



Agudas Achim Congregation

401 E. Oakdale Blvd., Coralville, IA 52241

Phone: 319-337-3813

www.AgudasAchimIC.org

December 2023 / Kislev-Tevet 5784

FROM THE RABBI

Esther Hugenholtz

When the night is the shortest and the moon is darkest... that is when we light Hanukkah candles. I do not think it is a coincidence that the integration of the solar and lunar cycles gives us a winter solstice festival in which we emphasize light and bring in light, close to the waning of the moon.

Light and dark, waxing and waning, feel present to us now. As our President shared his heartfelt words, we are still on our own timelines of emotional 'waxing and waning', trying to find our footing but also slowly growing in our healing and our resilience. We are no longer who we were before October 7, and it is impossible to know what lies ahead. Each of us walks a unique path. Some of us have family and friends in the region, others do not. Like the waxing and waning of the moon, our relationship to Israel, to Judaism, to each other is in flux, and often cyclical, spiralling through the key moments of our lives.

Still, we know we can always come 'home'; to our collective home of the Jewish people and our communal home here at Agudas Achim. When the Maccabees reclaimed the Temple, they too had to adjust to new realities. Temple worship had fallen out of use for two years due to the Seleucid Greeks overpowering the sacred site. The Maccabees came in, bearing palm fronds, willow branches, myrtle and citron, the symbols of a deferred Sukkot. I am trying to imagine what those ancient pilgrims must have found. The Temple, not quite destroyed, but defiled. Their world turned upside-down, their Jewishness in hiding and repressed under the autocratic rule of Antiochus Epiphanes IV. We often

look to the Maccabees as testaments of strength and victory. But they too must have had doubts; they too picked up the broken pieces of their lives as they swept the shards off the sanctuary floor. They too must have wondered: now what?

The Hanukkah miracle may not be just about Divine Intervention (or dare I say: about Divine Intervention at all). I think it is a tale about not the miracles of God but the wonders of the human spirit. Resilience. Solidarity. Justice. Vision. Moral imagination. Hope. Each of the oil lamps on that ancient candelabra can be seen to represent those values. Each of them requires the fuel generated in the human heart. We are our own miracles.

While we are a synagogue affiliated with both the Reform and Conservative movements, I will bring in the thought of the founder of a third denomination, Reconstructionism. Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan defined God as 'the power that makes for salvation.'

Orienting his theology to the human spirit and to the civilizational project of Judaism, he brought a new confidence and sensitivity rooted in humanity and humanitarianism without ever abdicating his Jewish commitments. We can absolutely do the same. In some ways, we are the ones who bring salvation, and the expansiveness and generosity of our own souls is where we encounter the Divine.

There is a lot to do for us to 'regroup' as a community in these uncertain times. But we have survived so much, and we are thriving, and we are resilient. It is up to us to find ways to have

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FROM THE RABBI

Esther Hugenholtz (cont.)

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courageous conversations, to hold space for our moral commitments, even and especially if they clash between us. We embrace the value of makhloket, sacred disagreement. The historical tale of the Hasmoneans is not necessarily a pretty one; consolidating secular and sacred power (what we would call 'separation of synagogue and state'), they became increasingly authoritarian, theocratic and corrupt. But they also laid the basic for Rabbinic Judaism; for a culture of challenge and debate, of menshlikeit (humanity) among disagreement, of holding each other close while exploring and celebrating our difference. This is the task set before us; this is the moral character we

are encouraged to refine. Like olives upon the press, difficult times can extract from us clarity and purity, allowing our flames to burn bright.

We must beware of simple narratives and relish the complexity of each other. Come celebrate with us; debate with us, daven (pray) with us, learn with us. Our Hanukkah programming is shaping up and we have a long and cozy winter ahead. We will do what Jews have always done so well: defy the darkness and dance into the light. Literally – with our live Klezmer band and our piping-hot latkes. Please volunteer, sign up, join, bring your friends, laugh, sit, schmooze, nosh—and hold each other close, like light candles in the night. The light will grow.

Chag Urim Sameach, a happy Festival of Lights.

