# Save the Date: Young Couples and Families Dr. Seuss Themed Shabbat Luncheon Shabbat, June 24 | Following Morning Services

Young Couples and Families will join together To learn Torah, eat food, and enjoy the weather. Featuring a Seussian themed buffet, With green eggs, and ham and other kosher gourmet. Fit for cats, for fish and loraxes too, And grownup and children, a lot or a few. You would not, could not, want to miss, A Shabbat luncheon quite like this! Would you could you come and play? Sign up at shearithisrael.org/seuss today!

Register Now for PTTS Hebrew School Don't Miss the Early Bird Discount (until June 1)! Polonies Talmud Torah School, provides children and teens, ages 3-16, with a substantive Jewish education in a positive and engaging environment. Register at shearithisrael.org/hebrewschool.

> Contribute to the PTTS scholarship fund at shearithisrael.org/hebrew-school-scholarship-fund

Curious About Becoming a Shearith Israel Tour Guide? Do you love Shearith Israel- it's history, customs, architecture, design, and objects? Experience a public tour for yourself on Wednesday, July 12 at 11 am, led by our master docent, Z. Edinger and then let him know if you would like to join the docent team.

### Morning Minyan Just Got Even Better!

Morning minyan participants are treated to a breakfast of champions (cereal and milk). Jumpstart your day by nourishing your body and soul and help make this minyan strengthening initiative a success. To sponsor, go to shearithis rael.org/cereal.

#### Parnas Office Hours

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

> Our Next Public Tour is: Wednesday, June 14 at 11:00 am

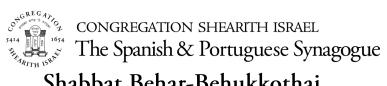
#### Don't Usurp the Sacred Trust Rabbi Ira Rohde, Hazzan

After minyan Thursday morning, Dr. Morris Shamah gave a class in which he asked why the Book of Leviticus ends the way it does, with a kind of "double ending:" The basic laws of purity and sacrifice, the "Priestly Code," ends with the traditional blessings and curses for keeping or not keeping the laws, ending with "These are the statutes and the ordinances and the laws which the Lord gave 'twixt himself and between the Children of Israel, at Mount Sinai, by the hand of Moses (Lev. 26:46)." But Leviticus doesn't end there. Another 34 verses, a whole extra chapter, is added, which seem to plunge us back to technicalities of Levitical law, all of which seem to be vaguely related to the subject of vows of dedication: dedicating oneself (and redeeming oneself), dedicating one's animals, one's house, fields, and other property, and if or how they can be redeemed. Then, after this "addendum" or coda comes the "real" ending verse: "These are the commandments to the Children of Israel which the Lord commanded Moses at Mt. Sinai (Lev. 27:34)." What is the point of this "addendum," and what can we learn about the teachings of Leviticus from the fact that it ends in this way?"

Dr. Shamah gave his answer, and I gave another, which I will start with here. I said that most of these latter laws seem concerned that sacred 'property rights" should be enforced properly and fairly. Fixed prices and procedures are set for the redemption of persons and goods, in instances where they can be, and in other instances rules are set so that the kind of pure domesticated animals needed for regular sacrifices cannot be redeemed, and if attempts are made to redeem them, penalties are imposed. Although the actual word isn't used here, all of these laws aim to avert the heinous crime of "מעילה," which I shall translate here as the "usurping of the Sacred." I pointed out that some ancient pagan cultures didn't take sacred property quite so seriously: Sacrifices were commonly eaten by the sacrificer and the priests, and sacred property was commonly embezzled or otherwise encroached upon and misappropriated. The Torah, by contrast, especially the Book of Leviticus, takes the sacred realm and especially the dedication of sacred property extremely seriously. Many sacrifices are burnt up completely, allowing no use by man. Man is forbidden in the strongest terms from trespass, encroachment, or infringement upon the sacred realm.

But we can extend the generalization even beyond this: The critical sins for which Israel is punished in Chapter 27 have to do with "במעלם אשר מעלו בי" their usurpation whereby they usurped Me (26:40). During the Sabbatical and Jubilee years, Israel has no right to cultivate the Land, for the Land properly does not belong to man to do with it whatever he wants: The Land belongs to God. Man has only limited property rights over the land, "because Mine is the Land, for strangers and sojourners are ye with Me." For encroaching upon Sacred Property by cultivating when he had no right, man will be subject to the fine or penalty of desolation according to and corresponding to his embezzlement; that, in fact, the formulation used in the "curses" section: "All the days of its desolation [the Land] shall rest [corresponding to] your Sabbaticals upon which it has not rested when you dwelt upon it (26:35)."

And we can extend the theme one stage further and view all of Leviticus as about Sacred Property. "For the Land is Mine," says God, and we, His People, also belong to Him. In offering sacrifices and tithes and sacred property, we are merely giving back to Him what was His to begin with. The Land, indeed, the Cosmos, is sacred. Every disobedience and infraction of God's Law is a usurpation, a taking of that to which we have no rights from the realm of the Sacred. If we treat that realm as a Sacred Trust for which we are grateful, cultivate it carefully, and guard its principles from violation, that Trust will blossom with the blessings of abundance. But if we encroach, infringe, misappropriate, and embezzle from that Sacred Realm, the Sacred Trust will turn to naught.



