

OUR SHIR SHALOM

Congregation Shir Shalom of Westchester and Fairfield Counties

Early Spring 2022 / Adar I, II-Nisan 5782

#6 Hakuna Matata: A Lion King Purim #9# Sunday, March 13th

Celebrate Purim with our Early Childhood Center families, K-7th Graders and their families. Members of the community are all welcome!

10:00 am to 12:30 pm

\$10 per child/ \$20 for 2 or more

Come in Costume!

Games, activities, costume parade, singalong, snacks, spiel and more.

No reservation required!

Please bring 2 cans/non-perishable food items.

**Join in the reading of the Megillah Purim service
on Wednesday, March 16 @ 5:00 p.m.**

OUR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Join us in-person or via Zoom for all worship services throughout the year.
Zoom links are made available through our weekly congregant eblast.

MARCH-APRIL WORSHIP AND HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

March 4	6:00 p.m.	Volunteer Recognition Shabbat/Shabbat Across America	April 1	6:00 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship
March 11	5:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Tot Shabbat 2.0 Kabbalat Shabbat Worship	April 2	10:30 a.m.	Shabbat Morning Worship: Bat Mitzvah, Sloan Wasserman
March 12	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101 w/Rabbi Reiner	April 8	5:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Tot Shabbat Special Musical Shabbat with guests-Julian Schwarz, cello and Marika Bournaki, piano
March 13	10:00 a.m.	Purim Carnival	April 9	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101 w/Rabbi Reiner
March 16	5:00 p.m.	Purim Service	April 15	8:30 a.m.	Fast/Feast of the Firstborn
March 16	7:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship	April 15	Passover	No Shabbat Worship
March 25	7:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship	April 16	10:00 a.m.	Passover Morning Service
March 26	9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Torah 101 w/Rabbi Reiner Shabbat Morning Worship: Bat Mitzvah, Maddie Crow	April 16	7:00 p.m.	Second Night Seder (TBD)
			April 22	7:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship
			April 23	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101/Rabbi Reiner
			April 29	7:30 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat Worship
			April 30	10:30 a.m.	Shabbat Morning Worship: Bar Mitzvah, Jake Levi

*Please join us in-person or online for Shabbat,
holiday and festival Services!*



Roger and Helene Karlin and family
(Ridgefield, CT)

Eddie and Jennifer Berman, and Benjamin
(Ridgefield, CT)

Gino Picano and Melissa Rifkin, and Max
(Ridgefield, CT)

**We are happy that you have become part of our Congregation Shir Shalom community,
and wish you a warm welcome!**

WHO WE ARE

We are a vibrant and inclusive community inspired by Jewish values and traditions.

WHAT WE DO

We honor the diversity of our backgrounds, experiences, and aspirations.

We celebrate our shared values: the study of Torah, participatory worship driven by music, the promotion of lifelong learning, the ongoing project of Tikkun Olam (Healing the World), and the work of social justice.

We embrace the responsibility/task of being “a light unto the nations,” building a brighter future for our community and the world.

CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM OF WESTCHESTER AND FAIRFIELD COUNTIES

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OFFICE HOURS

Our office is open Monday-Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and by appointment. If you would like to hand-deliver or need to pick something up, you'll find a clear plastic bin on the porch by the main door. We also encourage you to stop in as needed during office hours. We have yahrtzeit candles, prayer books, Jewish calendars and seasonal items available for home use. Don't hesitate to contact any of our staff by email or telephone, we will all be happy to talk with you. Also, note that it is our practice not to email on Shabbat or other Jewish holy days, except in the case of a life-cycle emergency. Thank you.

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

Rabbi David Reiner



With Purim falling on March 17th this year (a Christian feast day associated with a sainted 5th Century Irishman named

Patrick), it seems appropriate to share details of an exciting new venture at Congregation Shir Shalom that (I hope) will generate some revenue to support our sacred community and our sacred work.

Prior to serving our community, I was blessed to serve a congregation in New York's Finger Lakes

Region, an area known for frigid winters and a blossoming wine industry.

In partnership with former congregants and Cornell AgriTech (also known

as the New York State College of Agricultural and Life Sciences at Cornell University), and Nod Hill Brewing Company, we will be planting a vineyard at Congregation Shir Shalom to pilot a new hybrid variety of wine grape. I am grateful to a group of Cornell alumni in our congregation who helped make this opportunity possible. The geographic proximity of Ridgefield to the Hudson River Valley and Long Island Sound creates a unique terroir for grape growing. Two geologic bedrock formations meet beneath our property (granitic gneiss and marble); our soil is suitably acidic, well-drained, and ideal for a terraced vineyard. Soil conditions combined with the unique terroir, should be especially conducive to growing a

newly created wine grape hybrid. Other similar locations in the area are either over developed, over grown, or too close to septic fields, and our status as a non-profit religious corporation allows us some flexibility in response to town and state laws regarding land use and agricultural development.

As a non-profit religious corporation, we are exempt from Connecticut statutes limiting home wine production as well as rules established by the U.S. Department of the Treasury's Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). We are also exempt from tax payments otherwise required by the Internal Revenue Code for alcohol production,

"Purim is a day of *l'hafoch* – turning things around or turning the world upside down."

consumption, or sale.

