



# Agudas Achim Congregation

401 E. Oakdale Blvd., Coralville, IA 52241

Phone: 319-337-3813

[www.AgudasAchimIC.org](http://www.AgudasAchimIC.org)

**September 2024 / Av-Elul 5784**



*Photos courtesy of Myra Clark*

## RABBI HUGENHOLTZ IS BACK

Rabbi Esther is back! Following her annual Summer vacation, plus a month of sabbatical, we are excited to welcome our rabbi back to the building. Please note that any emails sent before September 3 will need to be resent as the rabbi will not be opening messages sent during her time off. Should you wish to meet in person or over Zoom, the [Calendly link](#) is once again active, and the rabbi will resume her Wednesday Bread Garden hours as well. *Please note that the rabbi currently has COVID, so in person meetings are on hold, and she is limiting her online availability until she is feeling well.*

## FROM THE RABBI

### *Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz*

Dear congregational family,

I had hoped to ease back into my work rhythm sharing sweet vignettes about my sabbatical, but alas—Murphy’s law strikes again and my family and myself have been felled by the spike-proteined beast called COVID. Thinking ahead of the High Holidays, I grabbed one of the first vaccination slots available for the booster last Friday... only for one of my kids to test positive on Friday night. In the words of Canadian songstress Alanis Morissette: ‘isn’t it ironic?’

Apart from our current health challenges (and the loss of a coveted slot to renew our Dutch passports in Chicago), I can look back on two restful, restorative, quiet, sometimes-challenging, emotionally-tender months. The world continued spinning, of course, and shocking and calamitous global and national events kept on unfurling. But I am so grateful to have had the space to process on my own, with my loved ones nearby. I was off social media which was a very healthy choice, and was able to prioritize my family’s needs.

I made sure I did lots of cooking to compensate my husband’s regular cooking schedule in our family. I’ve busted my way through Adeena Sussman’s ‘Shabbat’, an incredible cookbook which I highly recommend, especially for the High Holidays. I also bought my kids a cookbook and taught them how to cook (‘mac ‘n cheese!’, ‘fried chicken fingers!’, ‘American pancakes!’) and they have triumphed in their culinary skills. I taught them some Hebrew, took them swimming, played computer games with them, travelled some; vacationed in Boston and did lots of reading and some writing. The gist of it: I was able to be ‘just’ a busy summer mom and wife.

I am sure I will have to say more about the ‘lessons’ that I learned from this period as time goes on but the main one is giving yourself permission to disconnect. To fold your own world in on itself for a while. To refrain from engaging in public speech; from generating opinions, from pursuing the compulsive thoughts of our high-stakes, fast-paced era. That truly was more of a blessing than I could anticipate. And I am so grateful to all of you, my

beloved Agudas Achim family, for helping make this happen.

I am going to keep my article short as I am eyeing a box of Tylenol for that infamous COVID headache. But while I am still here, I do want to glance at the High Holiday season which is upon us soon. A High Holiday bulletin will of course be coming out as well. Before I went on leave and sabbatical, I alluded to the High Holiday theme I’ve chosen for this year: ‘Ahavah Rabbah’—‘A Great Love’. *Ahavah Rabbah* is a line from our morning liturgy, emphasizing God’s love for our covenantal community and there is a lot to be said about the place of love in our lives. Not just in an immediate, experiential sense but also philosophically. Who do we envelop in our circles of love and how can we actualize that? How can we love when we feel vulnerable, hurt or threatened? What does it mean to love the *Jewish* people, and *all* people? Is there a tension between those or is this a false dichotomy? How can we love ourselves in a season that calls for our repentance—and how can we truly do *t’shuvah* while not obscuring the holy truth of our cosmic belovedness? My guide for this High Holiday season will be Rabbi Shai Held’s seminal book ‘Judaism Is About Love’ that will push us to think deeply and critically about this and much more. Of course, we have wonderful High Holiday programming lined up to take us deeper still, including our impressive Scholar-in-Residence, Rabbi Micah Streiffer. Keep your eyes peeled on synagogue communications!

Right now, it is love that keeps me buoyant in many small, mundane ways and in some existential, big ways too. The love of family, community, the world. The tenderness I feel as I sit here on my screen porch in the late summer sun. Sometimes, stepping back allows us to see the bigger picture.

May the Holy One continue to invite us to see both the bigger picture and all of its rich detail in our own lives. *L’shanah tovah u’metukah*—with wishes, among the sorrows of our times, for a tender and sweet New Year.

## DOWNTOWN COFFEE

# Rabbi Esther is downtown for coffee on Wednesdays! ♥



**Every Wednesday, Rabbi Esther is downtown (at Bread Garden) to meet with you for coffee.**

**Do you want to connect in an informal, relaxed, Iowa City-based setting?**

**Come to the Bread Garden from 10:30 am till 2:30 pm.**

**If you want to book a slot, please book through the Rabbi's Calendly link.**



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*David Lubaroff*

Dear Agudas Achim congregants. It is the beginning of September and I, for one, feel like the High Holy Days (aka High Holidays) of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur should be just a week or two away. But not this year. Because of the extra month during the leap year in the Hebrew calendar, Rosh Hashanah does not begin until the evening of October 2 and Yom Kippur on the evening of October 11. How about them apples (and honey)? While this delay provides synagogue leadership with extra time to prepare for the many services, receptions, onegs, luncheon, and break the fast, it delays two of my favorite holidays. Grant you, I do not enjoy the 24 plus hours of fasting on Yom Kippur, but there are many joyful aspects of these two holidays that I consider it a minor distraction. I enjoy being with all of you that attend the services and social events, many people I have known for as long as 50 years, some for shorter times, and a growing number of new people. I enjoy the services--albeit very long-- whether under the long tenure of Rabbi Jeff Portman, interim Rabbi Barry Diamond or now Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz. I have marveled at the talents of our lay leaders who assisted our rabbis, whether it by co-leading services, reading Torah and Haftarah, blowing the Shofar, and many other aspects of these High Holy Days. I enjoy singing along with hundreds of other voices with our sounds filling the sanctuary and social hall. Finally, the spirituality of the services affects me greatly. Participation has a calming effect, placing everyday stressors far in the background.

As we are aware, on Rosh Hashanah we celebrate, reflect, and focus on new beginnings. We dip apples in honey, symbolizing the wish for a sweet new year. We gather with our family, friends, and community to give thanks, offer respect, and stay connected to the ancient and modern traditions that shape Jewish life and identity. We remember, we re-enact, and we retain the light for generations to come. We also honor the moments, experiences, and values we hold in fresh, but powerful ways.

Rosh Hashanah is also known as the Day of Remembrance, for on this day Jews commemorate the creation of the world. Rosh Hashanah is all about making changes. It's a time for new beginnings, for wiping the slate clean and starting over from scratch. But Rosh Hashanah also strikes a different, seemingly discordant note. Unlike so many other New Year's traditions, the Jewish holiday asks those who observe it to contemplate death. The liturgy includes the recitation of a poem, the Unetaneh Tokef, part of which is meant to remind Jews that their lives might not last as long as they'd hope or expect. "Who will live and who will die?" the poem asks. "Who will live out their allotted time and who will depart before their time?" "Who shall perish by water and who by fire," the poem continues, "Who by sword and who by wild beast, who by famine, who by thirst, who by earthquake and who by plague?" This focus on death might seem misplaced, bringing gloom to the party. Psychology Professor David DeSteno of Northeastern University wrote in the New York Times last year, that he believes there is a good reason for it. Contemplating death helps people make decisions about their future that bring them more happiness. This is an insight about human nature that the rites of Rosh Hashanah capture especially well, but it's one that people of any faith (or no faith at all) can benefit from. The brilliance of Rosh Hashanah is that it combines thoughts of death with a new year's focus on a fresh start. As work by the behavioral scientist Katy Milkman and her colleagues has shown, landmarks like New Year's Day offer an effective opportunity for a psychological reset. It allows us to separate ourselves from past failures and imperfections and prods us to consider new directions in life but also helps us make any changes more effectively.

The consideration of death on Rosh Hashanah is "in our faces" these High Holy Days as we approach the anniversary of the tragedies of October 7, 2023. The useless and barbaric slaughter of almost 1200

*(Continued on page 5)*

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*David Lubaroff (cont.)*

*(Continued from page 4)*

Israelis and the capture of 251 hostages by Hamas that incited a war one that continues today. There are many opinions among us about what has happened and what continues to happen in Israel and Gaza, and now Lebanon. But let us all use our time in Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services to pray for peace and survival in the Middle East, to use the spiritual aspect of the services to calm ourselves and direct our efforts to stop the war and help the injured.

Yom Kippur (aka Day of Atonement) is a fast day that is traditionally filled with prayer, confession and atonement. It is said that “on Rosh Hashanah the Book of Life is written and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.” It is the most solemn of Jewish religious holidays. We can think of Yom Kippur as a transformational retreat. By the time Yom Kippur rolls around, you may have theoretically asked for forgiveness from everyone in your life and forgiven anyone who angered you. This leaves you with one

last person to deal with... yourself. Yom Kippur only addresses the sins or wrongdoings we commit against God, not the ones we commit against other people. To make up for sins against people, you need to seek reconciliation and forgiveness directly. For example, you can't ask God to forgive you for lying to your mother. Many people say that between the fasting, which can help put you in kind of an altered state, in a good way, and the focus on being a better person, Yom Kippur is also when we are closest to God.

Despite the solemnity and fasting during Yom Kippur, the anticipation of the end of the holiday during Neilah services, the waiting for the final Shema and the blowing of the Shofar are so very special to me. As I stated earlier, the chanting and singing during the services and the magic of many voices are important parts of my enjoyment. I hope that you, also, find what you seek with our Agudas Achim community at this special time of the Jewish year.

L'Shanah Tova.

## HIGH HOLIDAYS BULLETIN FORTHCOMING

**Please keep an eye out for the High Holidays bulletin that will be published in the near future.**

**This year, Erev Rosh Hashanah is on October 2, with Erev Yom Kippur beginning on October 11.**

## AUGUST BOARD MEETING MINUTES

The August board meeting minutes can be found [here](#).

## SCHOOL NEWS

*Sonja Spear*

As I write, school has not begun. We are still sweating through the last days of August. It's like a sauna outside. The crisp, cool days of fall seem eons away. But by the time you read this, temperatures will have dropped into the non-lethal range. (I hope!) The kids will be back in school. We will already have celebrated the first days of school and started preparing for the High Holidays. I have nothing to report but everything to look forward to, so I am going to tell you how I imagine the semester will unfold.

This year we will emphasize integration and community. Often, the religious school operates in its own little silo, but it does not flourish separated from the life of the congregation. I would like to invite more participation from parents and from other members of the community. Rather than starting on a Sunday, then, we will begin with a Kabbalat-Shabbat service on Friday, September 13 from 6:00 to 7:00, dinner included. My hope is that families will enjoy singing together – singing releases endorphins and oxytocin, which is just a

fancy way of saying that singing together helps us bond. So, my dream for this service is that both parents and kids make friends and feel a little closer to

the synagogue community. I even hope that few people who don't have little kids will come just to meet some new people. And to see the kids of course. The kids are our future and they're cute!

The first "regular" day of school will be on Sunday, September 22 from 9:15-12:15 with parent orientation from 11:30 – 12:15. At the orientation, I will talk a little about how the school year unfolds. I plan to stress integration, or how we create

coherence while remaining flexible. It can seem as though the school is charged with an enormous list of goals: build community; teach prayers and Hebrew decoding; teach holidays; teach home rituals; teach Jewish ethics; teach Jewish history, teach stories from the Torah, foster friendships, make it engaging; foster a positive Jewish identity, etc. etc. etc. – all in three hours on a Sunday. Just to complicate things, I never know who will be there on any given Sunday. Kids and even teachers may be absent. I admire the commitment of parents who schlep their kids to shul on a Sunday and the passion of the teachers, busy people who sacrifice Sunday mornings to serve the community. I reproach absolutely no one for their absence. But it is still requires considerable flexibility to create a coherent program with a shifting population. What to do? Integration.

The list of goals is only intimidating if we think of them as separate items. They become more coherent and more manageable if we think of them as instances of a single goal: instilling Jewish

culture. You don't teach children about a culture; you bring them up in it. When they enter the synagogue, they enter a Jewish cultural zone. For instance, the first thing they see is a painting of Hebrew letters on the wall. This signals the importance of Hebrew

and of literacy. "Get your siddur," a teacher might say, "we have tefillah now." "What can you say to make your friend feel better? If you hurt her feelings, you need to do tshuvah." "Great job! Kol ha-kavod!" By speaking this way, we teach Jewish values in Jewish words. Better, we show that Judaism offers a way of learning to manage your impulses and get along with other people. Not a

*(Continued on page 7)*



## SCHOOL NEWS

### *Sonja Spear (cont.)*

*(Continued from page 6)*

small thing for an elementary school student. All of those statements included a sprinkling of Hebrew, but none of them were in Hebrew. We are integrating the teaching of liturgical Hebrew into the curriculum. That means that we are using Hebrew words to communicate in an appropriate context. We also sing in Hebrew and English, chant prayers, and even act out Hebrew vocabulary words. In this way, kids pick up Hebrew words in context before they begin to sound them out. After all, none of us learned to read our native language by sounding out syllables that we did not understand. We already had a rich vocabulary and a deep sense of grammar before we began to sound words out. We can't achieve that rich background in Hebrew without an immersion program, but we certainly don't have to make the kids start at zero. The more Hebrew words they know, the easier it will be for them to learn to sound words out.

Here's a final thought. The better integrated the curriculum is, the less it will feel like work to the

students. The crafts and projects we do, the games we play, the songs we sing will all work together integrate the kids into Jewish culture, including our culture of prayer. You don't absorb a culture by studying about it. After all, you didn't learn to say "please" or to hold the door for the person behind you by filling out worksheet. Probably don't even remember how you learned these things. Unfortunately, we call what we do "Sunday school." "School" conveys all sorts of expectations – worksheets, quizzes, and (frequently) boredom. That's not what we're about. So, if your kids say that they aren't doing any "work," that's fine. As long as they are having good discussions, hearing and learning Jewish words, and absorbing Jewish values, they're learning. And if it feels like play, all the better. Those are my thoughts at the beginning of the year. I'm sure the coming months will bring their challenges and their triumphs. Jewish supplementary education isn't easy, but it is always valuable. I am looking forward to reporting on what the kids actually do in my next bulletin column.

## COVID-19 CASES ON THE RISE: WHAT TO DO TO PROTECT YOURSELVES

*David Lubaroff*

As you may have read or heard, the number of COVID-19 cases has been on the increase in recent months. The hard work of monitoring incidence has been performed by our congregants Bob Wallace and Barcey Levy. The infections appear to be caused by SARS-CoV-2 Omicron variants that seem not to be any more severe than the earlier variants and causes similar symptoms. There are ways to minimize chances of infection that include wearing an effective mask (such as KN95) and get a booster vaccine. CDC is recommending that all persons over 6 months of age receive the new vaccine. The latest vaccine that targets the new variants is now available locally.

The policy at Agudas Achim is to encourage wearing a mask in the synagogue, although it is optional, not mandatory. A supply of KN95 masks will be available near the entrance to the synagogue. We also ask that you do not come to Agudas Achim if you are ill. This information will be updated if any changes occur.

Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones – you are all important to us.

## ADULT EDUCATION

*Lisa Heineman*

### **Judaism in the 21st Century: Where Have We Been? Where Are We Going? With Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Micah Streiffer, September 27-29**

To be Jewish is to live always with one eye toward the past and one toward the future. In every era, we creatively shape and reshape our Judaism in response to changing needs, while maintaining connection to our ancient, unbroken chain of tradition. This weekend will be an exploration of how Judaism is changing - and staying the same - in the turbulent 21st century. How is Jewish identity evolving in response to our rapidly evolving world? How do we balance religion, nationhood, and ethnicity in our Jewish identities? How do the land and state of Israel shape us, and how do they divide us? What does it mean in to be part of the Jewish people in 2024, and where do we want to be a generation from now?

*Please join us in a series of innovative sessions led by Rabbi Streiffer:*

#### **Friday, September 27, 6:30 pm, Senior Center Assembly Room, 28 Linn Street:**

Short Shabbat Service followed by light snacks and a panel discussion on the subject "Judaism in a Moment of Great Change."

*Judaism has never known a moment like this one! In 2024, Jews in America find ourselves in the midst of an unprecedented moment in history. A moment of rapid change and great creativity, which is unique in several fundamental ways - our participation in American civil society; our rates of intermarriage and integration with the wider society; our willingness to rethink our religious practices and beliefs; the existence of a sovereign Jewish state across the ocean. In almost every way, we are busily rethinking what it means to be Jewish.*

*In this panel discussion, Rabbis Streiffer and Hugenholtz will discuss the promise and the worry of this unique moment in history – and try to put it into context with other moments of rapid change. What wisdom does Jewish history and Jewish text offer for this moment? How has Judaism traditionally responded to times of change and uncertainty? What are the threats and what are the opportunities of 21<sup>st</sup> century Jewish life?*

#### **Saturday, September 28 following services, Agudas Achim Synagogue:**

Study session: "Who is a Jew? Ancient Traditions and Shifting Landscapes."

*What does it mean to be Jewish in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? Is it about who your mother was? Is it about your affiliation or cultural interests? Your citizenship or army service? Where you spend your money or which rituals you perform? For most of Jewish history, everybody knew who was Jewish – anyone who was born to a Jewish mother or who converted. Not so today. Today, Jewish belonging is incredibly varied – and getting more so! And while that's uniquely modern, our Jewish sources do have some wisdom to offer. In this study session, we will dig into some ancient and modern texts to understand how Jews today are rethinking Jewish identity, and what it might mean to be Jewish in another century.*

#### **Sunday, September 29, 9:30 am, Agudas Achim Synagogue (brunch provided):**

Study session: "Are We in Exile? Diaspora Jews and the Land of Israel!"

*(Continued on page 9)*



## ADULT EDUCATION

### *Lisa Heineman (cont.)*

*(Continued from page 8)*

*The land of Israel lives large in the Jewish psyche - as a homeland, a place of origin, and an ongoing focus of attention and longing. In fact, most Jews throughout history - at least until the modern era - thought of themselves as being in "exile." In this study session, we will explore that concept and ask whether it is meaningful to us. We'll study some Midrash about the land of Israel and the exile, and talk about what it means to be a Diaspora Jew today.*

**About Micah Streiffer:** Rabbi Streiffer is Founder and Director of Laasok, a virtual Beit Midrash bringing together liberal hosts the popular Seven Minute Torah podcast, in which he explores the weekly Torah portion through progressive Jewish eyes. He is Rabbi Emeritus of *Kol Ami* and Jews and the Jewishly adjacent to engage meaningfully with our sacred texts. He currently serves as Rabbi at *Am Shalom Congregation*, both in the Toronto region.

[You can read more about him here.](#)



### **Gear up for the High Holidays with Big Ideas in Jewish Books!**

In her High Holidays sermons, Rabbi Hugenholtz will draw on Shai Held's book, *Judaism is About Love*. Care to dig in deeper? Please join us for a discussion of Rabbi Held's book at the ICPL on Wednesday, September 25, 6-7:30 pm. *Judaism is About Love* is available at the ICPL and the synagogue library, and you can order it online or at a local bookshop.

### **Screening of *God and Country* (dir. Rob Reiner, 2024)**

The Interfaith Alliance Against 'Christian' Nationalism will screen *God and Country* on Sunday, September 8, 2:00 pm, at ICPL. Rabbi Hugenholtz and Prof. Robert Cargill will provide commentary and lead discussion after the film. Here's a short description by the filmmakers:

*Christian nationalism is the belief that America should be defined as a Christian nation, with government adherence to this ideology. GOD & COUNTRY takes a closer look at the dangerous implications and explores how a base of Christians has radically stoked a movement erasing the line between Church and State.*

You can learn more about the film and watch a trailer [here](#).

## COVID COMMENTS+

*Bob Wallace, Barcey Levy & Jane Zukin*

August 28, 2024

This has been a very active time for infections circulating in the community.

As noted previously, COVID-19 has been circulating nationwide. It was recently announced the next vaccine will soon be available, as it was approved by the FDA. There are two vaccine companies making this vaccine, Pfizer and Moderna. CDC is recommending that all persons over 6 months old be vaccinated. We do not have information about whether the vaccine has reached the Johnson County area, so please check with your usual sources (*staff note: it is now widely available in the area*). Also, the Biden administration announced over the last weekend that vaccine and testing kits may be available free of charge. The synagogue board is considering what steps to take with regard to any changes to our preventative policies.

There have been two other infections circulating in the community that merit your attention: Last week, Johnson County Public Health announced that a Pertussis (Whooping Cough) outbreak was detected, spread in a school setting in Iowa City. This can be an important and serious respiratory illness. It can largely be prevented with routine vaccination and treated. University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics have already taken steps to



deal with this issue. If you, your family, or other contacts are being considered for or diagnosed with Pertussis, please get help from your local health professional as soon as possible. You can also call Johnson County Public Health (319) 356-6040 if you have questions. Adults may want to consider requesting the acellular pertussis vaccine, which is included in the Tdap (“tetanus”) vaccines, which are recommended every 10 years.

Also, CDC has noted a national outbreak of Parvovirus B-19 (also known as Fifth Disease). This tends to be a mild respiratory-spread condition that has symptoms of fever, cough, sore throat, and a rash, sometimes occurring on the cheeks, giving children a “slapped cheek” appearance. The virus can also cause a transient arthritis. A rash is more common in children. This virus can be dangerous to the developing fetus, so pregnant persons should try to avoid contact with individuals who may be infected. It tends to be a mild illness, and there are no vaccines or specific treatments available. Again, please see your local health professional about the possibilities of this virus circulating in the community.

Please keep up to date with local news media and relevant websites to keep up with these changing situations, and we will try to help.

To your health!

## PRE-ROSH HASHANAH PARK MEETUP

Join Agudas Achim young families to meet up for a pre Rosh Hashanah Park Playtime on Saturday, September 28 from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. at Centennial Park in North Liberty, for children 6 and under and their families. Siblings and grandparents also welcome. There will be snacks and a holiday craft, thanks to Nicole Nagin. Also co-hosting will be Sam Brotman and Lauren Kanner. A link to RSVP will be forthcoming.

## DONATIONS

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

**Rachelle Palnick Tsachor:** in memory of  
Irene Palnick

### BUILDING FUND

**Frank Salomon and Mercedes Nino-Murcia**

### CEMETERY FUND

**Lorraine Dorfman:** in memory of Morris Tiss

### GARDEN FUND

**Michelle and William Mueller:** in memory of  
Charlotte Dobie

### GENERAL FUND

**Jody and Janie Braverman**

**Chuck and Karen Friedman:** in Memory of Irene  
Palnick

**Linda Kerber:** in memory of Dorothy Kaufman,  
Janusz Bardach, and Dick Caplan

### HIGH HOLIDAY / CANTOR FUND

**Mel and Diane Sunshine:** in memory of Sam  
Brodsky

### SAFETY FUND

**Sanctuary Community Church**

## THE GIFT SHOP *Joanne Margolin*

I will be putting Rosh Hashanah cards on the Gift Shop shelves soon. Remember, ALL cards are 10 cents each! If you need any Judaica that we don't have, please let me know and I'll try to get it for you!

## BUDDY SYSTEM

Interested in having a buddy or being a buddy? Information can be found [here](#).

## WARM UP AMERICA

*Therese Guedon, Jeanne Cadoret, & Jeanne Abrons*

As we prepare for a new year next month, Warm Up America invites you to join us, meet our people, see our afghans before they are donated.

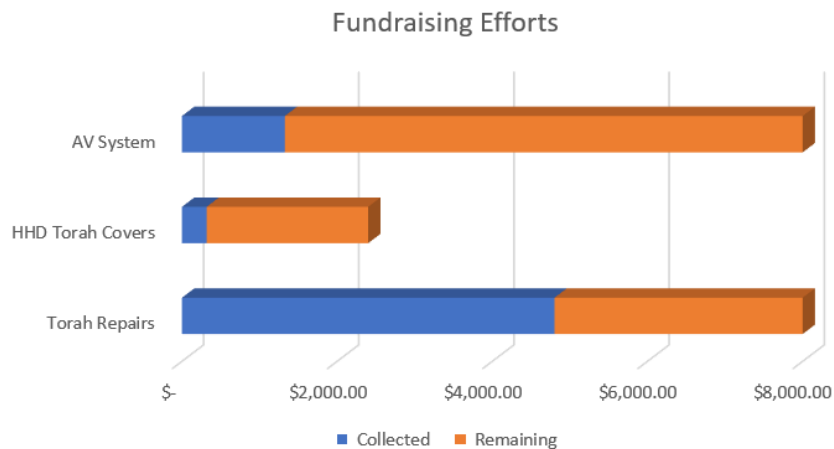
We'll be by the windows in the social hall on Sunday mornings Sept. 1, 15, and 29, 10:30 a.m. to noon.

Alternately, how about adding a new project for 5785? Many of our knitters and crocheters create afghan patches at home. If this interests you, please let us know.  
L'Shana tova.



## CONGREGATIONAL NEEDS FUNDRAISER

From time to time our congregation has needs that you may have a special passion for helping to provide to our space. In an effort to ensure our stability as a congregation, feel free to donate to these "smaller" important needs, as you are able. We will be noting our progress (transparently) each month to monitor where we are in reaching these goals! Note: \$2400 was previously in the Torah fund and is included here under Torah Repairs.



## SUSAN AIZENBERG READING

Agudas Achim member Susan Aizenberg will be holding a reception / book launch and reading from her new poetry collection, *A Walk with Frank O'Hara: Poems* at Prairie Lights on Saturday, September 21 at 4:00 p.m. More information on the book can be found [here](#), and learn more about Susan [here](#).

*A Walk with Frank O'Hara* Poems



Susan Aizenberg

## LIBRARY NEWS

Teresa Weiner



“Our tradition provides us with several reminders of the upcoming Days of Awe (*Yamim Nora-im* in Hebrew), as well as ways we can prepare during Elul, the Hebrew month that precedes them.

1. Make time for spiritual self-reflection and study.”

<https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/rosh-hashanah/6-ways-prepare-high-holidays>

Browse our library collection and check out materials to enhance your preparations.  
Include the children in your life as well!

## SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR 2024

### SERVICE SCHEDULE - 2024 - 5784/5785 - TRIENNIAL YEAR 2/3

<u>DATE</u>	<u>HEBREWDATE</u>	<u>PARASHA</u>	<u>SERVICETYPE</u>	<u>NOTES</u>
7/6/2024	30 Sivan	Korach	Conservative	RABBI HUGENHOLTZ VACATION
7/13/2024	7 Tammuz	Chukat	Reform	
7/20/2024	14 Tammuz	Balak	Conservative	
7/27/2024	21 Tammuz	Pinchas	Reform	RABBI HUGENHOLTZ SABBATICAL
8/3/2024	28 Tammuz	Mattot - Masei	Conservative	
8/10/2024	6 Av	Devarim	Reform	
8/17/2024	13 Av	Va'etchanan	Conservative	
8/24/2024	20 Av	Ekev	Reform	
8/31/2024	27 Av	Re'eh	Conservative	
9/7/2024	4 Elul	Shoftim	Reform	1st day of Rosh Hashanah 2nd day of Rosh Hashanah Shabbat Shuvah Yom Kippur Shabbat Chol Hamo'ed
9/14/2024	11 Elul	Ki Teitze	Conservative	
9/21/2024	18 Elul	Ki Tavo	Reform	
9/28/2024	25 Elul	Nitzavim - Vayelech	Conservative	
10/3/2024	1 Tishrei	Rosh Hashanah I		
10/4/2024	2 Tishrei	Rosh Hashanah II		
10/5/2024	3 Tishrei	Ha'azinu	Reform	
10/12/2024	10 Tishrei	Yom Kippur	Ref / Cons	
10/19/2024	17 Tishrei	Sukkot	Reform	
10/26/2024	24 Tishrei	Bereshit	Conservative	
11/2/2024	1 Cheshvan	Noach	Reform	RABBI HUGENHOLTZ SABBATICAL
11/9/2024	8 Cheshvan	Lech Lecha	Conservative	
11/16/2024	15 Cheshvan	Vayera	Reform	
11/23/2024	22 Cheshvan	Chayei Sarah	Conservative	
11/30/2024	29 Cheshvan	Toldot	Reform	
12/7/2024	6 Kislev	Vayeitze	Conservative	
12/14/2024	13 Kislev	Vayishlach	Reform	
12/21/2024	20 Kislev	Vayeshev	Conservative	
12/28/2024	27 Kislev	Miketz	Reform	3rd Day of Hanukkah

Please find the service schedule for the rest of 2024 [here](#).

## FAIR SHARE FORMS

**Synagogue members: if you have not returned your Fair Share form or informed the office of your intended pledge for this fiscal year, please do so soon if at all possible!**

## EARLY KEYBOARD SOCIETY CONCERT

Please join us for an Early Keyboard Society concert featuring Ken Aiso, violin and Sonia Lee, harpsichord at 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 22.



## MAHJONGG

Join us for Mahjongg from **1:00-3:00 p.m.** (unless noted) in the synagogue on the dates below. Bring a Mahjongg card if you have one. It is helpful to know by the Friday before the Sunday game who is planning to play so please email the host if you plan to play. There are also reminders in the synagogue weekly email and monthly bulletin. Beginners and walk- ins are always welcome.

### Upcoming Dates and who is receiving RSVPs:

Sept 8 [Corvin](#)

Sept 15 [Karen](#)

Sept 22 [Jayne](#)

Sept 29 [Karen](#)



## CHEVRA KADISHA

We are looking for people to be part of a chevra kadisha when called upon (to help perform the ritual washing of the bodies of those who have recently died in the congregation). Please contact the office if you'd be willing to help honor those who have died with this important task. You would not have to participate every time.

## AUGUST ONEG HOSTS

**Thank you to August's oneg hosts:**

**Sue Weinberg & Robert Armstrong, Beverly & Doug Jones, and the Social Committee**

**[Sign up to host an oneg at this link.](#)**

TOT  
SHABBAT  
5:30-6 pm

# TOT SHABBAT

SEPTEMBER 6



PIZZA  
6-7 PM

JOIN US FOR TOT SHABBAT  
BEFORE A FREE PIZZA DINNER

Songs, stories & lots of fun for the whole family!

All ages welcome. Please RSVP!

Hosted by the Membership Committee



RSVP for Tot Shabbat [here](#). Please fill out the separate RSVP form for the pizza dinner if you are planning on attending both events.



# **Pizza Party**

## **SHABBAT DINNER**

Friday, September 6

**Join the Social Committee for pizza  
and salad before Friday night services!**

Dinner 6:00 p.m. | Services 7:00 p.m.  
Dessert oneg after services

**Please RSVP by  
Tuesday, September 2**

RSVP [here](#) for the Shabbat pizza dinner

# SENIORS

# BRAINSTORMING

# LUNCHEON

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September 12

12 - 1:15 pm

Seniors- join us for a dairy luncheon (provided) and tell us what activities you would like to see at the synagogue!



## A BRAINSTORMING LUNCHEON FOR AGUDAS ACHIM SENIORS

*David Lubaroff*

Dear Agudas Achim Seniors -

I have been wanting to reach out to our seniors to involve them in aspects of synagogue life, particularly attending and participating in religious services and in adult education. The Agudas Achim leadership would like to make sure that this important group in our synagogue is well represented and that, like all valued members of our community, their needs are being met.

President-elect Lori McMann and I will host a **"Brainstorming Luncheon" on Thursday, September 12 at 12:00 noon**. A dairy lunch will be served. We want to hear from seniors how they would like to be part of the synagogue and what we can do to attract them to Agudas Achim. This will be an information-gathering session to understand what seniors want that will make them feel involved, whether it is the religious services, educational activities, social activities, or any other aspect of our synagogue lives. What can we do for you?

This luncheon does not replace the highly successful Senior Brunch organized by Jane Zukin, Phyllis Petchers, and Jeanne Cadoret. They have done a wonderful job and I look forward to its continuation.

**Please RSVP [at this link](#) no later than Tuesday, September 10.**

## SEPTEMBER YAHRZEITS

Abraham Dicker

David Milavetz

Donald Herbach

Dorothy Haber Kaufman

Douglas Ginsberg

Eleanor Frank

Frank Phillip Friedland

Gail Dougherty

Hannah Aizenberg

Ida Canter

Ida Vernon

Irene T. Sideman

Jacob Louis Levin

Janusz Bardach

Joan Nashelsky

John Abrons

Joseph B. Levin

Lillian Zwerling

Mary "Vera" Boyers

Maurice Weinstein

Michael Sellz

Milton Klausner

Mortimer Levine

Murray Weiner

Pat Kean

Rebecca Engman

Rhona Fox

Rina Bar-Lev

Stanley Corwin

Sydney Schochet

Sylvia Roston

Victor Brecher

Walter Roston



# LEARN TO PLAY



# D&D



**Sunday, September 15th  
1:00pm to 6:00pm  
Agudas Achim Synagogue**

## LEARN TO PLAY DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 5TH EDITION

Learn how to bring adventure and connection to your community with Dungeons and Dragons, a table-top roleplaying game! Learn about the game system by playing a one-shot with other community members! Please RSVP using Sign-Up Genius included in email.



## NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED!

DICE AND MATERIALS  
WILL BE PROVIDED

NEW AND EXPERIENCED  
PLAYERS WELCOME

**QUESTIONS? EMAIL STEVIE AT SAEDWARDS94@GMAIL.COM**

RSVP link can be found [here](#).

# Join Us! Agudas Achim Synagogue Seniors

**THURSDAY Sept. 19**  
**11am to 1pm in the**  
**SOCIAL HALL**

*Join us for Synagogue Seniors in September. Our speaker will be Michelle Edwards, an author and illustrator of many award-winning books for children and crafters. She writes about family, friendship, and community. **PLEASE RSVP BY Friday, September 13** so we can plan appropriately for brunch. Reserve your spot by emailing: [janezukin@gmail.com](mailto:janezukin@gmail.com)*

## Coffee, Conversation, and a Nosh

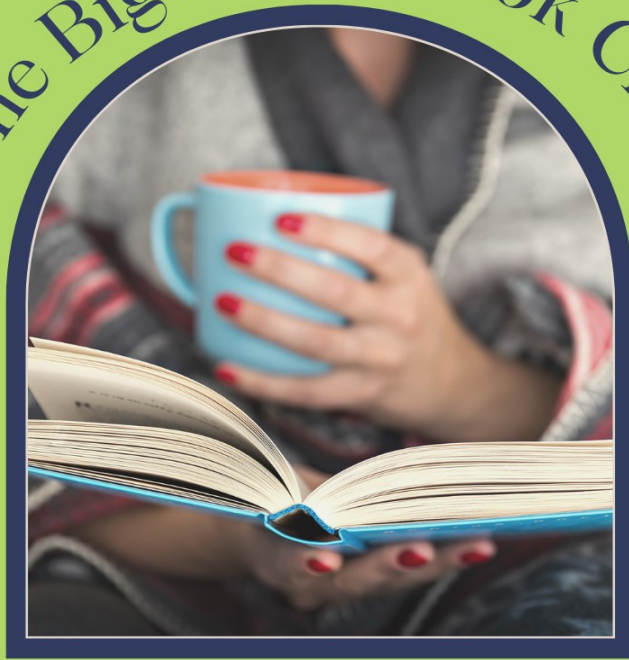
- However you define "seniors" is up to you
- Bring a friend
- Make a new friend
- Group meets third Thursday of the month
- To reserve your spot email: [janezukin@gmail.com](mailto:janezukin@gmail.com)



***Jeanne Cadoret - Phyllis Petchers - Jane Zukin***

Join us for Synagogue Seniors in September. Our speaker will be Michelle Edwards, an author and illustrator of many award-winning books for children and crafters. She writes about family, friendship, and community. PLEASE RSVP BY Friday, September 13 so we can plan appropriately for brunch. Reserve your spot by emailing: [janezukin@gmail.com](mailto:janezukin@gmail.com)

# The Big Ideas Book Club



Come explore important Jewish ideas  
at the Iowa City Public Library

ICPL, September 25,  
6-7:30 pm

Recovering the Heart of Jewish Life

JUDAISM  
IS  
ABOUT  
LOVE  
SHAI HELD

Shai Held

“Judaism Is About Love –  
Recovering the Heart of Jewish  
Life”

More info? Contact  
[adulted@agudasachimic.org](mailto:adulted@agudasachimic.org)

## INTERFAITH ALLIANCE AGAINST CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

The Interfaith Alliance Against 'Christian' Nationalism will screen *God and Country* on Sunday, September 8, 2:00 pm, at the Iowa City Public Library. Rabbi Hugenholtz and Prof. Robert Cargill will provide commentary and lead discussion after the film. Here's a short description by the filmmakers:

*Christian nationalism is the belief that America should be defined as a Christian nation, with government adherence to this ideology. GOD & COUNTRY takes a closer look at the dangerous implications and explores how a base of Christians has radically stoked a movement erasing the line between Church and State.*

You can learn more about the film and watch a trailer [here](#).

**A TRUE THREAT TO OUR DEMOCRACY**  
Free Screenings of a Powerful New Documentary

**GOD  
+  
COUNTRY**

Sunday, Aug. 25 3:00 p.m.  
at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church,  
with a discussion led by Connie Ryan  
of Iowa Interfaith Alliance

Sunday, Sept. 8 2:00 p.m.  
at Iowa City Public Library

**"What happens when a faith built on love,  
sacrifice and forgiveness grows political  
tentacles, conflating power, money and belief  
into hyper-nationalism?"**

Presented by Interfaith Alliance to Expose Christian Nationalism  
For more information email: [exposingchristiannationalism@gmail.com](mailto:exposingchristiannationalism@gmail.com)

# Embodying Elul: Psalm 27 as Yoga Practice

Dates: Sundays, September 1, 8, 15 from 2pm -3pm  
Location: Agudas Achim Congregation

For more information: [leslea-collins@outlook.com](mailto:leslea-collins@outlook.com)

Psalm 27 is traditionally recited each day during Elul, the Jewish lunar month proceeding the High Holy Days. Join Yoga teacher, Mussar facilitator and cantorial soloist Lea Haravon Collins as we engage in this ancient tradition with a new twist (literally!). In this three-session immersive experience, we will meet weekly during the month of Elul to explore the Psalm's themes of strength, comfort, gratitude, petitioning and waiting through text study and Yoga postures. We will come away from each gathering with a simple movement practice which can be coupled with a daily reading of Psalm 27 or used as you like to help you to prepare for the approaching Days of Awe.

No previous Yoga or Psalm-reading experience necessary! Join us for as many sessions as you like. Everyone, including and especially curious skeptics with tight hamstrings, is welcome.

A Yoga mat, large towel or blanket and a journal are recommended but not necessary.



AGUDAS ACHIM AND THE UNION  
FOR REFORM JUDAISM PRESENT



# ***TASTE OF JUDAISM***

A 3-session program of introductory knowledge to Jewish ideals and practices, to help you feel empowered going into the High Holy Days.

September ~~4~~, 11, and 18

6-7:30 pm

Robert A. Lee Recreation Center

RSVP to [rsvp@agudasachimic.org](mailto:rsvp@agudasachimic.org)

**\*\*September 4 session cancelled due to illness\*\***

# Pathway to the Inner Life: The Mussar Institute



**Join Lea Haravon Collins, Ph.D., certified Mussar facilitator, yoga instructor, and cantorial soloist, to learn about and practice the Jewish spiritual wisdom of Mussar.**

**In-person classes at  
Agudas Achim 2-3:30 pm on  
November 3, 10, & 24,  
December 8 & 22,  
January 5**

**Participants will study with chevruta  
(study partners) on alternate weeks.**

## SEPTEMBER SPECIAL EVENTS

God & Country Screening	ICPL	9/8	2:00 p.m.
Tot Shabbat & Pizza Dinner	Synagogue	9/8	5:30 onward
Taste of Judaism	Rec Center	9/11	6:00 p.m.
Learn to Play D&D	Synagogue	9/16	1:00 p.m.
Taste of Judaism	Rec Center	9/18	6:00 p.m.
Shabbat Service & Panel Discussion	Senior Center	9/27	6:30 p.m.
"Who is a Jew" Study Session	Synagogue	9/28	after services
Pre-Rosh HaShanah Young Families Meetup	Centennial Park NL	9/28	3:00 p.m.
"Are We in Exile" Study Session	Synagogue	9/29	9:30 a.m.

See dates for Mahjonn, Yoga and Warm Up America elsewhere in bulletin.

## RECURRING GROUPS WITH FIXED TIMES/DATES- [CALENDAR ON WEBSITE](#)

<b>Yiddish Study Group</b>  Mondays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom.	<b>Book group</b>  Fourth Wednesday of every month at 1:00.	<b>Intro to Judaism Class</b>  Mondays at 7:30 p.m.	<b>Talmud Study Group</b>  Sundays at 9:00 a.m. on Zoom.	<b>Adult Learners Group</b>  Alternate Mondays 6:00-7:00 p.m.	<b>Seniors Group</b>  Third Thursday of every month at 11:00 a.m.
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## SHABBAT SERVICES

[Streaming link for Zoom Shabbat services](#)

<b>Shoftim</b> <i>(Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9)</i>	Friday, September 6	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)
	Saturday, September 7	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
<b>Ki Tetze</b> <i>(Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19)</i>	Friday, September 13	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
	Saturday, September 14	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
<b>Ki Tavo</b> <i>(Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8)</i>	Friday, September 20	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem
	Saturday, September 21	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah
<b>Nitzavim-Vayelech</b> <i>(Deuteronomy 29:9-31:30)</i>	Friday, September 27	7:00 p.m.	<b>Service @ Senior Center</b>
	Saturday, September 28	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem

[Donate via Venmo](#); [Donate via Paypal](#)

<b>STAFF</b>			
Rabbi	Esther Hugenholtz	Administrative Assistant	Hannah Sandler
Administrator	John Wertz	Outreach Coordinator	Adrien Kaplan
Principal	Sonja Spear	Custodian	Amos Kiche
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President	David Lubaroff	Religious School	Lisa Heineman
President Elect	Lori McMann	Social	Ariel Levin & Lori McMann
Vice President	Jayne Sandler	Tikun Olam	Mallory Hellman
Treasurer	Mindy Russell	Ways & Means	Mindy Russell
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Ritual	Bernie Miller & Corvin Greene	At Large 2	Marcus Nashelsky
Adult Ed	Lisa Heineman	At Large 3	Ruth Nathanson