



Agudas Achim Congregation

401 E. Oakdale Blvd., Coralville, IA 52241

Phone: 319-337-3813

www.AgudasAchimIC.org

November 2022 / Cheshvan-Kislev 5783

FROM THE RABBI

Esther Hugenholtz

I know its way too early but I found myself recently browsing Hanukkah stuff online. The days are shortening and I don't know about you, but I'm just about ready to get real cozy.

Hanukkah in my life has undergone a curious transformation. During my blissful twenties and thirties, when the Jewish world was my proverbial kosher oyster, I would think 'oh, this is just a minor festival'. Instead, all the weight of my experience was placed on the High Holidays and Passover. High Holiday retreats; shul-hopping, long and thoughtful Elul prep. Big Seders put on without a worry and with no children underfoot. I paid less attention to a small celebration with drippy candles in December. Besides, no-one was going to buy me presents anyway!

Over the years, those sentiments have completely changed. While both heroic and questionable aspects to the Maccabean Revolt remain, Hanukkah has now become the time for my family to truly celebrate together and we go *big*. No busy High Holiday season and no last-minute kitchen scrubbing for Passover; we get to relax. I cook up latkes, make *sufganiyot* and make Hanukkah a child-centered and slightly indulgent extravaganza over which I feel zero shame or regret.

If I reflect on the reasons why Hanukkah is so popular (despite its minor status as a holiday) in the USA, of course the 'December Dilemma' comes up. Cynics might comment that it's the fierce competition with Christmas that drives Hanukkah's success, but I don't think that is the only possible answer.

Every mitzvah we perform, every part of Jewish culture we sample, enjoy and support, every Jewish movie we watch or Jewish book we read or Jewish recipe we cook adds to the continued thriving and flourishing of our people.

Despite Hanukkah's weird, eclectic origins (part revolt, part civil war, part miracle, part Talmudic reimagining), I think Hanukkah's magic lies in its synergy of Jewish pride and joy. Hanukkah is a holiday that invites us to both rally internal resources of light and an externalized confidence to share and shine that light outwards. Hanukkah is that

time of year where our candles are lit in the windows and our social media feeds light up with beautiful photos of said candles. It's a time to be unabashedly, unapologetically, proudly Jewish.

Perhaps I found myself browsing Hanukkah stuff early because we are in need of a little extra Jewish spunk and sparkle. As a community, we have closed out a wonderful and meaningful High Holiday season (*if you haven't yet filled out the High Holiday survey, please do so!*) only to be brought down back to Earth with reports of resurgent antisemitism. (You can find my sermon on the topic later in this bulletin). It's been a rough few weeks as we see the

(Continued on page 2)

FROM THE RABBI

Esther Hugenholtz (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

toxic old tropes and lies resurface. To many of us, I am sure, this feels like a strange and liminal time to be Jewish in America. On the one hand, we are and continue to be the victims of conspiratorial antisemitic thought and action. We have just crossed the four year anniversary of the Pittsburgh Synagogue massacre (I highly recommend the beautiful, poignant documentary called 'Tree of Life' on HBO Max). On the other hand, the same research data that reports that we are the religious minority most likely to be victims of bigotry, also bears out that Jews are one of the most beloved and respected minority groups in contemporary America. We are experiencing an odd kind of emotional whiplash.

No amount of words that I can put on paper could resolve those tensions or explain every phenomenon. What rabbis can do, however, is continue to encourage our people. To remind us that in the crucible of Jewish resistance, we alloy both Jewish pride and joy. In fact, *Jewish joy is an act of resistance*; as a way to fight back. We are signaling that we will not cede to those who hate us; that we will continue to shape our own agenda and build our own holy community. Every mitzvah we perform, every part of Jewish culture we

sample, enjoy and support, every Jewish movie we watch or Jewish book we read or Jewish recipe we cook adds to the continued thriving and flourishing of our people. Added to that, if we move through the world with a confidence and wholesomeness about our own Jewishness, that internal light – like the menorah in the window – will radiate outwards.