The new hybrid variety is a white wine grape and we hope it will produce a delicious wine somewhere between a Riesling and Gewürztraminer – think of a dryer, white version of Manischewitz. During the pandemic I began taking a series of continuing education courses that will enable me to certify the wine produced as kosher (not a subject covered during five years of rabbinical school!). We will be partnering with Nod Hill Brewing Company in Ridgefield to produce and package the wine using shared equipment. Because the wine will be kosher, it can be used for ritual purposes (including rituals performed at home) and

is not subject to taxation and the purchase of wine may be eligible for a tax deduction (consult your tax professional).

Wine production is a significant revenue opportunity for Congregation Shir Shalom. We anticipate an initial production run of 500 cases to generate approximately \$100k annually for our congregation with expenses less than \$10k. Producing our own wine will also allow us to remove the wine expense line in our Ritual budget – we currently spend approximately \$1k annually on Kiddush wine. Mature vines will be replanted in early April. Our grape yield may be low in the first year

and we will supplement using grapes grown in the Finger Lakes Region to begin wine production sooner.

There is a long history of Jewish involvement in wine production and distribution,

going back farther than the Bronfman Family (Seagrams), the Sands Family (Constellation Brands), and others. The medieval French commentator, Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki (known as "Rashi" (1040-1105), was one of the most prolific authors and commentators on Torah and Talmud, offering clear and concise insights into the basic meaning of ancient Hebrew texts. In addition to compiling the most used and practical commentaries for the study of Torah and Talmud, starting a yeshivah, and being viewed as the greatest authority on Jewish questions of his time, Rashi was a vintner, growing grapes and producing wine.

(continued on page 13)

THE CANTOR'S CORNER

Cantor Deborah Katchko-Gray



A WOW Choir! From Dream to Reality

Women's voices in prayer is not unusual in American egalitarian

synagogues. More than half of the Reform and Conservative cantorial schools are made up of women, including professors and cantorial coaches. Women cantors are the norm, and it is a well-known story many of us have heard from little children when they encounter a male cantor, "I didn't know men could be cantors!" I heard that in 1984 when I was a young conservative cantor, and I know it has been repeated dozens of times to many colleagues over the years.

So, what could be so new about women's voices in prayer these days?

The Women of the Wall in Jerusalem have been holding monthly Rosh Chodesh services since 1988; when an international Jewish Feminist Conference was held in Jerusalem, and Rivka Haut invited participants for "gratitude prayer for the wellbeing of the State of Israel" at the Western Wall. Sixty women from a range of movements participated.

The Women of the Wall is a diverse group with a hybrid mode of worship inclusive of traditional and contemporary movements. Wearing a tallit, tefillin and reading from the Torah are part of the culture and tradition, which sadly has been met with violent protests and assault on occasion from ultra-orthodox worshippers. It is an act of assault

that drew me to the Women of the Wall, when I saw a coffee-stained tallit on the director, Anat Hoffman as she was praying at the Kotel with her community. I was shocked that someone who disagreed with hearing a woman's voice in prayer would violently assault a woman in prayer, with hot coffee on their back.

I am a fourth-generation cantor, but I'm also a Swedish weaving tallit maker. I love making and creating unique prayer shawls, so my first instinct was to send Anat a coffee-colored tallit that would hopefully never be desecrated by violence. Her note to me of gratitude was so beautiful I invited her to speak by zoom to my congregation's



Sisterhood. She was so amazing; I shared my enthusiasm with a few cantorial friends who suggested she speak to the Women Cantors' Network. What a perfect shidduch/match! Anat spoke to us by zoom and challenged us to help her create a choir for Women of the Wall, to enhance the prayer and bring more beauty and light into their services.

As founder of the Women Cantors' Network, I knew this was a challenge we were made for- and I'm proud of our board for offering a major investment in this dream. I'm thrilled to announce we are on our way!

I found the most perfect choir director for this- Dr. Tanya Sermer, who is a

lecturer at the Hebrew University and the Artistic Producer of the Jerusalem Oratorio Choir. Oratorio is the largest independent choral organization in Israel. She has 6 conductors and runs 6 separate choirs, with about 150 singers in total. Tanya is looking for women volunteers for this brand-new WoW choir. Dedication to the cause of Women of the Wall and a singing voice is all that's needed.

After listening to the music of a typical service, I selected music to be arranged by the incredible music producer/composer/arranger Beth Styles. The music is beautifully done, so a choir will enhance the music, while still being inviting for all to join in prayer. Beth and I recorded it as a teaching tool, so singers can learn the music on their own. If you know of any singers in Jerusalem who are supportive of Women of the Wall and love to sing, please contact Women of the Wall and they will put you in touch with Tanya. If anyone would love to help support this exciting project, please donate to Women of the Wall for the WOW Choir.

It is a dream to help give the singers a stipend and travel reimbursement.

Hiddur Mitzvah - enhancing the mitzvah - bringing more beauty, light, song into our rituals. A dream of a WOW Choir is closer to reality. Please join us and support this wonderful effort if you believe women's voices have a place in prayer. If the idea of gorgeous harmony coming from the women's section of the Kotel strikes a chord in you, please join our effort by supporting the WOW Choir. All I can say is WOW! A dream is becoming a reality!

