

**8th Annual Jewish Community Pre-Memorial Day Event
Wednesday, May 20 | The Jewish Center (131 W. 86th St.)**

Doors open at 6:30 pm (family dinner at 6:00 pm)

Join over 50 Marines for an evening honoring the lives of service members who were killed in defense of our country and paying tribute to the dedication of our active and retired service members the US Armed Forces. Refreshments and care package activity following the ceremony. To register for the lecture and/or dinner go to jewishcenter.org

Shearith Israel's Nepal Earthquake Relief Fund

Help us show our support as a community by donating to an earmarked fund of Rabbi Soloveichik's Discretionary Fund. Our collective funds will be sent to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) with whom we've partnered in the past and upon whom we rely to distribute funds responsibly and in a timely manner. Please donate generously by May 8 to be a part of our communal relief effort for Nepal. You can send in a check made out to "CSI Rabbi's Discretionary Fund" or online at shearithisrael.org/discretionaryfund. Make sure to indicate on the memo: "Nepal Earthquake Fund."

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal Tob to Adam Freilich on becoming a bar mitzvah. Congratulations to his parents, Dr. Benjamin & Phyllis Freilich, and grandparents, Dr. Dennis and Estelle Freilich.

Mazal Tob to Leonardo Kaplan on becoming a Bar Mitzvah last Shabbat. Congratulations to his parents Thomas Kaplan and Daphne Recanati Kaplan. Thank you to the family for sponsoring last week's lovely kiddush luncheon.

Condolences to Joel Kazis on the passing of his father, Albert Kazis.

Our next public tour is:
Tuesday, May 12 at 11:00 am

Parnas Office Hours

Louis Solomon would be delighted to meet with you.
Please schedule a visit at
parnas@shearithisrael.org.

Israel Baer Kursheedt

Z. Edinger

Israel Baer Kursheedt passed away on Friday, April 30, 1852, on the eve of Shabbat Parashat Aharei Mot- Kedoshim. Kursheedt was the most learned Jew in America in the first half of the Nineteenth Century. To honor his anniversary we present here a short biography:

Israel Baer Kursheedt was born in Singhaven, Germany in 1766. He studied at the famed Yeshiva of Rabbi Nathan Adler in Frankfurt. He was among Adler's favorite students together with his classmates Wolf Heidenheim and Abraham Bing. When the Yeshiva was forced to close on account of the Napoleonic Wars, Kursheedt entered business and was able to secure a contract to supply the Prussian Army with provisions. In 1795 the Prussian Army was disbanded and Kursheedt left Frankfurt to seek new fortune. He arrived in Hamburg with the intention of emigrating to England. However, while in Hamburg he learned of an American sloop called the Simonhoff and decided instead to try his hand in America.

Upon his arrival in Boston in late 1796, Kursheedt found that Boston had no Jewish community to speak of and decided to move to New York. In New York, Kursheedt attended Shearith Israel and became friendly with the Hazzan, Gershom Mendes Seixas. Seixas appreciated the value of Kursheedt's yeshiva training and turned to him for advice in resolving questions regarding Jewish law. That Kursheedt was Ashkenazic and Seixas Sephardic was not a factor their relationship. Until about 1840, Kursheedt was the only Jew in America with any significant rabbinical training.

In 1804, Kursheedt married Seixas' eldest daughter, Sarah Abigail, and became Rev. Seixas' son-in-law. He was appointed to a committee to reorganize and revise the curriculum of Shearith Israel's Yeshibat Minhath Areb in 1808. And in 1810, Kursheedt was elected Parnas of the congregation.

Kursheedt relocated to Richmond, Virginia in 1812. While he and his family traveled from NY to Richmond by land, his large and valuable library – certainly the largest collection of Hebrew books and manuscripts in America – were shipped by sea. Unfortunately, the ship on which Kursheedt's library was sent, was the first ship to be taken by the British during the War of 1812. The ship was taken to Bermuda and its contents sold. While in Richmond, Kursheedt became a hazzan at KK Beth Shalom. He also became an acquaintance of Thomas Jefferson and visited Monticello on more than one occasion.

