

## TORAH THOUGHTS

### TAKE TIME TO REFRESH

Our annual Marlboro Interfaith Thanksgiving service was on Tuesday at the Old Brick Reformed Church, and it was inspiring. Rabbi Koas, Cantor Teplitz, and I all participated, and those who came from MJC enjoyed the sense of community.

Rabbi Don Weber of Temple Rodef Torah gave the sermon. Given all the struggles we've faced as a nation recently – shootings in Pittsburgh, Louisville, and Thousand Oaks; fires in California – I wondered what his message would be.

He cited a passage in the Talmud, in which Rabbi Akiva questioned the notion that he should complete all his work before Shabbat begins. “How is that possible when there is always more to be done,” he wondered. He answered his own question: he should behave “as if” all tasks are complete. This would allow him to enjoy the Sabbath worry free, and on the next day he would return to his work feeling refreshed.

Rabbi Weber applied this concept to Thanksgiving, noting our challenges including the ones listed above. But then he urged us to put them aside on the holiday, enjoy the company of family and friends, and feel gratitude for our many blessings. Starting Friday, we should get back to the work at hand, hopefully feeling energized and with a renewed sense of determination.

Let's all embrace the rabbi's good advice!

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. The loss of life and damage caused by the wildfires in California is overwhelming. To help, go to United Synagogue's Disaster Relief Fund:  
<https://crm.uscj.org/civicrm/contribute/transact?reset=1&id=12>
2. Read about how some Jewish teens responded to the fires.  
<https://uscj.org/blog/in-california-even-wildfires-cant-extinguish-usyvers-determination-and-spirit>

Shabbat shalom,

Rabbi Pont