

# A Jewish antiracist reading list for children of all ages

Lior Zaltzman, originally for Kveller

his moment has many of us reeling. Honestly, for those of you who are, like me, white-presenting Jewish parents, we should consider this a time of reckoning. Are we doing enough to make our homes antiracist? What about our communal Jewish spaces?

The work to dismantle racism goes beyond what we do when people are out in the streets protesting. And the activism we do outside of our home is just as important as the one we are doing inside our homes with our families, and especially with our kids.

Our kids perceive race much earlier than we think. So we have to start the work early. Raising your kids with a "colorblind" mentality just doesn't work — because we aren't, and the world we live in most certainly isn't colorblind.

In The New York Times, Dr. Marietta Collins, a clinical psychologist and the coauthor of Something Happened in Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice, a book for children about a police shooting, suggests that those first conversations about race be positive. As the article explains, "Dr. Collins gave the example of a white child asking why another



child had brown skin. A parent can take this opportunity to explain what melanin is, and to talk about how wonderful it is that the world has so many different kinds of people." The truth is, if you want to raise antiracist children, the work starts with us, the parents.

After all, we lead by example. Examine the biases that you were raised with and are still in your ears. This isn't a finite process — or an easy, or a comfortable one — and we have to learn to live with that discomfort. But there are a lot of great resources out there.

As always, it is key to listen to Black voices. Educator Brit Hawthorne, who is

an expert in antiracist education, is a wonderful resource, as is Tiffany Jewel, who wrote the great This Book Is Anti-Racist — and who actually does 15-minute consults on how to raise antiracist kids. (Remember, supporting Black artists, writers, and businesses is also important at this time!)

Certainly, diversifying your children's book collection — and specifically, your Jewish children's book collection, is one good step. These shouldn't all be books about struggles for equity. Showing happy, diverse Jewish kids celebrating your kids' favorite holidays is just as important. They show your kids that the world — and specifically the Jewish world — is diverse. And for Jews of color, these books show them that they belong.

While this (far from comprehensive!) list shows that there are plenty of examples of such books, it's still not enough. We need more diverse Jewish books, and we especially need more diverse Jewish books by Jews of color. So it is our hope that this list keeps growing, year after year.

Since some of these books are hard to get, we've included the Amazon links for some of

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# Jewish institutions grapple with calls to defund police

Ben Sales, originally for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency with reporting by WJN

hen Rabbi Capers Funnye attends a synagogue that's not his own, he must brace himself for the reaction that he knows will follow after he walks through the door.

Even though he comes in wearing a kippah and holding a prayer shawl, Funnye knows that if a security guard or police officer is there, he'll probably face extensive questioning because he's African American.

"They need to do whatever they're most comfortable with," said Funnye, the rabbi at Beth Shalom B'nai Zaken Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation in Chicago, regarding security practices at other synagogues. But, he added, "If I go to a synagogue where I'm not a guest speaker and they don't have my picture and have it advertised, I would be very uncomfortable going into a synagogue with armed policemen."

Interactions between armed police and black Americans have spurred a nationwide protest movement since the death of George Floyd, an African American man, in police custody in Minneapolis in late May. The movement has put synagogues and other Jewish institutions



New York police officers stand guard at the door of the Union Temple of Brooklyn after it was vandalized with graffiti, Nov. 2, 2018. KENA BETANCUR/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

in a challenging position: They are inclined to stand with the protest movement, but also have

built close ties with law enforcement amid rising antisemitism, including deadly attacks on

Jews in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Poway, California; and Jersey City, New Jersey. "They feel pro-

tected and I understand that," said Tamar Manasseh, an African American rabbinical student and anti-gun violence activist in Chicago, referring to white Jews. "It's not their fault that they feel protected. We just don't. I think the most important thing is for them to be sensitive to that,

for them to be aware of that." Jewish organizations have a history of working closely with law enforcement, and many see police as friend rather than foe. Jewish leaders have been grateful for officers' quick response to antisemitic attacks, and consistently recommend to local synagogues and other institutions that they build close relationships with the police.

The ADL is one organization that has tried to straddle the divide. The group has a long record of working for civil rights and has expressed solidarity with the protests. It has called for aggressive legislation against police brutality. It organized a Shabbat dedicated to antiracism.

But the ADL appears to be far from backing calls to defund the police, one demand of the protest movement that is gaining traction. A photo of two police officers graces the cover of the ADL's guide titled "Protecting Your Jewish Institution," which recommends engaging with police and other law enforcement dozens of times.

"Get to know local law enforcement and

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## From the Editor

elcome to WJN's first ever July issue. Even before the COVID-19 induced stay-athome summer, many readers had urged



Clare Kinberg

me to publish WJN monthly year round. But this has turned into an all hands on

case. On May 25, George Floyd's murder was caught on video--on the heels of revelations

March--leading to irrepressible demands for reform in policing and, hopefully, deeply effective racial reckoning informed by examinations of our country's history, listening to Black voices, and real commitment to justice. deck summer in any Every one of us is called to do what we

can. I hope within the pages of the WJN you will find something to help you learn from Jewish sources (the three weeks of introspection leading to Tisha B'Av begin July 9); teach your children about Jewish history and values and how to be antira-

about Ahmaud Arbery's murder in Feb-

ruary and Breonna Taylor's murder in

cist; vote for candidates you think best reflect your values; and be involved in Jewish community and Israel advocacy.

Local elections in August are important in themselves and also foreshadow the red strobe light flashing on the November 3 election.

As always, if you have an opinion about something you read here, send a letter to the editor. If you have something you'd like the Jewish community know about, celebrate, attend, or support please be in touch. 🔳

# **Statements on potential annexation**

from Jewish Clergy Calling on the Israeli Government to Abandon Plans for Annexing the West Bank

*This letter was written and is endorsed by the* ten member groups of the Progressive Israel Network: Ameinu, Americans for Peace Now, Habonim Dror North America, Hashomer Hatzair, The Jewish Labor Committee, J Street, The New Israel Fund, Partners for Progressive Israel, Reconstructing Judaism, and T'ruah and signed by 600 rabbis and cantors including nine from Michigan

#### Dear Friends,

As rabbis, cantors, and seminary students who deeply love Israel and care about its future, we urge all members of the Jewish community to call on the Israeli government to abandon plans for annexing all or part of the West Bank as early as this summer.

We hold fast to the vision, laid out in the state's Declaration of Independence, that Israel will be "based on freedom, justice and peace as envisaged by the prophets of Israel; it will ensure complete equality of social and political rights to all its inhabitants irrespective of religion, race or sex." Annexing all or part of the West Bank would mean turning Palestinians living there into non-citizen residents of Israel, without the legal rights or voting rights of citizens.

This would be a catastrophic mistake. Uni-

lateral annexation by Israel would:

Demonstrate that Israel's current government no longer seeks a two-state solution. Annexation would leave a series of disconnected Palestinian enclaves without real independence, freedom of movement, or civil rights. It would leave Palestinians without hope of genuine statehood and self-determination. Place Israel in flagrant violation of international laws and undermine Israel's status as a democracy, with the Palestinians under annexation becoming permanent second-class inhabitants living under a different system of rights and laws than the Jewish Israelis who will enjoy the rights of full citizenship.

Likely lead to an end of Palestinian Authority security cooperation with Israel.

Further isolate Israel in the world and strengthen Israeli and Palestinian extremists.

Endanger Israel's enduring peace agreements with Jordan and Egypt.

Profoundly weaken the bi-partisan consensus of support that Israel has enjoyed in the US for decades.

Unilateral annexation violates human rights, weakens democracy, and makes Israelis and Palestinians less secure. It gambles with longestablished peace agreements in exchange for enacting a messianist and ultra-nationalist fantasy that violates Jewish values of dignity for every human being, legal equality for all people, and the commitment to pursuing peace. Such a move will also drive more and more young people in Jewish communities away from Israel, as the most visible expressions of Zionism become ever more divorced from the principles of democracy and neighborliness expressed in Israel's Declaration of Independence.

We urge all who care about the future of Israel as a democratic state, the human rights of Israelis and Palestinians, and the safety and security of all people in the region, to lift up their voices now in opposition to unilateral annexation, and in support of the pursuit of a negotiated two-state solution that respects the legitimate national rights and aspirations of both peoples.

# EWISH NEWS

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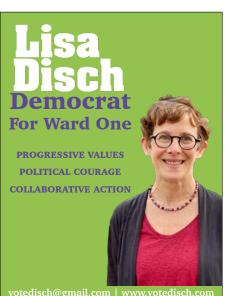
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# Statement on potential annexation by Ann Arbor area Jews

it would also force us to acknowledge that

 ollowing the Trump Middle East proposal and the formation of the new Israeli government, it appears entirely possible that Israel will unilaterally annex parts of the West Bank by July 1. This would be a disaster for the future of both Israelis and Palestinians. As American Jews,



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Israel has chosen to adopt a legally formalized path that is anathema to our values as Jews and as Americans. This raises critical questions about how we, as well as our Jewish and American institutions, should respond. There are so many ways that identification with and support for Israel is woven into our Jewish and American lives - from the Israeli flag in our sanctuaries, prayers identifying the State of Israel with religious redemption, United States military aid, economic and cultural exchange, and others. How do we reconcile all of this with a country whose government might formally put in place a permanent situation of unequal and non-democratic rule over a non-Israeli, non-Jewish population. Certainly, we must re-evaluate how each of these parts of our Jewish and American beliefs would be affected. Depending on what the Israeli government decides to do, we anticipate meeting together to look at these issues and raise these questions — we hope you will join us.

Steve Schiff, Rebecca Kanner, Harvey Somers, Diane Wilson, Martha Kransdorf, Leonore Gerstein, David Scobey, Denise Thal, Abbie Egherman, Bennett Stark, Michael Appel, Ruth Kraut, Yitshak Henig, Amy Rosenberg, Ellie Davidson, Simone Yehuda, Sarr Blumson, Diane Blumson, Harvey Michaels, Gloria Helfand, Paul Shifrin, Sari Shifrin, Julia DeVarti, Ellen Rabinowitz, Ruth Bardenstein, James Roll, Charles Weaver, Tamar Weaver, Irene Butter, Paul Sher



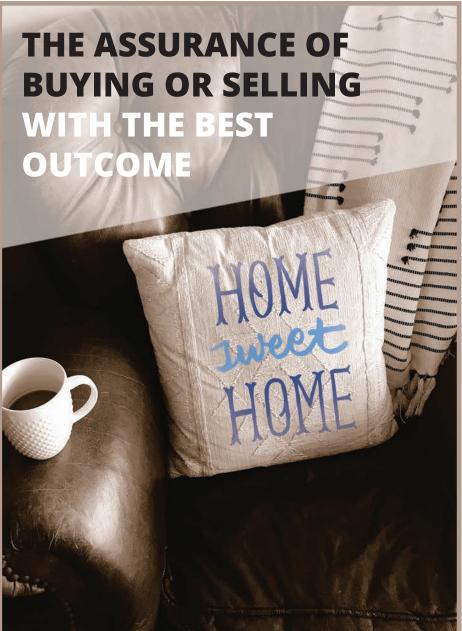


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# Israel and Politics

# AIPAC tells lawmakers it won't push back if they criticize annexation

Ron Kampeas, originally for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency

\*he leading pro-Israel lobby in the United States is telling lawmakers that they are free to criticize Israel's looming annexation plans — just as long as the criticism stops there.

Two sources — a congressional aide and a donor — say the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC, is delivering that guidance in Zoom meetings and phone calls with lawmakers. The message is unusual because the group assiduously discourages public criticism of Israel. they can criticize the annexation plan without risking tensions or a clash with the lobby group.

How far AIPAC's new guidance allows lawmakers to go is unclear. A spokesman would not comment except to point to a May 11 statement warning against proposals to reduce ties with Israel should annexation take place. "Doing anything to weaken this vital relationship would be a mistake," AIPAC said then.

Buried in the same statement, however,



People gather to stage a demonstration to protest against the annexation plan of the Jordan Valley, located in the occupied West Bank, and illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank, Tel Aviv, and Israel on June 6, 2020. (NIR KEIDAR/ANADOLU AGENCY VIA GETTY IMAGES)

But these are unusual times: Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has set a July 1 deadline to annex parts of the West Bank over the criticism of people at home and abroad who say the move would set back any efforts to bring peace to the region.

With anxiety pervading the U.S. Jewish community ahead of that deadline, AIPAC faces a thorny question: Does it support Israel's leadership at all costs, or does it draw a line on actions it believes endangers the Jewish state's future?

In a statement to the Jewish Telegraphic Agency sent after this story was published, an AIPAC spokesman said that AIPAC does not encourage criticism of Israel.

"AIPAC does not encourage members of Congress to criticize the government of Israel," Adam Harris said. "Our role is to strengthen the relationship between the two allies."

Telling lawmakers that they were free to criticize Israel, while short of encouraging them to do so, was nonetheless a departure from past practice.

So far, the group has remained publicly silent about annexation. But in private, AIPAC is telling lawmakers that as long as they don't push to limit the United States' aid to Israel, is explicit support for a two-state solution, which annexation would inhibit, and a suggestion that criticizing Israel is valid. "It is inevitable that there will be areas of political or policy disagreement between leaders on both sides — as there are between America and all our allies," the statement said.

But AIPAC's lobbyists are famously fastidious: No conversations would be taking place without express approval from the group, which recently called off its 2021 conference because of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

One donor who is deeply involved in lobbying Congress said AIPAC was making it clear that it would not object should lawmakers choose to criticize annexation. "We are telling the senators, 'Feel free to criticize annexation, but don't cut off aid to Israel," said the donor, who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

A congressional staffer, a Democrat who is the target of AIPAC's lobbying, described the same message from AIPAC. "They want to make sure members of Congress understand this is the time to warn Israel but not to threaten the Memorandum of Understanding," the deal signed in 2016 between the Netanyahu and Barack Obama governments guaranteeing Israel \$3.8 billion annually in defense aid for a decade, the staffer said, "not to threaten assistance."

What was clear, the donor said, was that AIPAC had shifted its tactics in part because the Netanyahu government had long ceased to take seriously behind-closed-doors warnings from AIPAC and other American Jewish groups, once the preferred means of conveying differences.

"They listen," the donor said. "But they do what they want."

The revelation of AIPAC's greenlight comes after weeks of public pleas to Israel by U.S. Jewish leaders, some on the left but others with deep roots in AIPAC and the centrist pro-Israel community, and warnings by senators of both parties that annexation would endanger Israel's international standing.

Groups on the pro-Israel right, preeminently the Zionist Organization of America, have embraced the annexation proposal, and have the backing of some Republican senators. (The Zionist Organization of America is currently under fire for its leader's response to the Black Lives Matter movement.)

The Trump administration, which created the space for annexation by releasing in January a peace plan that allows for it,

has been sending mixed messages. The White House and the State Department have said that annexation should, at least within the next four years, come only as part of a deal with the Palestinians. But the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem has signaled that annexation could precede a deal. Mike Pompeo, the U.S. Secretary of State, is invested in regional stability in the Middle East, especially as the United States intensifies its pressure on Iran and appears to be concerned about the broader destabilizing effects of annexation. Jared Kushner, President Trump's son-in-law, who authored the peace vision, is preoccupied with Trump's reelection and does not need a foreign policy distraction.

On the other hand, U.S. Ambassador David Friedman, who has a long relationship with the settler movement's right wing, appears to be invested in annexation; he has scheduled a meeting next week with Netanyahu and Deputy Prime Minister Benny Gantz, the leader of the Blue and White Party who has indicated he wants to go slow on annexation. According to Israeli media reports, Friedman wants the men to resolve their differences on annexation.

Gantz, a former Chief of the General Staff of the Israel Defense Forces and a former

military attaché in Washington, is attuned to the sensitivities of the American political establishment, said David Makovsky, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy who worked on Israeli-Palestinian peacemaking for the Obama administration.

"Anyone who has been Chief of Staff of the Israeli army understands Israeli dependence on American weaponry, even with Israel, with all of its indigenous capability," Makovsky said, "if you ever want to identify what part of Israeli system is most sensitive to the U.S.-Israel relationship, it's security people — it's not just \$3.8 billion. It's the technology, it's the personal relationships. They feel it."

Annexation could in the long term threaten those very fundaments of the U.S.-Israel relationship, including the military assistance, said the Democratic congressional aid. Lawmakers have read with interest a report by the Commanders for Israel's Security, a grouping of retired security leaders, distributed here by the pro-two-state solution Israel Policy Forum, and were taken aback by the estimated cost of annexation. Separating Palestinians from the newly annexed areas will require moving the security barrier, the report says, at a cost of \$7.6 billion.

"The current leadership is not interested in discussing changes to the Memorandum of Understanding, but that is not an enduring prospect," said the congressional aide. "But if annexation goes ahead and there's differences in the leadership in Congress, then we're looking at possible changes in in the Memorandum of Understanding package, not in cutting assistance, but members of Congress want to make sure the money does not go to the massive budget to pay for annexation."

The aide was referring to a leftward drift among some Democrats that could manifest in more leadership roles for left-wingers should Democrats keep the U.S. House of Representatives and win back the Senate in November.

Jeremy Ben-Ami, the president of J Street, the liberal Middle East lobbying group that is sometimes seen as AIPAC's rival, said that if Democrats sweep the November elections, his group would not advocate for cuts in aid, but for tougher oversight to make sure that the assistance not go to upholding the annexation. He would also expect a Democratic administration to join others in the international community pressuring Israel to roll back annexation.

Ben-Ami said that annexing the West Bank would be inherently destabilizing and threaten Israel. "The aid that the United States provides Israel is intended to help Israel deal with meaningful security threats, weapons systems, missile defense systems, to deal with the serious threats they face," he said. "Why would you provide money to enhance threats?"



# Community

# **Blessings in a pandemic**

By Lauren Katz

"Thank God for HDS."

My husband and I have said this to each other countless times over the last few months. Like most, our daily lives are vastly different now than they were before March 13, 2020. However, one thing that has remained a constant source of comfort has been the Hebrew Day School of Ann Arbor.

In the May issue of the *WJN*, Head of School Jennifer Rosenberg, wrote about the three "core learning values" that would undergird HDS' remote learning program: responsibility, learning, and community. The school year is coming to a close, and these Jewish values have unmistakably shown themselves in our family's daily connections with HDS.

#### Responsibility (Achrayut)

The intent of this value was, as Jen wrote, "Jewish law's orientation toward communal responsibility" — in other words, in the context of the pandemic, taking measures to ensure our community's health and safety and continuing to live our lives with kindness and compassion. But still, there is more to this. In this new normal of remote learning (and working), my husband and I have had the luxury of being home to see our son at school. I have reflected on what it means to raise children to become responsible adults who take care of their communities, and I have witnessed and experienced the extent to which our children learn responsibility through watching others be responsible.

The first very obvious lesson of responsibility came when HDS began educating remotely on March 17. To be clear, students left the school building on Friday, March 13; the administrators and teachers took Monday, March 16, to plan and train; and teachers resumed their teaching responsibilities on Tuesday, March 17. There was no ramping up; students left school on Friday and resumed synchronous and asynchronous learning on Tuesday. Marie-Adele and Jeremy Kress expressed that the HDS administrators and teachers demonstrated "a level of organization that exceeded our expectations at a time when the world felt so chaotic. The academic thoughtfulness and communication were present at every level — from the Head of School to the teachers to the psychologist. They were driven to provide the best they could in a remote context." HDS administrators and teachers modeled — they had a job to do, and despite the unprecedented challenges that came crashing into their laps, they forged ahead and taught our kids (and did so beautifully). Through their modeling responsibility, their students became more responsible children, and frankly, we became more responsible parents.

#### Learning (Limmud)

Lack of ready access to teachers when both big and small questions arise is a primary challenge one might expect for students learning remotely. But this was not an issue for us, and it wasn't an issue for the parents with whom I have spoken.

Our nine-year-old son, Gil, regularly connected one-on-one with each of his teachers by email, phone, and/or Zoom. In her email to Gil (only a brief excerpt follows), Morah Leah Kessler offered detailed feedback and suggestions for how Gil might improve his research project on the savanna: "Think about what the savanna has to offer the animals that live there (does it have food sources such as producers and prey animals? water sources? shelter? good weather



HDS 3rd grader at his homeschool work station

conditions?)." Through these kinds of email connections, within the first couple of weeks of remote learning, Gil also learned how to craft a more sophisticated and polite email that included a greeting, an expression of appreciation, and a closing:

"Dear Morah Leah,

Thank you for your help. It really pushed me forward, and it really sped up the progress. Shabbat shalom,

—Gil"

Morah [Carol] Gannon, Gil's technology teacher, met with him one-on-one via Zoom to practice for his project-based learning (PBL) presentation about the Huron Valley Humane Society. Gil's smile while he practiced and when he delivered his presentation in front of his peers was so heartwarming, and we were so happy to witness it.

