

# **Agudas Achim Congregation**

401 E. Oakdale Blvd., Coralville, IA 52241 Phone: 319-337-3813 www.AgudasAchimIC.org

## September 2020 / Elul 5780-Tishrei 5781

## **SCHEDULE FOR HIGH HOLIDAYS**

ual Tashlich service for					
Jal Tashlich service for					
Jal Tashlich service for					
Jal Tashlich service for					
Jal Tashlich service for					
Yom Kippur					
5:00 p.m.					
Sukkot					
n. Service					
Shemini Atzeret					
n. Service					

Note: we are deciding to make the second day of Sukkot (Sunday October 4th) and Simchat Torah (Sunday October 11th) optional. If you wish to have a Zoom service for both these festivals, please contact the office and you will be placed on a list and notified of a service, provided we have enough people for a minyan (prayer quorum). We also fully understand that congregants may wish to spend these festival days without the intrusiveness of Zoom technology.

\*Conservative/Reform hybrid led from Machzor Lev Shalem

\*\*Reform led from Machzor Mishkan haNefesh

\*\*\*Conservative led from Machzor Lev Shalem



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# FROM THE RABBI Esther Hugenholtz

High Holiday preparations certainly look a little different this year, in the age of spiking COVID-19 and in the aftermath of the Derecho storm that afflicted the Hawkeye State in early August. I am seated outdoors with my *machzorim* (High Holiday prayer books) gathered around me, jotting down notes for our Zoom services. High Holiday preparations are always a big deal for rabbis, but this year, 'mah nishtanah'—everything feels different.

There is an inevitable sadness about not gathering in-person this year. As I am celebrating our family's third year – now with green cards for all of us! – in Iowa City, this would have been our fourth High Holiday cycle in the Midwest (even though I was on parental leave last year). I cherish the moments of milling about our lovely building, aglow in the evening light, filled with people-regulars, visitors, friends, newcomers, family, out-of-townersembracing and greeting each other, wishing each other 'l'shanah tovah', a sweet and good New Year, while the *bimah* is decked in flowers and the Torah scrolls gleam white and silver in the holy ark. Few things bring a rabbi more joy than hearing people's voices blend in song, when our community becomes expansive in every possible sense of the world. We will not enjoy our 'Not Just Honey Cake' oneg, or festive dinners with extended family and friends. We will not get to relish tearing the challah after services or dipping apples in honey with members of our community. We will not have these experiences this year and it is okay to sit with the complexity of our feelings.

Loss is an integral part of the High Holidays and our liturgy. The Unetaneh Tokef acknowledges our loss and mortality. Our prayers often call on the image of a person being like grass, flowering in the morning and fading in the evening. This remarkable time of year can contain our complex feelings; it can hold our sense of loss amply and with grace. If anything, the High Holiday season gives us permission as well as instruments to process all that 5780 (or, more commonly known as 'the 2020 Bingo Card') has confronted us with. Just as there is loss, there will be consolation, hope, comfort and togetherness—even if we gather digitally. We will still gather on Zoom, with slightly amended services, and we will light up our screens with each other's faces and our voices will crackle through our home WIFI.

There are unexpected blessings to these strange pandemic Days of Awe too. We can gather digitally with friends and family, bridging geographical chasms that were impossible to bridge before. Livestreamed services level the playing field for those of us who may have mobility challenges; can bring companionship to those who are alone or lower the threshold for attending services for those who might be new to the synagogue experience. To my B-Mitzvah students, I often joke that God is our

(Continued on page 3)

#### (Continued from page 2)

WIFI and Torah is our router, and now there's more truth to that metaphor than I dared anticipate!

The High Holiday Season is also encouraging us to reframe what it means to shelter-in-place. The 27<sup>th</sup> Psalm, which we recite and study during this Season of Repentance, actually states: 'The Eternal will shelter me in God's shelter [sukkah] on an evil day, grant me the protection of God's tent, raise me high upon a rock.' (Psalm 27:5). As the weather turns; so do we—we turn inwards and outwards, we turn to our loved ones and to ourselves, to the quiet spaces in our homes and to the needs of our world, so that we may be sheltered, comforted and raised high; be lifted above the anxieties of our current age.

We can create small sanctuaries in our homes; set up spaces for contemplation where our devices rest. Light candles, set apples, honey and pomegranates on a pretty plate, side-by-side a beloved Jewish heirloom or family prayer book. Make a corner with a comfortable chair, a throw and pillows, with space for snacks and drinks. Consider wearing white for the High Holidays—just imagine seeing all our Zoom 'tiles' light up with our congregation dressed in white! Relish in the opportunity of a newfound spiritual intimacy, where Judaism is streamed into our homes; knitting our hearts together even if we are physically distanced.