During this month of Cheshvan and as we head into Kislev, into gathering with family and friends for Thanksgiving and Hanukkah (for some of us, Christmas with family and friends too)—I encourage us to live through this time period with conscious, dedicated, abundant joy. Make your Judaism *sparkle*. Do a small Jewish kindness for yourself. Pick up a tub of hummus or a loaf of challah (I'm not going to weigh into the *makhloket*, disagreement, what is the best place to source it here in Iowa City!) Light Shabbat candles. Listen to a Jewish podcast, enjoy a Jewish craft or activity and connect with a Jewish friend. I cannot imagine a more healing response to the darkness of our times, as we also deploy other tried-and-true strategies of civic engagement, protest, legal recourse, coalition work and community building.

Go take care of that Jewish *neshamah* and make it shine. And I look forward to welcoming you at our Hanukkah party in December. Can't wait to spark more joy with you!

GIFT SHOP NEWS

Joanne Margolin

Chanukah begins now in the Gift Shop! The actual starting date is December 18, but the Chanukah items are already on display and most are on mega-sale! The dreidels and menorahs will remain at their regular price, but cards (10¢ each), decorations, novelty items, wrapping paper, and everything else Chanukah will be ridiculously low-priced. The \$12 candles are \$10, there are also \$8 boxes, and the standard boxed candles are still \$2. All jewelry is half-price. Davita Rosen has given us four of her beautiful, natural gemstone necklace and earring

sets. The stones she used include freshwater pearls, citrine, white magnesite, white topaz, raw Brazilian emerald, malachite, ruby, and black and green onyx. A further description is with each one in the jewelry case, along with her suggested retail price.

Please take a look at the case when you're in the synagogue and "cash in" on the bargains!

Joanne Margolin

jrmargolin@gmail.com or 319-351-2181

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Janice Weiner

We've just emerged from our annual cycle of renewal and repentance – what a gift to be able to step back, take a breath and work on ourselves. The only downside is that, when we emerged, the world around us was the same as when we stepped out of it – maybe worse.

To be sure, there are points of light. I just attended the annual Human Rights Awards breakfast organized by Iowa City's Human Rights Commission, and the local work of the activists honored is not only inspiring – it tells me that we have a lot of people in this community dedicated to making it even better.

How I wish that changed the fact that these days, we are facing a barrage of openly antisemitic statements and protests – in the national media, on social media, unfurled from bridges (most recently in Los Angeles). It took days and a lot of prodding for one company (with a Nazi past) to drop a sponsorship in response to a call to kill Jews. It is endemic and has become a growing part of the toxic political discourse as well.

We are, however, in excellent company. Racism, transphobia, anti-LGBTQA, anti-teacher/education, anti-women and reproductive rights, anti-science –

it's all out there and out in the open. The plus is we can see it – it's no longer hidden. The minus is ... we can see it. And we have to deal with it.

it hadn't occurred to me until recently that simply being Jewish could again turn into an act of bravery; calling out and standing up to the antisemitism even more so.

I understand the impetus to turtle – pull in, live your lives. Everyone needs to do what is right for them. Personally, I'm not into being quiet. At the same time, it hadn't occurred to me until recently that simply being Jewish could again turn into an act of bravery; calling out and standing up to the antisemitism even more so. We are barely 2% of the US

population and .2% of the world population, yet, in line with age-old antisemitic tropes, painted as the scapegoats – and we know something about scapegoats from the Torah. We're not headed for the wilderness.

My suggestion is that we just keep on being us. We should continue to build community and push out into the larger community with our values through Tikkun Olam. I've always been fascinated by the notion that each good deed, each mitzvah repairs one more chink in our battered world – creates one more sliver of light. Maybe we can take care of each other while making an extra effort to each do just one more.

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME

Daylight saving time ends at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 6.

Make sure to set your clocks back!

PIKUACH NEFESH: CPR/AED/HEIMLICH TRAINING AT AGUDAS ACHIM

Urged by the Agudas Achim Safety Committee and by Fiona Johnson, Chief of the Johnson County Ambulance Service, we have begun a series of intensive series of hands-only trainings in Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and the use of Automatic External Defibrillators (AED).

Pikuach Nefesh refers to the Halachic principle that the preservation of human life overrides virtually any other religious obligation.

