



# Agudas Achim Congregation

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

**June 2021 / Sivan–Tammuz 5781**

## FROM THE RABBI

*Esther Hugenholtz*

In Tractate Gittin 56, there is a story that reads like a political thriller. Jerusalem is under siege during the first Jewish-Roman War. The Jerusalemite community is torn apart by extremist zealots who wish to exact hard vengeance on the Roman occupier while a pragmatist young rabbi called Yochanan ben Zakkai is trying to see beyond the immediate calamity and strategize for the future. Rabbi Yochanan realizes that Jerusalem is lost and that the Temple will fall. He needs to get out and build an alternative community. Through a ruse, by hiding in a coffin, he manages to smuggle himself beyond the walls of the Holy City and then journeys to confront the Roman General Vespasian. Either through prophetic insight or political cunning, he predicts that Vespasian will become the next Emperor. When this comes to pass only moments later, the new Emperor is so impressed with the sage that he grants him three wishes. To which he replies, 'give me Yavneh and its sages.' Yavneh was a sleepy and unassuming little town in ancient Israel, but it was the seat of the embryonic Sanhedrin, the Jewish 'Supreme Court' and a center

of rabbinic learning. Yavneh became code for a new beginning after all-encompassing trauma, for a paradigm shift that will allow Judaism to rise like a Phoenix from the ashes.

We know how the story ends: Jerusalem burns, the Temple is destroyed but in the study halls of Yavneh, a new Judaism was forged to withstand the trials of the ages. It is the Judaism we still live and breathe today.

I neither have political cunning or prophetic insight (I can't imagine two worse careers for a rabbi!), but I think many of us feel in our kishkes, our gut, that we are standing at the precipice of a new beginning. Something has shifted in the wake of the pandemic. We are asking new questions and seeking deeper meaning. We have seen our moral world tilt on its axis and are wondering what is next. As we inch slowly but surely towards herd immunity through vaccination (please God!) and as the days both warm up and lengthen, a sense of

*(Continued on page 2)*

The Annual Congregational Meeting is on  
Thursday, June 17 at 7:00 p.m. [at this Zoom link](#).

Please join us to vote in our next board and hear the latest developments.

## FROM THE RABBI

### *Esther Hugenholtz (cont.)*

*(Continued from page 1)*

creative optimism is returned to us. It's time for a paradigm shift, perhaps. It is time for our 'Yavneh.'

During this beautiful month of June (bye-bye, unseasonably cold and wet weather!), we get to breathe a little deeper. We are reopening the synagogue to in-person worship and activities for June and I am personally so excited!! We will still be observing pandemic mitigation strategies like masking and distancing, but the tent in our garden is open to receive us. I can't wait to see you in-person. We will be holding a hybrid model, so that Zoom will be ongoing for those congregants who are more comfortable on Zoom are included too. Also keep your eyes peeled for some fun family and children's crafting activities in the tent. And, I would be delighted to have one-on-one rabbinic meetings in the tent. While I'm not yet working in the building, my 'commute' to the synagogue is very simple and I'd gladly saunter down the hill to meet you among our shaded canopy for one-on-one interaction. Just be in touch through email to make an appointment.

July will be a quiet month and a month of vacations and respite. Due to the quietness of the period, we will go back on Zoom for the duration of July. However, if there is a great desire to continue with outdoors activities and worship in the month of August, we will rent the tent again and make it happen.

This month is a time of transitions. America is opening up again; the vaccine is widely available (did you get your shot yet? It's a mitzvah!) The sun is shining and we feel the everyday delights of living

a little more keenly. It is also a time of change at the synagogue. President Sue Weinberg and her Board will finish their term (and there I was, luring in Sue to the Presidency with the promise 'oh, it will be easy. Nothing major will happen.'...) and a new Board will be instated. As the Rabbi and as a Jew, I am so grateful to our amazing lay leadership for shepherding the community through this bizarre and testing time. This was virgin territory for all of us and we met it with grace and grit. We learned a whole new genre of digital communication, built community in new ways and took care of each other. I am so proud that so many of us made it through without contracting the virus. Dear Board and Executive Committee: you are rock stars. Thank you for your dedicated, wise and unprecedented service.