Cantor Debbie

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Larry Brooks



I hope you are enjoying the start of the year and are managing to stay warm. More importantly, I hope

you are staying safe and healthy. I truly mean this, particularly in the wake of the terrifying hostage situation at Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in Colleyville, Texas. This was a reminder that the safety of our students, teachers, congregants, clergy, staff, and guests remain our highest priority. We continue to assess and invest in our safety protocols and resources and pray they are never needed. To this end, I encourage each of us to act and participate in Community Security Service's one-hour training which will be provided in the weeks ahead. Please join me – we must all take steps to keep ourselves, families, and sacred community as safe as possible.

The new year is our time to renew our annual financial community commitment to Congregation Shir Shalom. We all share the responsibility for the financial health of our synagogue. To this end, if your financial circumstance allows, please consider making an Incremental Community Commitment to support our ability to be as inclusive a community for those who are not able to fulfill the Base Community Commitment. Last year, 20 families and 6 seniors provided Incremental Community Commitments, and this year we are striving for many

more. We also have an equal emphasis on providing confidential financial assistance when needed. In fact, if you visit the Congregation Shir Shalom website (<https://ourshirshalom.org>), our welcome message begins with "inclusive and caring." Let's all be an active part of this Jewish value.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our incredible clergy and staff. Jeff Gorelick and I have been co-presidents for about two months, and I think I speak for

"Educators are special people with a special skill."

both of us when I say how amazed we have been at all the dedicated people working to ensure the long-term stability, religious observance, and day-to-day operations of our sacred community. Each month I'd like to acknowledge someone in particular and express my gratitude.

Perhaps because my wife is a teacher, I continuously think about the incredible job Sarah Denyer and Cathy Deutchman, and all our ECC and religious schoolteachers have put forth. Educators are special people with a special skill, and I can't thank them enough as they've navigated the recent spike in COVID. If you are an ECC or religious school family, please take a moment and send your teacher an email to acknowledge their incredible work. We hope that by the time this letter reaches you, we are back to full

in-person learning, teaching, socializing, and praying!

I look forward to hearing from and seeing many of you soon.

In the meantime, if you would like to connect, please do not hesitate to send Jeff and I an email to president@ourshirshalom.org

Larry Brooks



The Board of Trustees, clergy and staff wish our entire Shir Shalom family a meaningful Passover this year!

WHY OPTIMISM CAN BE CONTAGIOUS

Mark Block, FSA, Executive Director



While we are told good food and exercise can make us healthier and maybe even extend our lives; taking care of ourselves,

both mentally and spiritually can have as great an impact on longevity as the food we eat or the physical exercise we do. If we expect good things we have to do good things.

Even when we are not well, feeling well can help you feel better, even in these continued uncertain times. Researchers have studied people with similar medical conditions and they have been able to accurately predict who is likely to live longer: the person who feels his or her health is better. There is something about the feeling of wellness that is important—maybe especially when we're not well. The Jewish people are an optimistic people, and our own sacred community is one that has shown that optimism helps us in our growth as a congregation, and individually as Jews.

But, optimism is something you do—it is not a spectator sport, it is a participatory one. If your emotions run negative or your anxiety is heightened it is likely to be detrimental to the health of your body and soul. Having an optimistic nature can protect you from some of the negative affects of being less optimistic about both the present and future.

And what should you do if you are not happy? Many experts will say: don't

worry. We know that has been hard to do during the Covid pandemic. Happiness is a feeling, while optimism is a belief. Optimism allows us to believe the future can be better than the present. It encourages us to recognize that things can turn out well after all. While happiness can fluctuate, an optimistic disposition generally keeps us pretty stable—on an even keel if you will. Remember, good things happen to everyone, not necessarily equally, but generally it is the pessimist who often doesn't take

"Optimism is something you do—it is not a spectator sport, it is a participatory one."

notice. Try spending a few minutes every day thinking of the positive things going on in your life, in the lives of your family and friends, and here at the synagogue, even during continued unclear times. Or, instead of simply trying to be optimistic, do what optimists do: work hard to reach the personal goals you set. We do that here at Shir Shalom regularly. Your professional staff and lay leaders approach every task and each issue with the same mindset—how can we best serve the Congregation. And while each accomplishment does not necessarily make the next one easier, it does make me hopeful, and hope is one of the cornerstones to future success.

There is a story about a small boy who was walking along a beach at low tide, where countless starfish, having been washed up on the beach, were stranded and doomed to perish. A man watched as the boy picked up individual starfish and took them back

into the water. "I can see you're being very kind," said the watching man, "But there must be thousands of them; it can't possibly make any difference." Returning from the water's edge, the boy said, "It will for that one."

The young boy proved that his optimistic nature might not save all starfish, but it did not deter him from making the life of one better than it had been when it washed up on shore.

The challenges we have faced and the opportunities they provide for a better future for Shir Shalom are invigorating. We have the unique chance to affect change as Covid goes from pandemic to endemic in the months ahead. It is exciting. It is a chance to set a course for greater growth. It is a time for optimism.

Mark Block

TORAH STUDY



Join Rabbi Reiner on select Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. for Torah 101.

You'll find this opportunity to engage in the study of our faith, observances and text to be extremely uplifting and interesting as we learn together. Check our weekly eblast and calendar for dates and in-person and Zoom information.

ADULT PROGRAMMING



On Sunday, January 9th we hosted the renown author and television producer David Page. David's presentation was very well attended. He talked about

his latest book "Food Americana"—a fascinating exploration of how America created a national cuisine from the foods of many other countries.