- In Johnson County, approximately 35-40 people suffer an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest each year. The chances of survival decrease by 10% by every minute that passes without CPR or the use of an AED. After 9 or 10 minutes the victim is dead.
- Survival requires that oxygen is restored to the brain within less than 10 minutes. If CPR is begun even a few minutes before the First Responders summoned by 911 arrive, the chances of survival can increase from 10% to 30%; if an AED is also used chances can increase to 40%.
- In 2022 so far, the lives of at least two people in Johnson County were saved by bystanders using CPR/AED before the First Responders arrived.
- The Johnson County Ambulance Service is leading an intensive effort to increase the number of bystanders who are competent to administer CPR/AED and use the Heimlich Maneuver (for dislodging food stuck in the windpipe, so the victim can breathe).
- Our CPR/AED training is led by certified medical people in our own community.
- Our training includes hands-on practice on mannikins with sensors to allow individuals to learn appropriate strength and timing of chest compressions and to learn the steps of using the AED.
- It includes adjustments for children and infants, and instruction in the use of the Heimlich maneuver.
- It is very important to repeat CPR training every **two years**, to sustain muscle memory. The last time CPR was taught at Agudas Achim was **four years** ago.
- Johnson County Ambulance Service 911 is now connected to PULSE POINT, an app that will notify you when it gets called and you are within 2,000 feet of a victim who has collapsed. You can then run to the site and begin CPR. Remember that some CPR is better than no CPR.
- The Iowa City Noon Rotary HeartSafe campaign has been placing dozens of AEDs in kiosks throughout the county; if you are called you will get the location of the closest AED and the code to open the weatherproof kiosk.
- Please join us! The life you save may be that of your child, your parent, your neighbor, your friend.

Sign up for a training in the social hall of Agudas Achim at one of the sessions below. IF none are convenient, let us know; we can schedule more in December!

[Signup Link Here](#)

[Check out this article](#) in the Daily Iowan about the efficacy of the new PulsePoint App that was launched as part of the HeartSafe Community Campaign.

Bob Wallace, MD and Barcey Levy, MD

THE COVID-19 COLUMN

Bob Wallace, Member of the Synagogue Board

COVID-19 continues to be actively transmitted in Iowa. As of this week (reported October 26, 2022) there were about 150 persons hospitalized with the infection and about 2300 positive cultures identified. Deaths in the statue state continue to occur, although there has not been any notable number in Johnson County residents.

The new “bivalent” booster shots have been extended to a lower age; please consult your physician about receiving the COVID-19 vaccines, which are recommended by CDC, and Iowa Department of Public Health. Those who have never received the initial series of COVID-19 vaccines are recommended to get this vaccine. In fact, CDC has now placed these vaccines into the routine schedule of vaccine recommendations for adults and children.

There has been a lot of press about concerns regarding three or four respiratory viruses being transmitted simultaneously: COVID-19, influenza A, influenza B, and RSV. Right now, there is no vaccine available for RSV. It is important to receive the influenza vaccine as soon as possible. It is already widely spreading in states in the southern U.S. Again, please see your physician or local pharmacy for advice on receiving the available vaccines.

You can receive both the influenza vaccine and the bivalent COVID vaccine on the same day in different arms! So, arm yourself against these viruses, which are common causes of illness and death in the very young, immunocompromised, and the elderly. Getting the vaccines helps to protect you and everyone else.

PICTURES FROM OCTOBER 30 PIKUACH NEFESH CPR TRAINING



Barcy Levy MD and Bob Wallace,
MD, leaders of Pikuach Nefesh.



President Janice
Weiner practicing CPR

CHESHVAN YOGA

Announcing Cheshvan Yoga: From “Mar” to Marvelous! Cheshvan is considered a “mar” (bitter) month due to its dearth of Jewish holidays. Let’s sweeten the season by joining together for some Cheshvan Yoga!

In this three-week drop-in class, we will relax, refresh, and rejoice in the New Year while giving ourselves time to rest and integrate our personal experience of the High Holy Days. We will come away from each gathering with a simple movement practice that we can add to our daily

routine. Everyone is welcome. No previous Yoga experience necessary! Join us for as many sessions as you like.

