



# Agudas Achim Congregation

401 E. Oakdale Blvd., Coralville, IA 52241

Phone: 319-337-3813

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

## September 2022 / Elul 5782-Tishrei 5783

Be sure to watch for the High Holidays mailing, with lots of information, which will go out next week.

### FROM THE RABBI

*Esther Hugenholtz*

Congregational family, you're going to be hearing a whole lot from your Rabbi in September and October, so I'm keeping this refreshingly brief. We have an awesome and information-filled High Holiday Bulletin coming out next week where I share my thoughts about this special time of year as well as information about services and different goings on for Elul and Tishrei. You will obviously be hearing from me during my sermons and teaching. This year's High Holiday theme is 'Back to Basics' where we will dig deeper into the 'classics' of 't'shuvah' (repentance/return), 't'fillah' (prayer and contemplation) and 'tzedakah' (righteous giving). The 'Back to Basics' also applies to regathering our community after two-and-a-half tumultuous years full of uncertainty, division and loneliness.

Reflecting back on times past is a well-honored Elul tradition. I can't believe my family and I relocated to the United States exactly five years ago. In so many ways, Iowa City (or Coralville, to be exact) has truly become our home. Our middle child is taking ballet lessons, our youngest was born in University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, our kids are firmly ensconced in the wonderful public school system here and we are home owners. We even adopted a sweet and feisty black cat; a pandemic acquisition! At the same time, it is strange to reflect that I have been a 'pandemic rabbi' to our congregation for just as long as a 'normal rabbi', being thrust into multiple crises at once. I never imagined I would be

preaching in favor of abortion rights on the Pentacrest (on Shabbat, no less!) as per the moral voice of our Jewish tradition, or that I would have officiated at life cycle events through Zoom and FaceTime during the deepest, darkest moments of the pandemic. Not to mention falling ill with COVID as a family over the summer.

All of these crises only affirm what I know to be true: community matters; a spiritual orientation (whether theistic or non-theistic) matters, moral character and social solidarity matter. Together, we can slay dragons—often in the most humble and unassuming way possible. My family, for instance, will forever be grateful for the generous and loving mealtrain that was set up for us when we had COVID. These moments of human connection and caring have a price beyond pearls.

As we orient ourselves towards the Yamim Nora'im, the Days of Awe, we have some great things in store for you. On Wednesday the 7<sup>th</sup> of September, at 7 pm, I will be teaching a challah-baking class, so show up with your dough and your creative spirits and let's get baking for Rosh haShanah. On Monday the 12<sup>th</sup> of September, I'll be 'double dipping' from an Adult Education perspective: from 5:30 pm, I will be co-teaching a fun Zoom class with dear colleague, Cantor Vera Broekhuysen, on Tolkien and the High Holidays. The new Amazon Prime

*(Continued on page 2)*

## FROM THE RABBI

*Esther Hugenholtz (cont.)*

'Lord of the Rings: Rings of Power' drops tonight and I can't wait finding 'Torah' in the great stories of our culture to help open our hearts. And later that evening, September 12<sup>th</sup>, at 7:30 pm, I will be teaching a Machzor class to help us find our feet these High Holidays. We might all be a little rusty, and that's okay – we will explore the main themes and structures of these special (but sometimes incomprehensible) days so that you will feel empowered by and connected to them.

All in all, good stuff. Cases are dropping, a new vaccine is here (do I need to remind you to get your booster shot? It's a Jewish value!) and soon Iowa will charm us with our beautiful Fall colors. I will never forget that first Fall when I came – the Midwest does Fall so beautifully – and I look forward to the season every year. The leaves will turn, as will our hearts, and we will do it together. Can't wait to see you in-person again in our beautiful communal home!

## A NEW PLAYGROUND

*Sue Weinberg*

The synagogue I grew up in, B'nai Jacob in Ottumwa, Iowa, is finalizing its closing. Agudas Achim and B'nai Jacob have always enjoyed a close relationship, from when Rabbi Jeff would lead a contingent to Ottumwa for a Torah service (sometimes leaving Agudas Achim without a minyan, as so many regulars would join him), to members of Agudas Achim celebrating Passover seders and Hanukkah parties with us in Ottumwa (thank you Doug and Beverly for the delicious latkes you cooked), to Rabbi Esther leading a beautiful sunset final service there with many Agudas Achim congregants in attendance.

Three of our four Torahs have been donated and we are currently looking at options to send the last Torah to Ukraine. The others were donated to Paraguay (<https://www.jta.org/2018/07/24/united-states/torah-scroll-makes-way-iowa-paraguay-telling-story-modern-judaism-way>), to Israel, where it is used at the Women's section of the Wall, and the Torah that was donated by my great-grandparents now resides at Agudas Achim, as do our memorial boards. Agudas Achim has also taken ownership of the remaining plots in the Ottumwa Jewish Cemetery, which will be sold as needed with Agudas Achim retaining the funds generated.