At our Annual General Meeting on June 17th, a new Board will be voted in and they will be stepping up to the plate, clear-eyed and level-headed. We will have to build back our community in some ways; retie the ties that bind, knit our hearts together again. In other ways, we will have an impetus to innovate, be creative and think of Judaism's place in the world in whole new ways. I look forward to that journey in shared partnership and leadership.

Of course, Yochanan ben Zakkai made it out, and so have we. Our Judaism and our world is the better for it. Many uncertainties remain; we are all feeling out our individual comfort zones, best practices and future dreams. For each of us, it may be a little different; but for all of us, the hope of a new day dawns.

## WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP

The Wednesday Book Group will meet on Wednesday, June 23 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom.

## WARM UP AMERICA

### Warm Up America Welcomes You

Knitting and even crocheting have seen a resurgence during COVID. Have you wanted to start knitting or crocheting again but feared that your skills were too "rusty," or wondered what you'd make?

Do you have some left-over yarn from long-ago projects? You don't want to throw it away. Marie Kondo says that if it's not bringing you joy, then out it goes; but you don't want to waste it.

Warm Up America [WUA] can help. Its volunteers across the United States create handmade knit and crochet afghans for people who have lost their homes, fled abusive situations, or are being cared for in shelters, hospitals, or other facilities. Last year, our group distributed over 4 dozen afghans locally, including Shelter House, Domestic Violence Intervention Project, Habitat for Humanity, Ronald McDonald House, and Cedar Rapids after the derecho.

Agudas Achim's congregants, family members, friends, and people in the community knit or crochet 7" x 9" rectangles in synthetic yarn [because other fibers shrink]. Being small, the rectangles are quickly completed AND use up left-over yarn. WUA members also help people refresh their knitting and crocheting skills one-on-one, during Sunday get-togethers and beyond, and provide starter kits.

Please consider joining us in the Agudas Achim parking lot on Sunday morning, June 13 and/or June 27, between 10:30 a.m. and noon.

Too busy for a Sunday get-together? Interested, but hesitant to try knitting, crocheting, or crocheting the rectangles, or assembling afghans? You can help WUA by leaving skeins of synthetic yarn in the office. Or you can support us by making a donation to Tikun Olam and WUA, for our yarn purchases.

We thank you in advance for supporting this project benefiting our community. And we hope to see you on June 13 or June 27, 10:30 a.m.

## BLAST FROM THE PAST



See if you can guess who these photos are! The names are on the back page.



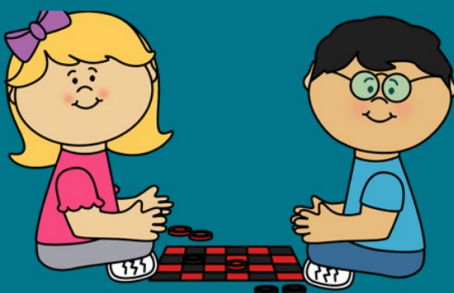


# FUN IN THE TENT!

Adults, come and schmooze while your kids play!

Tie-Dye and Sidewalk Chalk  
Monday, June 7 4:00 -5:00

Jumbo Games Day  
Sunday, June 13 3:00 - 5:00



Masks required at all events. Everything is free. Donations to offset the cost of tie-dying much appreciated.



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Sue Weinberg*

Dear all,

I write this with very mixed feelings. This will be my last President's column, as I prepare to turn the office over to Janice Weiner. I have utmost confidence that she will be a wonderful president, and I hope that you give her the same support and love that you have shown me over the last two years.

It has been an honor to have served as the President of Agudas Achim. My tenure as president has been a roller-coaster ride of ups and downs, and while it was not at all what I expected, it was fulfilling and challenging and rewarding. I have tried to do the best job I could, and I apologize if I have not lived up to your expectations. But we survived all of the challenges of the past couple of years, and I think we are stronger for it. We are just starting to come back together in person, and I look forward to seeing more of your faces in person rather than on zoom.