Dates: Consecutive Sundays November 6-20 from 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Location: Agudas Achim Congregation

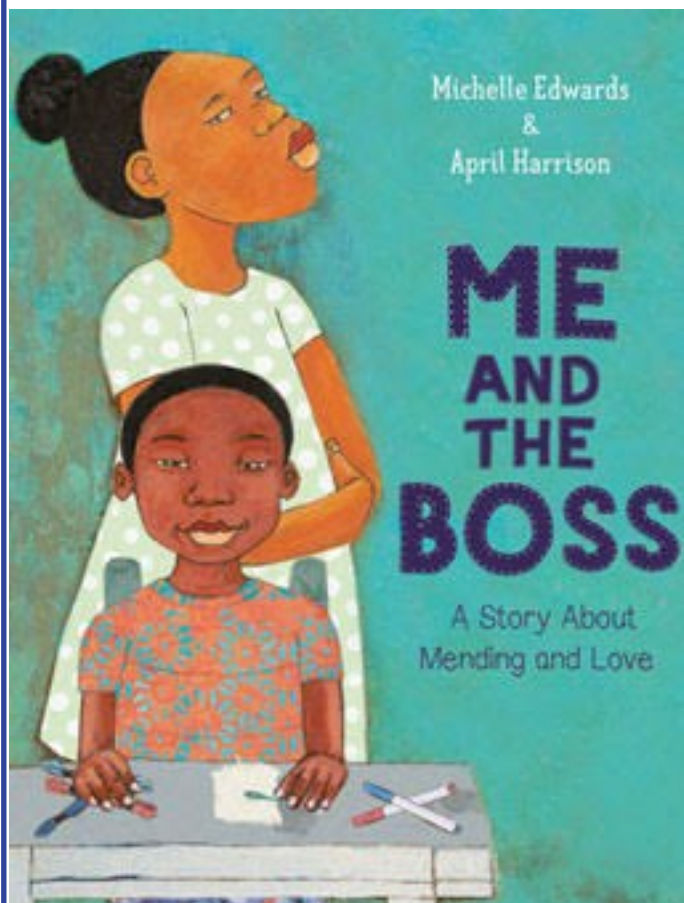
Bring: Yoga mat, large towel, or blanket (optional, but nice to have)

To register: rsvp@agudasachimic.org

For more information: leslea-collins@outlook.com

NEW MICHELLE EDWARDS BOOK

Michelle Edwards has published a new children’s book called *Me and the Boss*. Below are some scheduled readings for the book. You can find more information on Michelle’s website [here](#).



Join me in celebrating my new book!

Saturday, November 19, 1-3 p.m.

Reading, Signing, and Stitching

Home Ec Workshop

424 East Jefferson Street

Preorder your copy at 319-337-4775

Readings at 1:15 and 2:15. Home Ec will provide supplies so you and your child can make a small project inspired by the book.

Sunday, December 11, 2 p.m.

Prairie Lights Bookstore

Reading, Talk, Signing

15 South Dubuque St.

Preorder your copy at 319-337-2681

All events are free and open to the public!

SCHOOL NEWS

Sonja Spear

Simchat Torah began with pizza and toasted marshmallows. The marshmallows were the only things that were toasty, since it was a cold night. But the kids hardly noticed as they clustered around the fire, debating whether marshmallows are better burned quickly in a hot flame or roasted carefully to a golden brown over glowing embers. (Team “burn it quick” won the most votes.)

Of course, it was not all marshmallows and graham crackers. Before the sugar rush, the kids joined the rabbi on the bimah where they joined loudly (if not melodiously) in the Torah service. We have been practicing the Torah service in Sunday School since school began, so the kids were familiar with many of the prayers.

Happy events like these – marshmallows and all – do more than reward the students for their hard work. They build Jewish knowledge, Jewish commitment, and Jewish community. The kids learn from seeing their parents and other adults in the congregation that the holidays and prayers are part of adult life. The kids play with each other and form a little gang, or, more Jewishly, a little *chevra*, with other Jewish kids. They also learn Jewish values, prayers, and customs by practicing them with adults. This is how children make Jewish culture their own, by following Jewish practices in community, not by reading about Jewish customs in a book. In other words, learning in Sunday School can look a lot like play. But, of course, the students also study!

Leading up to the High Holidays, the whole school learned the story of Jonah. We re-enforced the

story by adding the song “Jonah and the Whale” by the marvelous Susan Shane-Linder to our morning rotation. Andy Frank led the whole school in a lulav-shaking workshop. The younger kids decorated the sukkah using old CDs, pie tins, waterproof paper, their own drawings, and leaves. The sukkah sparkled inside! (Well, at least until the wind knocked it over.)

