

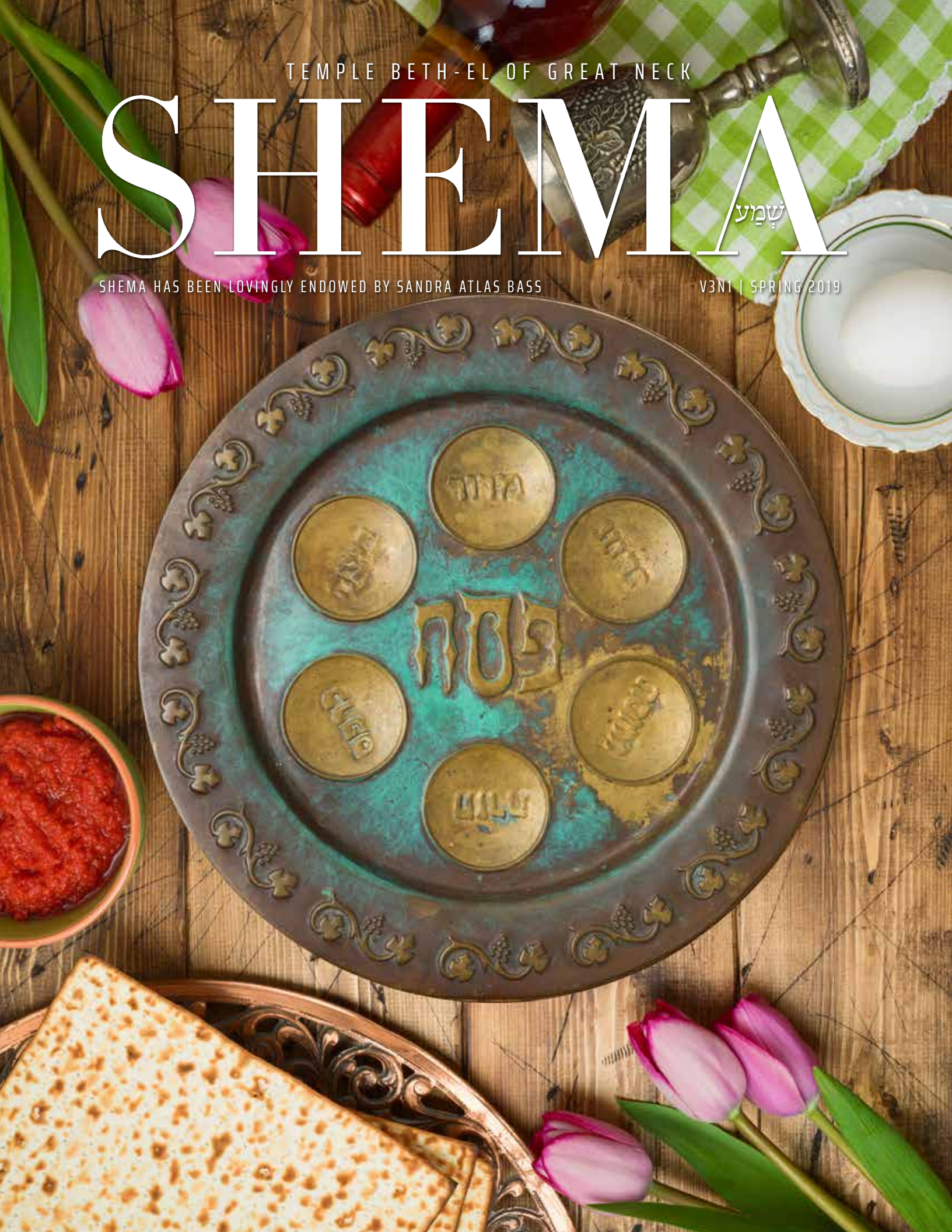
TEMPLE BETH-EL OF GREAT NECK

SHEMA

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V3N1 | SPRING 2019



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Shema would like to thank the clergy, staff, lay-leaders and congregation of
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Without you, Shema would not exist.



A Fiddler's Slippery Roof and Pesach's Open Door

RABBI TARA FELDMAN



WE FELDMANS WERE RECENTLY GIFTED WITH TICKETS to the Yiddish production of Jerry Bock and Sheldon Harnick's *Fiddler on the Roof* currently running Off-Broadway. Having just seen the impressive middle schoolers of Great Neck South perform the show, we felt well prepared for this offbeat experience, and yet, the performance took me by surprise: In Yiddish, the familiar show became altogether new. Yiddish, after all, was the language of Sholom Aleichem's original *Tevye the Milkman* stories on which *Fiddler* is based. Hearing the classic lines and songs in the actual language of the shtetl brought a heightened authenticity to each character. Their antics seemed less flashy, their sorrows more nuanced, their insights more honest, closer to the heart. They seemed more vulnerable.