I have gotten to know many of you; I treasure the connections I have made and I hope to continue and expand those relationships. I want to thank my

board, as well as the appointed committee chairs. They have been fantastic and supportive and I have very much enjoyed working with them. My thanks also to the rabbi, it has been a real pleasure working with her, and to our wonderful principal and office staff who were always very supportive and helpful. And thank YOU – congregants of Agudas Achim - for your confidence and trust in me. I hope I have lived up to it.

I invite all of you to attend the Congregational meeting on June 17 at 7:00 p.m. [at this zoom link](#). You will hear reports from the various committee chairs, including Safety and Reopening, you will vote on the next board slate that Janice will present (and I hope that you support her choices), and we will say goodbye to my tenure as president and welcome Janice as the next president.

So shalom for now, dear friends, although I do hope to see many of you either on zoom or in person in my new roles as Past President for one year, then stepping back into the most important role of all, Congregant!

Sue

## JUNE YAHREZEITS

Estelle Altschul  
Norman Altschul  
Samuel Bar  
Joseph Bernstein  
Morris L. Breggin  
Maurice Broad  
Dorothy Buddelof  
Jennifer Clinton  
Ethel Eisen  
Florence Helen Gessner  
Milton Sidney Gessner  
Sarah D. Glaser

Moshe Green  
Hilda Kessler Gilbert  
Jack Klein  
Dan Kubby  
Esther Kunik  
Jared Levy  
Bessie Marcus  
Meir Markovitz  
Sebastien Isaac Picard  
Marian Prager  
Albert Abraham Pruchno  
Lauren Reece Flaum

Richard Stephen Rochman  
Bill Sackter  
Rose Dovitz Sanders  
Nina Sawyer  
Samuel Shetzer  
Bill H Shields  
Beulah Smith  
Kalman "Sunny" Sunshine  
Frances Wieseneck  
Beatrice Willner  
Sylvia Zukin

## SCHOOL NEWS

*Sonja Spear*

*Bang! Bang!* That was the sound of the balloons I used to decorate our Shavuoth celebration bursting in the wind at City Park. Usually, I hate the sound of balloons popping. I'm one of those people who doesn't even like to watch someone inflate a balloon because I'm always waiting for it to explode. (I am grateful to my husband and daughter for blowing up many, many balloons over the years, including for Shavuoth.) But, this time, instead of flinching, I felt my heart leap each time a balloon popped. It sounded like fire crackers or like the celebratory breaking of a wine glass. *Bang* sounded like a long, dark COVID winter breaking open at last.

I know that we are not out of the danger yet. I know that new surges of infections and vaccine-resistant strains of the virus may await us. But I can't help but feel hopeful about next year.

Normally, at this point, I would look back on a year of adversity, reflect on insights gained, and conclude with a hopeful message about how the things I learned last year will inform my teaching.

Many of my colleagues across the country are posting thoughts like that on social media. I am full of admiration for their ability to find and to celebrate the silver lining to every cloud. But, if I'm honest, this is what I learned from running a Sunday school on Zoom: I never want to do it again.

Instead, I would like to celebrate the value of hands-on, mentally *and* physically active, socially engaged, messy education. I am looking forward to teaching Hebrew in a way that gets the kids up and moving and to devising big projects that will make Jewish learning come alive. I am all for going back to normal. Not new normal, just normal.

We're not quite there yet. But we can get a taste of togetherness in June when the synagogue will rent a *huge* tent. With masks and hand sanitizer, the kids can do crafts and games while adults socialize around their own activities. We are still planning events, but keep an eye on your email for a schedule. Let's start the summer off with a *bang*!

## SHABBAT AND FESTIVAL SERVICE SCHEDULE (ALL SERVICES VIA ZOOM)

Streaming links for Shabbat services on Zoom: [Friday Night \(7:00 p.m.\)](#);

[Saturday Morning \(9:30 a.m.\)](#) Evening services have a schmooze prior to the service at 6:30 p.m.

