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Washtenaw Jewish News
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WASHTENAW JEWISH NEWS

JUNE 2024 Iyar/Sivan 5784 Volume XXIV Number 10 FREE

A highly unusual Christian-Jewish partnership

Reprinted from the Genesis of Ann Arbor newsletter (February 12, 2024) and from *The Observer* (1994) We congregants of Saint Clare's Church and Temple Beth Emeth recognize that even today we enjoy a unique arrangement. Yet today, few of us think of our partnership as all that novel, let alone visionary.

It's easy to forget how "highly unusual" our "Christian-Jewish partnership" partnership was seen by the public, even two decades after our founding. In 1994, when we were building our new sanctuary, the *Ann Arbor Observer* published this article about us, chronicling some of our rich past from the vantage point of one stop along our journey. It recalls the idealism of our "first ever in the universe" partnership, which Genesis founder Rabbi Bruce Washal described as "one act of sanity in a sea of xenophobia."

The article reveals much about our struggles along the way, about building our partnership in the context of "old and deep" tensions between Christianity and Judaism, discussed in a manner that would likely be put more delicately today, if raised at all. That this sort of discussion now seems quaint only demonstrates how far we've come and highlights how much pride we deserve to



Genesis building in 2023

take in our commitment to each other and to our vision.

Genesis of Ann Arbor

by Peter Ephross, *Ann Arbor Observer*,
September 1994 (edited for length)

With the opening of a new sanctuary this month, the city's highly unusual Christian-Jewish partnership is being renewed and expanded.

Minutes after Saturday morning services at Temple Beth Emeth, Teil Marcus goes to work. Marcus, an employee of the Packard Road congregation, closes the Ark behind wooden doors and pulls the cross from behind the wall. He moves the eternal flame to the side and takes all the chairs off the raised platform in front of the Ark. He replaces the blue-and-white Israeli flag with the red-white-and-blue flag of the Episcopal Church.

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Pro-Palestine encampment at UMich: Three perspectives

Editor's note: When I read Ann Arbor native and University of Michigan alum Jonah Shifrin's widely shared and engaging Facebook post about his experience with the encampment, I wrote to him to ask if I could publish it in the WJN. I think he speaks for a lot of people. I also wanted to hear directly from Jewish faculty and students who were part of the encampment so I solicited two additional pieces from their perspectives. I asked Alexa Eisenberg and Cameron Kaufman why they were involved in the encampments and what they have learned from them. In the week this WJN went to press, the encampment was forcibly shut down.

When my daughter and I stumbled upon an encampment

By Jonah Shifrin

My daughter looked at me with fear in her eyes and whispered, "Isn't Ann Arbor a liberal city?"

Back in my hometown of Ann Arbor for Passover, I made the mistake on Monday, April 22, of taking the family to see the University of Michigan's campus. While I expected we'd encounter some messaging about the war in Gaza, I was unprepared for an encampment that had taken over the center of the diag.

The banner that caught my daughter's attention read, "Jewish Students Say: Zionism



is Racism."

During my time on campus in the late '90s/early 2000s, I had several uncomfortable encounters where fellow students, upon learning I was Jewish, pressed me to reveal my stance on the Palestinians. When I refused to agree to a simple good vs evil narrative, they demanded to know how I could turn a blind eye to oppression.

People believing they can openly solicit your opinion on Israel is a unique feature of being Jewish. It's generally understood that it's not appropriate to ask any other member of an ethno-religious group where they stand on a conflict half a world away.

My family history is a familiar Jewish tale. Persecution, pogroms, and murder. Pre-World War II, all the branches of my family

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From the editor



The past in the present

William Faulkner wrote it in 1951, "The past is never dead. It's not even past. All of us labor in webs spun long before we were born, webs of heredity and environment, of desire and consequence, of history and eternity." And in 2008 during the campaign, Presidential candidate Barak Obama paraphrased Faulkner's words to talk about race in America, "The past isn't dead and buried. In fact, it isn't even past." In this issue of the WJN, I'm introducing a new occasional section, "The past is never past," inspired by the 50th anniversary of the Genesis collaboration between Temple Beth Emeth and St. Clare Episcopal Church. The section will have "look back" pieces, specifically about Jewish

Washtenaw, ways that our past has influenced our present. Another take on Jewish time is the reprint of Alicia Jo Rabins, "The Torah of Time," on page 16, where she looks at the "malleable chronology" in rabbinic texts.

"Time" in Jewish life is one of my favorite topics — the cycles and the spirals. I write this on the 35th day of counting the Omer. The Omer gives us opportunities for spiritual re-alignment that I really appreciate. Of course, as I count, I am thinking about the war in Gaza, and fractures in Jewish communal life that the war is revealing. For many of us, the simple equation "Judaism = Zionism and Zionism = Judaism" was and is a truism. For some Jews, this was never true, and the number for whom it is not true any longer is growing.

The important thing for me is that more and more of us are digging into where we stand, and why. Our differences are not a fracture if we are listening to each other. If we are listening and speaking with humility, then it is makhloket l'shem shamayim, "a debate/dispute for the sake of heaven." ■

JEWISH NEWS

2935 Birch Hollow Drive
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48108
(734) 395-4438
www.washtenawjewishnews.org
CKinbergwjneditor@gmail.com

Editor and Publisher
Clare Kinberg

Advertising Manager
Pat Cowan

Design and Layout
Dennis Platte


Staff Writers
Hannah Davis, Lonnie Sussman

Contributing Writers
Rena Basch, Candace Bulkley, Philissa Cramer, Emily Eisbruch, Alexis Eisenberg, Shifra Epstein, Amichay Findling, Eileen Freed, Trina Fuller, Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Deborah Meyers Greene, Noemi Herzig, Peretz Hirshbein, Cameron Kaufman, Jill Kind, Andrew Lapin, Joan Levitt, Rabbi Asher Lopatin, Alicia Jo Rabins, Murray Rosenthal, Prue Rosenthal, Jonah Shifrin, Rachel Wall, Rabbi Bruce Warshal


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Next steps for community demographic study

By Eileen Freed, CEO, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor



publicly at a community Town Hall in April. A document of highlights, plus the full 160-page report and public-use data set, are all available online at www.jewishhannarbor.org/communitystudy.

While the study itself is complete, the community's work to translate data into action is just beginning. This report is the starting point for introspection, deeper conversation, and collaborative strategic planning.

Federation Board President Decky Alexander emphasizes that the next steps are a necessary continuation of the process started by the study. "As with other communities across the U.S. who have engaged in data-driven planning, I hope that the study gives us, if not a road-map, a light on how to best engage, serve, and support each other now and in the future," she says.

According to just-released data, the Washtenaw County area Jewish community is much larger than previously thought.

Estimates from the past 20+ years had suggested the local Jewish population was approximately 8,000 Jews, in 3,000 households.

But with a population of 11,000 households, and 20,000 Jewish individuals — including 3,900 Jewish children — the unexpectedly large size of the community is one of the most significant and exciting data points in the 2022–2023 Washtenaw County Area Jewish Community Study: A Data-Driven Collaboration.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, in partnership with local Jewish communal organizations and congregations, commissioned this demographic study of Jewish Washtenaw County to provide a current portrait of the local Jewish community and give needed insight to build the most welcoming, innovative, and vibrant Jewish community possible.

The results of the study were presented

To this end, a Community Visioning and Strategic Planning Committee, chaired by Robin Pollak and Megan Bernard, has been formed. This committee brings together a diverse group of community members who will, over the course of the next year, work to develop a community strategic plan to enhance local Jewish life, using the valid data of the study as a foundation to identify communal values and goals. Members of the community who are interested in serving on the committee are encouraged to contact Eileen Freed at eileenfreed@jewishhannarbor.org.

The visioning and planning process will be conducted in partnership with volunteer leaders, community organizations, program providers, and the community writ large to explore the data collected in the study, identify new questions, and continue to learn about communal needs and desires.

To learn more about the study, visit www.jewishhannarbor.org/communitystudy or contact Eileen Freed at eileenfreed@jewishhannarbor.org. ■

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The past is never past

Genesis cont from pg. 1

Later that afternoon, Cory Allender, president of the altar guild of St. Clare's Episcopal Church, continues the transformation. Along with her husband and her mother, Allender encircles the steps to the altar with rails and long kneeling pads and puts a large prayer book and covered silver plate and goblets holding the wafers and the wine for the rectors' communion on top of white linens on the altar table. Then they put plates and pitchers for the congregation's communion on tables in the front and back of the sanctuary.

By the time worshipers arrive for the Episcopal communion service on Sunday morning, there is no hint that Jewish Sabbath services were held the day before. "We made an agreement a long time ago that when it's the church it's the church and when it's the synagogue it's the synagogue," says St. Clare's rector, the Reverend Doug Evett.

It's not unusual for a Jewish congregation — particularly one in its infancy — to rent space temporarily from a Christian church.

"The idea of sharing with a church while one of them is small and is growing and is trying to build up enough capital to move out on its own is kind of an old hallowed tradition," says Beth Emeth rabbi Bob Levy.

But the relationship between Beth Emeth and St. Clare's goes far beyond that. Since 1974, the two congregations have been legally joined in Genesis of Ann Arbor, a limited partnership that owns the building both occupy at 2301 Packard Road. Genesis is "one act of sanity in a sea of xenophobia," says Bruce Warshal, the rabbi at Beth Emeth when the partnership began.

Ann Arbor's Christian-Jewish partnership was "the first ever in the universe," says Bob Levy. Even today, it's exceedingly rare. No national organization keeps track, but estimates range from five others nationwide to none.

The relationship is not without its problems. Cory Allender recalls that St. Clare's members once left a Christmas tree up, not realizing it would bother Beth Emeth, and that the shuffling about of people waiting to set up for a 1 p.m. Jewish wedding one Sunday annoyed the church worshipers. Allender compares the relationship to "being in a family with eight or nine kids, where the younger kids say, 'How come they get to stay up late past midnight and we don't?' and the older kids look at the younger kids say, 'How come they get presents and we don't?'"

But it's a relationship both sides are committed to. This month, barring last-minute construction delays, Beth Emeth's members will celebrate Rosh Hashanah and observe Yom Kippur, the most sacred days on the Jewish calendar, in a brand-new sanctuary. It is the centerpiece of a \$3 million building project that has renewed and extended this brave ecumenical experiment.

The tensions between Christianity and Judaism are old and deep. Although the two religions share many traditions and beliefs, according to Ralph Williams, a U-M English professor and a specialist in the Bible and Christian-Jewish relations, one difference has been emphasized since

Christianity's early days: Jews do not believe in the divinity of Jesus of Nazareth. Ever since Christian theology developed the view that those who did not accept Jesus "were doing so at the peril of their own souls," says Williams, "that view has haunted Christian-Jewish relations."

Doug Evett, who came to Ann Arbor in 1972 to be St. Clare's rector, was one of those. Evett grew up in a small town in central Michigan where there were few Jews and attended an Episcopalian college in southern Tennessee. "I had almost no previous exposure to Jewish people," he says. But the contemporary highs and lows of Jewish history — the tragedy of the



1995: Construction of the current sanctuary. Bob Levy and Doug Evett oversee a partnership that's been called "one act of sanity in a sea of xenophobia."

Holocaust and the establishment of the State of Israel — profoundly affected him.

Like many activist clergy who came of age in the 1960s, Evett also had interests beyond a clergyman's traditional role. "I have a lot more interest in the Christian faith than in the Christian institution," he says. At St. Clare's, a unique set of circumstances allowed Evett to establish a local partnership that ran counter to the centuries of mistrust.

In the mid-1960s, a group of Ann Arbor Jews formed Beth Emeth (in Hebrew, "house of truth"), a congregation based around the precepts of Reform Judaism.

The new Beth Emeth met in the First Congregational Church on State at William on August 19, 1966, at the invitation of the church's minister, Terry Smith. Smith's congregants did not share his enthusiasm for the arrangement, however, and after two services Beth Emeth was looking for a new home. It turned to the First Unitarian Universalist church on Washtenaw.

An incident in 1970 brought the problems between Beth Emeth and First Unitarian to a head. A group of African American activists, members of the Black Economic Development League, began staging protests at local churches. Charles Thomas, the activists' leader, would interrupt worship services to read the Black Manifesto, a list of grievances suffered by Blacks and a demand that U.S. churches raise approximately \$500 million to buy land for Blacks in the South and to support a Black university and several Black publishing houses.

Articles in the Ann Arbor News of the time recount that after Thomas and his fellow activists interrupted services and organized sit-ins, many local churches agreed to give them money. But not Bruce Warshal, then Beth Emeth's rabbi.

Warshal, now the publisher for a chain of Jewish newspapers in South Florida, remembers that Thomas called him up on a Friday to say that he would be coming to

read the Black Manifesto at services that evening. Warshal told Thomas that there already was a speaker for that evening's services and offered him time the following week. When Thomas refused to wait, Warshal threatened him with a legal injunction. "I'm on your side, but I'm a tougher son of a bitch than you are," he recalls telling Thomas. Warshal, who had been a civil rights lawyer for CORE (the Congress of Racial Equality) "was a wonderfully aggressive guy," says Doug Evett.

Warshal followed through on his threat. According to the January 10,

1970, *Ann Arbor News*, when Thomas arrived, he was shown the preliminary injunction granted earlier that day by Circuit Court Judge Ross W. Campbell. According to the *News*, Thomas left,

saying, "I don't want to spend the night in [then-sheriff Doug] Harvey's hotel so I'll leave."

Although a few other congregations followed Warshal's example, the episode further soured relations between First Unitarian and Beth Emeth. Looking for a new home, they found what they wanted at St. Clare's.

Church services were first held on the Packard Road property in the 1940s, in a small private chapel built by an extraordinary physician, Dr. Inez Wisdom. A devout woman who had lived abroad, Wisdom decided, in the English tradition, to build a chapel at her home.

Architect Aare Lahti designed the brick "Wisdom Chapel," which is still used by St. Clare's for small services. It has stained-glass windows and a fresco on the wall behind the altar that mixes the sacred and the everyday: behind the main subject — the transfiguration of Jesus — and pictures of Peter, Elijah, and Moses, are the U-M Hospital, Wisdom's house, and the chapel itself.

Wisdom and her friends, many of them U-M faculty and their spouses, held services in the chapel whenever they could get a minister to officiate. By the early 1950s, the number attending was beginning to outgrow the small building. In 1953, Wisdom donated the chapel and the land south of the house to the Episcopal diocese. A small church, named St. Clare's, was built on the donated property in 1955. In 1965, Wisdom died and Griffith moved to Pennsylvania. The remainder of the property reverted to St. Clare's, which had grown into a sizable congregation. It had about 150 families by 1969, when the building that until this month served as its sanctuary was built for \$175,000.

In 1970, when Beth Emeth needed a new home, St. Clare's was ready.

Longtime member Judy Avery says that the spirit of the times favored such an ecumenical move. "I think it seemed possible to do some things that previously hadn't been possible to do," she says. St. Clare's, Doug Evett adds, "has never been a congregation that has understood itself in an exclusionary way."

Beginning in the summer of 1970, Beth Emeth used St. Clare's building for Friday night services, and St. Clare's used it on Sundays. From Beth Emeth's point of view, St. Clare's new, modern, brick-and-glass sanctuary was more comfortable than a traditional Christian church.

In those first few years, the rental agreement was thought of as temporary. "All the time their expectation was that they'd build their own place somewhere in town," recalls Evett. With approximately 150 families by the early 1970s, Beth Emeth was "growing to the point where we were going to have to build," recalls Bruce Warshal. But Doug Evett had other ideas.

"I was talking to Bruce Warshal right here in this office, and I said, 'Why don't you stay?'" Evett remembers. Warshal was receptive. The two had a common attitude toward spirituality, says Warshal. "We were both questers." Newspaper photos of the time show two earnest, friendly looking young men, Warshal with side-burns and Evett with lots of wavy hair.

Throughout 1974, the two congregations' boards met together. The agreement that created Genesis was signed at the end of that year, and the dedication ceremony — covered by NBC News — took place the following May.

As part of the agreement, Beth Emeth agreed to take over two small mortgages from St. Clare's and to build additional space for an educational wing. Four members from each congregation sit on the board of Genesis, which taxes the two congregations equally for the upkeep of the property. While the agreement is full of legalese, a certain idealism shines through: "Although the world has always been torn by distrust, suspicion, waste, prejudice, and the threat of economic upheaval and war, its citizens are today becoming more aware of the absolute need to trust, conserve, believe, give, and love if we and our heirs are to survive as the children of God," reads one passage.

There was some reluctance and opposition among the congregations. About 10 to 20% of Beth Emeth members, Bruce Warshal remembers, hesitated, saying "it was one thing to rent [from Christians], but it was another thing to share a building." But Warshal doesn't recall any Beth Emeth congregants quitting because of the partnership agreement.

"I lost six families," says Doug Evett. A Syrian family left immediately after the agreement was reached. They didn't mind worshipping in the same sanctuary as Jews, Evett recalls, but said their family back home would disown them if they learned of it. A few others — whom Evett dismisses as "anti-Semites who didn't know it" — also left the congregation.

Since that time, both congregations have thrived. By the early 1990s, they had grown so much that they had to decide whether to expand or abandon their

The past is never past

collaboration. For different reasons, both congregations needed more space.

Some members in both congregations resisted expansion. Many St. Clarians, including Doug Evett, who come out of what he calls “this liberal, save-the-world tradition,” had to overcome their belief “that you don’t put money into buildings if you want to save the poor. We had to make an enormous theological and psychological adjustment to the fact that we might consider investing a great deal of money into building.”

