

THIS SHABBAT

Visiting Hazzan, Jonathan Garcia

- ♦ On Friday night, pre-registered guests enjoy Shabbat dinner, featuring guest Hazzan, **Jonathan Garcia**, who will be joining us from London. Together with our clergy, Hazzan Garcia, who regularly leads services at Lauderdale Road Synagogue and occasionally at Bevis Marks, will create a beautiful, music-filled atmosphere for this relaxed dinner, sharing melodies and stories from the London S&P tradition.
- ♦ On Shabbat morning, Hazzan Garcia will return to lead *Musaf* at morning services.

SEASON FINALE: Parent-Child Learning & Pizza

Saturday Nights bi-weekly | One hour after Habdala

FINAL SESSION OF THE SEASON:

February 22, led by Rabbi Rohde

The program is free, but please register for this session at shearithisrael.org/pclearning so we can know how many to expect!

Parent-Child Learning is sponsored by the Shearith Israel League.

UPCOMING SISTERHOOD PROGRAMMING

Stitch & Fix

Bi-Monthly on Sundays & Tuesdays | 10am-12pm

THIS Sunday, Feb. 23 | THIS Tuesday, Feb. 25

Sunday, March 15 | Tuesday, March 17

For anyone handy with a needle and thread—teenagers welcome!

Join our Sewing Circle to repair and restore our beautiful Shearith Israel vestments to their original glory! If you'd like to participate or have questions, contact Rose Edinger (rgedinger@gmail.com).

Visit shearithisrael.org/stitch-fix for additional dates.

Sisterhood Tambourine Workshop

Sunday, March 1 | 10:00 am-12:00 pm

Miriam Liebermann, MSW, author, community activist, and inspirational speaker, will conduct this tambourine-decorating workshop and then lead a song and dance.

Artistic talent is not necessary! Stencils will be provided.

Charge for Admission: \$25 for adults, \$20 for teens

Register at shearithisrael.org/tambourine.

DEBAR TORAH

—STEVEN ROHDE GOTLIB, BET MIDRASH COORDINATOR—

וַיִּקַּח סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית וַיִּקְרָא בְּאָזְנוֹ הָעָם וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל אֲשֶׁר-דִּבֶּר יְהוָה נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע:

Then he took the record of the covenant and read it aloud to the people. And they said, "All that the LORD has spoken, we will faithfully do!"

(Translation from sefaria.org)

Sforno explains the language of the above quote, which can also read as the people saying that “we will do what we’re told first and hear about the specifics later,” as meaning that the Israelites were so eager to accept God’s commands that they didn’t even think about the potential rewards for it. But what was it that made the Israelites so eager to follow God’s words? What made them so passionate that they were willing to do so before even contemplating the rewards they could be offered? The answer lies in what philosophers have come to call “The Kuzari Principle.”

What is this principle? The Kuzari was compiled by Yehuda HaLevy around 1140. It presents the King of the Khazars, who wishes to determine which religion is correct by examining the philosophical arguments of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In his argument for Judaism, the rabbi explains that the Jewish people are unique because they possess an intimate relationship with God, “first from personal experience, and afterwards through uninterrupted tradition, which is equal to the former.” The personal experience referenced is the mass revelation at Mt. Sinai where God initially revealed Himself not just to Moses but to each and every person at once. This kind of personal knowledge of God is so powerful that no one could bring themselves to doubt His legitimacy. Based on this, the Kuzari Principle asserts that the tradition which spawned from that pure acceptance is then just as legitimate as the initial revelation.

