

HAVE YOU REGISTERED YET?

CARING CONNECTION & THE LEAGUE PRESENT:

Upper West Side Blood Drive

The Esther Goldfarb Memorial Blood Drive

January 7, 2018 | 10:00 am-4:00 pm

The Jewish Center, 131 W 86 St

Kick off the new year by giving the gift of life—be a blood donor. To maximize our impact, this year we are partnering with numerous congregations on the Upper West Side, so far including: Darkhei Noam, The Jewish Center, Lincoln Square Synagogue, Congregation Shaare Zedek, and Young Israel of the Upper West Side.

To register to reserve a convenient time slot, or to volunteer at the drive, visit shearithisrael.org/uws-blood-drive. Walk-ins are also welcome.

LAST CHANCE!

Shearith Israel & The Jewish Center

Ski & Snowboard Trip

THIS Monday, December 25

Join us on the slopes of Hunter Mountain! Shearith Israel and The Jewish Center are joining forces again this year for a fun day of skiing and snowboarding. **This trip is all-inclusive (equipment, transportation, even lessons for beginners)**, though it is BYOL (Bring Your Own Lunch). There is **preferred pricing for members** of Shearith Israel and The Jewish Center, but non-members are welcome as well, so invite your friends!

For last-minute registration, contact Rabbi Zirkind at dzirkind@jewishcenter.org.

Our next public tour is **Wednesday, January 10**

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

DEBAR TORAH: A DISAPPOINTING REUNION

— BY ASHER FINKELSTEIN —

The magical moment had finally arrived. After more than two unbearable decades of separation, Yaakov and Yosef were reunited. All this anticipation seems to be for naught, however, once one carefully examines the *passuk* which describes this reunion. The *passuk* says, “And he fell on his neck and he cried on his neck more.” Something is terribly amiss. Although one of the two is clearly having the expected reaction to this encounter, either Yaakov or Yosef (the *passuk* is ambiguous) is not crying. What went wrong? Rashi cites a *midrash* which explains that Yaakov did not cry because he was busy reciting the *Shema*. This answer is only cause for more bafflement and confusion. Couldn’t Yaakov have found some other time to say *Shema*? If now was the ideal moment for reciting *Shema*, why was Yosef not doing so as well?

The Gur Aryeh and the Sefat Emes offer an approach which takes into account the well-spring of love and affection which was surely gushing through Yaakov at that moment. Realizing what remarkable love he was feeling at that moment, Yaakov decided put G-d before himself and channel that sense of love and happiness towards G-d. This he accomplished by reciting the *Shema* at that moment. Yosef however, did not have to recite the *Shema* in order to channel his love for his father towards G-d. Since he was accomplishing the mitzvah of *kibbud av* at that moment, his crying on his father’s neck was indeed an act of channeling his love for his father towards G-d.

While this approach does not preclude the possibility that although only one of them was crying, it was still a loving and happy reunion, many other commentators take a less pleasant approach. The He’emek Davar explains Rashi to mean that Yosef came towards his father wearing royal clothes, hoping Yaakov would mistake him for Pharaoh and bow down to him, thereby fulfilling his old dream. This indeed happened, and once Yaakov realized it was Yosef he had bowed down to, he was furious, since he thought Yosef shouldn’t be the one to ensure that his dream of his father bowing to him would be fulfilled. However, Yaakov did not want to ruin their reunion, so he defused the situation by reciting the *Shema* until he cooled down.

The Ramban believes that actually it was only Yaakov crying and not Yosef, for, “Whose tear is more easily found, that of the old father who finds his son alive after giving up hope and grieving, or the son who is a young man and rules?”

Rav Shimshon Rafael Hirsch offers a remarkable explanation in the opposite direction: In his view, Yosef cried but Yaakov did not. After so many years of incessant sorrow and grief, Yaakov could not cry anymore. He was hardened by endless grief, and had already had more than enough time to cry over Yosef. When it came to Yosef however, he had never really been afforded the chance to grieve over his misfortune and his separation from his family, since his life had moved so quickly, especially now that he was ruling Egypt. Now that he was finally reunited with his beloved father, he suddenly felt the impact of all those years of separation and what they meant, so he cried uncontrollably.

The imperfection of the reunion between Yaakov and Yosef is in many ways symbolic of Yaakov’s entire life and the history of the entire Jewish people throughout the years of exile. Although there have been many triumphs, redemption is never complete, and there is always another reason to be melancholy. The tragedy of this situation is manifested ever so clearly at the reunion between Yaakov and Yosef. Even a moment so perfect and so anticipated cannot go as well as it should. Yosef can’t cry, or Yaakov can’t cry. The long exile in Egypt has just begun, and perhaps both Yaakov and Yosef both know it. True happiness and joy will not be achieved until we finally find our way home in the final redemption **במהרה בימינו**.



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Vayiggash December 22-23, 2017

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 169; Haftarah: p. 178
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 222; Haftarah: p. 1086

CANDLE LIGHTING | 4:14 pm

MINHAH & ARBIT | 4:25 pm | Main Sanctuary

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “The Menorah and the Porcupine” | 2017-18 season sponsored by the Julis family.

