

MAY AND JUNE WORSHIP SCHEDULE

May 1	5:00 pm	Shabbat Afternoon Worship: Bar Mitzvah, Jake Margulies
May 7	6:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship: Gogish family Baby Naming
May 8	9:00 am	Torah 101
May 14	7:30 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship
May 16	8:00 pm	Erev Shavuot Worship & Text Study
May 17	1:30 pm	Shavuot Yizkor Service followed by our new mourners group at 2 pm
May 21	7:30 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship with Prayer-A-Thon winners
May 22	9:00 am 10:30 am	Torah 101 Shabbat Morning Worship: Bar Mitzvah, Jonny Rudin
May 28	7:30 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship

June 4	6:00 pm	Shabbat Worship: Pride Shabbat & Celebration of Recent Graduates
June 5	9:00am 10:30 am	Torah 101 Shabbat Morning Worship: Bat Mitzvah, Kayla Jacobowitz
June 11	5:30 pm 7:30 pm	Tot Shabbat (in-person outdoors) Kabbalat Shabbat Worship
June 12	9:00 am 5:00 pm	Torah 101 Shabbat Afternoon Worship: Bar Mitzvah, Andrew Carter
June 18	7:30 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship
June 25	7:30 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship
June 26	9:00 am	Torah 101

Please join us in-person for our Shabbat Services; see email for sign-up link to attend and for details on our upcoming outdoor services. *Online services will also continue.*



**HAPPY
SPRING!**



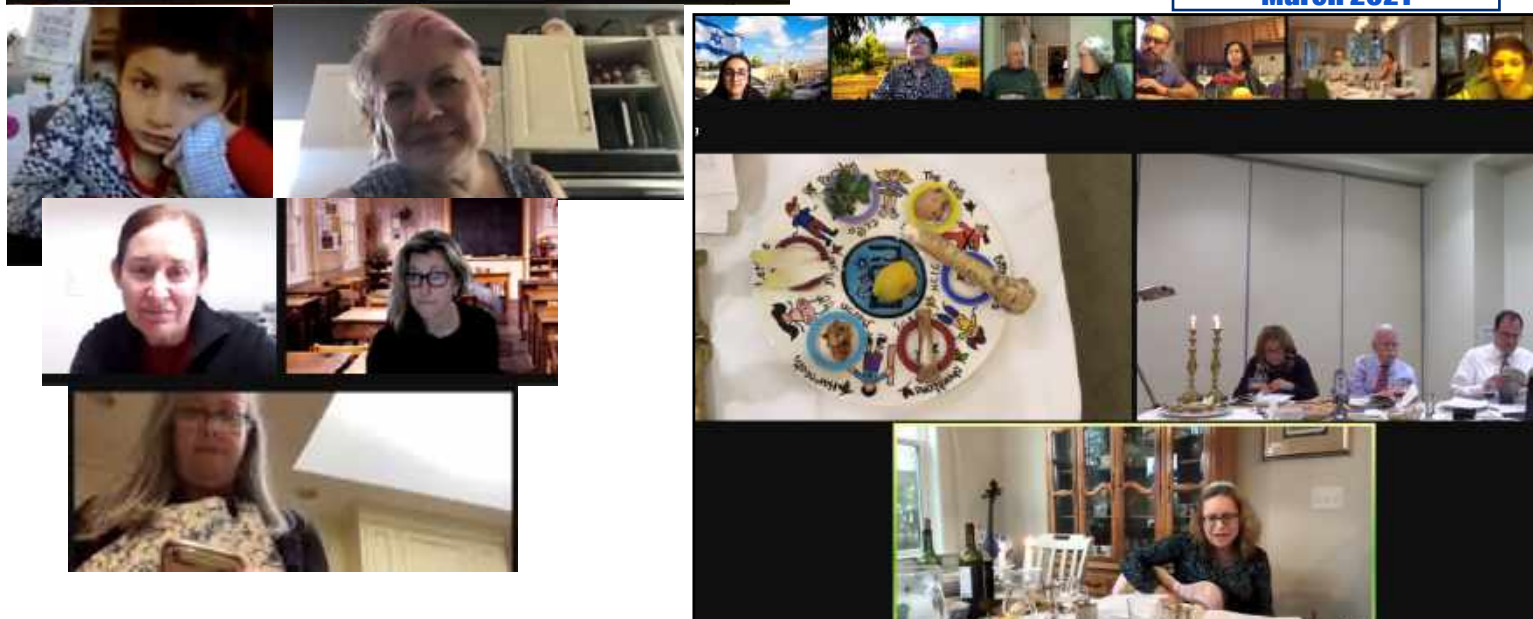
**CONGREGATION
SHIR SHALOM**
of Westchester and Fairfield Counties

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Our Community / Making memories!



Baking Matzah with Chef Rabbi Reiner!



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

LARRY HOFFMAN

Two down and none to go.....for now....

Funny what things you remember from a long time ago, even though sometimes the things you remember are somewhat trivial. I am pretty confident that many years from now I will remember that April of 2021 was the month I received my second Moderna vaccination, an event that will never be trivial in my mind. I have found myself feeling much more confident about my well being, there is a bit more bounce in my step and I have allowed myself to give and receive a few long overdue hugs the last few days and those have never felt better! My hope is that more and more members of our sacred community are experiencing similar feelings and are slowly allowing themselves a few more liberties as it pertains to interacting and enjoying in person family and friends.

With the added confidence that my vaccines have provided, my thoughts are now turning to the different ways we can slowly begin to meet safely in person both in our synagogue and on the grounds of Shir Shalom. I joined the Rabbi at our most recent Friday night Shabbat service and I assure all our congregants there is ample room to be socially distant and I encourage those that are fully vaccinated to come experience a service, dare I say the old fashioned way in person!

The truth is what you will find at our sanctuary is pretty unique; you will be present and see people in person and you can see and hear your fellow congregants on a large screen given the new found technical skills of Rabbi Reiner with a major assist from Julie de Lange.