B'nai Jacob's final closing action is to distribute our remaining funds. It was decided several years ago that any funds remaining would be divided among the last remaining members, who would select Jewish charities to receive donations of their share. So far, sizable donations have been made to Hadassah, HIAS, and Magen David Adom.

One thing I miss from our old building was the play structure out back. The kids loved it (and I have to admit that on occasion I played on it as well). I was sad that a play structure was not able to be included in our original vision of our wonderful new building. I feel that having a play area would not only enhance the school, but might encourage more family participation at services and events. Knowing that a fence will soon be installed in the back of the property, I have donated a portion of my share, in the amount of \$20,000, to be used to purchase and install a playground structure. Hopefully, it can be installed in the spring, after the fence is erected.

I look forward to seeing Agudas Achim children playing on it, and remembering B'nai Jacob.

Shalom,  
Sue Weinberg  
On behalf of B'nai Jacob Congregation, Ottumwa IA

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

*Janice Weiner*

If the High Holidays are just around the corner, that must mean autumn is coming. I admit that I'm not ready for fall (and definitely not ready for winter), but it's not as if I have a choice so I'm looking for the positives – and it turns out there are many. As we Jews enter the month of Elul and turn to the season of reflection and repentance, I've been thinking about how our country might benefit from taking a peek at how we do leadership, community, discourse and lending a hand. I hope it's not hubris and it's not binary – it's just a gentler, multifaceted approach.

While we view our rabbi as our leader, we recognize that the rabbi is a teacher – and that lay leaders also have wisdom to impart and experiences to share. Our literature and our history are replete with discussions, arguments, and divergent viewpoints. We spin our theories and move our liturgy and teachings forward. We expand our universe. We grapple with challenges old and new – and as we talk, we arrive at fresh interpretations, often based on our lived experience.

This approach to learning – examining issues and texts from all angles, considering how they impact our times and vice versa – is refreshing. Our

polarized politics and media might benefit from taking a page from our scroll.

We benefit from our annual introspection and asking others for forgiveness, which allows us to take a deep breath, make a clean sweep and start over. We also consider how to contribute, albeit in small ways, to making the world a better place, healing it and making it more whole. Tikkun olam encapsulates how, no matter one's political views, it is possible to help repair the world. You don't have to be of a certain political mindset to donate to a food bank, crochet a blanket, make a phone call or cook a meal for others. It is a universal language of love to our community, small and large – and a statement that we care about something larger than ourselves - our community, our country, our ecosystem, our environment.

I'm grateful that we have multiple voices at the table and can have spirited arguments on meaningful issues. I'm humbled that our cycle of Torah offers us the gift of clearing out the detritus in our lives from the past year and making things good with others. And I'm mindful that each of us, young and old, can undertake worthwhile efforts to heal our world.

I look forward to seeing as many of you as are comfortable during the High Holidays.

## GIFT SHOP NEWS

*Joanne Margolin*

Rosh Hashanah is fast approaching! I will be at the synagogue at noon on the first day of Sunday School, September 11, to help you with any of your holiday prep needs. There are plenty of things to see, including the rabbi's beautiful new collection of crocheted kippot!

As part of our continuing effort to reduce our inventory, I won't be ordering any new cards, but

please take advantage of our ongoing sale, with all that we have in stock being just 10¢ each! There are plenty of other bargains as well, so stop in and see what you'd like to take home with you!

As always, if you have questions you can contact me at 319-351-2181 or [jrmargolin@gmail.com](mailto:jrmargolin@gmail.com).

# SCHOOL NEWS

*Sonja Spear*

Welcome to a new school year!

My hope (COVID willing) is that the Sunday School can return to normal activities this year without interruption.

I am very excited about this year!

Sunday School begins **September 11**. The full calendar and registration forms are available on the Agudas Achim website ([AgudasAchimIC.org](http://AgudasAchimIC.org)). Please register in advance if possible. Until we have registrations, it is difficult to plan classes.

We live in difficult times. If you need accommodation on the school fee, please talk to Karen ([Administrator@AgudasAchimIC.org](mailto:Administrator@AgudasAchimIC.org)). We never turn anyone away for financial reasons. By the same token, if you feel able to contribute a little extra, we will use that money to defray the cost for those who can pay a little less.

## **New This Year:**

We have created a *Havurah* (a group of friends) for Sunday School families, including parents, students, and younger siblings. The *Havurah* meets a few times a semester for a student-led short service and a meal. (See the [school calendar](#) for this semester's meeting dates.) In the *Havurah*, students can practice leading prayers; parents can form or deepen friendships while participating in their children's formal Jewish education.

Even though it does not meet on Sundays, the *Havurah* is an essential part of the curriculum.