David read some of the excerpts from his book and talked about his communications with famous people like Mel Brooks and others. David is a chef in his family and prefers real food instead of packaged solutions that are now popular at the market.

Cantor Debbie moderated the talk,

so we had a lively discussion during David's interview.

You do not want to miss the next event on Sunday, April 24 at 2:00 p.m. Cantor Debbie will share a lifetime of learning and songs from her beloved teacher: "Songs and Stories of Elie Wiesel".



MUSIC AND CULTURAL ARTS

Join Cantor Debbie as she welcomes well-known and talented artists to our sanctuary for our enjoyment. Each one of these performances will leave you amazed at the breadth and depth of both classic and modern Jewish music and the artists that bring them to life.

Friday, April 8: 7:30 p.m.: Julian Schwarz, cello and Marika Bournaki, piano: World class musicians performing Jewish Music in our sanctuary as part of our Friday evening service.

Sunday, April 24: 2:00 p.m.: Songs and Stories of Elie Wiesel: Cantor Katchko-Gray shares a lifetime of learning from her teacher.

Friday, May 13: 7:30 p.m.: Spirited and Soulful Music with Beth Styles.

All programs are sponsored by the Cantor's Music Fund. Thank you for your donations.



CONGREGANT'S COMMITTEE

On Friday night, March 4th at 6:00 p.m. hundreds of synagogues across the continent will take part in an historic national Jewish event to celebrate what unifies all Jews — Shabbat! Everyone is invited... singles, couples, families — all ages.

That's the magic of Shabbat Across America and Shabbat Across Canada. By participating in this continent-wide event, you will not only have the opportunity to experience Shabbat, but you will be sharing your experience with tens

of thousands of Jews across North America.

This year, we will celebrate together in person and via Zoom and have prepared **Shabbat to Go Bags** with some special surprises and treats. Congregants can pick up these bags beginning, Sunday, February 27th during Religious school and also during the week.

During this Shabbat service, we will also be **recognizing and thanking our many volunteers** that make our community so special.



RITUAL COMMITTEE

Tiny plant shoots are pushing through messy snow piles signaling spring is just around the corner. The month of March starts off with Shabbat across America on March 4th. On Shabbat, we recount God's rest following six days of creation and we observe this time by resting ourselves. It's a time in which we take a conscious break from the routines of everyday life, eat a festive meal around the Shabbat table, and reconnect with family (and friends) after a long week of work and school. Last year we celebrated in our homes using our hand delivered "Shabbat in a Box." This year, families have the option of attending services in the sanctuary or via Zoom.

Congregants can pick up their family's "Shabbat in a Bag" ahead of time at religious school on Sunday or during the week prior to March 4th. Shabbat bags will also be at the

services that evening. Included in the bags are ritual items as well as some special Shabbat meal recipes from Cantor Debbie Katcho-Gray.

The festival of Purim is also in March. It occurs on the 14 day of Adar commemorating the deliverance of the Persian Jews in biblical times. The scrolls of Esther are read recalling the story. A Purim service is a raucous affair with noisemakers sounding when the name of Haman is read. Dressing in costumes, delivering food, and giving to charity are some established Purim customs.

This year's Purim service is on Wednesday, March 16th at 5:00 p.m. All are welcome. Children are encouraged to dress up. This service will also be on Zoom.

PASSOVER SERVICE SCHEDULE:

Passover Feast of the first born:
Friday, April 15th at 8:30 a.m.

Passover first night:

Friday, April 15 — No Shabbat Service.

Passover Morning Service:

Saturday, April 16 at 10:00 a.m.

Passover Second Night Seder:

Saturday, April 16 (Details TBD)

Passover Shabbat/Yizkor:

Friday, April 22 at 7:30 p.m.

The Ritual Committee welcomes individuals who wish to participate in planning holiday celebrations and Shabbat. We would love to hear your thoughts and appreciate your comments to create meaningful worship and fellowship moments for our temple family.

*Michael Salpeter and
Laurie Dubin*

SOCIAL ACTION NEWS

Immediate Need:

Dorothy Day Hospitality House, our local soup kitchen, is depending on us! On Wednesday, March 2nd volunteers from Shir Shalom will be purchasing, preparing and delivering a very simple dinner for the hungry guests at this Danbury soup kitchen. We are looking for more volunteers. Please reach out to Amy Margulies at margulies07@gmail.com to get more information and find out how you can help.

Other Volunteer and Giving Opportunities:

Daily Bread Food Pantry: This Danbury-based food pantry is seeing record numbers of hungry guests. Between 250 and 275 families visit the pantry twice-weekly, almost four times pre-COVID numbers. Inflation, the lapsing of the childcare tax credit and continued hardship from COVID force our neighbors to make the impossible choice between paying for food and other necessities. Daily Bread has been open throughout



the pandemic, distributing 50-60 pounds of healthy food to every family thanks to the support of the community. The pantry is always in need of enthusiastic volunteers for its outdoor distributions and monetary donations to cover the significant costs of many thousands of pounds of food each week. Please call 203-826-8252 if interested in volunteering and please consider visiting 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 also serving a huge number of families and would welcome socially distant volunteers. Financial donations can be made at their website:

<https://communitycenternw.org/>

...And Last but Not Least. For the Teens: Ben and Jacob Voellmicke, assisted by their Mom Lisa, have been working to organize the teens to participate in Social Action activities.