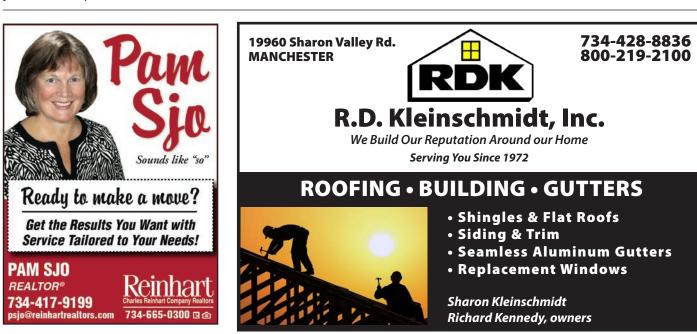
Sheryl Lasser said, "Because we were busy ourselves working from home, we could always count on teachers to step in. We could just text Milka [Eliav], and she would set up a phone call with him." Ari Kaplan and Adam Stein said the same thing, "The access was phenomenal. We could easily reach any of the teachers, they replied immediately, and he could connect with them one-on-one." Parents also noted that resource support did not stop or even slow down. "Sara [Goldshlack] still met with her regularly to work on reading." And there was so much content being delivered in thoughtful and creative ways. Marie-Adele Kress said, "They managed to personalize the experience for every kid." Because her son was becoming particularly excited about nonfiction, his teacher provided him with extra social studies activities. "Janice [Lieberman] made a list of books and projects. She suggested a book about bloody-horned lizards that, 'I think he would love.' This blew my mind! It helped raise my morale when things felt very hard. She even stopped by to deliver an end-of-year package of surprises, and we had a lovely porch conversation."

#### Community (Kehillah)

I become teary eyed whenever I think about the HDS community. It's not just the students; it's their parents and siblings and even grandparents. Joel and I have lived in Ann Arbor for 20-ish years now, and most of our close friends are parents of children who have attended HDS. As much as our children have benefited from this community, it's possible we have benefitted more. We have said many times that if we needed anything at any time, we could turn to any parent in this HDS community for help they are our family.

Since remote learning began, Jen and her team worked to ensure that our HDS community would stay strong and connected. Every Wednesday night, Jen read a bedtime story on Zoom. This was such a sweet spot in our week. We loved seeing all of the students together, and often with their siblings and parents in view. Our middle-school daughters became regular attendees for the Monday morning Havdalah and Friday noon Kabbalat Shabbat Zooms. Students met together in their Zoom classrooms daily, and while that wasn't the same as being together before the pandemic, it meant everything to us. Our HDS community has kept us going through this challenging time - HDS has been and continues to be a blessing.

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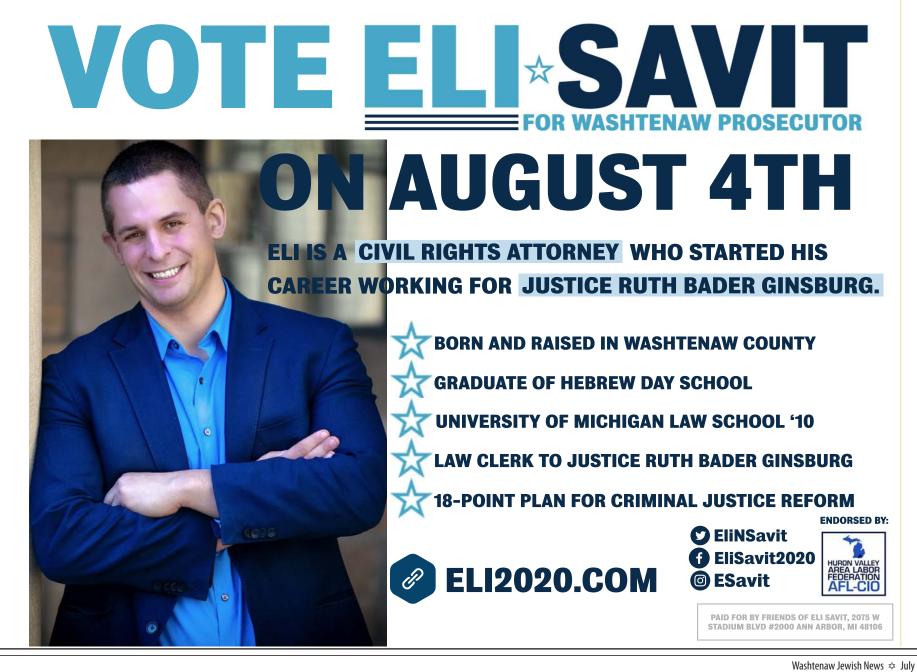
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# Community

# The first female chancellor of JTS shares her plans for the seminary – and getting through the pandemic

Shira Hanau, originally for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency

huly Rubin Schwartz's appointment as the Jewish Theological Seminary's eighth chancellor comes just in time for the historian to guide the institution through a period of unprecedented crisis management.

The flagship university of Judaism's Conservative movement recently completed a major renovation project of its Morningside Heights campus in New York City. The renovated building had been scheduled to open with fanfare March 22.

That dedication was canceled as the coronavirus pandemic first descended on the United States. Instead, the building sits empty as the seminary grapples with the uncertainty that all universities are facing right now: Should classes be held in person? Can students safely make their way to campus? Will donors be able to sustain their support?

Schwartz, who helped lead the transition to virtual learning back in March, believes her long history inside the institution makes her the right person to guide the school through a crisis.

"I know what needs to be done," Schwartz, the first woman to lead the seminary in its 134-year history, told the Jewish Telegraphic Agency.

We spoke with Schwartz about her plans and the future of denominational affiliation.

JTA: How does it feel to assume this role at a time when there's so much uncertainty due to the coronavirus pandemic? What are your goals as you assume this new position? Schwartz: I have a long history with JTS my parents are alumni, I am an alum, my late husband was an alum, and my son is a graduate of JTS, and I built my career there for the last 30 years, so this is an institution that I am extremely dedicated to. And I'm now the provost, so I've been very involved in addressing the needs that have been posed by the pandemic in shifting us all to online learning in a matter of days. So I feel very grateful to be able to take on this role at this time. I know what needs to be done, and I feel privileged to be able to serve in this capacity at this really difficult time.

The first goal is a very immediate one and that is, in a way, crisis management. What's the fall going to look like? That's what all institutions of higher ed are occupied with.

We're predicated on building community as an academic community and as a Jewish community, so on the one hand we've learned pleasantly how to forge community in a virtual way. We had to do a lot of that in a triage way, now we have to be involved in the process of figuring out how to do that more planfully. I imagine we'll do some kind of hybrid in terms of our teaching. Longer term, we have a new campus that is just about finished so my next goal is to get us back inhabiting that campus.

**JTA:** How are you thinking about that and how do you envision the seminary operating this fall?

**Schwartz:** The campus will enable us to enact a commitment to community, to Jewish learning in an environment of a living, vibrant Jewish community. It just so happens

that it will help us with all of the new requirements that we couldn't have imagined. We have a big new atrium that will make social distancing more possible than it would have before and there's a new residence hall with single-use bathrooms. We didn't do it with a pandemic in mind, but the design will be conducive to that.

One of the things we've learned over

**Schwartz:** Leadership can take many different forms. And rabbinic leadership is so important, but it's not the only avenue to Jewish leadership. I came of age in an era when I could not be ordained as a rabbi.

I see my leadership as having both an academic component and a religious component. I take that part of the role seriously. I'm a serious Jew. I care deeply about Jew-



Shuly Rubin Schwartz was named the eighth chancellor of the Jewish TheologicalSeminary in its 134-year history.(ELLEN DUBIN PHOTOGRAPHY)

the last few months is that there are ways to greatly expand the reach of our community. So while our first priority are our degree students who are in-house, there's enormous opportunity out there in the world. There's a lot of hunger out there for this kind of serious, critical, engaged Jewish learning that JTS offers. So I'm excited to think about ways to build on that so we can reach a much broader community.

My last important goal is to deepen the teaching we do in the area of ethics to help students grapple with the daunting ethical challenges of our age and to help them figure out how they will model those values in their social justice work.

**JTA:** You helped introduce a number of social justice initiatives at List College. Are there any projects you have in mind for rabbinical students at the seminary that have to do with social justice? What do you think should be the role of social justice work for Conservative rabbis and leaders?

**Schwartz:** I think it can play a role for all JTS students; only two of our schools are focused on training Conservative clergy. I think this is something that permeates our curriculum as a whole. There's nowhere else where you can get a degree in Jewish ethics. I feel strongly that our work in ethics should come from a deep sense of understanding and commitment to our obligation as Jews and be involved in social justice.

**JTA:** You're the third non-rabbi to be appointed chancellor at JTS. Do you think that says something about the future direction of leadership in the Conservative movement?

ish life and the Jewish future. I try to model that in my life. I think that that's critically important in leadership at JTS, in addition to the number one, which is we're an academic institution. So that I'm also a scholar and academic is critical, as well. I think the chancellor of JTS has multiple roles to play as a leader — there's an academic role, there's a religious role, there's a role of being a moral voice out there in the world — and I think all of those roles are critical.

**JTA:** In a world where young people are less loyal to denominations than previous generations, how do you keep the Conservative movement relevant to the next generation? And to what extent do you view this demographic issue as part of your role at JTS?

Schwartz: I believe that American Judaism's strength comes from the fact that there are so many different ways to express one's Judaism and one's Jewish identity, and all of these are important. I think that Conservative Judaism is a compelling approach to living an integrated life as an American and as a Jew, where both are important and where I don't have to compartmentalize one part of my life or another in order to feel fully present. That form of Judaism has something very compelling to offer to Jews, whether they want to identify formally with a denomination or not. Joining groups is not so fashionable - that's OK. I'm more concerned about the ideas, and what will inspire and ignite the passions of Jews to find their own way to connect meaningfully with Judaism and the Jewish people.

JTA: How does the proliferation of other

rabbinical school options – Hadar, Hebrew College, and American Jewish University – change the role of JTS?

**Schwartz:** If you think about the role that [rabbinical schools] played 70 years ago, the whole approach to leadership and to authority and to training, all of that was so different and you wanted your one place that would give you this one brand and would have the kind of quality control. Rabbis were so much more educated than the laity 70, 80 years ago. People were looking for a different kind of rabbi at that time than they are now. Jewish life is so much richer now. I think more is more, I think more engagement should lift all boats.

I think what JTS offers is unique, it has a distinctive approach to study, to the classical text. It's certainly unique, there's no other undergraduate program like it in the country. While Jewish studies has flourished in universities around the country, the way in which we do critical study would be inappropriate in a secular university. We're doing this in a Jewish context, so you have the same rigor and critical scholarly approach you would have in a secular sphere, but everyone is engaged in this project at JTS because the Jewish future matters to us.

I think the rabbinical program is distinctive because of our commitment to halacha and serious, critical academic study. That's a rich combination that enables our students to speak deeply and authentically about the Jewish tradition from a place of commitment and a recognition of how that ought to then be translated into action in the world.

There's no other Jewish institution that has all of these different kinds of leadership training programs under one roof. It's the only place where you have together studying, hopefully under one roof, future rabbis, chazanim, educators, scholars, and lay leaders who are all in this project of learning together.

**JTA:** Obviously you are taking over at a precarious moment financially. How are you preparing for this challenge?

**Schwartz:** Every institution of higher learning is revisiting its finances. We're all in this together, we are monitoring it closely and we don't know, we don't have all the answers. I feel very fortunate that JTS has been around for 134 years; we have the kind of financial and physical resources that will enable us to figure this out. JTS has an endowment, it has a new building, the campus is beautiful, and so we're not fearful, we're very well poised to meet these challenges.

The challenges are there. Enrollment looks great now, I hope that that continues. But so much is uncertain in terms of the public health challenges as we know. I think that JTS is strong and secure, and it's also a relatively small institution, so it will be able to pivot more quickly to be back on campus more quickly.

# Bend the Arc advocates for review of police union contract

Molly Kleinman, special to the WJN

he contract with Ann Arbor's police union is up for renewal, and the Ann Arbor City Council has the opportunity to make changes to the contract that would improve accountability and increase safety for everyone who lives or works in Ann Arbor. The terms of police union contracts often block accountability for police misconduct, and Ann Arbor's Independent Community Police Oversight Commission (ICPOC) asked Council to give them time to review the contract and suggest revisions before they passed it. The City Council was originally due to approve the contract at their June 1 meeting.

Leaders of Ann Arbor's chapter of Bend the Arc Jewish Action coordinated with ICPOC chair Dr. Lisa Jackson to put out a call to action to members over email and on social media. Council Members said they received thousands of messages about policing, and they did agree to push back the vote. At the time of this writing Council has yet to make any decisions about the length or terms of the contract.

The ICPOC was created partly in response to the killing of Aura Rosser, a black woman, by Ann Arbor police in 2014. Despite strong advocacy for an oversight commission that would have the power to track and investigate complaints, the police union contract drastically limited the commission's power. At the time, City Council said there was nothing they could do, because they were limited by the union contract.

When the ICPOC realized that City Council planned to approve a multi-year police contract without changes to the terms that had limited their ability to conduct meaningful oversight, they asked allies to contact City Council with two demands: 1) Delay the vote on the police contract until at least July to give the Oversight Commission and the community time to give substantive feedback, and 2) Ratify only a one-year contract to give advocates and City Council enough time for an indepth review, rather than being locked into this contract for the next several years.

According to Bend the Arc volunteer leader Rebecca Epstein, "We see police accountability as an explicitly Jewish issue because our tradition teaches us that all people are created in the divine image. We are obligated to pursue justice; to stay silent in the face of injustice endangers our own humanity."

#### Calls to defund police, continued from page 1

get them to know you before there is a problem," the guide says. "Invite local police officers to use your gym, to join you for an oneg Shabbat or just to visit your building and get to know it."

The principal organization tasked with coordinating protection for Jewish institutions is the Secure Community Network, or SCN, which was created in 2004 by two national coalitions of Jewish organizations. SCN also sees law enforcement as the first address, and one of the main tools for synagogues, schools, and community centers to turn to when devising a security plan. Its current and past CEOs both come from long careers in law enforcement.

SCN often recommends being in touch with the local police department as one of the first steps in any security plan. In a report issued this year about whether synagogues should hire armed guards — a step SCN did not necessarily recommend, and called "not a security strategy or plan on its own" — the group said the best option is to have an on-duty police officer present. The group credits law enforcement for preventing further bloodshed in Pittsburgh, Poway, and Jersey City.

Its CEO, Michael Masters, is a former Department of Homeland Security official in the Chicago area. Masters said he supports efforts to increase police accountability and transparency in ways that make black Americans safer, though he did not go into further detail. He said the Jewish community should take advantage of its relationships with law enforcement to help make that happen while also being more inclusive of Jews of color.

"We have had a perhaps more successful relationship with law enforcement than other communities, and if there are things to learn from that or ways we can leverage that to effectuate meaningful change, that will benefit other communities," he said. "It's also important for us to recognize as a community that we're not monolithic. We have incredible diversity in the Jewish community." But Masters stressed that antisemitic attacks remain a present threat and that police are a key partner in preventing it.

Masters spoke in Ann Arbor at last year's Federation Annual Meeting and advised

our community on the work of our own Community Security Committee (CSC). Eileen Freed, Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, says, "From its inception, the Community Security Committee has addressed the complicated issue of developing closer relations with and relying on local law enforcement to help maintain community safety and security with the recognition that for some members of our community, the presence of law enforcement lessens their sense of security. Our Jewish communal organizations, especially the congregations, have also grappled with how to maintain their welcoming and open cultures while protecting against very real threats to physical and emotional wellbeing."

The chair of Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor's CSC, Dave Nelson, who describes himself as a longtime pacifist, welcomes thoughtfulness on the role of police, and reconsideration of our reliance on police for too many unrelated things. His role as CSC chair, though, is to "help congregations connect with the resources they need to feel and be safe."

The ADL also plays a role in educating police against extremism and prejudice. The group says it's the largest nongovernmental trainer of law enforcement in the country and has trained 150,000 personnel. Some of the training is on counterterrorism, but many of the programs focus on how to recognize hate crimes and fight implicit bias.

One program takes officers to the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C., to show them how local police during the genocide carried out racist and genocidal policies. The ADL's Center on Extremism has provided intelligence on extremists to the FBI that has helped lead to arrests.

Current ADL officials declined to be interviewed for this article, but the organization did provide a statement from its CEO, Jonathan Greenblatt.

"There's important, deep, systemic work that needs to happen within law enforcement to rebuild trust and prevent tragedies like the murder of George Floyd or Breonna Taylor," he said. Greenblatt added that the ADL is advocating "for investments in meaningful police reform and broader efforts to address institutional racism in the criminal justice system."

While many recognize the need that Jews feel for security in the wake of antisemitic attacks, advocates for structural police reform say that physical protection must come with extensive conversations and training to ensure that security measures don't exclude Jews of color.

Funnye said that his synagogue on Chicago's South Side is in touch with police but relies principally on a network of close relationships across the neighborhood to create a feeling of security.

Security "can't come at the expense of black Jews or other black people," said Matt Nosanchuk, a former Obama administration liaison to the Jewish community who now heads the New York Jewish Agenda, a progressive advocacy group that supports legislation to reform police.

"We need to take a hard look at these relationships and . . . if we are partnering with law enforcement organizations, we need to make sure that they are observing policies and practices and training that does not turn them into an agent of systemic racism in our country," he said.

Some Jewish activists have joined the call to defund the police. For Jews for Racial and Economic Justice, a New York City group, that means a demand to reduce the \$6 billion NYPD budget by at least \$1 billion.

Leo Ferguson, a black Jewish organizer with the group, says he personally thinks New York City does need an armed municipal security force, but it should be much smaller than what currently exists. And he hopes synagogues will start building alliances with other vulnerable groups in their neighborhoods to provide mutual allyship and security rather than be under armed guard.

"The most powerful thing we can do for the safety of the Jewish community is build solidarity and much stronger relationships with other communities that face white nationalism and violence and hate violence," Ferguson said. "Building allies rather than doubling down on tensions — that's going to pay long-term dividends in a way that having a cop car parked outside of your synagogue never will." Decky Alexander, vice president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor and chair of its newly formed Jewish Community Relations Committee says, "We know that safety and security is not just engagement in and with law enforcement but also collaboration and connection with differing groups, cultures, and organizations. There is also safety and security in understanding one another — this is a strong reason as to why we have launched a Jewish Community Relations initiative."

Carin Mrotz, a Jewish activist in Minneapolis who supported that city's recent vote to disband the police department, said white Jews may look to police for protection because of a deep-seated — and justified — fear of antisemitism. But she hopes that Jewish institutions can think beyond self-defense to "dream what else is possible beyond what we have right now."

"Part of this is about whiteness and comfort with law enforcement, and part of it is historical, generational trauma and our response to fear, which is real," said Mrotz, executive director of the social justice group Jewish Community Action. "Our fear is often triggered by these attacks, which makes it hard to really dream or focus on the potential for a different world."

"Our community cares deeply about social justice," says Randy Milgrom, incoming President of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. "We're also well aware of our privilege - and have long considered how we might use it to address systemic racism in all of its forms. We know we must do more, and we want to do more. We know we need to continue to listen and to learn. We are open and we are sensitive and we are here. We are here to be helpful. We are here and we are hopeful — that we might be part of a solution. During this period of increased and increasingly violent antisemitism, we must continue to develop and maintain positive working relationships with those who are in the best position to assist us, especially in the event of an emergency. And we hope that maintaining good relations with all those around us might help in a facilitator's role."

# Community: Racial Justice

# 21 things we can do right now

#### By Eric K. Ward

understand the rage. I was in fourth grade the first time I was chased by police. My best friend got caught; I did not. His life ended up very different from mine, in part because I ran faster than he did.