In 1824, Kursheedt moved back to NY. Upon his return to Shearith Israel, he attempted to prevent the creation of a breakaway synagogue by offering to lead a separate Ashkenazic service at Shearith Israel. His proposal was not accepted, and ultimately, Congregation Bnai Jeshurun was formed. For the rest of his life he split his time and allegiances between the two congregations. Kursheedt was influential in the creation of the philanthropic "Hebrat Terumat haKodesh" in 1834. In 1840 as a result of the "Damascus Affair" he authored a letter to President Martin Van Buren asking for the United States to exert its influence in the Middle East on behalf of persecuted Jews in Damascus. This was the first time that American Jews advocated politically on behalf of Jews elsewhere in the world.

Although he authored no books and left very few writings, Kursheedt was influential, both by his philanthropic activities and in his role as the only posek (religious decisor) in America during the first half of the 19th century. He passed away in 1852 at the age of 86 surrounded by his family.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

May 1-2, 2015

Shabbat Ahare Moth-Kedoshim

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 480 – 508; Haftara p. 511
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 585 – 611; Haftara p. 1169

CANDLE LIGHTING | 7:34 pm

MINHAH | 6:45 pm

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary

SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Hidary delivers a seminar entitled: "A Rabbi, a Philosopher, and a Monk Walk into a Cave: The Lesson of Lag La'omer"

MEANING AND MELODY | 10:00 am | Rabbi Morris

TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Levy

Auditorium | Featuring Rabbi Morris at 11:00 am

YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Children's Library

ASSIGNED JR. CONGREGATION Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium

PARASHAT HASHABUAH: THE PARTS THEY SKIP IN HIGH SCHOOL | Rabbi Hidary | 6:30 pm | For high school students | Held at the Hidarys' home, 1 W 85th St Apartment 6A

SEUDAH SHELISHIT & PIRKEI ABOT SHIUR

Rabbi Soloveichik | 6:30 pm

Spring Semester Sponsored by Lewis Lipsey

MINHAH/ARBIT | 7:30 pm

KETER SHEM TOB | Rabbi Hidary | Main Sanctuary

HABDALAH | 8:33 pm

UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

"Maimonides' Guide 3:31: On Transcending the Rationales of the Commandments"
Professor Yair Lorberbaum
Monday, May 4 | 7:00pm
(In Lieu of Rabbi Hidary's Maimonides Class)
Hear Professor Lorberbaum, renowned professor and author, speak about Maimonides' Guide to the Perplexed.
Thank you to our anonymous sponsor.

Annual West Side Mikvah Fundraiser Event
Tuesday, May 5 | 535 West End Ave | 7:30 pm
Women are invited to celebrate and support the West Side Mikvah. There will be a dessert reception, raffle and speech by guest speaker, Rebbetzin Rivkah Slonim.
Register at westsidemikvahfundraiser.com

Jews for George: An Exploration of Judaism in the Age of the American Revolution
Co-sponsored by YU's Center for the Jewish Future and YU's Zahava and Moshael Straus Center for Torah and Western Thought
11:00 am - 12:30 pm
Wednesdays May 6, May 13, and May 20
This four-part course, led by Rabbi Meir Soloveichik, will utilize original source documents from the archives of the Congregation to explore Judaism during the American Revolution.
Register at yu.edu/jhistory.

Women's Service
Saturday, May 9 | Little Synagogue
These services are an opportunity for women to lead prayer, read from the Torah and perform the mitzvot associated with our services. Join us as we celebrate the Bat Mitzvah of Avigail Friedman. To participate, contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde at lrohde-csi@yahoo.com.

Shearith Israel Book Club
Wednesday, May 13 | 8:00 pm
Location in a private home | Esther Hidary
Join us for the last meeting of the year. We will be reading "The UnAmericans" by Molly Antopol. RSVP to chidary@gmail.com.

