

Lessons from the Holocaust: An Interfaith Book club

Lessons from the Holocaust: An Interfaith Book Club, is sponsored by the Holocaust Education Resource Council (HERC) and co-hosted by Temple Israel and St. John's Episcopal Church. The purpose of the club is to foster understanding and good relations between the two congregations as well as the larger community and to keep alive the memory of the Holocaust.

The group will meet one Thursday of every month at 7:00 p.m. at either the Temple Israel or St. John's congregation. Our first book club meeting on September 15th at 7:00 p.m., will be at St. John's Episcopal Church located at 211 North Monroe Street in the Carter Chapel.

The book chosen for the first meeting is *The Book Thief* by Markus Zusak. This four-star rated book, told through the perspective of the German people, has Death as the narrator and is set in WWII Germany. It tells the story of a young girl who has been moved from her home to live with foster parents. Though her life is hard, the protagonist is able to appreciate small things that make life pleasurable. We don't want to give away the plot, but the reader will soon discover that this is a powerful story, not soon forgotten.

The book selected for the second book club meeting is *Sarah's Key* by Tatiana de Rosnay. This book is now a major motion picture. This meeting will be on Thursday, October 13 at 7:00 p.m. at Temple Israel. Since this takes place during Sukkot, we will meet in the sukkah (weather permitting). *Sukkot*, a Hebrew word meaning "booths" or "huts," refers to the annual Jewish festival of giving thanks for a bountiful fall harvest and commemorating the forty years of Jewish wandering in the desert after Sinai. The sukkah symbolizes the frail huts in which the Israelites lived during their forty years of wandering in the desert after the Exodus from Egypt, and serves to remind Jews of the biblical account of how God protected them, provided for their needs in the wilderness, and still watches over us today. It is customary for Jewish people to welcome *ushpizin*, guests to our sukkah, so please, be our guests this Sukkot for book club.

Our plan is to read a variety of fiction and nonfiction which present the story of the Holocaust. We will discuss at our first meeting the overall structure of the book club and will take suggestions for future books. Book club discussions will be led by book club members unless we have a special speaker. Please feel free to bring interested friends. Teenagers are also welcome and encouraged to attend. Copies of the books will be available for sale at Temple Israel's Gift Shop, The Spinning Dreidel, and St. John's Bookstore.

For additional information, please contact Heather Kufert, Temple Israel's Program Director, at 877-3517 Ext. 6, tisraelprograms@gmail.com or St. John's at 222-2636

