

FALL
2020

מתו תש"פ-תשפ"א

CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue



America's First Jewish Congregation

DE = Digital Exclusive

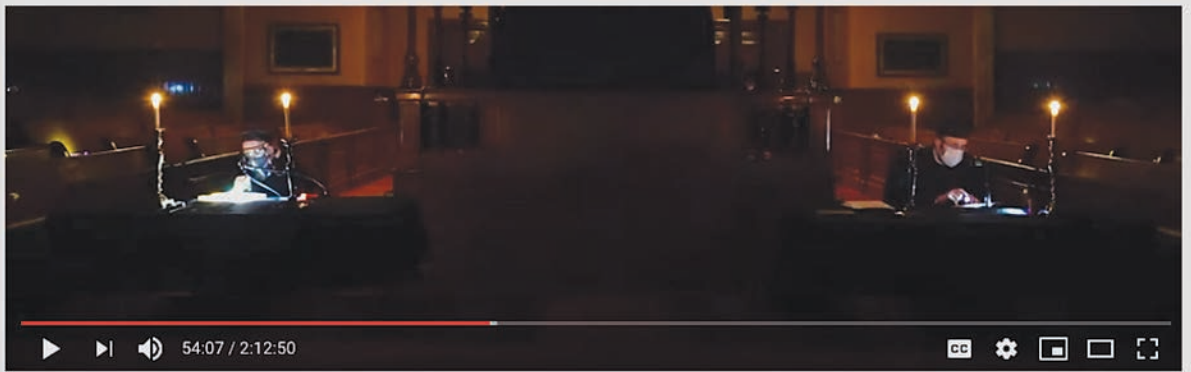
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Our seasonal bulletins usually offer an abundance of upcoming programs as well as a few articles and retrospectives. This Fall, while still fraught with uncertainty as to what programs will be possible – whether in-person or virtually – and which programs will be suitable given the ever changing circumstances, presented our team with unique challenges... and opportunities.

The Fall Bulletin on your screen is lengthier and more content-rich than ever, so much so that we have created this first-ever Expanded Digital Edition, which, as you can see, includes even more expansive and colorful content, with more articles and images. It is dedicated to everyone who has made our community more vital than ever during these past months: our intrepid leadership, our unflagging clergy, our industrious staff, our dedicated facilities team, our passionate volunteers, and every congregant and friend who has called in, logged in, or showed up (and supported us) during these challenging times. May the new year bring us health, calm, and togetherness.





Congregation Shearith Israel & the ASF Present Tisha B'Ab Evening Services

7,388 views • Streamed live on Jul 29, 2020

128 2 SHARE SAVE ...

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK A TISHA B'AB TO REMEMBER

Rabbi Dr. Meir Y. Soloveichik



"Why is this night different from all others?" In Sephardic liturgy this question is asked not only on Passover, but also on Tisha B'Ab evening. As I sat with only a few others in

Shearith's Israel's sanctuary intoning those words, the poem seemed to also bespeak how different this year's Ninth of Ab was for our congregation. Usually, one feels the powerful presence of all those packing the sanctuary; this night, the darkness enhanced the intense feeling of solitude. I read aloud the last words of Lamentations: "Return us...renew our days as of old." The words of Jeremiah plead first and foremost for a return to a rebuilt Jerusalem; but this year they also seemed to be a plea for the simple privilege of praying to God together as a community, one we took for granted until this year.

Yet in the midst of this lonely observance, there was actually a profound connection with others. Thousands watched our service over the Ninth of Ab, and listened to the lecture delivered

in memory of Dr. Alan Corre. The multitudes praying and learning with us bound us together, both members of our congregation and around the world. That so many joined us testifies to the nobility of what Shearith Israel's Tisha B'Ab represents: the story of Jews in the New World who patriotically embraced American equality and liberty, while at the same time always remembering Jerusalem, remembering the Temple, remembering the story of the our people. A day that seemed to embody isolation ended up embodying what joins us together across distance and generations.

Thus, in a sense, our Tisha B'Ab epitomized the lessons of the past months. We have been cut off from one another, but also have learned to cherish the ties that bind; we have been barred from fully joining each other in prayer, but we have also learned what a privilege praying together truly is, and how it embodies our unity as a faith and people. May we bring these lessons with us into the New Year, and may God renew our days very soon.

Meir Y. Soloveichik

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PARNAS

Louis M. Solomon



As this Bulletin goes to press, Jews worldwide are finishing Tractate Shabbat in their daily Talmud study. We began this, the longest Tractate in the Talmud by word, in March of this year.

Near the conclusion of Tractate Shabbat we find several stories, all pressed into service to prove that our lives are not controlled by the vagaries of astrological predetermination or even of chance. The stories are beautiful, full of wonder and power.

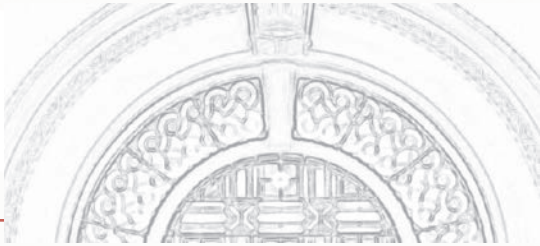
In one, a man returns unharmed from his travel to a swamp where, unknown to him, he had been predetermined to be killed by a snake. What had he done to avoid death, asks the great sage Shmuel? The man explains simply that with him in the swamp were other workers, including a poor man who had nothing to eat and therefore had no bread to contribute to a communal bread basket. Not wanting to embarrass the poor man, the doomed man stood up, collected the food from everyone, and, according to medieval interpretation, added an extra piece of bread so that there would be the right number of pieces, with everyone contributing and sharing. The doomed man went a-hacking at the reeds in the swamp and killed his killer snake without knowing it. With his simple act of generosity the inevitable was altered, the mighty, heavenly, ineluctable, pre-ordained decree vanished. C'est tout. The other stories are to similar effect.

Since March of this year, just as we were embarking on Tractate Shabbat, Jews and others worldwide have been coping with

COVID-19. In March, we in New York, the epicenter of the pandemic in America at that time, faced inconvenience that grew into fear, and anxiety that grew into sickness and even tragedy for many of our families. As a community we suffered as well. Many had to bury loved ones with no communal Kaddish and no communal mourning. We had to close our beloved Sanctuary for 108 days, the longest in our recorded 365+ years as a Congregation.

Even now, our lives remain on the whole stable but in great disarray. Our children are learning remotely, their summer plans dashed and their Fall returns to school upended. Our elders remain largely isolated. Our typically uplifting communal services are pale shadows of their former beauty. Those few of us who attend are masked, nearly always praying out of doors (either on our portico or on rooftop space generously loaned to us by Manhattan Day School), where we are rushed and essentially silent but for Rabbi Rohde's plainchant.

Yet the virus and chance did not do us in. And they will not. For six months Rabbi Soloveichik has sustained an earth-shattering pace of interesting, inspiring religious and educational lectures and classes. The pace has been exceeded only by the erudition and even



Yes, we may have to hear fewer Shofar sounds than we are used to. But we will hear the shofar.

brilliance of the scholarship and presentation. Rabbi Rohde and Reverend Edinger have both communicated with us weekly and often daily, lovingly ensuring video access to our weekly prayers for the sick and for those who have passed.

When our three ritual leaders combined forces, as on Tisha B'Ab, we were able to serve our community with a reading of Eikha, the Book of Lamentations, and Rabbi Soloveichik's stirring lecture at night and our *Kinot* in the morning and simultaneously beam our communal observance literally to thousands of grateful observers.

Their strengths – of faith, of commitment, of unity, of will – in turn buoyed the rest of us, including our staff, who has been working double time for months; our volunteers, who have visited others virtually, have made calls, have written letters, have even smuggled food; and our COVID-19 Reentry Working Group, who have met for countless hours over the summer to facilitate a safe reentry into our spaces for communal worship. We have enabled those saying Kaddish and observing a Nahala to have a community supporting them. We have reinstituted our people's ancient practice of the public reading of the Torah at least three days a week.

As a community, have we shown something akin to the “right stuff” shown by the doomed

man in the swamp and those in the other stories in Tractate Shabbat? We are a stronger community, and we will remain so even once this scourge is not only out of New York but tamed and tolerable throughout the world.

We are about to enjoy the privilege of ushering in the new Jewish year. Yes, the services won't be totally normal. But we will have services, including for those mourning the loss of loved ones and for our elders. Yes, we may have to hear fewer Shofar sounds than we are used to. But we will hear the shofar. We will have to eat alone or in small groups. But we will eat and be able to enjoy the holidays, more as a community now than we could six months ago, and, with Heaven's help, more in six months than now. We will be able to learn and grow individually and together.

To some, the glass is half-empty. They are right. To some, it is half-full. They are right. That there is a glass at all means that we must be grateful, that we must show our gratitude to the Almighty and to each other. C'est tout.

Happiest of holidays to all.

Louis M. Soloveichik



ANNOUNCEMENTS



NEW MEMBERS

We welcome the following individuals to the Shearith Israel Family:

Mark Belnick

Elizabeth and Josh Gindea

CONGRATULATIONS

Mazal Tob to:

Judah Bulow, upon becoming a Bar Mitzvah. Congratulations as well to his parents, Heather and Harris Bulow, grandmother, Lucienne Carasso Bulow, and grandfather, George Bulow.

Rose and Henry Edinger on the marriage of their grandson Yaakov Edinger, son of Benjamin and Shlomit Edinger of Silver Spring, MD, to Esther Friedman, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Shlomo Friedman of Brooklyn, New York. Congratulations as well to uncle Zachariah and Malka

Geula Levi-Freeman on the birth of a grandson, born to her children, Jonathan and Jenica Freeman.

Elisheva (Liz Hauser) and Binny Eizicovics, on the birth of a baby girl, Lea.

Halana and Alan Greenberg, on the birth of a baby boy to their children, Cynthia and Evan Kollander.

Erica Markowitz, upon her marriage to Mendl Borensztejn.

Dr. Leora Mogilner and Richard Linhart upon the birth of their first grandchild, a daughter, born to their children, Tobey and Yonah Goldschmidt.

Abby (Schulz) and Eli Mandel, upon the birth of a baby boy. Abby is the daughter of our late member and former trustee, Mr. Richard Schulz, z"l.

— continued —

Melissa Rutman and Dr. Daniel Nathan, upon the birth of a baby girl, Hannah Rachel Nathan. Congratulations to grandparents, Dr. Rebecca Chaplan and David Nathan and to great-grandmother, Ruth Nathan.

Emily Seife and Josh Nathan-Kazis on the birth of a son, Max Edgar Seife-Kazis. Congratulations to the proud grandparents, Sara Nathan and Joel Kazis, and to great-grandmother, Ruth Nathan.

Janice and Isaac Ovadiah, on the birth of a granddaughter, Raquel, to their children, Simhi and Shimmie Jacoby.

Elizabeth and Mark Vieyra, upon the birth of a baby girl, Charlotte. Congratulations as well to her grandparents, Katherine and Daniel Vieyra.

Ethan Vorchheimer, upon becoming a Bar Mitzvah. Congratulations to his parents, Rachel and David Vorchheimer.

HAZAKIM U'BERUKHIM

Members with special achievements:

THE HEALTHCARE WORKERS of our community, who have been doing heroic work throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

OUR MEGILLAT ESTHER READERS: Roey Bender, Vicki Bengualid, Annette Gorgey, Rachel McCoy Haberman, Suzanne Stern den Hollander, Janet Kirchheimer, Lilliane Marks, Adina Marmelstein, Liz Ninyo, Lisa Rohde, Ina Saltz, Layaliza Soloveichik, Gabriela Styler, and Julie Walpert. Special thank you to Mrs. Lisa Rohde for her training and coordination.

OUR SHIR HASHIRIM READERS (via Zoom): Honor Greenberg, Yaara Kaplan, Julia Levi, Olalla Levi, Cecelia Roberts, Jenna Roberts, Daniella Roberts, Lia Solomon, and Tess Solomon. Special thank you to Rabbi Ira Rohde for his training and coordination.

OUR BOOK OF RUTH READERS (via Zoom): Eloise Bregman, Lily Cohen, Matea Frieber, Hella Sasson-Gelman, Cherish Greenberg, Honor Greenberg, Flora Jakobishvili, Shirin Kaye, Hudson Lentnek, Ariella Liberman, Hadassah Liberman, Fina Oslick, Cecilia Roberts, Daniela Roberts, Jenna Roberts, Ruth Sherizen, Neta Wiznia, and Zahava Wiznia. Special thank you to Rabbi Ira and Mrs. Lisa Rohde for their training and coordination.