I will be in the sanctuary of the synagogue, with our small High Holidays team consisting of our

President Sue Weinberg, myself and our spouses. (We have formed a temporary 'High Holiday pod' after two weeks of rigorous quarantining so that we can tend to the many logistics that the High Holidays require). I look forward to seeing all of you on-screen as I am honored to serve our community as your rabbi, yet again.

These are extraordinary circumstances, brothers and sisters. But we are an extraordinary community and we will rally and rise. My last comment is that among the sadness and yearning, the wistfulness and the new avenues of being in the world, there is something else for us to hold onto: pride. The closing of our physical doors are offering our city, our state and our country—perhaps even our world—the gift of life. With every day that our doors remain closed and our yearning grows stronger, we are fulfilling that ultimate *mitzvah* of preserving life. We are breaking the chain of viral transmission. We are assuming our human responsibility that our loving Creator has endowed us with. We are staving off this pandemic with our dedication to science, devotion to Torah and solidarity with each other. May we indeed be lifted upon the rock and be inscribed—with words more poignant and resonant than in a hundred years—in the Book of Life.

We will get through this. We will be together again. HaShanah haBa'ah b'Agudas Achim—next year at Agudas Achim. L'shanah tovah u'metukah—may 5781 be a good, sweet year of collective healing, of body and soul.

## **YIDDISH STUDY GROUP**

The Yiddish Study Group meets Mondays and Fridays at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom. Contact the office for more information.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT Sue Weinberg

Who had Derecho for their August 2020 bingo card? I am not making light of the disaster, but sometimes I either have to laugh or cry, and I am more of a laugh person. In all seriousness, I hope that everyone is safe and has minimal or no serious damage. If you need help, please, PLEASE reach out to the synagogue, we are here for you. You can contact either me or the rabbi in confidence and we will do our best to assist. BTW, how many of you had to Google Derecho? (I did!)

This year has been completely unprecedented in the scope of disasters we have faced, but we are resilient and will get through it TOGETHER. Shabbat services continue to be held virtually. Sunday school and the High Holidays will also be virtual. Many committees and individuals have been working very hard to organize High Holiday services; details will be available in our annual High Holiday information packet, which should be mailed very soon (if it has not gone out already – I have to write this column a week before the bulletin is published).

Two things of note: we will be loaning High Holiday machzorim (prayerbooks) to local residents, both members and non-members. Information on how this will work will be in the packet. If you choose to borrow books, there will also be a small gift from the synagogue; a collaboration between the Ritual, Membership, Social, and Tikun Olam committees, as well as a few individuals – thank you all! Please remember that the books are a loan that we are offering for your convenience; we cannot afford to replace all the books so if you borrow a book and don't return it you will be billed for the replacement cost. The machzorim will also be available on-line.

Also, as mentioned at the Congregational meeting, our expenses for the High Holidays will be much less than normal, so we will not be requesting High Holiday donations. Rather, we hope that you will give generously to our Safety Fund Drive. We had started looking into building upgrades BP (Before Pandemic) but they were put on hold due to the building being closed. We have now started to look at implementing some safety upgrades, both for building security, and for infection control due to Covid-19, to be completed prior to reopening. A letter explaining what has been done, what we still hope to do, and the anticipated costs has been sent out, if you did not receive it and would like a copy please contact the office. We also have an anonymous donor who has made a very generous donation to kick off our fundraising effort (THANK YOU!). Please feel free to contact either me or the safety committee if you have any questions, and again, please give as generously as you can.

The year 2020 has been a difficult one so far, and personally I can't wait until it is over! Secularly the year won't end until December 31, but as Jews we will start the New Year 5781 this month. My wish for you is that you have a happy, healthy, and sweet New Year.

In closing, I want to share something funny I saw on Facebook. I am pretty sure that absolutely NO ONE got this common job interview question right in 2015, "where do you see yourself five years from now?"!

L'shana tova tikateyvu!

#### PRAYER BOOK DISTRIBUTION

Mishkan Tefilah (Reform) and Siddur Lev Shalem (Conservative) are now available for home use while services are conducted on Zoom. You can email <u>secretary@agudasachimic.org</u> to arrange no-contact pickup at the synagogue. If you'd like them delivered, contact Jody Braverman at <u>itbraverman@yahoo.com</u> or (319) 631-0416.

## SCHOOL NEWS Sonja Spear

Good news! You can now register for Sunday School on the Agudas Achim website! Dave Middleton worked very hard to set up the website, undeterred even by a derecho. Please register through the website even if you have been sending your child to school for years. We need new information now that the school is meeting remotely.

Parents, please note: Due to a family emergency, the first day of Sunday School has been postponed until after Rosh Hashanah. We will provide more information later on.

If your kids are anything like mine, they've had their fill and more of online learning. And the school year hasn't even started yet. Sunday School does not mean more hours in front of a screen! We wanted a Sunday School curriculum that would offer students the warmth of community and the joy of hands-on learning. I am happy to say that the educators at the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland came through in record time with a curriculum created for our needs right now.

The curriculum helps students find strength and resilience in challenging times by exploring Jewish values, starting with *sukkat shalom*, the "shelter of peace." Kids eight and under will do hands-on projects that help them deepen their understanding of this concept. Older students will work on ageappropriate challenges. There are even prompt cards for family discussions, if families wish to explore their ideas together. Zoom meetings are part of the curriculum so that students can maintain their Jewish community, but the meetings are kept short.

Rabbi Hugenholtz will hold very short zoom services/sing-alongs for the Sunday School. It will be as close to Hineh Ma Tov time as we can get remotely.

We are assembling craft bags so that parents do not have to shop for supplies. (By "we" I mean myself and my daughter, working in my bedroom – the boundaries between my home and work have dissolved. Maybe you can relate?)

Expect an email soon with information about how to pick up a craft bag. Please register so that we know how many supplies to buy.

Most of all, please be safe and keep in touch. I miss seeing the kids running around the synagogue and hearing them singing in the sanctuary. I especially miss the energy of the first day of school, when all of the kids would tell me about their summer adventures. I hope that there are many wonderful summer adventures in their futures and that we are able to see each other soon.

### GIFT SHOP NEWS Joanne Margolin

Even though we don't have in-person Gift Shop shopping, I do want everyone to know that we are still able to provide you with the Judaica you need for every day, holidays, and gift giving. We can send pictures of what's in stock, and you can pick up at the synagogue or my house, depending on what it is. I have a supply of shabbat and yahrzeit candles at home, so whichever location works best for you, works! I'm also able to order things for you if we don't already have them, so keep that in mind.

It's certainly going to be a different kind of Rosh Hashanah this year! I wish everyone a Happy, HEALTHY New Year -- and may we all celebrate together again next year!

> Joanne Margolin 351-2181 or <u>irmargolin@gmail.com</u>

Streaming links for Shabbat services on Zoom: Friday Night (7:30 p.m.); Saturday Morning (9:30 a.m.)

Ki Tavo	Friday, September 4	7:30 p.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)
(Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8)	Saturday, September 5	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
Nitzavim-Vayelech	Friday, September 11	7:30 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
(Deuteronomy 29:9-31:30)	Saturday, September 12	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
Rosh Hashanah	See schedule on page 1		
Haazinu	Friday, September 25	7:30 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
(Deuteronomy 32:1-52)	Saturday, September 26	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem

## DONATIONS

#### **RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND**

Ewa Bardach & Hani Elkadi: In memory of Janusz Bardach

#### The family of Barbara Brodsky

David & Martha Lubaroff: In memory of Barbara Brodsky and Rhona FoxGene Savin & Susan Enzle: In memory of

#### BRAVERMAN TALMUD TORAH FUND Betty Myers

BUILDING FUND Marc Zwerling: In memory of Craig Zwerling

#### **CEMETERY FUND**

Muriel Savin

Lorraine Dorfman: In memory of Morris TissRichard & Goldene Haendel: In memory of Anitra HaendelAlan Saltzman: In memory of Samuel Saltzman

#### **COMMUNITY RELIEF FUND**

Shelley Engman & Annie Goslin Linda Kerber David & Martha Lubaroff

#### COMMUNITY RELIEF FUND (CONT.)

Barbara & Martin Marks: In honor of Peter Oppenheimer's birthday Nancy Sprince

#### **GENERAL FUND**

llene Gertman

#### LIBRARY FUND

Rhoda Vernon: In memory of Lillian Sterman

#### PORTMAN PROGRAM FUND

Murray & Meryl Cohen: In memory of Marilyn KrachmerMiriam Gilbert: In memory of Hilda Kessler GilbertRichard Levine: In memory of Morty Levine