At the same time we are reopening the synagogue we are cognizant that we need to create a fun social activity that is accessible remotely and I am happy to announce that we will be **hosting a Trivia Night complete with prizes on Sunday, May 23rd**. Please mark your calendar and keep a lookout on your email for more details.

Last, but not least, I wanted to mention that the Hoffman Tennis facility located in South Salem will be hosting an event in late May or early June for any and all congregants that would like to attend. I am hopeful that Dr. David Pazer who has worked so diligently and has been so gracious volunteering his time to consult with us on medical issues will be the first of many to email me at President@OurShirShalom.org to sign up. More details to follow.

Warm Regards,
Larry Hoffman

FROM RABBI REINER'S DESK



In the opening chapter of *The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning* (accepted throughout Judaism as the authority on Jewish death and mourning rituals), Rabbi Maurice Lamm wrote:

“Judaism is a faith that embraces all of life, and death is a part of life. As this faith leads us through moments of joy, so does it guide us through the terrible moments of grief, holding us firm through the complex emotions of mourning and bidding us turn our gaze from the night of darkness to the daylight of life... Thousands of years of our rich tradition provides us with direction during moments of crisis. The accumulated wisdom of the ages is a source of great consolation...”

The dramatic changes to our world in the past year are unprecedented. We have rapidly adapted thousands of year of traditions to continue Shabbat and holiday worship, baby naming ceremonies, B* Mitzvah ceremonies, and even weddings. Hopefully families and friends have found our adaptations meaningful; our worship and ceremonies during the pandemic are similar in content and form, though the celebrations are quite different. I have shared with many that while options are limited today, it is possible to celebrate a marriage, a birth, or a coming of age, months or years after a sacred milestone. We can look forward to a belated hora dance. As I have shared on many occasions, our traditions (and our sacred community) have offered comfort, strength, and stability amidst the chaos and uncertainty of the ongoing pandemic.

The finality of death makes it difficult to offer the same guidance and hope to grieving families. As Rabbi Lamm observed, established mourning rituals and traditions offer a stable foundation at a moment when lives are dramatically and irreversibly changed.

In addition to the stable foundation of tradition and the comfort of accumulated wisdom when the death of a loved one changes our lives, Rabbi Lamm explained that our rituals offer significant psychological benefits. Prompt burial helps many surviving family members move through the “almost unbearable mental strain” of being in the physical company of the deceased (p. 22). Attending and participating in interment forces mourners to acknowledge the death of a loved one with certainty. Shiva is an opportunity to show our support and surround mourners with love, offering an opportunity to process grief in a communal setting, fill in the physical emptiness created by the death of their loved one with our own presence, and remind the mourners that their life will continue albeit differently.

The pandemic has made it difficult to proceed with the rituals and traditions that have brought us stability and helped us process the death of loved ones for countless generations. We have tried to adapt. Visit loved ones nearing death over Facetime is not the same as sitting bedside. A live-streamed burial is quite different from standing graveside and shoveling earth onto a casket. A shiva observance on Zoom does not replace warm loving embraces or being surrounded by family and friends in your home. It may even leave mourners feeling more alone.

There are so many in our sacred community who have experienced the death of a loved one in the past year, from COVID and other causes, unable to experience fully and find comfort in our established mourning rituals and traditions. I wonder and worry about our mourning during the COVID pandemic, if our adapted rituals have offered sufficient stability and comfort at a time when many traditions were impractical if not unsafe.

FROM RABBI REINER'S DESK CONT.

To that end, I would like to create some space for people in our congregation who have experienced the death of a loved one during the pandemic to come together, share memories and experiences and find some comfort and support in the context of our sacred community. We will gather online, Mondays in May at 2PM (including Monday, May 17 (Shavuot) and excluding Monday, May 31 (Memorial Day). Please refer to our weekly blast for more information.

I am reminded of the traditional greeting for mourners (and an expression that concludes our burial services): Hamakom y'nachem...May God console you with all who mourn in Zion and Jerusalem. May we all bring and find comfort with those who mourn.

David Reiner

Torah Study
<p>JOIN RABBI REINER ON SELECT SATURDAYS AT 9AM IN 2021 FOR TORAH 101. PLEASE CHECK OUR WEEKLY E-BLAST AND SHIR SHALOM CALENDAR FOR DATES.</p>



Congregation Shir Shalom is happy to welcome new Congregants:

Arel Meister-Aldama and May Lee Aldama and their children, Artemis and Avery from Ridgefield, CT, (joining grandparents and congregants Dafne and Matthew Meister Aldama).

Jennifer Meyers-Kaupelis and Ryan Kaupelis and their children, Harrison and Aurora from Ridgefield, CT.

Shara Birn and Geoffrey Isenman and their children Desmond, Jack and Samuel from Ridgefield, CT.

Steve and Angela Kesselman and their son Alexander from Ridgefield, CT.

Nicole and Derek Henderson and their daughter Winter, from Ridgefield, CT.

Rachel and Erin Gorman and their children Liam and Owen, from Ridgefield, CT.

Stacey and Jonathan Wanicur and their children Ellie and Tyler, from Ridgefield, CT.

We are glad that you have become part of our Congregation Shir Shalom community and we all wish you a warm welcome!

RITUAL COMMITTEE

BY MICHAEL SALPETER AND LAURIE DUBIN

“Lo the winter is passed, the rain is over and gone. The flowers appear on the earth; the time of singing of birds is heard and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land” **Songs of Solomon 2:11**

Shavuot is the Feast of Weeks or Pentecost. It occurs on the sixth day of the Hebrew month of Sivan. Shavuot falls 7 weeks after Passover at the end of the counting of the Omer (a verbal counting of each of the 49 days between the holidays of Passover and Shavuot). The holiday celebrates the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai as well as the grain harvest for the summer. In biblical times, Shavuot was one of the 3 festivals in which all the Jewish men would go to Jerusalem and bring their first fruits as offerings to G-d. Current practices include celebrating Shavuot by going to synagogue to hear the 10 commandments, having festival meals of dairy foods, and staying up all night/late to learn and read the Book of Ruth. There are many “explanations” of why dairy food; but many of us need no further excuse to eat cheesecake or cheese and crackers. Traditions of staying up all night to learn the Torah is to “make up” for our ancestors oversleeping the day they were supposed to receive the Torah.