OUR SIYUM PARTICIPANTS: Raanan Agus, Leah Albek, Alfandary/Nahon family, Jennifer Ash, Victoria Bengualid, Harris Bulow, Bentsi Cohen, Daar family, Jerry Duci, Henry Edinger, Malka Edinger, Rose Edinger, Z. Edinger, Feder family, E. Freilich, Frieber family, Friedman family, Faith Fogelman, Steve Gotlib, Annette Gorgey, Ernest Grunebaum, Akiva Haberman, Kahn/Orringer family, Jackie and Andrew Klaber, Lilliane Marks, Adina Marmelstein, Joshua Mendes, Juan Mesa-Freydell, Bonnie Barest and Gary Miller, Nathan Family, Jacob and Jannah Neumark, Sam and Isaac Neumark, Neumark family, Hayyim Obadyah, Reiss family, Gustave Rieu, Rabbi Rohde, Mrs. Lisa Rohde, Rafe Sasson, The Schlusselfelds, Morris Shamah, Sherizen family, Lia Solomon, Solomon family, Soloveichik family, Wiznia family, and Zuckerberg family. Special thanks to the participants who submitted dibrei torah: Francine Alfandary, Harris Bulow, Malka Strasberg Edinger, Z. Edinger, Faith Fogelman, Annette Gorgey, James Kahn, Jackie and Andrew Klaber, Lilliane Marks, Adina Marmelstein, Hayyim Obadyah, Harlan Reiss, Gustave Rieu, Lia Solomon, Yosef Solomon, and Marc Wiznia.

(The beautiful dibrei torah collection is available at shearithisrael.org/bulletins-and-guides.)

— continued —

OUR EIKHA READERS (live from the Sanctuary) and Kinot Readers (via Zoom): Mark Aaron, Cantor Eliot Alderman, Rabbi Jonathan Cohen, Jacob Daar, Zachary Edinger, Arnold Franklin, N. Robert Friedman, S. Den Hollander, Adam Jackson, Rabbi Raif Melhado, Jeffrey Mosseri, Avery Neumark, Rabbi Ira Rohde, Maimon Schwartzchild, Louis Solomon, Rabbi Meir Soloveichik, Rev. Salomon vaz Dias, and Boaz Vega.

GRADUATES: Eliezer Frye, Laura Frye, Hannah Doft, Lucy Doft, Aliza Freilich, William N. Herlands, Noa Kalfus, Yaara Kaplan, Victoria Esther Krimolovsky, Helena Lustig, Julia Lustig, Oran Meisels, Jacob Neumark, Barukh B. Rohde, Steve J. Rohde Gotlib, Ita Schechter, Aliza Schechter, Sammy Shiff, Ethan Charles Smith, Manuel Vazquez-Senior, M.D., Emma Vorchheimer, and Hannah Zuckerberg.

IN MEMORIAM

We mourn the loss of our members:

Selim Benardete
Gerald Bregman
Mindella Lamm
Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm
Andres Lopez
Stuart Wershub

Bequests

Please consider including Shearith Israel in your estate planning. To learn how, or for more information, please speak with our executive director, Barbara Reiss.

CONDOLENCES

We extend sincere condolences to:

Jonathan Aufzien on the passing of his father, Alan L. Aufzien.

Bonnie Barest, our Deputy Executive Director, upon the passing of her father, William Barest.

Liliane Benardete, upon the passing of her husband, Selim Benardete.

Viviane Bregman, upon the passing of her husband, Gerald Bregman. Condolences as well to her sons, Bertie (Rachel), Anthony (Malaika), and Peter (Eleanor) Bregman.

Simon Haberman, upon the passing of his brother, Jacob Haberman.

Andrew Klaber, upon the passing of his grandmother, Anne Klaber.

PTTS students, Gabriel and Sebastian Lipschutz, upon the passing of their father, Eduardo Lipschutz. Condolences as well to Eduardo's brother, Henry Lipschutz.

Lewis Lipsey, on the passing of his father, Judge Howard I. Lipsey

Olivo Lopez, Shearith Israel employee, upon the passing of his father.

Gary Miller, upon the passing of his mother, Esther Miller.

Gloria Mosseri, upon the passing of her sister, Daniela Laufer.

Barbara Reiss, our Executive Director, upon the passing of her mother, Feiga Tepler.

IN APPRECIATION

Special thanks to:

Alan Greenberg, who donated his time and legal expertise to help Shearith Israel with a matter at the 11th Street Cemetery.

Our team of volunteer docents, who, before the shelter-in-place began, continued to do a wonderful job guiding all our visitors on public and private tours of the Synagogue. We hope to resume tours when it is safe to do so.

Graduation Sponsors and Contributors:

Karen and Jack Daar

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Anonymous, in memory of Nissiem ben Ezra

Anonymous donors, in appreciation of Barbara Reiss's services to this community and in memory of her mother, Feiga Tepler z"l

Rob Bernstein, in memory of his father, Bernard

Nava and Dan Bettinger, in memory of Dan's mother, Gloria Bettinger, on her 13th nahala

Joseph Blank, in honor of the healthcare workers and teachers, and in honor of the birthday of his mother, Eva Blank

Sharon Dane in memory of her mother, Goody Dane, and sister, Marsha Dane Stern

Cindy Trop and Stuart Ellman, in honor of Rabbi Soloveichik (2 sessions)

Anne and Natalio Fridman, in honor of Rabbi Soloveichik

— continued —

ANNOUNCEMENTS

— continued —

Anne and Natalio Fridman, in memory of Ignace Oksenberg, father of Anne, on his nahala

Kathy Brooks and Larry Gelb, dedicated to Dr Arthur Turetsky

Carol and Arthur Goldberg

Miriam and Shiah Grumet

Jane Lefko and Joseph Gottlieb, in memory of Dr. Norman and Mindy Lamm and Florence and Arthur Gottlieb

Dr. Elon Granader, in memory of his father, Dr. Abraham H. Grant

Meryl Jaffe and Adam Hurwich

The Jaffe family, in loving memory of Spencer Raphael Jaffe

Dahlia Japhet, in memory of her mother, Esther Karpman, on her nahala

Irene and Martin Kofman, in memory of Leo Kofman, whose nahala was on the 28th of Tammuz

Jonathan and Marian Kramer

David Lavipour

Kayla and Elias Lebovits, in honor of their daughter, Ava Lebovits (Amalia Gittel)

The loving family of Dr. Alan Chanan Mendelowitz, in honor of his important birthday

Philippa Newfield and Phillip Gordon, in honor of Mona and Stephen Klaber

Gail Propp, in memory of her mother, Goody Dane, and sister, Marsha Dane Stern

Joy and Bruce Roberts, in memory of Flori Roberts

Shuly and Albie Roth, in memory of William Roth

Cynthia and Paul Rosenberg, in honor of the birth of two grandchildren, Danielle Noa Rosenberg and Henry Theodore Kaden

Anna and Elia Roumani, in honor of Rabbi Soloveichik

Hedda Rudoff and family, in commemoration of the nahala of Shaindy Rudoff

Diane Abrams, Sylvia Fisher, and Howard Schulder, in memory of their father, Jacob Schulder, on his nahala

Barbara and Sassoon Shahmoon, in memory of Jean Koplin Schwartz, mother and mother-in-law

Michelle and William Spielfogel, in memory of Rabbi Dr. Norman Lamm and Mindy Lamm

Susan and Mark Wiesen, in memory of Rabbi Dr. Norman and Mindy Lamm, and in honor of Rabbi Dr. Meir Soloveichik and the generations of Rabbanim who guide and inspire us.

Tova and Howard Weiser, in honor of the 75th anniversary of the liberation of their parents from Bergen Belsen (April 15, 1945) and Ebensee (May 6, 1945)

Rabbi Soloveichik's Pre-Pesah Shiurim Sponsors:

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Bengio family, in memory of Rachel Bengio

Rachel Neumark Herlands and Jonathan Herlands, in honor of their incredible children and grandchildren

— continued —

Rhino Foundation

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Debbie and David Sable, in honor of Shearith Israel Klai Kodesh and staff

Carol and Alan Schechter, in memory of Carol's father, Matisyahu Bar Koppel

The Solomon Family, in honor of our Rabbi, our office leadership, and our physicians

Linda and Howard Sterling

Shabbat HaGadol Derasha Sponsors:

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Co-Sponsors:

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Virtual Shir HaShirim Reading Sponsors:

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The Roberts Family, in honor of the physicians, nurses, and healthcare professionals of NYC

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Virtual Book of Ruth Reading Sponsors:

A friend of Shearith Israel, in honor of her birthday on Rosh Hodesh Sivan

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Laury Frieber, in honor of Matea Frieber

Stephanie, Meyer, and Aunt Bella, in honor of their granddaughters and nieces, Neta and Zahava Wiznia

The Jakobishvili family

Raquel and Ian Lentnek, in honor of their daughter, Hudson Lexie Lentnek

Alisa and Jacob Oslick, in honor of Fina Oslick

Susan and Marlon Portes and Family, in honor of all the Book of Ruth readers

Rima Raynes, in honor of Naftali Friedman

The Roberts Family, in honor of their Book of Ruth Readers

The Solomon Family

Rivka and Marc Wiznia and Family

Rabbi Soloveichik's King David Lecture Series Sponsors:

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Judi and Alan Eisenman, in memory of the kedoshim of the Shoah and the soldiers of Tzahal who have fallen defending Eretz Yisrael

Evelyn and Manny Gross, dedicated to the refuah shelema of Yechiel b. Blima and another friend

Meryl Jaffe and Adam Hurwich (2 sessions)

Evelyn and Salomon Sassoon, in memory of Harold Katz

Jane Shiff, in memory of Joel Shiff

Rachel and Dr. David Vorchheimer, in memory of David's parents, Judith and Fred Vorchheimer

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Maimon Schwarzschild

Rabbi Soloveichik's Yom HaShoah Lecture Sponsors:

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Joyce and David Friedman, in honor of the Survivors

Doris and Marshall Greenberg, in memory of Doris's grandparents, uncles, aunts, and cousins who died in the Shoah and her father, Louis Winer

Rabbi Soloveichik's Pirkei Abot Shiur Sponsors:

Semester: Scott Shay, in memory of his father, Gutman ben Shmuel v'Nesiya

Nicole and Raanan Agus

Rabbi Soloveichik's July 4 Lecture Series Sponsors:

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Marvin Davis, in honor of Benjamin Sternklar-Davis earning his Masters in Engineering

Leslie and Joel Kessler, in memory of Lillie Kessler a"h, Ahuva Lieba b. Shmuel Leib HaCohen

Meyer Koplow, in honor of Lisa and Leon Meyers

The Roberts Family, in honor of Mrs. Lisa and Rabbi Ira Rohde

Florence and Reuven Rosen

Radine and Bill Spier, in memory of Radine's parents, Jeanne and Samuel Abramson

Phyllis and Jonathan Wagner, in honor of Rabbi Isaac Furman

Dr. Rachel and Dr. Oscar Weg, in honor of Rabbi Meir Soloveichik, "A Man for All Seasons"

Daily Zoom: Book of Kings with Rabbi Ira and Z. Edinger Sponsors:

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Ephraim Weinstein, in memory of Sally and Charles Weinstein

Rabbi Soloveichik's Tisha B'Ab Lecture Sponsors:

The Corre family, in memory of Rev. Dr. Alan D. Corre and Mrs. Nita Corre

Rabbi Soloveichik's Tisha B'Ab Afternoon Shiur Sponsors:

Cindy Trop and Stuart Ellman, in memory of Cindy's mother, Yehudit Bat Beilah v'Avraham HaCohen

Do you have a life-cycle event, milestone, or major achievement to share with the community? Send it to Sarah Meira Rosenberg at srosenberg@shearithisrael.org so we can share the news in our handouts and bulletins.

SPRING FUNDRAISER SPONSORS

Without a Gala, we had to get creative for this year's Spring Fundraiser, but Rabbi Soloveichik and our community rose to the occasion. Rabbi Soloveichik took us on a 10-part marathon lecture series through Jewish history, art, and archaeology, supported by hundreds of listeners around the world and numerous sponsors, listed below.

Sponsorship levels ranged from \$250 to \$3600 and beyond, for individual lectures and the entire series. Sponsors whose total contributions reach \$3600 or more are listed as Series Sponsors.