Please reach out to them for more information on how to get involved jacobvoellmicke2005@gmail.com and bvoellmicke@gmail.com.

Many thanks everyone!

*Debbie Lavin,
Debbie Landzberg and
Amy Margulies*

Social Action Committee Co-Chairs

CRAFTS WITH CANTOR DEBBIE Challah Cover Workshop – Adult Education

Learn to make a beautiful challah cover using Swedish Weaving and a fabric that is easy on the eyes!

Sunday, March 13: 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.: Open to adult Congregants (limited to first 10 to register).

Sunday, March 27: 12:00 noon-1:00 p.m.: Workshop for Religious school students/families (limited to first 10 to register).

Sunday, March 27: 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.: Open to adult Congregants (limited to first 10

to register).

All materials covered by Cantor Debbie. If you want to use specific colors, please bring DMC Pearl Cotton #5 skeins in the ones you want. You'll need two of each color.

RSVP to adultprogramming@OurShirShalom.org by March 3!



NEWS FROM THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Cathy Deutchman, Director

לְיְהוּדִים הַיְתֵה אוֹרָה וְשִׂמְחָה וְשִׂשׂוֹן וְיִקָּר



“LaY’hudim hayetah orah v’simcha v’sason vicar...”

“The Jews enjoyed light and gladness,

happiness and honor.”

(Esther 8:16)

The Purim story takes on new meaning when read each year. As busy adults, we may not have the time to reflect on the different themes in the story, so let me propose one for this year: Joy. We are instructed to rejoice during this holiday. Our people were saved (yet again) from destruction when Esther stood up to the King, declared her identity and asked him to spare the Jewish people.

I encourage you to set aside the important work of the day, dust off a past Halloween or Purim costume (or secure a new one) and bring your family to the Shir Shalom Purim Carnival and Celebration for some lighthearted fun and games. If you do nothing else this holiday, say a l’chaim and celebrate that we’re still here. The imperative for happiness could feel like a welcome imperative, especially after the January incident

“If you do nothing else this holiday, say a l’chaim and celebrate that we’re still here”

at the Colleyville, Texas synagogue and two years of contending with COVID.

The Jewish month of Adar 2 begins March 1, and we celebrate the holiday of Purim the evening of

March 16. At Shir Shalom School, the teachers prepare lessons about the holiday, so each child can understand the story at their level. As part of family education on Sunday, March 6, families of 5th and 6th graders will take a deep dive into the Purim story to examine Esther’s Jewish identity and explore their own connection to Judaism.

On Sunday, March 13, we celebrate as a community (link to flyer with details) with a carnival, costume parade and Lion King sing-along Purim spiel. Seventh and eighth graders are invited to join the teen mentors to lead an activity/game station. Families and community members are invited to join the celebration. I hope you’ll join too!

B’Simcha (With Joy),

Cathy Deutchman



OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Sarah Denyer, Director



Our Winter at the ECC has been a mix of joyful learning and Covid challenges. Everyone returned from

December break refreshed and excited to be back at school. Just as we began learning about and preparing for Tu B'Shevat, we received word that there was Covid exposure at the ECC. We were able to keep the school open and stayed connected with our quarantined students via Zoom. Fortunately, all our students remained healthy and were back at school the following week to resume our Tu B'Shevat festivities. Fun was had making a tree together and planting parsley, beans, and pumpkins. On February 1st, we were informed of another positive case at the ECC, and we again were able to

keep the school open while Zooming in our students who were at home. This time there was some spread, but fortunately the three affected families all had mild cases. Our ECC families handled these challenges with patience, and we are very appreciative for their understanding as we navigated through each of these situations.

The remainder of February was free of Covid incidents. Our 2's Class has been delving into many goopy play

"ECC has been a mix of joyful learning and Covid challenges."

opportunities such as exploring with shaving cream, salt dough and kinetic sand. They have all grown so much in a few short months, the future of the ECC is bright! Our 3's Class focused on a theme called "All About Me." Students had their bodies traced

on large paper and later worked on painting and drawing details. They also shared many of their favorites: colors, ice cream, shapes, etc. We also engaged in activities such as Friendship Paintings and footprint artwork. Our Pre-K Class learned about arctic animals and the joys of wintertime. Everyone worked hard on their kindergarten readiness skills as well as engaging in cooperative play and art activities. Each child also made a "Shabbat Box" with everything they need to observe Shabbat at home with their families, and they were so proud of their efforts.

We are looking forward to all the fun Purim brings and the reinstatement of Shir Shalom's Purim Carnival on March 13. Registration for the ECC's Summer Fun Program will begin in mid-March.

Sarah Denyer



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (Cont'd)

Rabbi David Reiner

If you are still reading this column and have not stopped to report me to the Town of Ridgefield, the Connecticut State Department of Agriculture, the IRS, the ATF, the TTB, or the Cornell University Alumni Association, there is a custom of practical jokes on Purim, similar to April Fool's Day. Purim is a day of

l'hafoch – turning things around or turning the world upside down. We dress up in costumes instead of our regular clothes, interrupt the reading of our ancient texts with noise makers, and have a good time. This column was written in that tradition with enough truth to be possible. There are no plans to transform

Congregation Shir Shalom into a vineyard...yet.

With warm wishes for a happy and fun Purim,

Rabbi David L. Reiner

MORE FROM EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER



GREETINGS FROM SISTERHOOD

Snow and ice are melting and Spring cannot be too far away!