Shabbat services during the summer will be held at 6:30 Friday evenings. Weather permitting, some services will be held outside.

We want to take a moment to thank all the people who contributed their time and expertise towards our celebration of **Shabbat Across America – At Home**. It was lovely seeing so many congregants light candles together, in their homes.

Here are the congregants responsible:

Michael Zeitz and Laurie Dubin (*pictured below with SAA gifts*)-

- organizers, packers and delivery volunteers

Michelle Blum - packer and creative consultant

Jenna Dubin - graphics

Jane and Peter Zeitz and Natalie Esikumo - packers and

Stacey Sussman (*Stacey's Totally Baked*) for the Annivesary cake.



Delivery volunteers - Joseph Ellis, Tara Axler, Dawn Roberts, Sarah Denyer, Hilary Hughes, Bobbie Cohan, Elaine Gordon, Debbie Landzberg, Jessica Aframe, Jody Cross, Suzanne Sunday, Cantor Deborah Katchko-Gray, David Moss, Emily Wein, Monnie Newman, Tiffany Zuzula, and Stacey Sussman.

Please consider joining the Ritual Committee. We would love your input on how to celebrate the Jewish holidays here at Congregation Shir Shalom.

FROM THE OFFICE

Congregation Shir Shalom Congregant Directory

We are excited to inform you that our searchable congregant directory is now available online and is a great way to help us remain connected with others in our sacred community! You can access this congregant directory when you log into your Shir Shalom Congregant account through ShulCloud. ***As a reminder, our directory is for personal use and may not be used for any form of solicitation, or shared with anyone outside our congregation.***

Board and Staff

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Visiting our building: Our office is generally open for phone calls or visits from **10AM-2PM**, Monday-Friday, or by appointment. If you would like to hand-deliver something or need to pick something up, there are clear plastic bins and a mailbox on our porch. Yahrzeit candles, prayerbooks, and Jewish calendars are available for home use. Our staff can be contacted by e-mail at the above listed email addresses. Our practice is to not e-mail on Shabbat or other Jewish holy days unless a message is related to that day. Our staff wears masks while we are in the public portions of our sacred space and we expect visitors and vendors to also wear masks. If you are feeling well, we are eager to welcome you.

Mazel Tov!

Join us in wishing Mazel Tov to Margie and Jeff Gorelick who welcomed their 5th grandchild, **Scarlett Rae Shlosh**, daughter of William and Danielle Shlosh of Scarsdale, NY. She was born on February 5, 2021, weighing 7 lbs, 5 ozs, and 20 inches long. Big brother Jack Eli was so excited to welcome his baby sister.



Please join us in welcoming Cantor Debbie Katchko-Gray and F. Scott Gray's newest grandchild: **Rae Rose Zimmerman**, born on March 9th, 8lbs 6oz, to parents David and Kira Zimmerman.



Mazel Tov to Robin and Ian Harris on the engagement of their son. Skyler Harris, of South Salem, NY, is engaged to Lexi Selig, of Ardsley, NY. The happy couple reside in Manhattan with their dog Ollie. A spring 2022 wedding is being planned.



SOCIAL ACTION NEWS



Hi everyone, we hope all is well and that your spring is off to a good start. Many organizations serving people in need could use our help! As things begin to open up we hope you will consider some of the following volunteer opportunities:

Daily Bread Food Pantry: This Danbury-based food pantry has been open throughout the pandemic thanks to the support of the community. DBFP continues to provide more than sixty pounds of fresh, healthy food items to almost two hundred struggling households twice weekly. The pantry is always in need of enthusiastic volunteers and monetary donations to cover the costs of several thousand pounds of food each week. Please call 203-826-8252 if interested in volunteering and go to: www.dailybreadfoodpantry.com to make a donation.

Community Center of Northern Westchester: Located in Katonah, the CCNW's Food Pantry and second-hand clothing boutique is serving a huge number of families and would welcome socially distant volunteers. Financial donations can be made at their website: <https://communitycenternw.org/>

Dorothy Day Hospitality House: Your help is needed purchasing, prepping and/or serving food for hungry guests at this Danbury soup kitchen. Please consider one or both of the following!

1. Go to www.dorothydaydanbury.org to sign up for sandwich-making and drop-off.
2. Team up with volunteers at Temple B'nai Chaim in Wilton as they shop for meal fixings, cook and serve a warm meal to clients each month. Your assistance with any portion of this effort would be hugely appreciated! Please contact Peggy Zamore at peggyz18@gmail.com to volunteer or make a donation to help cover the cost of the food by going to TBC's website: <https://templebnaichaim.wufoo.com/forms/m7x3s5/>, selecting Tzedakah and typing Dorothy Day in the description field.

Laundry Love: This important program allows people with limited resources to wash their clothing free-of-charge at White Street Wash in Danbury. Coordinated by local temples and churches, Laundry Love has helped many struggling families in our area. Volunteer staffing of the laundromat is not needed during COVID, however, the program is currently very much in need of funds to pay for laundromat gift cards and laundry detergent for clients. If interested in donating,

1. Checks can be written payable to St. James' Episcopal Church (fiduciary of Laundry Love). Memo line should read "LLGD" or "Laundry Love of Greater Danbury". Please mail to:

St. James Episcopal Church
Attention: Denise Holl, LLGD
25 West Street
Danbury, CT 06810

Many thanks everyone!
Wishing you well and access to the vaccine soon!!