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Carol & Arthur Goldberg and Penny & Mark Aaron
Halana & Alan Greenberg
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Carol & Alan Schechter, in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Netanel, and in honor of the high school graduation of their granddaughters, Ita and Aliza
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Anonymous (3)

Sandy & Dr. Robert April, in thanks for
Rabbi Soloveichik's creative, inspirational
lectures

Nava & Dan Bettinger, in memory of Nava's
father, Shaul Aboudi, a member of the
Palmach, on his nahala.

Rabbi Meier Brueckheimer for Hakarat
Hatov (in appreciation) of Rabbi Meir
Soloveichik's lectures, and in loving memory
of Hindel Bat Elyakim HaCohen a"h

Suzan & Fred Ehrman

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Meyer G. Koplow

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Hanna Bismuth, Sheldon Tepler, & Barbara
Reiss, in memory of their mother, Feiga
Tepler (and in honor of Rabbi Soloveichik)

Meralee & Sidney Schlusberg

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\$360-\$499

Anonymous, in memory of Mrs. Reggie
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Anonymous

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Evelyn Cappell

Shlomit & Chaim Edelstein

Cindy Trop & Stuart Ellman, in memory of
Stuart's grandfather's nahala on the 10th of Sivan

Kathy Brooks & Larry Gelb, in loving
memory of Robert Brooks and F Gina Gelb

Miriam & Michael Gervis

Wendy & Sholem Greenbaum

Raquel & Steve Herz

Lois & Gerry Kirsh

Jackie & Andrew Klaber

Jane Shiff & Alan Lubarr, in gratitude to
Rabbi Soloveichik, and in memory of Elliot
and Dennis Freilich

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The children of Irene Schenker, z"l, on the
occasion of her nahala

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Lu & Michael Schulder

Maimon Schwarzschild

Tovah Segal & Gershon Segal

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Marla & Bob Stark, in memory of Bradley Stark

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shiurim and fortitude during these
challenging times
Lauren Weiner

REFLECTIONS ON SHEARITH ISRAEL'S SPRING 2020 FUNDRAISER

Bonnie Barest
Deputy Executive Director



This past Spring was one we will not soon forget. Perhaps as much for the hardship it brought (and havoc it wrought), it will be remembered for what it took from us. Among the many cancellations and suspensions, this was a Spring for which a fundraiser gala, bringing together our community in celebration of deserving honorees, was not to be. However, this Spring was also one of incredible determination, adaptation, and resilience. And instead of our traditional Spring gala, we created a unique—and wonderfully enjoyable—Spring fundraiser. Rabbi Soloveichik took us on an amazing “Biblical Tour of the World’s Greatest Sites: A Journey through Jewish History.”

Thanks to the generous support of so many members and friends of Shearith Israel, from our local community to the rabbi’s hometown of Chicago, to places all around the world including fans in Israel and Australia, and business partners, Congregation Shearith Israel raised \$200,000, exceeding our goal of \$180,000.

Over the course of ten evenings leading up to Shabuot, Rabbi Soloveichik took us through highlights of the Tanakh drawing on great art and archaeological exhibits around the world.

We traveled to the Great Museum in Cairo, the Louvre in Paris, the British Museum in London, the Istanbul Archaeology Museum and the Museum of the Ancient Orient, the Pergamon in Berlin, Greek temples in Athens, to Capitoline in Rome and Vatican City, Kiev, Girona, Belarus, and the City of David in Jerusalem. We viewed Rembrandts, Poussins, Michaelangelos, Raphaels; statues of Ramses II, King Tut, Titus, Alexander the Great, Hadrian, and Maimonides; the Pyramids of Giza; the Steles of Merneptah and Mesha; the Obelisk of Shalmaneser; stones showing the exile of the Ten Tribes; Greek temples and the marketplace of Agora; the Arch of Titus; the Gate of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar; the Gezer Calendar; Mezuzahs, Menorahs, and President



Wall relief on the Arch of Titus



Truman's Torah; Hezekiah's tunnels, and Jerusalem's archaeological treasures.

As Rabbi Soloveichik stated, "we travel to discover the diversity and constancy of the Jewish people." Many civilizations sought to destroy us, whether physically or spiritually, yet the Jewish people have endured and will continue to thrive forever, *im yirtze Hashem*. As Mark Twain wrote in his essay, "Concerning the Jews" (1899),

The Egyptian, the Babylonian, and the Persian rose, filled the planet with sound and splendor, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive

mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?

This ten-part lecture series took us on a journey through time to help us answer this question. Clearly, the answer does not lie in the fact that the Jews had great numbers or in their overwhelming military might. Unlike other civilizations, the Jews did not seek to establish great empires or conquer other peoples. Instead, the Jews have survived because they were true to the legacy of their forefathers and sought to infuse—or improve—the world with their faith in God and his Torah.

This series, with its potent reminders of our place in the grander scheme and the encouragement to endure our current troubled times in proper perspective, served as just the right spiritually uplifting Spring fundraiser for these times, and helped ensure our unique and historic Congregation's strong and vibrant future.



A

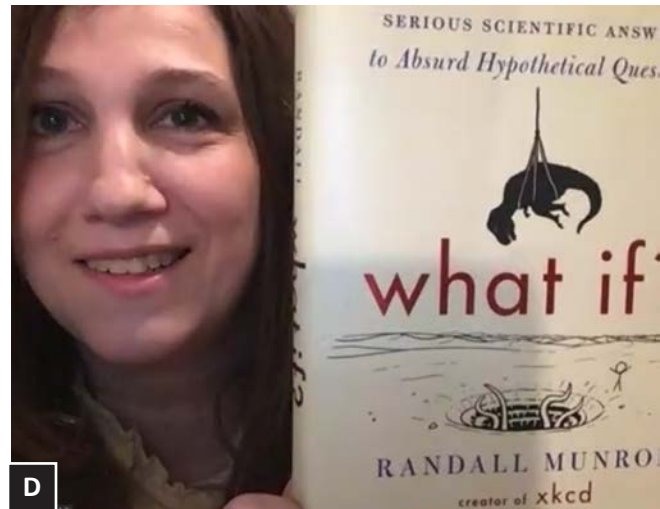


B

SHEARITH ISRAEL HAS GONE VIRTUAL



C



D

- A. Liz Rios brings the beach to our toddlers
- B. Lev Wiznia, one of our youngest Zoomers, is riveted by Rabbi Ira on his accordion
- C. A smaller socially-distanced Chatham Square Memorial Day service was experienced by many on Facebook Live
- D. Layaliza Soloveichik, along with Laury Frieber, co-chaired a Summer Enrichment Potluck Series



PROGRAMMING

VIRTUAL SHABBAT TESHUBA DERASHA

Date TBD

Rabbi Soloveichik will deliver a major address illuminating the themes of teshuba.

HEBRA HASED VA'AMET'S VIRTUAL ANNUAL PRE-HIGH HOLIDAY BETH OLAM CEMETERY TRIP (& TOUR)

Date TBD

Beth Olam Cemetery | 2 Cypress Hills Street, Ridgewood (Queens), New York

Join us for our annual visit to Beth Olam Cemetery -- virtually! Rev. Zachariah Edinger will give a tour and lead a memorial service in the Calvert Vaux-designed "*metaher house*." Details will be forthcoming.

CELEBRATE OUR HATANIM

Usually on Shabbat Bereshit, our community and friends come together to honor our Hatanim with an elegant luncheon and celebration. This year, we will be taking a more socially-distanced approach -- stay tuned for further details.

YOETZET HALAKHA

Events TBD

Shearith Israel is a co-sponsor of the Manhattan *Yoetzet Halakha* Initiative. If you have any questions regarding *Taharat Hamishpaha* (Family Purity) or the laws of *Niddah*, please contact our *Yoetzet Halakha*, Shiffy Friedman, in confidence at nycyoetzet@gmail.com.



PROGRAMMING NOTE: Due to the ongoing nature of the COVID-19 crisis, this section is necessarily abbreviated, with many programs and details yet to be finalized based on future developments. However, we are certain that our rabbi, clergy, and synagogue societies will continue to offer a wide array of high quality virtual programming throughout this time, as they have commendably and creatively done from the start (see previous section). We will certainly have a robust slate of High Holiday programming coming up.

For the latest programming updates, we encourage you to follow our newsletter emails. If you have not yet signed up, you may do so at shearithisrael.org/join-our-email-lists.

For a listing of upcoming virtual programs, and a record of past virtual programming, visit shearithisrael.org/virtual-programming.



WRITING CONTEST WINNERS:

“MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

This summer, we challenged our community to a writing contest, since storytelling, especially the written word, is built into our tradition and can be inspiring and healing for both the writer and the reader. Our judges were extremely impressed with the quality of the entries, and we were proud to present the **Grand Prize winners** in our print edition of the Bulletin and now in this expanded digital edition:

Matea Frieber, Len Dauber, and Emma Vorchheimer.

The essays of the Winners and Honorable Mentions are featured here exclusively in this expanded digital edition for your additional enjoyment.

Winners: Sandra Rose, Faith Fogelman, and Bonnie Barest

Honorable Mentions: Arnie Rosen, Vivien Eisenmann, and Barbara Shahmoon

WITH HOPE

By Matea Frieber, Age 12

GRAND PRIZE WINNER | POETRY

No one
Could have guessed
That in a moment
The familiar would
Slip
Slip
Slip
Through our fingers

No one
Could have known
How much we would
Miss it

The delicate harmony
Of voices intertwined
The choir

The hum of conversation
Smiles and waves
The meals

The joyous bells
Of children laughing
The events

Did anyone know
Could anyone have seen
What was to come?
No one thought
We could lose
Everything
In a heartbeat

But we didn't
Lose everything

What about the lectures?
Meaningful, powerful

What about the Habdala?
A strong voice, a baby's wave

What about the meetings?
Greetings from familiar faces

When the world fell apart
We came
Together

Instead of a hug
We have come to
Cherish every smile
Coming from our
Screens

We have lost
But we have
Gained

We have gained
Strength
We are not just
A community
We have found that
In fact we are
Family

We preserve
Every memory
Looking back not
With sadness
But with
Hope

With hope.



OCTOGENARIAN OUTLOOK

By Len Dauber

GRAND PRIZE WINNER | POETRY

Same old, same old, is really same old; The days of the week are different, truth be told.

Only by the chores to complete on the housekeeping tally; Monday vacuuming, Wednesday linen changing dilly dally.

To daily preparation of three meals; There is the Tuesday delivery of online grocery deals.

But the big event – I'm waiting on Amazon Prime for yeast; By Friday to make *hallah* for the *Shabbat* feast.

Friday mornings are reserved for grandchildren on Face Time; From Israel. We speak to the two youngest in New Jersey daily. (Sublime!)

My wife and I are still talking to one another; She remains my *ezer k'negdo*, my most significant other.

Congregational services are not for me; Pre-condition heart disease and I'm over eighty.

I daven alone, in a non-*minyan m'at*. God is listening to the problems we've got.

The prayer words embrace tradition and a wish; (My reedy baritone is hardly *hazzanish*.)

For a speedy end to the pandemic with which we cope; Wearing masks and washing hands with soap.

Social distancing will eventually be abrogated; Once an effective vaccine is generated.

Because the Public Library is closed, I'm bereft; Of books. No mysteries to read. I'm left.

With old volumes on the shelves of our living room; And the rabbinic lectures and *shi'urim* in cyberspace Zoom.

This and a close reading of *Parashat ha'Shabua*; Suffice for now until a real viral refuah.

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS:

“MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

— continued —



By Emma Vorchheimer, Age 18

GRAND PRIZE WINNER | ESSAY

“It’s like playing a musical instrument...anyone can bang away on a piano, but that’s to make noise, not music...At first, learning, learning to play the piano is a matter of some drudgery, as we master exercises... But as our mastery grows, we discover a new, richer kind of freedom: we can play the music we like, we can create new music on our own.”

It might seem strange to begin an essay for a synagogue contest with a quote from a Catholic theologian. Yet, as I heard Rabbi Meir Soloveichik cite this from Charles Weigel during a recent lecture, this idea immediately resonated with me.

While both Weigel and Rabbi Soloveichik were describing piano playing as a metaphor for religious development, I have literally been playing the piano throughout this summer. I have been performing a series of virtual music concerts via Zoom for residents of nursing homes across the country. The

concerts this summer continue an activity I started for my Bat Mitzvah, when I performed for the patients and doctors at Shaare Zedek Hospital in Israel, and I have sustained in-person performances at local nursing homes through high school.