Some of Beth Emeth’s congregants hesitated, too. “When we said we were going to share this building with Christians, people



1948: Dr. Inez Wisdom at her chapel

didn’t run and want to buy a ticket. People had to struggle with it,” explains Bob Levy.

Levy and Evett agree that St. Clare’s has more of its identity invested in the relationship than Beth Emeth has. “The church sees Genesis as part of its mission. We see Genesis as part of our identity, but our mission is to serve the Jewish community of Washtenaw County,” Levy explains.

Designed by John Hilberry and Associates, the new building will eventually cost approximately \$3 million, \$1 million more than was first budgeted. (The cost is being borne proportionately according to membership, two-thirds by Beth Emeth and one-third by St. Clare’s.)

On December 31 of this year, Genesis of Ann Arbor will celebrate its 20th anniversary. What makes the relationship work? Perhaps the simplest explanation is the town itself. “There is a significant number of people in Ann Arbor who, when visitors come from somewhere else, will drive them by here in an effort to explain Ann Arbor,” says Doug Evett. “They don’t know anything about us; they don’t worship here. They come by and say, ‘This is the kind of town Ann Arbor is, where two people that historically have been at each other’s throats could live together.’”

Bob Levy, while proud of the relationship, is skeptical that Ann Arbor’s liberalism is the catalyst. He argues that the similarities between the liberal versions of the two faiths have more to do with it. Many Beth Emeth congregants, he believes, look at St. Clare’s members and think, “Except for the fact that they’re Christians, they’re like us.” The two congregations also have a similar age makeup: baby boomers in their 20s when

Genesis was formed, they are now in their 40s.

On a practical level, it helps that the two congregations have distinct boundaries. “It’s not a very sentimental thing. It’s more of a business thing,” says Evett. While many intermarried families call looking for combined Christian-Jewish services, the two congregations never worship together, save at a Thanksgiving service once a year and a joint seder in celebration of Passover.

This separation is made easier by the fact that both sides have distinct beliefs — tenets more specific than those of, say, the Unitarians. “They’re more Christian. Frankly, that’s what makes it work better,” says Linda Vanek. “They don’t have any worries about where they might stand on an issue.”

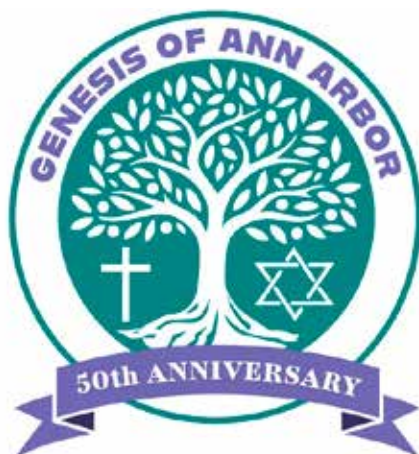
While the congregations remain distinct, some of their members have developed an unusual closeness. Linda Vanek was pleasantly surprised that people from St. Clare’s showed up at the dedication of the Ann Arbor Holocaust Memorial in March. “It was just an overwhelming feeling that they would want to be there for support,” says Vanek.

Bob Levy, who once a year gives a sermon on the New Testament at St. Clare’s, says that “at St. Clare’s if I want to say something about the tortured road that Jews and Christians have sometimes walked together, I would have no trouble saying that.”

There have been a few attempts at similar co-ownership around the country. Efforts in suburban Washington, D.C., and in Long Island haven’t gotten very far. Over the past year, two congregations in Waterloo, Ontario, that are considering joint ownership have contacted Genesis for information.

But the relationship remains rare — and relatively uncelebrated. Local representatives of both religions are supportive, say members of both congregations. But at a national Episcopalian conference in Detroit a few years ago, Doug Evett couldn’t convince anyone to drive over to Ann Arbor to take a look at his unique setup. A call to the national Reform movement in New York failed to find anyone who knew anything about joint Jewish-Christian building ownership.

It’s not surprising, says Ralph Williams, that very few if any congregations have managed to copy the Ann Arbor model. That St. Clare’s and Beth Emeth have managed it, he says, “is a tribute to both of them.” ■



Genesis wins the “Battle of the Buildings”

By Murray Rosenthal

Genesis of Ann Arbor was presented a Battle of the Buildings Award for reducing water use by 60.23% (2023 vs 2022). This award was presented to Murray Rosenthal, Chair of the Genesis Green Team, on May 8, at the Michigan Energy Summit in Grand Rapids. The United States Green Building Council (USGBC) of Michigan announced the 11 winners of this year’s Battle of the Buildings

Westminster United Church and Temple Shalom share The Cedars Worship and Community Centre.

Genesis is the nonprofit organization that is charged with maintaining the building and nurturing the relationship between the two congregations. Genesis also rents their social hall to Blue Ocean Faith, which also uses our building on Sundays. Ann Arbor Children’s House also rents space for its



Photo Credit: USGBC Michigan

contest. Genesis of Ann Arbor has won this year’s award for the “Biggest Loser” in the water savings category. The Genesis building reduced its water consumption by 60.23% in 2023 compared to 2022.

Genesis of Ann Arbor is a unique and equal partnership between St. Clare’s Episcopal Church and Temple Beth Emeth. This partnership started 50 years ago. The idea is that the Church uses the building on Sunday and the Temple uses it on Friday evening and Saturday.

There are well over 100,000 buildings in Michigan, and the Genesis building had the biggest loss of water use of all of them. Other awardees included Ford Field, the Huntington Center (the old Cobo Hall) and a building at the University of Michigan Bell Tower, which reduced greenhouse gas emissions. Genesis is not just a building. Genesis represents a special relationship between an Episcopal Church and a Reform Jewish Congregation. Reducing water consumption is good for the environment and improves sustainability, which supports values shared by both congregations.

Other than Genesis of Ann Arbor, there are a few other examples of equal partnerships between two or more diverse congregations in North America. Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church has a remarkable partnership with the Bethesda Jewish Congregation (BJC), as they share the same building in Bethesda, Maryland. Omaha, Nebraska, has a campus that has a synagogue, mosque and church. There is also an interfaith campus in Derry, Connecticut. And in Waterloo, Ontario,

Montessori School. Four institutions, which share the same building, save energy, as the baseline energy use is one-fourth that of having four separate buildings.

Genesis started its water-savings project during the pandemic in early 2022. The Genesis Green Team has continued to institute water-savings efforts and is still actively pursuing both energy and water savings. The Genesis Board has encouraged water savings and approved leaky faucet replacements. One of the faucets was replaced by a volunteer congregant (yours truly). When obsolete, toilets have been replaced with dual-flush options.

An environmentally conscious congregant, Ralph Katz, used his plumbing knowledge and acumen to circumnavigate all the bathrooms in the Genesis building and adjusted flush volumes down and fixed leaking toilets. This was likely one of the major contributions to our water savings.

Genesis also was presented with an E2P2 Award from Washtenaw County in October 2023 for Waste Reduction and Recycling.

Genesis is not only a leader in recycling, composting, and water savings; we have also taken huge steps in reducing our carbon footprint since the beginning of the pandemic. There is a 160 panel solar installation on two of the roofs of the building. An investor model was used to purchase the panels, which went live in February 2020. Genesis has also created a decarbonization plan that that is currently being executed. ■

The past is never past

My recollections of Genesis' beginnings

By Rabbi Bruce Warshal

If you are reading this, you may know that Clare Kinberg is the publisher and editor of the *Washtenaw Jewish News*. Clare reached out to me to reflect on the origin of Genesis of Ann Arbor on this 50th anniversary of its founding. As I was the first rabbi of Temple Beth Emeth, I do have some history to contribute. Clare sent me a reprint of the history of Genesis published for its 20th anniversary in 1994 in the *Ann Arbor Observer*, which was distributed in the Genesis newsletter. I will refer to that in a moment.

My relationship with Temple Beth Emeth began in the summer of 1968. The Temple, which was founded and run by lay leadership a few years before, had grown to 60 families but was not financially ready to hire a full-time rabbi. I became its student rabbi and travelled from Cincinnati to Ann Arbor on a biweekly basis. Upon my ordination in June of 1969, I moved to Ann Arbor and assumed the position as "spiritual leader" of the Temple. (I don't like that description. As the Hebrew word "rabbi" translates as "teacher," I would say I became the head teacher of the congregation.)

It was during that first year of 1969 that, according to my recollection, the Temple moved from the Unitarian Church to Saint Clare's. We were warmly accepted as their tenants. Most important, Doug Evett became rector of Saint Clare's in 1972. That was a blessing for their congregation and for me personally. Doug and I became close colleagues. He was a social action minister, and I was a social action rabbi. We shared the same ethical beliefs but expressed them through our own traditions. I felt closer to Doug than to many of my fellow rabbis.

There was a long hall in the middle of which a secretary would sit at a desk. Doug's office was at one end and mine at the other. There were two phones on the secretary/receptionist's desk. At any one moment you could hear her answer "Temple Beth Emeth" or "Saint Clare's Episcopal Church." It was a good symbiotic relationship between the two congregations on a lay level as well. Saint Clare's and Temple Beth Emeth both practiced a liberal form of their respective religions. The majority of members in both congregations were academics from the University of Michigan.

However, by 1974, the Temple had grown to almost 200 families and there was a feeling that we should discuss the possibility of looking for a physical presence of our own, a traditional freestanding synagogue building. At that moment Doug turned to me and said, "Why don't you stay?" Let history record that the originator of the idea of co-owning a religious structure between Jews and Christians (a revolutionary idea at that time, and maybe even now) was the brainchild of Doug Evett. When Doug died from cancer at the young age of 74, his obituary noted that "he felt that his greatest accomplishment during his 28-year tenure at St. Clare's was the creation of Genesis of Ann Arbor."

We immediately took this idea to our respective lay leadership. I am proud of having played a part in making that an eventuality, but I take no credit for having initiated the concept, nor bringing it to fruition. I fully supported it, but lay leadership made it happen. There was a year of gestation and

xenophobia."

As a footnote, I believe there is one historical error in the Ann Arbor Observer article written for the 20th anniversary of Genesis. Linda Vanek, Paul's wife, who was a leader in her own right as well as being the



1975: Bob Creal, Ann Arbor Mayor Albert Wheeler, Rabbi Bruce Warshal, Rev. Douglas Evett in front of the Genesis sanctuary facing Packard Road

presenting it to our respective congregations. After much discussion and contemplation on both sides, it was almost unanimously approved by the members of the Temple and Saint Clare's. Genesis of Ann Arbor became a legal entity in the early summer of 1975. (I confess to forgetting the exact date.)

I cannot overstate the excellence of the lay leadership that founded Beth Emeth a few years before my arrival, and those with whom I interacted during my seven years serving as rabbi. The list would be extensive, but in particular I want to mention two presidents with whom I served. The first was Paul Vanek. He was a Canadian who practiced dentistry in Ann Arbor and eventually returned to Toronto to open a fine arts gallery. The second was Allyn Kantor, who practiced law and who led Beth Emeth with a steady hand. A rabbi needs a strong presidential partner, and I was fortunate to have both of these leaders as I began my rabbinic career. (I apologize to those I left out and are still alive to read this.)

Getting back to the summer of 1975 ... A legal contract to establish joint ownership requires a plethora of legalese, but the following paragraph is included in the birth certificate of Genesis: "Although the world has always been torn by distrust, suspicion, waste, prejudice, and the threat of economic upheaval and war, its citizens are today becoming more aware of the absolute need to trust, conserve, believe, give, and love if we and our heirs are to survive as children of God." Today, I say Amen. At the time I was quoted as saying the birth of Genesis of Ann Arbor was "one act of sanity in a sea of

part-time school principal of our religious school, remembered that the move from the Unitarian Church to Saint Clare's occurred in 1970, and she attributed the "Charles Thomas incident" to one of the reasons that the Unitarians asked us to leave. My memory is that we moved to Saint Clare's in mid-1969, at least six months before the Charles Thomas incident, which was covered by the *Ann Arbor News*. Either way, the story is worth telling in that it reflects the tumultuous communal and political life in Ann Arbor in the late '60s and early '70s.

Before discussing the actual Charles Thomas incident, I must recount my background in the civil rights movement. While still in law school in 1961, my wife and I sat-in in the south. After graduation, I practiced law in Cleveland, Ohio, where I served as vice president of the local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), the leftist, cutting edge of the civil rights movement. (I am amused to think that we thought that the Rev. Martin Luther King was an Uncle Tom. Nevertheless, one of the highlights of my life was being at the March on Washington on August 28, 1963, when Dr. King delivered his "I have a Dream" speech.) We in CORE made lots of "good trouble," in the words of the legendary John Lewis. Everything we did was shadowed by the Cleveland Police Anti-Subversive Squad. Remember that J. Edgar Hoover believed that King was a communist, and we were looked upon in the same way.

Now back to Charles Thomas, who was

doing his own "good trouble" in Ann Arbor. Thomas, who was a member of the Black Economic Development League, would with very short notice interrupt church services to read the Black Manifesto that demanded that the church community raise money for what today we call restitution, supporting Black universities, Black publishing houses, etc. It highlighted a need and was creative activism.

And then came our turn at Temple Beth Emeth! As reported by the *Ann Arbor News*, on January 10, 1970, on the previous Friday Thomas called me in the morning to tell me in no uncertain terms that he would invade our services that evening. That was unacceptable to me since I had scheduled an important guest speaker for that evening. (55 years later, I have no recollection who he was.) I do remember clearly that I told him I would gladly invite him to my pulpit on next Friday evening's Kabbalat Shabbat service. Thomas refused my offer and responded that whether I liked it or not he was coming. (He was a good activist!)

At that point, I answered, "I'm on your side, but I'm a tougher son of a bitch than you are." In the Ann Arbor Observer article, in reflection on this whole affair, Doug Evett commented that I "was a wonderfully aggressive guy." I guess I was. Hey, I paid my dues. I had my life threatened a couple of times during my involvement in the civil rights movement. I never flinched, and by nature I don't like being pushed around. Dignity was very important to me. I told Charles that if he attempted to interrupt our services, there would be an injunction facing him. This did not stop him. With the help of Allyn Kantor, we obtained a preliminary injunction that afternoon. When Thomas arrived, he abruptly left, saying, "I don't want to spend the night in (then-sheriff Doug) Harvey's hotel so I'll leave." (As quoted in the Observer article)

Charles never accepted my offer for the following Shabbat. That was the end of the affair, and Temple Beth Emeth remained a bastion of liberal thought and action at a time of quickly changing mores and political upheaval in the general life of Ann Arbor. The year that I began serving the Temple (1969) marked the Tet Offensive in Vietnam; the year that I concluded my service (1975) witnessed a Marxist student-led party holding the balance of power on City Council. Amidst it all, the Temple grew from 60 families to 200 in those six years. I am told that it is now the largest Jewish congregation in Washtenaw County. I was fortunate to be around during its infancy. I send my congratulations on your impending 50th anniversary of Genesis of Ann Arbor. ■

*Bruce Warshal's recent book, **Schlepping Through Life Without a Road Map: One Liberal Rabbi's Attempt to Make Sense of Life — God, Prayer, Ethics, Evil, and All That Stuff** — in Plain English, is available on Amazon.*

Community

TBE events in June

Events and services are both in person and/or virtual. Please see www.templebethemeth.org for full details, location information, and links.

Wine & Cheese Shabbat Reception
Fridays at 6 p.m.

Shabbat Service
Fridays at 6:30 p.m.

Saturday Shabbat service
Saturdays at 10 a.m.

Weekday morning blessings
Weekdays at 9:15 a.m.
Join Rabbi Whinston each weekday morning for a short service of song, poetry, and meditation.

Twenty-five-minute mindfulness with Jewish spiritual director Linda Greene
Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.
Zoom room opens at 8:15 a.m. for optional check-in. Blessing and intention setting 8:30–8:35 a.m. Meditate 8:35–9 a.m. Start your day centered and connected.

Queer Torah Study
Tuesdays at 7 p.m.
Join us in person or via Zoom for a discussion of queer themes in the weekly Torah portion! Led by Ari Marcotte & Ari Smith. Guest leaders welcome! Contact Ari M (ari.j.marcotte@gmail.com) for more information.

Cantor's (Jewish) Book Club with Cantor Hayut
Thursdays at 11 a.m.
Join Cantor Hayut to read and discuss books of Jewish interest a few chapters at a time. This year, the book group will be reading primarily, although not exclusively, works by Israeli authors. For more information or questions, please contact Cantor Hayut.

Back Door Food Pantry
Thursdays, 4 to 7 p.m.

Meditation with Claire Weiner
Thursdays at 5 p.m.
Join Claire Weiner for a 40-minute meditation session.

Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Whinston
Fridays at 12 p.m.
Bring your lunch and learn with Rabbi Whinston during this informal and social gathering. We explore different ideas throughout the year with participants guiding our subjects.

Shabbat morning Torah study
Saturdays at 8:50 a.m.
Join us for this weekly discussion of the Torah portion.

Women's Rosh Chodesh Circle
Tuesday, June 6 at 5:30 p.m.
In the TBE Chapel and available via Zoom.

Renaissance Road Rally
Sunday, June 9 at 3 p.m.
Come join fellow Renaissance members (anyone 50-ish or older) for a road rally with a twist. Invite your friends to join your team of 4 (or fewer) as you travel around the Ann Arbor area stopping to work together on solving various types of puzzles and engage in creative thinking. Registration required.

Ann Arbor Community Tikkun Leil Shavuot
Tuesday, June 11 at 7 p.m.

Bereavement Group
Tuesday, June 18 at 4 p.m.
The group will have opportunities to share openly about their process of grieving and will also have topic-based readings to spark discussion.