## **This Year's Curriculum**

### **Hebrew/Tefilah**

We are using the Onward Hebrew (<https://www.onwardhebrew.org/>) approach to teaching *tefilah* (prayer). This approach emphasizes incorporating Jewish/Hebrew words into daily

speech, learning vocabulary through TPR (the teacher gives commands in simple Hebrew and the kids respond), and chanting prayers. In this system, students have a foundation in *tefilah* and vocabulary before they focus intensely on decoding (sounding out) words because it is both easier and educationally richer to learn to read familiar words than to struggle to sound out meaningless syllables.

In this approach, it is important to supplement classroom work with one-on-one tutoring sessions. I am happy to announce that I have found a wonderful group of volunteers willing to practice decoding with the kids. They will be visiting the school after the fall holidays, when our classes will be more Hebrew-intensive.

Every Sunday School session begins with songs (in Hebrew and English) and ends with *tefilah*. The older grades help lead the *tefilot* that they have studied.

## **Judaics**

### **Pre-K through Fifth Grade**

**Note:** Depending on how many students register, the Fifth and Sixth grades may be combined into one class.

These classes will be using different curricula from the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland. This curriculum is organized around the holidays,

but it is designed to build. Each year includes new Hebrew vocabulary, new stories from the Torah and Jewish tradition, and a different ethical focus.

### **Sixth Grade (Year Before B-Mitzvah)**

Students follow the *B'klol Lashon* ("In Every Language") curriculum, which explores Jewish life and culture in countries around the world. This emphasis on diversity opens naturally to a discussion of the diversity of Jewry in America,

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Join us for the picnic on  
September 11 at 11:30!

## SCHOOL NEWS

### *Sonja Spear (Cont.)*

including in Iowa City. We will also learn the history of Jewish dispersion and the establishment of various communities.

Professor Lisa Heineman will do a workshop in this class three times a semester to deepen their understanding of world/Jewish history.

Students will create an educational experience (for instance, a game) to teach the younger kids a little about different Jewish communities. We will also sample Jewish dishes from around the world!

#### **B-Mitzvah Year**

The rabbi teaches this course using a modified version of her Intro to Judaism class. The class will include a deep dive into the *siddur*, including its connections to rabbinical Judaism the broad narrative sweep of the Torah. The class will spend a large part of the day fine tuning *tefilah* in preparation for B-Mitzvah.

In addition, Alicia Maxwell will teach a workshop on chanting Torah and Haftarah.

#### **Specials**

Dr. Emily Schoerning will be teaching a workshop on Judaism and environmental resiliency. **Students who recently celebrated B-Mitzvah** are invited to join the B-Mitzvah class for this workshop. The whole school will also participate at certain points.

The class will draw up a resiliency plan for the synagogue and synagogue grounds to see us through the next twenty years.

#### **Meet the Teachers**

**Hannah Sandler:** Hannah, who grew up in the congregation, has extensive experience working with young children and running a daycare.

**Hersh Rephun:** Hersh, who has a deep knowledge of Judaism, is also a gifted comedian and performer.

**Shellie Smith:** Shellie is deeply engaged in the Agudas Achim community and has years of experience working with kids.

**Mallory Hellman:** Mallory is director of the Iowa Youth Writing Project, which gives her tremendous experience engaging kids and getting them to express themselves.

**Wendy Levy:** Wendy has been working at the school longer than I have, so she needs no introduction. She will bring her bottomless kindness and good cheer to helping the younger kids.

**Logan Jaskolka:** Logan, who became B-Mitzvah in this congregation, is a talented high school student. He will assist in the classrooms, especially in Hebrew/*tefilah*.

**Ari Collins:** Ari, who became B-Mitzvah in this congregation, is a talented high school student. He will assist in the classrooms, especially in organizing activities and helping the kids focus.

I could not ask to work with better people!

All the teachers and I look forward to meeting the kids on Sunday, September 11.

## EARLY KEYBOARD SOCIETY CONCERT

Save the date: An Early Keyboard Society concert will be held at Agudas Achim on Sunday, October 16 at 4:00 p.m. Jory Vinikour, harpsichordist, will be the featured artist.



## EMBODYING ELUL: PSALM 27 AS YOGA PRACTICE

Psalm 27 is traditionally read each day during Elul, the Jewish lunar month preceding the High Holy Days. Join Yoga teacher and cantorial soloist Lea Haravon Collins as we engage in this ancient tradition with a new twist (literally!). In this five-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.

**Dates: Consecutive Sundays August 21 - September 18, from 2:00-3:00 p.m.**

**Location: Agudas Achim Congregation**

Bring: Yoga mat, large towel or blanket. A notebook for journaling is recommended but not necessary.