My sense of Jewish vulnerability is heightened these days. So many images and headlines fuel my fear: anti-semitic slurs are hurled by Yellow Vest demonstrators in France, while in Massachusetts, dozens of Jewish headstones were found toppled or desecrated with swastikas. Just last month, a right-wing national weekly newspaper in Poland, one which is delivered to the house of the Polish parliament, published a front page article teaching readers "How to recognize a Jew" and continuing, "How to defeat them? This cannot go on!"¹

¹ <https://www.newsweek.com/poland-anti-semitism-newspaper-jews-how-spot-only-poland-racism-neo-nazi-1362406>

continued on page 4

continued from page 3

Of course, one does not have to travel to Europe to feel frightened. According to the FBI report on hate crimes, between 2003 and 2014, 65% of all such abhorrent acts in the U.S. were committed against Jews, despite the fact that we comprise less than 2% of the American population.² And this was *before* the dramatic rise of the alt-right, with neo-Nazis making appearances in Charlottesville and beyond. At my alma mater, Vassar College, 400 members of a recent incoming freshman class unexpectedly received a link in their email to a student-produced, online “Vassar College Disorientation Guide” which urged students to “slap a Zionist.” And yes, representative Ilhan Omar’s recent tweet about support of Israel being, “all about the Benjamins” adds fuel to a dangerous fire.

The struggles of Tevye and his family used to have, for me at least, a faint nostalgic glow; today, the pogrom that interrupts Tzeitel’s wedding, and the show-ending exodus from Anatevka, hit far too close to home. I am used to having my bag checked when I enter public spaces, but was startled by the added level of screening at *Fiddler*. The security guard checked each of us, one by one, waving his metal-detecting baton over our spread limbs and opening every bag, however small. Given that our audience was predominantly Jewish, I must admit that I was relieved by the inconvenience.

We know as Jews, and simply as humans, that there are many reasons in this world for fear—but the message of Passover, and perhaps of *Fiddler*, is this: Despite all the risks, we must hold onto our *chutzpa*, wearing our Judaism, and our humanity, on our sleeves. After all, it’s nearly impossible to be inconspicuous while eating a piece of matzah—or while speaking Yiddish. At the end of the Seder, we are instructed to open our door. While this act makes us more vulnerable to those who might seek our destruction, now is no time to shut our doors or our eyes. More than ever, we must be honest about the faultlines of hate that divide our world, the drops of blood spilled on the plate of our people and our place in the global human experience. An open door enables vulnerability in a world that can be cruel. But, in opening our doors, we also open a space for the prophet Elijah to enter, so that he might sip from his cup of deliverance. As a child, I remember watching closely the rim of that brimming Elijah’s cup. Had he come? Had he sipped? Was he gone already? In this uncertain world, it’s hard to know.

But do you remember the final scene of *Fiddler*? How the last person to leave the stage is the fiddler herself? Tevye and his family walk slowly, their faces downcast, all their worldly possessions in their hands, yet the Fiddler walks upright—her melody is still sweet. As the world wakes up around us, turning to spring, may we each awaken, making choices that will bring our world closer to Elijah’s promised deliverance. May we raise a full cup of wine, or even four, to the sweetness of that fiddler’s melody, as she continues to perch atop that roof. And, in spite of this world’s darkness, may we have the courage and faith to open the doors of our homes and our hearts wide, raising our voices, along with Tevye, in a hearty: “*Lchayyim!* To life!”

² <https://forward.com/subscribe/355864/anti-semitism-in-america-is-nothing-new-dont-deny-jewish-history-and-cultur/>

Temple Beth-El and Acts of *Chesed* Acts of Loving Kindness

RABBI MEIR & THE CHESED LEADERSHIP TEAM



Chesed, חסד, means loving-kindness. It's not just a noun, though—it's a way of Being. Chesed is the central work of the synagogue. Everything we do at TBE, from prayer, to teaching and learning, to the mitzvahs of

caring we perform for our TBE family and beyond: It's all for the sake of bringing more chesed into our world.

In Genesis 18, Abraham has just undergone his circumcision. He is resting, or perhaps praying, when God joins him for that most basic act of chesed: a hospital visit. It is likely an incredible moment for Abraham—who wouldn't like a visit from the most powerful force in the universe? Nonetheless, only moments later, when three travellers appear at his tent, Abraham interrupts his God-moment to attend to them. It's as if Abraham says to God, "Hold on; let's pause this mystical encounter. I need to care for some thirsty strangers." From this, our sages say: "Chesed is greater than seeing the face of the *Shekhina* (God's imminent presence)."