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary

SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Main Sanctuary

TOT SHABBAT WITH LIZ AND SHANADE | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am
| Fidanque Youth Room

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

JUNIOR CONGREGATION | Ages 5-12 | 10:30 am | Little Synagogue

SERMON | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “Lincoln and Grant, Joseph and Judah: Biblical and American Lessons in Leadership”

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium

SEUDA SHELISHIT & SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “The Greatest Parashat Vayigash Story Ever” | 3:30 pm | Levy Auditorium | *Fall semester sponsored by Scott Shay, in memory of Chana Razel bat Aaron v’Sarah.*

MINHAH & ARBIT | 4:10 pm

HABDALAH | 4:59 pm

Weekday Service Times

Mornings:

Sunday-Monday: 8:00 am

Tuesday-Friday: 7:15 am

Evenings:

Sunday-Wednesday (Arbit only): 6:30 pm

Thursday, Fast of Tebeth (Minhah and Arbit): 4:00

*The fast begins on Thursday, December 28 at 5:51 am
and ends at 4:56 pm.*

*Layaliza Soloveichik & the rabbis' wives of the UWS
cordially invite the women of the community to*
"The Annual Westside Mikvah Fundraiser"

**THIS Wednesday, December 27 | 7:30 pm
535 West End Avenue, Apartment 14**

Come celebrate and support the Upper West Side mikveh,
with special guest speaker Rebbetzin Peshi
Neuberger. Because the West Side mikveh faithfully
serves the community day in and day out, it is easy to
forget about its financial needs. **Even if you cannot
attend, please consider donating** to maintain this
essential community institution.

To donate, sponsor, and register, visit
westsidemikvahfundraiser.com.

Schedule and Office Closure Alerts

- ◆ Due to the legal holiday, Morning Services on Monday,
December 25 will be at **8 am**.
- ◆ Our office is **closed** on Monday, December 25 for the
legal holiday.
- ◆ Rabbi Soloveichik's Tuesday Morning Women's Class has
ended its Fall semester, and will **NOT** meet next week.
- ◆ Rabbi Soloveichik's Tuesday Evening Talmud Class will
NOT meet next week.
- ◆ Due to the Fast of Tebeth, Evening Services (Minhah and
Arbit) will be held at **4 pm** on Thursday, December 28.
- ◆ Due to the fast, Hazzan Rabbi Ira Rohde's Hebrew Class
will **NOT** take place on Thursday, December 28.



**SAVE THE DATE
Young Couples and Families
Pre-Tu B'Shebat Luncheon
Shabbat, January 27 | Following
Morning Services**

Hug a tree and celebrate the new year
with Rabbi and Layaliza Soloveichik & Co. Join us for a
family luncheon of Torah and fruity goodness.

Registration and sponsorship details coming soon.

SPRING SEMESTER BEGINS WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 3

Shearith Israel Toddler Program
"The best-kept secret on the Upper West Side"

Less than **two weeks remain** to enroll for the Spring!
Provide your toddler with the opportunity to be part of our
wonderfully fun and educational Toddler Program, held in
the brand new Fidanque Youth Room, and led by the
marvelous Liz Rios.

To learn more and apply, pick up a brochure in our lobby,
and go to shearithisrael.org/toddlerprogram.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

We mourn the passing of Levana Cohen, wife of Zvi Meir Cohen
and mother of Claire Cohen.

Enjoying Our New Fidanque Youth Room

Thank you to all the Young Families and their supporters who
have made this room happen. We're immensely gratified by the
positive response we received. To ensure the room is used as
intended and to preserve it for long term enjoyment, please take
note of the following guidelines:

- This room was designed primarily with our youngest
children in mind. Tot Shabbat will be held there each
week;
- Our older children (5-12) will continue to enjoy the
beautiful Elias Room most weeks;
- On the occasions when Elias is unavailable, Youth Groups
will also be held in the Fidanque Youth Room, with a
partition.

We will be evaluating these arrangements over time and making
adjustments as needed.

A few general reminders:

Tot Shabbat is a combination of supervised play and structured
Shabbat activities. The schedule is (approximately) as follows:

- ⇒ **10:00 am - 10:30 am:** Free play and snacks
[No drop-off before 10:00, please—Liz needs to prepare the room.]
- ⇒ **10:30 am - 11:15 am:** Older children may attend Junior
Congregation; younger ones remain with Liz.
- ⇒ **11:15 am:** Circle Time with Shabbat songs and stories with
Shanade
- ⇒ **11:45 am:** Cleanup and wrap-up
- ⇒ **After services or speech:** Pickup
- ⇒ Parents should pick up children **before kiddush**. Children
may not play unsupervised in the new Fidanque Youth Room
(or in the hallways). Liz will lock the Fidanque Youth Room
when Tot Shabbat ends.

**Junior Congregation with a Torah Reading
Shabbat, January 13 | 10:30 am**

Come lead Junior Congregation! Parts of Torah
reading and services for January 13 are available for participants
(ages 5-12) to lead; many of them are quite brief and excellent for
beginners. Please contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde to arrange a part for
your child (lirohde-csi@yahoo.com).



**Special Dues Offer
and End of Year Gifts**

- Now is the time to support Shearith Israel and our
special funds (e.g. rabbi's discretionary fund, Sisterhood,
Hebra, etc.) with an end of year gift.

Visit

[shearithisrael.shulcloud.com/form/
omnibus2017](http://shearithisrael.shulcloud.com/form/omnibus2017) to submit your gift.



- If you have any outstanding balances,
now is also a good time to take care of those.
- Finally, don't miss out on our special offer to pre-pay
your 2018-2019 membership dues at current rates.
Please refer to your inbox for emails from us with
details. If you have questions about your account, you
may also contact our bookkeeper, Ruth Yasky at
212-873-0300, x 228.

Visit [shearithisrael.shulcloud.com/form/earlybird-
membership_2018-2019](http://shearithisrael.shulcloud.com/form/earlybird-membership_2018-2019) to pre-pay online.