To register: [rsvp@agudasachimic.org](mailto:rsvp@agudasachimic.org)

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

## SHABBAT, SELICHOT, AND ROSH HASHANAH SERVICE SCHEDULE

[Streaming link for Zoom Shabbat services](#); [Streaming link for High Holiday services excluding Shabbat](#)

Shoftim	Friday, September 2	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)
<i>(Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9)</i>	Saturday, September 3	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
Ki Tetze	Friday, September 9	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
<i>(Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19)</i>	Saturday, September 10	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
Ki Tavo	Friday, September 16	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
<i>(Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8)</i>	Saturday, September 17	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
<b>Selichot</b>	<b>Saturday, September 17</b>	<b>8:30 p.m.</b>	
Nitzavim	Friday, September 23	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
<i>(Deuteronomy 29:9-30:20)</i>	Saturday, September 24	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
<b>RH First Night</b>	<b>Sunday, September 25</b>	<b>8:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Machzor Lev Shalem</b>
<b>RH First Day</b>	<b>Monday, September 26</b>	<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Machzor Mishkan HaNefesh</b>
<b>Tashlich</b>	<b>Monday, September 26</b>	<b>3:00 p.m.</b>	
<b>RH Second Night</b>	<b>Monday, September 26</b>	<b>8:00 p.m.</b>	<b>Machzor Lev Shalem</b>
<b>RH Second Day</b>	<b>Tuesday, September 27</b>	<b>8:30 a.m.</b>	<b>Machzor Lev Shalem</b>
Vayelech	Friday, September 30	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem
<i>(Deuteronomy 31:1-30)</i>	Saturday, October 1	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah

## SEPTEMBER ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING

### Challah Baking Group

Wednesday, September 7, 7:00 p.m.

[rsvp@agudasachim.org](mailto:rsvp@agudasachim.org)

In-person only, at the synagogue.

Challah Baking Group: Want to learn how to make challah for Rosh haShanah or even just Shabbat? Or, want to showcase your tried-and-true family recipe? Come bake challah with the Rabbi and friends at the synagogue kitchen. Use your favorite recipe, bring your dough and we will shape and bake the challah which you can take home to freeze. Some basic challah dough will be provided by the Rabbi, but please RSVP at the link below in order to plan for supplies.

### The Torah of Tolkien

The Torah of Tolkien: The Return of HaMelech

Lessons for the High Holy Days

Monday, September 12, 5:30 p.m.

Zoom only

[Register here](#)

[Facebook Event Page](#)

Let's prepare together for the Days of Awe and the Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power series! We'll explore Tolkien's theology, the ethical and narrative themes that LOTR and the machzor share,

and the role of t'shuvah in Tolkien's life and works. All are welcome! Join Cantor Vera Broekhuysen and Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz and learn what the World of the Lord of the Rings can teach us about the values of the High Holidays.

### Make the Machzor Your Own: High Holiday liturgy practicum

Monday September 12, 7:30 p.m.

In-person only, at the synagogue.

In this session, open to both Introduction to Judaism students and the wider synagogue community, we will familiarize ourselves with the Machzor (High Holiday prayer book), unlock its mysteries and explore its meanings so that we can feel prepared and empowered going into this special season.

### Rosh HaShanah First Evening Drinks Reception

A celebratory drinks reception will be held between 7:30 and 8:00 p.m. on the first evening of Rosh HaShanah (Sunday, September 25) on the synagogue patio, under the tent. People may unmask if they feel comfortable doing so.

## WARM UP AMERICA

Warm Up America is an outreach of Agudas Achim. We will be meeting, masked and vaccinated, on Sunday, Sept. 11 in the social hall. Please join us for a schmooze as we work to provide afghans for those in need of some added emotional or physical warmth.

We wish everyone L'Shana Tova. We hope that you'll be able to visit us as we meet on alternate Sundays in 5783. We also invite you to contribute synthetic yarn for our afghans and/or to offer your knitting, crocheting, crohooking, or sewing-with-yarn skills. Our contact information is available from the office.