Debbie Lavin, Amy Margulies & Debbie Landzberg

CANTOR'S CORNER

CANTOR DEBORAH

A Tale of Two Tallitot

Prayerful Creations is the name I call my tallitot- prayer shawls that are unique, made with a technique called, Swedish Weaving. It's a needlework art that I was introduced to as a cantor in Norwalk, CT by Ellen Temkin, my stitching mentor and dear friend. I've been making these tallitot for about 30 years. I started to make them for my four sons, dreaming of B'nei Mitzvah with rows of homemade tallitot I made for family wearing them for holidays and special simchas. I now make them as commissioned pieces, or as gifts for friends and family. Recently I made a brown tallit, kind of coffee colored, hoping someone would enjoy wearing it.

Imagine my horror when I saw a coffee splattered stained tallit in the news. I could not imagine what it would feel like to be praying and have someone so enraged that they threw hot coffee at your back, while you were praying, at the holy Kotel in Jerusalem. Anat Hoffman, Chair of Women of the Wall was the victim of this horrendous experience; an act of violence and abuse, inexcusable, and hopefully one with consequences.



When I saw the coffee stained tallit, I thought I must send Anat a new handmade tallit as a gift, and why not one already brown, although with beautiful earthy colors. I thought it would be symbolic, that the brown stains have been replaced with a tallit sent with love and admiration for her bravery and conviction that women should be able to pray as they wish at our holy Kotel. My correspondence with Anat has blossomed into two zoom speaking engagements with her, one with my synagogue on May 23 and one with the organization I founded in 1982; the Women Cantors' Network on June 6. I am so grateful for others to learn more about her dedication and struggles.

In all the years I have been making and giving out tallitot; easily several hundred, I have never known a tallit to be defiled, attacked and abused. It sickened me to see her beautiful tallit stained, and it pained me to think hot coffee was thrown at her while she was in prayer. She could have been burned G-d forbid! Ironically at that moment, her siddur was open to the page of the Prayer for Women of the Wall, a prayer written 20 years ago by a WOW member, Rahel Jaskow.

It is time for Women of the Wall to receive protection from the extremists who are not afraid of using violence. It is time for the Western Wall Heritage Foundation's chairman, Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz to respect the prayers of all women and make security and safety a priority. It is not reasonable or safe to allow violence as an expression of disdain for a different approach to Kol Ishah- the voice of a woman.

On a positive note, the recent ruling by the Israeli Supreme Court to adapt a more pluralistic view of Jewish identity by granting the right of automatic citizenship to foreigners who convert within the State of Israel to Conservative or Reform Judaism is encouraging. According to the Israel Religious Action Center only about 30-40 foreigners convert, but it is a huge statement about religious freedom in Israel and respecting the diversity of practices in Judaism.

CANTOR'S CORNER

CANTOR DEBORAH

Anat Hoffman is also the executive director of the Israel Religious Action Center. She remarked, "It's a tremendous sense of relief and gratitude and gratification. This verdict really opens the gates for Israel to have more than one way to be Jewish." This ruling will surely enrage the extremists even more. The sight of women praying with tallit, Torah and song will continue to be seen "as provocation." It is time for the Western Wall Heritage Foundation to make the Kotel safe for all Jews.

A tale of two tallitot — one created in an atmosphere of respect, love and safety and one attacked with hot coffee while in prayer. May our prayers be heard, and may there be respect and shalom for anyone praying anywhere, especially in Jerusalem.

**Please join us for a Women of the Wall
Event with Guest Speaker**

Anat Hoffman

Executive Director of the Israel
Religious Action Center (IRAC)



Anat Hoffman

**Sunday May
23rd at 11AM
on Zoom**



Bio: Anat Hoffman, an Israeli born in Jerusalem, serves as the Executive Director of the Israel Religious Action Center (IRAC) since 2002. Her position at IRAC places her at the forefront of the effort to advance religious pluralism in the State of Israel. As Executive Director of IRAC, Anat has fought (and won) recognition of Reform and Conservative conversions by the state; and led the struggle against gender segregation in the public domain, including on public buses, airplanes, and a national radio station.

In her teens, Anat was Israel's swimming champion, where she learned to dive headfirst into the deep end. This gave her the strength necessary to carry out her work in the past and today. **Anat has led Women of the Wall for over three decades in their struggle towards gender equality at the Western Wall, the holiest site of the Jewish faith.** She also served on Jerusalem's city council for 14 years, heading the opposition. In this role, she pushed relentlessly for equality and tolerance in a city run by the powerful Orthodox block. Anat was selected as "Person of the Year" by Haaretz in 2013 and chosen as one of the 50 most influential Jews by the Jerusalem Post in 2014. *Globes named her as one of Israel's top women activists in 2018.*

Anat got her bachelor's degree in Psychology from UCLA, and her master's degree in Psychology from Bar-Ilan University. Anat is a mother of three and has one grandchild. She lives with her partner in Jerusalem.

Please email office@OurShirShalom.org for more information.

ADULT PROGRAMMING

On Sunday, March 14th, just before Passover we had a very fun baking event: Baking Chocolate Macaroons. Our chef and presenter was once again the author Rachel Levy Lesser. Not only did she show how to make this delicious dessert, but she told us some interesting stories. Some attendees baked along and some just watched, having fun. Please find the recipe for macaroons below.

Thanks to Cantor Debbie, on Sunday, May 23 our Congregation guest will be Anat Hoffman, founder of Women of the Wall in Jerusalem. She will speak with us live about her work and gender equality in Israel. This event will be sponsored by Sisterhood.

*For the time being, all Adult Programming events will run online.



If you were not able to join us for the baking program, here is the recipe and directions!

Ednee's Chocolate Coconut Macaroons Directions

Ingredients:

4 egg whites
1 pinch of salt
1/2 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 cup sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
12 oz (1.5 cups) semisweet chocolate chips
14 oz shredded coconut

1. Preheat oven to 350 / Bake for 12-14 minutes.
2. Beat egg whites until stiff in electric mixer.
3. Add salt and cream of tartar.
4. Add in sugar and vanilla and blend well.
5. Melt chocolate chips in a double boiler or microwave and pour into mixture and mix well in mixer.
6. Add in coconut and mix with spoon.
7. Place small mounds (rounded teaspoon) on cookie trays lined with parchment paper.