My motivation to bring joy to others has been further heightened in these turbulent times, as I am aware of the great losses and devastating loneliness endured by the elderly community. My favorite aspect of performing these concerts is sensing the impact my music has on the audience. I can see in their eyes and feel in their souls that the music has helped lift their spirits. However, during this era of Zoom, I cannot interact with the residents, or see their faces light up. Something was missing from my experience.

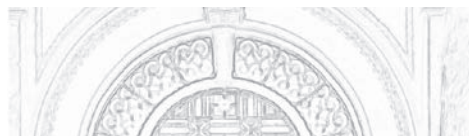
I had always considered these concerts to be a Jewish practice of *chesed* (showing kindness to others). Yet through this quote, I saw another Jewish dimension in my playing. It was not only learning Chopin, Scarlatti, and Mozart; rather understood through the perspective of Weigel, I realized that mastering the notes is an innately Jewish idea. As the notes give structure to the sonata, the details of Jewish law gives structure and meaning to our lives. As I embark next month for a year of study in Israel, inspired by what I learned this summer, I can now better appreciate that mastery of Jewish texts injects significance into our days and elevates our lives.

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS:

“MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

— *continued* —

EXCLUSIVE DIGITAL
CONTENT



By *Sandra Rose*

WINNER | ESSAY

My parents emigrated from Poland in 1922. Although I grew up in an orthodox home, it has been in my later retirement years (I am presently 79 years of age), that I have become enamored with Torah study and visits to Israel. I have searched for a biblical home in New York, and now I have found one: Shearith Israel. If one can think of it that way, the time of Corona has given me the gift of you.

Although I am a NYC resident, my husband and I are now living near family in San Antonio, Texas, having left New York, when the virus was in full force. My husband has a rare form of blood cancer and would be extremely vulnerable, as would I because of age.

Along with the many hardships, and tears shed for those who have been and continue to be lost in this terrible crisis, it has for me been a blessing of sorts in that I have, from a distance, had the opportunity to be included in your Synagogue's outstanding virtual lectures presented by your brilliant Rabbi Soloveichik.

For me, the highlight/sunshine of every week has been to thoroughly immerse myself into the captivating experiences your Synagogue

and the Rabbi have afforded me. During those moments my world is expanded from the restricted environments we all live with. The lectures have carried and fortified me through the dark fears of my husband's ongoing condition's worsening.

It is glorious to know that I am often joining hundreds of participants in the Rabbi's lectures. I am but one, sharing, learning, feeling, bonding with so many. Likewise, I try to expand my grandchildren's knowledge and pride when I show them the notes I have taken via facebook.

Thank you. Thank you. I have found "my" new community. I have benefited in countless ways. I am so proud of our heritage. I have learned so much. You have shared all this with me, and I didn't even have to become a member first. In better times, I look forward to becoming a member and meeting you, when we, G-d willing, return to New York. For now, my prayers are with you all for your health and safety.

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS:

“MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

— continued —

EXCLUSIVE DIGITAL
CONTENT



DEPRIMIDA SIN MI SINAGOGA

By Faith Fogelman

WINNER | ESSAY

Like the man without a country (E.E. Hale), I have been a woman without a synagogue since mid-March. Despite this deprivation, I have kept the rhythm of religious Jewish life afloat within my own environment. Since everything in life begins with the self, I attribute the maintenance of this religious rhythm to strong Jewish identity. Religious home rituals and practices are now complemented by measures which are usually conducted in synagogue, such as Shabbat prayers and Torah readings. Nevertheless, I engage in what I traditionally do with additional religious responsibilities to connect with normalcy, such as reading the weekly Parsha.

The dictionary defines identity as *the set of characteristics by which a thing or an individual is known* (American Heritage). In other words, identity is defined by others. This definition defies self-identity, and in the time of Corona self-identity is paramount. Jewish identity vibrantly rests within me, albeit the synagogue validates, enhances, and facilitates external momentum offering spiritual, educational, and social opportunity, dimensions of identity reinforcement which the self cannot provide. Fortunately, my identity as a religious Jew has always been internally driven, complemented by external support

and, as such, I always look forward to an external embrace upon synagogue entry. That duality is not always available, as was the case when I could not attend synagogue for long stretches of time for a variety of reasons, and now.

Strength in commitment during Corona is offset by sadness. Despite rhythms and practices which are heartfelt and not pro forma, emptiness is pervasive and overwhelming. Borrowing from W. Wordsworth, I *wandered lonely as a cloud* - through the maze of surrealism, and appreciate synagogue zoom sessions as anchors to reality and support for hope.

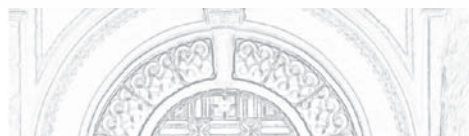
Our synagogue has not fully re-opened. Yet, unlike the man without a country, who contributed to his own fate, I will return to my (spiritual) home walking through its receptive portals. In the interim, I have no choice but to maintain the internal and external activities of religious identity. I reflect upon Jewish history when Jews could not attend synagogue and how they, together and individually, shed tears. They did what they could to meet expectations of Jewish identity until synagogue doors were fully re-opened. Am I fulfilling expectations without synagogue life? *HaShem* will be the judge.

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS:

“MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

— continued —

EXCLUSIVE DIGITAL
CONTENT



מן השמים תנוחמו

By Bonnie Barest

WINNER | ESSAY

May you be comforted by the heavens. This was one of the first Sephardic traditions I came to learn as I attended shiva visits in my new position as Deputy Executive Director at Shearith Israel. I never imagined that I personally would hear these words any time soon. Much to my chagrin, I did when my beloved father passed away unexpectedly during this pandemic. Fortunately, he was privileged to live 92 years and enjoyed his life. Who ever heard of a Zoom funeral?

Unfortunately, but fortunately, I had just gone through this with my dear friend who lost his mother. I watched his family Rabbi perform a really beautiful Zoom funeral service from his car. His experience proved to be my “beta” test.

I recognized that Zoom could offer unique opportunities. I choreographed what I hoped would be a meaningful, even if limited, service. As I was saying goodbye to my father at the hearse, friends and family started appearing on my phone screen. It was so powerful to feel everyone’s presence. My closest friends who now live miles away and never would have been able to be with me in person were now with me at a time when I needed them most. My dad’s rabbi performed a service that gave him the *kavod*

he deserved. My father loved cantorial music and I know the Hazzan’s beautiful psalms and memorial prayers reached him in the heavens. My brother and I memorialized our father from our separate cars. The service was extremely tasteful, and it was so comforting to hear all the Zoom “Amens.”

Zoom shiva was next. My learnings from the “beta” test allowed me to optimize my experience with limited times and staggered invite lists to help manage the crowds. I started with family members and my college *hevre*, followed by my father’s synagogue friends, octogenarians and nonagenarians, who proved to be capable Zoomers, and for whom it was so much easier to express their condolences from the comfort of their living rooms. Lastly, I opened Zoom to my Shearith Israel and UJA communities. Community is so important in Judaism, and thankfully, even with all the limitations, Zoom was able to foster community in a whole new way.

As we continue to confront challenges during this pandemic, be positive, stay true to your Jewish values, and find comfort in your Shearith Israel community. I am very grateful for everyone’s kind expressions of sympathy.

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS:

“MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

— continued —

EXCLUSIVE DIGITAL
CONTENT



By *Arnie Rosen*

HONORABLE MENTION | ESSAY

Looking at this title, I thought, boy, that's easy, *nil*.

Not that it was much before Corona, I'll have to admit. I enjoyed going to Shearith Israel on Shabbat mornings. After Corona, I missed partaking in the service, hearing the men's choir and listening to the rabbi adroitly interweave Judaism with history, art and culture.

I guess I gave little thought to *Jewish* life. Especially since life *itself*, for me and Sondra, my wife of almost 50 years, had now become hazardous and tentative. Alone in our apartment for most of the time, (excluding a furtive paranoid walk), Sondra was my only nearby warm human contact. We were a mixed marriage, Manhattan by way of Borough Park and Texas — traditional orthodoxy mingled with southern 'conservaform' Judaism.

Yet, every Friday night, I found myself seated before Jewish rituals unchanged and untouched by Corona. I found myself not only more carefully reciting the blessings

over wine and bread but also singing *Ayshet Hayil* more vigorously (and hopefully more tunefully). Sondra insisted on providing and serving our Shabbat dinner, dutifully and joyously, rejecting my help. I felt a new enhanced appreciation for how she keeps Judaism alive in less than ideal and nourishing circumstances.

Another unexpected relationship blossomed during this time of isolation. My 81-year-old widowed sister-in-law, Gloria, and I developed a lively and extensive correspondence. She was born and has lived all her life in Shreveport, Louisiana. Her grandparents had arrived from Poland not through Ellis Island but through Galveston. She was a living representative of generations of early small town southern Jewish life, flowering in the twentieth century only to wither in the present day. Yet she has maintained her talented and able children and six grandchildren all within the tent of Shreveport, and proudly sheltered within the tent of Israel. I found it miraculous and inspiring.

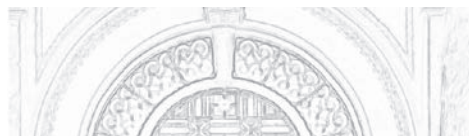
So now Bella, my oldest grandchild, leaves at her insistence 8 years of Jewish Day school for the challenges and opportunities of Stuyvesant High School. I know my responsibility. I have my marching orders. Jewish life is family life. They enrich and nourish one another. Preserving one helps to preserve the other. With Sondra, Gloria and Bella too, while keeping safety in mind, I will strive to deepen and strengthen those links.

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS:

“MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

— continued —

EXCLUSIVE DIGITAL
CONTENT



***Vivien Eisenmann,
quarantined in Florida***

HONORABLE MENTION | ESSAY

My husband had been in Florida since January. He intended to return to New York on March 17th to prepare for a European Pesah vacation. After celebrating Purim with my daughter, I decided to fly down on March 11th to surprise my husband on his birthday two days later. I booked my return on the same March 17th flight.

Man proposes and Hashem disposes. Our son Marc, who lives nearby, forbade us to leave. I had traveled to Florida with little more than a toothbrush. My husband and I have been here four months!

I had no choice but to make Pesah. We have a glass-top stove which cannot be kashered; I kashered the oven, the sinks and covered the kitchen counters. This was the first Pesah in our Florida home and it is over twenty years since the last time in New York. I had no Pesah equipment. I purchased a few pans and cutlery unaware that the local *kelim mikveh* was on lockdown. One of my grandsons *toiveled* them in a nearby lake. Fortunately, disposable plates are plentiful! However, I was forced to shop online and often items without a hechsher would be substituted for the brands I selected. The prices online were exorbitant but I was happy that most products were delivered.

We joined our son for the sedarim. He set a separate table for us at the far end of the room, away from the family. We felt like second class citizens but did enjoy our younger grandchildren reciting the “*mah nishtana*.” We were happy to be there as backbenchers.

Young Israel of Hollywood was closed. In *Pirke Abot Gimel* we are reminded that davening with a *minyan* merits long life. My son has four sons post bar-mitzvah and together with two houseguests and my husband, was just shy of a *minyan*. He convinced his Sephardi neighbor with two sons across the hedge to join and created a surrogate *minyan* for services throughout the duration of Pesach. Marc owns a *sefer torah* so this was not an issue. My daughter-in-law and I joined for *Yizkor*. A New York friend had e-mailed me the eruv tavshilin bracha and the *Yizkor* service. I managed without *mahzorim*.

However, the day following Pesah, Marc received a call from his Rav forbidding further *minyanim*. Jealous neighbors were complaining. Having his father, his sons and the two houseguests was acceptable but not the neighbors. The private *minyan* ended! Compliance with the Law of the Land is mandatory.

— continued —



WRITING CONTEST WINNERS: “MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

— *continued* —

Lag La'Omer was uneventful; just a few fireworks in Marc's garden to entertain seven-year-old Yehuda and four-year-old Aviva.

In *Pirke Abot*, R. Nechunya ben Hakana discusses the obligation to study Torah despite worldly distractions.

Enter ZOOM, the newest star on the block. Shiurim, family events, as well as a wonderful Chazanut Concert by Cantor's World streamed throughout these unprecedented times. Muk and I were invited to a friend's *berit*, a family wedding, as well as, sadly, the *shiba* and *shloshim* meetings for Rabbi Norman Lamm, our good friend and mentor. We have also participated in a ZOOM bar mitzvah from London.

Fast forward to *Shabuot*. Sadly, no private minyan and I davened a pseudo-*Yizkor* at home. This was difficult but perhaps I had more time to reflect on my beloved parents.