Over the years, the Kuzari Principle has been at the center of many debates between religious Jews and atheists. The latter tend to argue that the argument of a mass revelation centuries ago is not sufficient to prove that the Bible is accurate or that God exists. What these debates miss, however, is what the Kuzari Principle is really trying to teach. Yehuda HaLevy did not pen his argument in the hopes of presenting irrefutable proof that God exists to people who do not want to believe in Him. Rather, he wrote it to demonstrate to those who already believe in Him that the Jewish people have a unique personal history with God which has not repeated itself (and, in fact, cannot repeat itself) with any other group of people. While Christianity and Islam may claim their own prophets, everyone acknowledges that only the Israelites met God individually and therefore possess an unending personal relationship with Him. That personal relationship has traveled down the generations via our tradition and has now landed in our hands, presenting us and our families with the incredible gift of being able to continue that legacy. May we each have the strength and blessing (*Hazak U'Barukh*) to continue the passion of our ancestors by walking into the challenges and opportunities of life hand-in-hand with God. *Shabbat Shalom.*



CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL

The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

Shabbat Mishpatim-Shekalim

February 21-22, 2020

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 306; Haftarah p. 992
Kaplan Living Torah: p. 356; Haftarah p. 1118

CANDLE LIGHTING | 5:19 pm

EVENING SERVICES (MINHA & ARBIT) | 5:30 pm | Main Sanctuary

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “Shylock, Shakespeare, and Shabbat: A Story of Venice and Jerusalem” | *2019-2020 Season sponsored by the Julis family.*

HAZZANUT DINNER FEATURING GUEST HAZZAN, JONATHAN GARCIA | Levy Auditorium | *for pre-registered guests*

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary

SHAHARIT | 9:15 am

MUSAF | *led by Guest Hazzan, Jonathan Garcia*

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

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

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

SERMON | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “The Woman Who Saved the Davidic Dynasty: An Incredible and Uncelebrated Tale from Tanakh”

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | *Sponsored by Emma & Joel Blass*

SHABBAT AFTERNOON CLASS | 4:15 pm | Rabbi Meir Soloveichik | “Eating: A Theology” | Levy Auditorium

EVENING SERVICES (MINHA & ARBIT) | 5:15 pm

HABDALA | 6:10 pm

SEASON FINALE: PARENT-CHILD LEARNING & PIZZA | LED THIS WEEK BY RABBI ROHDE | 7:15 pm | Elias Room | *for elementary school aged children*

Rosh Hodesh Adar is on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Weekday Service Times

Mornings: Sunday: 8:00 AM | Monday-Friday: 7:15 AM

Evenings: Sunday (Minha & Arbit): **5:30 PM**

Monday-Thursday (Arbit only): 6:30 PM

Public Tours

Our next public tour is
Wednesday, March 11,
at 11:00 AM

Parnas Office Hours

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

Professor Laura Leibman:
The Art of the Jewish Family

An interactive crafting workshop

Tuesday, March 24 | 7:00 pm | *For adults & children over 10 years old*

In the 19th Century, before Facebook or Instagram, commonplace books were a place to record memorable quotes, images, and ideas. By writing in each other’s collections, women built friendships and shared the emotional peaks and valleys that made up their world.

In this very special and innovative event, each participant will be given the identity of one early American Jewish woman (many of whom were members of Shearith Israel) and then make and decorate their own commonplace book, with copies of historical artifacts such as poems, stories, sketches, recipes, portraits, and newspaper clippings.

Space is limited to 24 people; registration required at shearithisrael.org/leibman-workshop.

New York Sephardic Jewish Film Festival

February 23 - March 2

Shearith Israel is once again a proud co-sponsor of this celebration of Sephardic Jewish film. To find out more and get tickets, visit nysephardicfilmfestival.org.

CHOIR SELECTIONS

Friday Evening:

Veshameru #1 (p.166) | Samuel Naumbourg

Psalm 23 (p.174) | Rev. H. P. Mendes

Yigdal (p.177) | Traditional (London - “Old Melody”)

Shabbat Morning:

Misheberakh (p. 208) | Salomone Rossi

Ubnuho Yomar (p. 218) | Leon Hyman

En Kelohenu (p. 229) | Samuel de Sola

Adon Olam (p. 232) | D. A. de Sola

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mazal tob to Janice & Isaac Ovadiah, on the birth of a grandson.

Mazal tob to Gail Propp upon being honored at the Ramaz Dinner this Sunday, February 23.