TIKKUN OLAM COMMITTEE NEWS

Mal Hellman

Donation Drive for Houses Into Homes

This Hanukkah, the Agudas Achim Tikkun Olam committee will be collecting donations for Houses into Homes, a Coralville-based community organization that helps low-income individuals and families furnish their homes free of cost. Furniture items and home goods are delivered to each household based on needs and taste.

This season, Houses into Homes needs:

Table knives
Pots and pans
Kitchen trash cans
Lamps (table and floor)
Phillips head screwdrivers
Hangers
Toasters,
Shower curtain liners (must be new)

All items should be free of stains and odors.

Those interested in donating may drop off their donations at the Hanukkah bazaar, or, if unable to

attend the bazaar, at the Agudas Achim office between December 1 and the end of Hanukkah.

Maccabees for Mac 'n Cheese!

On **Wednesday, December 20, from roughly 10:30 a.m.—1:30 p.m.**, Agudas Achim will be sending a small contingent of volunteers to help out with the Free Lunch program in Iowa City. We could use a few more hands! Would you like to join members of the Tikkun Olam committee in serving up some hot and delicious food? If so, please email mallory-hellman@uiowa.edu for details.

Can't serve, but want to help us make a LOT of mac and cheese? Representatives from the Tikkun Olam committee will be meeting in the synagogue kitchen on **Wednesday, December 13 at 6:00 p.m.** to prepare several pans of macaroni and cheese to freeze and bring to our 12/20 Free Lunch shift. We know what you're thinking: You WILL be able to sample the mac! If you're interested, please email Sonja at principal@agudasachimic.org.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

David Lubaroff

As we approach the end of the secular year of 2023, I think back on the past 11 months and its ups and downs. I am amazed at the strength and resiliency of the Agudas Achim Congregation. All of us have experienced the good and the not so good, but we all came out the wiser and stronger. Early in the year we were still adjusting to the post-COVID world and how it has affected Agudas Achim. We have gone from many congregants attending services remotely on Zoom and low attendance at the synagogue to the reverse. The sounds of many voices davening and singing fills the sanctuary and social hall, something that was missing for three years. This has been true for Shabbat and holiday services as well as social events.

We experienced a dark time where there was unnecessary friction, but listening to our congregants at scheduled listening posts and seeking the advice of many of the synagogue's past presidents brought us back into a lighter, better time. Much of the credit for moving past the stress belongs to both the spiritual and lay leadership, working hard to communicate with one another for the good of the congregation.

The transition from the administration led by then President Janice Weiner and many of her board members to the current administration led by yours truly and the new board has been smooth and productive. Rabbi Hugenholtz has blossomed as she enjoys the sacred partnership of she and the lay leaders of the new board. The positive results of the partnership have been many, but especially evidenced by the highly successful High Holiday services. The synagogue returned to having separate conservative and reform services that accommodates our diverse membership. Attendance was up from the last few years and again we all enjoyed the sounds of many voices.

While I am on the subject of services, we are extremely blessed to have many volunteers that support our rabbi and gladly step in to help lead both holiday and Shabbat services. Without naming

individuals, I am sure many of you know the few that will occasionally lead Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services and the many that played important roles in the recent High Holiday services. We are indebted to them for their talents and availability. Our synagogue could not function without the three paid staff: our Administrator, Secretary, and Principal. They work hard to keep us going in the right direction.

We all felt so good following Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur through the early days of Sukkot. It was like a huge weight had been lifted from our shoulders and the congregation had turned the corner into a happier time at Agudas Achim. But our happiness came to an abrupt end on Simchat Torah, October 7, 2023, following the invasion of Israel by Hamas. The barbaric killing of Israelis and the capture and taking hostage of men, women, and children was like a knife slicing part of me away. My Jewish cousins thousands of miles away were under siege at an unprecedented level in the 75 years of Israel's existence. Israel struck back with brutal air and land attacks with the goal of ridding Gaza of the Hamas terrorists. These attacks have resulted in the killing many of the guilty, but also of innocent Palestinians. The events have led to the expression of differences about loss of life on both sides of the conflict. This adds to our unrest. We are also seeing an increase in antisemitism, nationally and internationally. Israel's right to defend itself resulting in the current IDF actions in Gaza has awakened both latent and active antisemitic behavior. The combination of mourning and fear has replaced our post-holiday joy with a return to stress in our congregation. Rabbi Hugenholtz has, and will continue, to reach out to congregants to let them know she is available for pastoral support now and in the future.

