

COMMUNITY NEWS

Dr. Simcha Paull Raphael was Shir Shalom Scholar-in-Residence at Shabbaton

By MICHAELA BEN
ABRAHAM

Congregation Shir Shalom (a merger of Temple Beth Am and Temple Sinai) held its Freda Berger Scholar-in Residence Shabbaton program this past weekend, Feb. 28 to March 2. The scholar was Dr. Simcha Paull Raphael, a former Canadian now living in Philadelphia with his wife (who is a Reconstructionist rabbi) and two children. He gave a few lectures and I attended the one on Saturday night after Havdalah.

Dr. Raphael is a Ph.D., Psychology, California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, CA; Rabbinic Pastor, ordination by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi; a Transpersonal Psychotherapist, Adjunct Faculty, Department of Religion, La Salle University, Philadelphia, Pa; an Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of Jewish Studies, Temple University, Philadelphia; a Spiritual Director, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, Pa; a free-lance adult

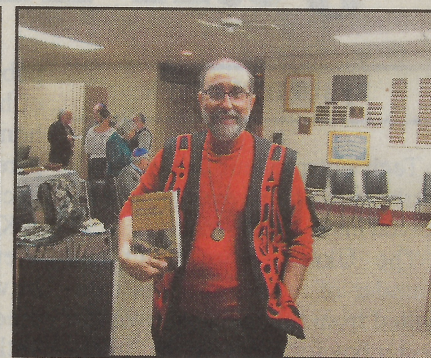
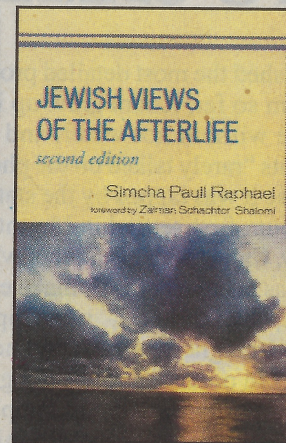
educator on topics of mysticism, spirituality, death, afterlife and bereavement and author of "Jewish Views of the Afterlife." His website is: www.simcharaphael.com.

The talk was held in a social hall in Shir Shalom and was well attended. Dr. Raphael was a masterful and compelling speaker. His audience was seated in a circle around him. We were spellbound listening to his traditional Jewish stories of transmigration of the soul, end of life and reincarnation stories. They were all part of Kabbalistic, midrashic and folklore Jewish heritage. Dr. Raphael's tales were not only enthralling but also informative as he summarized the history of Jewish thought and folk practices within the field of Jewish beliefs.

After his talk there was a dessert reception at which his thorough, scholarly and very readable 500+ page book "Jewish Views of the Afterlife" was made available for sale and autographing. Dr. Raphael warmly and graciously answered the many questions that were based on his talk.



Scholar Dr. Simcha Paull Raphael's talk was enthusiastically received.



Dr. Raphael is the author of "Jewish Views of the Afterlife."



Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein spoke with attendee Dr. Stan Bratton.



Refreshments were served after the program.