The older kids joined Hillel in cleaning up the Iowa River. Then, they studied with our own Dr. Emily Schoerning in the first in a series of workshops on environmental resiliency. Among her many accomplishments, Emily is a talented Jewish educator. She connected concern for the environment with Jewish values, including respect for trees and *bal taschit* (not destroying needlessly).

The B-Mitzvah class focused more narrowly on the prayers for taking the Torah out of the Ark. We learned vocabulary and worked a little on singing with confidence.

With the High Holidays behind us, the School will pivot to more Hebrew and more *tefilah*. We will introduce or reintroduce the alphabet and practice reading. We will also have fun acting out, drawing, or chanting particular vocabulary words.

I expect the kids to make real progress in chanting prayers and decoding Hebrew. Their progress will build on a foundation of learning *tefilah* “by ear,” joining adults in saying prayers in a joyful community, maybe with some marshmallows on a stick.

WARM UP AMERICA

Warm Up America will meet three more times in 2022; November 13 & 27, and December 11, 10:30 a.m. - noon, in the social hall. We hope that you will stop to say hello and see our afghans in progress if you are in the Synagogue during these times. For more information or to donate to Warm Up America in the Tikun Olam fund, contact the Synagogue office.



HERITAGE JUDAICA

Got an Extra Kiddush Cup?

Heritage Judaica in the Twin Cities can help.

Were you given 5 kiddush cups at your Bat Mitzvah? Have four Challah boards? Eight menorahs? Did you rescue a challah cover from a thrift store or garage sale? If you have Judaica you want to pass on to someone, donate it to Heritage Judaica and they will find a home for it.

According to a 2019 article in Minneapolis Jewish Life, Heritage Judaica in St. Paul was founded by Adam Schwartz, a recipient of the Twin Cities' Federations' Young Adult Leadership Action grassroots grants, a program that provided funds to young professionals and college students looking to get Jewish programs off the ground. Adam's idea instantly filled a need. He received a steady stream of both donations and requests. Within less than a year, Heritage Judaica had given out 553 Judaica

items. One woman contacted Adam after having fled an abusive relationship. She moved her young child to safety but her family's Judaica was left behind. Through Heritage Judaica, Adam was able to fulfill the woman's one request: Shabbat candlesticks.

For more information about donating Judaica, contact Sonya Rapport at heritagejudaica.twincities@gmail.com.

If you are visiting the Twin Cities, donations are being accepted at Beth Jacob Synagogue's main entrance. They are usually open Tuesday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. but double-check before you come.

To mail donations, send packages to Beth Jacob Congregation, Attn. Sonya Rapport Heritage Judaica, 1179 Victoria Curve, St Paul, MN 55118.

NOVEMBER SERVICE SCHEDULE

[Streaming link for Zoom Shabbat services](#)

Lech Lecha	Friday, November 4	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)
<i>(Genesis 12:1-17:27)</i>	Saturday, November 5	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
Vayera	Friday, November 11	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
<i>(Genesis 18:1-22:24)</i>	Saturday, November 12	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
Chaye Sarah	Friday, November 18	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
<i>(Genesis 23:1-25:18)</i>	Saturday, November 19	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
Toledot	Friday, November 25	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
<i>(Genesis 25:19-28:9)</i>	Saturday, November 26	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem

DONATIONS

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Arthur Bonfield: In memory of Doris Bonfield