<b>Shelach</b> (Numbers 13:1-15:41)	Friday, June 4	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)
	Saturday, June 5	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
<b>Korach</b> (Numbers 16:1-18:32)	Friday, June 11	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
	Saturday, June 12	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)
<b>Chukkat</b> (Numbers 19:1-22:1)	Friday, June 18	7:00 p.m.	Bar Mitzvah of Tobiah Collins
	Saturday, June 19	9:30 a.m.	Bar Mitzvah of Tobiah Collins
<b>Balak</b> (Numbers 22:2-25:9)	Friday, June 25	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
	Saturday, June 26	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)

## DONATIONS

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

**Judy & Gary Galluzzo:** In memory of  
Harry H. Dreyfuss

### GARDEN FUND

**Helen Goldstein:** In memory of Etta S. Tunik

### GENERAL FUND

**Kathleen Jacobs**

**Michael & Joanne Margolin:** In memory of  
Grace Bernstein

### SAFETY FUND

**Richard Levine:** In memory of  
Morty & Bernice Levine

### SIM & SARA STRAUSS MEMORIAL FUND

**Stephen Strauss:** In memory of Samuel Osdoba

### SISTERHOOD MITZVAH & MEMORIAL FUND

**Ray & Lindy Buch:** In memory of Sally Broad

### TIKKUN OLAM FUND

**Jody & Janie Braverman:** to support Iowa City  
Mosque after fire

**Richard & Phyllis Braverman:** In memory of  
Lee Green

**Stanley & Jane Zukin:** In memory of Beverly Klein

## YIDDISH STUDY GROUP

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

## BEREAVEMENT GROUP

The bereavement group will meet on  
Wednesday, June 16 at 12:30 p.m. via Zoom. For  
more information, [contact Martha Lubaroff](#).

## NACHAS

Stanley Perlman, professor of microbiology and immunology and Mark Stinski Chair in Virology, has been named a recipient of the 2021 University of Iowa Distinguished Chair. The award is one of the highest honors bestowed on faculty at the UI. It recognizes tenured scholars of national and international distinction who are making a significant positive impact within the university, state of Iowa and beyond through teaching, research, and/or scholarship. [Read more here](#). Congratulations!

## PASTORAL CARE

Is a loved one sick in the hospital and would your loved one or yourself like to receive pastoral care, a call or a (hospital) visit from the Rabbi and/or Caring Committee? Then please let the Office or the Rabbi know *directly*. Due to HIPPA, the hospital and its clinics will **not** release information about hospitalized congregants or congregants receiving care. Our synagogue, like all houses of worship, is reliant on family members and/or loved ones to inform us. Let us know, and we will support you!



STEVE AND LEA HARAVON COLLINS  
INVITE YOU TO SHARE OUR JOY  
WHEN OUR SON

# Tobiah

טוביה

IS CALLED TO THE TORAH  
AS A BAR MITZVAH

FRIDAY JUNE 18TH AT 7:00PM  
AND  
SATURDAY JUNE 19TH AT 9:30 AM

TOE WILL LEAD SERVICES  
OUTDOORS WITH HIS  
FAMILY IN ATTENDANCE

#### ONLINE SERVICE:

[SHABBAT SERVICES ZOOM LINK](#)