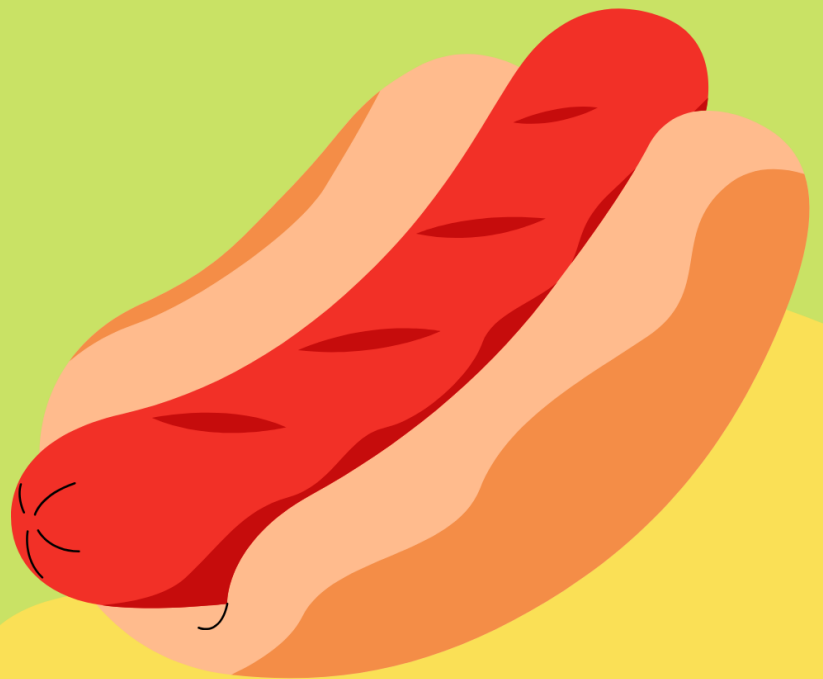


# AGUDAS ACHIM PICNIC



Meet friends! Nosh a hot dog!  
Kosher meat & vegetarian

September 11, 11:30 - 12:15  
at the synagogue





## WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP

The Book Group will meet via Zoom on Wednesday, September 28 at 1:00 p.m. [Contact the office](#) for more information.

## YIDDISH STUDY GROUP

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

## SEPTEMBER YAHRZEITS

John Abrons	Abraham Dicker	Benjamin M. Marcus
Hannah Aizenberg	Rebecca Engman	David Milavetz
Charles Anolik	Eleanor Frank	Etta Dubin Portman
Serena Armstrong	Douglas Ginsberg	Selma G. Rose
Rina Bar-Lev	Louis Ginsberg	Sylvia Roston
Janusz Bardach	Kenneth Graff	Walter Roston
Jerome Baskin	Donald Herbach	Irene T. Sideman
Mary "Vera" Boyers	Dorothy Haber Kaufman	Miriam Silversteen
Rose Brady	Pat Kean	Robert Thurston
Eli Braverman	Milton Klausner	Louis J. Tunik
Victor Brecher	Marilyn Krachmer	Ida Vernon
Pamela Breckner	Robert Kubby	Murray Weiner
Leonard Brodsky	Jacob Louis Levin	Maurice Weinstein
Ida Canter	Joseph B. Levin	Lillian Zwerling
Iylene Caplan	Mortimer Levine	
Stanley Corwin	Fannie Lewin	

## HIGH HOLIDAYS 5783

The High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur for 2022/5783 will begin on Sunday evening, September 25. This year we will again have one service, both conservative and reform, which will be held in our sanctuary. We will be offering an option for outdoor seating on our rear patio under a large tent. We will again offer a Zoom option which will function as a livestream, and for those who are able, we are encouraging in-person attendance.

Wouldn't it be nice to be with friends and family in our synagogue after two-and one-half years of separation? Consider the comforting feeling of singing together and being embraced by many voices. We will continue to require vaccinations and we will be sending out our COVID safety protocols under separate cover.

The Erev Rosh Hashanah service will use the Lev Shalem conservative prayer book. The service on the first day of Rosh Hashanah will use the Mishkan HaNefesh reform prayer book; Lev Shalem will be used on the second day and during Yom Kippur services.

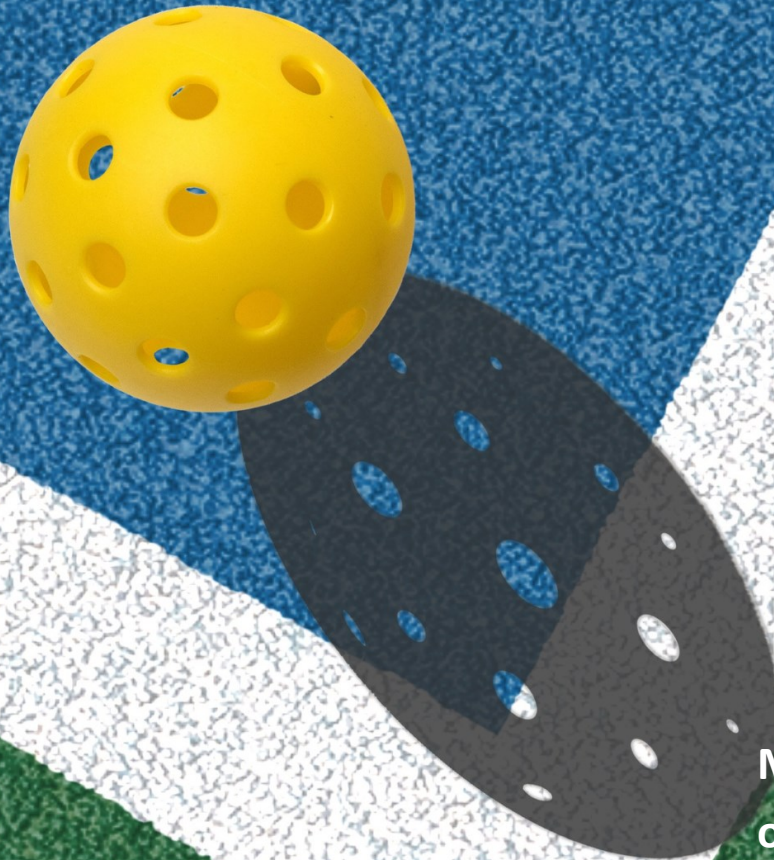
Let us perform the mitzvah of coming together to usher in the new year and the holy day 10 days later.