I understand the rage. I lived ten blocks from the Signal Hill Police Department in Long Beach, California, where Ron Settles come, and I proceed to the office. Most of the folks I work with are unmoved by my story. So I understand the rage. You follow the rules and yet injustice after injustice just keeps on coming. But even as I sit here in a rage that makes it difficult to be rational, I can see that there's more going on than the "language of the unheard," as Dr. King de-



was found beaten and hanging from a noose in his jail cell the day after his 1981 arrest just a few blocks from my house. Two years later, I was 17, on my bike, near that very spot. A cop pulled me over, put a gun to my head, and said, "I could kill you right now and no one would care."

By 1992, when a jury acquitted four officers in the brutal beating of Rodney King, I was a student leader at the University of Oregon, helping to organize protests in response. Within a week, I and other Black leaders would be hiding off campus, unable to go to classes for fear of being served a grand jury summons. In 1999 I was among the first wave to get pepper sprayed and hit by bullets in the Battle of Seattle. Later, my work in philanthropy gave me the chance to shift institutional resources to fund grassroots infrastructure to challenge police brutality through the Ford Foundation and in cofounding Funders for Justice.

Engaging in disciplined protest and systemic change doesn't mean I don't understand the rage. Months after starting a job in philanthropy, I'm in my fancy suit in a line of people exiting the train at Grand Central Station. A white guy pushes me out of line. I push back. He comes after me. I lock his arms down to his side. Through the music in my headphones I hear him say, "Let me go. I'm a cop." I release one of his arms so he can show me his badge, if he has one. He pulls his badge out from under his shirt. I let him go but I'm furious. I keep yelling at him, waiting for the police to show up en masse. I'm so angry I don't even care. If this is how I die, I think, this is how I die. No other cops

scribed rioting at times like this. There are accelerationists on the right and the left exploiting our rage. Trump has tweeted his intention to designate antifa a terrorist organization. The distraction of chaos can cloud our view. Which is why I have to testify to what is clearly at stake in this moment.

America is on a precipice. Whether we go over the edge into the abyss of a full-blown authoritarian state or find firm ground on which to construct an inclusive democracy depends on what we do right now. We need to be clear: every word and every action has consequences.

This is what I see today, from my home in Portland, Oregon, where I pray my neighbors' late-night loud music doesn't bring the police to my block. From my work with Western States Center and the Southern Poverty Law Center responding to the rise of white nationalism and a far-right authoritarian state. From deep in my bones, where I've been living the reality of police brutality my whole life.

This is what I can point towards, 21 things those committed to inclusive democracy can do right now.

**1-Recognize** the precarious moment that American democracy finds itself in right now.

**2-Honor** the grief and anger that the public is feeling over the recent lynchings of Black Americans, many at the hands of law enforcement.

**3-Understand** the culpability of elected officials and senior law enforcement who

waited until people were at their wits' end (protesting and rioting in the streets) before taking the issue seriously and taking action, and who now stand by as the police riot in cities across the nation.

**4-Condemn** Donald Trump's call for violence and demand that the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate open hearings immediately on the President's unlawful incitement of violence.

**5-Be troubled** by the seven people shot in Louisville; the 21-year-old shot and killed in Detroit, the law enforcement officer shot in Milwaukee, and the two law officers shot in Oakland, one killed.

**6-Raise** concern about the number of vehicle assaults against protestors by both law enforcement and possible vigilantes, a deadly tactic we remember from the protest against the Charlottesville Unite the Right rally where Heather Heyer was killed.

**7-Decry** the disparate and disproportionate policing response to the protests against police brutality in cities around the nation compared with the hands-off response to "reopen" rallies at which armed white men shut down state capitols.

**8-Acknowledge** that white folks (rioters, not protestors) have again and without invitation hijacked, sidelined, and distracted from Black communities' leadership's attempts to stop Black lynchings in America.

**9-Demand** that law enforcement prioritize de-escalation and that all violence against nonviolent protestors cease immediately.

**10-Build** the collective memory that law enforcement has a long-established track record of disproportionate response to social movement protest that comes from the left, and of employing agent provocateurs to incite violence.

**11-Insist** that police not equate property damage with the taking of a human life to justify state violence against protests.

12- Lift up the peacemakers, those like Erika Shields, the chief of police in Atlanta who walked the streets with protestors, talking to everyone, and Ruhel Islam, whose restaurant burned in the Minneapolis uprising and said that wasn't the most important thing, and networks like the Movement for Black Lives (#DefendBlackLives #DefundPolice) and local NAACP chapters (#WeAreDoneDying) that are calling for concrete and tangible changes to systems of policing.

**13- Raise** alarm about the activation of National Guard and military units, martial law, and states of emergencies, as well as the idea that those opposing fascism could now be labeled terrorists.

**14- Condemn** accelerators on both the right and left who glorify and center violence over justice, othering over community, divisive ideology over common-ground values. Demand that all parties cease engaging in violence and the targeting of civilians and their property through arson.

**15- Demand** that cities and state governments launch independent investigations into the deaths or injury of any individuals in the midst of protests and rioting.

**16- Call on cable**,cable ,news, and other media to drop all paywalls during this time. Americans need access to real-time, fact-checked information.

**17- Call** on the United Nations to immediately appoint a human rights special rapporteur to investigate present-day lynchings of Black Americans and organize towards a Truth and Reconciliation Commission on policing in America.

**18- Press** philanthropy to immediately double grantmaking, for at least three years, to advance real equity in America.

**19- Acknowledge i**njustice but call on all to restrain from a cycle of systemic and physical violence that will only escalate the rise of authoritarianism in America. Continued violence — from white nationalists, from law enforcement, and from the Left — puts beleaguered communities in further danger and will contribute to the reelection of Donald Trump, which could end forever the dream of inclusive democracy that our ancestors fought and died for.

**20- Bring** together people of goodwill who believe the American experiment's best days are yet to come. Defend inclusive democracy by using disciplined nonviolent protest and nonviolent direct action to demand justice and hold local elected officials accountable.

**21-If** you believe that Black lives matter, support the goals being established by the Movement for Black Lives. Respect the Black leaders who have lived this reality their whole lives. Educate yourself and others on the connection between police brutality in America and fine and loan forgiveness, universal basic income, and other forms of reparations as outlined by the Black-led movement for justice.

Do one thing. Do them all. But take seriously — and warn others — that the attempt to create an inclusive American democracy is now on a precipice. Words and actions carry real consequences that could drive us over

#### the edge and to a point of no return.

*Eric K. Ward is a Senior Fellow with Race Forward and Executive Director of Western States Center.* 

# Community: Racial Justice

## I helped coin the term 'Jews of color.' It's time for a history lesson.

Shahanna McKinney Baldon, originally in Alma

n May, eJewish Philanthropy, an independent publication serving the professional Jewish community, published an op-ed titled "How Many Jews of Color Are



There?" The article argued that current estimates of the number of Jews of Color in the United States, 12%-15% of the larger Jewish community, are too high. It also criticized the use of the term "Jews of Color," arguing that it doesn't accurately describe the people to whom it refers.

I am one of the originators of the term Jews of Color, and I think it's time for a history lesson. We haven't done enough to tell the story of what the term meant to its early adopters, and why it is in continuous use today.

In 2001, Bridges: A Journal for Jewish Feminists and Our Friends published an issue titled "Writing and Art by and for Jewish Women of Color." The issue's international team of contributors and editors were Jewish women of diverse heritages and identities, including Indigenous, African American, Chinese American, Ethiopian, Puerto Rican, Arab, Indian, Peruvian, Yemenite, Mizrahi, Sephardi, Ashkenazi, mixed heritage, and Jews by choice.

I wrote the introduction for that Bridges issue. "This collection of writings and artwork by Jewish women of color — Jewish women of African, Asian, Latin, and Native American heritages — offers readers a chance to think about racism within the Jewish community," I began.

"How we name ourselves and our experiences is a place to begin," I continued, arguing for use of a new term: "Jews of Color." It was the first time, to our knowledge, that the term had been used in print in a national publication.

Over the next 20 years, a range of initiatives, networks, and organizations have been organized using the Jews of Color framing. We even became an acronym: JOCs! Our work has focused on acknowledging and lifting up the racial and ethnic diversity in our communities, and on finding ways to end the exclusion we experience as racial and ethnic minorities within U.S. Jewish spaces.

Some examples of this exclusion mirror racial and ethnic exclusion in the wider U.S. society, for example, the lack of images of people who look like us in educational materials, and the lack of diversity among staff and leaders in our institutions. Other examples are specific to U.S. Jewish spaces, such as the general dearth of acknowledgement of non-Ashkenazi histories, melodies, or nusach (prayer services), and the experience of being mistaken for a waiter or custodian at our own synagogues.

But recently, I have been troubled by what seems to be a growing amount of confusion surrounding this term and how it has been applied in our work to create more welcoming and inclusive Jewish communities.

The idea for the Bridges issue came into being in the late 1990s, when progressives placed has been in continuous use over decades of women-led organizing. When placed in this historical context, any criticism by men of the term Jews of Color, such as that which was employed in the recent eJewish Philanthropy article, is also a gendered criticism.

In 2004, Sarah Tauber, current professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary's Graduate School of Education, wrote a beautiful review of our Bridges issue. In it, she made a bold statement: "These women-speakers and subjects claim a voice, a place, and a role in how Jewishness as an identity will be imagined, and thus defined, in the 21st century." She was right. It is no exaggeration that many of the women who were doing early work in there is a need to name the marginalization we experience.

I don't know that any of us early adopters of the term "Jews of Color" foresaw the way that the uses and understandings of the term would evolve. I certainly did not anticipate how the term would become essentialized and even weaponized by those who think they know better than we do about the names we have chosen for ourselves and our own damn lives.

Africana scholar Wade W. Nobles has written about self-naming as an act of cultural resistance essential to psychological protection and wellbeing. He describes such cultural resistance as a tool for "being family and being



great value on multicultural coalitions. "[The term] 'people of color' created a basis to do coalition-building among all people targeted by racism as nonwhites," I wrote. "Using the phrase 'Jews of color' can help people think about how some Jews have been targeted by racism because they are of backgrounds other than, or in addition to, European . . . [and] mindful use of the term 'Jews of Color' can be a political act."

The term was indeed used mindfully by its early adopters — it was our call for a new coalition. It was a tool that we used to crack open the door to conversations about racial and ethnic "minority within a minority" experiences in Jewish communities. It was a nod to the idea that we simply cannot totally disentangle the Eurocentrism in our U.S. Jewish communities from the Eurocentrism in the wider world, nor the various varieties of contemporary American xenophobia from the eternal specter of American racism.

It's important to note that Jews of Color is a term that was created by women. And it this area have had an outsize impact on Jewish life in 2020. As our communities and our work have grown over time, so has the experience of naming ourselves. But one thing has remained constant: The work continues to be led by mostly women.

Twenty years ago, I couldn't have imagined the incredible work of then-future generations of Jewish diversity leaders, or their own journeys of self-naming. I now understand better that the act of naming ourselves is an ongoing process that happens through shared experience — like a river that, as it flows, will continuously change its surroundings as well as be changed by them. Today there are folks mobilizing as "Jews of Color," "Jewish People of Color," "Jewish Women of Color," "Jews Targeted by Racism," "Jews of the Global Majority," "Jews of Color Indigenous Sephardim and Mizrahim," "Black Indigenous Jews of Color Sephardim and Mizrahim," and each of these terms has been generated through shared experiences of people doing the work. And the list will continue to grow, as long as



awesome in a hostile, toxic . . . reality" that would deny Black people our humanness. In our continued work to eliminate the ways that racism impacts our Jewish communities, let us lift up the act of Jews of Color naming ourselves, as a way of being family and as a way of being awesome in the face of the hostility and toxicity of racism.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of JTA or its parent company, 70 Faces Media.

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Donate to a COVID-19 Relief Fund serving People of Color in the Jewish Community

Funds range from \$250-2,500 and must be used for basic necessities such as groceries, rent/mortgages, medical bills, transportation to work or medical appointments, and burial expenses.

All funds directly assist People of Color in the Jewish community who are most in need as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. We appreciate gifts of any size.

You can donate here:

tinyurl.com/JoCI-donate

Jews of Color Field Building Initiative

# Federation

# Federation celebrates transition and community at 2020 Annual Meeting

Kayla Kapen, special to the WJN

ver 100 individuals on more than 95 computer screens gathered remotely for the 2020 Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor Annual Meeting Wednesday, June 10. The format of the evening was completely different from previous years, as this

her own Israel travel and learning experiences. Since 2009, the Susan L. Lichter Memorial Scholarship has enabled dozens of teens to visit Israel, where they developed their own connections to our worldwide Jewish community.

The annual meeting is when the new board

organizations in Ann Arbor, including for Hebrew Day School and Temple Beth Emeth.

Also honored was departing Federation Chief Development Officer Sharyn Gallatin. Aronson spoke of her two-year tenure. "She created and sustained relationships both big and eration President and appreciation of outgoing President Stephen Aronson. After reflecting on his tenure, Aronson introduced Milgrom, who has been involved with the Federation since 2012 and was elected to the board in 2015. Milgrom led the Strategic Communications



JFNA President and CEO Eric Fingerhut, Outgoing Federation President Stephen Aronson, Incoming President Randy Milgrom, Rabbi Nadav Caine

was the first, and hopefully only, year the meeting would take place virtually.

The evening commenced with a video of highlights from the past year and a welcome from Federation President Stephen Aronson. Aronson introduced representatives from local partner organizations and congregations as well as special guests including Congresswoman Debbie Dingell, Renie Schreiber of the Israeli Consulate General to the Midwest, Ann Arbor Police Chief Michael Cox, and regional director Chris Matus, representing Senator Gary Peters. Rav Nadav Caine of Beth Israel Congregation gave the d'var torah connecting the parsha (portion) B'ha'alotcha to how we as a community should address racial injustice and recent events surrounding the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis.

It has become tradition at the annual meeting to announce and introduce the recipients of the Susan L. Lichter Memorial Endowed Israel Scholarship. This year's recipients were Talya Castell and Elijah Rassoul, both students at Washtenaw International High School. Carolyn and Paul Lichter and their friends and family established the scholarship fund in memory of their daughter, Susan L. Lichter, z"l, who had a deep connection to Israel developed through

is elected by the members, and this year, official business included approval of amended bylaws. Governance and Board Development Chair Laurie Barnett presented the 2020-2021 board for approval. Current board members elected for an additional term are Hanna Goodstein. Babette Levy Daskin, and Joshua Sukenic. New board members elected for their first terms include Michael Davidoff, Marla Linderman Richelew, Rob Stern, and Andy Tankanow. They join Joelle Abramowitz, Decky Alexander, Stephen Aronson, Randy Milgrom, Marla Chinsky, Murray Rebner, Dalia Naamani Goldman, and Liz Wierba, who are in the middle of their terms. Officers to be elected at the next board meeting are Randy Milgrom (President), Decky Alexander (Vice President/President-Elect), Joelle Abramowitz (Secretary), and Marla Chinsky (Treasurer).

Three board members, Laura Udell, Donny Wohl, and Tamar Springer, were thanked for their service to the community. Udell, one of the founders of Jewish Young Professionals (JYP), had been on the board since 2015 and recently moved to Chicago. Wohl joined the Federation Board in 2016 and was a member of the first cohort of Levine Fellows. Springer joined the board in 2018 and was on strategic planning committees and work groups in other Jewish small with individuals, families, and organizations. She played a significant role in the Annual Community Campaign and spearheaded both the Community Security Campaign and then the COVID Emergency Fund. Sharyn will be very missed in the community."

Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) President and CEO Eric Fingerhut was the evening's keynote speaker. Prior to joining JFNA last fall, Fingerhut was President and CEO of Hillel International. Fingerhut spoke about the two current crises facing our country and community, the COVID-19 pandemic and systemic racism. He spoke about the uncertainty of the future and how communities must come together to "draw a picture" of what our world will look like post-COVID-19. He also spoke about this time of soul-searching for the Jewish community, during which we must join together with the Black community to fight racism.

Fingerhut stressed that it is difficult to build community during times of crisis. The strength of the Federation system is that Federations are constantly engaged in building community, which prepares them to act quickly to address acute challenges. He lauded the Ann Arbor Federation for its leadership and collaboration.

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the installation of Randy Milgrom as Fed-

Committee, in which he helped the organization professionalize communications efforts. Milgrom has "a leadership style marked by a thoughtful perspective that incorporates incisive — often out-of-the-box — thinking, utter respect for others and others' viewpoints, and an ever-present and irrepressible sense of humor," said Aronson. He is "clearly the right person to lead Federation at this time — and for all the right reasons."

Milgrom thanked Aronson for his passionate and devoted leadership of the Federation, in particular for his dedication to getting to know and connect with community members. "He is always on the phone with people," said Milgrom. "More than anything, Steve is generous. He is generous in his care for others. He is generous in his sense of compassion — and in the sharing of his many passions. And perhaps most of all, he is generous with his time. ... Thank you, my friend, for your many years of wise and impassioned service to this community."

Milgrom shared his motivations and plans for the coming year. "During this crisis," he said, "we've all acquired a greater sense of purpose, and I am poised and primed to do more. And I'm thankful to be in a position to try to help all of us do more." He committed the Federation board to "work together with Federation staff to further an already ambitious agenda" with a focus on security, helping those in need, sustaining our local institutions, and maintaining our communal way of life, even during these uncertain times.

The meeting was concluded by Federation Executive Director Eileen Freed, who expressed gratitude for the professional and volunteer Federation team, colleagues and volunteers who lead and serve the local Jewish community, JFNA for bolstering and supporting the system at this challenging time, and the many donors to Federation and its partners for their "deep commitment" and generosity. "We will look forward," Freed said. "We will start creatively thinking and planning for the future — one in which together we will nurture a strong, caring, engaged, connected, vibrant, and enduring Jewish community here in Washtenaw County, in Israel, and around the world."

The 2020 Annual Meeting was recorded and is available on the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor YouTube page.

# **Federation announces first round of Emergency Fund grants**

Stephanie Glass, special to the WJN

he Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor is pleased to announce the first round of Community Emergency Fund (CEF) grants to four community organizations. The grants will assist with challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Organizations were invited to apply for operational and programming with funding decisions determined by the Federation's CEF Committee, which also outlined the guidelines for the organizational and individual grants. In addition to organizational grants, funding is also being awarded on an ongoing basis to community members affected by the pandemic. Individuals are eligible to receive funding for housing, medical needs, and more. These grants are administered through Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County and local congregations. So far, the CEF has raised over \$150,000 toward helping the greater Ann Arbor Jewish community during these unprecedented times.

Grants of up to \$15,000 were awarded to the Jewish Community Center, Hebrew Day School, Jewish Family Services, and Beth Israel Congregation to help with operational costs related to remote programming, reopening plans, and increased services for vulnerable populations. "The tremendous generosity of this community and Federation in initiating and seeding the Emergency Fund Campaign has provided the opportunity for HDS to benefit from a grant that will help us reopen safely and mitigate some of the economic challenges the pandemic presents," said Jennifer Rosenberg, HDS Head of School. The CEF committee continues to meet on a regular basis to discuss future funding rounds and changing communal needs as this pandemic continues. "Through the committee, we are working to provide our communal institutions and members the necessary aid to weather this crisis and come through stronger on the other side. During these last few months, much has changed in how our community gathers, but our support and care for one another has not," said Murray Rebner, Federation board member and Chair of the CEF and Allocations committees.

For more information about the Community Emergency Fund and how you cancontribute, please visit www.jewishannarbor.org.

# Federation

# JCLP students and local organizations benefit each other

Kayla Kapen, special to the WJN

ield education is a significant part of the curriculum in the Jewish Communal Leadership Program (JCLP) of the University of Michigan School of Social Work. Students are required to complete at least one part of their field placement experience at a Jewish organization. Over the years, numerous JCLP students have completed their field placements at local organizations in Ann Arbor. Recently, the two organizations in Ann Arbor where the most students have completed their placements have been Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County (JFS) and Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor. JCLP students Jordyn Rosenzweig, '19, and Hilary Forrest, '21, completed the first part of their field educations at JFS. Courtney Bushnell, '21, completed the first part of her field education at the Federation.

Rosenzweig grew up in Metro Detroit and gained a lot from interning in Ann Arbor. "I'm very familiar with the Metro Detroit Jewish agencies, and having this opportunity of working in Ann Arbor gave me the chance to see how other Jewish organizations support their communities. I really appreciated how JFS not only assists those within the Jewish community but also anyone in the greater Ann Arbor area." Rosenzweig completed the second part of her field work at a school placement. "Having the opportunity to have two field placements, one at a Jewish nonprofit and one at a middle school, allowed me to gain different important social work skills. It also gave me the opportunity to explore my interests and to discover where I feel I can make the most meaningful impact."