Our Caring Committee, lead by Carole Safenowitz, has led Beth-El's efforts to care for the ill and bereaved for more than 30 years. Four years ago, Terri Levin further grew our ability to act when she spearheaded Times of Need (TON), which by now also has performed

thousands of deeds of chesed. Together, they have brought care and love to thousands in need. Phone calls, cards, challah, Shabbat baskets, rides for those in need, shiva help, flowers, baby gifts, meals and soup: This is just some of what we have to offer. If any of us loses a loved one, falls ill or suffers from a chronic, ongoing challenge, the TBE goal is to be there for them.

In a process begun in August, we have been working to do even better at our mission of chesed. Led by Terri Levin, Randi Weiler, Debbie Bernstein, and joined by Carole Safenowitz and Chris Knauer, we are working together to integrate the work of Caring Committee and Times of Need. Our two goals are simple:

- to provide a more organized and integrated system of providing chesed;
- to engage more of our TBE family in the work of giving chesed to others.

In the coming weeks and months, you will hear more about our efforts to fulfill these two goals. We intend to sing out, loud and proud, and humble and grateful, for all of the opportunities we have to perform acts of chesed on behalf of others.

If you'd like to be a part of our chesed team please let us know. (Call the TBE office and let either Joy Palevsky or Dafna Weintraub know of your interest.)



Be Known By Love:

Love and Political Activism in the Reform Movement

RABBI ELLE MUHLBAUM



LOVE IS AT THE HEART OF JUDAISM. In the Hebrew Bible, the root for the word love, *ahav*, (אָהַב) appears 217 times. Often, it's used to describe the relationship between humans and God, whom we are commanded to love, and whose covenant we are commanded to keep. In other situations, *ahav* appears to describe the loving relationship between human beings, as between Abraham and Isaac, or Isaac and Rebecca. Perhaps most compellingly, the root *ahav* also appears as an injunction to love our fellow human beings. We are commanded to love the stranger: not to tolerate, nor to peacefully ignore, but to love strangers as we love our families or ourselves, for we too were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Reform Judaism has a distinct and hard-earned legacy as a movement built on the prophetic teachings, which we enact in the ongoing work of social justice and political activism. My teacher, the celebrated historian Dr. Michael Meyer, observes that Reform Judaism is dynamic. We are not a reformed Judaism, but see our movement as changing all the time, moving ever toward progress.

The prophet Isaiah tells us that God will place the Jewish people as a light unto the nations (see 49:6), tasked to lead by example and partner with God in the work of repairing the world. In the second paragraph of the Aleinu, our liturgy enjoins us to strive “l’takein olam b’malchut Shaddai”: to repair the world, in order to bring about the majesty of God’s presence. The world—not just the Jewish world. And how? The psalmist tells us to turn from evil and do good, seeking peace and pursuing it (Psalm 34:14). The prophet Zechariah tells us to love truth and peace (8:19).

The Reform Movement has long insisted on speaking truth to power, because we know that without truth, there is no peace, no wholeness. Alan Moranis, a great teacher of Mussar, writes, “If we want real peace, we have to pursue it via the route of working for justice, truth and repair.” Our movement takes this wisdom to heart; we understand our roots in prophetic injunctions and hear our call to be a light unto the nations. Still, we often get stuck in the same cycle of raising up the idea of *tikkun olam*, the repair of the world, without taking action.

“Jewish text insists on the dignity of human life,” writes Rabbi Jill Jacobs in her book, *There Shall Be No Needy: Pursuing Social Justice through Jewish Law & Tradition*. “Human beings, according to the Torah, are not only created in the divine image, but also represent manifestations of the divine presence. For this reason, an injury to a human being is an injury to God.” This understanding has profound moral consequences. In *Jewish Dimensions of Social Justice: Tough Moral Choices of Our Time*, Rabbi David Saperstein tells us,

“The core of our insight [as Reform Jews] is that serious Jewish study inevitably leads to the soup kitchen; that serious prayer, among other vital things, is a way of preparing to do battle with injustice, that social justice...without a sense of God’s presence, is ephemeral and unsustainable...The thread of social justice is so authentically and intricately woven into the many-colored fabric we call Judaism that if you seek to pull that thread out, the entire fabric unravels.”

