

OUR SHIR SHALOM

Congregation Shir Shalom of Westchester and Fairfield Counties

Spring 2023 / Iyyar-Sivan-Tammuz 5783

ISRAEL SHABBAT DINNER

FRIDAY, MAY 5TH - 5:30 PM TO 8:00 PM



EXPERIENCE SHABBAT ISRAELI STYLE, FEATURING OFEK, OUR FEDERATION ISRAEL EMISSARY, FOR A LIVELY CONVERSATION AND Q&A.

JOIN US FOR ISRAELI APPETIZERS AT 5:30 PM, FOLLOWED BY SONGS AND SERVICE AT 6:00 PM

ISRAELI CATERED DINNER AT 7:00 PM

\$18 PER PERSON (CHILDREN UNDER 13 FREE)

IF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IS NEEDED, PLEASE EMAIL RABBIASSIST@OURSHIRSHALOM.ORG

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.

MAY - JUNE WORSHIP AND PROGRAM SCHEDULE

May 5	5:30 p.m.	Israel <i>Shabbat</i> begins, meet Ofek, our Federation Israel Emmissary and enjoy light snack	June 2	6 :00 p.m.	Pride <i>Shabbat</i>
	6:00 p.m.	Israel <i>Shabbat</i> Worship	June 3	5:00 p.m.	<i>Shabbat</i> Afternoon Worship, <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> , Aiden Aframe
	7:00 p.m.	Israel <i>Shabbat</i> Dinner		7:30 p.m.	<i>Havdalah</i> Worship
May 7	11:30 a.m.	Mitzvah Day	June 9	5:30 p.m.	Tot <i>Shabbat</i> 2.0
May 10	7:00 p.m.	Brotherhood Beer Tasting		7:30 p.m.	Graduation <i>Shabbat</i>
May 12	5:30 p.m.	Tot <i>Shabbat</i> 2.0	June 10	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101
	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship		10:30 a.m.	<i>Shabbat</i> Morning Worship, <i>Bat Mitzvah</i> , Ruby Kalish
May 19	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship with special guest Beth Styles		5:00 p.m.	<i>Shabbat</i> Afternoon Worship, <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> , Everett Axel
May 26	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship	June 16	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship
		Torah 101 will not be held in May, and will be continued in June.	June 17	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101
		<i>Please join us in-person or online for Shabbat, holiday and events throughout the year!</i>		10:30 a.m.	<i>Shabbat</i> Morning Worship, <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> , Eli Scott Hirschbein
			June 23	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship
			June 30	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship



TO OUR NEWEST CONGREGANTS AND ECC FAMILIES

Eitan Burstein and Raquel Spilka and their children, Leon, Noa, and Libbi

Lindsay and David Wolff and their son, Simon

Jessica and Gregory Brushett and their daughter, Emme

Dana and Michael Neiman and their children, Chloe and Hannah

Jennifer and Steve Severenko and their daughter, Mikaela

Jill and Kelly Markowitz and their daughter, Jericho

Rachel and Daniel Rosenbaum and their son, Benjamin

Dan Malkin and Sarah Klunk Malkin and their son, Noah

Amy Russo and Evan Perler and their son, Samuel

Rachel and Richard Priem and their children, Isaac and Ezra

Megan and Chris Grofcsik and their daughter, Inga

Kate Haase-MacDonald and Devin MacDonald and their son, Jack

CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM OF WESTCHESTER AND FAIRFIELD COUNTIES

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Leslie@OurShirShalom.org

OFFICE HOURS / SHABBAT AND HOLIDAY EMAILS

Our office is generally open Monday-Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and by appointment. If you are unable to visit during our office hours, there is a clear plastic bin on the porch by our main entry door. *Yahrtzeit* candles, prayer books, Jewish calendars and seasonal items are available for home use. Our clergy and staff are eager to connect by email or telephone and (consistent with our Jewish values) our practice is not to check or respond to e-mail on *Shabbat* or other Jewish holy days, festivals or secular Federal holidays, except in the case of a life-cycle emergency. We ask that you refrain from emailing or texting our clergy or staff during those times. We'll be happy to communicate you upon their conclusion. Thank you.

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

Rabbi David Reiner



As a sacred and inclusive community inspired by Jewish values and traditions, I am pleased and grateful for the support and

flexibility of our lay and professional leaders as I temporarily step back from some obligations during the month of May to bond with nearly four-month-old baby Gabriel and support Ashley in her transition back to full time work. Paternity leave is consistent

with Jewish values and reflects a growing trend in the corporate world, and I am

appreciative of their commitment and flexibility even though I am not able to have the leave I had imagined while Cantor Debbie is also on leave, continuing to heal.

We are calling this "modified leave" because I will remain available for pastoral needs (including life cycle events, home and hospital visits, etc.), and will continue meeting and working with students and families preparing for upcoming Bar and Bat Mitzvah ceremonies along with leading Shabbat worship and life cycle rituals, teaching and participating in our *B'Yachad* Religious School programs and activities with our Early Childhood Center, and other congregation wide

events including Mitzvah Day and Pride Shabbat. I will be deferring non-urgent meetings and my time for non-emergencies and non-pastoral meetings will be limited.

I will not be checking my email regularly and all incoming messages will continue to be forwarded automatically to my assistant, Allyson Bellio. Allyson will not open messages marked "CONFIDENTIAL" and may respond to some messages directly (and will seek my input in responding to urgent questions). If there is an urgent pastoral need, please call or text 203-493-1836. Please contact Allyson or our Executive Director, Mark Block at

mblock@ourshirshalom.org with general questions. To book an appointment please contact my

assistant, Allyson (RabbiAssist@ourshirshalom.org).

I will be transitioning back to work during June and July (I plan to visit Israel on business in late June and will be serving on the faculty at URJ camp Eisner in mid-July).

I could not find any verses of *Torah* that mentioned our patriarchs or Moses taking paternity leave or changing diapers, but Abraham's parenting track record was...abysmal (Abraham expelled Ishmael into the wilderness and nearly sacrificed Isaac), Isaac's favoritism fed into a tremendous sibling rivalry and conflict between Jacob and Esau, and the dysfunction among Jacob's

wives and children...oy! Ashley has been keeping track of every diaper changed over the past four months and expects me to balance the discrepancy in the weeks ahead. If you see a tall person pushing a stroller on Main Street in Ridgefield with two other boys in tow or struggling through a diaper change in the park, take a close look...it may be me!

Rabbi David L. Reiner

"We are calling this "modified leave" because I will remain available for pastoral needs."



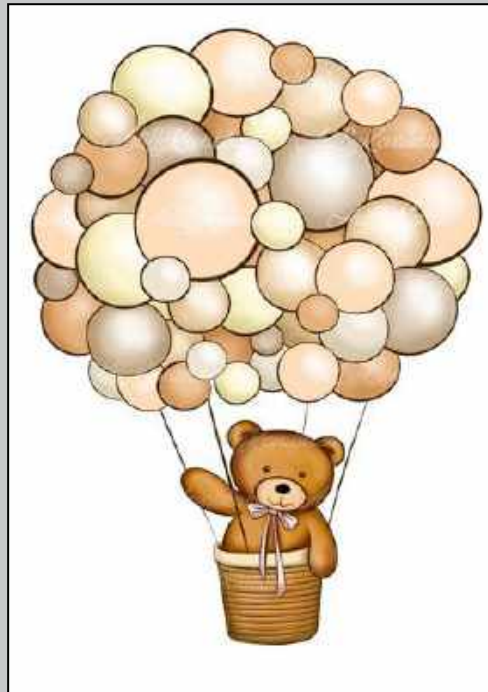
Join Rabbi Reiner on select Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. for Torah 101, *Shabbat* morning study.

We hope you'll join us as we learn together through the study of our sacred texts. Check our weekly eblast and calendar for dates and Zoom information.

WELCOME OUR CONGREGANTS NEWEST FAMILY MEMBERS!

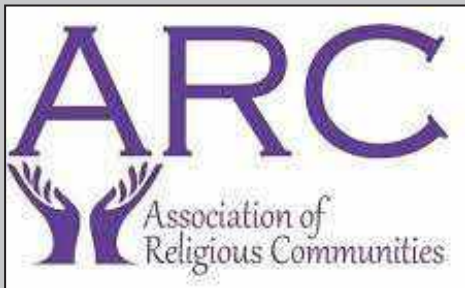


Gwen Madeline Cohn was recently welcomed by proud parents Ilana and Jordan Cohn, and older daughter Audrey.



June and Alan Rubin welcome the newest member into their family, grandson, Oliver Irving Erik Jönsson. Daughter Bonnie, and son-in-law Otto are his adoring and loving parents.

ARC TO HONOR RABBI JON HADDON

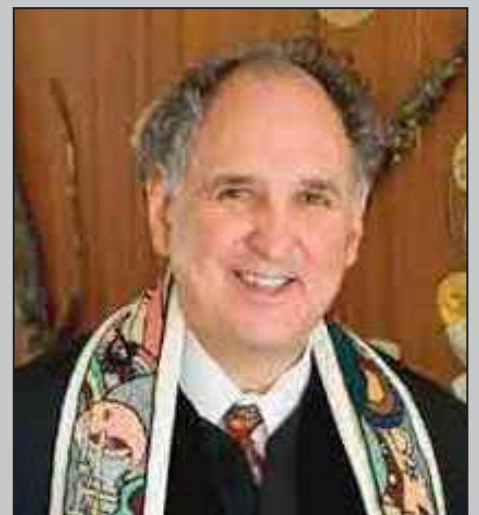


Our Rabbi Emeritus, Jon Haddon, is being honored by ARC (Association of Religious Communities) in Danbury, CT for his twenty five years of dedicated service. The Gala will be held at the Amber Room Colonnade in Danbury, CT on Thursday evening, May 11th at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner. If you are interested in attending, please contact Rabbi Haddon directly at

Jonrab33@gmail.com, and he will send you a personal invitation.

The Association of Religious Communities was founded over four decades ago for the purpose of facilitating interfaith cooperation in the greater Danbury area. Centered in the respective faiths, ARC continues to manifest the wisdom of the world's spiritual traditions while enhancing the quality of life in the greater Danbury community. It's mission is to alleviate the causes of violence, suffering, and hate while advancing peace, justice, and human dignity.

Congregation Shir Shalom wishes Rabbi Haddon a hearty Mazal Tov



on the honor being bestowed by The Association of Religious Communities for his commitment and dedication to service.

UNCONVENTIONAL WEAPON

Cantor Deborah Katchko-Gray



A Women's Choir Joins Battle for Pluralism at the Kotel.

Facing off against protests, loudspeakers, whistles

and jeers, the Women of the Wall's choir is using their voices in the fight against religious coercion in Jerusalem.

Once a month, a group of women convenes at Jerusalem's Western Wall to raise their voices together in prayer. And once a month, almost without fail, they find themselves surrounded by less-than-tolerant fellow Jews trying to shut them up.

"Before we even elicit a sound, the ritual begins," says Yochi Rappaport, the executive director of the feminist prayer group Women of the Wall. "On one side are the young Orthodox seminary girls who shout and curse at us non-stop. In front are the older women blowing their whistles so loud it hurts our ears, and to our left are the loudspeakers blaring prayers from the men's section. To hear our own voices over this cacophony, we have to sing so loudly we inevitably end up leaving the place hoarse."

The rabbi in charge of the Western Wall only allows loudspeakers to be used at the site on rare occasions, but this is one of them.

For more than 30 years, Women of the Wall have been holding a morning service at the Jewish holy site on the first day of the new Jewish month. To push back against the

deafening noise that greets them there, the multi-denominational prayer group is making use of an unconventional weapon: an entire choir of its own.

"Our goal has always been to make women's voices heard in prayer," says Rappaport. "This amazing singing group is our response to all those who have been trying for to drown us out."

The all-women choir was established just a few months ago, and still has no official name. It has already joined Women of the Wall for two *Rosh Chodesh* prayer services, and this coming Monday will be its third.

"I found it unbelievably disturbing that a woman praying would be assaulted with hot coffee."

The project could not have taken off without the financial support of another Jewish women's organization, this one thousands of miles away: the Women Cantors' Network in the United States.

Deborah Katchko-Gray, a fourth-generation cantor and the founder of the 40-year-old network, credits a fateful cup of coffee with inspiring this initiative.

"A couple of years ago, I saw a photograph of Anat Hoffman wearing a prayer shawl that had been stained when a cup of coffee was thrown at her," says Katchko-Gray, referring to the longstanding chairwoman of Women of the Wall. "I found it unbelievably disturbing that a woman praying would be assaulted

with hot coffee. I reached out to her and offered to send her a coffee-colored prayer shawl I had woven by hand, so that if it ever happened again, the stain wouldn't show."

The two women soon struck up a friendship, and Katchko-Gray invited Hoffman to speak at the weekly Zoom gathering of her cantors' network. "Anat spoke about the audio terrorism her group was up against, and I was able to convince our network – though it really didn't require that much effort – to donate \$10,000 to set up this choir. We had never done anything like this before, and now that it's all come together, it's like a dream come true."

Although it wasn't planned that way, the choir launch coincides with the rise to power of the most Orthodox and reactionary government in Israeli history. Indeed, never has there been a government in Israel this hostile to progressive streams of Judaism and to the values of pluralism and feminism represented by Women of the Wall.

Indeed, if it has its way, the Women of the Wall group could soon find itself banned from prayer in the women's plaza, where it has been meeting for more than 30 years.

The Orthodox establishment in Israel has long maintained that the practices these women embrace – wearing prayer shawls and phylacteries, and especially singing out loud – violate local customs at the Jewish holy site. But 10 years ago, an Israeli court ruled that this was not the case, providing Women of the Wall with an important legal victory.

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UNCONVENTIONAL WEAPON (CONT'D)

As part of the coalition agreements, Likud was forced to make major concessions to the religious parties, which hold an unprecedented number of seats in the new government. Among these concessions, the ruling party agreed that local custom at the Western Wall would be determined by the rigidly Orthodox Chief Rabbinate's office, and if need be, a new law would be passed to override the 2013 court ruling. The choir launch, and the resistance that it has already garnered, may intensify Israel's already heightened intra-Jewish conflicts.

Standing taller

Ester Ottolenghi, the 34-year-old choir director, begins the weekly Monday evening rehearsal with some stretching and breathing exercises. Generating a round of applause is her announcement that within the next few days, a shipment of scarves, decorated in Women of the Wall's colors and musical notes, will be arriving in Israel. These gifts from the cantors' network in America are meant to help visitors identify the choir members during their monthly Western Wall performances. "We may even have them in time for our upcoming *Rosh Chodesh* services," says the beaming director.

Ottolenghi moved to Israel from Italy 15 years ago, after graduating from high school. A trained pianist, she directs five separate choirs in Jerusalem, four of which are affiliated with synagogues.

"I come from an Orthodox home, and my dad was a cantor, so the connection between music and Judaism has always burnt strongly in me," she says. "When I was offered this job, I didn't even have to think



twice about accepting. Not only did it bring together Judaism and music, but it also was a cause I believed in."

Ottolenghi has recruited 18 women, most of them in their twenties and early thirties, for her choir. Some are professional singers and musicians,



but certainly not all. The group includes a translator, a social worker, a graphic artist, a waitress and an unemployed animal trainer, who makes the 90-minute drive from Hadera each way to attend these weekly rehearsal sessions.

Yael Dushy, a 25-year-old music student, has been a supporter of Women of the Wall for quite a few years. As a participant in a gap year program run by the Reform movement in Israel, she says, she frequently joined the prayer group for its monthly service. "During that year, I developed a real love for pluralistic Judaism, so when this opportunity arose, I jumped on it," she says.

Avigayil Zadik, a high-tech executive who also works as a mixed-media artist, grew up in an ultra-Orthodox home in Bnei Brak. Among the reasons for her rebellion against her upbringing, says the 33-year-old, was that she was not allowed to indulge her passion for singing. "That doesn't mean I've lost my love for prayer, and so for me, participating in this project is like fulfilling a calling."

Have the added professional voices of the choir succeeded in overpowering the loudspeakers, whistles and other noisemakers? "Very much so," says Rappeport. "In the past two months, we've actually been able to hear ourselves."

"But even more important," she adds. "It's been a real morale booster. I see that especially among the young girls who regularly join us at the Kotel. It used to be that they would shrink into themselves whenever the noise started."

Cantor Debbie

Reprinted from Haaretz, January 19, 2023

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jeff Gorelick



Larry Brooks and I, as synagogue co-presidents, hope that you and your family had a wonderful, inspiring Passover

holiday. The second night seder festivities at Shir Shalom were well attended and a wonderful community gathering. We are grateful to our staff and fellow congregants who made this possible.

If there was ever a silver lining to a dark cloud, the unfortunate flooding that we experienced this past winter that caused significant damage to our sanctuary and pavilion was addressed, remediated, and is well into repair and renovation. Ceilings repaired, walls painted, new carpeting and flooring, and

refinishing and staining of pews and bimah will result in an even more beautiful pavilion and sanctuary than we had before. This multi-month effort has been aided by our Executive Director Mark Block, Facilities Manager Patrick Barry, and Rabbi Reiner, as well as our Housing chair congregant Hal Wolkin, Eileen

"Renovations will result in an even more beautiful sanctuary and pavilion."

Segalman (design), and Richard Lipton and his "crew." We and the congregation offer our most sincere thanks for your time and effort. We are planning a casual gathering this summer to formally reveal the finished work to the congregation with more information forthcoming.

May is noteworthy for Mitzvah Day on May 7th, an annual wonderful

day for both adults and children to enjoy activities and work together for good, both in our synagogue and the greater community. Thank you to Debbie Lavin, Elie Schecter, and all congregants involved in organizing this wonderful event. The resurgence of the Brotherhood continues with an Israeli Beer Tasting event on

May 10th – What could be bad?

Consistent with Shir Shalom's mission to welcome all and equality for all, we celebrate Pride Shabbat on June 2nd. We look forward to celebrating the simcha and joy with our June B'nei Mitzvot and their families, Aiden Aframe (June 3), Ruby Kalish (June 10), Everett Axel (June 10), and Eli Hirschbein (June 17). We all wish you well and Mazel Tov!

Wishing you all health and happiness and hoping to see you soon!

Jeff Gorelick, MD

Holocaust Remembrance Day

Congregants Hal Wolkin and Serafima Dashevskaya represented Congregation Shir Shalom at the Holocaust Remembrance Day in White Plains at the Garden of Remembrance on April 18th this year. Our two rescued Torah scrolls were carried during the procession of Rescued Torahs. Survivor Hannah Holsten provided the keynote address as the Westchester-wide commemoration honored the estimated six million Jews and others murdered during the Nazi Germany Holocaust.



WERE THE 'GOOD OLD DAYS' REALLY GOOD?

Mark Block, Executive Director, FSA



If the “Good Old Days” were so good, how come no one really remembers them? This is an interesting topic that we think about

as winter gives way to the moderate temperatures of spring with flowers blooming and tree canopies filling in preparation for the warm days of summer. How often have we heard someone say how well the ‘Good Old Days’ were? They were so much better than today, yet probably won’t be as good as tomorrow.

Why do we think that way?

Today we become besieged with worries and concerns about our children’s safety, economic uncertainty, opioid abuse, climate change, the national debt, illegal immigration, foreign incursions and so much more. In our memories, the good old days seem so much better—but were they?

Are the ‘Good Old Days’ a figment of the imagination? The truth is what we consider to be the ‘Good Old Days’ had their own set of difficulties and uncertainties, nervousness, and anxieties. In times past, like today, we have been through wars here at home and overseas, depressions and recessions, constitutional crisis and gas lines, hostage taking, and hijacked planes, mass shootings, and pandemics. We once worried whether the United States and former Soviet Union were going to start a nuclear war and end civilization as we know it; today we worry about China and Russia, Iran, and North

Korea; and we continue to pray for a truly lasting peace in Israel and the Middle East. In the ‘Good Old Days’ smoking was socially accepted with little if any care for the effects long-term use of tobacco caused; today we are enamored with the latest technology and phones that allow us to text, tweet and take professional quality pictures while lives are lost by those distracted when they drive. All of this happens during what people will recall years from now as the ‘Good Old Days.’

In the ‘Good Old Days’ the government was willing to send you

"If the 'Good Old Days' were so good, how come no one really remembers them?"

plans for an underground shelter for protection from radioactive fallout. What they didn't tell you was that since you would probably have the only fallout shelter on the block, you would need to fend off your neighbors who would want to take shelter with you. Since nuclear war didn't happen, the days of air raids and getting under the school desk have become the ‘Good Old Days’ for a lot of people, replaced by shelter in place, active shooter drills and security measures to protect our children and ourselves. It is remarkable how time changes your perspective.

Our B’Yachad religious school recently held a series of focus groups for our families to gauge interest in returning to fully in person learning for Hebrew education and socialization. I suspect some

remembered the ‘Good Old Days’ when Shir Shalom had longer religious school days, BBYO was an active youth organization for post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah teens and the norm of the day was never broken by thinking a worldwide pandemic would upend our children’s learning and growth. Congregants remember the synagogue bustling in different ways during the High Holy Days when an online option wasn’t even a thought. Others will now remember small boxes with a face and a pet or two looking back on their computer screens and a quieter sanctuary on many Friday nights.

While we are a thriving congregation with an amazing sacred space we call our spiritual home, our leadership must grapple with budgets and unintended capital expenses to maintain our home at nearly every Board of Trustees meeting, not so different from the ‘Good Old Days.

My point is the ‘Good Old Days’ were filled with threats and insecurities, challenges, and opportunities just like today. Most of the things we worried about never happened or weren’t as bad as they seemed, and those that did are a part of our collective history, both for good and for bad. We tend to forget the threats and worries that never materialized because they fade in our consciousness and remember all the good things that happened. Maybe this says that optimism is a natural human trait, and optimism is something you will find in abundance throughout our synagogue—whether it comes from our clergy and staff, our lay leaders, or our amazing

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THE 'GOOD OLD DAYS' (CONT'D)

Mark Block, Executive Director, FSA

volunteers. Our Shir Shalom is not just a name, it is a realism of our daily lives that Congregation Shir Shalom, for all her challenges in today's segmented world, remains a beacon that illuminates with a welcoming light for Jews to our corner of upper Fairfield and Westchester Counties. It is an ever-evolving house of Jewish worship; a home to families and those who believe in our mission:

inclusive and caring, striving to inspire all with our traditions of enriching cultural and spiritual experiences: progressive worship, joy through music, relevant education, genuine personal connections, and meaningful social action.

So, when you look back and say about the years past, those were truly the 'Good Old Days,' keep in mind our

memories can be selective and our personal realities may exist only in what we choose to remember. Together, we will collectively succeed in making the days ahead our very real 'Good Old Days' because our mission is just as important today.

Mark Block

RITUAL COMMITTEE

As many of you are aware, our congregation is fortunate to have in our possession 2 *sifrei Torah* on permanent loan from the Memorial Scrolls Trust. One of these scrolls, the one formerly belonging to the Jewish community of Brno, Czechoslovakia is utilized by the majority of our students chanting their *Torah* portion on the day they become *B'nai Mitzvah*. Each year a Westchester countywide Holocaust Remembrance Day ceremony takes place in White Plains where area synagogues are invited to have attendees present with their rescued *Torah* scrolls. This year's commemoration took place on April 18th and we were honored to have our members Serafima Dashayevska and Hal Wolkin attending to represent our community at this important and meaningful event.

April also gave our community the chance to celebrate *Pesach* together

during our congregational Second Night Seder. It was a festive evening filled with camaraderie, family fun, Rabbi Reiner's interesting interpretation of the *Haggadah*, Rabbi Cantor Dan's lively music and of course a delicious meal catered by Wandering Dave's. If you did not get the opportunity to enjoy this



seder, please consider joining in the festivities next year.

The rehabilitation of our sanctuary and pavilion after the pipe leak is progressing and should be completed by June. In the interim

many of our Friday evening services have been held in the library which has resulted in a very warm and intimate feeling for those who have been attending in-person while preserving the ability to live stream to those who wish to attend remotely.

Shavuot is the next festival on the Hebrew calendar, please watch for email blasts detailing our schedule for this important and often overlooked festival. In addition, planning is beginning for the 5784 High Holy Days which tend to sneak up on us during the spring and summer months. *Rosh Hashanah* will be celebrated beginning Friday evening September 15. We look forward to seeing you at our *Shabbat* and festival services in the months to come either in our sanctuary or online.

*Michael Salpeter and
Laurie Dubin*

Congratulations to all our High School and College Graduates!
We invite you and your families to join us for a special
Graduation Shabbat on Friday, June 9th at 7:30 p.m.

Please send graduation pictures and the names of your
graduates to rabiassist@OurShirShalom.org so we can
include them in a special slide show during this service.



CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR GRADUATES!

Class of 2023



CURRENT COVID-19 POLICY

On the advice of our medical advisors in response to ongoing infection rates in our area, we continue to recommend and encourage masking at Congregation Shir Shalom. This recommendation extends to all visitors, guests, students and staff. Masks are available at our entrance for any visits, including before services and other programs and events.

SHIR SHALOM'S MITZVAH DAY



**Sunday, May 7th,
11:30 am – 4:30 pm**

Spend the afternoon with old friends and new ones too!

Work at Shir Shalom or as a member of an off-site team
to help people and organizations in need

*Food pantry work, outreach to children in need,
gardening for low-income elderly,
nature trail clearing, baking cookies
for the local soup kitchen and much more!*

**Members and non-members of all ages welcome!
Perform a mitzvah as a family, individual, or for a bar/bat mitzvah!
Enjoy a pizza lunch and an Ice Cream Sundae Wrap-up Party
with a slide show montage of our volunteers in action!**

Please **RSVP as soon as possible
to help us with event planning and to secure your spot!
Walk-ins welcome!**

To sign up contact Social Action Chairperson
Debbie Lavin at

SocialAction@OurShirShalom.org

Or sign up online: **<https://bit.ly/shirshalom2023>**

SOCIAL ACTION

We will hold our annual Mitzvah Day event on Sunday, May 7. Walk-ins are welcome if you haven't already registered. This is a community-building event where more than 100 volunteers, kids and adults, gather at the synagogue to participate in projects such as baking cookies for the DDHC, tying fleece blankets for the Kids in Crisis organization, braiding fleece dog toys for the SPCA, filling and decorating flower pots for the nursing homes and numerous other projects. We begin the afternoon with pizza/salad lunch and wrap up with a make-your-own ice cream sundaes and a slide show of our activities. This is the first Mitzvah Day since the pandemic, so we hope to have a big turnout of volunteers! If you have questions, you can email me at Drdebbielav@gmail.com or at SocialAction@OurShirShalom.org.

org. New volunteers are greatly appreciated – this is a great way for new members to get involved.



Please bring to donate: gently used children's books, non-perishable food items, old/broken crayons and gently used prom attire (for the Community Center of Northern Westchester's Prom Drive).

You can sign up online at <https://signup.com/client/invitation2/secure/87031742936826088/false#/invitation>.

Our other on-going project involves preparing a meal for the Dorothy Day Hospitality Center in Danbury. Once a quarter, Deb Gershner leads a group who purchases and prepares a meal for this vital "soup kitchen." This will be the first week in June. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Debrah. gershner@gmail.com. Another congregant heads up an effort to make a monthly meal for the DDHC. If interested in helping, please contact Jeff at Jhubsher@comcast.net.

Hope to see you all at Mitzvah Day on Sunday, May 7!

Debbie Lavin

JULIAN SCHWARZ AND MARIKA BOURNAKI IN CONCERT

Our library was filled and overflowing into the lobby as Julian Schwarz and Marika Bournaki brought their immense talent to Shir Shalom again on Sunday, March 12th for an extraordinary concert.

It was truly a musically memorable afternoon for all those attending.

Among those enjoying the concert were Cantor Joseph Ness from West Hartford, CT and Cantor Robert

Lieberman and his wife Rabbi Vicki Lieberman from Syracuse, NY. They were so moved they contributed to the Cantor's Discretionary Fund to invite the duo back next spring!



ADULT PROGRAMMING NEWS

On Sunday, March 19 we had a fun and educational program run by Ofek Moscovich, the Israel Emissary for our Federation in Fairfield County. The program was called "Hummus." Participants first met in the kitchen where Ofek showed us how to make a real Israeli hummus. In addition to hummus Ofek prepared tahini, onion jam and served us some typical Israeli plates (just chunks of pickles and raw white onion). He also showed us how to serve and eat hummus.

After tasting this deliciousness, we watched the documentary "Hummus the Movie" which featured stories and people who are famous hummus makers in Israel. Here is Ofek's hummus recipe people asked for (all ingredients are available at Stop & Shop):

Ingredients:

- 2 Large cans (29 Oz) of chickpeas
- 1 container of tahini (Haddar by Baracke)
- 1 lemon
- Salt to taste

- Pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp Garlic paste
- 1 tbsp cumin

Preparation instructions:

- Wash the chickpeas under cold water until the water is clear under the chickpeas
- Boil the chickpeas for 20 minutes
- Add all ingredients with the Chickpeas in the food processor and blend until smooth, add water until the right texture.

About one hundred years ago, it seemed like every street on the Lower East Side of Manhattan had at least one synagogue. It was a beautiful spring day on Sunday, April 16th as congregants met up in New York to walk the historic Lower East Side for a tour of synagogues of the area led by Bradley Shaw. Brad is an experienced and licensed tour guide and provided those participating with his tremendous knowledge of the history of houses of worship in the Lower East Side.



SISTERHOOD NEWS

In the spirit of connection, Sisterhood has been busy and engaged! We had a blast at ACT's performance of Rock of Ages. The Bake Sale sponsored by Sisterhood at the *Purim* Carnival enabled donations totaling \$225 that was divided to support both The Daily Bread Food Pantry as well as the BTF Earthquake Relief Fund. Many thanks to those who participated and donated. Donations were also made for the Prom Drive (collection of gently used formal wear) to support the efforts of those who would not otherwise have the opportunity for special occasion dresses and accessories for their Prom experience this Spring! Game play continues for Canasta



on Tuesdays at 7:15 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Mah Jongg on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Shir Shalom Library. Knitting Circle is enjoyed on Thursday mornings plus one Sunday a month. And, what's coming up going forward: Two Sunday morning Hikes at the Leon Levy Preserve in South Salem

from 10:00 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. on April 30th and weather permitting, May 21st. Book Club will be focusing on Lessons in Chemistry on Wednesday, May 3rd, and will be held at Laurie Wolkin's home in South Salem from 7:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Last but not least, mark your calendars for "Sisterhood Dinner Out 2023" on Monday, June 5th from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Eddie's in Ridgefield.

Look for details on our programs and events on the Facebook Shir Shalom Sisterhood Group Page!

*Margie Gorelick,
Christina Gogish,
and Laurie Wolkin*

BROTHERHOOD UPDATE

Thanks to all who joined us at the March Madness event. We had a solid turnout and good food, drinks and conversation were enjoyed by all. I don't have many pictures from that night, but I'll make sure to capture visual evidence of the fun from future events.

Our second event this year, an Israeli beer tasting, is coming up soon on Wednesday, May 10th at Shir Shalom. We'll be welcoming Ofek Moscovich, the Israel Emissary for our Federation in Fairfield County to join us and taste some Israeli beer and liquor (see the flyer in this bulletin). We'll learn about the history of the beers and talk about the big place beer has

in Israel culture. We'll also have Middle Eastern food to nosh on.

You can RSVP to the event here: <https://ourshirshalom.shulcloud.com/event/israeli-beer-tasting.html>.

The cost is \$18 per person payable at the tasting. Hope to see you there.

Feel free to contact me with any questions and ideas for upcoming

gatherings: joshua.krellenstein@gmail.com.

Josh Krellenstein



NEWS FROM THE B'YACHAD RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Cathy Deutchman, Director



When I reflect on the school year, I'm filled with gratitude. This past fall, I experienced a great loss when my mother died, and the Shir

Shalom community supported me. Teachers managed independently to deliver education and keep the program on track, parents reached out and the Rabbi, Board and Ed Committee held me with so much kindness. Your children said *Kaddish* during a Sunday service and offered words of support.

There are many aspects of the program to feel proud about. Our school is growing! Preschool *B'Yachad* reached capacity at 10 students, and we had lots of happy children, many enjoying their first taste of Jewish school. We gained two new families and hired an additional

fourth grade teacher when the class reached 18 students. In the way some things are meant to be, or *bashert* in Yiddish, the wonderful teacher was recommended by one of the new families!

We tried some new things: K/1 families braided and baked challah, 4th and 5th graders used stuffed bears to help learn about the "Bear"

"There are many aspects of the program to feel proud about. Our school is growing! "

cycles, 4-7th graders learned about the Jewish calendar from an expert astronomer, and everyone had an opportunity to roast bananas for *TuB'Shvat*. *Purim* was all about getting a little help from our friends.

We held focus groups to gather feedback and made program changes

as a result. 2023/24 *B'Yachad* registration opens in May. Please look out for the online registration link in weekly emails and register soon. On Saturday, June 3rd, we'll have a family *Havdalah* program at 7:30 p.m. and hope to see many of you there.

As *Purim* was all about getting a little help from our friends, let's end the school year together this Sunday, May 7th with a joint celebration of Israel's 75th Independence Day and last day of the school year.

"If we truly wish to hand on our legacy to our children, we must teach them to love it. The most important element of any education is not learning facts or skills but learning what to love. What we love, we inherit. What we fail to love, we lose." – Jonathan Sacks

With gratitude,

Cathy Deutchman



OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Sarah Denyer, Director



The ECC children had a spirited *Purim* Parade in March with their parents shaking instruments as they lined the

parade route into the sanctuary. We sang some favorite *Shabbat* songs, including a very special rendition of The Dinosaur Song as we had a live (costumed) dinosaur in the sanctuary singing with us! The grown-ups also performed a silly *Purim* Spiel, and the students were ready to participate using their homemade groggers. ECC grandmother, Serafima Dashevskaya,

helped with the *Oneg* nosh by making hamantaschen with the children. Thanks Serafima!

We loved learning about and celebrating *Passover*! In late March, Cantor Hayley came to the ECC to teach Passover songs and brought props and silliness for the children

"We loved learning about and celebrating Passover!"

to enjoy. There were definitely frogs jumping everywhere! In preparation for our ECC *Passover* Celebration on April 5th, all three classes helped make charoset, matzah ball soup and

chocolate covered matzah. Cantor Hayley and Rabbi David joined us for Passover songs, dancing, and a nosh afterward. When our Purple Room Students (3 & 4 year-olds) were asked what they learned about Passover, their responses included: "Lots of Frogs. Moses helped the Jewish people. King Pharaoh was mean. We eat matzah. We don't eat challah. The Red Sea parted. We find the afikomen. Moses lifted his staff to part the sea".

Our Last Day Celebration at the ECC will be Friday June 2nd. We look forward to seeing many of our students back for our Summer Fun Program that begins on June 13th.

Sarah Denyer



PURIM AND PASSOVER MEMORIES



MORE PURIM AND PASSOVER MEMORIES

TEACHER TAKES IT IN THE FACE



At the start of the school year Michael Salpeter, 7th grade teacher gave the 7th grade students a challenge to collect *tzedakah*. Michael told them if they collected \$50 by the time of the Purim Carnival they could shaving cream pie his face. Well, they did better than their challenge and collected over \$100 so they got him two times! Even better, during the *Purim* Carnival they collected an additional \$62 from attendees so one more time, Michael was hit with a shaving cream pie! The three charities monies were collected included Friends of the IDF, JNF, and Fund for Sderot.



MAY YAHRZEITS

FRIDAY, MAY 5

Rae Arenson
aunt of Linda Arenson
Selma Gimple
mother of Debra Bush
Paul Harris
uncle of Ian Harris
Klare Heller
mother of Paul Heller
Andrew Hyman
friend of Richard Mishkin
Andrew Krulwich
brother of Jeffrey Krulwich
Joseph Price
grandfather of Terry Henry
Henrietta T. Ringler
grandmother of Elyse Arnow
Annabel Schwartz
mother of Victoria Yolen
Marvin Stark
father of Andrew Stark
Harold Teich
father of Matt Teich
Gisela Warton
mother of Gale Berman

FRIDAY, MAY 12

Art Arenson
uncle of Linda Arenson
Harry Bernstein
grandfather of Maggie Staub
Robert Greenberg
brother of Adrienne Orlan
Gerald Held
father of Lindsay Held
Milton Hollar
husband of Claire Katz
Irving Ipp
father of Lisa Ipp-Voellmicke
Rosalynd Levitt
mother of Bonnie Dietzek
Sherry Levy-Reiner
mother of Rabbi David Reiner
and wife of Rabbi Fred Reiner
Jeanette Moskowitz
great-grandmother of
Stacey Rubinfeld
Evelyn Rubinfeld
grandmother of
Adam Rubinfeld
Eva Schenk
mother of Alice Gottlieb

Robert Shaplen
father of Jason Shaplen
Walter Vendig
father of Richard Vendig

FRIDAY, MAY 19

Fred Dietzek
father of Alan Dietzek
Hyman Ellis
father of Joseph Ellis
Marilyn Eslofsky
mother Ellen Barth
Judge William Gindin
stepfather of Janine Gordon
Anne Gordon
mother of Elaine Gordon
Regina Henry
mother of Robert Henry
Miriam Langer
mother of Karen Gerard
Edith Redman
mother of Debra Lavin
Murray Rose
father of Andrew Rose
Leon Shimkin
grandfather of Janine Gordon
Dov Stern
stepfather of Barbara Manners
Ludwig Sternberger
uncle of Alice Gottlieb
James Sullivan
Ken and Joan Isman
Ruth Teich
mother of Matt Teich

FRIDAY, MAY 26

Philip Abrams
father of Elyse Davis
Helen Bergson
mother of Phyllis Amerling
Pauline Block
grandmother of
Barbara Manners
Eileen Brody
cousin of Joan Isman
Mildred Geller
grandmother of Jamie Garrett
Samuel Gerard
grandfather of Ira Gerard
Abraham Goldfield
father of Laurie Wolkin

Diana Kalter
mother of Marcia Needleman
Marvin Katz
father of JoAnn Gorman
Claire Levens
mother of David Levens
Max Moskowitz
cousin of Stacey Rubinfeld
Dolores Neiman
grandmother of
Michael Neiman
Samuel Silverman
grandfather of Richard Burg
Carol Wiener
friend of Susan Randel
Indy Goldman

JUNE YAHRZEITS

FRIDAY, JUNE 2

Bertram Bildner
father of Rachelle Axel
Nathan Binstock
relative of Moreton Binn
James Dibble
grandson of Richard Burg
Madeleine Eisberg
grandmother of Tiffany Zezula
Everett Felper
father of Margie Gorelick
Leela Mallon
mother of Linda Krulwich
Samuel Mirsky
grandfather of Carlyn Bergman
Norman Remler
father of Leslie Moss
Eleanore Waldinger
mother of Steven Waldinger
Clarissa Zaltzberg

FRIDAY, JUNE 9

Henry Bangser
father of Robert Bangser
Elliot Buchman
father of Amanda Eisen
Max Burg
father of Judith Besserman
Norma Ginsberg
grandmother of Jamie Garrett
Paul Mallon
brother of Linda Krulwich
William Miller
father of Marilyn Lipman
Shirley Novom-Cowan
grandmother of Jeff Gorelick
Lillian Paget
mother of Debra Paget
John Weiller
husband of Jane Weiller
Adolph Joseph Auerbacher
Marlene Ellen Klotz

FRIDAY, JUNE 16

Rose Abrams
grandmother of Elyse Davis
Ed Blum
father of Neal Blum
Martin Bush
father of Richard Bush
Martin Fiderer
father of David Fiderer

Allan Stanley Jacobs
father of Tammi Jacobs Sulman
Sandra Schulman
grandmother of Dana Harnett
Gideon Tiktin
father of Ron Tiktin
Tim Neary Tuesday
Mishkin family
Judith Birnbaum
Maurice L. Cohen
David Dutka

FRIDAY, JUNE 23

Allen Alexander
stepfather of Hal Wolkin
Joan Arnow
mother of Joshua Arnow
Freida Binstock
relative of Moreton Binn
Gussie Boudier
grandmother of Claire Katz
Jack Brill
father of Elyse Arnow
David Edelman
grandfather of Dana Harnett
Joan Feinstein
mother of Shari Zins
Harold Fisher
father of Larry Fisher
Amy Franklin
stepsister of Ken Isman
Martin Langer
father of Karen Gerard
Elizabeth Levine
grandmother of
Stephanie Herbstman
Ruth Pottish
aunt of Richard Mishkin
Morris Pottish
uncle of Richard Mishkin
Martin Shapiro
father of Judith Shapiro

FRIDAY, JUNE 30

Belle Baker
aunt of Carlyn Bergman
Toby Berman
mother of Michael Berman
Jack Cohen
grandfather of Tiffany Zezula
Eli Lackow
father of Rhonda Lackow

Al Landzberg
father of Steven Landzberg
Harold Pecker
father of Sunnie Colen
Ethel Price
grandmother of Terry Henry
Albert Ross
grandfather of Karen Brenner
Richard Segalman
uncle of Joel S. Segalman
Kylie London Vanderbilt
niece of Joel S. Segalman
Arthur Zucker
father of Bobbie Cohan
Lillian Benjamin

CONTRIBUTIONS

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In Honor of:

The birth of Gabriel Reiner

Elyse Davis

Lora Wishod

Hebrew Naming Ceremony for

Amanda, Gisselle and Eury

Renee and Jeffrey Pessin

Hebrew Naming for their grandson

Alan and June Rubin

In Memory of:

Gene Wishod, z"l and

Benjamin Wishod, z"l

Lora Wishod

Richard Buchwald, z"l

Carol Buchwald

Mary Salpeter, z"l

Michael and Rona Salpeter

Arthur Margolis, z"l and

Stephen Margolis, z"l

Robi Margolis

Fay Goodman Weisberg, z"l

Marty and Tracey Weisberg

Richard Richman, z"l

Monica Richman

Hilda Vendig, z"l

Richard and Linda Vendig

GENERAL FUND

In Memory of:

James Taylor, z"l

Karen Taylor and

David Kaminer

MUSIC FUND

In Gratitude:

To Cantor Debbie for bringing
concerts to CSS

Myrna Robinson



In Memoriam

The Memory of the Righteous is a Blessing

We extend condolences to:

Lisa Kurtz on the death of her father, Richard Buchwald, z"l

Victoria Friedman on the death of her father, Bob Goodman, z"l

May their memory be for a blessing.

OUR MISSION

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

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

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.



Shavuot is the holiday that commemorates the date when God gave the *Torah* to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai. It is preceded by 49 days of counting in eager anticipation.

Many celebrate *Shavuot* through desisting from work, candle-lit dinners, staying up all night to study *Torah*, listening to the reading of the

Ten Commandments, enjoying dairy foods and other festivities. *Shavuot* is traditionally a two-day holiday, though in Israel it is celebrated for one day. The holiday falls May 25th-27th this year.

The word *Shavuot* means “weeks.” It celebrates the completion of the seven-week *Omer* counting period between *Passover* and *Shavuot*.

The *Torah* was given by God to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai on *Shavuot*. Every year on the holiday we renew our acceptance of God’s gift, and God “re-gives” the *Torah*.

Shavuot also means “oaths.” God swore eternal devotion on this day to us, and we in turn pledged everlasting loyalty to Him.

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**CELEBRATE PRIDE SHABBAT
JUNE 2nd @ 6:00 PM**

Come celebrate Shabbat and honor our LGBTQ+ community members, allies, friends, and families at our annual PRIDE SERVICE. All are welcome to join us!

For more information, contact the synagogue office at 203-438-6589, or email Office@OurShirShalom.org.