Dorothy Paul: In memory of David M. Paul

Bob & Donna Rodnitzky: In memory of Leo Pliner

GENERAL FUND

David & Constance Berman: In memory of
Robert Hoffman

Jody & Janie Braverman: In memory of
Rebekkah Richman

Joshua Hare

Kathleen Jacobs

Jeanne Jaggard: In memory of Harold Jaffe

Linda Kerber: In memory of Harry Kaufman &
Mel Marcus

Edward Krachmer

Richard Levine: In memory of Bernice &
Morty Levine

Stanley Group: In memory of Fredric Krupnick

BRAVERMAN TALMUD TORAH FUND

Barbara Levin: In memory of Adolph Glaser

CEMETERY FUND

Jack L. Snider: In memory of Herman Snider

FAMILY ASSISTANCE FUND

Helen Goldstein: In memory of Jonathan Goldstein
and Louis Tunik

HIGH HOLIDAY/CANTOR FUND

Ruth Carol

Judy Galat

Lawrence & Kathryn Horwitz

David & Martha Lubaroff

Anna Nett: In appreciation of the Agudas Achim
community

David Roston & Rita Marcus

Peter & Linda Rubenstein

Alan & Nina Weinstein: In memory of
Maurice & Bess Weinstein and Emilia Lasansky

LIBRARY FUND

Richard & Nancy Rossman: In honor of
Mira Cunning's Bat Mitzvah

PRAYERBOOK FUND

Charlotte Dvoretzky: In memory of
Edward Dvoretzky

SAFETY FUND

Sanctuary Community Church

TIKUN OLAM FUND

Linda Kerber

Mel & Diane Sunshine: In memory of
Mildred Siegel

TZEDAKAH COLLECTIVE

Anne Aguirre

Benjamin Cooper

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.

OCTOBER 2022

Wed	2	Intro to Judaism	7:30 PM	Thur	17	Board Meeting	7:00 PM
Fri	4	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Fri	18	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
		Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM			Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM
		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM			Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM
Sat	5	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM	Sat	19	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM
Sun	6	Daylight Savings Time Ends	2:00 AM	Sun	20	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM
		Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM			Pikuach Nefesh Training	1:30 PM
		Sunday School	9:15 AM			Cheshvan Yoga	2:00 PM
		Pikuach Nefesh Training	10:30 AM			Dungeons & Dragons Group	3:30 PM
		Cheshvan Yoga	2:00 PM	Mon	21	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
		Dungeons & Dragons Group	3:30 PM			Tea Time Check-In	2:30 PM
Mon	7	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM			Intro to Judaism	7:30 PM
		Tea Time Check-In	2:30 PM	Wed	23	Free Lunch	11:30 AM
		Intro to Judaism	7:30 PM				
Thur	10	Exec Meeting	5:30 PM	Thur	24	Office Closed - Happy Thanksgiving	
Fri	11	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Fri	25	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
		Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM			Shabbat Schmooze	6:30 PM
		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM			Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM
Sat	12	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM	Sat	26	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM
Sun	13	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM	Sun	27	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM
		Sunday School	9:15 AM			Warm-Up America	10:30 AM
		Warm-Up America	10:30 AM			Dungeons & Dragons Group	3:30 PM
		Pikuach Nefesh Training	1:30 PM	Mon	28	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
		Cheshvan Yoga	2:00 PM			Tea Time Check-In	2:30 PM
		Dungeons & Dragons Group	3:30 PM			Intro to Judaism	7:30 PM
Mon	14	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM				
		Tea Time Check-In	2:30 PM				
		Intro to Judaism	7:30 PM				
Wed	16	Ritual Committee	7:30 PM				

SYNAGOGUE VENMO

We Have Venmo! Donating to Agudas Achim has just become easier! We now have a Venmo account: @AgudasIC. (There are other Agudas Achims out there, so be sure to choose the one with IC at the end.) Since we are a business account, we do have a 2-3% charge on each donation in case you'd like to add a bit more. [You can donate via Venmo at this link.](#)

YIDDISH STUDY GROUP

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

WEDNESDAY BOOK GROUP

The Wednesday book group will not be meeting in November. We will resume on December 28 at 1:00 on Zoom. [Contact the office](#) for information.

SERMON PARASHAT NOACH- ON ANTISEMITISM

Esther Hugenholtz

Friends, this week marks the 4th year (secular) anniversary of the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre. I watched the newly released HBO documentary called 'Tree of Life' and it made for difficult, jarring, emotional viewing. I remember standing on this bimah four years ago like it was yesterday when Rabbi Jeff whispered into my ear that there had been a synagogue shooting. As I wrote in my journal at the time, *'it wasn't ice that shout through my arteries, but liquid fire... it felt as if my Judaism seared itself around me, filling every crack and crevice...'*

The fallout was immediate; the consequences enduring. We started locking our doors during services and the Safety Committee has diligently shepherded this community through a series of safety upgrades. The shifting landscape on antisemitism has cost us: emotionally, spiritually, financially and institutionally. I am not sure whether our American Jewish community has fully processed the implications of its resurgence.

Four years on, the memories of the eleven Jews murdered in Pittsburgh are shifting into something more eternal: memorialization. We both desire to honor their memories and to heed the warnings of this violence.

As we recall that traumatic anniversary of mass violence perpetrated against our community, we are confronted with more expressions of antisemitism.