Forrest, who grew up in New York City, could see the impact of interning in a smaller community. "Being able to intern in Ann Arbor has made me realize how tangible the rewards are of being in a small community where you can be so accessible and in touch with the community around you and see the change you are trying to create." One of the ways that Forrest has connected to the Ann Arbor Jewish community is eating lunch with older adults at the Jewish Community Center as part of the Washtenaw Integrated Senior Experience. She also delivered Passover meals to those in need. "Social isolation and food disparities greatly impact older adults, and connection and hunger are two values that the Jewish [community] works to improve, and I have become a part of it."

Bushnell appreciated completing her internship in a smaller Jewish community while being a student at a large university like the University of Michigan. "I love that I am able to be at a university where I am able to get such a high-quality education that is situated in such a closely connected community. I think that if that were not the case, I would not have been able to develop relationships with members of the community like I have. I think there are very few places where you have both the high-caliber education experience as well as to be able to connect with the local community so personally.

"Students who pursue placements in Ann Arbor have one, a shorter commute, two, the opportunity to build relationships with lay and professional leaders in our own community, and three, [the feeling] that they can make a greater impact than those who have placements in bigger communities and bigger organizations," says Karla Goldman, Director of JCLP. "The Ann Arbor Jewish community is one of the systems in which we operate. Having students able to bring back their insights into the



Left to right: Courtney Bushnell, Eileen Freed, Hilary Forrest Bottom three: Karla Goldman, Jordyn Rosenzweig, Kayla Kapen

workings of this particular system helps all the students in understanding this community and helps the bigger group think about how what happens here compares to how other Jewish communities operate."

At the Federation, "interns become valued and integral members of the team" says Eileen Freed, Executive Director. "Frequently, they are doing work that would not be able to be accomplished without them." There is also an added benefit of having a JCLP student as an intern at organizations in Ann Arbor. "JCLP students gain a broad and deep perspective of the Jewish communal field through their seminar, specialized programs, and site visits and experience, like the General Assembly or travels to other Jewish communities." Sarah Hong, Chief Program Officer at JFS, believes that MSW students are a huge resource. "To have bright social work interns who are still learning social work but are at the graduate level adds incredible value. JCLP students bring extra layers and integrate social work with a Jewish lens."

JCLP students bring in a variety of experiences to their field placements. In this past year's first-year cohort, some students came in straight from undergrad, while others have up to 10 years of work post-undergrad in various Jewish organizations. Students learn so much about work in the Jewish community through their academics, but their field work gives them a vital foundation to be successful in their future careers, and the interns provide great services to the organizations in which they complete their field ed-

ucation. For more information about JCLP, please contact Paige Walker, Program Coordinator, at vpwalker@umich.edu. ■

Kayla Kapen is an incoming second-year student in JCLP studying management of human services.

# Planning together to reopen

Eileen Freed, special to the WJN

**B** y any measure, the last few months have challenged us in ways we could not have imagined before we first heard about a novel coronavirus causing upheaval across the globe. It seems as though in the blink of an eye, here in Michigan, schools and businesses were closing, we could no longer safely attend our places of worship, and our economy all but ground to a halt.

The Jewish community in Washtenaw County is faced with an unprecedented situation. A community that builds personal connections through its social, educational, cultural, and religious services and programs was forced to close the doors of its facilities, but that did not stop our Jewish communal organizations and congregations from continuing to provide for and even increase efforts to meet the basic and spiritual needs of their members and the community at large.

Since March, during a time when we've never been so isolated, our community leadership has been working increasingly more collaboratively and supportively with one another. We have been meeting weekly to share resources and information, which has enabled organizations to access muchneeded assistance to keep staff employed and maintain financial stability. Together, we have raised and allocated funds to address unanticipated needs due to COVID-19, recruited new volunteers who have delivered food to those in need, reached out to check in on those most vulnerable, and developed creative programming for members of our community.

Reopening the community's facilities is another essential area of collaboration. Even as individual organizations make plans according to their particular needs and contexts, a task force has been meeting to share information and resources around how we can best safely and securely open our community over the coming months. The task force includes leaders representing the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Family Services, Hebrew Day School, Beth Israel Congregation, Temple Beth Emeth, Chabad, and UM Hillel, and two public health professionals: Ruth Kraut of the Washtenaw County Health Department and Arnold Monto of the University of Michigan School of Public Health.

The common guiding principle in making determinations around reopening is pikuach nefesh — the preservation of human life. The ability to provide for the safety and security of those who use our buildings including staff, tenants, and program participants — is the number one factor driving decisions about when and how to reopen. Every organization is committed to following the guidelines of the CDC, the State of Michigan, and relevant licensing agencies.

Beyond the principle of pikuach nefesh, there are varied considerations, approaches, and timelines for reopening; as I write, the JCC is preparing to open its Early Childhood Center and Camp Raanana. At the same time, many congregational leaders are committed to continuing remote programming through the summer and considering a range of factors in deciding how to hold High Holiday services in the fall.

The reopening task force is a valuable forum. The group shares expertise and resources and considers collaborations such as community purchase of PPE and other supplies needed as buildings and offices begin to open. It is also a space for frank discussions about how to maintain our cultures while reopening with guidelines that are antithetical to how we normally connect with our communities.

In the coming months, we will continue to communicate with the community about reopening and will provide details on the Community COVID-19 Resource page at www.jewishannarbor.org. For more information about the reopening task force, contact Eileen Freed at eileenfreed@jewishannarbor.org, or call 734-773-3537.

# Jewish Film Festival

# Jewish Film Festival presents online summer of film

Clara Silver, special to the WJN

he Jewish Community Center of Greater Ann Arbor, in partnership with Cinetopia, launched the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival: Summer of Film in June, with an exciting lineup of films available throughout the summer for online screening, continuing the Festival's longstanding relationship with the Michigan Theater. In response to an order from Governor Whitmer that extends the closure of movie theaters to prevent spread of CO-VID-19, the committee chose to recreate the Festival online, distributing screening opportunities throughout the summer to give film fans the opportunity to participate from the comfort and safety of their own homes. In addition to the scheduled lineup, Festival director Noemi Herzig said, "there may also be some pop-up online discussions, Q&A, or other related events as the weeks go by. There might be a surprise film screening as well."

To screen Festival films, individuals must purchase access to a unique generated link to each film's online screening platform. For most films, viewing must be completed within 48 to 72 hours after purchase, after which access expires. Film links will be available for purchase via the Michigan Theater website, michigantheater.org, on each film's availability date, some of which are still to be determined. Films will be available for differing amounts of time, from a few weeks to throughout the summer, depending on each distribution company's contracts with various theaters and streaming companies. The Ann Arbor JCC recommends that viewers visit film.jccannarbor.org to check out film descriptions and connect to the webpages with links to purchase online access.

The Festival lineup began with *Crescendo*, a powerful Israeli drama chronicling the impossible task of creating a joint Israeli-



Palestinian youth orchestra. The conductor is faced with teens that have grown up in a constant state of conflict, filled with threats of terrorist attacks and systemic violence. That tension erupts both on- and offstage. This film allows five days of access for viewing. The other film made available in June is *Abe*, a dramedy about a 12-year-old boy raised in a secular home in Brooklyn, N.Y., by an Israeli Jewish mom and a Palestinian Muslim dad. At an age where he is already struggling with his identity, Abe decides to unite his family by celebrating both his heritages through his passion: food. This film allows for 48 hours of access for viewing.

Two additional films were also made available in June, completing half the Festival lineup. *Picture of His Life*, a documentary whose link became available on June 19, tells the story of Amos Nachoum, a Yom Kip-

**Update on LIFE & LEGACY** 

Margaret Schreiber, special to the WJN

n late February, excitement was building as the 11 Greater Ann Arbor organizations participating in LIFE & LEGACY finalized their legacy plans and prepared for the scheduled kick-off on March 1. Then everything came to a sudden halt. As COVID-19 forced buildings to shutter and events to move online, LIFE & LEGACY, a four-year program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF), worked with their grantees, including those in Greater Ann Arbor, in adjusting program timelines. Now, with a kick-off date of September 1, Greater Ann Arbor is beginning to mobilize for this inspiring and vital program. While many participating organizations are dealing with unforeseen challenges from COVID-19, they recognize how essential LIFE & LEG-ACY is to the long-term viability of Jewish Greater Ann Arbor and are committed to its success. The economic uncertainty of this unprecedented time underscores how important the creation of endowments is to the Jewish community.

Thanks to Zoom, LIFE & LEGACY trainings are still being held, and in some cases, are connecting more people than ever before! Over 700 participants joined the HGF's annual "Create a Jewish Legacy Leadership Gathering" event, held May 18 and 19 — three-times the normal participation rate! The lineup included 10 sessions run by eight different speakers on topics related to philanthropy and the LIFE & LEGACY program. With varied sessions such as "Homer Simpson Leaves a Legacy: A Guide to Behavioral Economics and Fundraising" and "Storytelling: The Secret Sauce for Securing Legacy Commitments and Stewarding Donors," the conference was engaging, fun, and most of all, informative. Greater Ann Arbor participants left energized and with a better understanding regarding the incredible need and opportunity LIFE & LEGACY offers the community.

Ellen Abramson, chair of Jewish Family Services' LIFE & LEGACY team, shared that the virtual conference provided "an

unlikely benefit in that many more of us were able to attend than originally planned. I was able to attend sessions on 'Leadership Succession,' 'Formalizing Legacy Commitments,' and 'Managing Your Legacy Committee.' Just a few weeks earlier, I had agreed to be chair of the LIFE & LEGACY committee at Jewish Family Services, so the session on 'Managing Your Legacy Committee' was especially instructive for me. Several members of the JFS LIFE & LEGACY committee, as well as other board members, attended sessions." As a whole, the LIFE & LEGACY program across North America has secured over \$1 billion in legacy commitments since its inception. Greater Ann Arbor is incredibly excited and honored to participate in this program!

For more information about LIFE & LEGACY, please contact Margaret Schreiber, LIFE & LEGACY Coordinator, at margaret@jewishannarbor.org. ■

pur war veteran known around the world for his amazing underwater photography, particularly of apex predators. His ultimate goal is to photograph a polar bear underwater, despite the significant risk to his life, as polar bears see humans as prey, unlike most other apex predators. The second film, Aviva, made available on June 26, features Bobbie Jean Smith, former member and costar of the Batsheva Dance Company, as both choreographer and star in this contemporary dance-based impressionistic take on movie romance. The film is a love story that is timeless and universal, but also gender-fluid, modern, and sexy. The story ultimately is about navigating love in our changing world.

July features Love in Suspenders, a comedy of errors, or perhaps, Eros. When 64-yearold Tammy hits 70-year-old Benny with her car, she follows her son's advice to do everything she can to keep Benny from pressing charges. What follows is a heartwarming tale of finding love in the most unlikely of circumstances. Shooting Life is a drama that follows Yigal, a teacher new to Sderot, and his war-weary high school students, who find a voice when Yigal puts them behind a video camera. Their desire to express themselves brings students, families, teacher, and principal into conflict, pondering Israel's shattered dreams and future hopes through the eyes of the next generation. Both films will likely be made available as early as July 3, 2020.

August features Transkids, a documentary that follows four Israeli transgender teens for several years through their lifesaving identity transformations. They face not only the challenges of living in a gender binary world, but must also face issues specific to Israel, where military service is compulsory and Orthodox Judaism is the law. The Tobaccanist is a tender heartbreaking drama set in the 1930s, based on the book of the same name, about Franz, a young Austrian, sent to apprentice at a tobacco shop, who makes a mentor of an aging Sigmund Freud. His innocence slowly sheds as he falls for Anezka, a Czech émigré scraping by as an exotic dancer and escort, and as he realizes the increasing brutality of the Nazi occupation. Set against a stunning recreation of 1930s Vienna, Franz is a metaphor for Austria, and Anezka for Europe. These films should be available online in early August.

Other films may become available online and join the festival lineup in July or August. As distributors navigate the new world of film in a world without movie theaters, timing and availability have been two of the biggest challenges for theaters and presenters like the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival to overcome. Herzig notes that "most of the films we are presenting were part of the committee's original selections, but some have only recently become available online, and other films are not being put online at all, so we have had to be flexible." Festival selections and other events will be listed on the Festival website, film.jccannarbor.org. For more information, contact Herzig at noemiherzig@jccannarbor.org.

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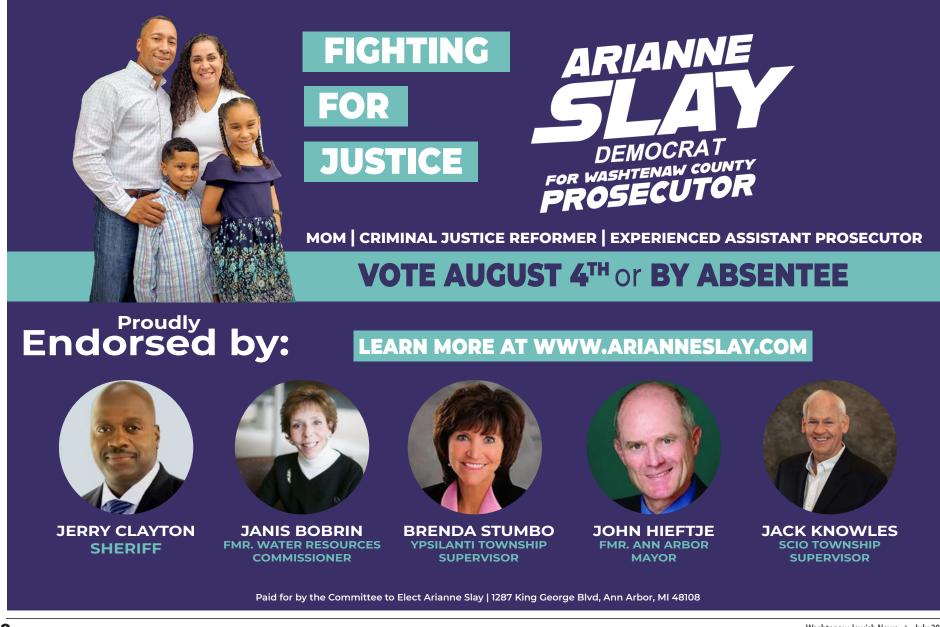
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groundwork for a future that truly represents our shared values."

# Rabbis' Corner

## **Missteps and speaking out**

Rabbi Nadav Caine, special to the WJN

s we were working our way through the book of Bemidbar (Numbers) and while Black Lives Matter protests were going on, we came to the Torah's most famous comment on race: "Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of the Cushite woman he had married. He married a Cushite woman!" (Numbers 12:1)



The Rabbis agreed that "Cushite" means "black skinned." They also agreed that Miriam, who is speaking, is standing up for the rights of her sister-inlaw Tsipporah (Moses's wife), who, was born in what is today Yemen and Saudi Arabia, and might well have had

**Rabbi Nadav Caine** 

dark skin. The context is that Moses long ago moved from his home into the small Tent of Meeting, maintaining sexual abstinence (and ritual purity) so that he can commune with God's presence, ready at all times to receive divine communications. His wife Tsipporah is essentially an agunah, an abandoned woman, deprived of her rights, and raising their two children alone. Miriam is pleading for her black sister's rights and the justice due her from Moses. For this, God confusingly strikes her with a plague of white skin.

Why is it, then, that even though the Rabbis agree that Miriam is standing up for her black sister's rights, I've always heard in Shabbos conversations that Miriam was punished for calling Tsipporah "black" as a derogatory term? Miriam, we have been told, was a racist.

How did we get here? Miriam, our hero, a prophetess, and in contemporary Jewish culture, clearly an advocate for women's rights, is also called a racist?

The timing of this section of Torah was remarkable. I had considered canceling Beth Israel's Equal Rights weekend, intended to celebrate the women's suffrage movement and the ERA. Given our need to be mindful of racial injustice in our country, it seemed wrong to celebrate the rights of white women. I came to learn that the women's suffrage movement excluded and sold out women of color for the sake of political expediency. I was left feeling that these women standing up for women's justice were actually racist. What I did not know, and which came up in Professor Karla Goldman's presentation, is that in many ways the women's suffrage movement began as the women's abolitionist movement. It was women standing up for the rights of black slaves, but when they saw they weren't taken seriously, they decided they needed a political voice/vote to be heard. As with Miriam, I was pointing the finger of "racist" at people fighting for women's justice, when they actually were a branch of the earliest Black Lives Matter movement! It's a striking synchronicity between Torah and 2020. As Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote in "The Great Schism" (The Atlantic, October 18, 2011):

I think of [Elizabeth Cady] Stanton and [Susan B.] Anthony, mis-stepping, but always pushing, always agitating, always expanding, and I feel a strong kinship. I don't need my personal pantheon to be clean. But I need it to be filled with warriors.

We see the same expectation of being "clean" in how we read the medieval Rabbinic commentaries. Rashi points out that "Cushite" (dark skinned like an Ethiopian) means "beautiful" and even shares the same gematria value with "beautiful," and so are equivalent in God's eyes. But then Rashi stupidly offers a potential etiology for "Cushite" that allows that "dark skinned" might have meant "ugly" and became a perverse expression for beautiful (so that people would avoid the Evil Eye). Ibn Ezra is horrified by this, saying the whole Evil Eye explanation is ridiculous: he says that "black" is purely a compliment and it definitely refers to Tsippora. She's black. She's beautiful. So is Rashi deserving of cancel culture? The man who saved Miriam's reputation and taught that black is beautiful?

Rashi's famous grandson Rashbam says that the dark-skinned woman Miriam is referring to is actually an Ethiopian princess Moses has taken for his second darkskinned wife. And the Bekhor Shor says that it's part of the Divine Plan that Moses is interracially married, but the meaning of why God wants this won't be revealed until a future generation.

Speaking up for justice has never been easy or simple. We may be accused of not listening enough, and of not speaking enough. Someone will complain that some activists in the BLM movement also embrace BDS, the boycott Israel movement that projects the American history of racial injustice onto Israel, even though the history of that region deserves to be understood in its own truth. We may be accused of losing our focus: didn't we know a synagogue was vandalized, a Jewish-owned business looted?

Rashi says the lesson of the episode is that there are those who speak up, like Miriam, for justice, and there are those who speak up mainly to criticize others. In issues of race, too many do not speak up because they know others will pick apart their words and question their character.

It's time for Jewish leaders to take our place with Miriam. We have known for a very long time that this country has never done any real teshuvah over building itself on the brutalized lives and bodies of black people, on land stolen from massacred and defrauded Native Americans. Let's demand justice, knowing there are risks, knowing our words and the character of our leadership will be questioned. When we speak up for the right reasons and suffer for it, we become worthy of Moshe's poignant plea of "El Na Refa Na La," God's direct healing.

Rabbi Nadav Caine serves Beth Israel Congregation

# **Converting mourning into happiness: Shabbat during the Three Weeks**

Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, special to the WJN

ost of the month of July we are busy mourning the destruction of both of the Holy Temples. The beginning of the mourning period starts Thursday, July 9 — the fast of 17th of Tammuz — and culmi-

nates three weeks later on Thursday, July 30 — Tisha b'Av, the ninth of Av — the date when both Holy Temples were destroyed. It is traditional to treat these days as days of mourning. Not just mourning for itself, but for taking the



time and looking at different ways to again bring the Holy Temple so that we don't have to be in exile anymore.

On Shabbat during these three weeks we are not allowed to show any signs of mourning. We have to be happy on Shabbat days including these. Furthermore, not only are we required to be happy on those three Shabbats, we also have to be happier than on any other Shabbat! The simple reason is because there shouldn't be any hint of mourning. So if a person is not very happy or extra happy on that Shabbat, someone might think that they are mourning on Shabbat, which, of course, is prohibited. Therefore, we have to be happier than on a regular Shabbat in order to show that on Shabbat (especially these three) we don't mourn.

So for this reason, it seems that we are not supposed to be happy on Shabbat because we have to actually be happy, but just in order that one should not appear to be mourning. Nevertheless, according to the teachings of Chassidus - on the mystical level — there's actually something special about Shabbat: not only shouldn't we be sad, but we have to be happier than usual. This is because Shabbat, in general — that is every Shabbat throughout the year - gives us a taste of how it will be when Moshiach comes. Therefore, in our prayers on Shabbat, we mention that we are looking forward to the coming of Moshiach, when our whole life will be a Shabbat life. At this time during Galut (exile), we only get to "taste" it once every seven days at Shabbat. But Shabbat itself, by its very nature, has the "taste" of Geulah (redemption) with the coming of Moshiach. Therefore, when Moshiach comes, we won't be suffering from exile anymore, and there won't be any residue left of the bitterness of exile that we are going through now. So, since Shabbat is going to be how it is when Moshiach comes, then even during the Three Weeks, on Shabbat we have to behave in a manner of simcha (happiness).