FROM THE CONGREGANT COMMITTEE

**Make friends, get involved, be an active part of the Shir Shalom Community.
We can't do it without you!**

If you are interested in becoming more involved at Congregation Shir Shalom please consider joining one (or more) of our committees:

Ritual Committee, Sisterhood, Brotherhood, Social Action Committee, Caring Committee, Congregant Committee, Education Committee, Special Arrangements, Board.

To join or for more information, please email us at: office@OurShirShalom.org.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT SHIR SHALOM SISTERHOOD

Welcome Spring!!!

Sisterhood was pleased to represent at Miriam's Table, a virtual Passover event where nearly 400 Jewish Women from various backgrounds of tradition came together to share, celebrate, and honor memories and others in their lives, as well as share some aspects of their own personal journeys, all reflecting issues so current today: LGBTQ issues, racial injustice, issues in personal and family development. This was a meaningful musical experience developed by Beth Styles and attended via Zoom by Cantor Debbie as well as Laurie Wolkin, representative of Sisterhood.

Also, on April 7, a small but friendly "Sip & Chat" took place via Zoom once again, in the spirit of creating opportunity for connection within Sisterhood. Our next gathering will be a socially distant/masked **walk or hike on the morning of Sunday, May 16th**. Also, please look for an e-mail where you will be asked to respond to a brief survey of potential opportunities for connection (perhaps some in-person) through Sisterhood!

Also, keep in mind the Zoom presentation of "Women of the Wall" co-sponsored by Sisterhood is on Sunday, May 23 at 11:00 am. Check the weekly email for accessing the Link!

Looking forward to a happy and healthy Spring and moving towards more potential for connecting safely, in-person!

Margie Gorelick, Laurie Wolkin & Christina Gogish (*Sisterhood Co-Leadership*)



Sisterhood is for all women of our Synagogue!

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Our Religious School...

After Twenty Years of Writing RS Newsletter Columns, The Last One Arrives

by Leslie Gottlieb



It was roughly twenty-five years ago when I had lunch in White Plains with my sister-in-law, Linda, and her friend from South Salem, Dafne Sanchez Aldama, a Shir Shalom congregant who was then the school director at Jewish Family Congregation. We were living in New Jersey at the time and considered moving to Northern Westchester—which we did soon after our midday introduction. This lunch meeting would prove to be the change agent for me for over two decades of my life.

Dafne needed a grade three Judaic culture teacher at that time. I was a high school English teacher taking time off to raise a family. She thought I would be ideal. I was not so sure! The congregation was renting space at the South Salem Presbyterian Church back then. Our oldest son was entering grade three, our youngest son was entering kindergarten-- and our youngest child had not been on the scene quite yet. We had no plans to join a congregation when we first moved here--- and without that fortuitous meeting down county, all of this may never have been. As I close my twentieth year as the school director of Shir Shalom after our successful merger six years ago, I wonder at it all.

Working with our cast of teachers, teen mentors, rabbis, cantors, education committee members & chairs, parents, students and other synagogue professionals has given me such a rich education over the years. I plan to move ahead in life striving to help children and families in new ways because of all of their inspiration. Rabbi Marcus Burstein, z”l, told me that he came to JFC because he wanted to partner with me, specifically-- and I don’t think I have ever been the same person since. What a thing to say to someone! There was such humility and love shared in those simple words... and we barely even knew each other at that point. Rabbi Reiner has been a great partner, too, and our relationship has grown deeply since the time of the merger, in my estimation. Working with rabbis is a true learning experience and motivator--- every day. What a blessing to have worked alongside all of these individuals!

Going through old emails and photos to generate some thought for this column has been wonderful and bittersweet. Some of the faces of young children in the old pictures have become assistant teachers, college/grad school grads-- and are even married now. Having taught at the ECC in 2019 for one year... these adults are now out in the world making a difference. What a gift it was to have worked with them and their families! I can never say enough about that--- or this journey.



The RS Staff and Mentors at the close of school in 2019

Our Religious School continued on next page...

Sleeping at the temple with the NFTY Youth Group back in the day, getting eighty feet up in the air in a cherry-picker truck to photograph students and teachers gathered in the shape of the Israeli flag below, playing kickball in the snow one winter to raise money for JNF and the Sderot, Israel underground playground, visiting Eisner Camp each summer with sugary treats on hand, helping to plan Rock Shabbat nights with our teens long ago as well as Youth HHD services & outdoor havdallah events led by them, cooking together, making end-of-year banners with all the students' footprints dipped in paint, the STARS parties and the end year pancake breakfasts, the launching of the Mentor Program and SAJE, the singing and dancing, and walking the Torah scroll down to our new/old home on Route 123 with the Storfer family leading on guitar.... Well, it will all be right here as E.T. suggests when he points to his heart in the film. Right here.

My father Eugene, z'l, a teacher himself, used to tease me and say that synagogues were businesses, at the end of the day. He was mostly teasing! In all seriousness, I have felt that I have been more of a commune member over all these years. The way I see it, I played a role along with others in the hope of creating something meaningful and sustainable. It is interesting, to say the least, to take the next step forward at this point in my life; as Director Emerita at Shir Shalom, I hope to have a lasting impact going forward in some way. I am honored to have been given that role and will try to be worthy of it. (Rabbi Reiner promises a T-shirt with my new title, so stay tuned!)

Thank you all!

**Wishing our Community
a happy, healthy, and
spiritually uplifting
Spring!**



Relax your body,
calm your mind,
renew your spirit...

RHONDA S. LACKOW
Licensed Clinical Massage Therapist



Rhonda has a diverse private practice, providing a nurturing, healing experience to clients of all ages. She has been practicing therapeutic massage since 2005 and helps clients manage stress, loss, illness, and life transitions. She is trained and experienced in Swedish, Deep Tissue, Reflexology, trauma treatment, Oncology massage, pregnancy and post-natal massage, Myofascial Release, Reiki, and Hospice massage and energy work.