One of the challenges of talking about antisemitism is that we are also learning to talk about it ourselves in our own communal spaces. Another challenge is that in order to identify it and combat it, we need to analyze and understand it in its many complex contexts. This also means that we may identify forces and actors that push our analysis

into the realm of the political because these things are hard to separate. As you know, I strive to be judicious in the pulpit when addressing such realities. We are called to an honest reckoning with what is happening today as well as acknowledging that any analysis is incomplete.

Let us start with the heart rather than the brain.

Contemporary antisemitism hurts us. It may hurt us as individual Jews in different ways; and affect our communities in different ways, but we sit with the hurt, anger and dismay. Fear can be a response to

antisemitism; defiance can be another. We have been through so much these last years that to be confronted with resurgent antisemitism can feel like a sucker punch. I can only speak for myself but I know the pain and anger I've been carrying in my heart.

On top of recent events in the media, this week also marks

the 4th year (secular) anniversary of the Pittsburgh synagogue massacre.

Here we are, four years later, when over this last month, several prominent and public figures have engaged in varying degrees of antisemitic rhetoric.

Let me be very clear: I do not want to single out any one person, not because individuals should not be held accountable, but because the phenomenon is, in fact, so much larger than one person. Recently, one person has been particularly reported on as a particularly egregious and baffling example of rabid antisemitism. This multitalented and contrarian musician and entrepreneur's views, actions and politics go against the grain and values of his community and has been rounded condemned by his community. He is not alone and we should emphasize the totality of the phenomenon: Neo-Nazis, white supremacists, other celebrities,

(Continued on page 12)

While the hateful mechanisms of antisemitism are unique in some ways compared to other forms of bigotry, our common cause is crystal clear.

SERMON PARASHAT NOACH- ON ANTISEMITISM

Esther Hugenholtz (cont.)

television personalities, politicians and even a former President have engaged in harmful and dangerous anti-Jewish rhetoric. The exposing light of the media does not shine equally on all cases.

I am making a conscious choice not to name names or to speculate on motives: if we step away from the personalities and look at the structures underlying them, we see some common threads. Antisemitism is a slippery social phenomenon and we in the Jewish community are not bound to find consensus on its definitions or manifestations. I, certainly am no expert on antisemitism. I am your rabbi, not a scholar of antisemitism. Yet for your rabbi not address it means to miss an opportunity to support our own community. To not address it means that we are not equipping ourselves to take back the narrative on what it means to be Jewish. Beyond legal recourse, political action and building social solidarity, we cannot control the forces that wish us ill; this is fundamentally uncomfortable. Nor should we be burdened with a toxically positive 'making lemonade out of lemons' ethos—we are entitled to our sense of loss and pain. What little we **can** control is our relationship to ourselves, our Judaism and our allies.

When Neo-Nazis hung hateful, virulently antisemitic banners over the overpass of the 405 (a highway I know rather well) in Los Angeles, the Los Angeles Black-Jewish Justice Alliance (of which many of my rabbinical school teachers and mentors are members) sprang into action. The BJJA did not spare a moment to issue their resounding condemnation as well as offer a compelling analysis between the relationship of antisemitism and white supremacy:

"We believe that what occurred on the 405 freeway... is disgusting, and is unfortunately evidence of a growing trend of overt antisemitic and racist incidents and messages taking place in Los Angeles and nationally... West has such a large platform and can influence so many people, he must be held

accountable for emboldening White Supremacy. West's recent statements are fanning the embers of hatred... reflecting a rising white nationalist sentiment across the country. His remarks display a total disregard for the safety and well-being of the Jewish Community and the African American community..."