Sisterhood has been active and engaged with opportunities for members to participate both in-person and remotely via Zoom. Mah Jongg continues to be well attended thanks to the skillful and supportive instruction to 20 Sisterhood members in recent months by Stacey Sussman and Yvette Carp, helpfully assisted by Karen Brenner, adding enthusiastic new players to the weekly group! Book Club had a lively discussion both in person and via Zoom to discuss "The Book of Lost Names" by Kristin Harmel. Our next Book Club (led by Phyllis Shaw and Andrea de Lange) will take place in April with specific date and book to be announced. Watch for this information on the Facebook Sisterhood Group page. "Sip & Chat" allowed for a small group catch-up

as well.

Sisterhood is focused on plans for the Spring and Summer with our primary goal of bringing women of Shir Shalom together for meaningful connection with each other both socially and within the context of our shared Jewish experiences. Each activity enables us to learn meaningful aspects of each other's lives we may not have known before, strengthening us, by serving to bring us together on common ground.

Some things to look forward to as we plan...

1. Participation at the Purim Carnival on March 13 (Look for details about this event and COVID guidelines)
2. Canasta workshop in late Spring
3. Possible Day Trip to NYC for

historic synagogue tour

4. Snowshoe/Hiking weather determined
5. Game Night for Grown-Ups
6. Food/Clothing Drives as needed tied to other major events, and more. We are always open to ideas and suggestions!

*Communications regarding schedule and details of events are transmitted via MailChimp and Facebook Sisterhood Group.

As always, we are grateful to Cantor Debbie and Rabbi Reiner for their on-going support and encouragement!

On to Spring!

*Laurie Wolkin,
Margie Gorelick and
Christina Gogish*

GREETINGS FROM BROTHERHOOD

Hi Shir Shalom community!

It might be a bit early to be thinking Spring, but in and around Valentine's Day, we all most certainly are thinking about Love (reminder to the guys out there, that if you don't, it'll most certainly exact a heavy price from your significant other. You'll be much better off and spend a lot less money all year if you will have bought those special "thinking of you gifts" now!). And in the spirit of love, community and giving, we want you to know that we are thinking hard and have many plans to not only bring the Shir Shalom community closer together (i.e.,

Brotherhood, Sisterhood and other groups!), but to deepen bonds and bring much joy to all!

Covid has been no fun for anyone, and we have not been able to set nearly the calendar we would have wished for. But even if spring isn't here, hope springs eternal for us Jews, right? We hope to create a terrific set of events in coming months here in 2022. In that spirit, we hope you will:

1. Certainly look out and join in on all such events going forward. The more widespread the participation, the deeper the meaningfulness of the experience!; and,

2. Please consider reaching out and offering your welcomed support by volunteering your time, energy and creativity in helping to set, design and ensure an awesome event schedule is developed and brilliantly executed for the benefit of the Shir Shalom community!

Stay warm; stay safe; chip in and let's make great things happen together!

From your trusty but entirely uncreative (I'm told by my kids this more than once daily) Brotherhood Leader (do I have to?).

Steve Landzberg

Donate to Shir Shalom @ www.OurShirShalom.org/donate/

Contributions, Congratulations and Remembrances

GENERAL FUND

Addrienne Orlan
Bruce and Julie Sacks
Gordon and Polly Schnell
Lesly Burns

In Memory of (z"l):

Murray and Helen Milrod
Maron Milrod
Ruth Sunday Davis
Suzanne Sunday and
Kenneth Kurzweil

Arthur L. Penzel

Jeffrey and Lesly Burns

Rita Zelin

Karen Taylor and
David Kaminer

Herbert Zieselman

Paul and Judith Stoogenke

Stephen Margolis

Robi Margolis

In Honor of:

Larry and Vivian Hoffman upon the
birth of their grandson Levi
Jeff and Margie Gorelick

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Lynne and Andrew Stark
Joseph Niola

In Memory of (z"l):

Rachel Gorelick
Jeff and Margie Gorelick

In Gratitude:

Jeff and Margie Gorelick
Kimberly and Jeffrey Knispel

In Appreciation:

Lora Wishod

CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Jeffrey and Kimberly Knispel
Joseph Niola

In Memory of (z"l):

Rachel Gorelick
Jeff and Margie Gorelick

In Honor of:

the naming of Cantor Katchko-Gray's
three beautiful granddaughters
Nancy & Dan Whelton

In Gratitude:

Jeff and Margie Gorelick
Kimberly and Jeffrey Knispel

MUSIC FUND

In Honor of:

Cantor Debbie and Scott Gray's
grandaughters, Ella, Rae and Lilliana
Dr. Barbara Safran

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MARCH YAHRZEITS

FRIDAY, MARCH 4

Pauline Berkowitz*
grandmother of Stephen Heit
Ada Dolin
grandmother of Rachel Bender
Nettie Miller
mother of Marilyn Lipman
Lottie Mirkin
grandmother of Judith Strom
Melvin Moss
father of David Moss
Aida Ryan
mother of Eve Siegel
James Taylor
father-in-law of Karen Taylor;
grandfather of David Taylor

*Memorial Plaque:

Leonard Brodnick
Felicia Israel-Mucciolo
Max Rifkin

FRIDAY, MARCH 11

Blanche Agisim
mother of Elliot Agisim
Monte Baier
brother of Shelby White
Elliot Bernstein
father of Meredith Rudin
Amy Cohen
sister of Adam Cohen
Seymour Drucker
grandfather of Janine Gordon

Albert Elkin
grandfather of Stephanie
Herbstman
Moses Fergenson
uncle of Michael Bergman
Florence Fine
grandmother of Peter Fine
Elaine Randel
mother of Susan Randel
Herman Rosenthal
grandfather of Susan Westlake
Douglas Schwartz*
brother of Vicki Yolen
Beatrice Strom
mother of Robert Strom

FRIDAY, MARCH 18

Steven Abraham
brother of Vivian Hoffman
Alice Cohlan
mother of Rick Cohlan
Lyubov Dashevskaya
grandmother of Vladimir and
Ilya Gogish and mother of
Serafima Dashevskaya
Morris Heller
father of Paul Heller
Jerome Howard
father of Laurie Dubin
Fayge Levin-Goldberg*
grandmother of Jacob Goldberg
Gloria Margolis
mother of Elise Aries

Jeanne Perrin*
mother of Charles Perrin
***Memorial Plaque:**
Elsie Rudy

FRIDAY, MARCH 25

Harry Cohen
grandfather of Steven Kaye
Michael Davis*
brother-in-law of Elyse Davis
Eva Engel
grandmother of Robin Heit
Morton Eydenberg*
father of Susan Westlake
David Adam Hagen*
brother of Ellen Lipton
Kenneth Henry
father of Robert Henry
Milton Kamler
grandfather of Adam Rubinfeld
George Levenson
uncle of Karen Brenner
Esther Mirkin*
mother of Judith Strom
Richard Ruo*
father of Eileen Segalman
Sam Schmeltzer*
father of Resa Fremed
Tillie Schmeltzer*
mother of Resa Fremed
Richard Wood
father of Trudy Wood

***Indicates Memorial Plaque
affixed in the Sanctuary**



In Memoriam

The Memory of the Righteous is a Blessing

Gloria Lederman
Harold Hoffman

Mother of Linda Lederman
Father of Larry Hoffman

We remember them. As long as we live, they too will live, for they are now a part of us as we remember them. When we are weary and in need of strength; We remember them. When we are lost and sick at heart; We remember them.

APRIL YAHRZEITS

FRIDAY, APRIL 1

Mary E. Keleher
mother of Catherine Mishkin
Barbara Gray
aunt of Scott Gray
Louis Grayson
friend of Donald Gordon
Eva Greenberg
mother of Adrienne Orlan
Leon Levy
husband of Shelby White
Helen Pilch
mother of Alan Pilch
Louis Rubinfeld
grandfather of Adam Rubinfeld
Emmy Sternberger
grandmother of Alice Gottlieb
Herman Zeitlin
father of Ianne Poushter

*Memorial Plaque:

Bernard Benjamin
Anne Elizabeth Raynor

FRIDAY, APRIL 8

Susan Baier
cousin of Shelby White
Alan Bangser*
brother of Robert Bangser
Jack Berkowitz*
grandfather of Stephen Heit
Sarah Buchman
aunt of Janine Gordon
Marilyn Cohen*
mother of Susannah Altman
Arnold Eydenberg
grandfather of Susan Westlake
Bernie Gerard
father of Ira Gerard
Warren Gittlen
grandfather of Franki
Zimmerman
Michael Goldberg
father of Sarah Rottman
Francis Horvilleur
father of Laurence Furic
Wallace Kalter
step-father of Marcia Needleman
Meyer Katz
father of Claire Katz
Ted Krulwich*
brother of Jeffrey Krulwich

Cyril Lesser*
father of Diana Friedlander
Arthur Margolis*
father-in-law of Robi Margolis
Thelma Reichenthal
mother of Sandra Rosenhouse
Robert Sigman
friend of Michael and Gale
Berman

Memorial Plaque:

Mary Benjamin

FRIDAY, APRIL 15

Isia Bursuker
husband of Veronika Bursuker,
father of Moshe Bursuker and
grandfather of Eve and Ari
Leah Fergenson
grandmother of Michael
Bergman
Robert Fields
uncle of Helene Karlin
Rita Katchko*
mother of Cantor Deborah
Katchko-Gray
Esther Oks-Ponczyk*
grandmother of Jack Goldberg
Joshua Ponczyk*
grandfather of Jack Goldberg
Adolph Ratner
grandfather of Judith Strom
Mary Salpeter*
mother of Michael Salpeter
Beate Schmidek
grandmother of Dana Harnett
Mark Shapiro
husband of Naomi Shapiro
Harry Slone
father of Judith Shapiro
Ben Stern
brother of Barbara Manners
Fay Goodman Weisberg*
mother of Marty Weisberg
Isaac Weintraub
grandfather of Karen Gerard

*Memorial Plaque:

Lillian Gordon

FRIDAY, APRIL 22

Millie Bernstein
Aunt of Alan Pilch

Edward Carroll
father of Jim Carroll
Jack Fernandes*
father of Marisol Binn
Phyllis Goldfield
mother of Laurie Wolkin
Harvey Haddon
brother of Rabbi Jon Haddon
Murray Haddon*
father of Rabbi Jon Haddon
Annette Holson
grandmother of Robin Heit
Monroe Sachs
father of David Sachs
Hilda Vendig
mother of Richard Vendig