This past shabbat, July 4th, our Rav held court on a lawn in our gated community. Sixteen people attended, distancing, and listened to a short *Debar Torah*. The following day we heard that one of the participants had contracted the virus.

Who knows? This is all *bashert*! This is in the hands of the Almighty!

We then commenced the Three Weeks, the time of tragedies and calamities in the history of the Jewish People.

May Hashem, in his mercy, keep us safe together with our families and *Klal Yisrael*.

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS: “MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”

EXCLUSIVE DIGITAL CONTENT



By *Barbara Shahmoon*

HONORABLE MENTION | ESSAY

For the past several months I have reread my private writings of 22 years, celebrated a private anniversary party with my husband of forty years, reminisced the important shared events, with *gratitude*, that were lovingly face to face and missing this now. I have continued to engage in the private writings composing my take on what we witness (on and under the surface reporting) in the time of Corona, and finally I knit and purl a special blanket for our first grandchild due in a few weeks.

The private writings are in diary format and letters, (recalling) the **past**, so as to not forget it, marking events that stand out in the **present**, and the **future**, for there are extensive and elaborate dreams many of which resonate as if foretelling happenings, like this one. I cannot help but notice and wonder, how and why?

These writings are *Jewish* as the Hebrew date is noted, as well as the Torah Correspondence for the date of the diary entry. This leads to much mystery, not the topic of this brief essay. But looking back at some of these diary entries, in the time of Corona, makes

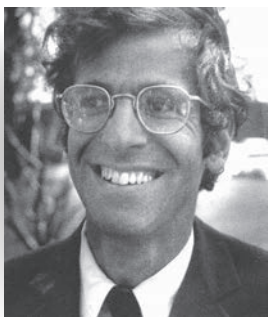
them possess *hints* of this future event, but only if taking the time to figure out a puzzle, which I do.

Now, there is much pondering about the future, making one both fearful whilst still hopeful, with faith, wherein the creativity of the mind, *uncensored* opens up to imaginings and how this event will be leading towards many consequences, new buildings, new beginnings. I begin to imagine what my design for a new sculpture garden would look like marking the time of Corona, past, present, and future.

I entered an empty field for nothing had been built on it. It was on 70th street. In the exact center of the field is a large evergreen tree, identifying it as *Thuya Occidentalis*, (*Arbor Vitae*) noticing it is two trees as one together. It is very tall. Next to the tree is a **statue** of a woman, both pliable and stiffened but looking closely there is definitely movement. One feels she is alive! She wears a long dress, colorful, made up of *masks* of every description, so creatively and lovingly constructed by the sculptor, covering her *body*. On her face however, there is no mask. On her head a simple be-jew-eled **CRown**. She is a juggler for her arm is raised to catch two balls in midair with *names* Liberty and Eve II. This is the body (protected, masked, hidden) and soul (flying free) of the woman. At her feet is a pyramid made up of eyeglasses, as if disposed, the label is “2020, the time of Corona, we can see clearly now...”

WRITING CONTEST WINNERS:

“MY JEWISH LIFE IN THE TIME OF CORONA”



Lewis Bateman served in various capacities in commercial publishing and scholarly publishing during his almost half-century career. Over two hundred of the books for which he was responsible at Princeton University Press, the University of North Carolina Press, and Cambridge University Press received awards. Some authors consider him the curmudgeon of scholarly publishing, others a legend, and still others their rabbi. He joined Congregation Shearith Israel in the mid-2000s. He enjoys the minhag of the Western Sephardic tradition, although he was reared in an Ashkenazic environment.

Jean Naggar has been a member of Shearith Israel since she first arrived in America in 1962. Her prose and poetry has been published in *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice*, *Publishers Weekly*, *The Listener*, *Athamor*, and *Writer's Digest*.

OUR JUDGES

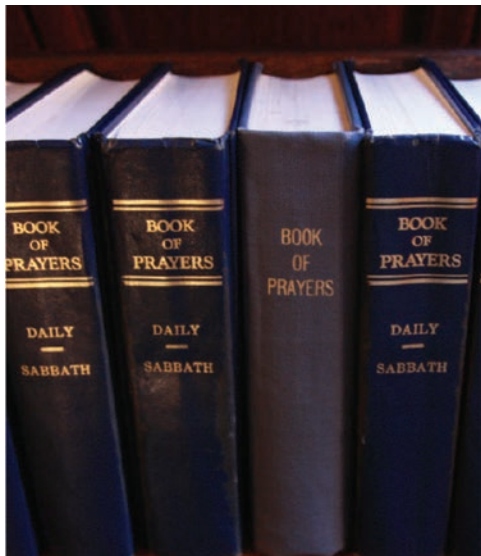
This contest was judged by our resident literary expert congregants, Lewis Bateman and Jean Naggar.



For over forty years, she presided over the agency she founded in New York City in 1974, the Jean V. Naggar Literary Agency, Inc. (JVNLA), delighting in introducing her vibrant, eclectic client list to the world. The agency is now run by Jennifer Weltz, her daughter. Jean's memoir of an unusual childhood, *Sipping from the Nile: My Exodus from Egypt*, was an International Book Award finalist in two categories. Her latest book, a novel, *Footprints on The Heart*, has hit the ground running with enthusiastic reviews on Amazon.

Mother of three and grandmother of seven, Jean is a past president of the the AAR (Association of Authors' Representatives) and a member of the Authors' Guild, the International Women's Forum, and the Women's Media Group. She was honored as Woman of the Year by the WMG in 2018. Website: <http://www.jeannaggar.com>

JEWISH EDUCATION



Sponsorship opportunities are available. To find out more, go to shearithisrael.org/sponsoraclass.

THE GUIDE TO DUTIES OF THE HEART

Sundays | 8:45 am
Rabbi Sjimon den Hollander

Via Zoom—To receive the link, email
Rabbi den Hollander at sjimon@flatironre.com

While *The Guide to the Duties of the Heart* (completed around 1075 CE) is sometimes called the first work of Jewish ethics, it aims to guide us towards a spiritual dedication, taught within a philosophical outlook that has similarities with both Saadiah Gaon and Maimonides. Besides philosophical concepts, Bahya ibn Paquda frequently uses stories and concepts from Sufism (Islamic mysticism) to stir in us a spiritual mindfulness and to deepen our love of God.

Rabbi Sjimon den Hollander was born in the Netherlands. He received his Master's degree in Arabic and Islamology from the University of Leiden. After subsequently earning a Bachelor's degree in education, he taught Comparative Religion at Ichthus Teachers' College in Rotterdam. More recently, Rabbi den Hollander received semikha from Rabbi Eliyahu Ben Haim and from Yeshiva University. He teaches Jewish literature at Hunter College. In addition, he does research on Islam's perception of Judaism and writes online articles in Arabic explaining Judaism to a Muslim audience.

DAILY ZOOM: BOOK OF KINGS

Sunday - Thursday Mornings
Rev. Z. Edinger and Rabbi Ira Rohde

Via Zoom—To receive the link, email
Z. at zedinger@shearithisrael.org

The loyal members of our morning minyan know the pleasure of camaraderie and learning that is especially enjoyed every Tuesday morning. All worshippers are welcome to enjoy breakfast and a short shiur by a member of our clergy.

FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS: THE MAKING AND MEANING OF SHABBAT

2020-2021 season sponsored by the Julis family

Fridays afternoons

Via Conference Call until further notice

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

More time at home (and sadly, less time at Synagogue) has enabled many more of us to enjoy Friday Night Lights beyond the “season.” Extending past Pesah and throughout the summer, Rabbi Soloveichik has masterfully continued his beloved Friday Night Lights lectures nonstop, via conference call, for hundreds of listeners each week. There is no better way to transition from the workweek to the aura of Shabbat than experiencing Friday Night Lights. Don’t forget to sign up to receive source sheets at shearithisrael.org/join-our-email-lists.

To sponsor an individual session, go to shearithisrael.org/sponsoraclass.

THE MISUNDERSTOOD MASTERPIECE: A NEW APPROACH TO PIRKEI ABOT

Rabbi Meir Soloveichik

Pirkei Abot is often understood as a mere series of unrelated ethical adages. In fact, each brief and frequently cited maxim in *Pirkei Abot* actually hints at the extraordinary, and unique, life story and worldview of its rabbinic source. What’s more, the chapters of *Abot* are joined in a structure that tells the story of the transmission of the Oral Law. We will see how studying the history of the rabbinic figures cited lends an entirely new understanding to these statements, and how *Abot* represents the diverse response of the rabbis to an age of crisis and transition that was, in many ways, not unlike our own.





SPOTLIGHT ON THE SISTERHOOD

On Sunday March 1st, just two weeks before we were forced to “shelter in place,” the Sisterhood’s Tambourine Workshop was held in the Elias Room. The event, led by Miriam Lieberman, MSW, noted author and speaker, was attended by a group

of women and teenage girls. As the participants decorated their professional tambourines, choosing among a variety of biblical quotes and colorful images of Jerusalem and nature, Miriam shared inspirational thoughts about Miriam the Prophetess who had used her tambourine as a symbol of hope and faith so long ago.

Miriam then led the group in song followed by dance. This special event became even more memorable as only a few weeks later these tambourines were used as instruments of gratitude for the courageous first responders to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Thanks go to Susan Solny for planning this most uplifting event.



Allaya Fleischer leads a hallah baking class on Zoom

Just one week later, on Purim, the Sisterhood was still able to distribute the Mishloah Manot packages to congregants who supported this most important and successful project.

Happily, despite the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, the Sisterhood has stayed active.

On Sunday, June 14, the Sisterhood hosted Marvelous Hallah Step-By-Step with synagogue member Allaya Fleischer of the *Stuff You Knead* bakery. In the course of making hallah with us, Allaya talked about the history and the science of bread baking – what each of the ingredients contributes, why (and how) we knead the dough, approximate times, how differing conditions will affect those times, and so forth.

It was a “marvelous” event, with some individuals just watching and others trying to bake at home along with Allaya. Her presentation, the recipe, and ingredient list are now available on the synagogue website: <https://shearithisrael.org/hallah-baking>



Handmade masks lovingly made by the Stitch & Fix group

Until the pandemic forced us all to “shelter-in-place,” The Sisterhood’s Stitch & Fix group met regularly at the synagogue to repair *talitot*, Torah mantles, and other synagogue fabrics. Determined to continue helping our community, they refocused their attention to making face masks. At first, many of the materials were hard to get, but that did not faze the group. Some members made masks from 100% cotton bed-sheets, others found scraps of fabric around their homes. Stitch & Fix was able to donate face masks to several congregants and 75 masks to *Westside Campaign Against Hunger*. Of course, we look forward to when we will be able to work together again in the Elias Room.

Hazak u’Barukh and thank you to all those who have volunteered their time and expertise for Stitch & Fix throughout the year: Roey



Bender, Aura Bijou, Bobbie Sue Deitch, Rose Edinger, Polina Goodman, Annette Gourgey, Rose Landowne, Janet Kirchheimer, Adine Marmelstein, Ben Motola, Laurent Nahon, and Lisa Rohde. Interested in joining the Stitch & Fix group? Please contact Rose Edinger at rgedinger@gmail.com.

Most recently, Lyaliza Soloveichik and Laury Frieber organized Summer Enrichment Potluck meetings on Zoom to give parents, empty nesters, and others with special expertise an opportunity to share ideas on educational and cultural resources to enrich the summers of young members of the congregation. There was a robust turnout and there were a lot of great suggestions.

Please stay tuned for future projects and events. We pray that 5781 will be a year of health, safety and peace for us all.

MEGILLAH READINGS GONE VIRTUAL

Tess Solomon



Prior to ten years ago, only a small number of members of Shearith Israel were familiar with the congregation's recitation of *Shir Hashirim*, the Song of Songs. We have a beautiful nusakh, trope, for the *Megillah*, but other than Rabbi Rohde, few members of the community knew it, and it was recited split into two parts, on the first and second days of Passover.

As the congregation considered ways of encouraging the participation of young women in its traditions, the leadership thought to invite them to reconfigure the recitation of this ancient and holy text. This new recitation would take place on Shabbat during Pesah after morning services. The event has been a part of our *minhag* for a decade, now, and has served as a way to read *Shir Hashirim* as a whole congregation as well as to teach our inheritance to a new generation of congregants.

I was twelve years old at the first reading of *Shir Hashirim*. I remember practicing

the fifth *perek* so much that, to this day, I know it mostly by heart. I feel proud to have participated in the event for all these years, both in our sanctuary and in Israel, on Pesah.