LGBTQ Shabbat Potluck
Friday, June 21 at 6 p.m.
Join us for a Shabbat dinner and candle lighting with members of the local queer community! Bring a dish to share with others, make new friends, and let us know what you'd like to see in future queer programming!

Jerry Herman (z"l) at JCC's Amster Gallery

The Ann Arbor JCC's Amster Gallery is pleased to present a collection of works by Jerry Herman (z"l). Starting on June 3, the JCC will showcase his pieces, with a reception taking place at the JCC on Thursday, June 20, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

Jerry Herman was a longtime Ann Arbor resident, having come here for graduate school in the late 1960s. He devoted much of his free time to exploring his love of nature, taking part in many hikes around Ann Arbor. Retiring from dentistry in 2015, Jerry was able to devote more time to being in nature.

Shortly after retirement, a series of strokes made it difficult for him to engage at his former level of involvement. It was then that Jerry revisited his interest in art, as he had always admired the artists in his family. He became a student of almost every

available art class at Washtenaw Community College, experimenting with a variety of mediums including watercolor and acrylic on canvas. Much of Jerry's artwork reflected his love of nature.

When Jerry was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in February 2021, he continued to create, almost until his death two months later. This exhibit is to honor the memory of Jerry and his passion for creating works of art. In addition, it is a thank you to Jerry's wonderful teachers and classmates from his art classes, for their kindness, encouragement, and support. Art truly became Jerry's passion, and it helped him as he dealt with the challenges he faced towards the end of his life.

Jerry's artwork will be up at the JCC until July 18, and proceeds will go to Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw County. We hope you will join us for his exhibit on June 20. ■

ECC bids farewell to Susan Horowitz

By Peretz Hirshbein, JCC Director of Child and Family Services

It is with both great sadness and great pride that the Jewish Community Center shares the news that Susan Horowitz, the JCC Early Childhood Center's beloved Assistant Director, will be leaving the JCC in order to accept the position of Director of Education at Temple Beth Emeth. The JCC is incredibly grateful for Susan's long years of dedicated service to the center and the families of the community.

Susan Horowitz joined the staff of the ECC 18 years ago as a recent U of M grad interested in the world of Early Childhood Jewish Education. She quickly got to know the field and became an expert in the education and care of infants and toddlers. When the program went through a multi-year process of moving to the highly regarded HighScope approach to early childhood education, Susan led the effort to implement the curriculum in the ECC's Infant/Toddler program. This was Susan's first experience with early childhood leadership, leading to her later promotion to Assistant Director. As the ECC's Assistant Director, she had an impact on every aspect of the program, from leading professional development workshops, coaching staff, supporting parents, serving as our ECC administrator during the first year of the pandemic, and

being an invaluable partner in developing the ongoing vision for the program. She has left an indelible mark on the ECC and the entire JCC.



The JCC has been so fortunate to have had Susan on its staff for the last 18 years, and her colleagues wish her the best of luck as she starts her new role at TBE. ■

Ann Arbor ORT celebrates 40th

By Joan Levitt, ORT Ann Arbor President

The Ann Arbor Chapter of ORT America will celebrate its 40th Anniversary on Monday, June 24. Current and past members of ORT Ann Arbor and their significant others, as well as prospective members, are invited to join this festive occasion. The dinner will also honor the chapter's generous donors who contributed to ORT in 2023.

Amos Gofer, CEO of ORT's Kfar Silver Youth Village in southern Israel, will be the special guest speaker. Kfar Silver is located only eight miles from Israel's border with Gaza. Due to its proximity to the border, Kfar Silver students were evacuated during the Hamas invasion on October 7, when Gofer and his fellow staff members acted quickly and decisively, transporting the students to safety. Kfar Silver has thankfully reopened, and Gofer will speak about the current situation and challenges at Kfar Silver as well as similar places near the border.

ORT is a global educational network driven by Jewish values and innovation, preparing people and communities for meaningful, self-sufficient futures. For more than 140 years, World ORT has offered access to educational programs in under-resourced communities.

The current Ann Arbor Chapter was formed in 1984 and is dedicated to ORT's mission of transforming lives throughout the world. Some of the founding members from 1984 are still very active. Each year the Chapter organizes an opening event in the fall and a spring donor dinner in June. In addition to having interesting speakers, the fall events feature foods from ORT schools around the world. In 2001, the

chapter started a book group, focused on books with Jewish themes and/or authors, that continues to the present. There is also a Zoom movie group, which became very robust during COVID and also continues.



With dedicated members, the chapter has successfully met its fundraising goals each year to support the ORT schools and programs in 40 countries around the world, benefiting a diverse student population. Most importantly, chapter members have formed lifelong friendships with each other!

The Board members of ORT Ann Arbor have been busy collecting memorabilia from the chapter's 40 years. There will be a slideshow and displays that will bring back many memories for people associated with the chapter throughout the years. So please join the celebration!

The cost for the dinner is \$40 per person, and rides to the dinner will be available to those who need them. For more information, please send questions to ortannarbor40@gmail.com by June 12. ■

Beth Israel June events

Everyone is welcome to join Beth Israel for services, classes, and events. Services are being held in person and virtually, unless otherwise noted on the calendar. Below is a list of the links to participate virtually in services at Beth Israel. Beth Israel is now live streaming services on the Beth Israel YouTube channel (Beth Israel Congregation AA MI). All links are also 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.

Shavuot at Beth Israel Congregation

Tuesday, June 11, 8:30 p.m.

Community Tikkun Leil Shavuot at Temple Beth Emeth

Beth Israel is pleased to join the Community Tikkun Leil Shavuot, held at Temple Beth Emeth this year. All are welcome to attend one-hour sessions on a variety of Jewish topics, led by members of Ann Arbor congregations. Kosher refreshments will be served. Registration on TBE website.

Wednesday, June 12, 9:30 a.m.

Shavuot Morning Service

Thursday, June 13, 9:30 a.m.

Shavuot Morning Service with Yizkor
Both morning services will be held in-person and streamed live via Zoom.

Camp Style Shabbat Dinner and Service

Friday, June 14, 5:45 p.m.

Join us for a family-friendly dinner for all sponsored by the Gorodetsky and Schweitzer Family. Come enjoy a pasta bar dinner at 5:45 p.m. followed by the Friday evening service at 6:15 p.m. featuring Rav Nadav on the bimah and Rachel Lawrence-Lupton on guitar. Cap the night off with dessert after services. All are welcome to this free event. Please register on the Beth Israel website (bethisrael-aa.org).

Tot Shabbat

Saturday, June 8 and 22, 10:30 a.m.

Tot Shabbat is held downstairs in the BIRS library. Ages six and under, and their grown-up, can sing

songs, play games, and have kids' kiddush.

Kid's Service

Saturday, June 15, 10:30 a.m.

A simpler Shabbat morning service for children, with a Dvar and Discussion in place of the regular Torah service. Held in the M & M Chapel. Contact Ben Brent at benb@bethisrael-aa.org for more information.

Babysitting at Beth Israel

Saturday, June 1, 8, and 22, 9:30 a.m.

Babysitting is now available on the same days as Tot Shabbat and B'nei Mitzvot. Babysitting is no longer available on other Saturdays. If you are interested in registering for babysitting, please email Barbm@bethisrael-aa.org.

Chodesh Chadash: A BIC Women's Group

Sunday, June 23, 6:30 p.m.

An open women's social group for members of all ages. We will chat, connect, and learn! Join us for this fun opportunity to get to know each other! Email Barb (barbm@bethisrael-aa.org) with questions.

Aura of Kabbalat Shabbat

Friday, June 28, 6 p.m.

A Jewish Renewal-inspired singing service led by Rabbi Aura Ahuvia. The choir, dubbed the "Holy Levites," will be holding a rehearsal at 5:30 p.m. leading right up to and seamlessly into services. All are welcome to attend.

Theology Book Club — Online

Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m.

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

In Person and Online Services

Evening Minyan

Sundays at 7 p.m. (in person in M&M Chapel and virtual)

Mondays–Thursdays at 7 p.m.

Friday Evening Services — in person and virtual

Kabbalat Shabbat Service at 6 p.m.

Shabbat Morning Services — in person and virtual

Saturdays at 9:30 a.m. ■

Frankel Fellows theme year: Jewish/Queer/Trans

In the upcoming academic year, the Frankel Institute for Advanced Judaic Studies will focus on the theme of "Jewish/Queer/Trans," under the leadership of head fellow Bryan Roby, University of Michigan.

In this theme year, we aim to explore in the broadest possible ways how queer/trans studies intersect with studies of Jews, Jewishness, Judaism, and indeed

Chimeric Liberation in U.S. Passing Films"

Marce Butierrez, National Archive of Remembrance, Argentina, "The Lost Feygele Files: Repairing Queer and Trans Jewish Legajos"

Jessie DeGrado, University of Michigan, "Their Way is Queer': Religion as Gender Transgression in Ancient West Asia"



Jewish Studies itself, from the full range of humanistic, artistic, activist, and social science perspectives. We have assembled a group of scholars, writers, and artists that will allow us to explore this set of fundamental issues across the temporal gamut of ancient to present and in Middle Eastern, African, Asian, European, and American societal contexts.

The Fellows will consider the ways in which Jewish Studies might thicken queer and trans studies. At the same time, we wish to inquire into how queer and trans studies might aid the interrogation of foundational categories deployed in Jewish Studies. In doing so, we seek to challenge social hierarchies, notions of sacred/profane, religious conceptions, political movements and structures, knowledge paradigms, and communal boundaries — all key elements in the history of studies of Jews and Judaism. That is, how can insights from queer and trans studies enrich and complicate our understanding of the dispersed, diverse, and shifting histories of Jewish sexual cultures and gender systems, as well as social, cultural, and racialized formations of Jewishness more broadly? We are particularly interested in approaches that create dialogue among the sub-fields of Jewish Studies: queer and trans studies that go beyond merely applying theoretical models to Jewish Studies. The 2024–2025 Frankel fellows and their fields of research are:

Rafael Balling, University of Washington, "A Story of Their Own: 20th-Century Jewish Trans Narratives in German and Yiddish"

Jonathan Branfman, Stanford University, "Passing Fancies: Jewish Specters and

Gil Engelstein, Northwestern University, "Split at the Root: The Jewish Question of Gay Liberation, 1970–1990"

Sheer Ganor, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, "A Place to Misfit Into: Valeska Gert's Beggar Bar"

Anna Hajkova, University of Warwick, "Quartet: Story of Survival"

LaurieMarhoefer, University of Washington, "Transgender People and the Nazi State"

Golan Moskowitz, Tulane University, "Jews and Drag: An American Cultural History, 1900–2020"

Rafe Neis, University of Michigan, "Multiplicity: Jewishness and Gender in Late Ancient West Asia"

Iris Rachamimov, Tel Aviv University, "Coccinellim: The Trans Community and the Transformations of the Israeli Gender Order in the 1970s and 1980s"

Sivan Rajuan Shtang, Brandeis University, U.S.; Sapir Academic College and Shenkar Academic College, Israel, "Queer Feminist Mizrahi Art"

Bryan Roby, University of Michigan, "Queer Jewish Futurities in Afro-Asian Israeli Poetry"

Adi Saleem, University of Michigan, "Jews, Muslims, and the Coloniality of Gender and Sexuality"

Simone Stirner, Vanderbilt University, "Give Us Our Roses: Queer Memory after National Socialism"

Max Strassfeld, University of Arizona, "Disciplining Life: The Life Cycle in Rabbinic Literature"

Oren Yirmiya, University of California, Berkeley, "Beyond the 'Hoo/Hee' Binary: Studies in Third-Sex, Nonbinary, and Gender-Fluid Hebrew Literature" ■

Refugee resettlement: Survival of joy

By Deborah Meyers Greene

After school, the three boys, ages 14, 11, and 9, ride their bikes — royal blue, black, and light blue, respectively — up and down the drive and around their apartment complex. Their laughter is contagious, energy enviable, and bond undeniable. Knowing the children's story, one might wonder how their joy survived refugee status for most or even all of their lives. Meeting the parents, you recognize how the power of their love and strength of will have carried the family through.

JCOR provided the boys' bikes and now is arranging ESL and other programs for summer vacation. JCOR volunteers help Mom and Dad connect with the children's teachers, arrange family health care appointments, and secure transportation for them. JCOR volunteers also give the parents private weekly ESL lessons and help them identify potential employers. Soon, the parents will begin driving lessons, another critical step toward independence.

The support of our community makes possible all this and more. Special

acknowledgement is due to the Brinery of Ann Arbor and to the Zelma Weisfeld Fund for Culture and Education of the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor for their support of the Joys of Klezmer Concert, JCOR's second annual fundraising concert.

Kudos also go to the amazing klezmer pros who provided the day's talent: the highly spirited Schmaltz, Klezmer R&D, and Neil Alexander of the Klezmer Fusion Band. Together, they provided a glorious afternoon of toe tapping, hand clapping, and a little dancing, all in support of JCOR's service to newly arrived refugee families.

Jewish Congregations Organized for Resettlement (JCOR) is an all-volunteer collaboration among six Ann Arbor area congregations: Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan, Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation, Beth Israel Congregation, Jewish Cultural Society, Pardes Hannah, and Temple Beth Emeth, who work in partnership with Jewish Family Services to help newly arrived refugees begin their lives in the Ann Arbor area. ■

New York klezmer legend Frank London is gearing up to fight for his life. But first, one more show.

Philissa Cramer, originally for the JTA

It was the eve of one of the biggest days of his life, but Frank London was trying to stay in the moment.

The klezmer music legend had convened an all-star lineup of Jewish musicians at a synagogue in suburban New York City, and the group was preparing to tackle an intimidating feat: They would be recording seven new songs — ones that London hoped would become contemporary classics of Jewish liturgy — without ever having played together before.

Ordinarily, a project of this magnitude would involve numerous rehearsals ahead of time. Certainly, an effort would be made

to have the music and words nailed down in advance. But London and his collaborators didn't have that kind of time: London's oncologist had ordered him to report to the hospital to start a grueling regimen of medical treatments meant to cure the cancer that had exploded in his blood.

"Hopefully, hopefully, hopefully, it'll work. Hopefully it will cure me," London, 66, said on Wednesday evening. "But it's going to be a very unpleasant next phase of my life."

The six months of planned treatment, which will include a bone marrow transplant, will mark the longest hiatus in London's storied career as a composer, per-

former and convener of Jewish music. The urgency of his doctor's orders means he'll miss a career-retrospective concert taking place June 3 in Brooklyn. London already knew that he would be unable to curate this year's Yiddish New York festival in December and would have to scrap plans for a concert featuring his new music this fall at Beth El Synagogue Center in New Rochelle.

So London and his collaborators instead decided to film a video featuring the new music, seven compositions using the traditional Jewish psalms for the days of the week, meant to be sung on the fall holiday of Simchat Torah when congregations circle their sanctuaries seven times while dancing with Torah scrolls.

"Sometimes I can get pretty out there," London said. "But for this particular thing, I really worked hard, with their help, to write really singable, really traditional-sounding melodies."

Though the evening came together quickly, the project was actually years in the making. Jack Klebanow, who runs Beth El's Shoreside Hahav Center for Jewish Music, routinely recruits world-class Jewish musicians to create new compositions meant for use in spiritual settings. But London, whom he has known for years, had been elusive, with a schedule too crammed to accommodate Klebanow's vision for a Simchat Torah collaboration.

This year, a quirk of the Jewish calendar means that the High Holidays do not begin until October — meaning that there would be time for a kickoff concert after the summer's end but before the holidays kicked into gear. So last fall, Klebanow and London committed to working together on the project.

Then, this spring, London's doctors told him that myelofibrosis, a rare and aggressive cancer that had been detected in his blood back in 2020, had become active. He would need intensive treatment to reverse its progress and restore his health.

"When he got this news he basically said, 'Let's hurry. I'm not going to make it in September so you're on your own, but let's at least get the tunes done,'" Klebanow recalled.

The duo accelerated their plans, hustling to compose songs that would break new ground musically but also be easy to imagine as new Jewish classics, sung alongside mainstays by Shlomo Carlebach and Debbie Friedman.

They grappled with the fact that on this Simchat Torah, worshippers will mark one year on the Jewish calendar since the Oct. 7 attack on Israel. Ultimately, they decided to marry a plaintive tune for Wednesday's psalm focusing on retribution with a more joyful melody. And they put out a call for collaborators that received a resounding reception.

Among those who cleared their schedule to be present was Don Godwin, one of the most in-demand sound engineers in the Jewish music world, who came from Washington, D.C., for the night. "Once you get word that Frank's not doing well, your priorities change," he said.

The musicians began arriving in the late afternoon soon after London and his wife, the artist Tine Kindermann, arrived from Manhattan. Lorin Sklamberg and Lisa Gutkin, London's bandmates in The Klezmatics, rolled in, as did Basya Schechter, the founder of the group Pharaoh's Daughter who until recently

was a hazzan at Romemu, the Renewal congregation. A cadre of musicians made their way from Brooklyn's "klezmer shtetl," including Yoshie Fruchter and Éléonore Weill. Rabbi Yosef Goldman, who blends Ashkenazi and Sephardic sacred music, came up from Maryland, fresh off a gig for Jewish American Heritage Month at the Kennedy Center in Washington where London also performed.

London presided from the head of a large table that had been set with candlesticks, goblets and colorful runners. Mics dangled and videographers circled, but he was focused wholly on the music and musicians in front of him.

The group would work their way through each song, pausing to mark where a note sounded off or the tempo needed to change. London might ask one singer to tweak his intonation, or strengthen her voice in the mix. At least once, he asked for more energy before resuming a run-through. And then, when London concluded that all of the elements had fallen into place, the energy in the room would settle as the official recording commenced.