GIFT CERTIFICATES AVAILABLE

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✉ rlackow@gmail.com

EXCERPTS IN JEWISH HISTORY

DID JEWISH IMMIGRATION INTO PALESTINE ADVERSELY AFFECT THE ARABS?

By Lewis Siegel

The close of World War I resulted in sweeping changes across the Middle East. Late in 1917, the British destroyed the last Turkish stronghold in Palestine and Syria. This provided hope for Jews to return to their ancient homeland. The Arabs living in Palestine, (where they were more than 85% of the population) wanted it to be their own. After intense lobbying by the Zionist movement, the British issued the Balfour Declaration that looked with favor upon Palestine being a Jewish homeland to share with the Arabs.

The League of Nations solidified this idea in 1922 by issuing the Palestine Mandate. It officially made Palestine a country (administered by the British) where both Jews and Arabs would live together, and allow unlimited Jewish immigration subject to British approval.

These policies made the Arabs fear that massive Jewish immigration would infringe upon their living conditions. They also objected to Jews occupying any part of the land they felt was Arab land. Even before large-scale Jewish immigration began, the Arabs, led by Haj Amin al Husseini (the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem) began attacking Jewish villages in 1920. After the fourth Aliyah in the mid 1920's, the Arabs, again led by the Mufti in 1929, launched battles against several Jewish cities. Hebron suffered the largest number of casualties, with 67 Jews murdered. The British, wishing to appease the Arabs, issued the Passfield White Paper in 1930, which limited Jewish immigration into Palestine. In 1934, a lone non-Jewish Zionist voice in the British government was that of Lord Harry Snell. He argued vehemently that not only did Jewish immigration not force Arabs out, but in fact it had the opposite effect, actually improving the Arab standard of living. Lord Snell did a study showing that between 1922 and 1931, the Arab population increased in much greater proportion in several cities with very large Jewish populations compared to cities which were almost exclusively Arab.^{1,2}

I've done a more extensive study on this subject, which supports Lord Snell's argument and which provides more convincing evidence that Jewish immigration into Palestine did not force the Arabs to leave. I examined the Jewish and Arab populations of eight cities between 1922 and 1944. Those cities that had large Muslim populations in 1922 were presumably desirable places for Arabs to live. Four of the cities had virtually no significant Jewish population. They were Ramallah, Jenin, Nablus, and Hebron. The other four, Jerusalem, Haifa, Jaffa, and Ramle had large Jewish populations in 1922.

I compiled data on the urban and rural Arab populations in all of the above cities to see if the increase in Arab population was hindered by the massive Jewish influx between 1922 and 1944, most of which occurred in the mid-twenties and mid-thirties. The reason for looking at both urban and rural numbers will become evident.

The results are as follows:

The percentage increase in Arab population between 1922 and 1944 in the “Jewish free” cities was: (combined urban and rural) ³

Jenin: 70%,
Nablus: 80%,
Ramallah: 58%,
Hebron: 67%

The percentage increase in Arab population in cities with large Jewish populations between 1922 and 1944 was: (combined urban and rural) ³

Jerusalem: 132%,
Haifa: 154%,
Jaffa: 163%,
Ramle: 121%

Clearly, those cities with a high Jewish population resulted in Arab populations approximately double that of the cities with very few Jews. The argument that Jewish immigration drove the Arabs out of the cities is refuted by these data. I should point out that although the data are not shown here, I found that the percent Arab increase in the “Jewish popular cities” was approximately the same for both urban and rural sections of each city. Therefore, one could not argue that although Arab populations increased in the “Jewish cities”, the Arabs were forced from the urban to rural areas or vice-versa within each city.

The Arabs, despite their bitter complaints about Jewish immigration, very likely chose to live in the highly Jewish populated areas because it gave them a better way of life. It gave them more employment opportunities, and those engaged in agriculture perhaps had a greater market for their produce.

At the present time, possibly, about 100,000 Palestinians living in the West Bank cross the border daily to work in Israel because of better employment opportunities and much higher wages. An additional 30,000 work in Israel settlements.

References:

1. Snell, Harry- How the Arabs Have Benefited; *The Young Zionist*; vol. 8, #7, 1934
 2. McCarthy, Justin-The Population of Palestine; *Population History and Statistics of the late Ottoman Period and the Mandate*. Columbia University Press, New York, 1990.
- (Technically, the study by McCarthy was done by religion rather than nationality, thus he used the term Muslim instead of Arab).

“Excerpts in Jewish History” is a regular feature in our Shir Shalom newsletter, written by Lewis Siegel, who wrote a similar series for *Focus*, the newspaper of the Jewish Federation of Greater Danbury. He is also the author of *A Brief History of Modern Israel* and *The Evolution of Zionism*.



My Father in WWII

By (Shir Shalom Congregant) Daniel Darst

My father would have turned 100 this year. He was a long-time Wiltonian, a former selectman, a founding member of the wetlands commission. He was raised in nearby Norwalk and as a youth was well-traveled to the farms and orchards of Wilton. His father was a fruit and produce man from the pre-WWI era, operating out of a store in Greenwich, later a warehouse there and in New Haven, in Bridgeport and in Waterbury, an early purveyor of frozen food in southern and central Connecticut.

But it was the fields and woods of Wilton, a respite from the horrors of WWII that drew him here in 1946. A six acre wedding present at the lower end of Sturges Ridge Road set him and my mother up for the next five decades. He graduated number 5 in his 1938 Norwalk High School class of 400+ and matriculated at Yale where he was admitted to the select History of Arts and Letters program in his junior year. He wrote his thesis on the 17th century invasions of England by the French. He earned a varsity letter in his three upper classmen years on the fencing team, Sabres.

The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor when he was a senior at Yale. The next day he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. Along with the lion's share of his classmates, he started training in the Yale colleges, Saybrook for the Air Corps, and went through two years of officer training, flight school and finally shipped out to Scotland and then East Anglia in 1944.