Condolences to Heather & Harris Bulow, upon the passing of their daughter, Charlotte. Condolences as well to her grandparents, Lucienne Carasso Bulow and George Bulow.

Condolences to Eric Fleisher, upon the passing of his mother, Linda Fleischer.

PURIM AT SHEARITH ISRAEL

Major Pre-Purim Shiur

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Tuesday, March 3 | Following Evening Services

CSI YOUTH PRESENTS: “Esther Saves The Day!”

A Purim Puppet Show from WonderSpark Puppets

Monday Evening, March 9 | 7:00 pm | Elias Room

When the evil Haman threatens the Jews of Persia, it's up to the brave Esther and her clever uncle Mordecai to save the day in this Purim Shpiel. It’s the Purim story as you’ve never seen it before!

This show is for all children to enjoy while parents attend 7:15 pm megillah reading. Children under 5 must be accompanied by an adult.

If you would like to sponsor this year’s Purim Youth Programming, visit shearithisrael.org/wonderspark.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Annual Purim Dinner

Monday Evening, March 9 | following 7:15 megillah reading

Dinner details and pricing coming soon.

Don't forget to give *Matanot L'Ebyonim*

One of the mitzvot of Purim is to give charity to the poor, *Matanot L'Ebyonim*. You can easily fulfill this mitzvah through the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. Donate online at shearithisrael.org/matanot, or send a check made out exactly to "Cong. Shearith Israel Rabbis Discretionary Fund" (in the memo, write: "Purim").

Your gifts will be distributed by Rabbi Soloveichik on Purim to those in need.

LAST CHANCE to Join Our Women’s Megillah Reading!

Megillah Reading Purim Morning, Tuesday, March 10 | 8:00 am

Rehearsals THIS Sunday, Feb. 23 at 6 pm & Sunday, March 8 at 7 pm (following evening services)

On the morning of Purim, the women and girls of the synagogue conduct a parallel Women’s Megillah reading in the Little Synagogue. Contact Mrs. Lisa Rohde at lrohde.csi@gmail.com as soon as possible for an assignment if you’d like to participate.

Annual Purim Breakfast

Tuesday Morning, March 10

Every year, following the readings of the *megillah*, our congregation enjoys a festive Purim Breakfast. To help ensure that we have we have plenty of hamentashen to go around, sponsor at shearithisrael.org/purim-breakfast.

Shearith Israel League Ping-Pong Meetup

March 7 | 8-10 PM | at SPIN54, 7 E 54th St

The Shearith Israel League invites you to a special event at SPIN 54 to socialize in a fun and lively atmosphere and of course to play ping-pong. See your fellow synagogue members in a whole new light and make new friends as we meet for this fun and relaxed social event. Drinks are included. All skill levels are welcome. \$25 per person, 21+ only.

Space is limited, so register now at shearithisrael.org/ping-pong.

SAVE THE DATE: SHABBAT, MARCH 28

Young Families Luncheon with the Author of *Angelina Ballerina*

Join our young families and Katharine Holabird, best known for her beloved Angelina Ballerina book series, for a light Shabbat lunch and an entertaining program full of ballet facts and life lessons learned from the books.

Registration and sponsorship opportunities coming soon.

JEWISH EDUCATION 5780

⇒ Friday Night Lights | Rabbi Soloveichik

Friday Nights | Following Evening Services

⇒ Shabbat Afternoon Class | Rabbi Soloveichik

Shabbat Afternoons | One hour before Minha

⇒ The Guide to the Duties of the Heart | Rabbi Sjimon den Hollander

Sunday Mornings | 8:45 am

⇒ The Idea of Kingship | Rabbi David Silber

Sunday Mornings | 10:00 am | Registration details at shearithisrael.org/idea-kingship

⇒ Tuesday Morning Women’s Class | Rabbi Soloveichik

Tuesdays | 9:00 am | Sign up for weekly reminders at shearithisrael.org/join-our-email-lists

⇒ Bet Midrash | led by Steven Rohde Gotlib

Monday-Thursday | One hour before evening services