"It felt kind of monumental," Aaron Bendich, a Yiddish record label operator, said Thursday morning. Bendich was one of a handful of guests who were invited to watch from banquet chairs lined up against the wall of the room.

"It was an evening of Frank doing what he does absolutely best ... I think it would have been special regardless of what the material he was recording was, but all of us who were there knew that the actual material was really good," said Bendich, who is assuming the curation of the Yiddish New York festival while London is undergoing treatment. "I don't think any of us could really know the extent of how good it was until everyone was performing it together."

Finally, a little after midnight, the recording was complete. Soon, while a skeleton crew broke down the set, London would head home to Manhattan — and, hours later, to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. He said he had grand plans to listen to and learn about all kinds of music while he is isolated and in treatment, but he said he understood that he might end up accomplishing nothing at all. He also said the energy from the recording session would help him during the grueling months ahead.

"It's kind of like a gift to me as I go into this next phase," London said. "I'm banking all the pleasant interactions as much as I can, because I'm going to have to have something to draw from."

But first, the group sang and danced together a little while longer, hugging before they parted.

"We romped, we whispered, we prayed, we pounded and we celebrated every note and every phrase," Klebanow wrote to the group on Friday morning. "I think the heavens opened just a tad and our music went straight up. ... What a great sendoff — chazak chazak — for strength and healing." ■

The joy of choosing films for the fest

Submitted by Noemi Herzig

What makes the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival Committee so awesome?

We are an eclectic group of 18 (a magical number) ranging in age from 41 to 89.

It's an active committee that makes major decisions about every aspect of the film festival, from film selection to food selection for the Sponsor Dinner. The committee also has a very demanding leader (me).

Every year, we meet for about five months, most Sunday mornings at 11 a.m. Meetings are held to one hour strictly (most of the time) and we start on time.

How does it work?

In December the executive committee, a much smaller group, meets and starts watching feature films that have been sent by distributors and collected throughout the year. These are new and current films. The executive committee members each watch about an average of 70 films. These are rated: YES (pass them on to the entire committee), NO, or MAYBE.

Some films evoke a lot of stimulating conversations. Once a film makes it to the larger committee, each member watches the film and rates it on a scale of one to five according to acting, presentation, production values, audience appeal, plot, storyline, and Jewish content, and gives it an overall rating. The online rating spreadsheet accumulates the scores, which we then use to make our selections. There are usually about 35 films that make it to the larger committee, and the goal is to have at least 10 people watch each film to make the selection of the 20 best for the festival.

While the feature films are being evaluated, one committee member begins an international search for short films of 30 minutes or less. The average number of short films she finds each year is about 140. Everyone on the committee who has any time left from evaluating the feature films then jumps in to start screening and evaluating the shorts. It's a lot of hours staring at a computer screen!

Besides watching and evaluating films, there are many other committee tasks. Some members take minutes during meetings. Others write articles for the Washtenaw Jewish News. Some members volunteer to proofread the Jewish Festival ad copy and find every missing space, comma, or text irregularity. Is it p.m. or pm? Is there a space

after the number? Are the films in-person, In-Person or in person? Is it State Theatre or Theater? The devil is in the details, as they say.

Other committee members perform such duties as writing a synopsis of each film or suggesting and contacting speakers to provide commentary at an in-person screening. The annual Sponsor Dinner draws on another set of committee members' skills. First there is the selection of the venue, then deciding on the menu, tracking the RSVPs, deciding on the program, table decorations, and more. Of course, everyone is involved in fundraising and publicity. If you are a supporter of the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival, you too can help promote and fundraise to keep the film festival alive.

Like so many cultural institutions, the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival has undergone dramatic change in the past few years, some of it as a result of the COVID pandemic which closed movie theaters and brought films to our couches. As the pandemic ebbed, the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival began limited in-person showings; this year we hosted seven films in-person, while 16 were available through the Eventive streaming platform. New models for presenting Jewish film festivals are evolving. For example, several Jewish communities currently present a short series of film "festivals" throughout the year. The challenge for next year's film festival committee will be to explore what model is right for the greater Ann Arbor Jewish community.

Now that we have concluded this year's festival, we will be soliciting public comment through an online survey to help shape the future of the Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival. We hope you will be a part of that effort.

By the time you read this newsletter I will be officially retired. I feel some sadness about leaving something that has been so gratifying and fulfilling for the past five years. I have also made many good friends through this position and now that I have moved to Ann Arbor, I can enjoy them, and all that this wonderful community offers. I look forward to seeing you all, maybe at the movies!

This is not goodbye, but it is until we meet again.

Respectfully, Noemi ■

Celebrating and commemorating Israel's national days with special guests

By Amichay Findling, Israel and Overseas Program Manager, Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

The third week of May was a very meaningful week for Israelis, and Jews in general, here in Ann Arbor.

participated in a variety of programming throughout the community. Some activities of their weeklong visit to Ann Arbor

the current war in Israel and Gaza. Later that day, they met a group of Michigan's Jewish War Veterans and bonded through shared

Temple Beth Emeth, the Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan, and Chabad House of Ann Arbor.



IDF Soldiers with MI Jewish War Beterans group



IDF Soldier Ron sharing his story at the Ann Arbor community Yom HaZikaron Ceremony



(L - R) Soldier Ron, MI state Senator Lana Theis, MI State Senator Jeremy Moss, IDF Soldier Daniel

The week commemorated Israel's Memorial Day (Yom HaZikaron) and Independence Day (Yom HaAtzmaut), which follow one another with a complex set of emotions for those who observe, especially this year.

The Jewish Federation, in partnership with many local Jewish communal organizations and congregations, initiated a series of events and engagements for this special time of the year.

Most notably, the Federation hosted Daniel and Ron, two IDF soldiers, who

included reading obituaries of their fallen comrades at the community-wide Yom HaZikaron service, engaging children at the Hebrew Day School, and participating in Shabbat services at various congregations around Ann Arbor.

In addition to their Ann Arbor area engagements, Ron and Daniel attended two special meetings. On Thursday, May 16, they traveled to Lansing, where they met a group of Michigan's State Senators, headed by Sen. Lana Theis and Sen. Jeremy Moss, and shared their stories and experiences of

experiences as veterans and comrades.

These events were made possible by the Jewish Agency for Israel's "Soldiers in Uniform" program, as well as funding and organization by the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor, and cooperation and sponsorship by many organizations, including Hebrew Day School, Jewish Family Services, Beth Israel Congregation,

To learn more about local Israel-related programming, visit JewishAnnArbor.org/Engagement/Israel or contact Federation's Israel and Overseas Programs Manager Amichay Findling at amichay@jewishannarbor.org. ■

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April in Israel

By Prue Rosenthal

In mid-March I received an invitation to my great-nephew's bar mitzvah in Jerusalem. It took me maybe five minutes to decide that I was going. I spoke to my son Nathaniel, he spoke to his son (my grandson) Ethan, and they were both enthusiastic about the idea. We did not think about whether we would be in danger. I have been to Israel many



times during the wars they have suffered and never felt at any risk. Israel has always felt safe to me.

We arrived in Jerusalem in the dawn hours of April 11. There were also 500 Israeli families staying in the hotel who had been evacuated from Kiryat Shmona in northern Israel because of shelling from Hezbollah. The next day I learned that all the hotels are housing these evacuees — paid partly by the Israeli government, partly by the hotels, but also partly by the Federations of North America.

After a nap we walked down to the old city to the Kotel (the Western Wall). It was very quiet, but a young Orthodox man came up and asked Nat and Ethan if they wanted to learn how to wrap tefillin, which they both did for the first time. After putting a prayer into the Wall we walked up and had a falafel at a small cafe overlooking the plaza. It was a lovely time, although we were very aware of the lack of tourists.

The next afternoon the festivities around



the bar mitzvah began and as the sun went down, we joined our big family for a Kabbalat Shabbat service and dinner. My nephew has five children and his sister, my niece, has four, and several grandchildren.

Everything took place in the hotel. There is a synagogue in the hotel and both families were staying there.

Out of the nine grandchildren of Ami's parents who live in Israel, four have served in the army (now in the reserves), one is in training, and the other four are planning to go when it is their turn.

Saturday night after the bar mitzvah we had supper at my nephew's house where his wife made a delicious Moroccan curry dinner and went home early. About 2 a.m. we were awakened by a knock on the door telling us to go to the safe room on our floor because

Jerusalem was being hit by drones and rockets. Each floor in the hotel has safe rooms, as does every hotel and house in Israel. It is the law. There was no TV or anything to tell us what was happening. There had been premonitions of an attack and talk that it might happen soon, so we were not surprised. We all had different reactions: anxiety, curiosity, amazement, and a certain satisfaction that we were experiencing a tiny bit of what the Israelis have dealt with for years and years. We heard no noise of any kind and after about an hour we were told it was safe to go back to our rooms. I turned on CNN and heard Wolf Blitzer telling me what had happened and saw night films of the bombing shown on TV.

The next day I walked around Bakka where we were staying and saw stores open, children playing in the park, mothers and fathers walking babies, friends having coffee. Everything was as usual.

On Sunday we were driven down to the Nova Music Festival area by a guide. My niece's son, who is in the army reserves, had planned to go to the festival with his girlfriend and at the last minute decided they had too much to do. He was with us, along with my son Nat and grandson Ethan and two other cousins from Florida. The field is quite a large area and has small eucalyptus trees spread throughout that created a soft sunlit/shady area. As we all know, the kids had been dancing and having a wonderful time when the October tragedy struck. Now the field is covered with touching homemade memorials in different places, with photographs of children, friends, and family who were killed. Dedications, flags, and other memorial objects were nestled into the sand. There were lots of people, young families, soldiers, and old people walking throughout the area murmuring to each other, wandering from one memorial to another as we were.

On the way back to Jerusalem we stopped at the wall of burned, destroyed, blown up cars spread along a half mile area near Be'eri Kibbutz. It is unbelievable that so much destruction happened in such a relatively short time.

Throughout the time we were there, we had supper with my nephew, his wife and family each night until we left the country. We took walks together, sat and talked about life there and life here. It was a lovely, special time with lots of families and catching up. We also talked a lot about what is going on here, the antisemitism, protests, etc.

Our conversations were about their experiences around October 7, how they saw their future, how they saw Israel's future, what they hope and what they fear. I came home feeling a very strong sense of pride in their resilience, of pain for what the country is going through, of gratitude that they are there fighting for the existence of a country so deeply important to all of us. ■

Why I went to a Uyghur conference

Rabbi Asher Lopatin, Community Relations Director Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

On April 17, I attended a New York conference called "Disrupting Uyghur Genocide" to end Uyghur erasure in China in East Turkistan. The conference was sponsored, among others, by the Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity. Professor Elie Wiesel, a"h, was my professor at Boston University, and his son, Elisha, has taken a leadership role in fighting to end the cultural genocide of Muslim Uyghurs by the Chinese government, in addition to fighting

do not see their advocacy for the millions of Uyghurs in China as selling out the Palestinians, or the Sudanese, the Darfur Muslims, or the Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar. To the contrary, they recognize that the more we can advocate for all those suffering from real threats of genocide (not the fabricated accusations against Israel), the more we affirm who we are as people.

One of the highlights of this conference for me was speaking on a panel titled "Preserving Uyghur Cultural Identity



antisemitism.

Since 2014, an estimated 1.8 million Uyghurs and Turkic majority peoples have been put through forced "re-education camps" in China, where torture and coercion are used to indoctrinate people so they give up their religious identity. The Chinese campaign of terror against these Muslims has led to a 62% reduction in their birthrate, and 16,000 mosques (65%) have been destroyed or damaged.

So why would I represent the Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor at such a conference — especially right before Passover, one of the busiest times on the Jewish calendar? Why as a Jew, with all our issues of antisemitism around the world and with Israel fighting a war, would I speak at such a conference? The answer, I hope, is obvious: in a season where we talk about the Jews being freed from oppression in ancient Egypt, we as Jews must care for all those oppressed around the world.

It was striking and sad that there were very few Muslims at the conference to support their fellow Muslims. The few Muslims there — mostly women leaders — have been subjected to a hateful campaign accusing them of supporting Israel. But these women, who also decry the horrors of Hamas and October 7,

and Learning from the Jewish Diaspora Experience." It was fascinating to be able to discuss how the Jewish people can contribute from our own experience to peoples whose identity is being challenged and who have been forced into exile. The Uyghurs are eager for our support and for us to be proud Jews who inspire other peoples with a history of oppression to rise above their pain and maintain their identity, as the Jewish people have done throughout the millennia. Moreover, just as the Jewish people has always retained its connection to our homeland, we can show Uyghurs in exile that their connection to their homeland, in Chinese Turkistan, can be maintained through education and commitment.

Let us fight all those who seek to end our identity as Jews. Our fight for others to maintain their identity and existence will only strengthen our understanding of freedom and the Jewish tradition. ■

For Shavuot: A little different By Lonnie Sussman

June is such a lovely month. It's full of graduation parties, spring gardens, sunshine, and this year, Shavuot. Our family also starts a birthday season with many of us celebrating birthdays from ages five to over 70, and, despite being retired for many years, I still feel the thrill of summer vacation.

Usually, I declare after Passover that I don't want to cook again until at least Shavuot, but I don't really mean it ... or do I? If you are still excited about recipes for many people, I wish you good luck. Otherwise, I hope you find the recipes that include a big salad with a piece of grilled salmon, a pasta dish with some vegetables thrown in, or a basic roast chicken. But here are some recipes for Shavuot which starts the evening of June 11. Many people are unfamiliar with this joyous festival that originally was based on the wheat harvest but celebrates the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai. A few years ago, I shared the recipe for the Bread of the Seven Heavens. It is a Sephardi custom that refers to a Biblical verse from Exodus (chapter 16, verse 4) where G-D says to Moses, "I will rain down bread for you from the sky." This refers to manna, but other sources for making this bread include a challah designed to look like Mount Sinai. I made the bread a few years ago and it was impressive and tasty. If you are interested, Google "The Bread of the Seven Heavens." I've included one kugel recipe and two cheesecake recipes that are a little different from Ashkenazi traditions.



Balsamic Glazed Tuna

The Bais Yaakov Cookbook

Serves 4

- Four 5-oz tuna steaks
- ½ cup plus 2 tbs olive oil, divided
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbs honey
- ½ tsp salt
- Ground pepper to taste

Mix ½ cup olive oil, balsamic vinegar, honey, salt, and ground pepper in a small bowl. Set aside ¼ cup for serving. Put the tuna steaks in a large plastic bag and pour the remaining marinade over them. Marinate in the refrigerator for 3–4 hours. Use the remaining 2 tbs of olive oil to heat in a large skillet over medium heat. Remove the tuna from the marinade and discard the marinade. Sear the tuna in the skillet for about five minutes on each side. Use a small saucepan and pour in the remaining ¼ cup of marinade and simmer for about two minutes. Pour over the steaks when ready to serve.

Asparagus with Cherry Tomato Vinaigrette

The Gourmet Jewish Cook by Judy Zeidler

Serves 10 (so invite everyone)

I really like the idea of spring vegetables for Shavuot meals, and nothing says "Spring in Michigan" like asparagus. I don't believe you need to peel or shave the stalks, but I do think it is good to remove the lower part of the stem that is woody. I hold the bottom of the stem and find the spot where it naturally breaks off. Some people use a knife to cut the rest of the asparagus at the same length.

- 4 pounds of fresh asparagus, trimmed
- Roasted red bell pepper strips
- 10 cherry tomatoes, stemmed and halved
- Juice of 2 lemons
- ¾ cup olive oil
- Chopped parsley for serving
- Salt and pepper to taste

Use a vegetable steamer or a large pot and fill with water. Steam the asparagus, covered, until tender but crisp. This might take 5–10 minutes depending on the size of the asparagus. You will probably need to do this in stages. To make the vinaigrette, use a medium bowl and add the lemon juice and olive oil and whisk together. Add the cherry tomato halves and mix well. Season to taste with the salt and pepper, cover with plastic wrap, and chill in the refrigerator. Divide the asparagus into 10 equal bundles and wrap each with a strip of the roasted red pepper. Place them on a large serving plate and spoon the vinaigrette over them to serve



Zucchini Kugel

The Bais Yaakov Cookbook

Serves 12

Cheese kugels are a popular food for Shavuot, but here is a little different take on kugel with no cheese.

- 2 tbs vegetable oil
- 6 medium zucchinis, shredded
- 2 medium onions, diced
- 6 large eggs
- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup sugar
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp salt
- Ground black pepper to taste.

Use a large skillet to heat the vegetable oil over medium heat and then add the zucchini and onions. Sauté for about 10 minutes. The onions should be transparent and the liquid from them and the zucchinis dissolved. Remove from heat and set aside. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Mix the eggs, flour, water, mayonnaise, sugar, baking powder, salt, and pepper in a large bowl until combined. Add the zucchini and onion mix. Pour the mixture into a 13x9x2 inch baking dish and bake for about an hour. The top should be brown. Let cool and cut into squares.

Carrot-Spice Cheesecake with a Vanilla-Pecan Crust

The Jewish Gourmet by Judy Zeigler

Makes one 9-inch cheesecake.

There are tons of cheesecake recipes using every available fruit, chocolate, or other flavors. This cookbook is one of my favorites for finding something a little different from other recipes, and I think this cheesecake fits that bill. Even the crust is interesting and a little different.