What of the future? What do we expect in 2024? As I, a Jew, look at the future, I pray that Israel will prevail in eliminating the Hamas organization and allow Gaza to be governed by non-militant,

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

David Lubaroff

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reasonable Palestinians. I pray for a permanent solution to the Arab-Israeli situation with proper living and governing situations for all inhabitants of Israel.

And – what of the future for Agudas Achim? As the president of the synagogue, I am optimistic that we will recover from this dark time and continue to build on our successes. We are led by a wonderful rabbi who is serving our diverse membership with class, enthusiasm, and empathy. She adheres to the traditional as well as new innovations in religious services. We are governed by a remarkable group of people on the Board of Trustees. They work so

well together and support our pledge of *respect and collaboration*. Despite the diversion caused by the Israel conflict, you can expect new and exciting spiritual, educational, and social activities in the coming months and through the years.

I am so very proud to play a small role in making Agudas Achim happy, interactive, supportive, and a home for all Jews. Our Mission Statement states that *“We are a vibrant, egalitarian, inclusive Jewish community committed to supporting your ongoing joyful journey with Judaism.”* It is a pleasure to work with Rabbi Hugenholtz, the office staff, religious school principal and our board. Please join us in moving forward.

STAFFING MERCY HOSPITAL INFORMATION DESK

In keeping with a 35+ year tradition, members of Agudas Achim will again substitute for the regular volunteers at the Mercy Hospital information desk on December 24 and 25, so that the regular volunteers can spend Christmas holiday time with their families. We need two volunteers for each of the four-hour shifts, 8:00 a.m. to noon, noon to 4:00 p.m., and 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m, each day.

Duties primarily include answering the telephone to connect callers to in-patients’ rooms and directing visitors to patient rooms or elsewhere as appropriate.

Please contact Jeanne Cadoret, jcadoret@southslope.net or 319-524-2746, to schedule your time for this much appreciated mitzvah.

NEW! ‘LIFE IS GOOD AT AGUDAS ACHIM’ SLIDESHOW

This two-minute slideshow of Life is Good at Agudas Achim features many of our families in high quality photos. It is the product of two years of work by the Membership Committee with input from Jane Zukin, Shawna Levy, Nate Mullin, Curt Braverman, Karen Lipman, Karen Charney, Dave Middleton, and Rabbi Hugenholtz. A link to it can be found on our website’s homepage. Most of the photos were found online or were taken by Dave Middleton. Click this picture to view it.

Chuck Friedman



SHABBAT SERVICES

[Streaming link for Zoom Shabbat services](#). Schedule of service affiliations [here](#).

Note: We are continuing our experiment of alternating Reform and Conservative services for the month of December. If you have feedback, please [contact the ritual committee](#).

Vayishlach (Genesis 32:4-36:43)	Friday, December 1	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem (Conservative)
	Saturday, December 2	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah (Reform)
Vayeshev (Genesis 37:1-40:23)	Friday, December 8	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
	Saturday, December 9	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
Miketz (Genesis 41:1-44:17)	Friday, December 15	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem
	Saturday, December 16	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah
Vayetze (Genesis 44:18-47:27)	Friday, December 22	7:00 p.m.	Mishkan T'filah
	Saturday, December 23	9:30 a.m.	Lev Shalem
Vayetze (Genesis 47:28-50:26)	Friday, December 29	7:00 p.m.	Lev Shalem
	Saturday, December 30	9:30 a.m.	Mishkan T'filah