# Pickleball Club

**Anyone can be a kosher dill!**  
**Free lessons**

**Sundays, September 4, 11, 18**  
**9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.**

**Meet at the Coralville Rec Center**  
**West Outdoor Courts**



**More information  
on next page**

## DONATIONS

### RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

**Wendy Levy:** In appreciation of Rabbi Hugenholtz for handmade kippot

**Ellen Lewin & Lizabeth Goodman:** In memory of Joseph Lewin & Fannie Lewin

**Nathan Eugene Savin & Susan Enzle:** In memory of Muriel Savin

### CEMETERY FUND

**Lorraine Dorfman:** In memory of Morris Tiss for pavilion maintenance

**Sinaya Nadler:** In memory of David Nadler

**Alan Saltzman:** In memory of Samuel Saltzman

### GENERAL GIFTS

**Beverly Boyers:** In memory of Francis Smith and Beulah Smith

**Jeff & Sara Braverman:** In memory of Helen Dunn

**Rudolph & Gloria Galask:** In memory of Miriam Gelfand

**Kathleen Jacobs**

**Linda Kerber:** In memory of Dorothy Kaufman, Richard Caplan, Janusz Bardach

**Richard Levine:** In memory of Levine family for Yizkor-Yom Kippur

**Richard Levine:** In memory of Mortimer Levine

**Paul & Linda Muhly**

**Charles Packard**

**Betty Rosse**

### HIGH HOLIDAY/CANTOR FUND

**Betty Rosse:** In memory of Dick Caplan

### LAUREN REECE FLAUM TERRACE FUND

**Congregation B'nai Jacob:** for playground equipment

### LIBRARY FUND

**Sam & Marj Kuperman:** In memory of Burton Frank

**Rhoda Vernon:** In memory of Lillian Sterman

### LOUIS GINSBERG YOUTH FUND

**Mark & Vickie Ginsberg:** In memory of Marvin Pomerantz

**Doug & Beverly Jones:** In celebration of the birth of granddaughter Aviva Ruth Jones

### PORTMAN PROGRAM FUND

**Andreya Schneider:** in celebration of my rabbinical ordination

### SAFETY FUND

**Sanctuary Community Church**

**Mel & Diane Sunshine:** In memory of Sam Brodsky

### TIKUN OLAM FUND

**Sam & Marj Kuperman:** In memory of Eleanor Frank for Warm-Up America

## PICKLEBALL LESSONS

Learn to Play Pickleball! Free Lessons! No experience necessary – a sport for all ages. Come join us, meet new friends, and have fun playing/learning Pickleball.

**Dates: Sundays, September 4, 11, 18 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.**

**Location: Meet at the Coralville Rec Center West Outdoor Courts**

Paddles and balls provided. Bring a water bottle and interest in learning a new game. If it's sunny, wear a hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, court shoes, and comfortable clothing.

Instructors: Myra Clark, Jeffrey Aizenberg, Chuck Friedman

RSVPs/questions are encouraged to [chuck.friedman1@gmail.com](mailto:chuck.friedman1@gmail.com).

## THE SEASON OF REPENTANCE AND THE MEMORY OF THE UNIVERSE

*Bernie Miller*

As I am writing this piece, we have just come to the end of the 'Three Weeks' – the period from 17 Tammuz (the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem) to 9 Av (the destruction of the First and Second Temples) and have concluded the observance of Tisha B'Av, the saddest day in the Jewish calendar. Leaving the synagogue I attend in the Twin Cities after this observance is an eerie experience. The service concludes at around 10:30 PM and people start to file out of the building with no formal acknowledgement of each other. You walk silently in the dark with the words of Eichah (Lamentations) and the somber melody of "Ali Tzion" ("Lament, Zion") still reverberating in your ears. You get to your car and start the drive home. Many of the roads along the path to my house have few, if any, streetlights. There is a silence and a sort of desolation that is palpable. You feel alone, as if there is nothing to anchor you to anything familiar. I can't help but wonder if this is but a small fraction of what our ancestors felt when the Temple – the anchor of pre-modern Judaism – could no longer serve as a focal point in their lives. All they had besides each other and their few possessions were their thoughts and regrets. Judaism could no longer be practiced with the focus on some external entity. The people had to go deep within. They had to ask themselves the tough questions: What did we do to deserve this? Why did we not pay heed to G-d and the prophets? Is there anything we can do now to save ourselves, to save our people, to return to G-d's good graces?

Now that Tisha B'Av is past and we continue our long and impassioned three-month search within ourselves, culminating in the shofar blast which ends Yom Kippur, the questions we ask ourselves are the same eternal questions: What have we done about which we can be proud of? Was our intensity and passion driven in directions which honor G-d and our fellows? Or, conversely, did we

do and say things that brought about embarrassment, shame, disgrace, or even worse, and what can we do to atone for those words and deeds? Were we even passionate about anything at all, or did we just choose to coast thru the year? Will we stand out as a shining example of what humanity can be, or will our light fade into insignificance?