Vanilla-Pecan Crust

- ⅔ cup finely ground vanilla wafers (4 oz)
- ⅔ cup finely ground ginger snaps (4 oz)
- ⅔ cup finely ground pecans (4 oz)
- ½ cup sugar
- 4 tbs unsalted butter

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. In the large bowl of an electric mixer or blender combine the ground cookies, pecans, and sugar and then add the butter until the mixture is well blended but still crumbly. Spoon the mixture evenly into a 9-inch springform pan and press it down firmly. Bake for 5–10 minutes until the crust is lightly browned. Cool.

Cheesecake

- ¾ pound of carrots, boiled and then pureed
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- 3 tbs ginger preserves, or grate fresh ginger, but I suggest about 2 tsp unless you absolutely love ginger. In that case, go for it.
- 2 tbs candied ginger (again, it depends on your tolerance of ginger)
- 1 tbs fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp orange zest
- ¼ tsp each of ground cinnamon, ground mace, ground allspice
- 2 packages (8 oz each) of cream cheese
- 4 eggs
- ¼ cup chopped pecans for the top of the cheesecake

Use a large bowl and an electric mixer to beat the carrot puree, brown sugar, gingers, lemon juice, orange rind, and all the spices until they are blended. Next add the cream cheese and blend. Beat in the eggs, one at a time, until the mixture is smooth. Pour into the prepared crust and sprinkle with the additional chopped pecans. Bake about 50 minutes or until the center is firm and a toothpick inserted into the middle comes out clean. Allow to cool and then cover and store in the refrigerator for at least an hour.

Mascarpone Cheesecake

Classic Italian Jewish Cooking by Edda Servi Machlin

Serves 6

- 3 eggs, separated
- 9 tbs sugar
- 1 pound Mascarpone cheese, at room temperature
- 2 tbs rum
- ¼ cup cold strong coffee
- 40 vanilla cookies (bought or see recipe below)
- ¼ cup sugar-roasted chopped almonds, made by placing the chopped almonds in a small skillet with 2 tbs sugar, 2 tbs water, and 1 tsp almond extract. Bring

to a boil and cook, stirring, for 2–3 minutes, or until the almonds are dry and light brown. Remove from heat and let them cool.

Beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. Gradually add half the sugar and beat until the mixture has the consistency of marshmallow. In a separate bowl beat the egg yolks with the remaining sugar until frothy and lemon colored. Reduce the speed, add the cheese, and beat until well mixed. Add the whites and mix well. Mix the rum and coffee together. In a serving bowl, make alternate layers of the cheese mixture and the cookies quickly dipped in the coffee/rum mixture, ending with the cheese. Sprinkle the top with toasted almonds and chill at least 1 hour before serving.

Rona's Vanilla Cookies

Classic Italian Jewish Cooking by Edda Servi Machlin

Edda Servi Machlin's daughter came up with this recipe when she was a young girl.

Cream together ¾ cup of firmly packed raw sugar, ½ cup olive oil, and ¼ tsp salt. Then add 2 eggs, 1 at a time, and beat after each addition. Now add in 2 tsp vanilla extract and beat again. Finally, gradually, add in 1¼ cups unbleached all-purpose flour and beat the mixture until it is smooth. Drop by teaspoonful on a lightly oiled baking sheet dusted with a little flour or on parchment paper. The cookies should be 2 inches apart. Bake in a 375-degree oven for 7 minutes or until the cookies are slightly browned. Allow to cool before storing in cookie jar.

Strawberry Muffins

The Kosher Palette by The Joseph Kushner Hebrew Academy

Makes 2 dozen

This is the first of the cookbooks written by Susie Fishbein that start with the phrase "Kosher by Design." Local strawberries are a welcome spring fruit and here is a way to use some.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup whole-wheat flour
- 1 cup sugar
- 4½ tsp baking powder
- 1½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp salt
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 egg white, lightly beaten
- 1 cup apple cider or juice
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups sliced strawberries, divided

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Combine the flours, sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt. Combine the eggs, apple cider or juice, and oil. Add the egg mixture to the flour mixture until moistened.

Uses 24 slices of strawberry to add to the batter. Spoon the batter into greased muffin pans, filling ¾ full. Top each muffin with a reserved strawberry slice. Bake for 25 minutes and remove pans and allow to cool on wire racks. ■

Restaurant review

Trekking to Base Camp on Jackson Road

By Candace Bulkley and Trina Fuller

Candace and Trina became friends in the Temple Beth Emeth adult b-mitzvah class that graduated in 2022. They will be honing their palates, visiting, and writing about a variety of independent, locally owned Washtenaw County restaurants, catering to a variety of dietary preferences.

Let's all say it together — “Him-all-yan,” “Himalayan.”

If a trek to Nepal is out of the cards this summer, you might consider a trek out to Jackson Road to visit a new Nepalese outlet, Base Camp. This newcomer to Ann Arbor features the cuisine of Nepal, India, Tibet, and Bhutan — all geographical neighbors. Located in a small shopping strip, the space is bright and cheerful. Boldly colored, geometric Nepalese textiles and patterns decorate the dining room. On one wall a large mural displays the majesty of the Himalayan Mountains, and on the other, clever window coverings camouflage



the concrete and street traffic while allowing ample sunlight to flow in. Upon arrival, our group was welcomed warmly and seated at a comfortable booth at the base of the mountain mural, giving us food for thought on farming practices and trade in the region.

Perusing the menu, we were immediately drawn to the momo: Nepalese dumplings. We decided to split our order between the steamed vegetable and pan-fried chicken varieties. Both were excellent choices and were accompanied by a slightly spiced dipping sauce. We were pleasantly surprised by the addition of coconut, an imported influence from India, in the vegetable momos. We shared a laugh with our server imagining palm trees growing in Nepal.

Much like Indian restaurants, there was a bread list featuring roti, alu paratha, two types of naan, and something new to us — Tibetan Bread. We ordered it along with some garlic naan. The naan was good, buttery, warm, and garlicky, and disappeared quickly. The fluffy Tibetan Bread was fried and dusted with sugar with a touch of salt, similar to the fry breads of many other cultures. It received mixed reviews with our group, but we don't regret trying something

new.

From the entree list, Shyakpa stood out. It is a brothy stew, chock full of fresh vegetables with bite-sized dumplings similar to what you'd find in American chicken and dumplings. We ordered the medium-spiced vegetarian version, although meat and tofu versions were available. In a later conversation with our server, we discovered that Shyakpa was the most typical Nepalese dish on the menu. He explained that it is both nutritious and warming in the extreme cold of Nepal. We liked the freshness and variety of the vegetables that were cooked perfectly — the peapods still snapped.

Moving through the menu, we also tried the Aloo Cauli, the classic combination of cauliflower and potato in a well-seasoned, tomato-forward curry. Notably, the cauliflower was very fresh and cooked to just tender. Saag Paneer, another classic dish rich with spinach and fresh cheese, was a good rendition enhanced by slivers of fresh ginger on top to wake it up. Meat and veggie versions of Tikka Masala, Biryani, Curry, and Bhuteko were also featured on the menu, which according to our server, will change every few months. We selected a longtime favorite: Chicken Makhani, or butter chicken, which is a famous dish usually made only in Indian restaurants, not homes. It was a standout. The rich, creamy cashew sauce and tender chicken were flavorful and had the right amount of heat. Along with our food, we were served a generous portion of beautifully presented and prepared long grained royal basmati rice. Entrees at Base Camp are perfect for sharing and sampling the nuanced flavors of Nepal, India, Tibet, and Bhutan.

Too full for dessert, we had to pass on the cardamom-laced rice pudding (Kheer) and the syrup-soaked sticky sweet fried milk balls (Lal Mohan), although they were awfully tempting!

Next time we might also try something from the beverage list, which includes a Nepalese chai, mango lassis, and Himalayan herbal tea. They looked delicious at a neighboring table, but we took the advice printed on their beverage glasses — “From base camp to summit, hydration is key” — and stuck with water.

Every dish at Base Camp can be prepared with your choice of spiciness level and are labeled as DE dairy free, GF gluten free, V vegan, and VG vegetarian. Lunch specials (meat or vegetarian) are offered where you are served several small portions including a drink and dessert for \$11.50. Patio dining is offered out front with plenty of picnic table seating to enjoy in warmer weather — though we noticed that with Jackson Road traffic on one side and I-94 on the other, it might not be a bucolic location for a meal. In Michigan we'll take what we can get! Whether you choose inside seating, the patio, or carry-out to your own kitchen table, we recommend sampling the flavors of the Himalayan region at Base Camp.

Base Camp

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Rav Gavrielle Pescador installed as AARC rabbi

By Rena Basch

The Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC) celebrated a joyful installation for Rabbi Gavrielle Pescador at Shabbat morning services on April 13. The morning Torah service and installation featured new music adapted specially for the occasion, including Michael Shapiro's musical setting for Ibn Ezra's liturgical poem "Libi U'vesari," Eitan Katz's "Lulei B'toracha" from Psalms, and an interpretive "Modim" by Beth Styles entitled "Grateful." Rav Gavrielle also set "Kedushah" to a composition written by her harp teacher and friend, Carol Kappus. The event was hugely collaborative with leadership from within the congregation and special guests Hazzan Diana Brewer, Hazzan Devorah Fick and pianist Renee Robbins. There were beautiful heartfelt tributes and blessings offered by members of the AARC board and Rabbi Elliot Ginsburg, Rav Gavrielle's beloved teacher and mentor from rabbinic school. The installation was followed by a delicious kiddush meal.

Rav Gavrielle trained at the ALEPH Ordination Program as both a rabbi and cantor, completing the double track in January 2024. Rav Gavrielle started as AARC's rabbi in July 2023, seamlessly integrating into leading the congregation. Her spirituality, musicality, and commitment to helping people find meaning in Jewish life



are a perfect fit for AARC.

Music has always been an integral part of the AARC community, and Rav Gavrielle brings something new to that tradition — her harp! Around the time she began her rabbinic training she also started playing the harp and gradually included the instrument while leading services. She considers the harp an instrument of healing because of its soothing sound quality and biblical resonance, and uses it as a tool for heart opening and easing the pathway to religious experience.

Rav Gavrielle Pescador was raised in Windsor, Ontario, and attended Congregation Shaar Hashomayim, a synagogue co-founded by her maternal great-grandfather. Jewish tradition and religious practice were central

to her upbringing, and that grounding has continued to inform her perspective on community, ethics, and spiritual life to this day.

After the passing of her beloved mother and father, Rav Gavrielle became particularly drawn to deepening her connection to Jewish community, as she was no longer able to celebrate holidays, rituals, and lifecycle events with them. She responded to her grief by immersing herself in Jewish studies and its ancestral wisdom, which eventually led her to enroll in rabbinic school at the ALEPH Ordination Program.

In the middle of her rabbinic studies, she became reacquainted with Ashkenazi hazzanut, which called up beautiful memories of the soundscape of her childhood synagogue. But it was only after having the life-changing

experience of serving as cantorial soloist for AARC in 2019 that she decided to enter ALEPH's cantorial program and become a double track rabbinic-cantorial student.

Before becoming the rabbi of AARC, Rav Gavrielle served as Interim Spiritual Leader of Temple B'nai Israel of Petoskey, Michigan, and as guest cantor in synagogues throughout the country. She founded Pardes Hannah's Rosh Chodesh minyan in 2018, which she led every month for four and a half years. She has now begun leading a Rosh

AARC events in June

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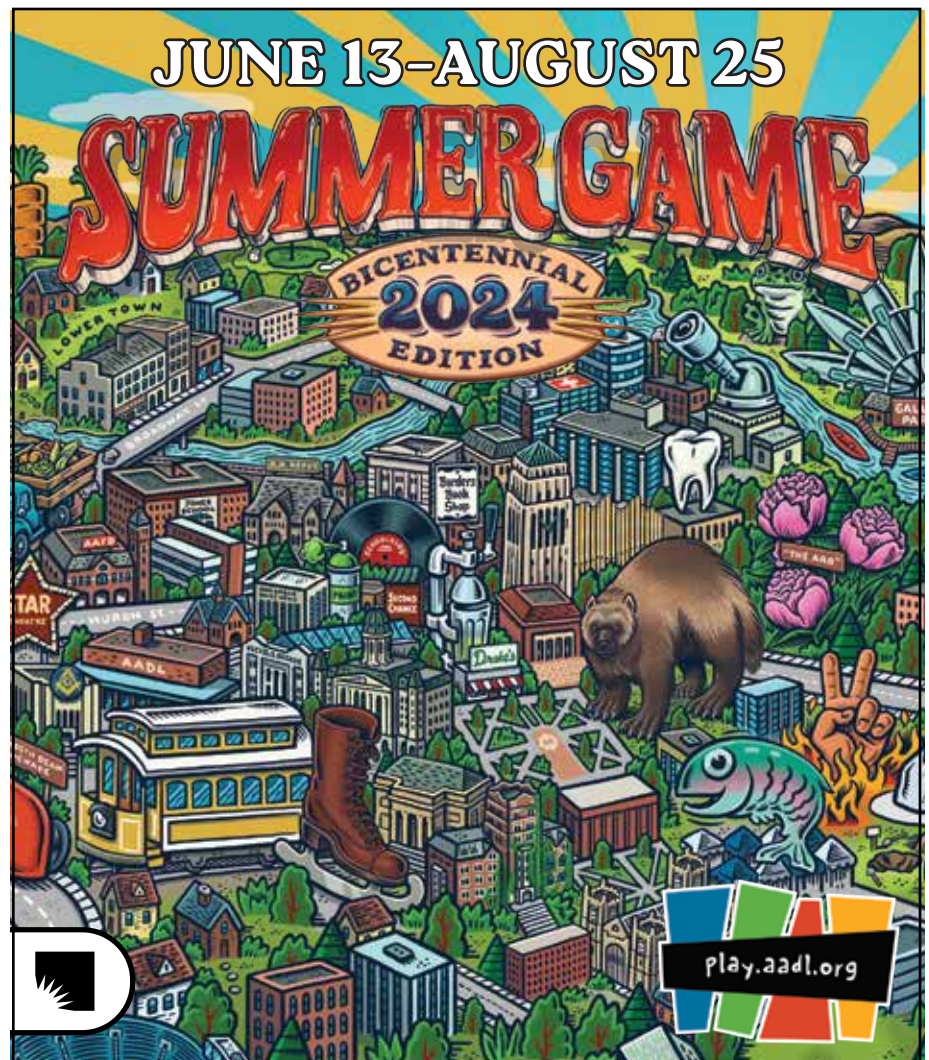
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Kaddish at Jewish WWI graves in Gaza

By Shifra Epstein

I write this in memory of the IDF soldiers who gave their lives during the Israel-Hamas War in Gaza, as well as the Jewish soldiers who sacrificed their lives during World War I and are laid to rest in two British Army Cemeteries in Gaza. Their courage, dedication, and ultimate sacrifice will always be remembered and cherished.

Some 50,000 Jewish soldiers fought in the British army during World War I, with 8,600 falling in battles. At least 10 of them who took part in the battles for Gaza are buried in the British Army Cemetery in the town of Al-Maazi, in the center of Gaza. According to news reports in January and February, "While fighting their way through Gaza, Israeli soldiers have stumbled across several well-preserved Jewish graves."

The 188th "Barak" (Lightning) Armored Brigade made an unexpected historical detour when they ran across a well-kept World War I British military cemetery. This brigade has a long history beginning before the foundation of the State of Israel. The late Yoni Netanyahu, Benjamin Netanyahu's brother, was one among the legendary commanders of the 188th Barak Brigade.

In an interview with the Israeli Radio, Lt. Col. Oren Schindler, the commander of the Barak Brigade, described the unexpected discovery of the cemetery. His soldiers found among the hundred tombstones seven

tombstones of Jews. "We photographed the tombstones with the names of the places where they fought and died. I said to myself, we are not the first Jews fighting in Gaza, that this is not only our battle. Our war here is because they (the Jews) fought here in the beginning of the last century."



The discovery and the recitation of Kaddish in Gaza was an event representing a moment of realization that the IDF's war

in Gaza is intimately connected with events from World War I, where Jewish British soldiers also fought on the same soil. This realization brings the Jewish/Israeli soldiers in Gaza to a full circle, highlighting the continuity of struggle and sacrifice across generations.

Too tired and exhausted, Lt. Col. Schindler and his commanders promised to return to the cemetery later to say Kaddish

on the graves of the British Jewish soldiers buried there.

A two-minute video posted by the Barak Brigade documented the return to the cemetery of two commanders as they had promised.

The video documenting the event starts with a long shot from one end of the cemetery, zooming to a commander dressed in an army uniform holding a siddur.

Standing in front of a tombstone with a Magen David covered with an Israeli flag, the commander started with an introduction, "We are in the cemetery where dead soldiers from WWI are buried, among them Jews. And we will say Kaddish."

Though already inside the cemetery, in the video, one of the commanders, started with *asher yatzar etkhem badin*, "he who created you in judgment," a blessing usually recited before entering a cemetery after not seeing a grave for 30 days. He followed with the recitation of Kaddish, ending with *Ose Shalom*, the prayer which poignantly concludes the Mourner's Kaddish, a prayer used for remembrance of those who have passed on or are in need.

And finally, the commander ended with *Shabbat Shalom*.

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Jewish author Nathan Thrall, Reuters and New York Times win Pulitzers for controversial Israel reporting

Andrew Lapin, originally for the JTA

Pulitzer Prizes were awarded Monday to reports on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict that have become steeped in controversy since their publication, including a nonfiction book by Jewish author Nathan Thrall and breaking-news reporting and photography of Hamas' Oct. 7 attacks by Reuters and *The New York Times*.

The Pulitzer board also presented a special citation to journalists covering the war from Gaza, noting that "an extraordinary number have died" while doing so.