DECEMBER YAHREZITS

Kenneth Allweiss	George Elisha Hall	Gladys Ehrenreich Pruchno
M. David Allweiss	Leah Halle	Ann Rodnitzky
Mildred Bar	Ilene Holbrook	Gertrude M. Rosenbaum
Deanna Boyers	Alice Thorn Laquer	Judy Rosenstein
Jesse Boyers	Ellen Leer	Michael Allen Sabin
Aaron Braverman	Sam Levey	Mel Schneider
William Brenner	Bernice Levine	Toby Schuman
Betty Brodsky	Esther Levy	Benjamin Shedle
William Chazanoff	Max Levy	Ida Simon
Bernice Corn	Pinchas Levy	Irene Simon
Henry Corn	Robert C. Levy	William Simon
Ethel Corwin	Henry Magaziner	Richard Smith
William M. David Jr.	Morris M. Marcus	Belle Strauss
Chester Jacoby Flaum	Lillian Margolin	Sim Strauss
Lawrence Gelfand	Zisi Leib Mazur	Susan Strauss
Mendel Goldberg	David Gray McClean	Esther Tsai Sugg
Sari Goldstein	Benjamin Ross Mutnick	Isadore Tepper
Barbara Goodsell	Waverly C. Ormond	Roger Wetlaufer
Lewis Goodsell	Marjorie Osdoba	Nathan David Zabner
Janet Gussin	Rebecca Markovitz Posner	

FROM THE CARING COMMITTEE

Nancy Goldsmith, Susan Lutgendorf, & Teresa Weiner

Agudas Achim's Caring Committee coordinates volunteers to support members of our congregation and community. Volunteers offer comfort, connection, and assistance through participation in Meal Trains, in-person and phone visits, providing rides, making deliveries, and other ways of reaching out to each other.

Contact us at caring@agudasachimic.org :

- May we add you to our volunteer list? Please email your contact information to us!
- Can our volunteers help you? Don't hesitate to ask— just email your request to us!

Meal Train Requests

Meal trains are a wonderful way to help those in our community who are celebrating the birth of a new baby or are recuperating from a health issue. Currently, we have two active Meal Trains; information and specific requests can be found at the links below:

Health

Martha and David Lubaroff: [Meal Train Link](#)

Martha recently fell and has some injuries that will keep her immobilized for a while. This Meal Train will help ease David's caregiving burden.

Lauren Kanner & Aaron Adler: [Meal Train Link](#)

Lauren recently had surgery and is recuperating at home. Meal deliveries would help ease some of the strain on the family.

New Babies

All the parents out there know how crazy life gets when a new baby enters the home. It's a good crazy but not having to worry about feeding the adults in the family is a huge help. Our community is blessed to have these new additions.

Josh and Teagan Nathanson: [Meal Train Link](#)

East coast boy + West coast girl = Midwest baby due in mid-December. This is their first child.

Andrea and Joe Chase: [Meal Train Link](#)

Levi Raymond Chase was born on 11/19/23 just in time to join his big sister for Thanksgiving.

Please consider helping if able. Meals don't have to be fancy or huge; not having to cook is a great gift.

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.

CHANUKAH PARTY & BAZAAR

Agudas Achim Chanukah Party December 10 (5:30-8:30 p.m.)– and Makers-and-Bakers Bazaar, December 10 (4:30-5:30 p.m.)

The annual Chanukah party and second annual “Makers-and-Bakers” bazaar will be Sunday, December 10, 2023! The Bazaar (details below!) will be from 4:30-5:30 p.m., candle lighting will begin at 5:30, followed by food around 6:00 p.m. Klezmer band Roots of Rhythm Quartet will start around 6:30 p.m. The Member cost for the Latke Dinner and Party (with side dishes, sufganiyot, and dessert) is \$20 for adults, \$10 for youth ages 13-17, and free for kids 12 and under, payable in cash, check or Venmo at the door. You may also send a check to the office or call to use a credit card. (Non-Member cost is \$5 more per person.) Financial aid is available; no one will be turned away for lack of ability to pay. **Please RSVP, ideally by December 6, [on the Google form](#)** or by calling the office. (You can register at the door, but RSVPing ahead of time will help us plan for plenty of food!) The Social Committee could still use a few volunteers to help make Latkes and help out in other ways! Sign up at [this Volunteer Sign-Up Genius link](#).

The Bazaar will feature the following “makers” from the congregation:

Rachael Hills - leaf artwork

Samantha Brotman - challah

Corvin Greene - resin jewelry, Jewish greeting cards, Judaica

Sue Weinberg - candy

Charles Packard -baked goods

Alicia Maxwell - polymer clay magnets and figurines

Rabbi Esther's kippot will also be available

The Synagogue Gift Shop will be open!