Furthermore, looking at it from a mystical standpoint, why do we have to increase our happiness on Shabbat? The answer has to do with understanding the purpose of exile. We are still in exile and waiting for the coming of Moshiach and looking forward to the redemption. It's not like we are looking forward to the redemption in order to go back to the same way it was before the destruction of the Holy Temple. Actually, we have to say that with the end of exile through the redemption, we will be put in a much higher level than before. We're not going to merely go back to where we were before; we're going to an even higher level.

There is a beautiful analogy that Chassidus uses to explain the concept that when Moshiach comes we will be on an even greater level than before. The analogy is that sometimes one has to destroy first in order to build something better - creative destruction. For example, when a person destroys their house it is for certain that the replacement house will be better than the original. The new house will be newer, greater, bigger, nicer, more beautiful, and, in general, much better than before. If the new house won't be greater and bigger, etc., then what is the purpose in destroying the original house? So the inner reason or purpose of the destruction of the Holy Temple was not that we should get a new Temple that is the same as the previous one. It has to be one much greater. Every time the Jewish people had to go through exile and redemption, the redemption put them at a higher level than before.

So, given that we have been in exile for approximately 2000 years, the redemption that we are going to go through will be a much higher redemption, because there won't be another redemption after this one. Therefore, this redemption will be very special. When Moshiach comes to redeem us there will be a new revelation of Godliness in the world and we will realize that it was worth it for us to have suffered all the trials and tribulations through this long, long exile.

Once we understand this concept, we'll also understand why the Shabbats during the Three Weeks give us a taste of what it will be like when Moshiach comes to redeem us and take us to a new, higher level. This means that Shabbat has, hidden in itself, a taste of the revelation of how it will be when Moshiach comes. It will be so powerful that even during the Three Weeks of mourning it will have the ability to give us a "taste" of redemption.

Therefore, in these three Shabbats, we have to be much happier than on a regular Shabbat. We can see in the actual Jewish Law that it says that one is allowed to have a full meal — just like King Solomon — during the Three Weeks on Shabbat. Even if Tisha B'Av (ninth of Av, the date that both Holy Temples were destroyed) is on Shabbat, Jewish Law states that not only are we allowed to have, but we are encouraged to have, a meal as great as King Solomon in his full glory. Why do we choose King Solomon as the example? Because the times of King Solomon were a taste of the times when Moshiach comes.

Therefore, these three Shabbats give us the ability to convert the days of mourning and pain into days of happiness - with the coming of Moshiach very soon in our days.

## Tisha B'Av at Pardes Hannah

by Reb Elliot Ginsburg

ardes Hannah, the Jewish Renewal community of Ann Arbor, has embraced

this period of social distancing to move yet deeper into our Jewish mystical practices and rituals. Gathering around the Zoom screens doesn't create the physical intimacy



**Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg** 

that we yearn for, but it has created a spiritual intimacy that has sustained our community over these past difficult months. There are a number of stimulating and deeply engaging offerings Pardes Hannah offers monthly, such as a Rosh Chodesh morning minyan, an evening Rosh Chodesh Women's Circle, Shabbat and Kabbalat Shabbat services, Torah study, and offerings to celebrate the holidays of each month.

We invite you to join us for a special upcoming two-part suite of services/spiritual encounters for Tisha B'av on Wednesday, July 29, at 8:30 p.m. and Thursday, July 30, at 5 p.m. Tisha B'av, the ninth day of Av, marks the end of a 22-day period of living close to the bone — without excess or self-puffery.

It represents the "low point" of the Jewish spiritual year, a time when the earth (in the Land of Israel) grows dry and parched. On the spiritual level, we might think of Tisha B'av as the moment when both God and the People Israel blink, at exactly the same moment, neither seeing the other. Tisha B'av is a time for dedicated reflection: for holding, with care, some of the shatteredness of the world. We break the heart open to both be with this fragility and begin to collectively envision a new, more attuned, holier way of being.

Tisha B'av has been a magnet for moments of meaningful loss, variously signifying the destruction of the first and second Temples — the loss of the sacred center and the attendant grief of exile, of homelessness, famine, and dislocation. We sit on the ground, in a setting stripped of finery, as though in shivah, to be together in our shared grief. It is a grief that must not shut us down but rather open us out to the cry of the world. In our contemplation and in our rituals, we hold our ancestral history of being decentered, of being a refugee, of living amidst famine and plague. We stand (and sit) in solidarity with those treated as Other.

And yet, this day of mourning, with its haunting melodies and poems and the keening eloquence of Eicha, the Book of Lamentations, also brings about a stirring power, and a spiritual intimacy. The fierce love of a mother for her starving children morphs into the image of Mother Rachel paving the way to a restoration. Paradoxically, love blossoms out of the ashes.

For many of us in the world of Jewish Renewal, the lament of losing our bayit, our home, has been expanded to include an ecolament for the Earth, our most expansive and inclusive home. We sit in both grief and on the knife's edge of resolve and hope, as we fast (refrain from taking in parts of the earth that usually sustain us) and move more slowly. At Mincha, in the mid-afternoon, the energy shifts, as hope begins to rise. We put on the tefillin of prayer and we glimpse the arrival of a Messianic future, for it is said that the Messiah is born on Tisha B'av.

I remember some years back when I coordinated a Tisha B'av spiritual practice for Mincha time with the late Bernie Glassman, the activist Zen Peacemaker, who was also a

proud and engaged Jew. As I chanted from the Torah, he did a Zen form of a Tonglen practice, breathing in the suffering of the world and breathing out peace. Breathing and chanting together with those assembled, we opened a space in our hearts for the healing of the planet, a prayer for homecoming, in its many registers.

And so: this year at Pardes Hannah, we will chant from the Book of Lamentations, meditate, and pray from the place of breaking the heart open — on Wednesday night July 29 at 8:30 p.m.-and we'll rise up together through our Mincha practice (Thursday at 5 p.m.). Visioning the world we wish to live in, cocreate, and share. Our prayers are heartfelt and tuneful, our discussions real and deep. We are grateful to be here, sharing with other Jews and planetary citizens, in the work of the hour.

Please join us for this special offering or any of our ongoing services, rituals, circles, and teachings by checking the Pardes Hannah website for the Zoom links at www. pardeshannah.org, or call Renee Robbins at 734-904-5459.

# A lesson from the forgotten corner of the calendar

Rabbi Jared Anstandig, special to the WJN

have always found it so peculiar the way the Hebrew calendar and the school calendar align. The school year begins in the fall, just when we celebrate Rosh Hashanah, such a beautiful way to celebrate the beginning of a year



of learning. And Shavuot, falling always at the end, serves as a meaningful capstone to a year filled with learning. With enough creativity, I think we can fit every Jewish festival into its

**Rabbi jared Anstandig** place in the academic year. That is, of course, with the exception of the outlier, the so-called Three Weeks in the heart of the Summer. Perhaps because school is never in session between the 17th day of the Hebrew month of Tammuz and

the ninth day of the Hebrew month of Av, many don't even realize that these mark dates of significance for the Jewish people. For those unaware, the 17th day of Tammuz begins a three-week-long period of mourning over the loss of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem, culminating in a 25-hour fast on the ninth of Av.

Commemorating a close-to-two-thousand-year-old event, however historically significant, is difficult; even the most devout struggle to connect and find meaning in the year 2020. Yet I believe that the lessons of this period offer meaningful insight for our times.

Perhaps the most salient message comes from the Haftarah we read on the afternoon of the 17th of Tammuz. Taken from the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 55, the Haftarah urges us to reflect on the relationship we elect to have with God. The prophet Isaiah rebukes the people in 55:6, "Seek the Lord while He may

be found, call upon him while He is near!" But what exactly is this rebuke? What does the prophet mean? Surely God does not have a body, so not that He is sometimes closer and sometimes further from us!

Erica Brown, Ph.D., in her book In the Narrow Places: Daily Inspiration for the Three Weeks, suggests that Isaiah is urging his fellows not to fall into the trap that ensnares so many of us. She writes, "Perhaps Isaiah spoke from his awareness that God's presence was not always apparent during the average working day of an Israelite. Busy with harvesting fields, winnowing in the threshing floor, or finding a fertile place to graze sheep, our ancestors could have spent their days preoccupied with the demands of family and making a living, not making a place for God" (pages 27 and 28). According to Brown, it is we who grow closer or further from God, not the other way around. In our

modern world, we are so busy, so hyperconnected to everyone and everything, we may feel we cannot possibly take the time in our lives to contemplate spiritual matters.

I believe the significance of the period of the Three Weeks is its excuse for us to be introspective on spiritual matters. Do we feel connected to God? Do we feel connected to our loved ones? Do we feel that we are giving the best of ourselves to our world? As Brown expresses it, so much of our lives we are busy working and tending to important matters. Perhaps now is the season, in the middle of the summer, that we can make the time (as we do for our work), to check in on our spiritual wellbeing. I invite you to join me this 17th of Tammuz, wherever you are and however you can, to pause and reflect on our spiritual wellbeing.

Rabbi Anstandig serves the Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan.

# **Pardes Hannah upcoming events**

The Zohar: Virtual Study and Practice Session Sunday, July 19, 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. https://zoom.us/j/96783244181?pwd=NjYrN 1d6Q3kwcCtTSUhnQXR0WkZNdz09

The purpose of these sessions is to enable participants to learn how to read the Zohar, enter its symbolic universe, and hear its inner music. Among the themes we will explore are: nature mysticism, awakening and spiritual improvisation, shifting modes of consciousness, spiritual friendship and the mysticism of the group, the language of the Sefirot, gendering (queer and not-so), the symbolization of the Shechinah, the mystical Sabbath, entering the mystical

dark, and the mysticism of love. While each session is self-standing, the sequence of sessions is designed to cumulatively deepen your appreciation of this mystical masterpiece. Our text study will be enriched by conversation and spiritual practices. Texts will be provided in English, Aramaic, and Hebrew. For texts and questions, contact Rabbi Ginsburg, rebelliot91@gmail.com.

#### Rosh Chodesh Av Virtual Minyan

Wednesday, July 22, 9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. https://zoom.usj/95106274422?pwd=RUx4c W41VEhsd

#### Rosh Chodesh Av Women's Circle

Thursday, July 23 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. https://zoom.us/j/94902558448?pwd=MHZ OcW5xWmk1MGRwZU1nMGpiSStDQT09 Welcome the new month of Av.

#### Tisha B'Av: Lamentations

Wednesday, July 29 8:30 – 10:00pm https://zoom.us/j/94348111797?pwd=cEhNR k9oWDF3WmZNam8yNm03U29QUT09

#### Tisha B'Av Mincha: The Arising

Thursday, July 30, 5:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. https://zoom.us/j/99083014587?pwd=ektvSlJ

#### aWTFQNVJVNE9kbVNObml0Zz09

We will chant from the Book of Lamentations, meditate, and pray from the place of breaking the heart open on Wednesday night, and we'll rise up together through our Mincha practice on Thursday, visioning the world we wish to live in, cocreate, and share.

Please join us for these or any of our ongoing services, rituals, circles, and teachings by checking the Pardes Hannah website for the Zoom links (and any changes) at https://pardeshannah.org or by calling Renee Robbins at 734-904-5459.

# Community

# **TBE Events July 2020**

#### Families with Young Children (FYC): Tot Shabbat

Service - Virtual Fridays, July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 5:45 p.m. Tot Shabbat Services; 6:15 p.m. Shira Service All of your favorite songs led by TBE's tot team, Cantor Hayut and Rabbi Whinston.

#### Daily Morning Blessings

Daily, 9:15 a.m. Join Rabbi Whinston each morning via Zoom for a short morning blessing.

**Daily Afternoon Blessings Mondays-Thursdays 3 p.m.** Join Cantor Hayut each afternoon via Zoom for a short afternoon blessing.

#### Weekly Lunch & Learn Virtual

Fridays, July 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 Noon Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Sessions are open to the entire community. Feel free to bring your lunch.

*Saturday Torah Study - Virtual* Saturdays, July, 4, 11, 18, 25, 8:50 a.m. Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston.

#### Women of TBE: Historical Novel Reading Group

Monday, July 12, 12:30 p.m. The WTBE Reading Group meets on the second Monday of each month, Contact Molly Lindner, burnham@umich.edu.

WTBE Cooks – Monday Meals

Mondays, July 13, 27, 3:30 p.m.

#### Adult B'nai Mitzvah Classes - Virtual

Mondays, July 6, 13, 20, 27, 6 p.m. Join Cantor Regina Hayut for either an afternoon session or an evening session for one hour. To join the class, or for more information, contact Cantor Hayut, cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org.

#### Women's Torah Study - Virtual

Mondays, July 6, 13, 20, 27, 7 p.m. An in-depth study and lively discussion of the week's Torah portion led by Cantor Regina Hayut. The group will explore various passages from the portion looking at several translations and commentaries from a variety of scholars from Talmudic times to the modern day. No Hebrew knowledge necessary to participate in the discussion. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@ templebethemeth.org.

#### WTBE Fiber Arts – Virtual

Mondays, July 6, 13, 20, 27, 7 p.m. Noontime Nosh – Virtual

Monday through Thursday, Noon

#### *Talmud Tuesdays with Rabbi Alter - Virtual* Tuesdays, July 7, 14, 21, 28 11 a.m. and 8 p.m.

Join Rabbi Alter to learn about the history of Rabbinical literature and some tremendous texts from Talmud!

*WTBE Virtual Happy Hour* Tuesday, July 7, 5:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 22, 5:30 p.m. *Adult Education with Rabbi Whinston – Virtual* Wednesdays, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 1 p.m.

Utilizing the Shalom Hartman Institute Curriculum. Together and Apart: The Future of Jewish Peoplehood.

#### Meditation with Claire Weiner – Virtual

Wednesdays, July, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 5 p.m. Join Claire Weiner for a 40-minute meditation session.

*Wednesday Evening Torah Study – Virtual* Wednesdays, July 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 7 p.m.

*Biblical Book Club with Cantor Hayut* **Thursdays, July 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 11 a.m.** For more information or questions, please contact Cantor Hayut.

#### Meditation with Linda Greene

Thursdays, March 5, 12, 19 & 26, 1 p.m., TBE Chapel Linda Greene offers brief Jewish teachings

and leads a 20-30 minute meditation time. Contact Linda Greene, lingreene@gmail.com, with questions.

#### *Shabbat Morning Torah Study – Virtual* Saturdays, July 4, 11, 18, 25 8:50 a.m.

*Saturday Shabbat Service – Virtual* Saturdays, July 4, 11, 18, 25 10 a.m.

#### Havdalah from the Whinston Home Saturdays, July 4, 11, 18, 25 7:30 p.m. Join Rabbi Whinston and his family for a short prayer marking the end of Shabbat.

*Kol Halev Rehearsal and Meeting – Virtual* Sundays, July 5, 12, 19, 26, 7 p.m. For more information or questions, please contact Cantor Hayut

*Biblical Book Club with Cantor Hayut* Sundays, July 5, 12, 19, 26, 3 p.m. For more information or questions, please contact Cantor Hayut.

#### *Teen Talk with Rabbi Alter and Rabbi Whinston* Sundays, July 5, 12, 19, 26, 7 p.m.

Join Rabbi Alter and Rabbi Whinston on Sundays at 7 p.m. for a weekly Teen Talk. This recurring event is open to grades 6-12. We ask that you choose one of the following options before each session: A) Read through different news outlets during the week and choose a current events article that sparks an emotional reaction in you; concern, fear, joy hope, etc., or B) Identify an emotion you are feeling about the world right now and find an article about that aspect of the world. Please have the article URL available to share with others.

#### WTBE Bulb Sale: Now through July 3, 2020

For all orders over \$30 and ordered before June 15, you got a special bonus: 3 Purple Sensation Allium bulbs.

# PLEASE JOIN US **WOMEN OF TEMPLE BETH EMETH** CHECKOUT OUR WEBSITE FOR VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES **WWW.WTBE.ORG**



NEW: We have fun and educational activities delivered via virtual platforms.
We provide a meaningful way to support our congregation and our community...
We offer supportive environment where every woman can delve deeper into Jewish life...
We give members a worldwide voice through our affiliation with Women of Reform Judaism.
NEW: Our newly renovated Gift Shop awaits you, until then, we are launching an online shopping soon ..... www.WTBE.ORG

# Calendar

# **July 2020**

The Calendar has been updated to reflect events that are happening only online. Always check websites or call for updates before planning to attend anything listed here. For prayer services, check congregation websites.

#### Wednesday 1

- Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m. Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion
- of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 7 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC. Online 8 p.m.

#### Thursday 2

- Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.
- Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m.
- Pirke Avot: Ethics of the Fathers: BIC. With Rabbi Dobrusin. 5 p.m.

Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m.

#### Friday 3

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon-1 p.m.

#### Saturday 4

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m. Sunday 5

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 11a.m.- noon.

- Book Group: AARC. *The Plague* by Albert Camus. Via Google Meet Contact Greg Saltzman, gsaltzman@albion.edu. 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 3 p.m.
- Teen Talks w/ Rabbi Alter & Rabbi Whinston: TBE. 7 p.m.
- Kol HaLev Rehearsals: TBE 7 p.m.

#### Monday 6

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 3:30 p.m.

- Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class: TBE. 6 p.m. Women's Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. For questions, contact Cantor Regina
- Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth org. 7–9 p.m.

#### Tuesday 7

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11a.m. and 8 p.m.

Living in the Time of Covid-19: BIC. 4 p.m. WTBE Virtual Happy Hour. 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. See first Tuesday of month.

#### Wednesday 8

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m. Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 7 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC. Online 8 p.m.

Washtenaw Jewish News 🌣 July 2020

#### Thursday 9

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

- Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m. Pirke Avot: Ethics of the Fathers: BIC. With Rabbi Dobrusin. 5 p.m.
- Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m..

#### Friday 10

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon-1 p.m. Saturday 11

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m.

#### Sunday 12

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 11 a.m.- noon. Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads

- discussion. 3 p.m. Teen Talks w/ Rabbi Alter & Rabbi Whinston:
- TBE. 7 p.m. Kol HaLev Rehearsals: TBE 7 p.m.

#### Monday 13

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 3:30 p.m. WTBE Cooks Meals. 3:30 p.m.

Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class: TBE. 6 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7–9 p.m.

#### Tuesday 14

- Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11a.m. and 8 p.m.
- Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m.

#### Wednesday 15

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

**Torah Study: TBE.** Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 7 p.m.

Theology Book Club: BIC. Online. 8 p.m.

#### Thursday 16

- Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.
- Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m.
- Pirke Avot: Ethics of the Fathers: BIC. With Rabbi Dobrusin. 5 p.m. Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m.

Friday 17

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon–1 p.m.

#### Saturday 18

**Torah Study: TBE.** Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m.

#### Sunday 19

- Zohar Virtual Study and Practice: Pardes Hannah 11 a.m.
- Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 11a.m.- noon.
- Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 3 p.m.
- Teen Talks w/ Rabbi Alter & Rabbi Whinston: TBE. 7 p.m.
- Kol HaLev Rehearsals: TBE 7 p.m. Monday 20

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 3:30 p.m. Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class: TBE. 6 p.m.

Women's Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. For questions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at can-

torhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7–9 p.m.

#### Tuesday 21

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11a.m. and 8 p.m.

Living in the Time of Covid-19: BIC. 4 p.m. Tea and Torah on Tuesday–for Women: Chabad. 8 p.m. See first Tuesday of month.

#### Wednesday 22, Rosh Chodesh Av

Rosh Chodesh Av Virtual Minyan: Pardes Hannah. 9 a.m.

- Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.
- WTBE Virtual Happy Hour. 5:30 6:30 p.m. Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion
- of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 7 p.m.
- Theology Book Club: BIC. Online 8 p.m.

## Thursday 23

Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m. Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 11 a.m.

- **Pirke Avot: Ethics of the Fathers: BIC.** With Rabbi Dobrusin. 5 p.m.
- Rosh Chodesh Av Women's Circle: Pardes Hannah. 7 p.m.
- Talmud–Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m..

#### Friday 24

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whinston meets on Fridays for an informal discussion about religion. Noon–1 p.m.

#### Saturday 25

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whinston 8:50-9:50 a.m.