Thrall, a Bard College professor based in Jerusalem whose work is often highly critical of Israel, won the Pulitzer for general nonfiction for his book *A Day in the Life of Abed Salama: Anatomy of a Jerusalem Tragedy*. Published days before Oct. 7, the book focuses on a Palestinian father's efforts to uncover news about his son following a bus crash; the Pulitzer jury called it "a finely reported and intimate account of life under Israeli occupation of the West Bank." The book also focuses on several Israeli characters whose lives intersect with Salama's.

Reuters won in the breaking news photography category for its of-the-moment images of the beginning of the Oct. 7 attacks. Since the newswire published the images, it faced accusations from a pro-Israel media advocacy group that its photography staff had advance knowledge of the attacks, a charge the company has denied.

The Pulitzer jury did not mention the controversy in its citation, which praised Reuters for "raw and urgent photographs documenting the October 7th deadly attack in Israel by Hamas and the first weeks of Is-

rael's devastating assault on Gaza."

Staff at the *Times* won the Pulitzer for international reporting for a series of reports on the attacks and Israel's retaliation in Gaza, including work focusing on the intelligence failures of Israel's military and the ways in which its government had propped up Hamas for years, as well as its strategy of bombing areas where it had instructed Gazan civilians to flee.

The Pulitzer jury did not cite "Screams Without Words," a controversial *Times* report about rapes allegedly committed by Hamas on Oct. 7, in its comments. Published in December, the story has drawn criticism from pro-Palestinian media outlets that questioned the *Times*' sources and from survivors and family members who said the paper's characterization of what happened to people they knew was not true. The criticism led to a high-profile newsroom leak of internal debate over the piece and also has helped fuel some denials that Hamas committed rape during the attacks.

While Thrall's book predates the Oct. 7 attack, his book tour was conducted in its shadow and has been a frequent magnet for controversy. Some tour stops canceled planned talks by Thrall, saying they would be "insensitive" in the midst of Israel's war, in a sign of how the broader arts and culture landscape has been divided over Israel since the attacks. After the book's publication, a local Jewish federation protested Thrall's plan to teach a Bard course on whether Israel's treatment of Palestinians could be considered apartheid.

At least one media outlet also canceled a planned sponsorship by his publisher, while Thrall himself turned down a speaking engagement at the University of Arkansas after the school, in accordance with state law, required him to sign a pledge promising not to boycott Israel. Thrall is currently in Berlin, where he said the Open Society Foundation, funded by progressive Jewish megadonor George Soros, paid to distribute free copies of his book.

Elsewhere in the awards, the Pulitzer committee honored Vladimir Kara-Murza, a Russian Jewish dissident, with the prize for commentary. Kara-Murza, who has accused Russia of committing war crimes in Ukraine, was sentenced to 25 years in prison last year for treason and won the Pulitzer from his cell.

Jewish author Jonathan Eig was also honored with the Pulitzer in biography for *King: A Life*, his thorough new biography of Martin Luther King, Jr., one of two books to receive the prize. Eig, who has also written a celebrated biography of Muhammad Ali, has said that his Judaism led him to explore topics related to African-Americans: "I'm Jewish and that also makes me feel like an outsider. Jewish people are often reminded that they share a history of oppression with African-Americans, which is one reason so many Jewish people were involved in the civil-rights movement," he told *Chicago* magazine in 2018.

"Here There Are Blueberries," a play by Moisés Kaufman and Amanda Gronich that draws on real Nazi photographs of Auschwitz acquired by the U.S. Holocaust Memorial and Museum, was a finalist in the drama category but did not win. The show premiered at San Diego's La Jolla Playhouse in 2022 and is currently playing at the New York Theatre Workshop. And in the memoir category, Jewish author Andrew Leland's *The Country of the Blind: A Memoir at the End of Sight* was also a finalist.

An account of radical Jewish activists in the early 20th century was also a Pulitzer finalist in the history category, but did not win. *American Anarchy: The Epic Struggle Between Immigrant Radicals and the U.S. Government at the Dawn of the Twentieth Century*, by Michael Willrich, traces the history of Jewish anarchists Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman and the lawyers who made trailblazing free-speech arguments in their defense. The history took on new timeliness in the shadow of the college student protests on Israel.

The Pulitzers are overseen by the journalism school at Columbia University, which has been at the epicenter of a nationwide campus pro-Palestinian encampment movement and which canceled its university-wide commencement ceremony earlier on Monday in the wake of the protests. Several days before announcing the awards, the Pulitzer committee also issued a special acknowledgement of student journalists covering the campus protests. ■

The Torah of time

By Alicia Jo Rabins, originally published May 30, 2018 in the *Jewish Journal* (Los Angeles) jewishjournal.org

A famous rabbinic principle of interpretation holds, "There is no such thing as early or late in the Torah."

At first glance, this is rather mysterious, because the Torah seems to tell a story that, like most stories, goes in one temporal direction. It begins with the creation of the world, continues through the birth of the Hebrew people, and follows the family tree generation after generation until the moment when Moses dies, on the verge of entering the Promised Land.

However, looking more closely, there are indeed some confusing snags in the time-space continuum of the story. Perhaps most famously, the fact that Moses receives the five books of the Torah midway through the second book.

Which raises a couple of questions. How can Moses receive a story written in past tense, containing the future? And specifically, how, in the Torah's last chapters, can Moses describe his own death?

Of course, modern text scholars would answer that the stories are not literally true; after all, the Torah (unlike some modern media) does not pretend to be journalism.

But that takes all the fun out of the koan-like question of linearity and time in Torah. The most creative interpretations come from

the rabbis who are attached to the literal meaning of Torah, and therefore need to find poetic solutions to its paradoxes. They offer explanations: Maybe the Torah was given like a tightly furled bud, which unfolded its petals through time. Or maybe Moses did glimpse his future, and transcribed God's words in ink until the last paragraphs, when he dipped his quill into his own tears to describe his death. Or perhaps linearity is not the only way to understand time; perhaps "there is no such thing as early or late in the Torah."

This idea of malleable chronology may seem to some like an ancient cop-out, but I love it. I love how it resonates with modern astrophysics and our understanding of bendable space-time, and our inner psychological realities. The truth is, we do not experience time as strictly linear. Stories contain currents and eddies of one another; our past is embedded in our present; our future is seeded in our past. So it is with Torah, which we read over and over through time, looking to the past to understand the present, and to create a better future.

When I began studying Jewish texts at age 20, one of my teachers described the annual Torah reading as a spiral staircase that

we ascend, one more round each year. We hear the same stories each year — but we are different, and so the stories are different. We chant them through the seasons, gripping onto the heavy wood handles, turning the scroll as the earth turns.

I remember being moved by a saying by the wonderfully named sage, Ben Bag-Bag. He said, about the Torah: "Turn it and turn it, for everything is contained within it." The entire world is contained in the Torah — the entire scope of human experience. That infinite possibility is a constant; we are the variable, each year ready to understand a little bit more.

Before my students' bat mitzvah ceremonies, I always tell them: "I want you to know that we have not reached the limits of Torah. As you get older, you will need deeper, more complicated sources of strength and advice. You can always come back to our sacred texts. They will grow along with you." I want them to understand the Torah will continue to be there for them as older teens and adults, in moments of trouble as well as joy, of questioning and crisis as well as

celebration.

I sometimes think of time as the medium in which we humans are created: As an artist paints in oils, or a writer makes a world in fiction, we exist in time. And, like Torah, time is at once forward-moving and mysteriously circular. Each year we return to May, to August, to December; in the ancient Babylonian lunar months the Jewish calendar still keeps, we find ourselves again in Nisan, in Av, in Kislev. New moon, full moon, new moon, full moon — each month the same, but each month different.

We are children in spring, then older children the next. We grow into adults, and spring-time carries with it a bit of the taste of childhood. And if we are lucky, we will walk among the spring blossoms in our old age, too.

Alicia Jo Rabins is a writer, musician and Torah teacher based in Portland, Oregon. She is the author of three books, including *Even God Had Bad Parenting Days*, a collection of short personal essays about early parenthood and Jewish spirituality. She is the creator of *Girls in Trouble*, an indie-folk song cycle about Biblical women, and *A Kaddish for Bernie Madoff*, an independent feature film about finance and mysticism. Visit her at www.aliciajo.com ■

Campus protests: Three perspectives continued from pg 1

escaped Eastern Europe and made new lives in the United States.

While I have no direct ties to Israel, because of my religion some feel the need to establish when it comes to Israel whether or not I'm the "good kind" of Jew.

Representative Ilhan Omar summed up this dichotomy with her pseudo-denunciation of antisemitism, "I think it is really unfortunate that people don't care about the fact that all Jewish kids should be kept safe and that we should not have to tolerate antisemitism or bigotry for all Jewish students, whether they are pro-genocide or anti-genocide."

You're either the good kind of anti-Zionist Jew who hates genocide or the wicked kind of Jew.

If you must impose that binary, I guess that makes me the wicked kind.

I believe in the importance of a Jewish state. I believe that Israel would have respected the territorial boundaries assigned to it in 1947 by the United Nations had it not been invaded. I take pride in the story of Jews in the shadow the Holocaust defying the odds and establishing a nation. I believe there's no greater example of Israel's importance to the Jewish world than when it absorbed the Jewish communities forcefully expelled by their Arab and Persian neighbors in response to its creation.

I also believe you can't tell the story of the formation of the state of Israel without the creation of Palestinian refugees in the wake of the War of Independence, a cultural trauma referred to as the Nakba. I believe that the only pragmatic long-term solution is one involving two states for two peoples. I believe there have been so many heartbreaking failures between the Israelis and the Palestinians that the conversation should avoid getting bogged down in grievances and discuss the obstacles standing in the way of peace.

I am a Zionist. That doesn't mean that I stand blindly with Israel; nor does it mean that I disregard the humanity of Palestinians.

As my wife and I were trying to skirt the family away from the protests, my eight-year-old son put on his kippah. He goes to a Jewish school — so he always has a spare in his coat pocket. It was a sunny day and he was trying to angle the large yarmulke on his forehead so it shaded his eyes.

"Take that off!" I hissed with the urgency I'd use to pull him back from a busy intersection.

It took a moment to process the full implications of what I'd said. One of the unconscious safety alarms I'd developed as a parent had gone off. Not wanting to create a scene, I'd told my son to hide a symbol of our Judaism. Never before had I felt an urgency to keep our religion secret. Our kind of Jews were not welcome.

We witnessed the encampment in the early stages before the giant banner went up that read, "Long live the Intifada."

My formative years were a time of hope. Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Fatah leader Yasser Arafat both seemed sincere about the promise of two states for two people, and (naively) it seemed like a matter of time.

Similar to the 1979 peace deal between Egypt and Israel, it was a chance to put aside grievances and allow statesmanship to prevail.

Alas. Rabin was assassinated by an Israeli extremist. Hamas, with the goal of establishing a Caliphate across a Greater Palestine from the River Jordan to the Mediterranean Sea, began a campaign of suicide bombings.

In 2000, at a peace summit at Camp David, Arafat refused to agree to a two-state solution (I've always believed it was because he was worried about being assassinated by his own people the way Rabin and Anwar Sadat were).

Following the failed peace summit, protests and demonstrations turned violent and then all hell broke loose. Suicide bombers began targeting Israeli civilians at large Passover seders, buses, dance clubs, and restaurants. The Israeli army and police became embroiled in active combat with Palestinians. A lot of lives were lost. The left-wing Israeli parties with dreams of a two-state solution effectively disappeared, with security barriers separating Israeli land from Palestinian territories. That was the result of what's known as the Second Intifada.

It's hard to read "Long Live the Intifada" without seeing it as a celebration of violence.

A lot of the problematic language in these protests isn't about October 7 or the war in Gaza. They are directed towards any of the "bad kind" of Jews who support Israel using language that romanticizes horrific violence against civilians.

Complaints about the language in the protests aren't being taken seriously from the far left. Representative Omar defended her remark about pro-genocide and anti-genocide Jews by posting an article about a student who chanted, "Kill All Arabs" at UMass Amherst. Even if the unnamed student was Jewish, Omar's claim that her comments were referring to this incident is misleading. "Pro-genocide" is directed at Jews who have any level of support for Israel.

Senator Bernie Sanders, when asked about Omar's comments, defended them with a deflection of his own, "The essential point that Ilhan made is that we do not want to see antisemitism in this country."

Whatever one may think about the belief that Israel needs to terminate its military campaign in Gaza immediately, there's nothing inherently antisemitic or hateful about that opinion. Why can't the far-left politicians who have praised and encouraged the protests acknowledge that some of the messaging is hateful and redirect it?

This is a movement that has galvanized young voters and brought their wing of the Democratic Party into the spotlight. It seems no far-left politician wants to risk disapproval by suggesting the protestors tone down the antisemitic and violent language. Politically, it's easier to gaslight the Jews and claim they're being hysterical because some protestors have Jewish friends standing with them.

I still worry I'll have nightmares about the horrors I read about October 7. While I strongly believe Israel needed to respond, I have grave concerns about the humanitarian toll in Gaza and whether Israel's long-term goal of wiping out Hamas is achievable. Whatever one thinks of this take, on college campuses, I'd be labeled as a pro-genocide Zionist.

My daughter was spot on with her comment that the sign calling her a racist for being a Jew who supports Israel didn't jive with what it means to be liberal.

I hope I've managed to outline how complicated and tangled it all is and why the messaging is so hurtful. I can confidently say I know I don't have it right. With each brief historical summary I gave, I see so many ways to find flaws in so many sentences and what I left in or out. I'm a far, far cry from an expert. If you're looking for a simple history with a clear and obvious answers, I recommend you consider another region of the world.

The reality is, the United States of America is not a great place to be Jewish today. That's not something I would've imagined thinking a decade ago. Between Jewish schools and our synagogue, I pay a significant amount of money each year to fund our security. A tax on being a practicing Jew in America.

In the past year, hundreds of synagogues and Jewish schools in this country were targeted with fake bomb threats or "swatted." I worry in ways I haven't before about a hateful incident when I'm inside a Jewish space.

My daughter frets about whether she'll have the grades to get into the University of Michigan, much the same as I did when I was her age. I fret about whether eight years from now Michigan will be a place for Jews like us.

In the early part of the 20th century, my family made a brave and desperate bet on a foreign land an ocean away. While we have a comfortable life here today, at what point does it get too hard to live our lives as Jews in America?

I don't know the answer to that — and I hope it's not a question I have to seriously ponder. But if it comes to it, I'm grateful for the land of Zion, where all Jews are welcome.

Jewish values lead me to support students in the encampment

By Alexa Eisenberg, UM lecturer and organizer with Jewish Voice for Peace Detroit

I participate in the protests because I am committed to equity, education, and justice. These commitments are grounded in Jewish justice lineages and values like pikuach nefesh, the imperative to save every life. At its core, this is a movement to save as many lives as possible.

I participate because, as a person of conscience and a descendent of survivors of genocide, I cannot remain neutral or stay silent while 35,000 Palestinians have been slaughtered, as entire communities are decimated, and blood lines are ended by Israeli bombs. I participate because I cannot continue business as usual as a faculty member at the University of Michigan, a public institution that preaches commitments to equity and the common good, when in reality it is funding

and enabling the genocide of the Palestinian people.

I participate to act in solidarity with Palestinians, and because I love Jews and I care deeply about the safety of our people. I know Jewish safety is bound up with Palestinian safety and freedom. We are living at a historic junction point in Palestinian history, U.S. history, and Jewish history. While the Israeli government wages genocidal war in the supposed name of protecting Jews, dozens of hostages have been killed by Israeli air raids, and the Israeli government rejects a ceasefire that would bring them home. There is zero doubt in my mind that the State of Israel committing war crimes and upholding apartheid is fueling antisemitism, which makes Jews less safe around the world.

I participate to support academic freedom, free speech, and freedom of assembly. I have been horrified by the culture of repression taking place on university campuses across the country, and have seen my own university censor, suppress, and aggressively police the speech and advocacy of Palestine liberation student activists. I have seen the university deliberately mischaracterize and weaponize fears about Jewish safety to justify illiberal and dangerous policies. Across the country, universities are using violent and punitive approaches to attack one of the largest and most significant student and social movements of the last half century — I reject the claim that this violent suppression serves the cause of Jewish safety.

Finally, I participate to embody the distinction between anti-Zionist politics and antisemitism. I acknowledge that there have been instances of antisemitism at pro-Palestinian demonstrations and solidarity encampments, but they do not define the protests, nor campus life (we must also acknowledge that a few years ago our students were kids, and we are all still learning). The conflation of anti-Zionism with antisemitism is dangerous and undermines our ability to detect and oppose antisemitism when it occurs. I participate in part to offer education about what antisemitism is (re: hatred against Jews, not criticism of Israel) and how to fight against it, along with all interlocking forms of oppression, including Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian racism.

As faculty (and a member of Faculty and Staff for Justice in Palestine), my role is to support student leadership in the encampment. History has shown us time and time again to follow the lead of young people. Young people were right in demanding an end to the brutal war on Vietnam. Young people were right to pressure their universities to divest from South African apartheid. And history will show that young people were right to fight against the Israeli government's genocide of Palestinians and apartheid regime.

I support by being physically present at the camp — whenever I am able, I spend time working, grading, or reading at the encampment (the nice weather has been

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lovely in that regard). I have participated in Jewish rituals and attended teach-ins. I have felt nothing but safe, welcome, and inspired by the solidarity, good will, and unity of purpose that have brought Palestinian and Jewish students and faculty together (aside from one parent calling me a “loser” and telling me to “get a job”). Another way I participate is by staying alert to any attempt by the University to invoke a militarized police response against students or the camp. I am horrified by the University’s decision to call the police on nonviolent student protesters last week, who were attacked with pepper spray and assaulted with bikes and batons.