#### **SIM & SARAH STRAUSS MEMORIAL FUND**

Thomas & Rhonda Van Roekel: In memory of Susan Strauss

#### SISTERHOOD MITZVAH & MEMORIAL FUND Jaime Kean: In memory of Pat Kean

## WARM UP AMERICA Connie Berman

This afternoon, David and I helped load ten afghans into the trunk of Royceann Porter's car to be taken to Cedar Rapids and distributed to people who have lost their homes from the derecho storm. What an accomplishment and relief to me to reach the right person for our helping out in this way, as facilitated by Sue Weinberg and Rabbi Hugenholtz. Sue is amazing at such practical things!

As Beth reminds us, we've been energized by twice a month zoom meetings at 11:00 am to noon on Sundays. My thanks to Nancy Goldsmith for getting this started. In the coming month we will meet on September 6 and 13. Questions may be directed to Connie Berman at (319) 338-9633.

With only two bags of blocks to sew together, both ready for designated people, my house is suddenly freed up from WUA for a moment. We had already delivered four afghans to Shelter House and five full sized and two babysized ones to DVIP (the women's shelter). And there were two that Habitat for Humanity picked up on July 15.

Earlier in the week I delivered blocks to sew together for three afghans to Ruth Baldwin,

whose house suffered more than most in the storm. She and Dick and their little dog, Nyla, seem to be all OK (as is the red bug convertible). On a personal note, David and I also delivered two ten-year-old laptops to Table to Table for their helpers; Table to Table has been actively expanding its reach from Johnson County only into Cedar Rapids, so we were particularly happy to do this with computers that no schools would take.

Be well. Be safe. Happy New Year.

Hugs from Connie and Fred George



## **AUGUST YAHRZEITS**

John Abrons Hannah Aizenberg Charles Anolik Serena Armstrong Rina Bar-Lev Jerome Baskin Rose Brady Eli Braverman Victor Brecher Pamela Breckner Leonard Brodsky Ida Canter

Iylene Caplan Stanley Corwin Ronald Farber Irving S. Gelman Louis Ginsberg Adolph Glaser Kenneth Graff Milton Klausner Sidney Lenett Jacob Louis Levin Joseph B. Levin Celia Hubelbank Levine Mortimer Levine Fannie Lewin Joseph Lewin Hyman Lupeson Robert Godin Mangers Benjamin M. Marcus Vince McFadden David Milavetz Etta Dubin Portman Frances Raskin Selma G. Rose Sylvia Roston Walter Roston Bernard Schoenberg Irene T. Sideman Miriam Silversteen Herman Snider Robert Thurston Louis J. Tunik Ida Vernon Maurice Weinstein Lillian Zwerling

## **Shabbat Prayer Books**

Need a prayer book for Shabbat services? Tikun Olam continues to provide books for Zoom services on Friday nights and Saturday mornings. Available books include Lev Shalem (Conservative), Mishkan Tefilah (Reform) and Etz Hayyim (Torah and Commentary).

## **Derecho Relief**

Tikun Olam answered the call of the Johnson County Interfaith Coalition to help Cedar Rapids after the derecho of August 10. We packed a car full of bottled water, beef jerky, candy, granola bars, crackers, salty snacks, and disposable masks and delivered everything to a distribution point at Redmond Park in Cedar Rapids.

## **Giving Blood**

Blood supplies are still low! The DeGowin Blood Center at the University of Iowa has moved its easily accessible remote blood donation center to St. Andrews Presbyterian Church (near Melrose Ave. and Camp Cardinal Blvd, just west of West High School). President Sue Weinberg donated in June and plans to donate once again next week. Josh, Molly, and Rich Lipman and Jody Braverman donated in July/August, during the blood drive sponsored by Tikun Olam. Rich Lipman says this is a new family tradition: As Levites, they consider donating blood to be the modern equivalent of administering the blood of animal sacrifices at the Temple that their ancestors performed thousands of years ago. Kol HaKavod (more honor to you), Lipman family! Tikun Olam encourages you, too, to donate.

## **Jigsaw Puzzles**

Tikun Olam is expanding its jigsaw puzzle exchange to include a lending "library" of puzzles. Martha and David Lubaroff added puzzles to the collection. Karen and Julia Charney borrowed and completed two puzzles. There are plenty of high quality, challenging puzzles available to borrow or exchange. The puzzles sit, without being touched, for several days before being picked up or delivered, lowering any potential risk of Covid-19 exposure. Contact Wendy Levy at shawnco2011@gmail.com or Jody Braverman at jtbraverman@yahoo.com or (319) 631-0416.