Like so many of our traditions, the reading of *Shir Hashirim* was a unique experience this year, both for the readers and for the congregation. Due to the ongoing closure of our sanctuary, we held the reading over Zoom during *Hol Hamoed* Pesah. Rabbi Soloveichik began the event by addressing more than sixty congregants as families sat around at computers, listening to his words. At our home and at others, readers waited for their *perakim*, chapters, when we would unmute ourselves and sing into the computer.

Sharing would-be in-person events through Zoom has been a challenge with which all of us have had to cope. This event was one small way we were able to continue our *minhag* in these challenging times.

Tess Solomon is currently an undergraduate English student at Princeton University, Class of 2021. She is the daughter of our Parnas, Louis Solomon, and she and her sister, Lia, both participated in this year's virtual readings.

VIRTUAL SECOND ANNUAL SMASH THE STIGMA:

Dr. Philip Roth

A PANELIST'S REFLECTIONS

On May 17, we held our second annual Smash the Stigma panel, continuing the sobering discussion about suicide and depression in the Jewish community. We partnered once again with NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) and nine local community organizations: B'nai Jeshurun, Congregation Magen David, Congregation Rodeph Sholom, Darkhei Noam, Drisha, Galim, The Jewish Board, Lincoln Square Synagogue, the Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, and Ohab Zedek. Our panel included Rabbi Mimon Mamane of Congregation Magen David, Nina Kampler, and Dr. Philip Roth, whose reflections you can read here.

As I reflect on my participation in the Smash the Stigma event at Congregation Shearith Israel, I feel that I not only contributed in some small way to the normalization of the discussion of mental illness and its treatments, but also progressed on my own pathway toward healing after catastrophic personal loss.

Although my son, Jonathan, took his life a little over 7 ½ years ago, his premature passing still impacts virtually every aspect of my life. I am not the type to see any “good coming out of his death,” but do recognize the need to advance constructively in navigating life rather than curling up in a ball and isolating from the world.

The adage that “what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger” may apply to me, but more importantly I see my life including happy events, which thank G-d do occur, as akin to the smashing of the glass under the *huppah* at a wedding. Even at the height of joy, there is that twinge about what or who is missing from that

event. What would that celebration have been like if Jonathan were there?

And so as I participate in events like the one sponsored by Shearith Israel or the many wellness activities involving the young physicians in training at the hospital where I work, this twinge becomes manageable and not a debilitating pain that prevents any semblance of normal existence. In the past 7 ½ years, my life has moved forward—which would have happened whether I was on board or not—and those in it continue to need my love, companionship, and support, as I do theirs, during both good and bad times.

Undoubtedly my participation in this synagogue program and others like it has helped fortify me and carve a path forward for an engaged and even joyful—although tempered—existence. I am therefore grateful to have shared my thoughts on that evening along with my co-participants, Nina Kampler and Rabbi Mamane, at this powerful and important event.

Philip Roth, MD, PhD, is the Chairman of the Dept. of Pediatrics and Vice President of Medical Education at Staten Island University Hospital, as well as a Professor of Pediatrics at Hofstra Northwell. He and his wife Ruth have generously shared their experiences at our annual Smash the Stigma events.
If you or someone you know is struggling with mental illness, resources are available at nami.org.



LEEK PATTIES

OR CROQUETTES FRITADA DE PRASA/
BOULETTES DE POIREAUX

Lucienne Carasso Bulow

If you would like to submit a recipe for a future bulletin, or a review of a kosher cookbook or restaurant, either in NYC or around the world, send it to Tikva Ostrega at tikvaostrega@gmail.com. In addition to the recipe or review, please include a short backstory describing yourself, your connection to Shearith Israel, and the food's significance to you.



The recipe for these leek patties (fritada de prasa in Judeo-Spanish, or boulettes de poireaux in French) has been in Lucienne's family for centuries. They are a must-have at her Pesach seders and at Rosh Hashana. They are rather simple to make, and it is easy to adjust the quantities depending upon how many leeks you want to use. Based upon her experience with her children and grandchildren, Lucienne recommends that you make extra, because they disappear very quickly! She usually uses 16 or 20 leeks.

Ingredients:

4 small leeks, white and light green parts only (discard the dark green parts or reserve for a soup recipe)

Kosher salt and ground black pepper

Dash of garlic powder

1 large egg, beaten

1 tablespoon matzo meal or breadcrumbs (I prefer to use matzo meal all year round)

Olive oil, for frying



Instructions

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Line a plate with paper towels.

Trim the root of each leek, leaving the ends intact to hold the leaves together, then halve lengthwise to wash. Rinse well under running water to flush out any grit trapped between the leaves. They can be very sandy.

Add the leeks to the pot and cook until soft and very tender, about 45 minutes. If you end up using large leeks, you may need to cook for about one hour.

Drain the leeks in a colander.

Place the leeks in a food mill or a food processor fitted with a grating disk. Process the leeks into a medium bowl in batches until the leeks are pureed and the leek fibers are separated from the puree.

Season the leeks with the salt, pepper and garlic powder. Beat the egg, add it to the pureed leeks, then stir in the matzo meal.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Use a fork to gently place about 1 teaspoon of the mixture onto the skillet to make a patty. Repeat with the remaining mixture.

Cook the patties in batches until golden brown.

Remove the cooked leek patties to the prepared paper towel-lined plate to absorb any excess oil. Allow to cool for 5 minutes. Enjoy!

Lucienne Carasso Bulow was born in Alexandria, Egypt, before coming to New York. Her family in Egypt was not especially religious, but when Lucienne was in kindergarten in a Jewish lycée, she learned about Passover and about the Haggadah, and insisted that her family resume the tradition of a Seder meal. For that first seder, her aunt Yvonne made these Boulettes de Poireaux, or Leek Patties, which she always loved. After they left Egypt, her mother would always make them for Passover as well as for Rosh Hashana. Lucienne is carrying on the tradition. Her children and grandchildren all love them as well as guests at their Sedarim.

RETROSPECTIVE: MEMORIAL DAY 2020

Rev. Z. Edinger



Our Memorial Day service this year was significantly curtailed due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Being unable to gather, we could not conduct our ceremony with the usual color guard, field music, special guests, and attendees that make this day so special. Nevertheless, we were determined to honor the service and sacrifice of Shearith Israel's veterans as best we could on this meaningful day.

I led the service together with the help of Dr. Morris Shamah, Mr. Aaron Nathan, and Captain Jordan Lender. Dr. Shamah is a member of our congregation and a veteran of the United States Army. Mr. Nathan, also a member of our congregation, is a direct descendant of several of the veterans buried in our cemetery. Captain Lender represented the *Jewish War Veterans of the United States of America*; he is a veteran of the Marine Corps and is still active in the Reserves.

The entire service was streamed live on Facebook and was watched by hundreds of people. Dr. Shamah provided musical accompaniment playing the National Anthem to open the ceremony and *Taps* to close. Dr. Shamah, Mr. Nathan, and Captain Lender then took turns decorating the graves of the 18 veterans and patriots of the American Revolution buried in the Chatham Square Cemetery, while I read short biographies of each.

To date, this ceremony has been viewed on Facebook more than 2,000 times, reaching many more people than could ever have attended in person, even in the best of circumstances. Of course, we look forward to our usual ceremony again next year, please God, but we are truly gratified that, thanks to our volunteers, we were able to conduct this special and meaningful service despite the unusual circumstances.

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Planning for the Memorial Day ceremony this year started many months before. At the time when we began planning for this year's ceremony, Colonel Carl Singer (US Army, Ret.) was scheduled to appear as our special guest speaker. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, he was unable to attend. However, Col. Singer kindly sent me the remarks he was planning on giving this year, which are reproduced below. We hope to be able to have Colonel Singer (and his wife Miriam) attend in future years.

Being here today it seems lucky that I married into this august congregation. My wife, Dr. Miriam Pressel Singer, is the great-granddaughter of Louise Pressel-Bonnemaman, who joined this congregation before World War II. Miriam's paternal grandparents Adolphe and Rosa Pressel were staunch and active members. I recall her grandfather sat closest to the Aron Kodesh, or Hekhal, and her grandmother sat opposite him, in the balcony so they could see each other. Grandma Rosa, as she was called, was born in 1899 and passed in the year 2000. Her life touched three centuries. I recall poignantly that at her funeral, the hearse stopped at the synagogue and the doors to that magnificent edifice were opened as a sign of kavod – respect.

As for me, I'm a kid who was born on a freight train in post-war Europe. I came to this golden land of opportunity as a child. I first met Miriam in early 1970, the week that I got drafted. I served. After Basic Combat Training at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, I was assigned to the Army

Chief of Staff's Office at the Pentagon. I was privileged to serve with outstanding officers many of whom later became senior leaders. As a tease, I can truthfully say that when Colin Powell and I were officemates, I had a private office; he did not. After leaving active duty I was commissioned and joined the reserves. At first, I remained with the Chief of Staff's Office, then moved to the Secretary of the Army for Research and Development, and for my last ten years I commanded a team of colonels at the U.S. Army War College. Overall, I was privileged to serve for over 31 years before retiring in 2001. In 2016 I was elected to a one-year term as National Commander of the Jewish War Veterans of the U.S.A. Hence this hat.

Switching gears if I may. We see in Rabbi Soloveichik's book "Proclaim Liberty throughout the Land" how our Bible and Jewish thought influenced and inspired our nation's founding fathers. I cannot add to that excellent dissertation. Instead, I want to turn the clock back 120 years prior to the founding of this great nation to the first instance of Jews taking up arms for our country – even before it was a country. And this story is the story of the Spanish-Portuguese presence in America. In 1654, the same year that this storied congregation was founded, Asser Levy, one of 23 immigrants from Recife, Brazil to New Amsterdam petitioned a reluctant Peter Stuyvesant, the Governor, for permission to stand watch and thus achieve the status of citizen within the colony. It took a bit of influence from

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management – in the form of the Dutch West India Company – but Levy and his fellow Jews were eventually granted this request.

Returning to 1776 – we need only look around this hallowed cemetery to see that Jews fought in the War of Independence. This is in part why we are here this morning.

Jews have fought in all of our nation's wars. Leaping forward from 1776 to 1896, we find erroneous, anti-Semitic charges that Jews did not fight in the U.S. Civil War. In response, a group of 63 Jewish Civil War Veterans stood up and formed the "Hebrew Union Veterans..." which in time became the Jewish War Veterans of the USA – the longest continuously serving veterans organization in our nation. I am proud to have served as it's National Commander in 2016.

Shortly after the Civil War, on May 30th 1868, Americans began decorating the graves of Civil War veterans. That May 30th was designated – as, I quote – "a day for strewing with flowers or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who

died in defense of their country..." And so it was called "Decoration Day."

Today, we call it Memorial Day. To some of us, Memorial Day has a face. That face is a parent, or grandparent, or a sibling, or perhaps a child. To some, that face is a buddy with whom we served. To some, a classmate whose yearbook picture brings back memories of happier days. Or that face belongs to the kid down the block who once played with our own children.

And there are so many more faces of Memorial Day that we do not know. Since the American Revolution over 40 million men and women have served in our armed forces. Over 650,000 have died in battle, and nearly half a million have died of other causes during wars. These are not simply numbers – these are, each and every single one, not only a face, but a vibrant life. A life cut short protecting us, our nation, and our way of life.

Today, we remember each and every one of them. May God bless them and may God bless the United States of America.



Carl and Miriam Singer



Paul (Miriam's father), Adolphe and Rosa, Raymond Pressel

RETROSPECTIVE:

AZHAROT WEBCAST: WORLD-WIDE VIRTUAL READING

Hazzan Rabbi Ira Rohde

Due to the pandemic, the traditional congregational round-robin reading of *Azharot* at Shearith Israel on Shabuot had to be cancelled, but Rev. Zachary Edinger proposed replacing the planned reading with a webcast by leaders of Spanish & Portuguese congregations from around the world. Accordingly, on May 24, 2020, the Sunday before Shabuot, at 10:00 am, our congregation's *hazzanim* joined pre-invited *hazzanim* from other Spanish & Portuguese congregations in a live webcast reading of the entire medieval Spanish *Azharot* poem by Solomon Ibn Gabirol, with the traditional introductory poem by Bahya Ibn Paquda. This was arranged in conjunction with the American Sephardi Federation, whose professional staff hosted the webinar. The *Azharot* session was envisaged as part of ASF's "Global Naçao Series," a set of cultural-historical programs about Western European Spanish & Portuguese Jewry. The reading gained a large audience, and the recording has continued to be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eP1EhB5rOyM>.