Along the way, he had been tapped for some S2 work as an intelligence officer, looking after papers and communications that would or would not play a role in the prosecution of the war. He never discussed the specifics. He claimed he had forgotten. He flew out of an airbase adjacent to a small village called Molesworth. He dropped bombs on Nazi factories and munitions depots. He lost two members of his crew and witnessed the brutal destruction of more than two dozen B-17s, the fortress plane he flew as a navigator and bombardier. He flew thirty-one missions over Axis occupied Europe. His sense of purpose as an American Jew fighting the heinous Nazis was brought into startling focus when his older brother was killed in the Battle of the Bulge, November 1944. He wore his profound sadness at the loss of his brother like a heavy cloak he could never shed. In this short vignette which he wrote for his 50th college reunion, he captures his 24-year old sense of relief at finding a welcoming Jewish home and his sorrow at experiencing the displacement of the orphaned Jewish children.

My Father's Friday Night at War

WWII - The Hopelessness of War

Clifford Steinberg, First Lieutenant, USAAC 1945.

World War II can only be viewed as dashing and or heroic from a Hollywood screen or the perspective of 51 years later. In truth, aerial bombardment, Luftwaffe fighters, and German Flak were life-threatening, malevolent, and extremely frightening experiences, and never "interesting."

I'll try to translate harsh routine and precarious existence. I was a Lead Bombardier in B-17s (Fortresses, and the Brits called them), a First Lieutenant in the 303 Bomb Group, 8th Air Force, in England.

(con't. on next page)

On an evening, after a particularly harrowing bombing mission to the bridges of Frankfort-amMain, during which #3 ship on our wing took a direct hit, I found myself on a liberty-run truck into nearby Northampton, North Hants. It was a Friday night, and the beginning of the Jewish Sabbath

I felt a need for calm and a strong measure of religious reflection. For a 23 year-old, too much emotion had been building up — my older brother been killed three months earlier on the Moselle River line, a particularly good friend had flown on #3 wing ship. “Where was there a synagogue?” I inquired. None were presently open. “War, you know,” they curtly answered.

However, there was a large house in a residential neighborhood, in which a Rabbi was sheltering many Jewish orphans. He had also been conducting religious services for his charges, I was told Rabbi Hirsch formerly of Frankfort (surprisingly), was house mother, teacher, religious mentor, and in loco parentis, a warm bosom. Approximately 50 boys from 5 to 15 years of age lived there. British authorities had assigned this house to the Rabbi for a collection spot for homeless, unaccompanied Jewish children from German, Holland, Belgium.

Mattresses were spread on floors, 8 to 10 per room. Nor were there any sheets or pillow cases for these “beds.” Friday night dinner was sparse, with emphasis on potatoes, turnips, Brussel sprouts, and some canned vegetables; a fragile chicken rounded out the meal. I was given the seat of honor, next to the Rabbi. The children clustered around me asking about the war, my airplane, the cities, bombed, and the like. To my embarrassment, I was venerated as one who come, in person, to liberate Europe from Hitler.

The children intoned the traditional Sabbath meal prayers, blessing the candles, the wine, and the challah. There was an air of peacefulness, despite the dissonance of their youthful voices and the war beyond the walls of the house. I had begun to relax; it was a warm, comfortable feeling. After dinner, prayer services were conducted by the Rabbi. Along with the children’s memorial prayers of lament for their lost families, I joined in the memorial prayer, for my brother and my friends in #3 wing ship.

I had come so much closer to this war, which up to now, had been viewed from 5-6 miles up — a war in which cities below were Lilliputian, where bomb bursts were like flash bulbs, and flak was puffs of black smoke that threw metal against our aluminum shell.

This household in North Hants was, indeed, Act III of the bloody tragedy that had decimated a people, destroyed cities and lives. Absolute horror. The children’s faces mirrored the hopelessness of war.

MAY YAHREZEITEN

Friday, May 7th, 2021:

Rae Arenson	aunt of Linda Arenson	Art Arenson	grandmother of Rachel Bender
Ruth Cohen	grandmother of Steven Kaye	Emilia Custodio	grandmother of Frank Andrade
Selma Gimple	mother of Debra Bush	Anne Gordon	mother of Elaine Gordon
Robert Greenberg	brother of Adrienne Orlan	Paul Harris	uncle of Ian Harris
Klare Heller	mother of Paul Heller	Andrew Krulwich	brother of Jeffrey Krulwich
Jeanette Moskowitz	great-grandmother of Stacey Rubinfeld	Joseph Price	grandfather of Terry Henry
Diane Ravitch	aunt of Michael Gitlitz	Henrietta T. Ringler	grandmother of Elyse Arnow
Evelyn Rubinfeld	grandmother of Adam Rubinfeld	Annabel Schwartz	mother of Vicki Yolen
Marvin Stark	father of Andrew Stark	Walter Vendig	father of Richard Vendig

Friday, May 14th, 2021:

Marilyn Eslofsky	mother Ellen Barth	Gerald Held	father of Lindsay Held
Irving Ipp	father of Lisa Ipp-Voellmicke	Rosalyn Levitt	mother of Bonnie Dietzek
Sherry Levy-Reiner	wife of Rabbi Fred Reiner and mother of Rabbi David Reiner	Eva Schenk	mother of Alice Gottlieb
Ruth Teich	mother of Matt Teich	Robert Shaplen	father of Jason Shaplen

Friday, May 21st, 2021:

