promised in my last Tikvah Talk column, here are the details on the next series we're collaborating on. It's called "Walking in The Valley of the Shadow – And Not Being Afraid." Did you know it's been documented that the



pulpit. I didn't know much about what that life would actually look like, but I knew with deep certainty that it was the life I was called to live.

That conviction is still with me today as strongly as it was then. I feel so very lucky to be doing work in this world that I feel I am meant to do. I know that many people cannot say that about their jobs, and I don't take that belief for granted. The more I have gotten to know our community, the more I want to engage with it and be an agent of transformation for our members. I have witnessed such exciting growth and change in the last 12 years, and I have been privileged to help nurture a thirst for learning and prayer that is so palpable here on Hillcroft Way. I want nothing more than to keep contributing to that growth in our community, but in order to do so, it is time for me to take a break to help recharge my own spiritual batteries, so to speak. Pulpit life is very taxing, especially with three young children at home. For that reason, I am thrilled to be taking a three month sabbatical starting on May 1st of this year.

The idea of sabbatical is biblical in origin, from Leviticus 25. It comes from God's instructions to the Israelites about how to treat the land of Israel in order to keep it rich and fertile: