



# Agudas Achim Congregation

401 E. Oakdale Blvd., Coralville, IA 52241

Phone: 319-337-3813

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

**January 2026 / Tevet-Shevat 5786**

## FROM THE RABBI

*Esther Hugenholtz*

If you glance ahead to president Lori's piece, she will take you to Paris (which she recently visited). In the spirit of continuity, I want to pick up where she takes us. My husband and I spent our short honeymoon in the City of Lights, onboarding the Eurostar train that took us from Central Station in Amsterdam to Gare Du Nord. It was a brief but eventful trip with more excellent food options than I could have dreamed of: including excellent kosher Asian food and the best kiddush lunch we've ever had at my life at a Sephardi Masorti synagogue. (There was a Bar Mitzvah and we really lucked out) When Lori described her Parisian adventures, it took me right back to my own memories of Jewish Paris. For a population about 0.2% of the global population, we are incredibly networked and connected.

New Jews sometimes ask me: 'Rabbi, will I ever truly feel at home in the Jewish community? It sounds like everyone knows everyone but I don't—how can I play 'Jewish geography?' It is a real conundrum for Jews-by-Choice (and not just for Jews-by-Choice – there are many Jews who grew up outside of affiliated communities). I tell them: 'give it time. Keep building the relationships and before you know it, you can play Jewish geography too.' I have found that to be true in my life, even as a small-town Midwestern rabbi. One day you realize that you know hundreds and hundreds (if not thousands) of fellow Jews, almost effortlessly. Jews on Facebook are even more networked.

The tradition calls this sense of Jewish connectedness 'K'lal Yisrael', 'All – or the totality - of Israel'. It means that *someone's friend knows a congregant somewhere who knows... or someone's cousin twice removed married so-and-so*. It means that if we log onto Facebook or talk to a Jewish friend, Jewish news travels fast—sometimes for tragic reasons.

It was 5 am when I woke up on the morning of our Hanukkah Bazaar and checked Facebook (I couldn't sleep). I saw a colleague post about a shooting in Australia and had to re-read their post several times before it registered. A family member of theirs had been wounded (they are doing okay, thank God) and the news sent chills down my spine. Something on the literal other side of the globe, came so close. This was the Bondi Beach Hanukkah Massacre, the latest in a string of violent antisemitic attacks since the Pittsburgh Massacre in 2018.

We Jews are so connected – our 'K'lal' – that we immediately feel the seriousness and urgency of such a grievous attack. As a worldwide Jewish community, we are diverse, divided and prone to disagreement. Those tensions and realities don't change. But we also understand each other's vulnerability and the need for mutual accountability and protection. In some sense, being interconnected as a community means we are often witnesses to each other's distress, but in that connectedness also lies our hope and strength

*(Continued on page 2)*

## FROM THE RABBI

### *Esther Hugenholtz (cont.)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

(without setting aside our diversity, divisions or disagreements – they are healthy).

The same day of the Bondi Beach Massacre, we held our wonderful, joyous Hanukkah Bazaar and Party. Sadness comingled with happiness as we reflected on what had just transpired in the Jewish world. Looking at our beautiful community still coming together. We showed up for each other. We raised funds for the synagogue and for good causes. We showcased our creativity, talent, grit and fellowship and it was precisely the light we needed to light the darkness.

This Jewish connectedness means that we have built up relationships over the years with organizations like The Parents' Circle / Bereaved Families' Forum. I remember we organized an adult education programming with them on Zoom during the height of the pandemic (2021). We have shared and sponsored their programming, and raised funds for them. They continue to do the essential work of holding space for grief and create opportunity for healing between Israelis and Palestinians who have lost loved ones in the conflict.

Our congregant, Rachelle Tsachor, who lives in Chicago, has introduced me to the transformative work of the Center for Mind-Body Medicine. The CMBM are also active in Israel and Gaza, doing important trauma-work and training up facilitators through a trauma-informed approach.

(A small practical point: the Hanukkah Bazaar intended on fundraising for both these organizations, but there was a glitch in the QR codes generated. Please remember them in your charitable giving and build towards a healed future in the region; see more extensive article elsewhere in the Bulletin).

In the secular New Year, we hope to continue building more connections. Our Big Ideas Book Club is relaunching and we have four exciting new books planned, including our first book on the history of antisemitism. We will also have a Lunch and Learn on antisemitism on Saturday the 28<sup>th</sup> of January after services (at 12:30 pm) in order to create more opportunities in our community to understand and confront this reality.

Of course, our annual Membership Shabbat is an excellent way to become – and stay – connected to our synagogue community. We will be welcoming and honoring members new and old and continuing the holy task of building community.

My little honeymoon was 19 years ago this year, and I went to rabbinical school the next year (2008). I look back on decades of Jewish connection and connectedness which has brought my life so much meaning, purpose and joy. May we all stay connected to each other and continue to thrive Jewishly together!

## FACEBOOK PAGE

### *Agudas Achim Congregation IC*

The "[Agudas Achim Congregation IC](#)" Facebook page is back! Please follow us there for event announcements and updates. Note: link may not work if you are not logged in.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Lori McMann

I hope that the start of 2026 finds you well! My family and I just spent part of the winter break in Paris, which might, understandably, prompt you to ask how that is relevant to our January bulletin. Indeed, on the surface, life in Iowa and life in Paris are more different than they are similar. But on a deeper level, where the most meaningful “living” happens, they have a lot in common for me. Paris is where I really started to find my deep connection to being Jewish.

From 2000 to 2001, I lived in Paris during my doctoral studies. More specifically, I lived near the Rue des Rosiers, the street central to the “Pletzel,” Paris’ historic Jewish quarter, where I was alternately sustained by the poppy-seed cake from Sacha Finkelsztajn, a landmark bakery, and falafel from l’As du Fallafel, often cited as the best in Paris. For centuries, this street was the home of Jewish businesses and *Yiddishkeit* brought by successive waves of Eastern European immigrants. The last 30 years have seen the disappearance of many, if not most, of these once-crucial shops, replaced by chic boutiques and corporate labels who can afford skyrocketing rents. Taking the 5-minute walk from the front steps of my old apartment to the Rue des Rosiers is always a return to one of my “spiritual homes,” eliciting mixed feelings. I prepare myself for a rush of nostalgic warmth but also an anxious reckoning of which once-familiar spots have been lost since I last visited. The Jewish bookstore I frequented (la Librairie du Temple) seems to be thriving, while another I remember is gone.

The whole of Paris is constantly changing in some ways, yet carefully preserved in other ways. New restaurants and shops replace others, bicycle-shares are added, and narrow one-way streets become pedestrian zones. But the French dedication to *patrimoine*, cultural heritage, means that architecture is preserved as time passes.

Informational signs detailing historic events introduce passers-by to the buildings and monuments around them.

How does this relate to our little corner of Jewishness in eastern Iowa? To our synagogue and the lives of its congregants? It reminds me that it takes intention to both preserve the memory of the past and to grow into the future. There is equal need for innovation and dedication to traditions. Our [mission and vision statements](#) guide us in finding a judicious balance between the “old” and the “new.”

*It takes intention to both preserve the memory of the past and to grow into the future.*

We have events upholding longstanding traditions as well as others that reflect innovation. This past Chanukah saw another delightful Latke party, a tradition which goes back many years, and the newer Bazaar, bringing together our own talented congregants and introducing us to

worthy local and global causes. We continue our rich tradition of adult education, with recent documentary film screenings and an upcoming visit in March from Alicia Jo Rabins, multi-talented author and musician. We will roll out some new programs, including one to organize intergenerational chess playing between seniors and young people. Stay tuned! In the mix of old traditions and new ideas, there is sometimes value in re-invigorating what worked in the past, yet fell by the wayside. I’m glad to report that dedicated volunteers successfully revived Tot Shabbat a few months ago. I hope you will join Agudas Achim for these and other events, whether they are new programs or longstanding traditions. I thank you for another year of your financial support, which is so crucial to our existence. Mostly, I wish you health and happiness in 2026 and “Bonne Année!” as we say in French.

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

*Sonja Spear*

We had a strange December because we closed for a snow day. At first, I was sad about closing because I was looking forward to our Hanukkah classes. But I heard so many happy reports about the kids sledding and drinking cocoa that I ended up feeling happy. What's more fun than an unexpected holiday, a heap of snow, and a sled? The kids had a winter festival! But, when it came time to rededicate themselves to Sunday School, they found that they only had one day to learn about Hanukkah and to celebrate it.

Like the Maccabees faced with only one day's worth of oil, we had to make our resources stretch. Did the sun stand still? Did time expand to meet our desires? Did the kids become unnaturally passive and obedient? Not exactly. But our wonderful teachers and assistants leapt into action. In one short day, the kids learned the Hanukkah blessings.

In Robyn and Josie's class, students made Hanukkah bunting and hung decorations in the Social Hall.

In Hersh's class and Mal's class, they studied the Jewish expulsion from Spain and its consequences. We call this unit "Jewish Pirates of the Caribbean." Little known fact: There really were Jewish pirates, often allied with Muslim Turks, who harassed and robbed Spanish ships in the Caribbean. Jews were also among the first European settlers in the Caribbean, where the influence of Judeo-

Papiamentu (a Sephardic language) can be traced to this day. It's a bit of history that goes as well with Hanukkah as a yo-ho-ho and a bottle of, um, Manischewitz. Hersh's class illustrated this history, with a particular emphasis on the piratical kosher diet.



Mal's class hid dreidels so that the younger kids could go on a dreidel hunt. We teach cooperation and taking care of younger kids as a quiet part of the curriculum. It's always good to see the "big kids" looking out for the "littles." After the dreidel hunt, the kids

needed a password to enter the Hanukkah party. I'm not sure who came up with "dreidel, dreidel, yub-yub," but I will try it next time I need to create a computer password.

In the Hanukkah party, kids made dreidel shapes with tangrams, built Hanukkah menorahs (and fortresses) out of Legos, and decorated cookies. I am especially grateful to Meyer for providing Hanukkah cookies and an apparently endless supply of sprinkles. The kids were so absorbed in their sugary creations that they barely noticed the donut holes and cider we provided for snack.

For a bunch of hungry kids, it was a Hanukkah miracle!

## DIRECTORY ADVERTISEMENTS

We are beginning to prepare our annual membership directory to be published in early 2026. We are always looking for more businesses or individuals to advertise with us to help offset the cost of the publication. These ads will be seen in the directory, and supporting individuals or businesses will also be listed in several of our publications throughout the year.

If you have a business card or advertisement you'd like to include in the directory, [contact John](#) for details. **Agudas Achim members pay half price for ads!** Member pricing begins as low as \$100 for a black and white business card-sized ad. If you have a favorite local establishment that might be interested in advertising with us, let us know so we can reach out to them.

Thank you for your support!

## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS

*Karen Lipman*

### Mazel Tov! Share Your Simcha News!

We love celebrating joyful moments in our community—weddings, births, graduations, new pets, anniversaries, and other non-work related news. If you or your family have a simcha (happy occasion) to share, let us know so we can announce it here. Please email [membership@agudasachimic.org](mailto:membership@agudasachimic.org) with the information to share by the 24th of the month.

Let's spread the joy!

#### Mazel Tov to:

**\*Barcey and Steve Levy on the wedding of their son  
David to Na Kamnansone\***

**\*Adam Zabner, son of Kineret and Joseph Zabner, on  
receiving his Master's degree in Data Science from the  
University of Iowa\***

#### Welcome to new members:

**\*Emily Upin and Isaac Marshall\***

**\*Daniel Benton and Nancy Hauserman\***

# MEMBERSHIP SHABBAT 2026

Saturday, January 24  
9:30 a.m. Service, luncheon to follow

We will be honoring our school principal,  
member teachers & B'nei Mitzvah tutors in recent  
years, as well as new congregation members.

## Principal

Sonja Spear

## Teachers

Martin Blum

Ari Collins

Jeremiah Collins

Toe Collins

Mallory Hellman

Josie Hermiston

Robyn Hermiston

Logan Jaskolka

Avery Lehman

Meyer Lehman

Oren Lehman

Shawna Levy

Hersh Rephun

Hannah Sandler

## Tutors

Alicia Maxwell

Jerry Sorokin

## New Members

Aaron Andrew and family

Ethan and Jennie Begun and family

Beth Bellman

Daniel Benton and Nancy Hauserman

Elana Buch and Ken Hill and family

Jim and Bonita Bunton

Jaia Burton and family

Aaron and Leah Lee Caplan

Marc Falk and Dana Foster and family

Alexandra Geraets

Hillary and Luke Granfield

Steven Gross

Nicholas Harshman

Celeste Howington

Kate Klingborg and family

Rose Phillips and family

Anne and Steve Price

Steve and Robin Ungar

Ellen Weinberg (in memoriam)

Emily Upin and Isaac Marshall



January Yoga Class:

## TRANSFORMATIVE TEVET

In this drop-in class, we will join Yogic practices, Jewish wisdom and the fresh start of the secular new year to both steady ourselves and spark transformation in these deep and dark winter weeks. We will come away with a simple movement practice that we can add to our daily routine. Everyone is welcome. No previous Yoga experience necessary!

Date: Sunday January 18, 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Location: Agudas Achim Congregation, Coralville IA

Bring: Yoga mat, large towel, or blanket (optional, but nice to have)

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

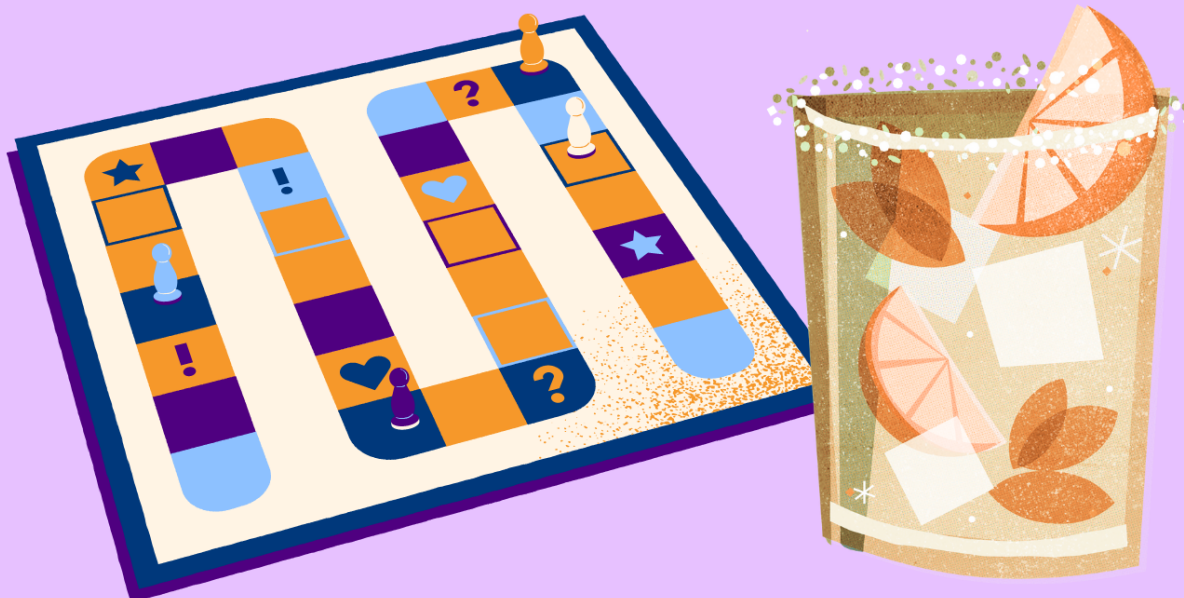


# Youngish Jewish @ Diversions Board Game Night

WED. JANUARY 21, 7 PM  
119 2<sup>nd</sup> St #300, Coralville

Admission is free- Agudas Achim will cover it!

*Everyone in their 20s or 30s is welcome!*



# The Big Ideas Book Club

Event is free  
and open to  
the public

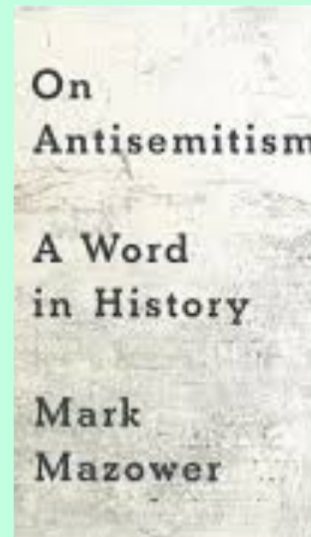


Wednesday,  
Jan 28  
6:30-8:30 pm

Come explore important Jewish ideas  
at the Iowa City Public Library

Mark Mazower

‘On Antisemitism: A Word in History’



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

# Big Ideas In Jewish Books Club

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



Come explore important Jewish ideas at the Iowa City Public Library

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January 28

'On Antisemitism: A Word in History' by Mark Mazower



February 25

'Heart of a Stranger: An Unlikely Rabbi's Story of Faith, identity and Belonging' by Angela Buchdahl



March 25

'When We're Born We Forget Everything: A Memoir' by Alicia Jo Rabins



April 22

"Embracing Exile: The Case for Jewish Diaspora' by David Kraemer



—Agudas Achim Congregation—  
—invites you to—

# LUNCH & LEARN

## Discussions of Antisemitism

In recent months, antisemitism has taken an increasingly dark turn. Agudas Achim will sponsor two events in January to discuss these developments:

**Wednesday, January 28, [6:30 pm] ICPL:** ‘Big Ideas in Jewish Books’ will discuss Mark Mazower’s important new book, “Antisemitism: A Word in History.”

**Saturday, January 31, Lunch & Learn following services, at the synagogue:** Rabbi Hugenholtz and Lisa Heineman (Co-Director of Jewish Studies at the University of Iowa) will lead a discussion of recent developments and local strategies.

# Shevat Yoga

**Nurturing Self, Igniting Potential**

**In this drop-in class, we focus on self-nurturing and realizing our potential as the winter days get a little shorter. We will come away from this gathering with a simple movement practice that we can add to our daily routine. Everyone is welcome. No previous Yoga experience necessary!**

**Date: Sundays February 1st & 15th, 2:00-3:00 p.m.**

**Location: Agudas Achim Congregation**

**Optional, but nice to have: Yoga mat, large towel, or blanket**

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

# Agudas Achim Winter/Spring 2026 Tot Shabbats

FRIDAY  
FEBRUARY

**6**

**5:30PM**

*Dinner served after  
short service*

SATURDAY  
MARCH

**7**

**11:00 AM**

*Join congregation in Kiddush  
lunch after short service*

SATURDAY  
APRIL

**4**

**11:00 AM**

*Join congregation in Kiddush  
lunch after short service*

FRIDAY  
MAY

**1**

**5:30PM**

*Dinner served after  
short service*



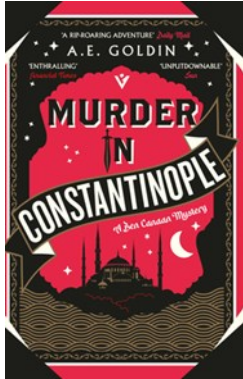
RSVP Here!

Tot Shabbat families keep in touch and get reminders via an email listserv (Google Group). If you're not already on the Tot Shabbat listserv, you can request to join by emailing [samantha.brotman@gmail.com](mailto:samantha.brotman@gmail.com)!

## LIBRARY NEWS

*Teresa Weiner*

### Three NEW books for your winter reading!



Historical mystery? Jewish tailor's wayward son?

Check this one out!

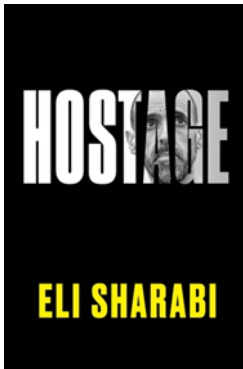
[\*Murder in Constantinople\*](#)



Or, a memoir from the first Asian American rabbi and

first woman Senior Rabbi of Central Synagogue in New York City?

[\*Heart of a Stranger\*](#)



Or, Eli Sharabi's memoir about his 491-day captivity by Hamas?

"...his observations and thoughts on survival, endurance, and hope are much needed at this moment."

[\*Hostage\*](#)

## MAHJONG

All ages and life stages are welcome to join us.  
Experienced players, as always, are welcome to join  
a player's table.

[RSVP to Karen](#) [RSVP to Jayne](#)  
[RSVP to Corvin](#) [RSVP to Rachel](#)

### January Dates:

January 4- Karen  
January 11- Jayne  
January 18- Jayne  
January 25- Karen



## PARENTS CIRCLE & CENTER FOR MIND-BODY MEDICINE

Both the Parents Circle–Families Forum and the Center for Mind-Body Medicine (CMBM) are doing vital trauma-healing work in Israel-Palestine. They were intended beneficiaries of our fundraising at the Hanukkah Bazaar; however, due to a technical glitch, we were unable to collect funds for them at that time. I am therefore writing now to draw attention to their work and to invite you to remember both organizations in your tzedakah (charitable giving).

Both the Parents Circle and CMBM can make speakers available to engage our congregation, should there be interest.

With gratitude,  
Rabbi Esther

### The Parents Circle–Families Forum

The Parents Circle brings together bereaved Israelis and Palestinians who have lost immediate family members to the conflict. Through shared encounters, community outreach, advocacy, and retreats, participants tell their personal stories locally and internationally, opening pathways to empathy and human connection. Today, more than 800 Israeli and Palestinian families are involved in this work.

Founded in 1995 by bereaved Israeli father Yitzhak Frankenthal, the Parents Circle began as a group of Israeli families and soon expanded to include Palestinian families. Despite the upheavals of the Second Intifada and the severing of ties with Gaza, the organization rebuilt and continues to operate as a joint Palestinian-Israeli nonprofit with a shared board and binational professional staff, based in Beit Jala and Ramat Ef'al.

The Parents Circle provides a safe and transformative space for bereaved families to share their stories, understand each other's narratives, and recognize the humanity of the "other." Through educational programs, school visits, public events, media engagement, and international outreach, the organization amplifies the moral voices of those who have suffered the deepest losses—demonstrating that even after immense grief, peace remains possible.

Since October 7, 2023, the Parents Circle has adapted its work to meet new and painful realities, deepening its local and global impact. Its programs foster empathy, critical thinking, and emotional openness, and seek to break cycles of fear, violence, and dehumanization. The organization's vision is of a future in which both peoples live side by side in freedom, dignity, and security, with human connection laying the groundwork for a just and lasting peace.

### The Center for Mind-Body Medicine (CMBM)

Our connection to the Center for Mind-Body Medicine is deeply personal, as our member **Rachelle Tsachor** is a trained facilitator and a member of CMBM's supervision team. Below, Rachelle shares what drew her to this work and how she has witnessed CMBM Israel's impact firsthand. Further on, you will also find information about CMBM's work in Gaza.

*(Continued on page 16)*

## PARENTS CIRCLE & CENTER FOR MIND-BODY MEDICINE *(cont.)*

*(Continued from page 15)*

**From Agudas Achim member Rachelle Tsachor:**

“Thank you for including CMBM among your selected charitable organizations focused on Israel and Gaza. The Israeli CMBM nonprofit (Amuta) urgently needs funds for its ‘Helping the Helpers’ professional training programs. These programs support care-providers, first responders, and community leaders who have been under extraordinary stress for the past two years, often while working with minimal resources.

The CMBM model has been part of my worldview since 2009, in both Iowa and Israel. My interest in trauma and displacement began much earlier, when the kibbutz where I lived near Israel’s northern border became home to Maronite Christian families fleeing Lebanon’s civil war. Later, as friends from high school returned from military service carrying invisible wounds, I continued searching for effective, population-wide approaches to trauma healing.

I completed CMBM certification and internship by 2013, in time to teach this mind-body trauma resiliency model at the University of Haifa and Wingate College before and during the 2014 Gaza conflict. I had also been trained shortly after the devastating 2008 floods in Iowa, which allowed me to facilitate resiliency groups for first responders and care-providers overwhelmed by crisis. Over time, I taught the model in academic settings, including a first-year university seminar focused on healing arts and transition.

In 2020, I trained as a supervisor to support new facilitators bringing this public-health-based trauma model into their communities, including teachers responding to gun violence in the U.S. By 2022, I was supervising creative arts therapists in Ukraine at the start of that war, and in late 2023, I again found myself supporting Israelis after October 7.

During the first chaotic months of the war, Israelis stepped in where systems were lacking. I provided supervision for teachers, organized and led groups for creative arts therapists, supported care-providers near Israel’s northern border, and joined CMBM healing retreats for survivors of October 7. During my 2024 sabbatical in Israel, I volunteered with the Israeli CMBM nonprofit, helping adapt professional training programs for the intensity of ongoing conflict and supporting program assessment and effectiveness.”

### **CMBM’s Work in Gaza**

CMBM is also actively supporting trauma-healing efforts in Gaza. Since 2005, it has trained approximately 1,500 Palestinian clinicians, educators, women’s group leaders, and community figures in culturally responsive psychological self-care and group support. These trainees have, in turn, reached more than 280,000 children and adults.

Since October 2023, CMBM’s beneficiaries in Gaza have largely been internally displaced, with over 95% living in overcrowded shelters after repeated forced displacement. They face extreme food insecurity, lack of clean water, fuel, electricity, and medical supplies, and profound psychological distress. Most have lost loved ones and are living amid disease, violence, and constant uncertainty. In these dire conditions, CMBM’s work provides essential tools for resilience, emotional regulation, and communal support.

## TORAH REPAIR

*Bernie Miller, Agudas Achim Ritual Committee*

As many of you may know, one of our 3 Torah scrolls sustained damage back in 2024, making it unfit for ritual use during the High Holidays this past fall. We are happy to share the news that it has now been repaired and returned to use. The patching and rewrite addressed multiple tears in the parchment, including damage affecting the text, thus restoring the scroll's kashrut while preserving the original material.

The repair work was done by Yonathan Reches, a sofer working out of the Twin Cities. Besides the actual repairs, Yonathan was kind enough to offer his expertise and advice on how to best care for the scroll in the long-term, so that it may continue to serve us for many more years to come. Those recommendations include:

- Addressing minor margin tears by trimming, performed by a trained scribe. Larger tears should be stabilized with patches. There are numerous margin tears in this scroll which, if allowed to propagate, pose a risk of further damage.

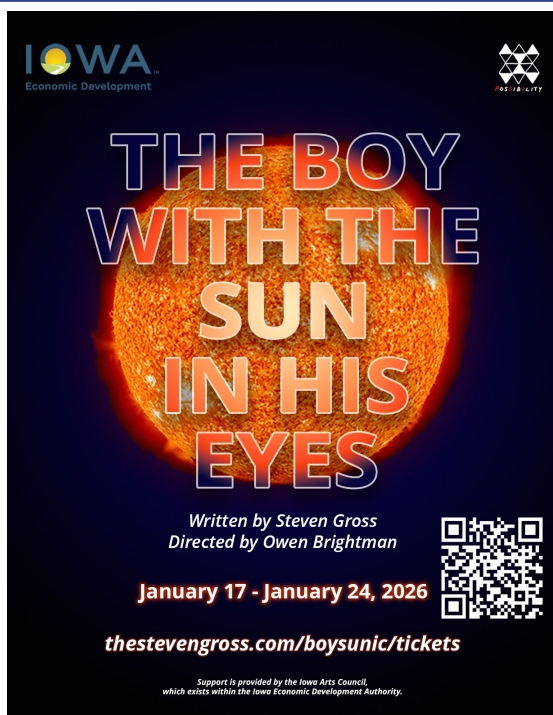
- Ensuring that a seam is positioned near the center of the scroll during hagbah and transport, which are the two riskiest times for a Torah. This increases the likelihood that any tearing will occur along a seam rather than through the parchment itself, making for a simpler repair.

- Considering what is known as an 'Italian hagbah', in which two people lift the Torah together—one holding the etz chayim at Bereshit and the other at Devarim. This approach is gentler on the scroll, often more accessible for older congregants (particularly with heavier scrolls), and can offer a pleasing aesthetic as well.

Yasher Koach, Yonathan!!

We will continue to take steps to ensure careful handling and long-term care of our scrolls. We also offer our most profound thanks to all of you who contributed funds which helped make these repairs possible.

## THE BOY WITH THE SUN IN HIS EYES



Agudas Achim is part of the community hub network for *The Boy with the Sun in his Eyes*, a musical by Agudas Achim member Steven Gross. Developmental workshop staged readings will be held on the following dates:

- January 17, 8:00 p.m.
- January 18, 2:00 p.m. (followed by student workshop)
- January 18, 7:00 p.m. (followed by talkback)
- January 23, 7:00 p.m. (followed by talkback)
- January 24, 7:00 p.m.

These are workshop readings, with minimal staging and design elements. Audience members will be asked to provide feedback on their experience and perspective on the musical following the readings. Located at Public Space One Close House (538 S Gilbert St, Iowa City, IA 52240).

[More information](#)

[Buy tickets](#)

## WARM UP AMERICA

In 2025, Warm Up America produced the individual all-synthetic blocks for, assembled, finished, and delivered 36 afghans, sized 5½' x 4½', weighing about 3 pounds each.

Recipients included Shelter House, CommUnity Crisis Center, United Action for Youth, Inside-Out Reentry, and Houses into Homes twice, because the new North Liberty Food Pantry sends its people there.

Warm Up America will meet again on January 4th and 18th in the social hall. Please join us. No experience is necessary.

May the warmth and light of this season carry us through the next year and the years to come. Together, we all do make a difference.

### 2026 dates for Warm Up America:

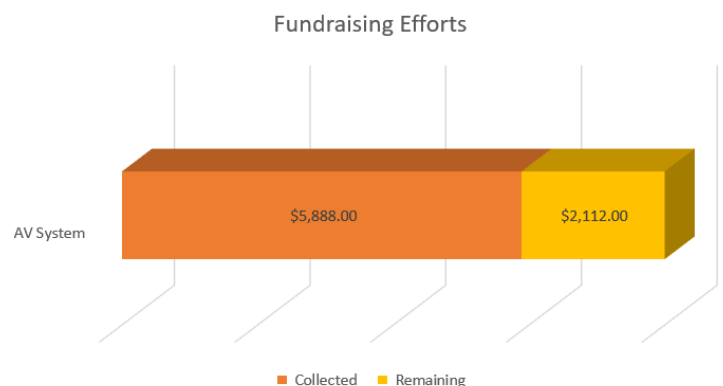
January 4, 18  
February 8, 22  
March 8 [DST starts], 22  
April 12, 26  
May 17, 31  
June 14, 28  
July 12, 26  
August 9, 23  
September 6  
October 11, 25  
November 1, 15, 29 (maybe)  
December 6, 20



## CONGREGATIONAL NEEDS FUNDRAISER

Our congregation regularly undertakes smaller fundraising initiatives that require support. Contributions of any size are welcomed and typically meet the immediate needs of these projects. If you have a particular interest in a specific initiative, we encourage you to consider offering your support.

Thanks to generous donations, we previously met our target for Torah Repairs. The installed AV system currently lacks complete funding. Additional support for the fundraising effort would help to reach this funding goal.



## WALK-IN-WALKIN'

Wintery Weather has started. Agudas Achim provides a way to walk in a safe indoors space, on hard surfaces and/or carpeting, with friends or alone, in any weather.

The Synagogue is available 11:00a.m. - 1:00p.m. on Tues. and Thurs. when the office is open, for Walk-In Walkin' with comfortable seating if you want to rest or decompress, too. Use it as quiet "me time," or arrange to meet your friends for a bit of exercise and a schmooze.

Try it, you may like it.



## Synagogue Seniors December 2025



## SYNAGOGUE SENIORS

Please mark your calendars to attend the next Synagogue Seniors Brunch on Thursday, January 15 when Devon Terrill, an Emmy-nominated documentary film producer and senior program officer for [journalism and media](#) at the Stanley Center for Peace and Security in Muscatine will present about her work. [Click here to learn more](#) about Devon and the Stanley Center. If you are not on the Synagogue Seniors email list but would like to be, please email [janezukin@gmail.com](mailto:janezukin@gmail.com).

## NOVEMBER ONEG HOSTS

Thank you to December's oneg hosts:

**Steven Gross**

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

## DECEMBER BOARD MINUTES

[Click here](#) for December board minutes.

## BUDDY SYSTEM

Interested in having a buddy or being a buddy?

Information can be found [here](#).

## SERVICE SCHEDULE FOR 2026

[Click here for the 2026 service schedule.](#)

Trying to reach the office or someone else at the congregation?

Hannah: [office@agudasachimic.org](mailto:office@agudasachimic.org)

John: [administrator@agudasachimic.org](mailto:administrator@agudasachimic.org)

Rabbi Hugenholtz: [rabbi@agudasachimic.org](mailto:rabbi@agudasachimic.org)

Sonja: [principal@agudasachimic.org](mailto:principal@agudasachimic.org)

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

### Yiddish Study Group

Mondays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom.

### Book group

Fourth Wednesday of every month at 1:00 p.m.

### Talmud Study Group

Sundays at 9:00 a.m. on Zoom.

### Seniors Group

Third Thursday of every month at 11:00 a.m.

### Intro to Judaism Class

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m.

## JANUARY SPECIAL EVENTS

See Mahjong / Warm Up America dates elsewhere in bulletin.

Tevet Yoga	Agudas Achim	1/18	2:00 p.m.
Youngish Jewish Board Game Night	Diversions	1/21	7:00 p.m.
Membership Shabbat Service & Luncheon	Agudas Achim	1/24	9:30 a.m.
Big Ideas in Jewish Books	ICPL	1/28	6:30 p.m.
Lunch & Learn on Antisemitism	Agudas Achim	1/31	12:30 p.m.
Save The Date: Shevat Yoga	Agudas Achim	2/1	2:00 p.m.

## SHABBAT SERVICES

[Streaming link for Zoom services](#)

<b>Vayechi</b> (Genesis 32:4-36:43)	Friday, January 2	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)
	Saturday, January 3	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
<b>Shemot</b> (Genesis 37:1-40:23)	Friday, January 9	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
	Saturday, January 10	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
<b>Vaera</b> (Genesis 41:1-44:17)	Friday, January 16	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem
	Saturday, January 17	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah
<b>Bo</b> (Genesis 44:18-47:27)	Friday, January 23	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem
	Saturday, January 24	9:30 a.m.	<b>Membership Shabbat</b> (Reform)
<b>Beshalach</b> (Genesis 44:18-47:27)	Friday, January 30	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem
	Saturday, January 31	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah

## DECEMBER DONATIONS

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

**Rody Gessner and Michelle Edwards:** In memory of Lillian Edwards

**Steven and Barcey Levy:** in memory of Ruth Levy

**Tom and Becky Gelman:** In memory of Gloria Gelman and Webster Gelman

**Scott and Julie Gasway**

**Sue Weinberg and Robert Armstrong:** in memory of Doug Armstrong

**Jonathan and Susan Simon:** in memory of Liba Goldberg, Mendel Goldberg, and Irene Simon

**First United Methodist Church**

**Richard Levine:** in memory of Bernice Levine

**David Skorton and Robin Davisson:** in memory of Pauline Skorton

**Alan Mutnick:** in memory of Benjamin Ross Mutnick- from Alan and Rachel Mutnick

**Jonathan and Pamela Sabin:** in memory of Michael Allen Sabin

**Alan & Rachel Mutnick:** in memory of Barbara Mutnick

**Leonard Sandler and Lucy David:** in memory of William M. David, Jr. from Lucy, Len, Hannah, Josie, Robyn, and Maya

### 2ND CENTURY FUND

**Linda Kerber**

**Richard Braverman**

### CEMETERY FUND

**Dorfman & Kaish Family Foundation**

**Lorraine Dorfman:** in memory of Beverly Tys-Berson

**Michael and Joanne Margolin:** in memory of Lillian Margolin

**Richard Haendel:** in memory of Goldene Haendel

**Robert and Vida Brenner:** in memory of William Brenner

### FAMILY ASSISTANCE FUND

**Robert and Vida Brenner:** in memory of M. David Allweiss

### GENERAL GIFTS

**Kathy Ormond**

**Chuck and Eliana Friedman:** wishing Karen Friedman a refuah shlema and speedy recovery

**Linda Kerber:** in memory of Pauline Kerber

**Richard and Karen Lipman:** in honor of the marriage of David Levy & Na Kamnansone

**Marcus and Joan Nashelsky:** in memory of Ellen Weinberg

**Harriet and Stephen Swartz**

**Bernard Miller and Sonja Hauter:** in memory of Ellen Weinberg

**Charles Packard and Jamie Klein-Packard**

**Julia Gelfand and David Lang:** in memory of Lawrence & Miriam Gelfand

**Emily Johnson**

**Loretta Fingert:** in memory of Bernice Corn, Henry Corn, and Benjamin Shedle

**Ruthann Medville**

**Caplan Family Foundation**

**Bob and Donna Rodnitzky:** in memory of Ann Rodnitzky

**Meg Rose**

**Lisa Heineman and Glenn Ehrstine**

**Samantha Brotman and Robert Roupail**

**Marcus and Joan Nashelsky**

**Renee Zukin**

**Alex and Eleanor Price**

**James Blum and Lori McMann:** latke party donation/sponsorship

**Aaron and Leah Lee Caplan:** latke party donation/sponsorship

**Linda Kerber:** for AV system

### HIGH HOLIDAYS FUND

**Kathleen Jacobs**

**Jeanne Cadoret:** in memory of Remi Cadoret

**Naomi Bloom and Ellen Marie Lauricella**

**Lea Haravon Collins and Steve Collins**

*(Continued on page 22)*

## DECEMBER DONATIONS *(cont.)*

*(Continued from page 21)*

### **MARCUS SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

**Mel Sunshine:** In memory of Betty Brodsky

### **REECE FLAUM TERRACE FUND**

**David and Martha Lubaroff:** in memory of Meyer Middleman

### **SIM & SARA STRAUSS MEMORIAL FUND**

**David and Penny Strauss:** In memory of Simeon Strauss

**Stephen Strauss:** in memory of Simeon Strauss, Belle Strauss, & Marjorie Osdoba

**Richard Strauss and Ellen Herman:** in memory of Belle & Simeon Strauss

### **SAFETY FUND**

**Sanctuary Church**

**Richard Levine:** in memory of Bernice Levine

### **TALMUD TORAH FUND**

**Eloise McCuskey:** in memory of Rosalie Braverman

### **TIKKUN OLAM FUND**

**Kathy Ormond:** in memory of Waverly C. Ormond

**Lea Haravon Collins and Steve Collins:** In memory of Aristide Haravon & Jacob Haravon Collins

## JANUARY YAHREZEITS

Anna Federbusch  
Anna Lea Dvoretzky

Belle Rosenbaum

Benjamin Sprince

Betty Brodsky

Betty Mangers

Celia Wolf

Charles Hecht

Charles Henry Clements

Daniel Kroloff

David Moyer

David Silversteen

Dennis Saletta

Doris Hoffman

Edie Singer

Florence Vitiello

George Elisha Hall

Gertrude M. Rosenbaum

Gloria Gelman

Hannah Pauline Scheer Berg

Irving Gussin

Isaac Strauss

Isadore Tepper

Jack Joseph Brown

James Terrell Bryant

Janet Whitebook

Joseph Greenberg

Joyce Schiller

Kenneth Allweiss

Kent Braverman

Larry Tepper

Leah Halle

Lewis Goodsell

Lillian Edwards

Louis Landweber

Marlene Garfin

Mary Jessie Clements

Max Levy

Meyer Markovitz

Miriam Gelfand

Morris L. Ziskind

Nathan David Zabner

Nathan Rodnitzky

Pauline A. Kerber

Rebecca Markovitz Posner

Roger Wetlaufer

Rose Goldman

Rose Widiss

Ruth Ginsberg

Ruth Levy

Sam Levey

Sari Goldstein

Susan Schechter

Susan Strauss

Vivian Kroloff

Waverly C. Ormond

William Chazanoff

William Simon

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

#### STAFF

Rabbi	Esther Hugenholtz	Administrative Assistant	Hannah Sandler
Administrator	John Wertz	Custodian	Amos Kiche
Principal	Sonja Spear		

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Membership	Karen Lipman	At Large 2	Chuck Friedman
Ritual	Ezra Hendelkin & Bernie Miller	At Large 3	Sue Weinberg
Adult Ed	Barney Sherman		