

Annual Thanksgiving Celebration

NEXT Thursday, November 22

Join us for our Thanksgiving Day programming for the whole family!

7:45 am | Morning Services with Special Thanksgiving Hallel

8:30 am | Rabbi Soloveichik's Address

Keep your children entertained during the rabbi's address with our Children's Hesed Craft Activity in the Fidanque Youth Room

9:00-11:00 am | Hot Cocoa & Refreshments | Elias Room

Parade Viewing for Youth | Portico | Space is limited; register at shearithisrael.org/parade.

9:30-11:30 am | Thanksgiving Pack-a-thon | Register at shearithisrael.org/packathon 2018.

To join our list of sponsors for our refreshments and festivities, visit shearithisrael.org/thanksgiving.

CHOIR SELECTIONS THIS WEEK

Friday Night (11/16)

V'Shameru (p. 166) | Samuel Naumberg (1817-1880)

Hazzan and Choirmaster at the Great Synagogue of Paris.

Psalm 23 (p. 174) | H. Pereira Mendes (1852-1937)

Minister of Shearith Israel from 1877-1937.

Shabbat Morning (11/17)

Misheberakh (p. 208) | Leon Hyman

Mr. Hyman has been the choirmaster of Shearith Israel since 1955.

En Kelohenu (p. 229) | Samuel de Sola (1839-1866)

Minister of Bevis Marks synagogue, London, from 1863-1866,

Adon Olam (p. 232) | Salomone Rossi (~1570-1630)

Musician and Composer in Mantua, Italy.

Public Tours

Our next public tour is
**Wednesday, December 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.

DEBAR TORAH: GET OVER IT AND DO SOMETHING!

— RABBI IRA ROHDE, HAZZAN —

And Rachel saw that she had not borne to Jacob. And Rachel became jealous of her sister and she said to Jacob: "Give me children, or, if none, I die." And Jacobs anger kindled against Rachel, and he said: "Do I [sit] in place of God, who withheld from you the fruit of the womb?" And she said: "Here is my maid servant Bilha. Come to her, and she will give birth upon my knees, that by her I, too, shall be built-up." (Gen. 30:1-3)

This strident exchange is important for many reasons. I always got the sense that this exchange proved to be Rachel's undoing, and even, indeed, presages her doom. Rachel, in fact, dies only a few chapters later, and there is a strong sense that her cursing herself here is part of what leads to that early death, even though she does have two stepchildren by Bilha as well as later giving birth to two children of her own. The Torah seems to justify Jacob's angry reaction to Rachel. Later on in this Parasha, Rachel "steals" Laban's household idols which, as if that weren't itself bad enough, ends up subjecting Rachel inadvertently to Jacob's curse that whoever the idols are found with "shall not live." We could say, perhaps, that Jacob should have shown much more understanding, compassion, and forgiveness, but in the main, the Torah does seem to justify Jacob's anger. Literally, of course, Jacob is correct that Jacob is not "in place of God," and that conception is not merely a matter of how much love a couple has: Fertility is always a Divine gift. But everybody knows that; that would not seem to bear out such an angry reaction. What bears out Jacob's strong reaction and makes him right here?

Well, for one thing, Jacob is, by now, quite used to the idea that God doesn't always, and, in fact, seldom, makes things go the way Jacob might have liked them to go. It would have been much nicer for Jacob to have been born first, but Esau was born first instead. Jacob has had to adapt to God's not making things go his way literally from the moment he was born. Jacob is upset that he didn't get Rachel first, but he adapts when he gets Leah and then gets Rachel. It's not that God's ways are completely unjust or inscrutable, but God does seem to operate according to His own calculus, not according to ours. Jacob accepts that. We are told that God saw that Leah was detested, and chose to reward her by giving her children first. Now, we might have said that there would have been more justice if God had rewarded the deep, true love and devotion between Rachel and Jacob by giving Rachel children first, but that was not God's calculus. And Jacob humbly accepted that God would often not show him particular favor, that God's calculus is not man's, and yet Jacob still devoted himself at Beth-El to serve God exclusively, as long as God should grant him food and clothing enable Jacob to return home.

Rachel has a hard time accepting this type of god. She is, perhaps, used to "terafim," idols with whom one seeks to curry favor and influence. Or, at least, gods which follow a logic much closer to our own. And she does have a point: I mean, God's covenant with us means that we have been shown some kind of grace or "favor;" but what is this "favor" we can't see or understand?

Jacob, on the other hand, is not only used to merely accepting God's calculus: Jacob is used to pushing back at that calculus and transforming it. Jacob accepted that Esau was born first, but that didn't stop Jacob from trying to get the "firstborn birthright" for himself anyway. Laban's trickery and taking advantage may exasperate Jacob, but they don't phase Jacob: He prepares to take action of his own, and trusts in God's eventual blessing, despite what appears to be a contrary Divine calculus. Jacob's strident answer to Rachel emerges out of the persistent lesson of his life: Things will often not go our way. Now get over it and do something!



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

Year of Years Celebration

CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Vayetse

November 16-17, 2018

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 106; Haftarah p. 135
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 130; Haftarah p. 1430

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:19 pm

EVENING SERVICES | 4:15 pm

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Rabbi Soloveichik | "Rembrandt vs. The Nazis" | 2018-2019 season sponsored by the Julis family.

MORNING SERVICES | Main Sanctuary | 8:15 am

TOT SHABBAT | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Fidanque Youth Room

YOUTH GROUPS | Ages 5-12 | 10:00 am | Elias Room

JUNIOR CONGREGATION | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

SHIUR | Rabbi Soloveichik | "Dreams of Herzl, Freud, and Manassah ben Israel: Parashat Vayetse and Jewish History"

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium

SHABBAT AFTERNOON CLASS | Rabbi Soloveichik | 3:30 pm | "The First Hanukkah" | Levy Auditorium | Sponsored this week by Tikva Ostrega in memory of her father, Ezra Meir Shohet.