The *Azharot* delineate the 613 commandments of the Torah in rhymed, metered poetry. It is not, strictly speaking, a listing, since at times the same commandment seems mentioned more than once, and Rabbinic ordinances as well, but it is rather an attempt to weave a song or "poetic version" out of the words of the commandments of the Torah, a characteristically Sephardic pursuit, as the opening remarks from YU's Prof. Ronny Perelis and Rabbi Soloveichik pointed out.

Hazzan Danny Shapiro from the Esnoga, Kahal Kados Talmud Torah, as well as *Hazzan* Nachshon Rodrigues Pereira, from the Amsterdam Bendigamos S&P Community, read in quintessentially Amsterdam style and tune, even staying in-rhythm, and Mr. Adam Musicant's London version was quite similar. Rev. Salomon Vaz Dias' reading was slower and less rhythmic but the same. Although Shearith Israel's version has an alternating variation every other stanza, the similarity to Amsterdam can be heard, especially in the fact that both traditions, although ostensibly

RETROSPECTIVE: AZHAROT WEBCAST: WORLD-WIDE VIRTUAL READING

— *continued* —

in a major-sounding key, end on the third note of the scale, the “mi.” It’s interesting that Shearith Israel’s first stanza starts on the “mi,” but it is Shearith Israel’s second stanza, which starts on the fifth, the “sol,” which sounds most like the versions of Amsterdam, London, and Livorno, all of which either start on “sol” or get to “sol” after a lead-in from “mi.” Rabbi Israel Elia, from the Lauderdale Road Synagogue of the Spanish & Portuguese Jews’ Congregation in London, had a parallel version to the Amsterdamers’; however, it allowed for more variation, notably the use of the high “do,” as well as additional notes of ornamentation, which is perhaps the origin of the Shearith Israel version. Rabbi Elia’s version also allowed for a freer pace. My own New York-style version tends to sound quite Baroque, or perhaps somewhat classical. The rhythm, however, stays quite regular, with the ornaments coming out as sixteenth-notes. Rev. Zachary Edinger’s version was similar, as was Rabbi Meir Soloveichik’s and that of Rabbi Albert Gabbai. All of the Amsterdam and London versions have the same four pause points in common with the New York version: first “do,” then “mi,” then “re,” then “mi.” That, especially, points to the common musical origin of them all.

It was a great privilege to hear again my elder Italian colleague, Dr. Daniele Bedarida, *Hazzan* of Comunita ebraica di Livorno. His family has been quite active in Italian Jewish life since before World War II, so he himself is a treasury of musicological knowledge. To find his Italian,

Southern European version of the *Azharot* so consonant with Amsterdam and London versions really bears out the consistency of the musical traditions of the Spanish & Portuguese Jews. His version was rhythmic and consistent from verse to verse. I also found it interesting that although there is a lot of emphasis on the “mi,” which is where the major pause is, *Hazzan* Bedarida ends each stanza on “do,” on the tonic. In that respect it is very “musical,” in the Western European musical tradition, which, of course, the Italians originated! Of course, New York’s final ending on “mi” I’ve always felt was strange, musically. I’ve always preferred an ending more like Livorno’s on “do!” Perhaps the Amsterdamers, along with the Londoners and New Yorkers, changed it to end on “mi” because they were in a hurry to get on with the other verses and consequently didn’t want to make the pause too final-sounding! Rabbi Jonathan Cohen, formerly of London, also ended each stanza uniquely, on “re.”

Our sister North American congregation, the Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue of Montreal, the oldest in Canada, was represented by *Hazzan* Daniel Benlolo. His tradition was different from some of the others, perhaps more like Moroccan versions. There was freedom of rhythm, although he had a consistent mode, with step-wise *coloratura* performed identically each verse. He started on the “sol” below the “do,” paused on the do, then on the same low “sol,” then on the low “la,” then on the “do” tonic. Rabbi Daniel Kada of

RETROSPECTIVE: AZHAROT WEBCAST: WORLD-WIDE VIRTUAL READING

— *continued* —

the British Wembley Synagogue varied his phrases from ending on “sol” and “mi,” although not entirely consistently. These two versions sounded fairly Moroccan. Perhaps the outline of the mode could be seen as similar to the Amsterdam and New York versions. Rabbi Amir Elituv’s reading sounded particularly “Mizrahi” or Eastern, with an Eastern sing-song rhythmic pattern, as well. His congregation in Manchester traditionally had more of an Iraqi, Mizrahi community. His mode did sound similar, with many pauses on an apparent “mi.” However, each stanza seemed to end on “re.”

Rev. Peter Nahon’s French tradition, coming from those of the Paris Rue Buffault Synagogue and the Spanish & Portuguese congregation of Bordeaux, had some higher notes and a freer rhythm. Some of the contours of the chant may seem similar to Amsterdam and London, depending upon how “do” is defined. If I divide each stanza into four phrases, Rev. Nahon begins, like the Amsterdammers, on “sol,” ending that first phrase also on “sol.” His second phrase ends on “mi,” more like the others, followed

by a dramatic high phrase ending also on sol. These higher notes make use of the triad, making them more “Western” than the higher notes of *Hazzan* Benlolo’s. What seems a bit strange is the final cadence on “sol” using a “fa-sharp,” cadencing, as it were, on the dominant. Again, this could be because the *hazzanim* wanted to avoid a final resolution in order to facilitate repetition of the same tune-motifs from stanza to stanza. That type of cadence on the dominant is used in classical music to facilitate such repetition.

My predecessor, *Hazzan* Daniel Halfon, rounded out the reading with his New York version of the *Azharot* tune, beautifully sung and varied. He ended the first section of the *Azharot* with the traditional transition to the *Tal/Geshem* “*Leshoni Bonanta*” tune, which he sung quite well, based upon New York and London choir versions, executed slowly, but quite rhythmically and elegantly, much more rhythmically than my version in New York. I will probably imitate some of his nuances.



HESED

IN TIMES OF CORONA

CARING CONNECTION

Caring Connection trains community members as sensitive volunteers, enabling them to proactively help others through times of need, one of Judaism's greatest mitzvot. This vital assistance greatly aids the individual, and also strengthens and unifies our community, enhancing our sense of responsibility for one another. This group of volunteers responds to a variety of situations, both in times of difficulty, such as illness or mourning, and times of joy, such as the exciting and often overwhelming challenges accompanying the arrival of a new baby.

Our volunteers coordinate meals to those in need; arrange visits and phone calls to the elderly, homebound, and recuperating; and even provide transport or wheelchair assistance to those who wish to attend synagogue services or events. *Caring Connection* also facilitates and organizes important communal conversations, raising awareness on mental health issues, such as our recent "Smash the Stigma" panel on suicide and depression.

During these past months, *Caring Connection* has been instrumental in providing emotional and practical support to those in our community, from check-in calls to grocery shopping for those who are high-risk or under quarantine. If you would like to support their COVID-19 work with a donation, please do so at shearithisrael.org/support-cc.

If you know someone who might need assistance, or if you would like to volunteer or help with events, please email caringconnection@shearithisrael.org.

When Caring Connection lacks the expertise or resources to provide appropriate assistance, they do their best to direct people to other congregational and communal organizations.



MEALS FOR MOURNERS AND NEW PARENTS

Shearith Israel's *Caring Connection* provides meals for members and their families after the birth of a child, and the *Hebra Hased Va'Amet* provides mourners and their family with their *shiba* meals.

If you would like to sponsor a meal, we offer several options and easy ways for you to do so. **Simply go to shearithisrael.org/hesed-meals** and select the meal type you would like to sponsor. The family will be notified of your generous gesture. Please be assured that our *Caring Connection* and *Hebra* volunteers are in touch with the affected families and will ensure that their specific needs (quantities, dietary restrictions, etc.) will be considered. Any surplus sponsorships will be used to ensure that all of our members are provided meals in their times of need.

If you would prefer to cook and deliver your own home-cooked meals, or place food orders on your own rather than participate in *Caring Connection's* fund, please contact **Layalza Soloveichik** at layaliza@gmail.com beforehand. Layalza is our congregation's volunteer coordinator for meals for new parents, and she makes every effort to ensure that the family's preferences and requests are accommodated and that duplication of efforts are avoided.



SERVICES

SHABBAT SERVICE TIMES

September 4th-5th

Candles (18 min. before sunset).....	7:04 pm
Friday Sunset.....	7:22 pm
Parashat Ki Tabo.....	Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8
Haftarah	Isaiah 60:1-22
Bar Mitzvah.....	Charles Bieler
Saturday Sunset	7:21 pm
Habdalah.....	7:57 pm

September 11th-12th

1860 - 19th St. Consecration Anniversary

Candles (18 min. before sunset).....	6:53 pm
Friday Evening Services.....	6:53 pm
Parashat Nitsabim-Vayelekh.....	
Deuteronomy 29:9-31:30	
Haftarah	Isaiah 61:10-63:9
Saturday Sunset	7:09 pm
Habdalah.....	7:45 pm

September 25th-26th Shabbat Teshuba

(See High Holy Days Schedule)

October 16th-17th Shabbat Bereshit

(See Fall Festivals Schedule)

October 23rd-24th

Candles (18 min. before sunset).....	5:45 pm
Friday Sunset.....	6:03 pm
Parashat Noah	Genesis 6:9-11:32
Haftarah	Isaiah 54:1-10
Bar Mitzvah.....	Reuben Frierber
Saturday Sunset	6:02 pm
Habdalah.....	6:32 pm



We continue to explore and pursue venues inside our synagogue, outdoors, and beyond to accommodate our mid-week, Shabbat, and holiday services in a safe and congenial atmosphere. For the most up-to-date information, visit shearithisrael.org and follow our emails.

— continued —

October 30th-31st

C Candles (18 min. before sunset).....	5:36 pm
Friday Sunset	5:54 pm
Parashat Lekh-Lekha	Genesis 12:1-17:27
Haftarah	Isaiah 40:27-41:16
Saturday Sunset	5:53 pm
Habdalah.....	6:22 pm
End of Daylight Savings Time,	Sun. Nov. 1
Turn Clocks Back One Hour.....	2:00 am

November 6th-7th

Candles (18 min. before sunset).....	4:28 pm
Friday Sunset	4:46 pm
Parashat Vayera.....	Genesis 18:1-22:24
Haftarah II Kings 4:1-23.....	
Saturday Sunset	4:45 pm
Habdalah.....	5:14 pm

November 13th-14th

Candles (18 min. before sunset).....	4:21 pm
Friday Sunset	4:39 pm
Parashat Haye Sarah	Genesis 23:1-25:18
Haftarah	I Kings 1:1-31
Saturday Sunset	4:38 pm
Habdalah.....	5:06 pm

November 20th-21st

Candles (18 min. before sunset).....	4:16 pm
Friday Sunset	4:34 pm
Parashat Toledoth	Genesis 25:19-28:9
Haftarah	Malachi 1:1-2:7
Saturday Sunset	4:33 pm
Habdalah.....	5:01 pm

November 27th-28th

Candles (18 min. before sunset).....	4:12 pm
Friday Sunset	4:30 pm
Parashat Vayetse.....	Genesis 28:10-32:3
Haftarah	Hosea 11:7-12:12
Saturday Sunset	4:30 pm
Habdalah.....	4:57 pm

MINOR HOLIDAYS

Labor Day Legal Holiday

Monday, September 7th

*Late Morning Service (Shahrit) 8:00 am

***Services by Confirmed Reservation only**

Rosh Hodesh Marheshvan (Two-Day)

Saturday Evening, October 17th through Sun. & Mon., October 18th & 19th

*Sunday Morning Shahrit & Musaf..... 8:00 am

*Monday Morning Shahrit & Musaf..... 7:15 am

***Services by Confirmed Reservation only
following the Weekday Schedules**

Rosh Hodesh Kislev (One-Day)

Eve of Rosh Hodesh, Mon. Eve, Nov. 16th Tuesday Daytime, November 17th

Shahrit, Hallel, Musaf

(Services Follow Shabbat & Daily Schedules)

*Tuesday Morning Shahrit & Musaf 8:00 am

***Services are by Confirmed Reservation only
following the Weekday Schedule**

Thanksgiving Day (Legal Holiday)

Thursday, November 26th

*Late Morning Service (Shahrit) See Website

***Services by Confirmed Reservation Only**

*DAILY SERVICES

Mornings:

Sundays Shahrit..... 8:00 am

Monday-Friday Shahrit..... 7:15 am

Evenings, Sunday-Thursday:

Sep. 1st-24th Minhah, Arbit & Selihot 6:30 pm

Sep. 29th-October 1st Minhah & Arbit 6:30 pm

October 5th-8th Minhah & Arbit..... 6:15 pm

Oct. 12th - 15th Minhah & Arbit 6:00 pm

Oct. 18th - Mar. 11th, Arbit Only 6:30 pm

***Services by Confirmed Reservation Only**

HIGH HOLY DAYS 5781

Rosh HaShanah-New Year 5781

Friday Eve, Sep. 18th-Sunday, Sep. 20th

PREPARATIONS

Friday Morning, September 18th

Early Morning Selihot & Daily Shahrit

EVE OF 1st DAY ROSH HASHANAH

Friday Evening, September 18th

Friday Evening Candle Lighting6:41 pm

Friday Evening Sunset6:59 pm

1st DAY ROSH HASHANAH MORNING

Saturday, September 19th

Shahrit Torah Reading.....Gen.21(all) Num. 29:1-6

1st Day HaftarahI Samuel 1:1-2:10

(No Shofar because of Shabbat)

Musaf with Shabbat additions

EVE OF 2nd DAY ROSH HASHANAH

Saturday Evening, September 19th

1st Day Minhah, 2nd Day Arbit

Saturday Evening Sunset6:57 pm

Sat. Evening Candle Lightingafter 7:32 pm

2nd DAY ROSH HASHANAH MORNING

Sunday, September 20th

Saturday, September 19th

Shahrit Torah Reading.....Gen. 22 (all) Num. 29:1-6

2nd Day HaftarahI Samuel 1:1-2:10

Shofar & Musaf

2nd DAY ROSH HASHANAH CONCLUSION

Sunday Evening, September 20th

Sun. Evening Minhah, Arbit & Selihot

Sunday Evening Sunset6:56 pm

Sunday Evening Habdalah7:18 pm

Fast of Gedaliah

Monday, September 21st

Fast Begins (Dawn) 5:21 am

Monday Morning Sunrise6:43 am

Monday Morning Shahrit7:15 pm

Minhah (with tefillin), Arbit & Selihot.....6:00 pm

Monday Evening Sunset6:54 pm

End of Fast7:16 pm

Shabbat Teshubah

Sabbath of Penitence

EVE OF SHABBAT TESHUBAH

Friday Evening, September 25th

Candles (18 min. before sunset).....6:29 pm

Friday Evening Sunset6:47 pm

SHABBAT TESHUBAH DAY

Saturday Morning, September 26th

Parashat Haazinu..... Deuteronomy 32:1-52

HaftarahHosea 14:2-10; Micah 7:18-20

Saturday Evening, September 26th

Saturday Evening Sunset6:45 pm

Habdalah7:19 pm

Yom Kippur-Day of Atonement

PREPARATIONS

Sunday, September 27th

Early Morning Selihot & Daily Shahrit

Early Afternoon Minhah Service.....1:30 pm

EVE OF YOM KIPPUR

Sunday Evening, September 27th

Sunday Candle Lightingbefore 6:26 pm

Begin Fastingbefore Sunday sunset, 6:44 pm

YOM KIPPUR DAY

Monday, September 28th

Sunset6:42 pm

Shofar, Arbit & Habdalah7:13 pm

FALL FESTIVALS 5781

Succot

Festival of Tabernacles

Friday Eve, October 2nd-Friday, October 9th

Succot: First Two Days (Yom Tob)

EVE OF 1st DAY SUCCOT

Friday Evening, October 2nd

Friday Eve Candle Lighting6:17 pm

Friday Sunset6:35 pm

1st DAY SUCCOT DAYTIME

Saturday Morning, October 3rd

Shahrit, Hallel, Musaf, Shabbat Hoshanot

Succot (cont'd)

EVE OF 2nd DAY SUCCOT

Saturday Evening, October 3rd

Saturday Sunset6:34 pm

Candle Lightingafter 7:07 pm

2nd DAY SUCCOT DAYTIME

Sunday Morning, October 4th

Shahrit, Hallel, Musaf, Hoshaanot

Sunday Evening, October 4th

Sunday Sunset6:32 pm

Habdalah, End of Yom Tob6:53 pm

Hol HaMoed Succot

Intermediate Days of Tabernacles

INTERMEDIATE WEEKDAYS

Monday Tuesday Wednesday & Thursday

The Mornings of October 5th, 6th, 7th, & 8th:

Shahrit, Musaf, & Hoshaanot7:15 am

[by reservation only]

Monday, Tuesday, & Wednesday Evenings

October 5th, 6th, & 7th:

Minhah & Arbit [by reservation only]6:15 pm

Hoshaana Rabba, Grand Hosanna

Seventh Day of Succot (Tabernacles)

EVE OF HOSHAANA RABBAH

Thursday Evening, October 8th

Minhah & Arbit [by reservation only]6:15 pm

HOSHAANA RABBAH DAY

Friday Morning, October 9th

Zemirot, led by Avery E. Neumark6:30 am

Shahrit, Hallel, Musaf, Hoshaanot, Shofar



Shemini Hag Atseret

Eighth Day Convocation Festival

EVE OF SHEMINI HAG ATSERET

Friday Evening, October 9th

Candle Lightingbefore 6:06 pm

Friday Evening Sunset6:24 pm

SHEMINI HAG ATSERET DAY

Saturday Morning, October 10th

Shahrit, Hallel, Musaf with Morid HaGeshem

Simhat Torah

End of Reading-Cycle Celebration

EVE OF SIMHAT TORAH

Saturday Evening, October 10th

Sunset6:22 pm

Candle Lighting/End of Shabbatafter 6:55 pm

SIMHAT TORAH DAY

Sunday Morning, October 11th

Shahrit, Hallel, Musaf

Sunday Evening, October 11th

Sunset6:21 pm

Habdalah, End of Festival6:42 pm

Shabbat Bereshit

The First Parashah-Shabbat Hatanim

EVE OF SHABBAT BERESHIT

Friday Evening, October 16th

Candle Lightingbefore 5:55 pm

Friday Evening Sunset6:13 pm

SHABBAT BERESHIT DAY

Saturday Morning, October 17th

Torah Reading, Genesis 1:1-6:8 Bereshith

Haftarah Isaiah 42:5-21; 61:10; 62:5

SHABBAT BERESHIT CONCLUSION

Saturday Evening, October 17th

Saturday Evening Sunset6:12 pm

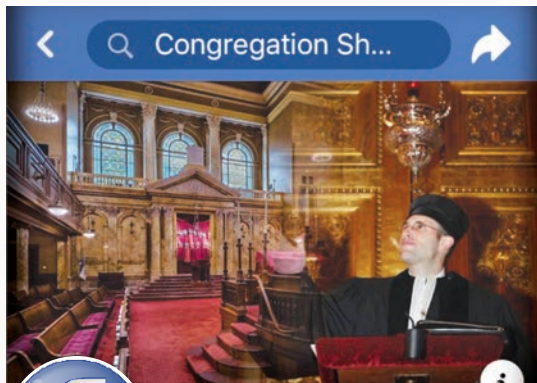
Habdalah, End of Shabbat6:43 pm

STAY CONNECTED

CONNECT WITH US

Don't Miss an Update

Sign up for any or all of our email lists! In this time of social distancing, keeping up with our latest programming via email is the best way to be sure you won't miss anything! Visit shearithisrael.org/join-our-mailing-lists

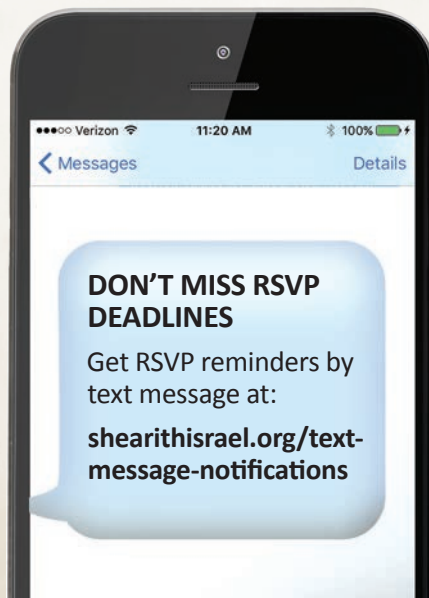


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Have you attended a Shearith Israel tour, lecture, or event that you loved?

Leave a post on our Facebook page so that others can share your enthusiasm!

To learn about upcoming events and fascinating historical Shearith Israel tidbits, follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/shearithisrael.nyc.





HELP MAKE IT ALL HAPPEN

The generosity of our members and friends enables us to continue to honor our past, strengthen our community and pass on our traditions for the next chapter of Jewish and American history. We have many opportunities to contribute in fulfilling our mission as a synagogue.

GENERAL DONATIONS

General donations honor our past with dignity through the preservation of our historic spaces including our main sanctuary and small synagogue, three historic cemeteries in Lower Manhattan and our active cemetery in Cyprus Hills, Queens. These donations ensure a strong future through engaging educational programs with rigorous ritual and liturgical training for youth including PTTS, our Toddler Programs, Junior Congregation, and special opportunities for girls. And perhaps most importantly, general donations uphold and celebrate our minhag and liturgical traditions through dedicated clergy members, our sublime choir, Shabbat, and holiday services.

KIDDUSH FUND

The congregational kiddush is an opportunity for congregants and visitors to socialize and mingle after services, humbly serving an important congregational function. Sponsoring a kiddush is a beautiful way to pay tribute to a loved one, celebrate a birthday, anniversary, graduation, a personal accomplishment, or a ritual honor. It is also a great way to foster community—facilitating fellow congregants to catch up with friends, meet new members and guests, and greet synagogue leaders.

SPONSOR SCOTCH AND ARAK

In addition to our weekly Kiddush sponsors and contributors we are now also accepting sponsors for the scotch and arak that we make available each week.

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

The Rabbi's Discretionary Fund is a charitable arm of our congregation. These funds are designated by our rabbis for members in need and communities in crisis. This past year, our funds have assisted a number of members who have hit hard times as well as important causes such as the Houston Jewish Community recovering from flooding, the Food Bank for NYC, and worthy institutions in Israel.

CLASS AND EVENT SPONSORSHIPS

Help us strengthen educational initiatives at Shearith Israel by supporting a warm and inviting atmosphere to learn, debate, and grow together as a community. Sponsor a class, Monday Night Learning, minyan breakfast, Tuesday morning women's class, Tuesday evening Talmud shiur, or Shabbat afternoon class. Or, contribute to sponsor an event, such as academic symposiums, lectures, and discussions with Jewish scholars from around the world, and maintain our synagogue as a leader in contemporary Jewish dialogue.

CARING CONNECTION

Financial contributions support efforts in proactively providing organized assistance to members of our community through times of need, one of Judaism's greatest Mitzvot. Caring Connection raises the funds needed to defray the costs of all it does, including delivering meals to mourners and new parents. Not only does this vital assistance greatly aid the individual or family, it also strengthens and unifies our community and enhances our sense of responsibility for one another.

BEQUESTS

Please consider including Shearith Israel in your estate planning. For more information, please speak with our Executive Director, Barbara Reiss.

VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME AND TALENT

Shearith Israel belongs to its devoted members and our vitality depends on our participation and involvement. Our most successful programs and activities are those that are organized with the help of capable volunteers who bring creativity, good cheer and friends. We have a variety of committees and societies, such as our Sisterhood and Young Leadership for you to contribute ideas and energy. We also benefit from the talents and expertise of lay leaders who can help us in important projects such as historic cemetery restoration, archival upgrades, real estate projects and facilities needs, and so much more. And of course, at our core, we are a caring community and that means that providing emotional and logistical support to members in times of need cannot depend on our clergy alone but requires the care and involvement of many whether through our Caring Connection hesed committee or our Hebra. Getting involved is how you make it happen and how you forge meaningful connections at your synagogue.

Giving is easy and feels good too. Visit shearithisrael.org/giving.

Thank you for enabling the continuation and strengthening of our congregation's mission and legacy.





STAFF AND BOARD

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Taharat Hamishpakha (Jewish Family Law)
Shiffy Friedman, Yoetzet Halakha
nycyoetzet@gmail.com, 646-598-1080

MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES

Interested in becoming a member or curious to learn more about our membership options? Executive Director, Barbara Reiss, would be delighted to speak with you. Information and applications are also available online at shearithisrael.org/membership.





CONGREGATION SHEARITH ISRAEL
The Spanish & Portuguese Synagogue

2 West 70th Street
New York, NY 10023