Yom Yerushalayim
Sunday Morning, May 17 | 8:00 am
Following 8:00 am morning services, Rabbi Soloveichik delivers a special shiur followed by a festive breakfast. Afterwards, we head down to Chatham Square cemetery in Chinatown for our historic Revolutionary War memorial service. See below. To sign up, go to shearithisrael.org/yom-yerushalayim-lecture

Annual Pre-Memorial Day Service: Honoring Veterans of the Revolution and Members of the Armed Forces
Sunday Morning, May 17 | Chatham Square Cemetery | 11:00 am
Following our Yom Yerushalayim festivities, at around 10:00 am we head down to the Chatham Square Cemetery to honor veterans of the US Armed Forces including members of our congregation who participated in the Revolutionary War. This special service is open to all members of the community (veterans are encouraged to attend in their dress uniforms.) Join us as we place American flags at the graves of 22 veterans of the Revolution. The cemetery, active from 1682-1828, is located at 44 St. James Place, opposite Chatham Square. Transportation from and back to Shearith Israel will be offered on a limited basis. To sign up, go to

Yom Yerushalayim Screening of the film "Beneath the Helmet: From High School to the Home Front"
Sunday, May 17 | 7:00 pm | following evening services
Sponsored by the Tsesarsky family
See this documentary which follows the stories of five 18 year-old Israelis as they are drafted into the IDF. Producer David Coleman and soldier, Lt. Aviv Regev will join us for Q&A. Light Refreshments will be served. This event is free and open to all.

Jews and Booze: A Halakhic Tale of Godfathers and God-fearers in the Age of Prohibition
Rabbi Meir Soloveichik
First Night of Shabuot, Saturday Night, May 23
We'll offer you a lecture and cheesecake that you can't refuse.

Girls' Megillat Ruth Reading
First day of Shabuot | Sunday, May 24
The girls of our synagogue recite Megillat Ruth for the congregation in the Main Sanctuary after services. If your daughter would like to participate, please contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde at lrohde-csi@yahoo.com.
Please consider sponsoring or contributing to a kiddush to follow the reading in honor of our girls.

WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION
View all our spring classes at shearithisrael.org/education

- Sunday
- ◇ Sephardic Responsa on Contemporary Issues | Rabbi Hidary | 8:40 am
 - ◇ Saadia Gaon's Emunot ve'Deot on Revelation and Commandments | Sjimon den Hollander | 9:30 am

- Monday
- ◇ Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed on Prophecy | Rabbi Hidary | 7:00 pm
 - ◇ YL Monday Night Learning * | 7:00 pm
 - ◇ Hebruta Program* | 7:15 pm
 - ◇ Living Jewish | Rabbi Morris | 7:30 pm |
 - ◇ Bet Midrash | 8:00 pm
- Spring semester sponsored by Josh Eisen and Bruce Roberts and Joy Saleh Roberts
- ◇ Rambam Rules for Young Professionals | Rabbi Morris | 8:30 pm
- *In partnership with JICNY*

- Tuesday
- ◇ Shulhan Arukh | Rabbi Hidary | 7:45 am
 - ◇ Jewish Time: The Festivals in Halakha and Jewish Thought- A Class for Women | Rabbi Soloveichik | 9:00 am
 - ◇ History of the Sephardim, the Spanish & Portuguese Jews | Rabbi Morris | 7:00pm - 7:30 pm
 - ◇ Talmud Class: Tractate Berakhot and the Philosophy of Jewish Prayer | Rabbi Soloveichik | 8:00 pm

- Wednesday
- ◇ Parashat Hashabua | Esther Hidary | 10:00 am

Hebrew classes
Level 1: Sundays 10:00 am - 11:00 am
Level 2: Wednesdays 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
Level 3: Thursdays 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm
To sign up: shearithisrael.org/hebrewclasses