Our diverse Jewish community may have different views on the nature and origins of antisemitism, but we can be united in our commitment to and appreciation of this kind of crucial solidarity. One of the nefarious lies of antisemitism is that it makes us feel isolated and vulnerable as Jews. It makes us feel unloved; it makes us wonder who will stand with us in our hour of need. This solidarity is not implicit, of course—it is a dynamic force that requires active cultivation, but the fruits it bears are all the sweeter for all. While the hateful mechanisms of antisemitism are unique in some ways compared to other forms of bigotry (functioning more as a conspiracy theory), our common cause is crystal clear. A local Black Pastor, the Co-President of our Johnson County Interfaith Alliance and I have touched base in the wake of this. He texted me the following and I bring you his words as a gift: *'My prayer is that the antisemitic venom being displayed doesn't resonate in our community. We must continue to stand in solidarity and fight the good fight of unity and justice.'*

The last thing to focus on is our relationship to our own Judaism. It was Representative Maxine Waters who popularized the phrase, 'I'm reclaiming my time', which was shorthand for her establishing her own healthy boundaries. Let me be absolutely clear: this is not to say that we should underestimate threats, be dismissive of our hurt or minimize anti-Jewish hatred, God forbid. On the contrary: we will continue to make our communities safer, make our social alliances stronger and help us process the emotional tax of antisemitism. Added onto that, we can focus on our

(Continued on page 13)

SERMON PARASHAT NOACH- ON ANTISEMITISM

Esther Hugenholtz (cont.)

meaningful relationships to our Jewishness and spark Jewish joy. This is not meant to sound trite; it is actually a profound act of defiance, resistance and resilience. When confronted with the indignity of anti-Jewish hatred, we reclaim the dignity of Jewish lives worth living and Jewish light worth shining.

As these recent scandals have played out in the media and ricocheted in the echo-chambers of the internet, my heart has been heavy. Yet, last night, in honor of *Parashat Noach*, I kept my family's tradition to make rainbow challah with my kids. I kneaded my stress and pain and sadness and anger into the multicolored dough, grateful for the rhythms of Shabbat and moments of tactile Jewish delight. We made batches of beautifully brightly colored challah in honor of the ancient promise that

no matter how bad things get, we will pull through. We will continue living and thriving. This deep and ancient knowing will not bring back the dead or turn back history's clock. It may not even turn hearts of stone back to repentant hearts of flesh (although it may for some; such stories exist). However, our remembering hearts know that darkness yields to light and that we are stronger and more joy-filled than we can imagine.

We will raise a chorus above the dissonant voices of hatred. After loss and trauma, we shall plant our vineyards and gaze upon the rainbow. We will honor our people and all peoples, walk in sacred memory and with uncompromising purpose.

NOVEMBER YAHREZEITS

Selma Asch
Simon Assouline
Norman Berg
Sherman Bloom
Doris Bonfield
Florence Braverman
Remi Cadoret
Rose Marie Caplan
Edward Dvoretzky
Max Dvoretzky
Ruth Prager Engleman
Mertie Ellen Evans
Stanley Flatte
Lillian Friedman
Miriam Saltzman Goichberg
Liba Goldberg
Chaim Graber
Selma Graber
Victoria Haendel

Sage Adams Hall
Alda Haravon
Andrew Hoffman
Dorothy Kanef
Richard Kerber
Joseph Kimmel
Gordon Korsmo
Ed Laquer
Emilia B. Lasansky
Abraham Levitz
Reba Magaziner
Miguel Margulis
Steve Marsden
Sol Meyer
Leon Middleman
Barbara Anne Mutnick
Jacqueline Fooshe Ormond
Harry Portman
Jacob Portman

Claire Rephun
Max Rosenbaum
David Rothstein
Mathilde Loewen Salomon
Edith Schneider
Norman Sellz
Anna Shulman
Herman Sterman
Joseph Sunshine
Bertha Tiss
Beverly Tys-Berson
David Vernon
Bernice Warren
Bess Weinstein
Al Widiss
Elsie Wingo
Bernard Zwerling



Save the Date!
Annual Agudas Achim Hanukkah Party
Sunday December 18th, 2022
Latkes, songs, candle lighting & more.
Bring a friend!

We are looking for volunteers to help prepare, cook & celebrate. If you would like to make new friends, have fun in the kitchen & lend a hand, please contact the synagogue office. Thank you!

STAFF

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

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President	Janice Weiner	Social	Kineret Zabner
President Elect	David Lubaroff	Tikun Olam	Mallory Hellman
Vice President	Janelle Jaskolka	Ways & Means	Mindy Russell
Treasurer	Mindy Russell	Youth	Curtis Braverman
Board Secretary	Chuck Friedman	At Large 1	Esther Retish
Membership	Jane Zukin	At Large 2	Bob Wallace
Ritual	Rita Marcus & David Lubaroff	At Large 3	Samantha Goldish
Adult Ed	Doug Jones		