# Shabbat Behar-Behukkothai

May 19-20, 2017

Hertz Pentateuch: p. 531; Haftarah p. 551 Kaplan Living Torah: p. 630; Haftarah p. 1178

CANDLE LIGHTING | 7:51 pm MINHAH | 6:45 pm

ZEMIROT | 8:15 am | Main Sanctuary SHAHARIT (NISHMAT) | 9:00 am | Rabbi Soloveichik delivers a lecture on the topic "The Jubilee of Philadelphia and Jerusalem"

TOT SHABBAT WITH LIZ AND SHANADE | Ages 0-4 | 10:00 am | Levy Auditorium

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

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

KIDDUSH | Levy Auditorium | Thank you to this week's scotch sponsor: Jennifer Ash and Seth Haberman

SEUDAH SHELISHIT AND SHABBAT AFTERNOON SHIUR Rabbi Soloveichik on the topic "Pirkei Abot: Yom Yerushalayim Edition" | 6:45 pm | Levy Auditorium | Spring semester is sponsored anonymously in memory of Irma Cardozo

MINHAH/ARBIT | 7:45pm HABDALAH | 8:52 pm

The Shabbat we commemorate the 120th consecration anniversary of the congregation's fifth and current synagogue at 2 West 70th. Street, built in the neoclassical style.

Weekday Service Times Mornings: Sunday: 8:00 AM, Monday-Friday: 7:15 AM Evenings (Minha & Arbit): Sunday- Thursday: 6:30 PM

# UPCOMING EVENTS AND INITIATIVES

Annual Pre-Memorial Day Service: Honoring Veterans of the Revolution and Members of the Armed Forces Held at the Chatham Square Cemetery | 55 St. James Place This Sunday, May 21 | 10:30 am

If you missed our recent historic visit to Monticello, you can still learn about and honor the Levy family and other Jewish patriots at this unique Shearith Israel event. Head down to Chatham Square Cemetery in Chinatown to honor members of our congregation who participated in the Revolutionary War. Our historic ceremony, led by Rabbi Soloveichik, with the Color Guard is a special Shearith Israel tradition and is open to military veterans, clergy, and members of the community. Join us to place American flags at the graves of our twenty-two veteran congregants.

UJA's Fleet Week Pre-Memorial Day Community Program Wednesday, May 24 Held at The Jewish Center, 131 West 86th St.

For Youth: Meet the Marines! Pizza with our Soldiers | 6:00 pm Prior to the memorial day lecture, youth are invited to join US Color Guards and Soldiers for dinner and a short Q&A. To register, sponsor and for more information please contact jennandgaby@jewishcenter.org.

For All: Honoring our Fallen Heroes Lecture | 6:30 pm Hear from Jewish military leaders, including our own honorary trustee, Col. Jonathan de Sola Mendes and help create care packages for those serving abroad.

> Shabuot Public Lecture Time to Eat Swordfish? A Deep Dive into a Fishy Halakhic Story Delivered by Rabbi Soloveichik Tuesday, May 30, 11:30 PM

Rabbi Soloveichik will deliver another intriguing lecture at what has become a prime Shabuot learning destination on the Upper West Side. After the talk, guests are encouraged to enjoy cheesecake! To sponsor go to shearithisrael.org/shabuot-public-lecture

## Girls Megillat Ruth Reading Wednesday, May 31 | Following Morning Services

On the First Day of Shabuot, after musaf, the girls of the synagogue chant the Book of Ruth for the congregation in the Main Sanctuary. Afterwards, the congregation joins together for a Kiddush in the their honor. To co-sponsor the Kiddush, go to shearithisrael.org/girls-book-ruth-reading.

Film Screening: Trezoros, The Lost Jews of Kastoria Followed by a Talk-Back Session with Directors Lawrence Russo and Larry Confino Wednesday, June 7 | 7:15 pm

Trezoros (Ladino term of endearment meaning "treasures"), an

emotionally compelling first person documentary, chronicles through never-before-seen footage—one of many former Sephardic communities which had existed in Greece before World War II. Kastoria, an idyllic lakeside village, saw Jews and Christians living in harmony for over two millennium. October of 1940 saw Axis forces break through



Greek defenses, eventually dooming the Jewish community that had existed since the time of the Roman Empire. Register at shearithisrael.org/trezoros. \$5 members/\$8 non-members.

## DON'T LET YOUR GRADUATE GO UNNOTICED!

Graduation Kiddush and Scroll of Honor Shabbat, June 17 | Following Morning Services

Let's spread the good news and celebrate the success and accomplishments of all our graduates from pre -school to PhDs! Go to shearithis rael.org/ graduation to ensure your graduate is listed on our scroll of honor that will be distributed on that shabbat. But even if you cannot attend, consider co-sponsoring our graduation kiddush

for \$180 or just \$36.



#### **WEEKDAY JUDAIC EDUCATION**

For details go to: shearithisrael.org/judaic-education Sunday

♦ Saadiah Gaon's Book of Beliefs and Opinions | Sjimon den Hollander | 8:45 am

Monday, Wednesday, & Thursday

♦ *Habruta* (Paired) Learning | 5:15 pm - 7:15 pm | Before and after evening services, Rabbi Chaim Yanetz and rabbinical students from YU are available in the Elias Room to study in habruta with congregants of all ages.

Tuesday

♦ Minyan Class and Breakfast | Following Morning Services | Sponsored by Chaim Katzap

To sponsor a single class or an entire semester, go to shearithisrael.org/sponsoraclass To find out when your favorite class is held, canceled or for

#### **COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Mazal Tob to Josh and Alyse Rozenberg on the birth of twins (a girl and a boy). Congratulations to grandparents, Susan and Avery Neumark and greatgrandfather, Melvin Neumark.

Mazal Tob to Rachel and Jonathan Herlands on the birth of a granddaughter, Devorah Asya, to their children, Dinah and Josh Foer of Brookline. Congratulations to great-grandfather, Melvin Neumark.

Weekday Toddler Summer 'Camp' June 20- August 17 Tuesdays and Thursday | 9:30-11:30 am For children aged 16-33 months. Includes outdoor play and a wading pool. Adult caregiver presence is required. Register online at shearithisrael.org/summer-toddler-camp.