*Memorial Plaque:

Murray Fischberg

FRIDAY, APRIL 29

Joan Bieber Carroll
mother of Jim Carroll
Rita Bush
mother of Richard Bush
Joseph Hubsher
grandfather of Jeffrey Hubsher
James Jolly
father of Robert Jolly
Lillie Landsberg
great-aunt of Karen Gerard
Ivey Meyers*
granddaughter of Elinor
Darvick
Edward Joseph Modest
father of Betsy Brand
Ruth Muchnick
grandmother of Jason
Muchnick
Rose Pecker
mother of Sunnie Colen
Sol Saleem
grandfather of Kate Alvarez
Mark Shapiro
nephew of David Shapiro
Rebecca Shimkin
grandmother of Janine Gordon

*Memorial Plaque:

Nathalie Fried Alexander



SHABBAT ACROSS AMERICA

Whether physically apart and joined online, or gathered in the sanctuary, we celebrate Shabbat together.

This year we are recognizing and celebrating our many Volunteers who make our Shir Shalom Community a warm, giving, inviting, inclusive and spiritual home.

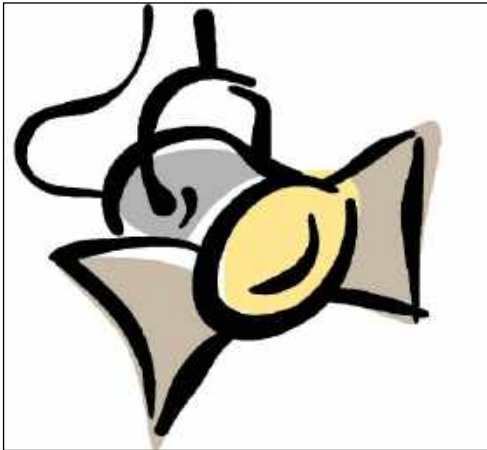
Our Friday night service starts at 6:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting ID: 630 893 374

Passcode: Shalom

CONGREGANT SPOTLIGHT

ROBERTA (ROBI) MARGOLIS - JFC Founding Member 1981 (40Years)



How long have you lived in this area and what brought you here?

When my husband, Stephen and I married, we lived in New York City and then in Mamaroneck for several years. As our two daughters were growing, we moved to South Salem and bought our house in 1977.

Tell us a little about your family and your career.

I have two daughters – Julie, who lives in Montclair, New Jersey, with her husband and three daughters, Lily, Talia and Mia – and Loren, who lives in Dobbs Ferry, with her husband and their dog. I work for a physician search firm based in Salt Lake City that places doctors in positions throughout the country.

Share your experience and involvement at Shir Shalom.

I started Jewish Family Congregation in South Salem with two other founding members, and was its first President. Jewish Family Congregation began as a sort of grassroots movement to create a synagogue in South Salem. Starting with twenty families, everyone contributed and helped it grow. In the beginning, Sunday school took place in members' homes, and was taught

by the members themselves. The South Salem Presbyterian Church assisted in providing us with a place for services and eventually for classrooms as well. Later, the congregation bought a property on Route 123 (a former restaurant), and it became the home of the synagogue.

The synagogue obtained a Holocaust Torah, which is used in many services today at Shir Shalom, including our bar and bat mitzvah services. The Torah, which is several hundred years old, and which had been in a synagogue in Bruno, Czechoslovakia, was brought back from England by JFC synagogue member, Ed Mendell. In respect for the Torah, he treated it

"The most rewarding experience is when you find things that you want to partake in."

as a person, and purchased a ticket for the Torah to sit on the plane next to him. The Torah was bare, and in time, Joan Schwartz designed the needlepoint cover with the names of all of the towns whose members had started the synagogue – South Salem, Danbury, New Canaan, Ridgefield, etc.

When we started JFC, it was all very exciting – and the miracle was that people jumped right in and helped with the growth of the congregation. This was the hallmark of the congregation – that everyone mattered, and everybody had a role and chipped in. We chose the name Jewish Family Congregation, since it was founded as a family and a happy place for children and their families.



What was your early experience with Judaism?

I was born and raised in Hartford, Connecticut, and I obtained a degree from Wheaton College in Massachusetts and attended Harvard University. My major was History and Philosophy of Religion.

Interestingly, my grandfather built a synagogue – in Old Lyme, Connecticut where our family vacationed every summer. The beach community was half Jewish and half Italian. My grandfather and two other men built a one-room synagogue, a red brick building, which is still there today. My grandfather was the first President, and his name – Alexander Rappaport – is on the wall. We attended Friday night services, and my cousins were bar mitzvah'd there.

How can people become connected?

In forming JFC, everybody had a role, everybody had a responsibility, and everyone was a valued part of a community. The most rewarding experience is when you find things that you want to partake in. Everyone matters.

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PASSOVER 2022/5782
Holiday Dates and Service Times

Passover 2022 will begin at sunset on Friday, April 15 and will end with sunset in the evening of Saturday, April 23.

Passover Feast of the first born: Friday, April 15th
@ 8:30 a.m.

Passover first night: Friday, April 15 — No Shabbat Service.

Passover Morning Service: Saturday, April 16
@ 10:00 a.m.

Passover Second Night Seder: Saturday, April 16
(Details TBD)

Passover Shabbat/Yizkor: Friday, April 22
@ 7:30 p.m.