#### Sunday 26

Tanya–Jewish Mysticism: Chabad. Delve into the basic text of Chassidim and discover the beauty and depth of Judaism. 11a.m.- noon.

- Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads discussion. 3 p.m.
- Teen Talks w/ Rabbi Alter & Rabbi Whinston: TBE. 7 p.m.
- Kol HaLev Rehearsals: TBE 7 p.m.

#### Monday 27

- Golf Outing for Youth Scholarships: JCC. 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin: BIC. 3:30 p.m.
- WTBE Cooks Meals. 3:30 p.m.
- Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class: TBE. 6 p.m. Women's Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. For ques-
- tions, contact Cantor Regina Hayut at cantorhayut@templebethemeth.org. 7–9 p.m. **Tuesday 28**

Talmud Tuesdays w/ Rabbi Alter: TBE. 11a.m.

Tea and Torah on Tuesday-for Women: Chabad.

Wednesday 29, erev Tisha B'Av

Meditation with Claire Weiner: TBE. 5 p.m.

Torah Study: TBE. Zoom. Weekly discussion

Theology Book Club: BIC. Online 8 p.m.

Tisha B'Av Lamentations: Pardes Hannah

Biblical Book Club: TBE. Cantor Hayut leads

Meditation with Linda Greene: TBE. Zoom. 1 p.m.

Pirke Avot: Ethics of the Fathers: BIC. With

Tisha B'Av The Arising: Pardes Hannah 5 p.m.

Lunch and Learn: TBE. Zoom. Rabbi Whin-

Tot Shabbat Service: TBE. Zoom. 5:45 p.m.

organizations frequently listed in the calendar:

cussion about religion. Noon-1 p.m.

Phone numbers, websites and addresses of

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM):

1429 Hill Street, 248-408-3269, annar-

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congrega-

734.445.1910, aarecon.org

3276, jewmich.com

narbor.org

alsociety.org

tion (AARC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive,

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC): 2000 Washt-

enaw Ave, 734-665-9897, bethisrael-aa.org

Birch Hollow Drive, 745-971-0990, jccan-

Hollow Drive, 734-975-9872, jewishcultur-

State Street, 734-769-0209, jfsannarbor.org

Jewish Federation: 2939 Birch Hollow Drive,

Pardes Hannah: 2010 Washtenaw Ave, 734-

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE): 2309 Packard

Road, 734-665-4744, templebethemeth.org

UM Hillel: 1429 Hill Street 734-769-0500,

23

Chabad House: 715 Hill Street, 734-995-

Jewish Community Center (JCC): 2935

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS): 2935 Birch

Iewish Family Services (IFS): 2245 South

734-677-0100, jewishannarbor.org

761-5324, pardeshannah.org

michiganhillel.org

ston meets on Fridays for an informal dis-

Talmud-Jewish Civil Law: Chabad. 8 p.m.

**Thursday 30,** Tisha B'Av

of the Torah portion led by Rabbi Whin-

*icsuly* 20

and 8 p.m.

ston 7 p.m.

8:30 p.m.

Friday 31

borminyan.org

discussion. 11 a.m.

Rabbi Dobrusin. 5 p.m.

8 p.m.

# Kosher Cuisine

# **The great big Jewish Food Festival**

Lonnie Susman, special to the WJN

ow do over 18,000 people around the world participate in a Great Big Jewish Food Festival? On Zoom! A brief six weeks before the 10-day festival began on May 19, a group of incredibly talented people put together an amazing menu of chefs, historians, musicians, a rabbi, and others to celebrate

Jewish food and food traditions all over the world.

With a goal of raising \$100,000 in support of small food businesses and their employees, as well as people experiencing food shortages, the free festival encouraged donations. By the

**Lonnie Sussman** aged donations. By the end of the festival, the organizers had raised over \$150.000.

You can still donate on their website at jewishfoodfest.org, where there are videos and recipes archived.

I was completely impressed by everything and everyone. Technologically, this group man-

#### **Bread of the Seven Heavens**

I've already described how mesmerizing Jawhara-Piner's one-handed kneading method was. Thinking about it is still making me smile. I've looked up other recipes for this Sephardi tradition for Shavuot, and most are similar, although shapes vary in different communities. It seems to have originated in Spain, or maybe Salonika. Many of the examples I found show a very elaborate design for the bread. The recipe below is simpler and took less than 15 minutes to make, another 30 to rise, another 30 to bake, and about five to eat. Also, I have to confess that I forgot to count, so my attempt was the Bread of the Five Heavens.

#### Dough

- $1^{1}/_{3}$  cup flour (regular, not bread flour)
- $1^{1/3}$  cup semolina flour this gives a little crunch to the dough
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  tsp salt
- 1 tbs yeast
- 1 cup lukewarm water

Mix all ingredients together and knead for about 10 minutes until all the flour is incorporated and the dough feels smooth and elastic. Stuffing

- 7¼ oz cheese like a feta or farmers' cheese
- (I guessed at the weight and used about 1 cup)
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- Garlic, mint, and thyme crushed,
- chopped, and mushed together with the cheese and olive oil. Put in the refrigerator while you make the dough.

Roll out the dough using a rolling pin or your hands (I couldn't find my rolling pin) into a rectangle "one hand wide and five hands long." I loved that description because it seems like a grandmother describing how to make this to her granddaughter. Then take the filling and put it all around the border about one to two inches from the edge. Then roll the edges over to enclose the filling. Then roll the dough into a long log-shaped form, like a jelly roll, until it is about ½ inch in diameter. I think mine was a fatter log, and it didn't seem to matter. Put olive oil on your hands and start to make a spiral with the log shaped dough. This is where I forgot to count and ended up with five rather than seven aged to connect thousands of participants from all over the world, sometimes at the same time, viewing presentations and asking questions! Considering how hard Zooming with large groups can be, the organizers wisely used one person monitoring and asking the questions that were written in the chat box.

The sessions covered many aspects of Jewish cooking that go far beyond recipes. For example, Helene Jawhara-Piner, Ph.D., demonstrated a Sephardi tradition for the holiday of Shavuot called the Bread of the Seven Heavens. She was in her kitchen in the south of France while I sat in my kitchen in the southeast of Ann Arbor. The recipe was interesting, but the story of how it came to be a tradition and how and where she learned about it were the real highlights of the presentation. As she was telling us the story, she continued kneading the bread with one hand while keeping me enraptured with her French accent, deep knowledge, and invitation into a world I want to learn more about.

Rabbi Menachem Creditor is a Scholar-in-Residence at the UJA-Federation of New York and one of the founders of Rabbis Against Gun

times around the spiral. Spread the olive oil and

sprinkle the dough with more thyme and or

mint if you choose. Heat oven to 350 degrees

and use parchment paper to line a pan. (Sure,

if you don't have parchment paper, use Pam or

oil the bottom of the pan so the bread doesn't

stick.) Push up the center of the spiral so that

you have built Mount Sinai - remember this

is a bread for Shavuot, the holiday celebrating

the giving of the Ten Commandments. (Mount

Sinai will sink a bit during the baking.) Let rise

for about 30 minutes and bake for about 30

Pizza Ebraica (Dried-Fruit- and

This recipe was demonstrated by Leah Koe-

nig, who altered it slightly from the recipe in

her cookbook, The Jewish Cookbook. This is a

tradition from the Jews of Rome. This commu-

nity dates from 200 BCE, and members view

themselves as "Italkim" (Italians) rather than

as Sephardim. The recipe makes a wonderful

shortbread-style cookie that isn't too sweet and

freezes great. It makes about 2 dozen cookies.

<sup>1</sup>/, cup dried cherries or dried apricots

<sup>2</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup unsalted butter or Earth Balance,

21/2 cups all-purpose flour (may need a bit

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and use two large,

rimmed baking sheets lined with parchment

paper. In a small bowl, combine the raisins,

cherries, and wine (grape juice) and let sit for

10 minutes. Then drain the fruit but save the

liquid. Use a standing mixer or hand mixer to

beat together the butter, sugar, vanilla, and salt

until well blended. Add half the flour and con-

tinue mixing until well blended. Then add ¼ of

the liquid and then more of the flour until ev-

erything comes together into a pliable dough. If

<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup raisins, golden or black

 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sweet wine or grape juice

1/2 cup roasted, unsalted almonds

softened

1 cup sugar

1 tsp vanilla extract

more for kneading)

1/2 tsp kosher salt

 $\frac{1}{3}$  cup pine nuts

minutes until nicely golden on top.

Nut-Studded Cookies)

Violence. His session did not offer any exotic New World or Old World recipes. Instead, he talked about "Kashrut, Social Distancing, and Discontent." What a topic for our time in guarantine! Somehow, despite the limitations of a Zoom session with over 200 people, he spoke, answered questions, and played guitar and sang. Beginning with the brief Torah commandment, "Do not cook a kid in its mother's milk," he went on to discuss traditional and modern interpretations of the verse. How did we go from cooking a baby goat in the milk of its mother, a very specific prohibition, to the general separation of milk and meat? From there he went on to briefly discuss kashrut in Jewish history and the history of kashrut certification in the U.S. Finally, he tied all these threads together with thinking about our current social distancing. Is kashrut meant to distance us from those who do not follow the laws of kashrut, whether or not they are Jewish? How do ecological, ethical, and sociological issues enter into the conversation? I am not doing justice to the breadth and depth of his presentation, but his words are still ringing in my ears. You can view it yourself on the website.

the mixture looks too dry or crumbly, add more of the liquid one tablespoon at a time until the consistency seems right. Finally, add in the dried fruits and nuts. Turn the dough out on a slightly floured surface and knead a few times until the fruits and nuts are well incorporated. Shape into a large rectangle about ½ inch thick. Use a sharp knife to cut the dough into squares or rectangles (I tried rectangles but my inability to be exact means that next time I will cut into squares). Use a spatula to transfer to the baking sheet. The cookies will bake about 20-25 minutes until they are browned. Let cool on the baking sheets and then transfer to wire racks to finish cooling.

#### **Tahini-Glazed Carrots**

One of the highlights of the Festival was a Friday afternoon session with three chefs and cookbook authors, Michael Solomonov in Philadelphia, Adeena Sussman in Tel Aviv, and Einat Admony in Brooklyn. Together, they made a Shabbat dinner. I have reviewed several of their cookbooks (*Shuk, Balaboostah*, and *Sababa*) and shared some of their recipes in other columns. Here is the recipe that Adeena Sussman made for this Shabbat dinner. It is a very easy and incredibly tasty side dish.

The dressing is great on all kinds of roasted vegetables, fish, or cold noodles. It's a beautiful dish with the different colors of carrots, but all orange is fine. Double the recipe and you won't be sorry.

- 1½ pounds of carrots peeled and trimmed. Cut into half if they are too thick.
- 2 tbs olive oil
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> tsp kosher salt, or to taste <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> tsp cumin

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees and place the carrots on a rimmed baking sheet. Drizzle on the olive oil and sprinkle on the salt and cumin. Shake the pan to coat all sides of the carrots and roast for about 25 minutes or until they have softened and look golden or roasted.

Tahini Glaze

- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup olive oil
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup pure tahini paste
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup fresh lemon juice

When I am looking for a traditional holiday or Shabbat dish that may not be familiar to those raised in an Ashkenazi food tradition home, my "go to" food writers have been Claudia Roden and Joan Nathan. The festival presented conversations with both these women that left me smiling and determined to try even more foods from around the Jewish world.

Roden was interviewed by Leah Koenig, a young food writer and cookbook author. Nathan was interviewed by Ruth Reichl. If you are not familiar with any of these women, please, please, look up their cookbooks, memoirs, and other writings. They are pioneers in bringing Jewish cooking to so many. Here's a quote from Roden: "Cuisine is the kernel of a culture" and it "helps reattach you to that place." Maybe that is why there are now so many Jewish/Kosher cookbooks on the market and a rise in the number of new chefs reimagining and reinventing traditional dishes.

Here are some of the recipes that I made during the 10-day festival. They are delicious, and the stories behind them make them treasures to keep.

3 tbs silan (date syrup) 2 tbs water, or more as needed

- 1/2 tsp fine salt
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper (optional)

Mix all ingredients together until the smooth and pourable. Add water if needed. The silan really gives this a wonderful taste, but if you don't have any, use maple syrup, honey, or agave. When carrots are ready, transfer to serving platter and drizzle with the tahini glaze. This is delicious!

#### **Jeweled Rice**

Serves 4-6 and takes about an hour to make, including the time to cook the rice.

This was another recipe that Adeena Sussman made for the Shabbat dinner. It is beautiful and full of flavors. I made it for Shabbat that same night. We finished it the next day.

- 6 tbs olive oil
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cups basmati or jasmine rice
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cup chopped dill
- $^{1}/_{3}$  cup dried cranberries or barberries (if
- you can find them)
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup chopped pistachios or other nuts
- <sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> cup toasted sliced almonds
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

In a large skillet heat 3 tablespoons of the olive oil over medium-high heat and add the onions. Stir frequently to prevent them from burning for about five minutes. Then reduce the heat to medium and continue cooking and occasionally stirring until the onions turn light golden. Reduce the heat again to medium-low, add 1/4 tsp salt, and stir. Let the onions cook until caramelized and deep golden in color, another 15-20 minutes. In a separate pan or pot, bring the rice and 21/4 cups water to a boil, then reduce the heat to low, cover, and simmer until the rice has absorbed all the water and is fluffy, about 15-17 minutes. Uncover the rice and stir in the caramelized onions, dill, dried cranberries, pistachios, almonds, and lemon zest with the remaining three tablespoons olive oil, 3/4 teaspoon salt, and pepper.

# Feature

# Looking for Rose: finding the deed

by Clare Kinberg, seventh installment in a series

wo months after my first trip to Vandalia and the Calvin Community Cemetery, when I had stood near my aunt Rose's unmarked grave, I drove the same route to the rural southwest Michigan county where she and her husband Zebedee Arnwine had made their home.

This time I went alone. In the cold and soggy first week of November, 2016, the Trump-for-President signs were posted everywhere, on rusted silos and half-painted barns. Trump country makes me uneasy. In the small town of Cassopolis, alienation crept along my skin as I tried to find the Cass County Historical Library and the Recorder of Deeds office.

I found the right office late in the afternoon, too late to do more than scratch the surface of the information stored there. Within a half-hour, though, I lay my hands on the original deed to the 25 acres of Paradise Lake waterfront that Mr. Arnwine had bought for \$5,000 in 1943. There were two other men on the deed, Lionel Glover and Leon Amico - my aunt Rose was not named. I left the office with a photo copy of the papers, a satisfying accomplishment, which assured I'd be back to search for more.

As I left Cassopolis, just after five p.m., when the November dusk sets in, I noticed two lonely but appreciated "I'm with Her" Clinton for President signs. The 2016 election would be over the following week. I might have foreseen then that Trump would take Michigan, but I didn't.

In the Spring of 2017, I make another to Vandalia, driving through spring green and freshly plowed rolling fields. Now, I descend and rise into almost familiar landscape.

This time, grain silos look new and shiny, ready for the corn that is yet to be planted. The route is comfortable, and even when the GPS loses the signal, I know when I am headed south, then west. I know where to park, and how to find my way through the labyrinth of county offices to the Recorder of Deed's small rooms, which house ledgers filled with each and every Cass County real

estate transaction from the 1800s onward.

With growing awe, and thankfulness, I find at least a dozen deeds related to Rose and Mr. Arnwine. And more, I find their divorce decree from 1957, and, with real sur-

involving Catherine Arnwine, Mr. Arnwine's mother, from as early as 1951, when she assumed the mortgage on 34 nearby acres. I realize that Mr. Arnwine and Rose were married for a full 20 years (late 1930s to late 1950s) before their acrimonious divorce, and that they'd had family close by. His mother was a part of their lives in the same year Rose's mother passed away. I find that when

Mr. Arnwine, Mr.

Amico and Mr. Glover bought the land in 1943, only they are listed on the deeds. But when they divided the land into separate parcels six years later in 1949, each is listed on the deeds with his wife. "Zebedee W. Arnwine and Rose Arnwine, husband and wife" were deeded 10.76 acres; "Lionel Glover and Jewel Glover, husband and wife" were deeded 5.38 acres; and "Leon Amico and Ivie Amico, husband and wife," were deeded 5.38 acres. I find a section of a probate document related to Rose Arnwine's will.

The legal papers are full of information, and confusing. The facts are scrambled and hard to decipher. Ownership of properties seems to be established over and over, implying that ownership was disputed. I realize I have a full trove of research to do.

In their divorce decree in 1957, Rose became full owner of the 10.76 acres on Paradise Lake, and relinquished any claim to any other property Mr. Arnwine may have owned. Over the next 20 years, Rose mort-

gaged the property, divided it, sold it. When she died in 1982, her will specified the dispensation of each plot to which she and her financial partners still held mortgage.

I find a document dated six months after her death, titled "Order Allowing Final Account and Assigning Residue of the estate of Rose Lillian Arnwine, deceased." She assigned her personal property and real estate in the amount of \$15,953.84 (a not-

insignificant sum, especially in 1982) to Margaret Davis and Ann McGee. New names to investigate, though I remember a McGee is buried in the plot next to Rose's space in the Calvin Community Cemetery. The final account was presented to the court by "Cinda Saylor, Personal Representative."

Still naive about the law of wills, I think that "personal representative" could mean personal friend, a person who knew Aunt Rose. So, I determine to track down Cinda Saylor, who, according to the internet, is 68

As the sun lowers on the horizon, I drive to the address listed on the court document from 1982, 35 years prior. After passing the house three times, I finally pull into the driveway of a large rambling colorfully painted

two-story home with a wraparound porch. Two white haired white people are sitting on the porch. As I stick my head out of the car window with no plan in mind, I shout, "I'm looking for Cinda Saylor." A woman replies, "That's me!" as the other person retreats inside.

I tumble out of the car waving a stack of Xerox copies, still yelling because I don't approach people I don't know unless invited, 'You're listed on my aunt Rose Arnwine's will from 1982 as a personal representative, and ... "

"I never met her," Cinda snaps, and then softens, "but I worked for a few lawyers back then and did things like that. I think I remember that name. Rose is such a pretty name....

Cinda walks down to my car and we start to look through the papers, which she says she likely typed up. I explain that I'm just looking to find my aunt's personal effects, things like photos, letters, small things that may have been hers. She looks at the names Margaret Davis and Ann McGee, the women Rose left her things to. Cinda has lived in the area all her life, perhaps in this same house, but she doesn't recognize these names. She fixates on placing the lawyer she worked for in 1982, trying to relate it to the date of her own marriage, when she changed jobs and worked for the county, or another lawyer, when she retired....

Finally, Cinda looks up, examines my face, and asks, "Was your aunt white or black?"

Never quick on my feet, I answer simply, 'My aunt was white and her husband was black." But my mind is working overtime with questions I don't ask. I want to know more about the texture of their lives as an interracial couple in rural southwest Michigan, yet I blow this opportunity to suss out any additional information from Cinda Saylor. "Nope. I didn't know her," she concludes before I hop back into the car and drive off.

years old and still living in the area.

# **Beth Israel Congregation July services and classes**

#### **Online Services**

Everyone is welcome to join Beth Israel for services, classes, and events, all virtual. Below is a list of the links needed to participate in services at Beth Israel. Beth Israel is now livestreaming services on the Beth Israel YouTube channel (Beth Israel Congregation AA MI). All links will also be available on the Beth Israel homepage (www.bethisrael-aa.org). Please note that passwords are used. Contact the office to get the passwords at office@bethisrael-aa.org.

#### Evening Minyan

Sunday through Thursday at 7:30 p.m. Zoom Link: https://zoom.us/j/267845102 Meeting ID: 267 845 102

#### Friday Evening Services

Friday Minchah at 5:45 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat Service at 6:00 p.m. Zoom Link: https://zoom.us/j/657949107 Meeting ID: 657 949 107

#### Shabbat Morning Services

Saturday at 9:30 a.m. Zoom Link: https://zoom.us/j/359791284 Meeting ID: 359 791 284

#### **Classes and Groups**

Talmud Study with Rabbi Dobrusin Mondays at 3:30 p.m.

Rabbi Dobrusin will be facilitating a Talmud class online on Monday afternoons from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. While we will read the Hebrew/ Aramaic text, translations are available, and all discussions will be in English. All are welcome to join regardless of the level of your familiarity with Hebrew. The section we will be studying, from the second chapter of the Tractate Bava Metzia, concerns the responsibilities of those who find a lost object. This is a particularly interesting subject to consider since it is such a common experience and one that we can all relate to. It is also a great text for those who are just beginning to explore

Talmud study, as most of the arguments are typical of Talmudic reasoning and interpretation. Please check the calendar on the Beth Israel homepage for the actual dates.