For those who feel that what we do matters little, I would point you to 2 sources. First is the Psalms:

*"He reckoned the number of the stars; to each He gave its name." (Psalms 147:4)*

We read this psalm each morning, and it serves as a reminder that it is G-d who is the author of creation, and it is He who knows all his creatures intimately.

The second example also refers to the stars, but comes from a more recent source:



This was the first publicly released image from the James Webb Space Telescope, launched in December 2021. It is a picture of countless numbers of stars and galaxies as they existed over 13 billion years ago, not long after G-d declared, "Yehi or" – "Let there be light." Without getting too deep into the technology that made this image possible, telescopes work because they can magnify

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## THE SEASON OF REPENTANCE AND THE MEMORY OF THE UNIVERSE

*Bernie Miller (cont.)*

and amplify the radiation they detect. And all objects in the universe emit radiation – ultraviolet, infrared, visible light, etc. The advanced technology that made the JWST possible can detect some of the faintest radiation from the most distant parts of the universe – almost all the way back to the beginning of time. We can actually see what these objects looked like before we as a species even existed.

As objects of the universe ourselves, we, too, emit radiation. That includes what is emitted thru the actions we take and the words we speak. They leave our planet and travel far out into the universe, just as the energy from these distant galaxies has traveled all the way to us. Nothing that has ever happened is lost to the collective consciousness of our universe. I briefly considered the possibility that, someday, a mechanism might be created which could accurately capture and describe our past words and deeds which are moving thru the vastness of creation, just as the JWST captures the physical aspects of the cosmos. It then occurred to me that such a mechanism already exists. That mechanism – is G-d.

You see, like many, the first time I saw this image, I was amazed by the technological prowess that made it possible. But some time later, I began to consider it as much more than just a study of stars and galaxies and nebulae. I looked at it and saw the Book of Life our High Holy Days liturgy speaks of. G-d opens the book and it reads itself. What we do – for good or bad – is permanently recorded in this ‘cosmic Book of Life’.

During these 3 months of introspection, we have no choice but to consider those actions which have made us less than noble human beings. There is a permanent record of them in G-d’s universe. But the power of repentance, prayer, and good deeds – as described in the Unetaneh Tokef – is also a part of our permanent cosmic record and will permanently be credited to our benefit.

As I was writing this, I had a fantasy. I dreamed of a super-sized version of this image installed in the main hallway of our synagogue – at least thru the Yamim Noraim - so that it might be the first thing people would see when they entered. Besides listing the appropriate technical acknowledgements, it would be titled, “The Memory of the Universe – The Memory of G-d”. In this fantasy, I see people contemplating this vast repository of our words and deeds and using it as a springboard for good.

The destruction of the Temple forced our ancestors to channel their energies into creating the kind of Judaism which would not only survive exile but would allow our faith to flourish throughout the centuries by way of our prayers and our good deeds. May we use our G-d - given energies for good and send a positive message thru the universe for G-d to read and acknowledge for all time.

The memory of the universe is long.

The memory of G-d is infinite.

For what will you choose to be remembered throughout eternity?

## MEETING WITH RABBI HUGENHOLTZ

[We’ve set up a Calendly link here](#) for setting up meetings automatically with Rabbi Hugenholtz. We are reserving Wednesday and Thursday from 4-6 for B-Mitzvah meetings specifically, but feel free to schedule a meeting with her if you’d like. Meetings can be via Zoom, via telephone, or in person. Note that we have reduced the rabbi’s calendly hours due to the High Holidays.