Like many American Jews, I was brought up in a congregation where I was taught that Jewish identity and Israeli nationalism were inextricable. I visited Israel as a kid on a “teen mission,” and fell in love with the place, and deeper in love with Judaism. Of course I was taught nothing about Palestinians, their dispossession, or the occupation. It was not until college when I learned about the complex history of the land, about the Nakba, and about apartheid conditions. Naturally, I was horrified and indignant about the propaganda and one-sided information I was given as a kid and felt horribly guilty and betrayed. It impacted my relationship to Judaism and Jewish community for years. Now, after being introduced to Jewish community, ritual, and practice separate from Zionism, Jewish faith and practice has again become central to my life. I see organizing for justice in the U.S. and in Palestine/Israel as an embodiment of my Judaism.

The UM encampment was not established out of the blue — rather, it was an escalation of strategic, principled organizing by the TAHRIR Coalition, whose members have faced censorship, repression, and policing by the University since October 7. [TAHRIR is an acronym for Transparency - Accountability - Humanity - Reparations - Investment - Resistance, a coalition of more than 80 UM campus groups.]

I have learned a lot about the University’s investments from UM graduate students involved in the TAHRIR Coalition who have done incredible investigative research, despite the University’s opacity with respect to its endowment (see bit.ly/UMEndowmentGuide). I have learned that UM’s \$17.9B endowment dwarfs the costs of its academic operations, which in 2024 were budgeted at roughly \$5.4B. I have learned that our public university’s tax-exempt status makes it ripe for high-risk investment strategies, aka “nonmarketable alternative investments,” which have ballooned since the early 2000s when UM successfully lobbied the state for its investments to be exempt from the Freedom of Information Act. Importantly, I’ve learned that over \$6B of the University’s endowment is invested in companies that profit from the sale of weapons and other repressive tools to Israel, including drones and spyware used by the IDF to kill children in Gaza. I have learned that there are students, faculty, and staff in every corner of the University who refuse to stand for our tax dollars and our university’s investments being used to fuel endless war and Palestinian oppression.

The encampment gives me hope

By Cameron Kaufman, UMich student

Growing up a fairly secular Ashkenazi Jew in Southeastern Michigan, I read a lot of books about the Holocaust. I grew up with it ingrained in me that Israel and Zionism were necessary to be safe as a Jew in the world to protect us from genocide, and I believed Israel could do no wrong. The Jewish summer camp and the temple I went to for High Holiday services reinforced those beliefs. But as I grew older, I met more Palestinians, and I watched in 2021 as Palestinians protested the eviction of six families in Sheikh Jarrah and ensuing Israeli air raids flattened apartments and news offices.

Watching the brutality and sheer violence that Israel continually perpetrated against Palestinians and hearing the stories of my classmates entirely shook my outlook on the world. I realized that the entire idea behind Zionism and the foundation of Israel was contradictory to the principles that I had learned from Judaism. Zionism is built on the idea that we as Jews are unsafe everywhere, which then ostensibly gives Jewish people the right to take Palestinian land and commit an ongoing campaign of ethnic cleansing and genocide against Palestinians to obtain more land that can become Jewish-only.

The belief that Jews need a militarized, nationalistic, segregated state built upon the racist destruction of millions of Palestinian lives and homes to be safe is directly at odds with so many Jewish values: Tikkun Olam, Pikuach Nefesh, pursuit of justice, and resistance against oppression. The conflation of Judaism and Zionism supported by Israeli hasbara initiatives also entirely ignores the long Jewish history of valuing doikayt — fighting antisemitism wherever we find it, in all the places that Jewish people currently live.

My beliefs, shaped by my Jewish experiences growing up, require me to speak out, to do something, anything, to resist what Israel is doing and reject the premise that to be Jewish is to support Zionism. Watching the backlash against student protests, I ask — why do so many people care more about people protesting Israel than what Israel is actually doing? How can I sit back as Israel continues a campaign of relentless, indiscriminate bombing and destruction on Gaza while severely restricting humanitarian aid that would provide medicine, fuel, and food to two million starving Gazans? How can I ignore that Israel has murdered at least 35,000 Palestinians, including 14,500 children, all paid for by my tax dollars and the investments of my university? Why are so many silent, or even worse, justify it when there is a genocide against Palestinians in our name, and Israel began an assault on the last “safe” city in Gaza on Yom HaShoah? What happened to Never Again? Now, more than ever, as attacks against the pro-Palestine movement, freedom of protest, and Palestinian people worsen, I refuse to be complicit, and I refuse to be neutral. My Judaism compels me to fight for divestment from Israel and war profiteers everywhere, important for all

struggles for liberation and peace.

It’s hard to be Jewish, and antisemitism is bad right now, worsening every time Israel escalates their campaign of mass murder. To claim that to be Jewish is to unconditionally support Israel and Zionism is not only heartbreaking and infuriating, but also frequently leads to spikes in antisemitism as many people who know nothing about the richness and diversity of Jewish culture, history, and traditions come to exclusively associate Jewishness with the murderous state of Israel.

The conflation between Judaism and Zionism also leads to mischaracterization of anti-Zionist pro-Palestine protests as virulent antisemitism. Antisemitism is not rampant at the encampment at Michigan, regardless of what most media outlets will tell you. The word intifada and the phrase “from the river to the sea” are not inherently antisemitic or violent, and largely are only seen as such because of racist and Islamophobic stereotypes of Palestinians. The word intifada is a call for justice and liberation from occupation, and “from the river to the sea” originated as a call for a secular, multicultural democratic state in all of historic Palestine free from all forms of oppression.

Jewish people make up a significant amount of the pro-Palestine movement on campus and are welcomed to the movement into the open arms of proud Jews and goyim alike. This current fixation on supposed widespread antisemitism at encampments has been repeatedly used as a political tool to try to derail the movement for divestment and justify immense surveillance, repression, and police violence. The sheer number of unsubstantiated claims of antisemitism also makes it increasingly difficult to identify acts of antisemitism, and could even cause dismissive attitudes towards antisemitism and threats to Jewish safety.

History did not begin on October 7, and neither did the movement for Palestine. I’ve attended protests organized by Students Allied for Freedom and Equality, the chapter of Students for Justice

in Palestine at the University of Michigan, since I first started my undergraduate college degree in fall 2022, but the collective punishment of Gaza in retaliation for the October 7 attack by Hamas pushed me to have greater involvement with our newly formed Jewish Voice for Peace chapter in particular. Throughout the past seven months of sheer horror in Gaza, I have felt an obligation to do as much as possible to stop the genocide, but everything I do still feels insufficient. I’ve helped plan events, including Shabbat, Chanukah, teach-ins, and protests. For the encampment, I and several other organizers put many hours (and days) of effort towards planning and scheduling a variety of programming including a Seder, teach-ins, Palestine-focused art, Havdalah services, Jumah services, and rallies. It was an immense amount of work, but played an important role in fostering the flourishing, compassionate, multicultural community that was entirely unlike any other community I have ever experienced.

The encampment was a welcoming, intersectional community that instilled a sense of hope in me and allowed everyone involved to respectfully experience new cultures and traditions. Being at the encampment restored my hope in humanity and in Judaism, and honestly part of the reason I still have any hope at all is due to the community and communal organizing efforts, particularly with regards to the encampment. Having the community and meeting so many wonderful people, particularly elders and fellow anti-Zionist Jews, has been one of the main ways I’ve managed to remain somewhat hopeful in the face of horror. Having the support of a community of Jews who are all wrestling with the conflation of Judaism and Zionism and the experience of having a genocide perpetrated in our name has been immensely healing. My experiences spending so much time at the encampment for the first eight days emphasized to me that building connections, bringing community in, centering intersectionality, and learning to work together is necessary to build any movement that seeks to create change in the world, and we must not forget that ■

Recap: 2024 Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival

By Drew Coel, Ann Arbor JCC

This year’s Ann Arbor Jewish Film Festival was a success! Taking place from May 5–26, our festival featured 17 feature films, two sets of short films, and seven live events, six of which took place at the State Theatre in downtown Ann Arbor.

There was a strong turnout at the festival’s kickoff event with Ron Frank’s *Remembering Gene Wilder*, a heartfelt tribute to the acting legend. The film showed interviews and never-before-seen footage, providing insight into the life, career, and legacy of Gene Wilder.

Sponsor Night at Washtenaw Com-

munity College’s Morris Lawrence building included a delicious dinner and a showing of Laura Bialis’s exceptional film, *Vishniac*, a tribute to the photographer who captured iconic images of Jewish life in the years before World War II, Roman Vishniac. The evening also included a thought-provoking discussion of the documentary led by local award-winning author and University of Michigan Professor Deborah Dash Moore.

The JCC extends overwhelming gratitude to our staff, our dedicated film festival committee, our sponsors, and our community members. Thank you for making our festival possible, year after year! ■

Under fire from Congress, Northwestern's Jewish president forcefully defends encampment deal

Andrew Lapin, originally for the JTA

At one point in his congressional testimony on campus antisemitism, Northwestern University President Michael Schill found himself sparring with Rep. Elise Stefanik over a purported conversation he had with the school's Hillel director.

"Isn't it true that you asked the Hillel director whether it was possible to hire an anti-Zionist head of Hillel/rabbi?" asked Stefanik, the firebrand New York Republican who has taken center stage at previous hearings on the topic.

"I absolutely did not. I would never hire anyone based upon their views of being Zionist or anti-Zionist. That's not what I do," Schill responded.

"That's not according to the whistleblowers who have come forward to this committee," Stefanik retorted.

The exchange was one of many explosive moments in the latest hearing on campus antisemitism on Thursday, which hinged largely on whether Northwestern and other universities were right to make agreements with pro-Palestinian protesters that ended encampments on their campuses. Northwestern's agreement with protesters prompted the bulk of the day's questioning, and Schill stood by the deal.

"By engaging students with dialogue instead of force, we modeled the behavior we want to apply going forward," Schill, who is Jewish, said during the Republican-led House Committee on Education and the Workforce hearing.

At the hearing, Schill joined Rutgers University President Jonathan Holloway and University of California, Los Angeles Chancellor Gene Block, who is also Jewish. All were called to account for how colleges have responded to a groundswell of protest around the ongoing Israel-Hamas war. (A fourth participant, Phi Beta Kappa Society CEO Frederick Lawrence, provided analysis.)

It was the third time since the outbreak of the war on Oct. 7 that university presidents have been called before Congress to testify on campus antisemitism. The first such hearing, in December, led to the resignations of two Ivy League presidents, while a follow-up in April with the president of Columbia University touched off a nationwide pro-Palestinian encampment movement that has bedeviled schools and, Jewish students and groups say, created a hostile and antisemitic atmosphere.

Now, the heads of three schools whose encampments had been cleared were asked to defend their approaches to the issue. Two of the witnesses, Schill and Holloway, cleared their schools' encampments peacefully by agreeing to review the schools' financial holdings in Israel and to take on additional Palestinian students and faculty. Those terms upset several Jewish groups as well as Republicans on the committee.

Block, meanwhile, sent police in to clear UCLA's encampment — but only after several days of rising tensions during which Jewish students were harassed and a pro-Israel mob attacked pro-Palestinian protesters, resulting in injuries. Since then, the University of Califor-

nia's graduate student union has gone on strike over what it said was UCLA's handling of its encampment, prompting an ongoing legal battle. The school has also reassigned its head of campus security; a new encampment went up Thursday as Block was testifying.

In defending the Rutgers agreement, Holloway advocated "dialogue as a first option instead of police action," saying during his opening remarks, "We had seen what transpired at other universities," where thousands of students have been arrested in recent weeks.

Schill added that getting rid of the encampment was the best way to address the safety concerns of Jewish students. He described various antisemitic flyers protesters had distributed, including one targeting him. But he came under the harshest scrutiny at the hearing, as Republicans sought to make an example of his deal with Northwestern's encampment. Some openly called for his resignation over it.

The Northwestern deal has proven the most contentious of any of the more than a dozen similar agreements colleges have since struck. It led to the dissolution of the school's advisory committee on antisemitism after the Jewish members resigned in protest, as well as calls from leaders of major Jewish organizations for Schill's resignation.

"Mr. Schill, you cut a disgraceful deal with the encampment that prompted seven Jewish members of your own antisemitism advisory committee to resign in protest," North Carolina Rep. Virginia Foxx, the committee chair, admonished during her opening remarks. During her closing remarks, Foxx further attacked Schill for what she said was "the condescension and contempt you've shown for the committee and towards your own Jewish students today."

Some Republicans echoed harsh criticisms of Schill, with Stefanik referencing the Anti-Defamation League's "F" rating of Northwestern's approach to antisemitism. (Jews at several schools have criticized the ADL's report-card project.) California Rep. Kevin Kiley said he agreed with the ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt's call for Schill's resignation.

"I would associate myself with the comments of the ADL," Kiley said, calling Schill "the easiest case that we have dealt with. You agreed to the demands of those who are trying to change university policy in an antisemitic way."

But Schill, a free-speech legal scholar who assumed the campus presidency in 2022, pushed back on the questions — delivering a more pugnacious performance than the other university presidents called before Congress. He shot back at questioners who accused him of granting a "sweetheart deal" with the protesters, and made a show of defending his character in general.

"I really am offended by you telling me what my views are," he retorted to Utah Rep. Burgess Owens at one point, during a back-and-forth about Northwestern's connections to Qatar and the media outlet Al-Jazeera. Later, asked if he would commit to keeping any suspected violators of the school's code of conduct off campus in the fall, Schill responded, "That is not how due process works."

In addition to denying the conversation with the Hillel director, Schill rebutted claims by Republicans that his agreement with the encampment was inappropriate or provided too many concessions to protesters. He said several of the terms, including commitments to fund Palestinian students and scholars, were simply extensions of existing programs and added that he refused to consider any demands that the university divest from Israel. He described the decision to pursue a deal as the best of the options available to the university after ruling out other approaches, such as police intervention and ignoring the encampment altogether.

The Hillel director, Michael Simon, was a member of the antisemitism committee that Northwestern formed after Oct. 7 and that disbanded following the encampment deal. While Simon was one of seven Jewish members who signed a letter to Schill claiming that "we were not consulted by the University's leadership and had no role in the agreement," Schill testified under oath Thursday that, in fact, he had consulted with Simon on the deal.

Reached by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Simon confirmed that he and Schill had discussed one part of the deal but that "the committee as a whole" was not consulted on it. He also said that Schill had mentioned an early student demand to hire an anti-Zionist rabbi, but that, contrary to Stefanik's characterization of the conversation, Schill had already rejected the idea and "that was not on the table."

Facing pushback from lawmakers on both sides of the aisle, Schill also defended his decision not to involve the antisemitism committee in the agreement, though he committed to reconstituting the body.

"That was never in the purview of that committee," Schill said, adding, "That committee was designed to assess the extent of antisemitism on campus and then to propose educational and other ways to deal with it. It wasn't to deal with an existing encampment." Elsewhere he added that it would have been "impractical" to consult "Jewish and Israeli students" on the agreement.

That answer did not satisfy Pennsylvania Democratic Rep. Susan Wild, who is Jewish. Wild responded, "It seems to me that you had a ready-made committee that could've been asked to weigh in on this, and obviously seven of the members of that committee felt the same because they stepped down."

The other university leaders also faced questions. Progressive Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, a fierce critic of Israel, took Block to task for failing to respond more quickly to the pro-Israel activists' violence at UCLA, though she did not directly reference the ideology of the attackers, instead describing them as a "mob of agitators gathered near the encampment with a clear intention to cause violence." Omar told Block, "You should be ashamed for letting a peaceful protest gathering get hijacked by an angry mob."

Omar also described a pro-Israel counterprotest tactic that took place at UCLA:

using a screen and loudspeaker to project filmed clips from Hamas' Oct. 7 attacks directly at the encampments. She did not note that the material was from Oct. 7, instead describing it as "vile and disturbing footage." She also took a quiet step toward referencing Jewish disagreement over the encampments by entering into the congressional record an open letter from Jewish UCLA faculty and staff without describing its contents. Omar may have been referring to a letter from some Jewish faculty criticizing Block for his handling of the encampment that asserted, "Critiques of Israel are not presumptively antisemitic."

Block said his school "should have been prepared" to remove its encampment sooner but did not specify that pro-Israel counterprotesters were to blame for the violence.

Jews were also at the center of the debate over the Rutgers encampment. Shortly before Thursday's hearing, dueling open letters circulated: one pair from Rutgers Jewish faculty and students said the school had become "intimidating" for Jews because of the encampments, while the other, from Jewish faculty at Rutgers and other universities, praised the agreement by saying it was "in conformity with the fundamental mandate of the university: openness to dialogue and critical inquiry, the pursuit of knowledge, and mutual understanding. It also conforms to our commitments as Jews and as educators."

Jewish critics of the university heads remained unmoved by their performance during the hearing. "Rather than holding perpetrators of antisemitic harassment & intimidation accountable—as he pledged he would—President Schill gave them a seat at the table and normalized their hatred against Jewish students," the ADL wrote on Twitter, sharing a clip of Stefanik referencing their report cards.

A leading anti-Zionist Jewish group involved in the encampments, meanwhile, reserved its harshest critique for the fact the hearing was taking place at all.

"It is offensive and dangerous that right-wing Republicans are putting on a show hearing under the pretense of protecting Jewish safety when in fact the only thing they are protecting are the profits of weapons companies and ongoing U.S. complicity in Israeli war crimes," Stefanie Fox, executive director of Jewish Voice for Peace, said in a statement. "Congress is using these hearings to distract from the very point of the principled anti-genocide student movement."