## High Holiday Prayer Books

Tikun Olam will assist in the no-contact distribution of High Holiday prayer books, available at the synagogue on the dates listed below. We will provide a bag including a Conservative High Holiday book and a Reform Rosh Hashanah book, covering all of this year's services. If you cannot pick up books at the synagogue on these dates, please contact Jody Braverman for options.

Sunday, September 13, from 10:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.

Monday, September 14, from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Tuesday, September 15, from 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

If you are available to help with no-contact distribution, please contact Jody Braverman.

Tikun Olam encourages members to participate in the annual food drive. This year's food bank is North Liberty Community Food Pantry. Cash or products accepted. See the flyer for details.

## **BEREAVEMENT GROUP**

The bereavement group will meet on **Wednesday, September 16** via Zoom. For more information, <u>contact Martha Lubaroff</u>.

### **SEPTEMBER 2020**

ALL SERVICES, MEETINGS, AND EVENTS WILL BE VIA ZOOM. EMAIL THE OFFICE IF YOU NEED DETAILS.								
Wed 2		Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	Wed 1	Wed 16	Bereavement Group	12:30 PM	
		Tikun Olam Committee	7:00 PM			Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	
Thurs	3	Soulful Virtual Ma'ariv	8:30 PM	1		Ritual Committee	7:30 PM	
Fri	4	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM			Thurs 17 B	Board Meeting	7:00 PM
		Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM			Soulful Virtual Ma'ariv	8:30 PM	
		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM	Fri	18	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	
Sat	5	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM			Erev Rosh Hashanah	8:00 PM	
Sun	6	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM	Sat	19	Rosh Hashanah 1st Day	9:30 AM	
		Warm-Up America	11:00 AM	1		Erev Rosh Hashanah 2nd Day	8:00 PM	
		Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	Sun	20	Rosh Hashanah 2nd Day	8:30 AM	
Mon	7	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Mon	21	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	
		Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM			Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	
Wed	9	Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	Wed	23	Free Lunch	11:30 AM	
Thurs	10	Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM			Book Group	1:00 PM	
		Soulful Virtual Ma'ariv	8:30 PM			Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	
Fri 11		Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Thurs	24	Soulful Virtual Ma'ariv	8:30 PM	
		Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM	Fri 25		Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	
		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM			Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM	
Sat	12	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM			Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM	
		Selichot Service	9:00 PM	Sat	26	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM	
Sun	13	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM	Sun	27	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM	
		Warm-Up America	11:00 AM			Kever Avot	12:00 PM	
		High Holiday Book Pick-up	10:00 AM			Kol Nidre	6:00 PM	
		hours 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.		Mon	28	Yom Kippur	9:30 AM	
		Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	1		Yizkor, Minchah, Neilah,	5:00 PM	
Mon	14	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM			Havdalah, Blowing of Shofar		
		• •	3:00 PM	Wed	30	Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	
		hours 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.				SAVE THE DATES		
		Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	PM <mark>Fri Oct 9</mark>		Erev Shemini Atzeret Service	6:30 PM	
Tues	15	hours 2:00 6:00 nm		Sat Oct	: 10	Shemini Atzeret Service	9:30 AM	
				Sun Oc	t 11	Simchat Torah Service	9:30 AM	

Jewish Federation of the Corridor has contributed \$1800 to NECHAMA – Jewish Response to Disaster. Based in Minnesota, NECHAMA (a Hebrew word meaning "to comfort") offers sustained direct services in the U.S. following natural disasters. The organization's response teams traveled to the Corridor area to provide assistance after the 2006 tornado and during the floods of 2008. Now in the aftermath of the derecho storm that has ravaged the area, a team with trucks, chainsaws, and other equipment is working in Cedar Rapids to clear debris. Jewish Federation of the Corridor is a new 501c3 nonprofit organization connecting Jewish communities across a 13-county region including Black Hawk, Dubuque, Buchanan, Delaware, Tama, Benton, Linn, Jones, Iowa, Johnson, Washington, Keokuk, and Jefferson counties. It provides programming of interest to Jewish communities, antisemitism response, and crisis response. Donations are welcome and are tax-deductible.

Connect with Jewish Federation of the Corridor via email at <u>ifciowa@gmail.com</u> or Facebook at <u>https://www.facebook.com/jfciowa</u>.

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Principal	Sonja Spear		
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