Judge William Gindin	stepfather of Janine Gordon	Philip Abrams	father of Elyse Davis
Helen Bergson	mother of Phyllis Amerling	Eileen Brody	cousin of Joan Isman
Fred Dietzek	father of Alan Dietzek	Hyman Ellis	father of Joseph Ellis
Mildred Geller	grandmother of Jamie Garrett	Samuel Gerard	grandfather of Ira Gerard
Abraham Goldfield	father of Laurie Wolkin	Regina Henry	mother of Robert Henry
Marvin Katz	father of JoAnn Gorman	Miriam Langer	mother of Karen Gerard
Claire Levens	mother of David Levens	Alan Levinsohn	brother of Kenneth Levinsohn
Edith Redman	mother of Debra Lavin	Murray Rose	father of Andrew Rose
Leon Shimkin	grandfather of Janine Gordon	Dov Stern	step-father of Barbara Manners
Ludwig Sternberger	uncle of Alice Gottlieb	James Sullivan	

Friday, May 28th, 2021:

Adolph Joseph Auerbacher		Bertram Bildner	father of Rachelle Axel
Pauline Block	grandmother of Barbara Manners	Indy Goldman	Memorial Board
Diana Kalter	mother of Marcia Needleman	Max Moskowitz	cousin of Stacey Rubinfeld
Thomas B. Newman	father of Kelly Lash	Norman Remler	father of Leslie Moss
Samuel Silverman	grandfather of Richard Burg		

JUNE YAHREZEITEN

Friday, June 4th, 2021:

Nathan Binstock	relative of Moreton Binn	Ed Blum	father of Neal Blum
Max Burg	father of Judith Besserman	Madeleine Eisberg	grandmother of Tiffany Zezula
Everett Felper	father of Margie Gorelick	Marlene Ellen Klotz	
Alex Leitner	father of Arnold Leitner	Leela Mallon	mother of Linda Krulwich
Samuel Mirsky	grandfather of Carlyn Bergman	Clarissa Zaltzberg	grandmother of Rita Landman

Friday, June 11th, 2021:

Rose Abrams	grandmother of Elyse Davis	Henry Bangser	father of Robert Bangser
Judith Birnbaum		Elliot Buchman	father of Amanda Eisen
Martin Bush	father of Richard Bush	Martin Fiderer	father of David Fiderer
Norma Ginsberg	grandmother of Jamie Garrett	Paul Mallon	brother of Linda Krulwich
Shirley Novom-Cowan	grandmother of Jeff Gorelick	Lillian Paget	mother of Debra Paget
Ruth Pottish	aunt of Richard Mishkin	Gideon Tiktin	father of Ron Tiktin
John Weiller	husband of Jane Weiller		

Friday, June 18th, 2021:

Toby Berman	mother of Michael Berman	Jack Brill	father of Elyse Arnow
Maurice L. Cohen		David Dutka	
Harold Fisher	father of Larry Fisher	Elizabeth Levine	grandmother of Stephanie Herbstman
Joel Levy	father of Marla Kay	Morris Pottish	uncle of Richard Mishkin
Tim Neary Tuesday			

Friday, June 25th, 2021:

Allen Alexander	step-father of Hal Wolkin	Joan Arnow	mother of Joshua Arnow
Lillian Benjamin		Freida Binstock	relative of Moreton Binn
Gussie Boudier	grandmother of Claire Katz	Amy Franklin	stepsister of Ken Isman
Dr. Marvin Henry Terry Grody	father of Erica Levens	Eli Lackow	father of Rhonda Lackow
Al Landzberg	father of Steven Landzberg	Martin Langer	father of Karen Gerard
Herbert Markham	uncle of Richard Mishkin	Albert Ross	grandfather of Karen Brenner
Bessie Ross	grandmother of Karen Brenner	Martin Shapiro	
Arthur Zucker	father of Bobbie Cohan		

Condolences

To Elinor Darvick and her family on the death of Elinor's husband, Murray Darvick, z"l

To Rick Cohan and his family on the death of his mother, Alice Cohan, z"l

To Steve Kaye on the death of his cousin, Nat Greenspun, z"l

To Marty Weisberg on the death of his nephew, Andrew Kjellhofer, z"l

May their memory be for a blessing.

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 in memory of James Taylor, z”l
 in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of Steve Kaye

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 Natalie Zeiger
 Elinor Darvick

in memory of Mary Salpeter, z”l
 in memory of Alice Cohlan, z”l
 in memory of Alice Cohlan, z”l
 in memory of Alice Cohlan, z”l
 in memory of Alice Cohlan, z”l
 in memory of Alice Cohlan, z”l
 in memory of Alice Cohlan, z”l
 in memory of her father, Benjamin ben Levi v’Esther, z”l
 in honor of her granddaughter’s naming ceremony
 in gratitude to the Rabbi and his assistant
 in honor of Rabbi’s assistant
 in memory of Alice Cohlan, z”l
 in memory of Alice Cohlan, z”l
 in gratitude for the beautiful service and in memory of
 Murray Darvick, z”l
 in gratitude for the online services and Passover celebrations

Cantor’s Discretionary Fund

Drs. Lisa Ipp & Kurt Voellmicke
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 in gratitude for the beautiful service and in memory of
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 in memory of Murray Darvick, z”l

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Caring Fund

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 Serge Vinograd

in honor of the yahrzeit of Herbert Zieselman, z”l
 in memory of family lost in Shoah

ECC Fund

Serafima Dashevskaya

in honor of Sarah Denyer for her outstanding work

2020 Annual High Holy Day Appeal

Jon and Allison Stockel
 Carol and Richard Buchwald

NEWS FROM THE ECC

Our Early Childhood Center

by Sarah Denyer (ECC Director)

Spring is here and we are enjoying the outdoors, starting with an outdoor young family Shabbat and Passover songs with Rabbi David and Cantor Debbie. To celebrate Passover, we also made matzah covers, Afikoman bags and a Seder plate filled from nature! Our children are enjoying playing on the playground, painting, sandbox fun, the racetrack, outside vehicle play, collaboration working on a floor puzzle, and our Tell & Show. We introduced a new name board for each child to offer an opportunity to explore the letters in their name. Other highlights this month include the obstacle course in the Pavilion to beat the rain and starting to work on the ECC Garden, watering the tomato, onion and pepper seeds!

Please note that registration for the 2021/22 school year & our Summer Fun program is underway!



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