KISLEV YOGA

The Essence of Kislev:

In this three-session drop-in class, we focus on light, hope and strength as the days get shorter and we approach our festival of rededication. 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.

Remaining Date: Sunday December 3 from 2:00-3:00 p.m.

Location: Agudas Achim Congregation

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

To register: rsvp@agudasachimic.org

For more information: Leslea-collins@outlook.com



Resilience and Light: Hanukkah at Agudas Achim and beyond

Celebrate the Festival of Lights with Jewish warmth, joy and pride. **Save the dates:**

Hanukkah Story Time with Rabbi Esther at Iowa City Public Library

Thursday, December 7, 10:30 a.m.

Resilience & Light-themed contemplative service at the synagogue

Friday, December 8, 7:00 p.m.

Makers-and-Bakers Bazaar & Latke Party

Sunday, December 10

4:30 p.m. Bazaar | 5:30 p.m. Candle lighting | 6:00 p.m. Latke Party | 6:30 p.m. live Klezmer music

Pricing for Latke Party:

Members: Adults \$20, children age 13-17 \$10,
children 12 and under free.

Non-members: Adults \$25, children age 13-17 \$15,
children 12 and under free.

All-Iowa community Hanukkah Zoom event

Wednesday December 13, 6:00 p.m.

Do you want to sell items at the Crafts & Baked Goods Bazaar?

Email us at **rsvp@agudasachimic.org**

Agudas Achim Congregation and Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz wish you and your loved ones an uplifting, encouraging, and joyous Hanukkah.

GIFT SHOP NEWS

Joanne Margolin

As always, the Gift Shop is available to you whenever the Rabbi or administrative staff member is there. I'll be there on Sundays, December 3 and 10, from 10:00-12:30, and also during the Chanukah Bazaar and Party on the 10th, starting at 4:30.

There are candles, menorahs, gelt, and loads of ribbons and decorations at a ridiculously low price, as there were last year. Any remaining cards will be 10¢ each. Such a bargain!!

Please let me know soon if you'd like anything special to be ordered and I'll try to get it for you. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in the next couple of weeks!

Joanne Margolin
irmargolin@gmail.com or 319-351-2181

ONEG HOSTS NEEDED IN DECEMBER AND JANUARY!

Dear friends,

Over the last year we have enjoyed many delicious and beautiful Onegs after our Friday night Shabbat Services. THANK YOU TO all who have hosted, or are are signed up to host in the future.

We do have a few upcoming dates that do not have a host, we would love to have those dates filled. If you have never hosted, we are happy to help and answer any questions. There will also be detailed information about hosting emailed to you when you sign up.

[Sign up here](#) for these open dates in December and January:

12/15/23; 1/5/24; 1/26/24

Most dates after this are also open.

Thank you,

Sue ([email](#)) and Ari

NOVEMBER ONEG HOSTS

Thank you to November oneg hosts!!!

**Lori McMann; David & Martha Lubaroff; Lea Haravon Collins; Lisa Heineman;
Sue Weinberg & Robert Armstrong**

If you'd like to sponsor an oneg, contact the office!

SCHOOL NEWS

Sonja Spear

“Like, *Lashevet* means ‘sit!’” “Really?” “Uh-huh.”

This may not seem like an exciting dialogue to you, but I was thrilled. I looked around to see which student had confided this information to a parent, but all I saw was the synagogue door swinging shut.

I smiled all the way home.

The Sunday School calendar has been so spotty (er, I mean, *challenging*) this year that I wonder how much the kids are taking in or remembering from session to session. But every so often, the kids hand me a happy surprise, all wrapped up and tied with a ribbon.

We’ve been leaning into Hebrew and *tefilah* (prayer) a bit more, now that the High Holidays are behind us. Rachael Carlson volunteered to teach Hebrew Through Movement (including *la shevet*). The kids are eating it up. She even taught them the names of all the place settings from *kaf* (spoon) to *tzalahat* (plate) in time for Thanksgiving. (Ask your child to set the holiday table and see how many words they remember!)