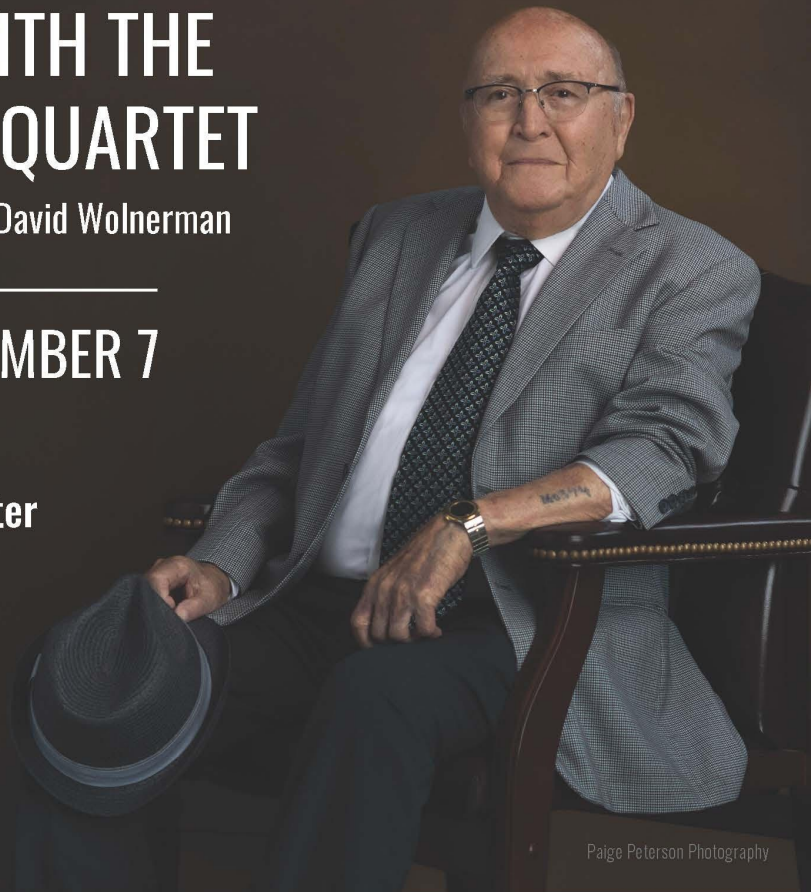
# AN EVENING WITH THE INDIANAPOLIS QUARTET

in honor of Holocaust survivor David Wolnerman

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7  
7:30 PM

**Hoyt Sherman Place Theater**  
1501 Woodland Avenue  
Des Moines, IA

**TICKETS \$25-\$40**  
[hoytsherman.org](http://hoytsherman.org)



Paige Peterson Photography

## THE INDIANAPOLIS QUARTET



Zachary DePue  
violin



Joana Genova  
violin



Michael Strauss  
viola



Ilya Finkelshteyn  
cello

### PROGRAM

SCHULHOFF: Five Pieces for String Quartet

ULLMANN: String Quartet No. 3, Op. 46

MENDELSSOHN: String Quartet No. 6 in F Minor, Op. 80

This program celebrates the timeless music that lives on despite the attempted erasure of Jewish art and culture that impacted these artist-composers and their legacy. The Indianapolis Quartet performs to honor the triumph of human spirit exhibited in the life of David Wolnerman, Iowa's only living Holocaust survivor.

**TICKETS \$25-\$40**  
[hoytsherman.org](http://hoytsherman.org)

Use QR code below



Sponsored by Iowa Retina Consultants and The Jewish Federation of Greater Des Moines

## SEPTEMBER 2022

Fri	2	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Sun	18	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM
		Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM			Sunday School	9:15 AM
		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM			Yoga Class	2:00 PM
Sat	3	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM			Dungeons & Dragons Group	3:30 PM
Sun	4	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM	Mon	19	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
		Yoga Class	2:00 PM			Tea Time Check-In	2:30 PM
		Dungeons & Dragons Group	3:30 PM	Fri	23	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
Mon	5	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM			Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM
		Tea Time Check-In	2:30 PM			Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM
Wed	7	<b>Challah Baking Class</b>	7:00 PM	Sat	24	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM
Thur	8	Executive Committee Meeting	5:30 PM	Sun	25	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM
Fri	9	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM			<b>Celebratory Reception</b>	7:30 PM
		Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM			<b>Erev Rosh Hashanah</b>	8:00 PM
		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM	Mon	26	<b>Rosh Hashanah Morning Service</b>	9:30 AM
Sat	10	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM			<b>Tashlich Service</b>	3:00 PM
Sun	11	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM			<b>Rosh Hashanah Evening Service</b>	8:00 PM
		Sunday School	9:15 AM	Tue	27	<b>Rosh Hashanah Morning Service</b>	8:30 AM
		Warm-Up America	10:30 AM	Wed	28	Free Lunch	11:30 AM
		Yoga Class	2:00 PM			Book Group	1:00 PM
		Dungeons & Dragons Group	3:30 PM	Fri	30	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
Mon	12	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM			Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM
		Tea Time Check-In	2:30 PM			Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM
		<b>Tolkien and Torah with Cantor Vera</b>	5:30 PM	<b>SAVE THE DATE!</b>			
		<b>Machzor Study</b>	7:30 PM	Sun	10/2	<b>Kevor Avot Service</b>	2:00 PM
		Intro to Judaism	7:30 PM	Tue	10/4	<b>Kol Nidre Service</b>	5:30 PM
Wed	14	Ritual Committee	7:30 PM	Wed	10/5	<b>Yom Kippur Service</b>	8:30 AM
Thur	15	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Wed	10/5	<b>Yizkor, Minchah, Neilah, Havdalah, &amp; Blowing of Shofar</b>	4:30 PM
Fri	16	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Oct 9-11	<b>Sukkot Services</b>		
		Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM	Oct 16-18	<b>Shemini Atzeret &amp; Simchat Torah Services</b>		
		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM				
Sat	17	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM				
		<b>Selichot Service</b>	8:30 PM				

**STAFF**

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

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