

Weekly Teaching

March 16, 2018

This week's teaching was a collaborative effort between Rev. Dr. Heather Wright and me, and will also appear in The Greenwich Sentinel. Heather is the Executive Director for the Center for Hope and Renewal and her bio can be found [here](#).

Shabbat Shalom,

Rabbi Mitch

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“Iron Sharpens Iron”

Rev. Dr. Heather Wright & Rabbi Mitchell M. Hurvitz

Rev. Wright:

A few weeks ago, I was at a luncheon where Rabbi Mitch gave a commanding introduction of Rev. Neely Towe, the former senior minister of Stanwich church. I was struck by his words, “Neely has been a mentor to me.” I was delighted to discover that my friend and colleague felt the same way I did. Neely had been a personal and professional mentor in my life as well for many decades. I have a strong respect, friendship and appreciation for both these two clergy and their connection made sense. How refreshing that a Congregational minister would leave such legacies in the lives of both a Presbyterian Minister and a Rabbi. I know of other clergy in town from other denominations who would also credit Neely as playing a part in their discernment or their ongoing sense of call. That rubbing off on one another is something Greenwich clergy do well.

Having served in specialized ministries here in Greenwich since 2005, I have been privileged to be a part of the Greenwich Fellowship of Clergy and to serve in its leadership. There is nothing as wonderful as a group of people working together for the common good, particularly as our differences find their commonality in fellowship, shared learning, teaching and in worship. Clergy colleagues can become powerful sources of support and wisdom for one another. Expressions of this have happened in our interfaith Thanksgiving and MLK services; interfaith Seders; coming together to commemorate the Holocaust and combat Genocide. In our pursuit of understanding God and truth more deeply and to guide others into that knowledge and relationship, learning from one another's traditions, challenges and inspirations profoundly enriches the work we do.

“Iron sharpens iron” is the concept from the Hebrew Scriptures that indicates as we live life together, we become stronger from community and the back-and-forth, the give-and-take. In the Christian Scriptures, we hear about “where two or more are gathered, there God is with them.” That means we are stronger in community and we experience more of what God has to offer through community.

Rabbi Mitch:

Our community's local Fellowship of Clergy has truly been a source of inspiration for me and my colleagues. It's why both Rev. Wright and I have each served as President of our Fellowship group. We know that it is TOGETHER that we learn and grow from one another.

It's within our Fellowship of Clergy that we have the opportunity to become what the Talmud describes as “*Hevruta* — Scholars who when they study together sharpen one another”.

Rabbinic dogma asserts that no one individual has, on their own, a complete understanding of a particular idea. Instead, you always depend on a meaningful discussion with another so as to discover the “truth”. When my colleagues and I participate in this process it’s the series of questions and discussion that lets us form relationships that becomes the opportunity for collaborative-developmental mentoring. We can safely express and discuss our ideas, and the “sharpening” of one another lets each of us further reflect and grow.

Everyone in life should seek out meaningful *Hevruta* partners. It takes time and effort to uncover the “Truth”, but it’s always worth the effort because we can truly “sharpen” our greater human potential. No matter one’s personal religious prescription, we can help each other learn and grow in meaningful ways.

I often like to note that each of us climb God’s Holy Mountain. Each of us are on their own particular path rising upwards towards God. But, we walk so close to one another that should one of us need assistance, the other is right next to them so as to lend support on the journey. Rev. Towe, Rev. Wright, Rev. Lemler, MSGR. Detscher; my list could go onwards noting my friends and clergy colleagues; my *Hevruta*; who sharpen my own potential, and support my personal journey up God’s Holy Mountain. My hope is that all people of faith can find other friends by which they can cultivate their own special *Hevruta* relationships and “sharpen” one another.

Rev. Wright & Rabbi Mitch:

We see God better when we share meaningful time of fellowship and sacred study. Seeing things both differently and the same always provides us with the much-needed perspective which expands our vision. We invite you to join in this endeavor. Share in the journey. Sharpen your own vision of God in your life. Find you mentor. Find your *Hevruta*. Success in this endeavor will help us all better lead, love and serve God.