The rabbi visited every classroom to teach each class a particular Shabbat prayer. We will use these prayers as a springboard into reading as soon as the students have mastered the sounds and some of the vocabulary.

Meanwhile, Hanukkah is nearly upon us – if you count by Sundays. The littlest kids learned the rules for playing dreidel and made decorations for the school Hanukkah party. Hersh’s class joined them in making decorations, but they also learned the

Hebrew for all the major colors. Hersh and Logan’s classes are both working on the Hanukkah blessings.

Meanwhile, Mal’s class has been digging deeply into the real history of the Hasmoneans and the Temple. Meyer Lehman, who volunteers in the classroom, has added richness to these discussions. The history of Hanukkah is complicated, a story of assimilation (always a bad thing?), violence, and the benefits and hazards of power. The class is happy to debate it all.

At the end of the day, Avery Lehman led the whole school in a rousing rendition of “I Had a Little Dreidel.” The kids volunteered things that dreidel might be made of (plastic! food! metal!). Avery improvised a rhyme. They couldn’t stump her!

All of that, in just two sessions. The teachers make it all possible. Every session, they approach the students with good humor and kindness. Kids learn better when they feel safe and appreciated. They also learn well when the community is involved. We have been especially lucky that Meyer and Rachael have shared their talents with the school.

I have always believed that Thanksgiving is secretly a Jewish holiday because it combines gratitude with an enormous feast, including *traditional dishes that you can’t leave off the menu, or else!* This Thanksgiving, I will give thanks for the entire community that supports the school when I *yoshevet* at the Thanksgiving *shulhan* and heap mashed potatoes on my *tzalahat*.

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 meet on December 27 at 1:00 p.m. on Zoom.

[Contact the office](#) for information.

SENIORS GROUP

The Synagogue Seniors will not be meeting in December. Join us in January when our featured speaker will be Miriam Gilbert, UI professor emerita, who will speak about how her long career teaching Shakespeare has informed her life. More details to follow.

YOUNG-ISH JEW-ISH GROUP

DECEMBER GATHERING

*Young-ish
Jew-ish Group*

DECEMBER 16 7PM

LOCATION TBD

The Young-ish Jew-ish group will have our December gathering on 12/16 at 7 p.m., location TBD. If you're 25ish-45ish we'd love to have you join us! Contact Corvin Greene (corvingreene@gmail.com) for details.

ADULT EDUCATION COMMITTEE NOTES

Lisa Heineman

What does Adult Ed have in store for December?

For starters, we're gearing up for Hanukkah!

Friday, December 1 hang around after Oneg to hear Doug Jones give a talk (and maybe a demo?) of Hanukkah games.

We're also moving forward with our plans to introduce adult learners to Torah reading and chanting. We'll hold two information/planning sessions in preparation for our launch in early 2024.

Wednesday, December 6, 6:15 p.m., and Saturday, December 16, after services

If you're interested in participating, please plan to attend one of these sessions. They'll be held in person at Agudas Achim. If you need to attend remotely, contact Lisa & we'll set up a zoom option.

(Lisa.heineman.1945@gmail.com)

HANUKKAH ITEMS

Bernie Miller and Linda Kerber donated some Hanukkah items for anyone who is in need or cannot afford supplies. Contact the office if interested.



DONATIONS

HIGH HOLIDAY FUND

Kathleen Jacobs

Richard & Karen Lipman

GENERAL FUND

Jody & Janie Braverman: In memory of Rosalie Braverman, Jean Breggin and Dana Coles

Mace & Kay Braverman: In memory of Rosalie Braverman

Mary Gangeness: In memory of Gary.Fingert

Lea Haravon Collins & Steve Collins: In memory of Alda & Aristide Haravon

Kathleen Jacobs

Jeanne Jaggard: In memory of Harold Jaffe

Linda Kerber: In memory of Richard Kerber

Hershel Rephun & Devon Terrill: In memory of Claire Rephun

David Schapira: In memory of Abraham & Gitel Dicker, Leo, Mildred & Farel Schapira

BUILDING FUND

Michael & Joanne Margolin: for AV System upgrades

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church: for November Peace Vigil

Alan Mutnick & Rachel Albrecht: In memory of Barbara Anne Mutnick

Leonard Sandler & Lucy David, and Hannah Sandler & family: In memory of William M. David Jr.

