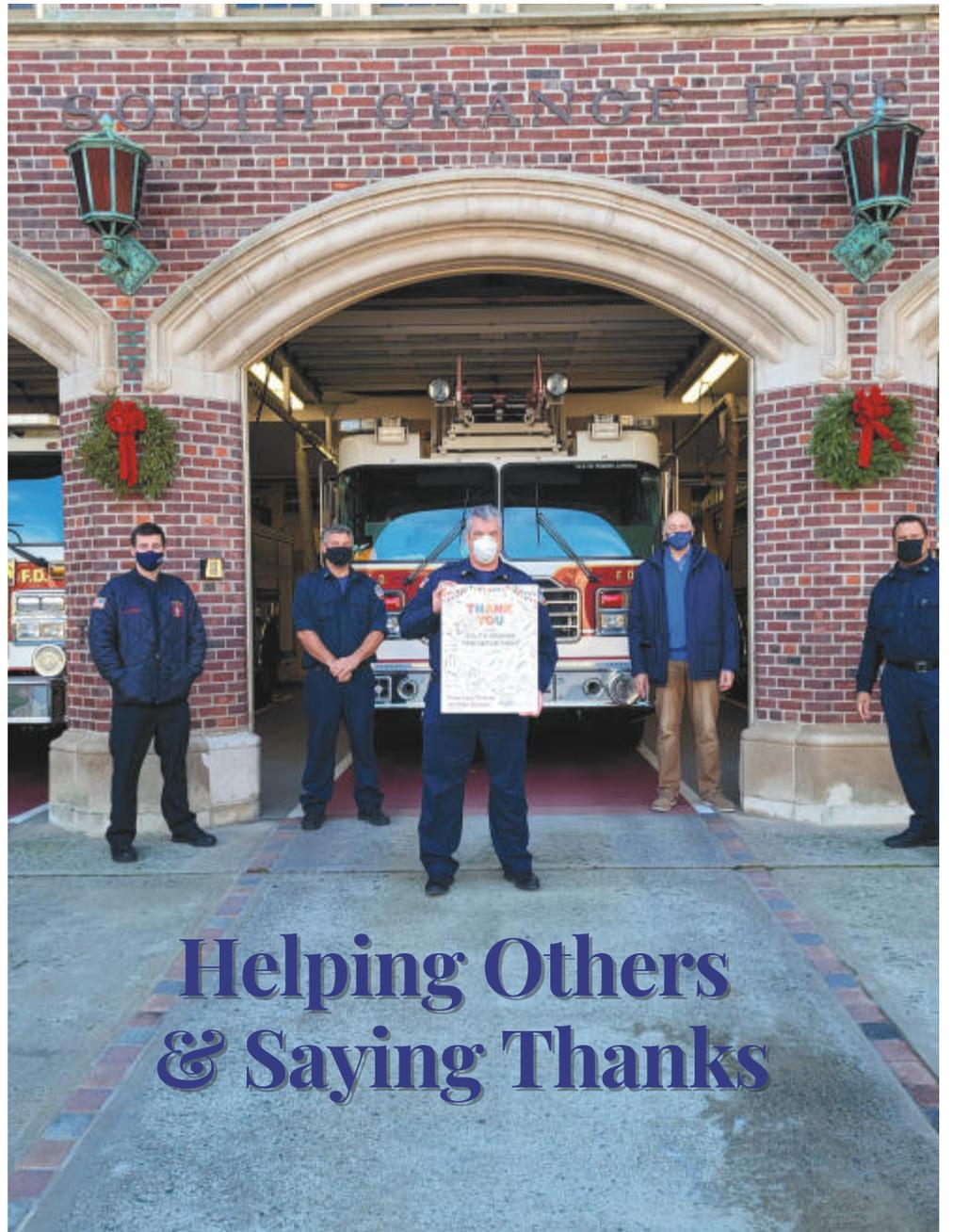




JANUARY - FEBRUARY 2021

TEVET/SHEVAT - SHEVAT/ADAR 5781

A Publication of Oheb Shalom Congregation



Helping Others
& Saying Thanks

the

FROM OUR RABBI



OHEB SHALOM CONGREGATION

Founded 1860

**Congregation Beth Torah
affiliated 1983**

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**Affiliated with United Synagogue
of Conservative Judaism**

*Rabbi Mark Cooper
Cantor Erica Jan Lippitz*

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THE REVIEW OF OHEB SHALOM CONGREGATION

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We often hear about the importance of unity. We hear calls for unity in America, which is increasingly fragmented along racial, political, and socio-economic lines. The 2020 presidential election exposed serious divisions among people (along with different views of the importance of the truth). We have heard calls for unity among the Jewish people who historically have had plenty of disputes and infighting. It does not make sense that unity requires all people to think the same way and believe the same things. So, what does it mean to be unified?

In the Book of Exodus, the Israelites, newly freed from Egyptian enslavement, prepare to meet God at Mt. Sinai: *“They entered the wilderness of Sinai and encamped in the wilderness. Israel camped there in front of the mountain”* (Exodus 19:2). In the verse there is an odd grammatical form used in the Hebrew text that is not mirrored in the English translation. The phrase “Israel camped there in front of the mountain” uses the singular form of the verb “camped” while all other references to the Israelites use the plural form. It is as if the Hebrew text refers to the Israelite nation as a single person, not many people.

A midrash offers an especially meaningful and helpful insight into this grammatical anomaly: *“When it says “Israel encamped” there (Sinai), it uses the singular form “vayichan.” When they were traveling, as in the Book of Numbers, it uses a plural form. This implies that at other times they were divided, but here they were unified. When they gathered at the foot of Mt. Sinai, they felt a shared kindness, loved one another, and were thus ready and able to receive the Torah.*

The Midrash teaches us that unity does not require consistency of thought or belief. Rather, the prerequisite for unity is shared kindness and love, understanding and tolerance. Unity requires making room for the ideas, feelings and needs of others, even when we disagree with them. Unity demands compromise and acceptance of the idea that no single member of a large and diverse community or nation will get everything he/she wants.

Shared kindness and love lie at the foundation of a decent, and democratic, society. To be a democracy requires respect for the voices and opinions of its people. A democratic society thrives not only on the rule of law but on tolerance and understanding. True democracy is made possible not by imposing uniform ideas on people but by embracing respect, kindness and shared love of others.

I hope and pray that the spirit of these words of Torah find their way to the halls of the United States Congress and that Americans discover their urgency.

Rabbi Mark Cooper

CANTOR'S CORNER



“G’doley HaDor” – the Great Ones of a Generation. We have lost far too many in the year that has passed. But no life is fully lost, for every life is a gift, and even the quietest life leaves stories carried in the hearts of others. Every kindness leaves a ripple that begets the next kindness. Every teacher’s wisdom lives in their students.

Today I share the wisdom of two G’doley HaDor, named Sacks. It is not a coincidence that they share this surname, for they were uncle and nephew. The elder, neurologist Dr. Oliver Sacks, pioneered the contemporary field of music and memory, which has long informed my pastoral work. Of Dr. Sacks, it was said:

“...worldly matters and affairs didn’t really concern him. He aspired to shine a light on madness, mental illness, unusual disorders, the dispossessed, the disenfranchised, the forgotten. That became his bailiwick and mission in life: he would tell their stories to the world because they needed to be told.” (*The Observer*, 12/27/15)

Those words were offered in loving tribute by his nephew, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, z”l. Rabbi Sacks’ final book – completed just as this pandemic began – challenges us to look critically at the secular culture that we have created. In [Morality: Restoring The Common Good In Divided Times](#), he offers prophetic guidance to lead us from this crisis into a more empathetic world.

At Oheb Shalom we have long affirmed that empathy without action falls short of God’s call. So, let us take these words to heart:

“Good leaders create followers. Great leaders create leaders....Not all of us have power, but we all have influence. That is why we can each be leaders. The most important forms of leadership come not with position, title or robes of office, not with prestige and power, but with the willingness to work with others to achieve what we cannot do alone... Always choose influence rather than power. It helps change people into people who can change the world.”

“The test of faith is whether I can make space for difference. Can I recognize God’s image in someone who is not in my image, whose language, faith, ideal, are different from mine? If I cannot, then I have made God in my image instead of allowing him to remake me in his.” (as quoted by Noam Weissman in “Remembering Rabbi Jonathan Sacks” - *Unpacked for Educators*, 11/11/20)

— Cantor Erica Lippitz

OHEB SHALOM/JESPY HOUSE

INCLUSION SHABBAT

Friday, January 29 • 6:30 PM

An upbeat service with lots of music and special readings, led by Cantor Lippitz, with JESPY’s own Harris Engel at the piano, live from our sanctuary.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Friends,

I am writing this after a busy fall at Oheb Shalom. As you can see, if you look at the listing on the next page or watch a video that we made (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dOSJCIAUllc>), we have had a robust fall of programming both in-person and online. Not to mention an active Mickey Fried Pre-School and Zeman. It is truly amazing the amount of activity in our community!

Pandemic Update

By the time you read this, hopefully, the pathway to a widely distributed vaccine will be much clearer and we will be on a course to returning towards normalcy, albeit one that takes the still extant Covid 19 virus into account.

We have taken, and will continue to take, a pro-active approach to the pandemic. We are NOT just going to make it through, we are NOT just going to go virtual, and we are not just going to go with the status quo – but our approach is one of “carpe diem”. We are seizing the day, taking advantage of the opportunity to change. We are trying new methods and modes of connecting with our synagogue community. We are trying new ways of prayer, new programming, and new methods of education and we all should fully support those efforts. Our approach has been – and will continue to be – “don’t tell me it can’t be done, but tell me what can be done.” By proactively embracing the opportunities, new experiences are being created. Most of the time, the results are good – even outstanding—our High Holiday experience for example – but not always. And I am not afraid of failure.

Another tenet of our philosophy of how we are approaching the pandemic is that we are striving mightily to have as many in-person events as possible. Zoom is good but it is no substitute for in-person interaction.

The last tenet of our philosophy is a return to normalcy as quickly as possible but keeping the health, safety and security of our congregants, clergy, staff, and visitors paramount. For every “new” activity, we get the Reopening of Oheb Committee’s approval. For example, we opened MFPS with only one “3” and only one “4” class right after Labor Day with only 10 children per class. We have since added early drop-off and more children (as the State Protocols have allowed) and we now anticipate a more fully enrolled “2” class starting in January. While we could probably start a “2” class now, we think it is the prudent thing to wait until January.

So, to summarize our philosophy on the pandemic:

- A “can do” attitude
- “In person” is the goal
- A return to normalcy as quick as medically prudent

Rabbi Search

As you all know, we have completed our congregational survey, we have held town halls and submitted our application through the process run by the Rabbinical Assembly. When you read this, we will have interviewed three and as many as five candidates and hopefully, at least one is still proceeding forward. Quite exciting, to say the least.

Approach to Music

With Cantor Lippitz retiring next June, no doubt an end of era. But, the dawn is breaking on a new era. Music will continue to be a central element of Oheb Shalom’s worship and community. It is at the core of Oheb Shalom and will remain a priority going forward. One indication of that is the 160th Anniversary Concert which will now be held in the Spring of 2022 – after Cantor Lippitz’s retirement. We will also continue to have Music Lover Shabbat and other musical programming as the Music Committee so chooses to program.

So, we are confident that we will address all the needs of the congregation. However, until a Rabbi is hired (and we figure out how to support him or her), we are not making any long term decisions about how we fulfill our musical needs. That being said, there are two longer lead time items that can’t wait until the hiring of the new Rabbi is finalized (April 2021 at the earliest).

...continued on next page

Those two items are High Holidays 2021 and B'nai Mitzvah experiences in the next 18 months.

- HH 2021: We have expanded the liturgy subgroup of the High Holiday Task Force and they have already started to figure out a plan for HH 2021. Eileen Weiss is chairing this effort. We are calling it “Where do we go from here?” This committee has been instructed to be creative, to think outside of the box and look at several options that are available. Clearly, we have just finished a “wow” of a HH series and we can just repeat that, with some tweaks. Or, we will try something new and different. We shall see. So, stay tuned.

With respect to B'nai Mitzvah training and day of event co-ordination:

- B'nai Mitzvah in Spring of 2021, no change at all. Cantor and Rabbi are here and will continue in their current roles and duties. We are working with these families to determine options in this rapidly changing COVID environment.
- B'nai Mitzvah in Fall 2021: the training begins in Spring of 2021. We are evaluating different approaches.
- B'nai Mitzvah in Spring 2022, training does not start until Fall of 2021, so too early to start training and can wait until a new Rabbi is installed.

Again, several potential solutions to each of these “mission critical” B'nai Mitzvah activities and we are focused on determining which path to take.

Lastly, as I mentioned, with respect to other parts of our musical life, Cantor Lippitz is with us until the end of June 2021 and all the programming -- the Music Lover Shabbat, etc – is staying in place. After that, as I said, I am confident that we will address all of the needs of the Congregation, however, it may be with a different strategy than historically. We will focus on these events after a new Rabbi is hired.

Closing

There are lots of good things going on here at Oheb and yes, there are sure to be lots of changes – a new Rabbi being one of them and Cantor Lippitz’s retirement being another. But, if we all contribute our time, our skills, and our resources, if we all work as a focused team, if we all recommit to our community and if we become an active part of that community with a positive “can-do” attitude, we will become even stronger as the fabulous synagogue institution that we are. We will begin to paint our glorious vision on the blank canvass that is our future. As I like to say, we will be really strong – #OhebStrong.

Sincerely,
— Paul Schechner, *President*

Did You Know....

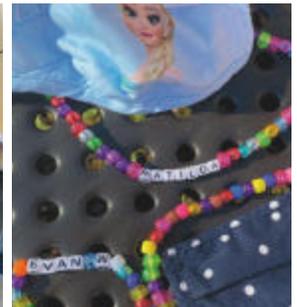
- MFPS has two classes of 10+ children each (ages 3 and 4) and we are planning on opening the 2-year-olds class in January.
- Our Zeman School has 63 students attending as a hybrid, so a student will have in-person classes one week and then virtual for two weeks. Parents have been really receptive, with the vast majority of parents choosing to opt-in to all of it.
- Youth Activities: we’ve had 3 movie nights, a reservation hike, an improv workshop, and a scavenger hunt in town. These are for grades 3-12 and we’ve averaged about 8-10 kids per event. Plus our madrichim remain active!
- Miriam Sisterhood’s robust programming has included Sukkah under the Stars, Membership Appreciation, and the 140th celebration.
- Our Bobrow Kosher Food Pantry serves over 100 families per month and preps 200 bags for each distribution.
- Lifelong Learning has continued its virtual programming with at least one event per week. Highlights have been:
 - ♦ ZOOM tour of the Knesset and a discussion with Knesset member
 - ♦ Talmud Study Series: Between the Eternal and the Human
 - ♦ #MeToo and the Jews
 - ♦ Beyond Dispute: Debates That Shape Jewish Life
 - ♦ Rabbi Alexander Shapiro Memorial Lecture: “How Can I Pray What I Don’t Believe?”
- Men’s Club hosted Scotch in the Socially-distanced Sukkah, as well as helped at the Tailgating event and with the Food Pantry.
- Weekly Shabbat Services continued both in-person and on ZOOM.
- Daily Minyan on ZOOM has an average attendance of 20 members each day.
- Two First Fridays, each attended by close to 50 people in the parking lot, with a dinner served by a Kosher food truck.
- A Fall Tailgate party with over 25 members, who all watched the Giants beat the Eagles.
- Blessing of the Pets with 15 families and their pets, who came together for the semi-annual event.

MICKEY FRIED PRESCHOOL



What a school year we have had so far!!! The year is halfway through and the children have adapted to a whole new type of schooling. We have gotten used to having Shabbat in our classrooms while watching a video of the Cantor doing the blessings. Although the songs are the same, the feeling is different, but we are putting on a smiling face (under our masks) and going with the new “normal.” Masks are part of our new normal, and what better way to personalize them than to have each child make their own mask chain! One by one they strung colorful beads along with the letters in their name to create the chain! They wear them with pride. Just another example of the MFPS way, we make it work no matter what we must do!

— Sloane Goldstein, *Director*



MORNING MINYAN

Weekday minyans meet at 8:00 am and Sunday minyans meet at 9:00 am with the exception of the following dates:



Shabbat Candle Lighting Times

JANUARY

January 1	4:22 pm
January 8	4:29 pm
January 15	4:36 pm
January 22	4:44 pm
January 29	4:53 pm

FEBRUARY

February 5	5:01 pm
February 12	5:10 pm
February 19	5:18 pm
February 26	5:27 pm

FEBRUARY

Monday, February 17, 2020	
Presidents' Day	9:00 AM
Tuesday, February 25, 2020	
Rosh Chodesh Adar	7:45 AM
Wednesday, February 26, 2020	
Rosh Chodesh Adar	7:45 AM

JOIN US VIRTUALLY! DAILY ZOOMINYAN

Mon-Fri @ 8:00 AM, Sun @ 9:00 AM
<https://zoom.us/j/9737627067>
 Check your email for the password.

LIFE CYCLE EVENTS FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

Condolences To:

Bonnie and Edward Tessler

on the passing of Bonnie's Father,
Leon Homer Schindel

Julia Serebrinsky and Steven Hanselman

on the passing of Julia's Aunt, Ella Pavlinich

Ralph Neibart,

on the passing of his wife, Marilyn Neibart

Congratulations To:

Abe and Janice Bunis

on the marriage of their granddaughter,
Justine Bunis to Jacob Paul

Matthew and Lydia Kertz

on the birth of their daughter, Annabelle Mattea Kertz

Allen and Marilyn Kohan

on the birth of their grandson, Nathan Eli Kohan,
son of Eitan and Lauren Kohan

Richard and Alyson Slutzky

On the marriage of Dane Slutzky to Sebastian Merrill

Richard and Eve Wasserman

On of the marriage of Zoe Wasserman and Phil
Gorokhovsky

January: Milestone Birthday Wishes To:

Joel Barkin

Sandra Kaplan

Janice Bunis

David Landau

Frederick Cohen

Neal Levin

Margery Cohen

Bella Pritsker

Saul Dennison

Arthur Schechner

Barnet Eskin

Eric Sherman

Renee Fredman

Donald Slimowitz

Barbara Grunt

Yefim Teperman

Gerald Grunt

Leah Weiss

February: Milestone Birthday Wishes To:

Jane Aaron

Cheryl Schneider

Ellyn Dennison

Ronald Silikovitz

Steven Field

Ernestine Turkel

Hindy Kempler

Susan Vercheak

Judith Rothbard

Joseph Weintraub

Michael Schatzberg

Karl Zukerman

January: Milestone Anniversaries:

Andrew and Erica Furman

David and Robin Miller

February: Milestone Anniversaries:

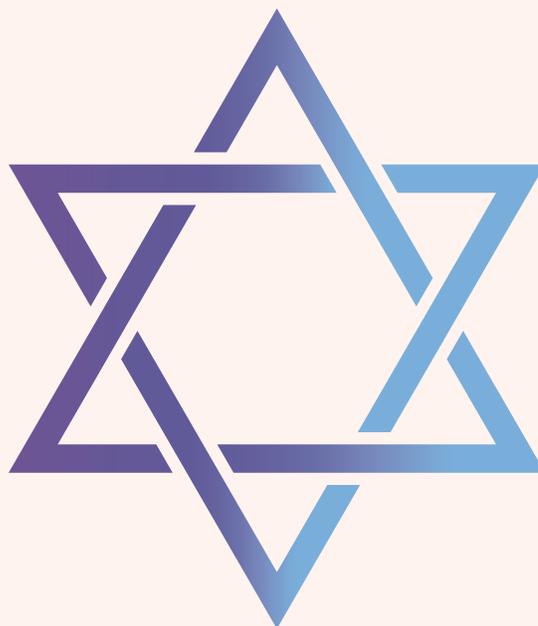
Lawrence and Judy Bernstein

Stephen and Alice Shapiro

Fred and Judith Simon

Donald and Sharey Slimowitz

Walter and Roberta Zweifler



LIFE CYCLE EVENT NOTICES

To ensure that important life cycle events are included in The Review, please contact the office to share the news.

This includes information about your (or someone else's) birthday, anniversary, marriage, birth, death, etc.

If you would like someone's name on the Misheberach list,

please email the Rabbi with all the information Rabbi@ohebshalom.org

SISTERHOOD



miriam
sisterhood
oheb shalom congregation

Happy New Year! Covid-19 has wreaked havoc on our work, school for the kids, families, and just life in general. I am looking forward to 2021 and hope it will be a better year.



What I will say, is that Miriam Sisterhood has had an amazing fall of activities, all on Zoom. Beginning with our Sukkah Under the Stars event on Oct. 6 with Sara Schechner. An evening with Sara telling us what is in the sky during the fall and allowing several minutes for us to go out and see if we can identify Mars, Jupiter and some constellations. Eleven days later we had an amazing array of guest speakers to celebrate Miriam Sisterhood's 140th anniversary. The evening began with Rabbi, then Cantor led us in Havdalah, our very own Oheb President, Paul Schechner presided as the Chairman of the first meeting. The attendees were aroused and participated with reminiscing of the old photographs and played who's who. The evening continued with well wishes from Garden State Region President, Teresa Samtur and ended with the International Women's League for Conservative Judaism's President Debbi Kaner Goldich with warm words and a toast. Miriam Sisterhood's final fall program, Membership Appreciation, brought the Immediate Past co-president from Forest Hills Jewish Center Marcia Belgorod to present the Jewish Women Suffragettes and the 100th Anniversary of the Ratification of the 19th Amendment. A robust agenda with varied programs that everyone enjoyed. We truly wanted to engage everyone and believe that without you, we would not be able to have the programming that we had and want to have in the future.

Our winter programming will change a little bit as we will push back our fun Designer Bag Bingo until we can be in person. We will do a fun social program and will let you know. Sisterhood Shabbat will take place on February 20 by zoom so that we can all be together. Please reach out to Denise Dickinson for a part in this special Shabbat day. And Mae Zelikow Book Review takes a hiatus until March. But look for an guest author coming in January by zoom. It will be announced by email.

Keep warm, stay safe, and be well.

Sheila

— Sheila Kaufman,
Miriam Sisterhood President

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Purim 2021

FEBRUARY 26, 2021

Purim Bags!

ON SALE THRU FEBRUARY 15

Buying Purim Bags fulfills one of the Purim mitzvot AND contributes to one of Oheb Shalom's biggest fundraisers. We appreciate all of your support in helping our congregation thrive. See your email for purchase information.

Purim Celebration!

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25

Save the date for a virtual Purim celebration.

Purim Morning Service!

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 26

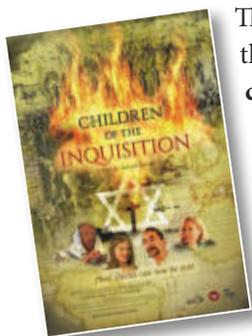
8:00 AM, followed by a reading of the Megillah.

LIBRARY NEWS

Winter's a good time to delve into a new topic. Sephardic Jewry and its fascinating, far-flung history is receiving a good deal of attention these days in fact, fiction and on the Web.



To learn more, look at the American Sephardi Federation's website <http://americansephardi.org/>. Ongoing is a multi-session Sephardic cooking program with chef/scholar Helene Jawhara Piner. Cooking along with her will fill your home with delicious smells. Past webinars are available.



The two-hour film *Children of the Inquisition* traces the travels of Sephardim from Iberia as they spread throughout the world. Clips can be seen on YouTube. A discussion is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-QCPEVIxKY>.

The Inquisition did not end with the expulsion of Jews from Spain and Portugal. It followed them across the Atlantic to "The New World." Fleeing the Inquisition in Brazil led a small group of Jews to settle in New Amsterdam in 1654. Others went to places far from the reach of the Inquisition and lost touch with organized Jewry but maintained some customs. Many of the descendants of these 15th and 16th century conversos are now rediscovering and returning to formal Judaism.



In fact, the Inquisition was not formally dissolved until after the 19th century Napoleonic Wars. In the Papal States it lasted until 1908 when, renamed, it became responsible for the promulgating and defending Catholic doctrine.

The last major case tried by the Inquisition was the case of Edgardo Mortara, a young Italian Jewish boy who had been baptized by a family servant, taken from his parents, and raised as Catholic. The Pulitzer Prize winning book *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* by David I. Kertzer tells the complete story. A video, **End of the Inquisition**, the last of a 4 part series

shown on PBS, details that famous and notorious case. <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x7whr7g>

AMONG THE BOOKS ABOUT THE INQUISITION AVAILABLE IN OUR LIBRARY ARE

- Arbell *The Jewish Nation of the Caribbean: the Spanish-Portuguese Jewish settlements in the Caribbean and the Guianas.* This book tells the story behind the once vibrant and powerful Jewish communities of the Caribbean.
- Carvajal *The Forgetting River: a modern tale of survival, identity and the Inquisition.* An American journalist searches for her long buried past in Spain.
- Gidwitz *The Inquisitor's Tale: or the three magical children and their dog.* While this award-winning kids' book is long, it's a great read aloud for families and readers of all ages.
- Gordon *The Last Jew, a novel of the Spanish Inquisition* follows a secret Jew as he tries to survive living in two worlds.
- Kaplan *By Fire, By Water.* Set in Ferdinand's Spain, the novel follows characters torn between survival and faith.
- Levy *The Key from Spain: Flory Jagoda and her music.* A brief biography of the internationally recognized musician largely responsible for preserving Ladino music.
- Liss *Day of Atonement.* This novel begins in Inquisition ruled Portugal and takes the reader through much of Europe.

— Aileen Grossberg,
Librarian

LIFE LONG LEARNING



In January and February, we will move our focus to Northern Africa and Israel with a remote learning program about the Jewish community of Morocco and a class taught live by a rabbi who leads a congregation in the charming town of Zichron Yaakov in Israel.

Explore Jewish Morocco – Sunday morning January 24, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Oheb's own Hank and Linda Glickman, intrepid world travelers and avid students of Jewish life, will lead us on a visual exploration of Jewish Morocco, a land where Jews have lived and flourished for at least 2,000 years!

God in our Own Image – Tuesday mornings, February 9 and 16, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Rabbi Elisha Wolfin of the Masorti congregation Kehilat Veahavta of Zichron Yaakov will teach a two-part class on how the changing names which we refer to God reflect our evolving conception of the divine. Rabbi Wolfin explains, "God is one – we declare twice a day, and once more before going to sleep. Yet throughout the ages, humans have imagined God in a variety of images. We can say that humans fathomed God in the image of their own needs. As the Rambam [Maimonides] taught, God has no image. How we talk about God, then, tells us more about us than about God. In these two sessions we will look at some of the many faces of the God of Torah – mostly by examining the names God was given – and trace the evolution of God's presence in the lives of the ancient Hebrews. Most importantly, in the process, we will discover our own preferred image of God – the one we need to take us forward, to help us evolve.

Please join us in expanding our hearts and minds with these programs.

One People / Many Voices / Join the Conversation
Jeremy Garber, *Chair*;
jeremysgarber@aol.com

Food insecurity is growing during the pandemic and an increasing number of families are using our food pantry services each month. We have a greater need for monetary donations and volunteers. Donations can be made online at OhebShalom.org or by sending a check to the office. Volunteer information is below.



Wednesday Distribution:
Jan. 6 & Feb. 3 - 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Sunday Distribution:
Jan. 10 & Feb. 7 - 9:00 am - 12:30 pm

We need
**VOLUNTEERS
& DONATIONS**

Oheb Shalom's Bobrow Kosher Food Pantry is looking to train new volunteers for a variety of monthly tasks. Until the pandemic is over, family "pods" of adults and teens are welcome to learn about the tasks and help keep our pantry running. An experienced pantry volunteer will train new family pods, maintaining social distancing protocols. Masks are required.

If you would like to learn more about the tasks and how you can help, please contact Sandra Kaplan at sandrakstevf@gmail.com.



OHEB SHALOM'S SOCIAL JUSTICE GROUP

Dear Friends,

Did you know?

- People with untreated mental illness are 16 times more likely to be killed during a police encounter than other civilians approached or stopped by law enforcement, according to the Treatment Advocacy Center.
- Numbering fewer than 1 in 50 U.S. adults, individuals with untreated severe mental illness are involved in at least 1 in 4 and as many as half of all fatal police shootings.
- According to data collected by The Washington Post, around 1,000 people are shot and killed by the police in the U.S. each year, and Black men are more than twice as likely to be victims as white men.

Oheb Shalom's Social Justice Group, invites you to join us for our next virtual program on February 23, 2021 entitled:

Police Response to the Mentally Ill in Crisis: Must it be life or death?

Three speakers will discuss recognizing a mental health crisis and steps necessary to de-escalate a police encounter.

Dr. Barbara Prempeh is a clinical psychologist and the co-developer and co-facilitator of a trauma focused curriculum for police officers and community members in Newark. She recently spoke on "Racism, Law Enforcement Reform, Police Brutality, and Black Lives Matter" at St Elizabeth University. She is the Externship Program Coordinator of a doctoral level psychology training program at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, an Adjunct Professor at Kean University, and a consultant with Equal Justice, USA, which describes its vision as "safety, healing, and accountability that repairs."

Dr. Prempeh who also has degrees in forensic psychology and educational psychology, has worked for over 15 years with children, adolescents and families providing assessments, crisis intervention and therapy across multiple settings including schools, hospitals, community outpatient and inpatient centers, and juvenile correctional facilities.

A representative from the **Mental Health Association.**

Captain Richard McDonald of the West Orange Police Department who oversees all in-service training for the WOPD. is the lead instructor for the training course "Police Response: De-Escalation Techniques for Individuals with Special Needs/ Mental Health Issues.

Working with trained clinicians from The Mental Health Associates of Morris & Essex County, all WOPD officers as well as WOPD firefighters participate in this program. The training focuses on ethical decision making, procedural justice, understanding the use of force continuum, active resistance vs passive resistance, and numerous verbal de-escalation tactics.

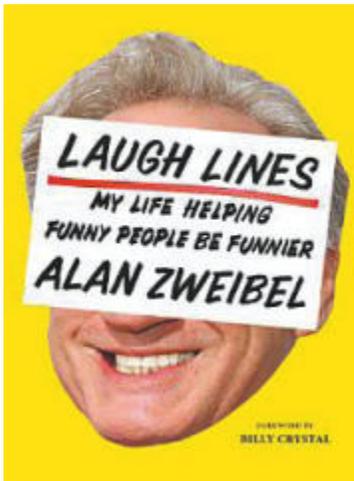
Oheb Shalom's Men's Club and Miriam Sisterhood are co-sponsors of this important program. We look forward to sharing what will be a very timely and interesting program. We hope you will be able to join us.

Regards,

Abe Bunis and Terri Harrison, co-chairs
jabunis@comcast.net or tjh8190@gmail.com

We would also like to invite all members who wish to be notified of social justice events sponsored by other organizations to contact us on email and we will add you to our Social Justice distribution list.

WHAT WE ARE READING



LAUGH LINES: MY LIFE HELPING FUNNY PEOPLE BE FUNNIER BY ALAN ZWEIBEL

Prolific author, screenwriter, and playwright Alan Zweibel has collaborated with the giants of American comedy, dating to his big break as one of the original writers for *Saturday Night Live*. On the set of the iconic show's first season, in 1975, he met his muse Gilda Radner, and their friendship is a basis for one of the most endearing platonic love stories ever told. The friendship lasted to Radner's death from ovarian cancer in 1989 at the age of 42, and Zweibel chronicled it with wit and pathos in his heartwarming memoir *Bunny Bunny: Gilda Radner—a Sort of Love Story*. Since its publication in 1994, Zweibel has continued his work with top talent on tv, film, and stage, from Garry Shandling and Billy Crystal to Dave Barry and Rob Reiner. He has penned a number of not to be missed books including *For This We Left Egypt? A Passover Haggadah for Jews and Those Who Love Them*, but it is *Laugh Lines*—published in the humor thirsty year of 2020—that brings Zweibel's memoir up to date, with

hilarious inside stories on the brilliant writers and performers who make us laugh--Martin Short, Steve Martin, Judd Apatow, Larry David, to name just a few-- touching reflections on love and loss, and more than a few tips on how to craft a good joke. Zweibel is a local treasure, having settled in Short Hills so that he and his wife Robin could be close to their children who grew up and live in New Jersey. His latest collaboration is on a screenplay for the movie *Here Today*, co-written with Billy Crystal and starring Crystal and Tiffany Haddish. The movie is about the relationship between an aging comedy writer suffering from Alzheimer's and a younger woman whose unexpected friendship brings new hope and promise of a different kind of love into his final days. Another reason to look forward to 2021.

Friday, January 22

MUSIC LOVERS' SHABBAT

Led by Cantor Lippitz, featuring Dave Davis at the piano, live from our sanctuary.

WHAT WE ARE STREAMING

THE QUEEN'S GAMBIT (NETFLIX)

Anyone who takes a crack at chess quickly surmises that the Queen is the most powerful figure on the board (though “she” was once a “he”, playing Vizier to the King’s Shah, but that’s a different story). And players with more advanced sophistication know that the queen’s gambit is one of the game’s oldest opening moves, in which a player offers up the sacrifice of the queen’s bishop’s pawn to an opponent, who may choose to accept or decline it. The move has gone in and out of fashion over the centuries, and the grandmasters have a special fondness for its possibilities which for more casual players is probably more difficult to calculate. Still, one doesn’t need to be a skilled player to grasp the metaphor that a fearless gesture of vulnerability can be a foundation for unexpected strength, a notion which the Netflix miniseries *The Queen’s Gambit* spun into a spellbinding tale. Set in the 1950s and 60s, the story is about an American chess prodigy named Beth Harmon, an orphaned girl from Lexington, Kentucky, who becomes the first woman to win a world chess championship. Based on a 1983 novel by of the same name by Walter Tevis, the story is a baroque but neat and inventive pastiche that binds invention with fragments of transposed facts from the author’s life and the international chess drama of the late nineteen sixties and seventies which captivated the world and culminated in the edge-of-the-seat real life 1972 match in Reykjavik, Iceland between Boris Spassky or the Soviet Union and Bobby Fischer of USA, which ended up with Fischer winning the world championship title. But one need not know all that to enjoy this young woman’s coming of age story, spiked with alcohol and drug addiction, spectacular, surreal displays of dreamworlds, and strikingly gorgeous exhibits of haute couture. Midcentury details and architectural backdrops from Paris to New York, Mexico City to Moscow are a visual feast not seen on tv since *Mad Men*. Anya Taylor-Joy, who plays the lead character with mesmerizing power, pierces with her stare and beguiles with her cool, sinuous hand gestures. It is not surprising that the series, which debuted this Fall, has been watched by 62 million viewers worldwide, making it—according to Netflix—the streaming network’s most watched series to date. The timing of release couldn’t have been more opportune—according to some news sources, interest in chess has risen as much as 600 percent, and stores are reporting shortages of sets for sale. Perhaps the Pandemic, together with the series, will bring chess back into the more mainstream imagination, especially for girls.



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Kol Hakavod

MYRNA MAZER



Oheb Shalom Congregation—like all communities around the world—is eager to return to in-person gatherings, but whatever the new normal may look like, one stark difference will not escape us. Myrna Mazer, who over the last 14 years has welcomed thousands of congregants and guests to services, holidays, and celebrations at the doors of our sanctuaries, will now be found inside, enjoying a well-deserved retirement as an “emeritus” from her position as a head usher.

A member of Oheb Shalom Congregation since 1970, Myrna is a resident of Millburn and a New Jersey native. She was born in Kearney 75 years ago and taught reading and math at the Perth Amboy Middle School. She also taught teachers at Fairleigh Dickinson University in Madison, had a teaching gig in Kentucky, and a stint at a mid-size Texas ranch which she recalls as “interesting.” She joined Oheb the same year she married her husband and since then has served as a volunteer in various capacities. Prior to taking on the head usher job—which, in addition to being present at services involves organizing and managing a crew of 43 ushers who work in two-hour shifts—Myrna has served as head of the Mickey Fried Preschool committee for 12 years and a youth committee member for two years.

Myrna describes being an Oheb head usher as “exhausting, exciting, and always exhilarating,” and will miss the pre-Covid rituals of greeting, hugging, and kissing sometimes as many as 300 people a day and the joy and satisfaction this experience brought her. Celebrations like Bar and Bat Mitzvah were especially memorable, but so were moments of crisis, like the time she had to save a life by summoning medical attention for a congregant who was having a heart attack, accompanying him to the hospital, and making sure he was okay. She has always done her job with precision and in good spirits, and while she claims not to be a perfectionist anymore, she will always be a guardian of what she calls a winning Oheb personality—“kind, caring, and willing to work hard.”

Like all working women in the time of Coronavirus, Myrna has become a devout Zoomer. In the meantime, Gloria Aaron will be taking the reins as the head usher and will be there when we reopen for indoor services. Thank you, Myrna, for your many years of smile and always making us feel at home!

From Myrna:

I want my Oheb family to know that I fought for our children to be welcomed at all religious services. I chaired just about every committee that represented our children. I am so fortunate!

THE FUTURE OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IS IN YOUR HANDS.

Oheb Shalom enriches us deeply. It is a place where, as individuals, we find connection to one another and to our Jewish traditions. It is a place where we support one another as we traverse life's joys and challenges. It is a place where we find both repose and inspiration. It is a place to call home.

Supporting the synagogue beyond an annual gift, a legacy gift is the ultimate expression of your values and commitment to Oheb Shalom. It will impact the synagogue for years to come.

By including Oheb Shalom in your estate plans, you become a member of the 1860 Legacy Society, named after the year our congregation was founded. Your legacy gift connects you to the past, present, and future of our synagogue.

It is a gift for all time.

Thank you to the following members of the 1860 Legacy Society for their generous gifts:

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Tu B'shevat For Kids From PJ Library

Tu B'Shevat starts the night of Wednesday, January 27 and ends the evening of Thursday, January 28. Celebrate the New Year for Trees by planting and growing!

How to Plant a Tree Sapling During Cold Weather

Taking care of a plant can help a child develop a sense of responsibility. If it's too cold to plant a tree where you live, consider planting a sapling indoors. As you and your child nurture it, keep track of its growth. By the time warm weather comes, it may be ready to plant outdoors.

Supplies:

- Tree sapling to plant*
- A pot or other container with drainage
- Potting soil
- Water and fertilizer as needed

**Many nurseries and garden centers have saplings or young trees for sale. You can also start smaller and grow your own sapling from a seed by graduating the seedling to larger containers as it grows.*

Directions

1. Select a tree. Good choices for container planting include Japanese maples, dwarf conifers, and yews. Make sure your selection can survive in your climate when the tree is ready to move outdoors.
2. Choose a container. Depending on the size of your sapling, go for a pot that easily accommodates its roots. Make sure it has good drainage. Fill the pot about two-thirds of the way up with soil, hollowing out the center for the sapling.
3. Plant your tree. Pour a little water into the hollow, place the sapling in it, then add more soil over the roots and pat it down.
4. Water and fertilize regularly. Container plants tend to dry out more quickly than their earthbound counterparts. Depending on the needs of your particular species of tree, keep the soil watered and add fertilizer every few weeks to months.

Source: <https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/december-2018/how-to-plant-a-tree-sapling-during-cold-weather>



Learn How to Sprout an Avocado Tree

Want to grow your very own tree for Tu B'Shevat—or anytime? The next time you eat an avocado, save the pit for sprouting. Most avocado trees grown from just the seed itself won't bear fruit, but they can still provide the wonderful experience of caring for a plant.

Supplies

- Avocado pit
- Toothpicks
- Glass of water

Directions

1. Wash your avocado pit. Carefully stick three toothpicks in it and suspend the broad end of the pit into the glass of water so that it's mostly submerged.
2. Place the glass in a warm spot, but not in direct sunlight. Over time, the water level will lower. Add more water as needed to keep the pit wet.
3. In the next 2 to 6 weeks, you'll notice the roots and stem beginning to sprout. When the stem is 6 to 7 inches long, cut it back several inches. When the roots thicken and the stem grows new leaves, transplant it into a pot of soil, leaving the top half of the pit exposed—or, if you live in a warm enough climate, you can plant it outdoors. Place it in a sunny spot, water it regularly, and don't forget to celebrate its birthday!

Source: <https://pjlibrary.org/beyond-books/pjblog/december-2018/learn-how-to-sprout-an-avocado-tree>





The CONNECTIONS initiative began a year ago and has become an important part of our Oheb Shalom community. As members have reached out to each other to provide a helping hand or a friendly voice, we have become a tightly knit family.

We invite you to join this effort to enhance and strengthen our community. Do you have a desire to lend a hand or are you in need of support? Never forget that we are here for each other.

LET US KNOW:

- if you can make periodic phone calls.
- if you can shop for someone who cannot go to a store.
- if you can deliver a treat or dinner to someone.
- if you know a congregant who would appreciate a phone call or a helping hand.
- if you know someone who is hospitalized or ill.

There are so many other ways we can all reach out to each other and become more connected; we are limited only by our imaginations.

Because we are living through difficult times, we need to work at being connected. Remember, we are all in this together. One day you might need support and another day, you might be the one to lend a hand.

Please contact Marilyn Kohan and Roberta Zweifler at connections@ohebshalom.org or contact Rachel Kahn at RachelKahn@ohebshalom.org or (201) 951-8437.

All information will be considered confidential.

WE'RE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!

Tu B'Shevat Foods: Persimmon and Pistachio Cupcakes

Courtesy of My Jewish Learning • <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/recipe/persimmon-and-pistachio-cupcakes/>

Ingredients

- 1/2 cup pistachios, toasted and chopped
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- pinch of salt
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup pureed persimmon
- 1 cup almond milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup margarine, room temperature



Directions

Line two cupcake trays with cups and preheat oven to 350 degrees. Stir together all dry ingredients except sugar in a bowl and set aside. In a separate bowl, combine persimmon, almond milk, and vanilla and set aside. In a third bowl, cream the margarine and sugar until light and fluffy.

Alternate folding in the flour mixture and puree mixture into the creamed margarine until just incorporated. Fill cupcake cups until three-quarters full and bake 20-25 minutes until golden. Let cupcakes cool, then top with vegan buttercream frosting and sprinkle with pistachios.

If you make it, tag us on Instagram: @OhebShalomNJ.

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