**MEETING ID:** 889 8049 8024

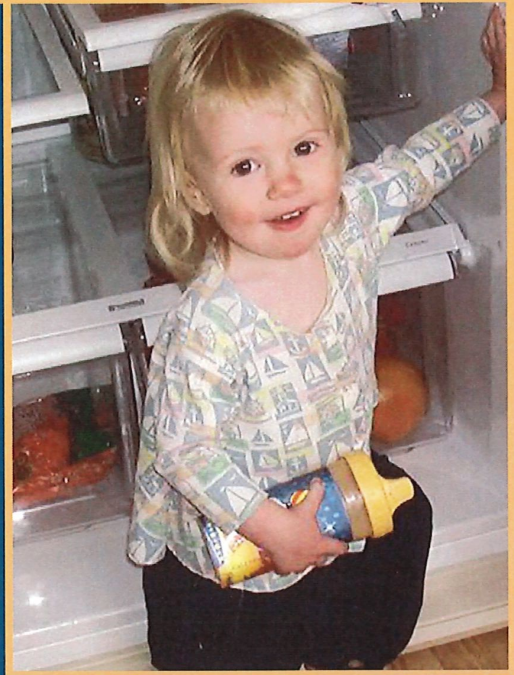
**PASSCODE:** 772022

#### TO CALL IN:

DIAL +1 312 626 6799 FROM ANY TELEPHONE.

CONSERVATIVE SIDDUR (PRAYERBOOK)– EVENING

REFORM SIDDUR (PRAYERBOOK)– MORNING





AS TOE'S BAR MITZVAH WILL BE FAR FROM THE LARGE SIMCHA THAT WE HAD INTENDED, WE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE DAY SPECIAL FOR TOE BY INVITING YOU TO JOIN US IN A "CARD SHOWER." IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO PARTICIPATE, PLEASE MAIL A CARD TO TOE, WISHING HIM WELL OR OFFERING WORDS OF LOVE, WISDOM, ENCOURAGEMENT, SUPPORT OR HUMOR. CARDS MAY BE SENT TO: TOBIAH COLLINS 24 WOODCREST LN NE IOWA CITY IA 52240. THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING JOINING US IN THIS EFFORT TO BRIGHTEN THE OCCASION FOR TOE!

WE ARE MINDFUL OF PANDEMIC MITIGATION EFFORTS AT THE SYNAGOGUE. IF IT IS YOUR USUAL CUSTOM TO ATTEND SERVICES, WE WOULD BE HONORED TO HAVE YOUR PRESENCE. IF YOU FEEL MORE COMFORTABLE ATTENDING THE SERVICE ON ZOOM, WE FULLY UNDERSTAND THIS DESIRE AND WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORT IT.

*IN COMPLIANCE WITH SYNAGOGUE REOPENING GUIDELINES, MASKS AND SOCIAL DISTANCING PROTOCOLS WILL BE OBSERVED AND NO ONEG WILL BE SERVED.*

CONTACT (319) 541-4623 OR  
LESLEA-COLLINS@OUTLOOK.COM  
FOR MORE INFORMATION

## JUNE 2021

ALL SERVICES, MEETINGS, AND EVENTS WILL BE VIA ZOOM. EMAIL THE OFFICE IF YOU NEED DETAILS.

Fri 4	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Thur 17	<b>ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING</b>		7:00 PM
	Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM				
	Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM				
Sat 5	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM	Fri 18	Yiddish Study Group		10:30 AM
Sun 6	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM		Shabbat Schmooze		6:30 PM
				<b>Tobiah Collins Bar Mitzvah</b>		
Mon 7	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Sat 19	Shabbat Evening Services		7:00 PM
	<b>Tie-Dye &amp; Sidewalk Chalk in the Tent</b>	4:00 PM		<b>Tobiah Collins Bar Mitzvah</b>		
	Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	Sun 20	Shabbat Morning Services		9:30 AM
	Intro to Judaism	7:30 PM		Talmud Study Group		9:00 AM
Thurs 10	Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM	Mon 21	Yiddish Study Group		10:30 AM
Fri 11	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM		Tea Time Check-In		4:00 PM
	Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM		Intro to Judaism		7:30 PM
	Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM	Wed 23	Free Lunch		11:30 AM
Sat 12	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM		Book Group		1:00 PM
Sun 13	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM	Fri 25	Yiddish Study Group		10:30 AM
	<b>Katie Chalstrom Talk: on Klezmer Music</b>	10:00 AM		Shabbat Schmooze		6:30 PM
	Warm-Up America	10:30 AM		Shabbat Evening Services		7:00 PM
	<b>Jumbo Games in the Tent</b>	3:00 PM	Sat 26	Shabbat Morning Services		9:30 AM
Mon 14	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM		Talmud Study Group		9:00 AM
	Tea Time Check-In	4:00 PM	Sun 27	Warm-Up America		10:30 AM
	Intro to Judaism	7:30 PM		Yiddish Study Group		10:30 AM
Wed 16	Bereavement Group	12:30 PM	Mon 28	Tea Time Check-In		4:00 PM
	Education Committee	6:00 PM		Intro to Judaism		7:30 PM
	Ritual Committee	7:30 PM				