#### Living in the Times of Covid-19

Tuesday, July 7 and 21, at 4 p.m. Join Congregational social worker Rebecca Nieubuurt for a biweekly discussion on coping with the current times. Group-driven themes about living in isolation, reorganizing daily life, and remaining connected to friends and loved ones will guide our discussion.

#### Theology Book Club

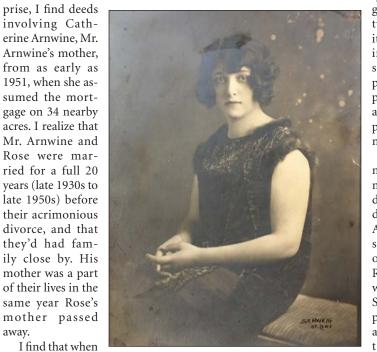
#### Wednesdays at 8 p.m.

Beth Israel Congregation's Theology Book Club welcomes you to join them to read together and discuss books about Jewish thought and beliefs. The books are in English. Contact Paul Shifrin at 248-514-7276 for more information.

#### Pirke Avot: Teachinas of the Saaes

Thursdays at 5:00 to 5:45 p.m.

Join Rabbi Dobrusin as he facilitates Zoom discussions of the classic Rabbinic text Pirke Avot. While the title is usually translated as "Teachings of the Sages," a more interesting translation is "Chapters of Fundamental Principles." Pirke Avot consists of short rabbinic statements concerning ethics, faith, and interpersonal relationships. Reading Pirke Avot helps us focus on the values and principles that guide our lives. We will study the text in English, referring occasionally to the Hebrew. The text can be found in the Shabbat morning Sim Shalom siddur. Please check the calendar on the Beth Israel homepage for the actual dates.■



# Books

## **Dear grandchildren**

Excerpts from Letters to my grandchildren: childhood stories, by Marianne Adler Aaron, preface by her children

Behold, I have lived with an entire book written within me.

Your very teaching is within the inmost parts of my being. (Psalm 40)

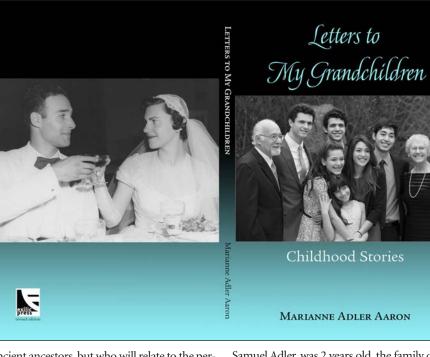
#### Preface

"Dear Grandchildren!" That is how every chapter of this book originally started, as Marianne Adler Aaron set off to record stories of her youth through email letters to her six grandchildren.

As time went on, she produced more and more letters, and the problem of preservation emerged. As wonderful a medium as it is, email does not serve very well as a permanent repository for important documents. Thus, we were presented with the problem of how to safeguard these letters not only for the youngest of the grandchildren who could not yet fully appreciate them — let alone read them on their own — but also for future generations beyond those with us today.

In honor of her 75th birthday (and revised for her 86th) we, Marianne's children, decided to convert the email letters into the chapters of this book. While books have been around since antiquity, neither the printing method (instant, on-demand printing) nor the CD structure used for this volume existed when Marianne was born. Chances are, all of these technologies will be antiquated by the time her grandchildren reach adulthood.

It is with confidence that we predict that the pages of this book will someday be leafed through by a descendant who will perhaps know the names printed here only as those of



ancient ancestors, but who will relate to the personalities and events described as the very moments in history that led to their own existence. With this in mind, we present our mother with this volume in love.

— David and Marjorie, Richard and Yuni, Jonathan and Michelle September 2005

#### 1. Let's Begin at the Beginning

Once upon a time, in a city called Mannheim, in a country called Germany, which is far across the Atlantic Ocean on the continent of Europe, there lived a man, a woman, and a little boy. When the little boy, whose name was Hans Samuel Adler, was 2 years old, the family decided that it was time to have another child.

Now in those days, people used to tell little children that in order to get a brother or sister, you had to be very good, do everything that your mom and dad asked you to do, and put a lump of sugar and a piece of chocolate on the windowsill. The sugar was for a brother and the chocolate for a sister, and since Hans didn't care which he got, he decided to put both on his windowsill. This was done in order to lure a stork (that huge bird with a large bill, like Big Bird on Sesame Street) to your window. If it liked the treat, it would eat it and go to find you a baby, which it would deliver some night while you were asleep. I'll bet that there are children in Germany today who are still being told that story. Anyway, I don't remember any of this happening, because the baby that the stork brought to this family was me, and I was told about it later by my mommy, whose name was Selma, and my daddy, whose name was Hugo Adler.

Later, I found out that the stork actually delivered me to the Hedwigsklinik — a Catholic hospital in Mannheim, where my mother was waiting for me, and that I was so beautiful — I looked just like an apricot. Now if you've ever seen an apricot—it is beautiful in color, but I'm not so sure whether I like being compared to a fuzzy piece of fruit!

Jewish boys of course receive their names at their b'rit ceremony a week after they are born. Girls in Southern Germany were named at an unusual ceremony called Hollencrache in which the baby was placed in a beautiful white basket decorated with satin ribbons, flowers, and bows, and the guests, relatives, and friends would lift this basket up high three times while they shouted, "Hollencrache, Hollencrache, wie soll das Kind heisen?" or "How shall this child be called?." My parents said, "Marianne, Marianne."

I recently tried to look up the origins of this ceremony but found little about it except that it was a very old custom that was practiced only in that region of the world. Besides this ceremony, my father also said a mishe-berach at the Shabbat service after my birth, which is a universal custom when a Jewish child is born. And so my life began with much joy and celebration, making our family of four complete.

#### Continued from page 1

them — but whenever possible, we encourage you to get these books at Black-owned book-stores.

#### For toddlers

## The Snowy Day and other Peter Books by Ezra Jack Keats

The Snowy Day was the first mainstream children's book to feature a Black main character, the lovable and delightful Peter. The book doesn't mention race and it isn't Jewish, but its iconic author, Ezra Jack Keats, was a Jewish immigrant who changed his name because of persecution. If your kids are big fans of Ezra Jack Keats, you can read them A Poem for Peter: The Story of Ezra Jack Keats and the Creation of The Snowy Day, a book all the making of this groundbreaking book.

It's Tot Shabbat! by Naomi Danis, photos by Tod Cohen

This book shows the faces of a diverse Jewish congregation, and it also tells the story of how and why Shabbat is celebrated. It's available on Kindle, so you can read it with your kids right now!

# Buen Shabat, Shabbat Shalom by Sarah Aroeste, illustrated by Ayesha L. Rubio

My toddler and I love this book about a Sephardi family celebrating Shabbat. Written by the fabulous Sarah Aroeste, the book is both musi-

cal and lovely — and a great opportunity to expose your kids to Ladino and Sephardi culture.

#### For younger children

Ezra's BIG Shabbat Question by Aviva Brown, illustrated by Anastasia Kanavaliuk

Written by Kveller contributor Aviva Brown, Ezra's BIG Shabbat Question came to be when Brown saw there weren't enough Jewish books that depicted families like hers. In this adorable book, Ezra wants to know if he can perform a certain action during Shabbat. He goes to his rabbi to get the answers but comes out with even more questions! Honestly, is there anything more Jewish than that?

#### Let's Talk About Race by Julius Lester, illustrated by Karen Barbour

Award-winning children book author Julius Lester's 2005 book stars with Lester telling us his own story: where he was born, what he loves to do, and that he is Jewish and that he is Black. ("There's something else that's a part of my story," he writes. "It's part of yours, too. That's what race we are. I'm Black. What race are you?") While the book reminds us that we are all skeletons underneath, it also urges us to inquire about the story of every person we meet, and reminds us that race is a part of that story.

The Color of Us by Karen Katz

"When my daughter was five years old in kindergarten she asked why she was a different

color than my husband and me," Karen Katz, the book's writer and illustrator says. "She is adopted from Guatemala. We talked about it. The next day I was at her school looking at all the beautiful kids in her class and I thought. These colors of kids."

#### Jalapeno Bagels by Natasha Wing, illustrated by Robert Casilla

Joey finds a way to celebrate his Mexican and Jewish heritage in quite possibly the most



kids are brown and tan and peachy they aren't just black or white. It was then I decided to do do this book as a celebration of the beautiful delicious way possible: by making jalapeno bagels. (Yum!) This beautifully illustrated book teaches some Yiddish and Spanish words, too.

"I'm finished reading about the Holocaust.... What do you think you're doing writing about Vichy? ... You're not a journalist. ... You're not even French. What chutzpah."

**Embracing Jewishness** 

t the site of a marble monument

erected in 1996 to commemorate

the Jewish families deported dur-

ing WWII from the French village of Auvillar

to the nearby Septfonds internment camp, the

writer Sandell Morse photographed the monu-

ment's inscription. Morse writes in her new

memoir that she found it difficult to believe

it took so long for these French Jews' tragedy

to be recognized. Yet she realizes that's exactly

what the Nazis counted on, "our disbelief, our

willingness to say that it never mattered, or to put it aside." As she worked on the memoir that

became The Spiral Shell, many friends told her,

Yet Morse, a former Rockette who had appeared at New York's Radio City Music Hall, elects to write about the Holocaust, resistance and collaboration, and Jewish and French identities. She learns that Anne Frank's assertion that we're all good at heart isn't necessarily true. "Ours is a world without justice. Auschwitz is proof of that." She also learns that, thanks to her travels, she's been able to find "that essential part of herself that connects her to others." And that, even so, "You don't need a personal connection to feel the horror, the injustice, the cruelty. You need empathy."

The heart of this inspiring and moving memoir is the "spiral shell" of an American woman finally embracing her Jewishness.

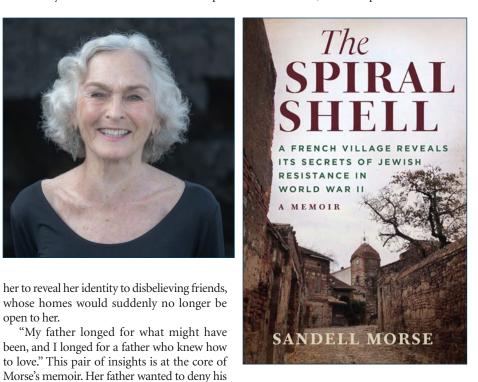
Sandell Morse's mother had raised her to "remember" she was Jewish "as a "point of pride." Her beloved grandmother, Mama, taught her to love Shabbos, the lighting of the candles, Yiddish, "chicken soup, a first cut brisket and potato kugel."

However, her father, a German Reform Jew whose family name was Hirsch, wholeheartedly committed himself to assimilation in America. He insisted Hirsch was a German, not Jewish, name, and that being a Jew was no different from being a Christian. "It's a religion, that's all."

The Spiral Shell: A French Village Reveals its Secrets of Jewish Resistance in World War II, a memoir by Sandell Morse. Reviewed by Simone Yehuda

Knowing what he said wasn't true, Morse begged him to allow her to be bat-mitzvahed. He refused. Because he insisted she look and act like Christian girls, she avoided Jewish classmates. Only antisemitic remarks would compel

Morse applies for and receives an artist's residency in Auvillar, where she begins her memoir. She acknowledges that although memory is faulty, "beyond memory there is story, human action and interaction, cause and effect, and some mysterious connection we feel but cannot name." She asks, "How is it possible to find one's



way after Auschwitz, to find one's soul?" Yet she believes that, since "community is embedded in Torah . . . we are a timely and timeless people. . .. We can choose memory over forgetfulness."

At the Rue des Hospitalières Saint Gervais, she finds a stone plaque that, roughly translated, reads, "The Germans deported 260 Jewish children from this school . . . for extermination in the Nazi camps. Do not forget." Yet she meets many people in the area who have forgotten, or who never even made the connection between

themselves and the Shoah. For example, Aline, the daughter of a new acquaintance, admits that she once looked in a book with pictures of people who looked like skeletons, piles of dead bodies, yet didn't connect herself"to this subject or those people in the book." She continues, "I didn't think I was Jewish. I didn't know what Iewish was."

Ultimately, Morse wants to claim Judaism in her own way, choosing meaningful rituals, praying or not praying. She wants her French friends to acknowledge their heritage and history, then realizes "this is what I want to do, stand tall and say to the world, 'I am a Jew.' . . . No more 'Now you see me now you don't." And she wants to learn from, rather than avoid, the consequences of her new commitment.

I can relate to Morse's story. My own maiden name is Juda. After my married last name became Press, I learned the benefits and secrets of passing. After my divorce and a return to the Hebrew form of my maiden name, Yehuda, I was looked at and treated very differently by many in my profession and community.

The memoir's conclusion takes place at Morse's adult bat-mitzvah. Readers will feel both her pride and her humility. She has achieved so much during her quest for a stronger, more secure sense of her identity. With her three granddaughters beside her at her American seaside home, family and friends sing the Shehecheyanu. "Praised are You, Spirit of the Universe, who keeps us alive, sustains us, and brings us to this moment. Amen." Guests retire to a feast. She looks up at the stars and can see that "the sea shifted. I am a Jew, a daughter of the covenant — a pinprick of light in the night sky."

#### continued from previous page

#### Hanukkah Moon by Deborah De Costa, illustrated by Gosia Mosz

This beautifully illustrated picture book explores the Hanukkah customs of Latin American Jewish families. It's told through the story of Isobel's visit with her aunt Luisa, a new immigrant from Mexico. Isobel plays with a dreidel piñata and learns about celebrating the luna nueva, the new moon that appears on Hanukkah.

Yaffa and Fatima, Shalom, Salaam by Fawzia Gilani-Williams, illustrated by Chiara Fedele

Teach your kids about coexistence with this beautiful book that depicts the relationship and religious traditions of two neighbors: Yaffa, who is Jewish, and Fatima, who is Muslim. It's a lovely way to teach your kids about Islam and loving your neighbor.

Queen of the Hanukkah Dosas by Pamela Ehrenberg, illustrated by Anjan Sarkar

This book features a multicultural Jewish and Indian family celebrating Hanukkah, and starts one curious and perky little girl! It's a delight.

#### Always an Olivia by Carolivia Herron, illustrated by Jeremy Tugeau

- and therefore her - Jewish heritage, and she

didn't feel loved by him. This personal explora-

tion was deepened during her writer's residen-

Jewish Resistance in World War II begins when

she learns that a nine-year-old boy, Jean Hirsch,

was a Resistance courier in Auvillar. "This coin-

cidence of our matching names intrigued me."

What compels her research is a single name:

Morse's desire to explore the French village's

open to her.

cies in France.

Jean Hirsch.

In this pretty children's book that's based on the author's remarkable family history, a girl's great-grandmother tells her about her the story of her family's Jewish and African American heritage.

#### Elan, Son of Two People by Heidi Smith-Hyde, illustrated by Mikela Prevost

This book tells the story of Elan, the son of a Jewish father and a Native American Pueblo mother, who undergoes both a bar mitzvah and the pueblo ceremony that takes one from childhood to manhood.

#### For Middle Readers

Stealing Home by Ellen Schwartz

In 1947, a biracial Jewish kid with a passion for baseball faces alienation in both his African American community and in the Jewish community of Brooklyn.

#### My Basmati Bat Mitzvah by Paula J. Freedman

Aside from the challenge of learning her bat-mitzvah Torah portion and dealing with the usual challenges of a girl her age, Tara (Hindi for "star") deals with how to balance her Indian and Jewish identities, as well as what it's like having a bat-mitzvah while you're questioning your faith.

#### This is Just a Test by Wendy Wan-Long Shang and Madelyn Rosenberg

David is preparing for his bar mitzvah, dealing with the drama between his Jewish grandma and his Chinese grandma, and ... building a fallout shelter? A fun story about growing up Chinese and Jewish.

#### For Young Adults

#### Little & Lion by Brandy Colbert

This is a coming-of-age story about Suzette, who is Black, Jewish, and bisexual, and her relationship with her stepbrother, Lionel, who has bipolar disorder. As Lisa Borten writes for Kveller sister site Alma: "The intersectionality and emotional honesty in this book are unmatched, and anyone looking for a realistic portrayal of mental illness and well-developed characters will enjoy this book."

#### Lucky Broken Girl by Ruth Behar

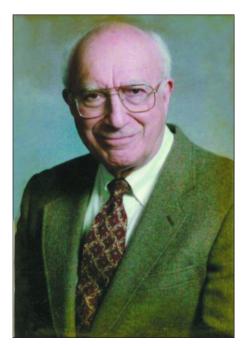
A young Cuban Jewish immigrant to America adjusts to life in New York City while dealing with the aftermath of a terrible car accident in this dramatic coming-of-age tale.

#### Color Me In by Natasha Diaz

As Emily Burack writes for Kveller sister site Alma, Color Me In "is coming-of-age story of Navaeh Levitz. Navaeh is a Black Jewish teenager whose father forces her to have a belated bat-mitzvah at age 16. Navaeh's parents are in the midst of a divorce, and the bat-mitzvah is her father's way of having her stay connected to his family. Meanwhile, Navaeh is struggling to figure out her identity, her relationship to her blackness, her privilege, a blossoming relationship, and her family. It's a compelling and timely read."

# Obituaries

**Dr. Manuel Sklar** of West Bloomfield, Michigan, passed away on June 12, shortly after his 95th birthday. He was in good health and spirits almost up until the day he died. He lived a life of unparalleled vigor and vitality.



Born on May 3, 1925, to Fannie and Sol Sklar, Manny grew up in Detroit, graduated from Central High School, and was drafted into the military in 1943, when he was 18. He served as a medic in a combat engineer unit because he had been allowed to complete one semester of college and desperately dreamed of becoming a doctor. He vividly described marching through the south of France, up into the Ardennes Forest, and facing combat in Germany in 1944. He served out the last phase of his military service with his unit in Nuremberg, following the Nuremberg Trials closely as the horrors of the Holocaust were revealed. He said often that he was the only Jewish member of his unit, but always stressed that he never experienced any antisemitism during his service and that everyone with whom he served was kind to him, the youngest man in his company.

Coming home in 1946, he earned a bachelor's degree and an M.D. from Wayne State University in under 5 years while living in a two-flat home with his parents, brother, sister, and grandparents, studying in the attic to opera and classical music, which he loved with a passion. He was especially devoted to his maternal grandfather.

In 1949, he married Harriet Latt, and they began their family in 1951, right before his medical school graduation, where he was presented with highest honors.

Dr. Sklar completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at Receiving Hospital in Detroit and continued on to the University of Chicago for his fellowship in gastroenterology, which he actively practiced until age 90. He always said he was fortunate to be able to be at U of C at the time that the new field of endoscopy was being pioneered there. Always at the top of his class in every area, Manny was asked to join his mentor, Dr. Joseph Kirsner, in his department. However, with a wife, two young children, and a third on the way, Manny chose to return home to Detroit to be close to his family. He returned to Chicago periodically for continued training in the evolving area of endoscopy, working closely with the Olympus Corporation, the Japanese company that developed scopes. Manny and Dr. Kirsner maintained a very close relationship as colleagues and friends until Dr. Kirsner died in 2012 at the age of 103.

Upon moving back to Detroit in 1956, Manny Sklar opened a medical practice that thrived. He worked with Olympus on the development of flexible endoscopes for many years and for a time was the only GI specialist in Michigan with this expertise. He was a dedicated and devoted physician who was also an outstanding diagnostician. A highly regarded teacher, Dr. Sklar was board certified in internal medicine, gastroenterology, and geriatrics and served as Chief of Gastroenterology at Sinai Hospital. He was an author and coauthor of numerous scholarly papers throughout his long career. Beloved by his many patients and highly respected by colleagues of all ages, including the many residents he taught during the latter years of his career, Manny was also known for being available to his patients 24/7 and making house calls long after house calls were considered too time consuming. Medicine was his passion, his joy, and his identity, as evidenced by his maintenance of recertification in his three specialties.

He was a Renaissance man of sorts with a lifelong love of classical music and opera. He and his wife, Harriet, were DSO members for many years and enjoyed concerts immensely.