David Skorton & Robin Davisson: In memory of Pauline Skorton

SCHOOL FUND

Ruth & Douglas Nathanson: In honor of Martin Blum's Bar Mitzvah

BRAVERMAN TALMUD TORAH FUND

Eloise McCuskey: In memory of Rosalie Braverman

TIKUN OLAM FUND

Richard & Karen Lipman: for food drive

TORAH FUND

Meyer & Jen Lehman: for Torah covers

SAFETY FUND

Sanctuary Community Church

COMMUNITY RELIEF FUND

Rhoda Vernon: In memory of David Vernon

BOARD MINUTES

You can find minutes from our November board meeting [at this link.](#)

LIFE CYCLE EVENTS

The congregation extends its condolences to Sonja Spear, Steve and Hadassah Wolcott, and family on the death of Sonja's grandmother, Sonia Spear.

The congregation extends its condolences to Loretta Fingert and family on the death of Loretta's husband, Gary Fingert.

Congratulations to Andrea and Joe Chase on the birth of their son, Levi Raymond Chase.

DECEMBER 2023

Fri 1	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Fri 15	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
	Shabbat Evening Services: Israel-Gaza Sermon #1	7:00 PM		Shabbat Evening Services: Israel-Gaza Sermon #3	7:00 PM
	Doug Jones Hanukkah Talk	8:30 PM			
Sat 2	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM	Sat 16	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM
Sun 3	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM		Torah Reading Info Session	12:30 PM
	Sunday School	9:15 AM		Young-ish Jew-ish Group	7:00 PM
	Kislev Yoga	2:00 PM	Sun 17	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM
Mon 4	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Mon 18	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
	Intro Class	7:00 PM		Intro Class	7:00 PM
Wed 6	Torah Reading Info Session	6:15 PM	Wed 20	Exec Meeting	5:30 PM
	Ritual Meeting	7:30 PM		Board Meeting	7:00 PM
Thur 7	Hanukkah Storytime @ Library	10:30 AM	Fri 22	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
Fri 8	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM
	Shabbat Evening Services: Resilience & Light Theme	7:00 PM	Sat 23	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM
Sat 9	Shabbat Morning Services: Israel-Gaza Sermon #2	9:30 AM	Sun 24	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM
Sun 10	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM		Warm-Up America	10:30 AM
	Sunday School	9:15 AM	Wed 27	Free Lunch	11:30 AM
	Warm-Up America	10:30 AM		Book Group	1:00 PM
	Hanukkah Bazaar	4:30 AM	Fri 29	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM
	Hanukkah Candlelighting, Dinner and Music	5:30 PM		Shabbat Evening Services	7:00 PM
Mon 11	Yiddish Study Group	10:30 AM	Sat 30	Shabbat Morning Services	9:30 AM
	Intro Class	7:00 PM	Sun 31	Talmud Study Group	9:00 AM
Wed 13	All Iowa Hanukkah Candle Lighting on Zoom	6:00 PM	Office Closed Dec 25-Jan 1		
			Save The Date		
			Sat 1/27	New Member Shabbat & Lunch	9:30 AM

COVID COMMENTS

Bob Wallace, Barcey Levy, & Jane Zukin

Lately, the number of cases of COVID-19 infection have appeared to be lessening, which is of course a good thing. But the virus is still with us, and there have been a handful of patients being admitted to our University Hospitals with the infection. Medical journals are now talking about how the current virus strain has been “clever” and changing (mutating), and the future of the pandemic is uncertain. The important federal health agencies (CDC and FDA) are still strongly recommending that all appropriate persons receive the current (COVID-19) booster shot. Testing kits for the infection are still available at no cost from the federal government, by mail. The rules for the synagogue have not changed. Masking is optional, but it is still best to avoid attending if you are sick with any possibly contagious condition. If conditions change, we will of course let you know as soon as possible.