EVENING SERVICES | 4:10 pm

HABDALA | 5:04 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings:

Sunday: 8:00 am | Monday-Wednesday & Friday: 7:15 am

See inside for Thanksgiving morning schedule.

Evenings (Arbit only):

Sunday-Thursday: 6:30 pm

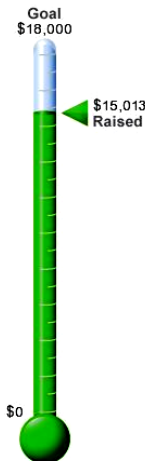
THANKSGIVING AT SHEARITH ISRAEL

LESS THAN ONE WEEK AWAY!
Fourth Annual Thanksgiving Pack-A-Thon
Thursday, November 23, 9:30 am
Levy Auditorium

On Thanksgiving morning, after Rabbi Soloveichik's special Thanksgiving address, registered volunteers from Shearith Israel, the Jewish Center, the West End Collegiate Church, the Church of Latter-day Saints, and Drisha will pack thousands of packages of food and winter apparel that will be distributed to New Yorkers in need by the Met Council on Poverty.

We have raised \$15,000 so far —
help us reach our \$18,000 goal!

To sign up or support this event, visit
shearithisrael.org/packathon2018.



Would You Like To Co-Sponsor Our Thanksgiving Festivities?
Visit shearithisrael.org/thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving Day Parade Viewing

This Year, Pre-Registration is Required, but still free for Shearith Israel Youth (and pre-registered Pack-A-Thon Volunteers)

Our Portico provides one of the best Thanksgiving Day Parade views in the city. In an effort to ensure an orderly, secure, and enjoyable experience for the kids, we ask that you pre-register. **Note: no adults are admitted unless your small child needs you.**

Registration is FREE for CSI Members (and for pre-registered Pack-A-Thon volunteers); \$5 per person in advance for all others, including guests of members. Special thanks to our volunteer congregants who will be helping manage the crowd and make this a safe and memorable experience for all.

To register your child(ren) for the Portico Parade Viewing, visit shearithisrael.org/parade.

REMEMBERING BAGHDAD—

Between the Tigris and the Hudson:
The Iraqi Jewish Community and Shearith Israel
Special interview with Mr. Ezra Zilkha, and a panel discussion featuring Professor Carole Basri, Mr. David Dangoor, and Mr. David Lavipour

Sunday, December 16 | 7:00 pm

Join us for an unforgettable evening to hear about Jewish life in the cultured, progressive, and cosmopolitan city of Baghdad before WWII, the tragedy of the Farhud and the unprecedented IDF Air-lift operation *Ezra & Nehemiah*. Hear first-hand accounts of life in Baghdad from Jews who lived through it and about how this ancient community still survives in Israel and America today.

This event is FREE, thanks to our generous sponsor.
To register, visit shearithisrael.org/baghdad.

If your family has Iraqi heritage, we would like to include you in a special booklet being prepared for this event. You can submit this information through the registration form.



This program, which showcases the extraordinary diversity of our congregation throughout its history until today, is one of our many Year of Years, 365th Anniversary celebration events.

From Recife to New York:

A Shabbat Dinner with Today's Conversos of Brazil
Friday, December 14 | Following Friday Night Lights

Former Member of Knesset, Rabbi Haim Amsaelem, has been working for years with the descendants of Brazil's Conversos — also called “Zera Yisrael” — helping them to reconnect with their Jewish roots. He, along with several of these individuals who will be traveling from Recife, Brazil (365 years after our original 23 founders!), will tell us about their Jewish journey.

Introductory remarks will be given by our member, **Sam Katz**.
To register or sponsor this event, visit
shearithisrael.org/conversos.



This program, which showcases the unique history of our congregation and its connections to current events, is one of our many Year of Years, 365th Anniversary celebration events.

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

Hanukkah Fest!

For all Shearith Israel Youth and PTTS Families
Sunday, December 9 | 10:30 am

Please join CSI youth and PTTS for fun and educational Hanukkah festivities planned by our dynamic duo of Youth Groups Leader and Programming Coordinator, Nat Bernstein, and PTTS Principal, Yona Glass. Kids will enjoy art projects, songs, homemade waffles, and more!

While many Jews celebrate Hanukkah by eating potato pancakes, deep fried in oil in remembrance of the miracle of the oil, here at Shearith Israel we honor the tradition of Amsterdam by eating vaffele (waffles) because God made a “miracle and wonder” (Hebrew: “nes va-fe'le”) during these days. And after all, everyone loves a good waffle!

NEW: Parent-Child Learning & Pizza

On 3 Saturday Nights:
December 15 | 6:30 pm
Led by Rabbi Soloveichik

January 12 | 6:45 pm || February 9 | 7:00 pm
For Elementary School Age Children & Their Parents or Grandparents

This new initiative gives parents (or grandparents) the opportunity to study Torah with their children together with Shearith Israel's clergy. Pizza and prizes help make this a fun-filled evening of inter-generational learning.

Register or sponsor at
shearithisrael.org/parent-child-learning.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal tob to **Rebecca Lewin & Morgan Resta-Flarer** on the birth of a baby boy, Jack Nathan. Mazal Tob as well to grandparents, **Marjory & John Lewin**.

Mazal tob to **Bess Castagnello & Simcha Fern** on the birth of a baby girl. Mazal Tob as well to grandmother, **Gail Castagnello**.

Happy Birthday to **Sam Cohen** (91) - we wish him many more years in good health!