During his opening remarks, Block drew attention to his Jewish background by noting that, in a previous job as provost of the University of Virginia, he watched "neo-Nazis rioting outside the synagogue in Charlottesville where my children were called to the Torah." He was referring to a 2017 rally by white supremacists in which one counterprotester was killed.

The chancellor has not faced the same calls to resign that Schill has drawn, because he is retiring at the end of the current school year, which is in its final weeks. When asked what UCLA will be doing differently in the fall to help Jewish students, Block responded, "I will not be there this fall." ■

Calendar

June Calendar

Always check websites or call for updates before planning to attend anything listed here and for prayer services.

Saturday 1 Bechukotai

Havdallah 9:57 p.m.

Shabbat Morning Services. Pardes Hannah. In-person and online. 10 a.m.

Rejoice with Regina Gala Dinner and Tribute Celebration: TBE. 6 – 10 p.m.

Sunday 2

Monday 3

Tuesday 4

JCC Annual Meeting: 7 p.m.

Wednesday 5 Yom Yerushalayim

Thursday 6

Friday 7 Rosh Hodesh Sivan

Candle Lighting 8:51 p.m. Bamidbar

Saturday 8

Havdallah 10:02 p.m.

Sunday 9

Monday 10

Tuesday 11

Wednesday 12 Shavuot

Thursday 13 Shavuot

Friday 14

Candle Lighting 8:55 p.m. Naso

The Beit Midrash Studio Series: Idelle Hammond-Sass leads using the Open Studio Process. Each 90-minute zoom session includes text and discussion, artmaking, writing and (witness) reading. Sponsored by the Jewish Women Artists Network of the W.C.A. \$15 non-members, \$10. members. All participants are eligible to submit work to the exhibit “The Art of Process: Dialog and Resolution” at 22 North Gallery. https://nwca.memberclicks.net/beit_midrash4. 11-12:30 EST

Saturday 15

Havdallah 10:06 p.m.

Study Session. Pardes Hannah. In-person and online. 3 p.m.

Sunday 16

Jewish Community Meet Up at Top of the Park: Fed.

Monday 17

Tuesday 18

Wednesday 19

Yiddish tish: (Virtual) (Yiddish Conversation & Reading Group): Zoom. About 45 minutes each of conversation and reading. Free and open to all those interested in Yiddish language, literature, and culture, no matter what level of proficiency. For more infor-

mation, to get the link, and to make certain that we are meeting on a specific day, please email Elliot H. Gertel at egertel@umich.edu at least one day before scheduled meeting day every Wednesday (except major Jewish holidays). 2 p.m.

Thursday 20

Amster Gallery Exhibition: A Collection of Works by Jerry Herman (z”l): JCC. 6 p.m.

Friday 21

Candle Lighting 8:57 p.m. Behaalotecha

Saturday 22

Havdallah 10:08 p.m.

Sunday 23

Honey Cakes and Latkes: Zekelman Holocaust Center. 2:30 p.m.

Monday 24

ORT 40th Anniversary Celebration. 6 p.m.

Tuesday 25

Wednesday 26

Thursday 27

Friday 28

Candle Lighting 8:57 p.m. Shlach

Saturday 29

Havdallah 10:07 p.m.

Sunday 30

Phone numbers, websites, and addresses of organizations frequently listed in the calendar:

Ann Arbor Orthodox Minyan (AAOM): 1429 Hill Street, 248-408-3269, annarborminyan.org

Ann Arbor Reconstructionist Congregation (AARC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-445-1910, aarecon.org

Beth Israel Congregation (BIC): 2000 Washtenaw Ave, 734-665-9897, bethisrael-aa.org

Chabad House: 715 Hill Street, 734-995-3276, jewmich.com

Eastern Michigan University Center for Jewish Studies (EMU): www.emich.edu/jewish-studies/

Frankel Center: 202 S. Thayer St., lsa.umich.edu/judaic/

Jewish Community Center (JCC): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 745-971-0990, jccannarbor.org

Jewish Cultural Society (JCS): 2935 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-975-9872, jewishculturalsociety.org

Jewish Family Services (JFS): 2245 South State Street, 734-769-0209, jfsannarbor.org

Jewish Federation: 2939 Birch Hollow Drive, 734-677-0100, jewishannarbor.org

Pardes Hannah: 2010 Washtenaw Ave, 734-761-5324, pardeshannah.org

Temple Beth Emeth (TBE): 2309 Packard Road, 734-665-4744, templebethemeth.org

UM Hillel: 1429 Hill Street 734-769-0500, michiganhillel.org ■

Graves Cont from pg. 14

A picture of the two commanders holding the Israeli flag next to a grave of a Jewish soldier has gone viral, with more than 3.5 million viewers in Israel and abroad. The event in the cemetery received a great deal of attention in the Israeli media, both secular and religious.

I felt the event in the cemetery was a moment of unity and commemoration, honoring the Jewish soldiers who fought in Gaza more than 100 years ago and who are buried in the cemetery.

For me, the recitation of Kaddish in the British Army Cemetery in Gaza underscores the universal human impulse to honor the dead and to seek connection with those who came before us. I believe that during conflict and chaos, such gestures of respect and reverence serve as powerful reminders of our shared humanity and the importance of preserving the memories of those who have gone before us.

Focus groups on “aging solo”

By Jill Kind, Director of WISE Aging Services at Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw

Alison is 78 years old, widowed, and lives alone. Her sister, five years older and her only family, was very ill until the end of her life. Alison provided support and acted as her Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care. Now Alison is thinking about what will happen when she needs that kind of help. Alison has good friends, but chronic health conditions are starting to make life more difficult for all of them. She can’t identify a single person who could take on that responsibility. Plus, she doesn’t have the financial resources to pay for that help. She’s alone and feels enormous shame in admitting she has no one to care for her.

More and more older adults like Alison are “aging solo” and do not have a trusted advocate to ensure their end-of-life decisions are carried out. Without family and financial resources, there is no back-up system of financial advisors or attorneys to identify and implement the medical treatment or essential wishes of these older adults. Older adults are often reluctant to complete Advanced Directives because it means acknowledging they don’t have anyone to fulfill the role of Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care. As devastating as this is for older adults, it is also a significant problem for health care providers, who want to follow the patient’s wishes, but must err on the side of providing every possible life saving treatment when explicit instructions aren’t available.

Jewish Family Services of Washtenaw, with the support of the Sephardic Foundation, is exploring potential solutions to this problem and is seeking the input and recommendations of older adults and professionals with experience in end-of-life issues. Some questions to address include:

During the past several months since I first read these reports of the British Cemetery in Gaza and the recitation of Kaddish in the cemetery, I found myself surfing YouTube videos taken there while I recite Kaddish for Israelis and Palestinians who died in Gaza.

Personally, I like to replace the line in the Kaddish “v’al kol Yisra’el” (and upon all Israel) with “v’al kol yoshvei tevel” (and upon all the inhabitants of the world).

I hope that the recitation of Kaddish by the commander in the British Army Cemetery in Gaza will inspire you as it inspired me to recite Kaddish for Jews and non-Jews, Israelis and Palestinians, who were killed during the Hama-Israel war in Gaza. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTSOIEzEPHI> ■

How are older adults and stakeholders currently responding to this issue? What new ideas can be explored?

Is there a role for volunteers or a support group of older adults to be trained to be DPAHC? What are the benefits, obstacles, and issues?

What possible community-wide solutions exist or could be proposed? What role can social service providers, medical practitioners, and others provide?

Older adults want peace of mind and confidence that their medical wishes and end-of-life plans will be respected. Can you help?

We need the input of older adults.

Are you an older adult who is “aging solo”? We define that as being without family or an identified trusted friend who is able and willing to take on Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care tasks. Would you be willing to participate in a focus group, or perhaps a personal interview?

We need ideas from community stakeholders.

Are you a health care provider, in legal services, or have a role in the community that involves end-of-life issues? Would you be willing to participate in a focus group or interview to give us your thoughts and ideas?

Focus groups and interviews will take place in June and July. If you’d like to participate, please contact Sarah Russman at sarahr@jfsannarbor.org or Jill Kind at jkind@jfsannarbor.org for more information. We look forward to your input! ■

Obituaries

The WJN prints obituaries, memories, and eulogies free of charge for family members of Washtenaw Jewish community members as a service to the community and to honor the lives of those who have passed away. When local congregations send condolence notices to the WJN, the editor searches for obituaries online. Also, community members are invited to send obituaries to the editor.



Samuel Fine, age 97, of Ann Arbor died on April 24, 2024. Beloved husband of Peggy A. Fine, dear father of Valerie (the late Alvin) Klaassen, Emily (James) Reyes, the late Lawrence Fine, and the late Jeffrey Fine. Loving grandfather of Bella Reyes, Max Reyes, and Isaac Reyes. Sam enjoyed a unique and inspiring enthusiasm for learning and life from childhood through age 97.

He remained curious his entire life, learning languages and taking online college courses into his 90's. Sam delighted in good conversation and took every opportunity to learn about the passions and interests of others. A chat with Sam offered a window into his unique and complex life experiences which he immensely enjoyed sharing with willing audiences. Both a great listener and storyteller, Sam shared tales from his extraordinary life with zeal and modesty - a fine line to walk and he did it well with graceful execution.

Sam reluctantly retired at 94 from an incredible creative career. From science and technology to pop culture, he never limited how he applied his many talents and would encourage others to do the same. Sam designed the original Domino's Pizza logo and later became head of marketing for the company, playing an intricate role in securing Domino's Pizza into its position as a global brand in the 1980s. He firmly believed and lived by example that there absolutely no limits to what one can accomplish. The world truly is your oyster.

His adoring wife, daughters, son-in-law, and three grandchildren are so deeply grateful to have known him and loved him, but can assure all that with Sam, it was never enough time. He was infamous for long goodbyes. He had to squeeze in one more question or one more story with one foot out the door. His final goodbye was impossibly heartbreaking to accept, but he will remain with us in what he has taught us and how he inspired his family and those who were blessed to know him. He is dearly missed, and we will continue to celebrate his impact

and memory for years to come. The Graveside Service was held on Friday April 26, 2024, at Adat Shalom Memorial Park, Livonia. Arrangements entrusted to the Hebrew Memorial Chapel, Oak Park. You can watch the service and/or leave a tribute with the family by visiting www.hebrewmemorial.org



Muriel Snyder Gluckman, 95, of Ann Arbor, Michigan, died after sunset on May 20.

Muriel Snyder Gluckman was born on September 7, 1928, in Charleroi, Pennsylvania, the second child of Gertrude Westerman Snyder and Leonard Samuel "Sam" Snyder. She excelled in school and was especially inspired by her chemistry teacher at Charleroi High School. After winning a college scholarship based on an essay competition, she attended the University of Pennsylvania where she majored in chemistry, belonged to the Phi Sigma Sigma sorority, and met her future husband Melvyn Gluckman in a chemistry lab.

After completing a master's degree in chemistry at Bryn Mawr College, Muriel worked at the chemical company Rohm & Haas both before and after she and Melvyn had their first child. She eventually discontinued her work as a chemist to raise four children, Elaine, Arthur, Stephanie, and Amy. Throughout, she was actively involved as a school and community volunteer, including being an enthusiastic member and leader in the Wayne Woods Garden Club and always bringing her children into the pleasures of gardening and flower arranging. During these years she also pursued her interest in visual art, taking courses in art history at the Barnes Foundation and studying studio art at the Tyler School of Art. In the 1970s she took steps to return to the chemistry field, working first at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia and then at Gelman Sciences in Ann Arbor.

Muriel and Mel had a close and loving marriage for 67 years until Mel's death in 2009. Together they endured the tragic losses of two of their children as young adults: Arthur at age 27 and Elaine at age 42. But Muriel carried on with tremendous verve and spirit. After retirement, she led a full and active life with Mel. She went back to school, taking a series of courses at Washtenaw Community College including computer graphics and digital photography.

She also volunteered at both the Ypsilanti Public Library and the Matthaei Botanical Gardens. At the Matthaei, she was especially passionate about showing visitors around the Solar House, an experimental totally-solar model house that was stationed there for many years. She would often say that she cared about the problem of climate change because she wanted her grandchildren to have a livable planet. She will be sorely missed.

Beloved wife of the late Melvyn I. Gluckman. Dear mother of Stephanie (John) Ulcej, Amy Gluckman, the late Elaine Gluckman Popowitz and the late Arthur Gluckman. Cherished mother-in-law of Harold (Janet) Popowitz. Devoted grandmother of Abby Ulcej, Adam Charles Popowitz, Elizabeth Cayouette, and Sarah Cayouette-Gluckman. Treasured sister of Elaine Snyder Danzig and the late Bernard Snyder and sister-in-law of the late Howard Gluckman and the late Jerry Gluckman. Also survived by many loving nieces and nephews, other relatives, and friends.

Contributions may be directed to the Washtenaw Community College Foundation, Student Center Building, Suite 304, 4800 East Huron River Drive, Ann Arbor, MI 48105-4800, <https://www.wccnet.edu/foundation/>. ■

Simchas and Sorrows

The Washtenaw Jewish community sends condolences to the families of:

Yael Zoldan on the death of her brother, Oded Ostfeld, April 22.

Matt Kaplan on the death of his father, Irving Kaplan, May 4.

Samuel Fine, age 97, of Ann Arbor died on April 24.

Muriel Snyder Gluckman who died after sunset on May 20.

The Washtenaw Jewish community sends mazeltovs to:

Justin and Rebekah Gamble who welcomed son, Jaxon Richard-Henry on February 2. Brother of Jordyn, Jenna & Jillian. Grandson of Sally and Richard z"l Adler.

Annie Russell on her bat mitzvah, June 1.

Sam Mickey on his bar mitzvah, June 8.

Colin Renouf on his bar mitzvah, June 22.

Michael Appel & Ruth Kraut and siblings Lior and Joel Appel-Kraut on the marriage of Gabe Appel-Kraut to Erika Tarley.

Deborah Beim & Michael Pomeranz on the birth of their son, Benjamin Pomeranz, also brother of

Samuel Pomeranz. ■

Rabbi's Corner



The Ten Commandments

By Rabbi Aharon Goldstein, Chabad of Ann Arbor

On Wednesday June 12-13 we will be celebrating the holiday of Shavuot. We read in the Torah about one of the most momentous events in Jewish history — the giving of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. United within these laws are two apparently quite different orders: The first commandments express and reveal the deepest truths about G-d's unity (true monotheism); the last, on the other hand, contain such elementary injunctions as "Thou shalt not murder" and "Thou shalt not steal," which seem self-evident even to the average human intellect.

However, the truth is that even "self-evident" moral precepts, if left to human judgment alone, without binding force of Divine authority and sanction, can, out of self-love, be distorted so as to turn vice into "virtue."

By rejecting the commandments of "I am G-d" and "Thou shalt have no other gods", or by disassociating them from the societal, moral commandments such as not to murder or steal, society ceases to be safeguarded against bloodshed and theft, their most brutal forms. But, certainly, then, it is also not safeguarded against more subtle forms such as the "bloodshed" of character assassination, or the "theft" of knowledge, and the like.

The Ten Commandments emphasize, and experience has fully and repeatedly borne it out, that even the simplest precepts of morality and ethics must rest on the foundation of "I am G-d" and "Thou shalt have no other gods" — and only then can their compliance be assured.

If, in previous generations there were people who doubted the need of Divine authority for common morality and ethics, in the belief that human reason is sufficient authority, then our present generation has, unfortunately, in a most devastating and tragic way, refuted this mistaken notion. For it is precisely the nation which had excelled itself in the exact sciences, the humanities and even in philosophy and ethics, that turned out to be the most depraved nation of the world, idealizing murder and robbery, etc. Anyone who knows how insignificant was the minority of Germans who opposed the Hitler regime, realizes that the German cult was not something which was practiced by a few individuals, but had embraced the vast majority of that nation, who considered itself the "super race," etc. ■



JOIN US!

JEWISH COMMUNITY MEET UP @ TOP OF THE PARK

Sunday, June 16, 2024, 5 pm

ALL AGES WELCOME

Kosher snacks! ✦ Private fenced-in area!

First drink free for 21+! ✦ No registration necessary!



□

Register to WALK today!






Sunday, September 29, 2024
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
 Burns Park Elementary
 1414 Wells St., Ann Arbor, MI 48104

Join us for JFS' annual Walk a Mile in My Shoes event supporting RISE Resettlement Services. Gather together in solidarity to embrace the struggles that our new neighbors have endured. We will never know what it's like to walk in their shoes, but we can join as allies to our friends from around the world. Join us in WALK around town that makes a difference in our community and beyond.

**Scan here to START
or JOIN A TEAM TODAY!**





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Corporate Event Chair

jfsannarbor.org | 734.769.0209

Questions? Contact gabbym@jfsannarbor.org

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HONEY CAKE & LATKES

RECIPES FROM THE OLD WORLD BY THE
AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU SURVIVORS



IN-PERSON PROGRAM

Sunday, June 23

2:30 PM

Register at HolocaustCenter.org/Honey

In *Honey Cake & Latkes*, cookbook editor Maria Zalewska brings together a remarkable collection of recipes and stories from **Auschwitz survivors**. Woven together, they form a tapestry of loss and healing as they are handed down from generation to generation.

Join Maria, Holocaust survivor Tova Friedman and her grandson Aron, and local survivors, for a fireside chat followed by a Q&A and dessert reception featuring dishes from the cookbook.

**Admission: \$10 per person,
or free for members of The HC**

**THE Zekelman
HOLOCAUST
CENTER**

28123 Orchard Lake Rd
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