Additionally, citizens are still being asked to receive the annual influenza vaccine, and the new RSV vaccine, as recommended. These vaccines should now all be available at doctors’ offices and pharmacies without much difficulty. Also, don’t throw away your masks. There may situations such as travel and being in crowded environments, where masking should be considered.

To your health!

WARM UP AMERICA

Dates: December 10 and 24.

Please join us for a schmooze while family members are in religious school, or arrive early for Chanukah Party set up December 10. Help us create afghans for neighbors who might benefit from a little added warmth. Bring your house guests to help, too. Where else can they have this experience?

You've heard that it takes a village. This also applies to creating afghans. This year, we have donated afghans to United Action for Youth, Shelter House, Iowa Highway Patrol (to be kept in their cars as they respond to emergencies), Mercy Hospital (baby afghans), Domestic Violence Intervention Program, Inside Out Reentry Community (for people recently released from prison and restarting their lives), and directly to a couple men released from prison.

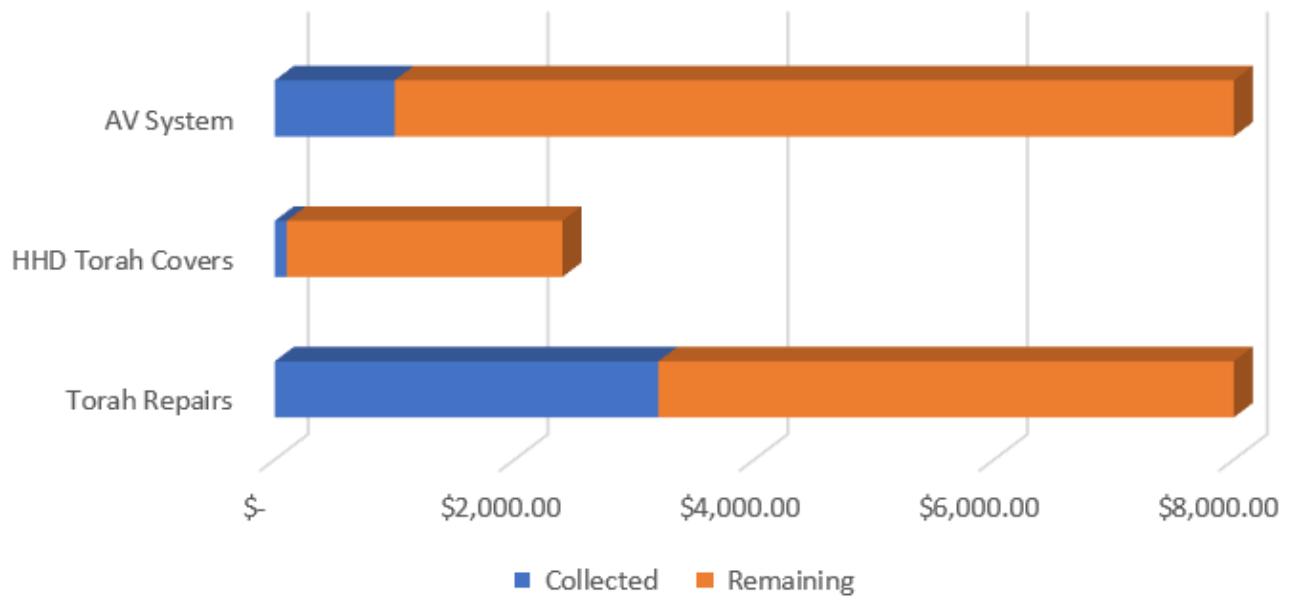


Congratulations, to people who have supported Warm Up America, with donations of either all-synthetic yarn or money in Agudas Achim's Tikun Olam fund for yarn purchases. And a huge THANK YOU to our members. You have made a difference in the community.

CONGREGATIONAL NEEDS FUNDRAISER

From time to time our congregation has needs that you may have a special passion for helping to provide to our space. In an effort to ensure our stability as a congregation, feel free to donate to these "smaller" important needs, as you are able. We will be noting our progress (transparently) each month to monitor where we are in reaching these goals! Note: \$2400 was previously in the Torah fund and is included here under Torah Repairs.

Fundraising Efforts



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

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Administrator	Karen Brady	Custodian	Amos Kiche
Principal	Sonja Spear		

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