He was also beyond devoted to the Detroit Tigers and Detroit Lions, and he never missed a home football game from 1956 through just a few years ago. We have no doubt that a Lions' Playoff appearance (let alone a victory) would have kept him going for longer. He also attended numerous Tigers' games throughout his life, and their numerous winning seasons gave him tremendous happiness and hope even during the losing ones.

Manny was also a dedicated and longtime member of Congregation Shaarey Zedek and attended Shabbat services every Saturday. He also loved his Torah study group there.

Last but not least, he was a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather to his late wife Harriet; children Susan Hurwitz (Martin), David Sklar (Julie Edgar), Melissa Sklar, Joel Sklar (Connie Cessante), and the late Elizabeth Sklar; grandchildren Ariel Hurwitz-Greene (Joseph Greene), Noah Hurwitz (Lizzy), Judith Hurwitz, Jonah Sklar, Daniel Sklar, and Lev Sklar; and great-grandchildren Nathaniel Greene, Gabriel Greene, Asher Hurwitz, and Hamilton Hurwitz. Manny is also survived by his sister Diane Blau (Larry), sister-in-law Valerie Indenbaum, devoted companion Elayne Galin, and many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his loving parents, Sol and Fannie Sklar, and wonderful brother Donald Sklar.

When one of his children would consult him about a clearly psychosomatic illness, he would say with his wry smile, "Well, nobody lives forever." Unfortunately for all of us, Manny Sklar, the energetic, brilliant man who was known for taking the stairs at Sinai, no matter how far he had to climb, and who had never been sick in his long life, proved this adage true when he left us on June 12, just a few days after a cancer diagnosis.

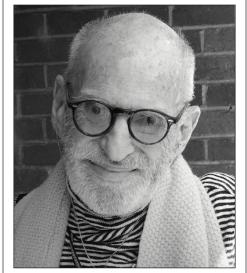
#### Larry Kramer

Larry Kramer, one of the most important figures in the history of LGBTQ activism and a writer, died on May 27.

Kramer, who wrote the semi-autobiographical play A Normal Heart, died in Manhattan of pneumonia, his husband, David Webster, confirmed to The New York Times. He was 84.

He had undergone a liver transplant after contracting liver disease and was infected with HIV, the virus that can turn into AIDS. Kramer was a cofounder of the Gay Men's

Health Crisis, now one of the biggest AIDS



service organizations in the world, but was forced out because of his outspokenness and went on to found the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power, or ACT UP, a more militant group that took to the streets to protest for more AIDS drugs research and an end to discrimination against gay men and lesbians.

His worldview was shaped by his Jewish identity, the Jewish Telegraphic Agency wrote in 2016.

"In a way, like a lot of Jewish men of Larry's generation, the Holocaust is a defining historical moment, and what happened in the early 1980s with AIDS felt, and was in fact, Holocaustal to Larry," Tony Kushner said in 2005.

Kramer and Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, crossed paths as the AIDS crisis continued to kill gay men, with Kramer calling him a killer. Fauci told *The New York Times* that Kramer spurred him to break through the slow federal bureaucracy that held up AIDS research. They later became friends, according to the report.

In March, Kramer told a Times reporter that he emailed Fauci to tell him he was sorry for how he is being treated as the public face of the efforts to combat the coronavirus.

Kramer wrote books, plays, and screenplays, many with gay themes and some autobiographical. He was a Pulitzer Prize finalist for his play The Destiny of Me, which picks up where The Normal Heart leaves off. His book Reports from the Holocaust: The Making of an AIDS Activist, is a collection of his essays on AIDS activism and LGBT civil rights

In the weeks before his death, Kramer had started to write a play in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

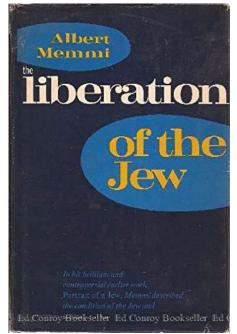
He was a graduate of Yale University and enlisted in the Army. He began working for Columbia Pictures in the early 1960s. (from JTA) **Albert Memmi** Albert Memmi, a prominent French-Jewish author who was born in Tunisia, has died in Paris. He was 99.

Memmi won recognition for his 1972 autobiographical novel The Pillar of Salt, in which he dealt with anti-Semitism and the marginalization of Jews in his native country. He also wrote influential essays about Judaism and French colonialism.

Memmi, who died May 22 of natural causes, was an ardent Zionist. He advocated for the movement as an anti-colonialist emancipation of an oppressed people in the left-wing circles he inhabited.

In 1943, he was rounded up with other young Jews by the German occupation forces and sent to a labor camp. After World War II, Memmi studied philosophy in Algeria, when it was still part of France. He continued his studies in Paris, married a non-Jewish French woman, and settled with her in Tunisia.

However, he felt marginalized amid growing nationalism and Islamist tendencies after Tunisia gained its independence in 1956, and eventually moved to France and settled there.



He was the second oldest in a poor family of 13 children that spoke Arabic at home, according to Figaro. His mother was illiterate. Memmi attended a Jewish preschool and elementary school, moving on to the Alliance network of Jewish education, where he mastered the French language.

He received a scholarship to attend the prestigious Carnot French school in Tunis. (from JTA)  $\blacksquare$ 

# Obituary

# Rabbi Norman Lamm, longtime head of Yeshiva University and prolific author, dies at 92

Uriel Heilman, originally for the Jewish Telegraphic Agency

**Norman Lamm**, the prolific author and Modern Orthodox rabbi who headed Yeshiva University for nearly three decades, died Sunday. He was 92.

As president and chancellor of Y.U., Lamm helped rescue the institution from the financial brink in the late 1970s and rebuild it in the decades that followed into the flagship institution of Modern Orthodoxy. As a pulpit rabbi at Manhattan's Jewish Center, in his writings on philosophy and Jewish law, and as leader of Y.U.'s rabbinical school, Lamm also helped articulate an unabashed ideological basis for a movement that has often struggled to define itself.

"He was both an architect of and a spokesman for Modern Orthodoxy, and using his position at Y.U. as a perch, he helped buttress that ideology in a substantial way," said Rabbi J.J. Schacter, a professor of Jewish history and Jewish thought at Y.U. "He was uncomfortable with the word 'modern,' so he invented the word 'centrist' to describe his brand of Orthodoxy — between the extremes of totally favoring contemporary culture on the one hand and totally rejecting contemporary culture on the other."

His wife, Mindella, died April 16 of CO-VID-19 at 88.

Lamm had a commanding wit and a poet's ear for the spoken word. His sermons were widely admired, and he was as quick with a pun as he was with a religious homily.

In addition to being steeped in Jewish law and literature, Lamm was well versed in history, philosophy, and science. He earned his undergraduate degree from Yeshiva College in chemistry — he was the valedictorian of the Class of '49 — and did some graduate work in chemistry at the Polytechnic Institute of Brooklyn. He also worked on a munitions research project during Israel's 1948 War of Independence under the direction of Ernst Bergmann, who later became head of the Israel Atomic Energy Commission.

Ultimately Lamm was destined for a different kind of scholarship. One of his points of pride was that he was the only student to obtain both rabbinic ordination (1951) and a doctorate in Jewish philosophy (1966) under the tutelage of Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik, the 20th-century luminary of Modern Orthodoxy, according to Lamm's son-in-law, Rabbi Mark Dratch.

"The greatest asset of his leadership was leadership through ideas — through speaking and through writing. He wasn't afraid to take a stand," said Dratch, the executive vice president of the nation's largest centrist association of Orthodox rabbis, the Rabbinical Council of America.

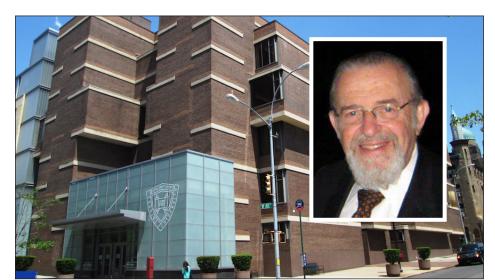
One of four children, Lamm was born in 1927 in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. His father, Samuel, had an odd assortment of jobs, including umbrella salesman and kosher inspector for New York State. His mother, the former Pearl Baumol, hailed from an illustrious rabbinic family.

Lamm's maternal grandfather, Yehoshua Baumol, was the scion of a long line of rabbis in Poland and was himself ordained at the age of 13. It was Baumol who encouraged his precocious grandson to leave Mesivta Torah Vodaath, the Brooklyn institution he attended for elementary and high school, and go to Yeshiva College in Manhattan, where Soloveitchik would become his mentor.

Lamm's first pulpit job was in Springfield, Massachusetts, at a time when when Orthodoxy was struggling for adherents. Even Lamm's own synagogue had congregants who would work on the Sabbath after going to services.

While in Springfield, Lamm founded an Orthodox scholarly journal, Tradition, that dealt with contemporary matters of Jewish law and reflected his position between ism had something relevant, thoughtful, and inspiring to say about the issues of the day."

In 1959, Lamm became the senior rabbi at The Jewish Center and a professor in Jewish philosophy at Yeshiva University, where he helped make the case for Modern Orthodoxy at a time when it wasn't at all clear that the embrace of both Orthodox observance and the modern world was possible. Lamm was the rare Orthodox rabbi who was well versed in both secular and Jewish scholar-



Rabbi Norman Lamm, inset, helped rebuild Yeshiva University into the flagship of Modern Orthodoxy during his nearly three decades as its chancellor. The school's Mendel Gottesman Library is shown. (LAMM PHOTO: YESHIVA UNIVERSITY; LIBRARY PHOTO: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS)

the Orthodox and secular worlds. Tradition mourned him on the RCA Facebook page as "a man of wisdom, scholarship, and leadership."

It was also in Springfield that Lamm honed his talents as a master orator, following in the tradition of Rabbi Joseph Lookstein of Manhattan's Kehilath Jeshurun, where Lamm had been an assistant rabbi.

By the time Lamm landed a rabbinic position at The Jewish Center, a high-profile Orthodox synagogue on the Upper West Side, his sermonizing had begun earning him wide acclaim.

"If Rabbi Lookstein was the master teacher, then Rabbi Lamm was the master student; he set the standard for his generation of Orthodox preachers," Touro College history professor Zev Eleff wrote in a 2013 essay in Jewish Action magazine.

Lamm's messages weren't just particularistic — about how Orthodox Jews should relate to God or each other — but also outward facing. He talked about how Jews should relate to the world, whether to a famine in Bangladesh or to moral codes governing other societies.

"The purpose of Torah is neither some kind of arbitrary spiritual exercise, nor the beating of man into submission in order to aggrandize the divine ego. Rather, Torah is the divine instrument for man's spiritual welfare and fulfillment," Lamm said in a 1971 sermon. "The Torah is God's formula for man's moral development. The prescriptions may be difficult, they may entail discipline and renunciation, but the purpose of Torah and commandments is the good of mankind."

A history of The Jewish Center credits Lamm with showing that "traditional Juda-

ship — and inordinately articulate when it came to both.

"He was a real model of a sophisticated Orthodoxy at a time when Orthodoxy was sorely lacking sophistication," Schacter said. "He set the bar for what an elegant sermon should be. He was a master darshan [preacher], and of course he carried that over as president of Y.U. in all the speeches he gave."

Lamm became Y.U.'s third president and its first American-born one — in 1976, succeeding Samuel Belkin, who had led the institution for 33 years. At the time, Yeshiva was teetering financially, and Lamm proved adept at appealing to donors and bolstering the school's academics. Y.U. gradually rose to become a top 100 school in university rankings.

Lamm wrote 10 books and edited or coedited more than 20 volumes. His 1999 book, The Religious Thought of Hasidism, won the National Jewish Book Award in Jewish Thought. Lamm also launched the Torah U-Madda Journal.

Beyond his well-known public positions, family members said Lamm often played a key role in Jewish communal affairs behind the scenes. When ArtScroll publisher Mesorah Publications was going through a financial rough patch, Lamm helped introduce the publisher to philanthropist Jerome Schottenstein, who ended up bankrolling ArtScroll's years-long work translating the Talmud into English.

After Lamm stepped down from Yeshiva's presidency in 2003, he proved irreplaceable. Y.U. had always been led by someone who held both the post of university president and head of its rabbinical program — an arrangement that embodied the university's dual mission of Torah U'madda, or Torah

and secular learning. But the university could not find such a candidate to succeed Lamm.

In the end, the presidency went to Richard Joel, formerly Hillel's international director and the first non-rabbi to occupy Y.U.'s top job, while Lamm stayed on as head of the rabbinical school, known by its acronym RIETS. Lamm remained head of RIETS and Y.U. chancellor for another decade.

When he finally announced his retirement in 2013 at age 85, Lamm surprised many by penning a resignation letter that included an apology for mishandling allegations of sexual abuse against faculty members at Y.U.'s affiliated high school for boys in the 1970s and '80s.

Lamm said he was aware of concerns about two staffers, one an administrator who allegedly groped students and rubbed himself against them during wrestling bouts, and the other a teacher who allegedly sexually abused and sodomized students. But Lamm handled them the way many such incidents were treated at the time: quietly and internally.

"At the time that inappropriate actions by individuals at Yeshiva were brought to my attention, I acted in a way that I thought was correct, but which now seems ill conceived. I understand better today than I did then that sometimes, when you think you are doing good, your actions do not measure up," Lamm wrote in his letter. "True character requires of me the courage to admit that, despite my best intentions then, I now recognize that I was wrong."

At the time, a \$680 million lawsuit against Y.U. by 34 former students of the boys' high school was in the works. The lawsuit was dismissed ultimately due to the expiration of the statute of limitations.

Dratch said his father-in-law was plagued by guilt over his role in failing to halt the abuse.

"That people suffered was tremendously bothersome to him, and he regretted that," Dratch said.

In his later years, Lamm faded from public life, suffering from an illness that affected memory, a family member said.

Lamm was hardly the only famous member of his family. His brother Rabbi Maurice Lamm, who died in June 2016, was the author of the how-to shiva book The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning, among other works. His sister's son, Shalom Auslander, wrote a popular 2007 memoir, Foreskin's Lament, about rejecting Orthodoxy (and his father's abuses), and also wrote and created Showtime's Happyish.

Lamm is survived by two sons, Shalom, a real estate developer involved in a controversial Hasidic development in the upstate New York village of Bloomingburg, and Joshua Lamm, a psychiatrist; and a daughter, Chaye Warburg, an occupational therapist in Teaneck, New Jersey. His daughter Sara Lamm Dratch died in 2013.

Lamm also is survived by 17 grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren.

# Crossword:Workers

#### Across

- 1. Item in a vampire movie
- 6. Small, unified group
- 11. Shtick
- 14. "Sesame Street" character who enjoys
- taking a bath 15. Companion of Gabriel and Raphael
- 16. It's north of Afr.
- 17. The sofer was frustrated with the IRS because he couldn't get a \_\_\_\_
- 19. Baton Rouge campus: Abbr.
- 20. Episode where Anakin Skywalker
- "dies"
- 21. 1,051, to Nero
- 22. Lost GI's status
- 24. One, to Jacques
- 25. The cantor no longer enjoyed the job and felt 30. "We should avoid doing that" 32. Capital of Michigan 33. "C'mon, take a bite"
- 34. Nof or HaBayit
- 35. Super-secret org.
- 36. The beit din felt the workload was
- 41. MD org.
- 44. UCLA's 'L'
- 45. Enveloping glows
- 49. Dustin Hoffman won an Oscar for it
- 52. Female
- 54. The mashgiach was losing it one day and felt\_
- 56. Date for a baby

- 57. Acidity measures, informally 58. Glass of "This American Life"
- 59. Work tables
- 60. Company with Max streaming
- 62. Due to the recession the shochet \_
- 67. Kind of iPad
- 68. Violinist Zimbalist or his actor son (with a name similar to Joseph's youngest son)
- 69. Like the November sky, to the bard
- 70. Palindromic tyke
- 71. Water falls?
  - 72. "In a strange twist..."

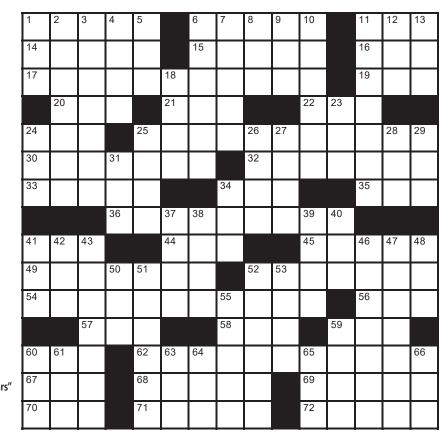
#### Down

- 1. Filming area
- 2. One can get you into shape
- 3. High or separation follower
- 4. Auckland native, informally 5. Ending for "puppet" or "profit"
- 6. Piece of chicken
- 7. "The votes \_\_\_!"
- 8. Italian G-d?
- 9. One blowing a whistle
- 10. Jenna in "Keeping the Faith"
- 11. Pig product that prevents a lot of
- candy from being kosher
- 12. Ger. neighbor 13. "Despicable Me" main character
- 18."Now \_\_\_\_ expert, but..."
- 23. Connections, so to speak
- 24. Farthest or highest, briefly

26. It can be molded 27. Storied spy Mata

25. "Golden rule" word

- 28. Netanya residents?
- 29. Org. for movie helmers
- 31. Fill a chair
- 34. Long shots: Abbr. 37. Josh (Gad's) notable role
- 38. Kukoc who briefly played
- for the Bucks 39. Archibald who briefly
- played for the Bucks
- 40. Hasidic dynasty
- 41. Path of a fly ball
- 42. Fannie or Sallie
- 43. Flight site
- 46. Lessened
- 47. "Just like always..."
- 52. JJ of "Star Trek" and "Star Wars"
- 53. Honor an honoree, say
- 55. "American Idol" alum Clay
- 59. Longest-serving senator in
- U.S. history
- 60. Kind of trick
- 61. Brief life story?
- 63. "Death \_\_\_\_ Salesman"
- 64. "... \_\_\_ quit!" (ultimatum)
- 65. Whole big thing
- 66. Give it a go



Solution on page 5



- 48. Netanya to Modi'in dir. 50. Synonym for 24-Down 51. Fellow

# Vitals

# **Simchas and Sorrows**

#### Mazel Tov

- Dr. Joseph (z"l) & Margery Adelson on the birth of their grandson, Henry (Hank) Miles Kaplan, son of Gretchen & Michael Kaplan.
- Harvey Berman and Shelly Kovacs Berman on the birth of their granddaughter, Olivia Faye Berman, daughter of Joshua Berman and Allison Tatarsky Berman.
- Karen Shill and Henry Beitz and Merton and Linda Shill on the birth of their granddaughter, Naama Yael, daughter of Jonathan (Yoni) & Leah Sholem (Shill) and sister of Eliana, Ariella, Naftali, and Talia.
- Nina and Howard Rush on the birth of their granddaughter, Isabelle Jane Rush, daughter of David Rush & Susie Sheldon Rush.
- Dave and Susan Gitterman on the Zoom wedding of their son, Adam, to Emily Fridman on May, 30th in Washington, DC.

Carol and Bob Milstein on the birth of their grandson, Julian Glenn Milstein-Mapes, born on Friday, June 12, in Chicago, Illinois, to parents Naomi Milstein and Rob Mapes.

#### Condolences

Maureen Ginsburg on the death of her father, Jack Kushinsky, June 6. Sarah and Victor Hong on the death of Selig Alpern, grandfather of Sarah Hong, Thursday, June 11 in New York City at the age of 97



Mazel tov to Jonathan (Yoni) and Leah Sholem (Shill) on the birth of their daughter, Naama Yael, to Eliana, Ariella, Naftali and Talia on the birth of their sister, and to thrilled grandparents Karen Shill (Henry Beitz) and Merton (Linda) Shill, Monday, June 1, in Passaic, NJ.

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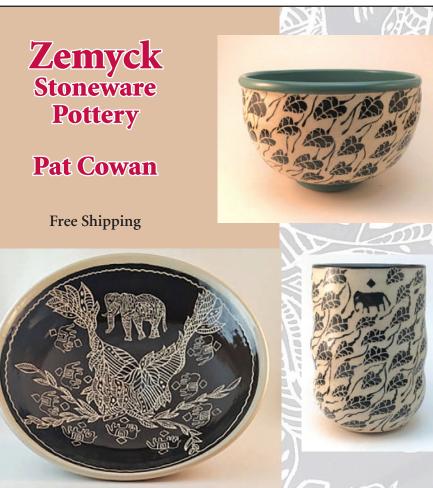
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