## KATIE CHALSTROM TALK

On Sunday, June 13 at 10:00, Katie Chalstrom will give a talk on Klezmer music via Zoom. Katie is a Trumpet player and recent University of Iowa graduate who has done research on Klezmer music and on Jews in jazz.

[Zoom link](#)

(Meeting ID: 827 8440 8023; Passcode: 050527)



## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

*Jane Zukin*

The Agudas Achim Congregation Membership Committee sponsored a BYO Everything (food, drink, masks, hand sanitizer) Picnic at Northridge Park on Sunday, May 23 from 11 am to 1 pm. The weather cooperated to provide a fun space for 18 young AA member families to meet, connect, and enjoy time outdoors together while the kids played on the playground. This new group is geared towards families with children six years old and under or young families without kids. Our youngest child participant was only eight weeks old, son of new members Kate and Eric from Muscatine. We plan to visit another park next month and, in the meantime, we will set up a list to share so families can arrange play dates, help each other with resources, and just be friends. It was a lovely and "haimish" event.

## THE GIFT SHOP

I just want to remind everyone that the Gift Shop is still here to serve you in whatever way it can! Please don't hesitate to give me a call if you need something.

I've recently received these two beautiful 3-piece silk tallis sets. I'll have them at my house for a while, until we're back in full swing. I can, however, drop them off at the synagogue if anyone is interested in taking a look and it's more convenient for you than coming to my house to check them out. They're each \$95 for the set.

Enjoy coming back to life as we knew it!

Joanne Margolin  
351-2181 or [jrmargolin@gmail.com](mailto:jrmargolin@gmail.com)



## MISSING PLAQUE

We'd like to put out an APB for a missing plaque that has historical significance for Agudas Achim, and a great deal of meaning for a former synagogue couple. The plaque in question is one that was presented to Agudas Achim by the Chaus, a "boat family" whom we sponsored when they came to Iowa City in 1980, as refugees from Vietnam. The plaque, presented to the congregation when the family returned to Iowa City after 25 years, was in the upstairs social hall of the synagogue on Washington Street, and was somehow 'lost' in the move to Oakdale Boulevard. Tamara and David Schoenbaum, who were instrumental in overseeing the Chaus' support, say they recall that the plaque was "engraved on brass with an appreciative message and date." The size was a standard stationery size, eight and a half by eleven. So that's what we're looking for! If anyone might know of its whereabouts, please contact either Joanne Margolin (351-2181) or Karen or John at the synagogue (email is best).

## BLAST FROM THE PAST NAMES

The Blast from the Past pictures are Jody Braverman and Miriam Gilbert.

### STAFF

Rabbi	Esther Hugenholtz	Office Secretary	John Wertz
Administrator	Karen Brady	Custodian	Amos Kiche
Principal	Sonja Spear		

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President	Sue Weinberg	Adult Education	Daphne Lison; Bennett Brown
President Elect	Janice Weiner	Sisterhood Liaison	Nancy Sprince
Vice President	David Lubaroff	Social	<i>Vacant</i>
Past President	Kathy Jacobs	Tikun Olam	Jody Braverman
Treasurer	Mindy Russell	Ways & Means	Mindy Russell
Board Secretary	Janelle Jaskolka	Youth	Shellie Smith
Membership	Jane Zukin	At Large 1	Elliott Abrons
Ritual	Peter Rubenstein; Alan Weinstein	At Large 2	Curtis Braverman
Religious School	Chuck Friedman	At Large 3	Bob Wallace