In our Reform Movement, we know that it is the engagement of our own hands in social justice work that brings our religious principles to life. It is through our insistence upon not only seeing those in need, but on loving and actively caring for them, that our Judaism becomes a reality. We must continue to move ever forward, inching toward progress through hard work and activism, because we strive for peace, and peace requires justice, truth and repair. Like our textual tradition, we must insist on the dignity of human life, and work to be God’s covenantal partners on earth. If we are to be a light unto the nations, then ours must be the light of advocacy, care, and love. May our hands merit this weighty task, and may we inspire through purpose and be known by love in all that we do.



The Majesty of “*L’cha Dodi*”

CANTOR VLADIMIR LAPIN



EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT, JEWS AROUND THE WORLD begin their Shabbat celebrations with a journey back to the 16th Century and the Israeli city of Safed, or *Tzvat*. It was here that a group of Jewish mystics, the Kabbalists, created the Kabbalat Shabbat service: a set of prayers based on texts from the *Book of Psalms* and medieval poetry. The peak of this service is “*L’cha Dodi*” (“Come, My Beloved”), a liturgical poem composed by Rabbi Shlomo HaLevi Alkabetz, who concealed his name in the first letter of each verse as an acrostic. From its mystical origin, this poem quickly made its way into standard Friday evening liturgy; some ethnomusicologists estimate it to have 2,000 melodies (our go-to at Temple Beth-El is the melody of Leonard Cohen’s “Hallelujah”).

One of the themes of this poem—preparing oneself to greet the Shabbat—is based on the Talmud’s account of how our sages would welcome Shabbat: “Rabbi Chanina would wrap himself in his cloak and say, ‘Come, let us go and greet the Shabbat Queen.’ Rabbi Yannai would don his robe and say, ‘Enter O bride! Enter, O bride!’” (Shabbat 119a). Shabbat is a queen, and a bride, but who is the bridegroom? In a midrash, our sages teach that each of the six weekdays has a partner: The first day has the second, the third has the fourth and the fifth has the sixth. When Shabbat complained that it didn’t have a partner, God responded, “The community of Israel is your partner” (B’reishit Rabbah 11:8).

The last verse of “*L’cha Dodi*” imagines Sabbath worshippers as guests at the start of a wedding, eagerly awaiting the wedding couple. Consequently, many congregations have a tradition of rising at that point to face the synagogue entrance, honoring the Sabbath Queen’s entrance and greeting our bride. On the words *boi kallah, boi kallah* (“come bride, come bride,”) We may also bow, first to the left, and then to the right, as she arrives into our company.

I see this magnificent poem and prayer as a central part of Shabbat liturgy. “*L’cha Dodi*” encompasses the majesty of Shabbat, the wonder of creation and the power of love. “*L’cha Dodi*” teaches us to greet Shabbat with a full heart, and a ready soul. The mystics went into the countryside around Tzfat to greet the Shabbat bride week after week. As we sing “*L’cha Dodi*” week after week at TBE, I invite you to take some time to greet Shabbat in whatever way feels comfortable for you. Take a moment Friday afternoon (or some other time this weekend if Friday is too stressful) to focus on the distinctive beauty of Great Neck. Try and release yourself from the burdens of the week and think of the blessings (family, friends, community, etc.) in your life. And the next time we sing “*L’cha Dodi*”, take a deep breath, and welcome Shabbat with every ounce of your being.

Seven Questions for Jonathan Haidt

On March 23, *New York Times* best-selling author Jonathan Haidt came to Temple Beth-El to talk about his books *The Righteous Mind* and *The Coddling of the American Mind*. In anticipation of his visit, *Shema* sent Dr. Haidt questions about his work, interests and convictions; his answers follow.

1 What do you think is the biggest threat to political discourse today?

The steady rise in how much people on each side hate each other. Surveys from the Pew Foundation show this cross-partisan hatred rising steadily since the 1990s. Combine that with social media, which became very popular by around 2012, and we have the ingredients for a civic life made up mostly of outrage.

2 How can we make our kids stronger, more critical thinkers?

Given the rapidly rising rates of anxiety and depression for kids born after 1995, our most urgent priority is to make kids stronger, psychologically—less depressed and anxious. It's hard for anyone to do critical thinking; people who feel chronically threatened find it even more difficult. We must reverse the anxiety epidemic first. Step 1: Give kids back the long periods of unsupervised playtime that we banned in the 1990s. They cannot learn to function independently when we give them no independence before the age of 12.

3 What gives you hope for the future of American democracy?

Nothing, other than the fact that we have been through very bad times before. But I see no hopeful signs right now.

4 Deborah Lipstadt won't debate Holocaust deniers; Bill Nye will debate climate deniers. Who's got the right idea? Does everyone get a seat at the table?

At a university, no. Any professor or scholar who has data or research gets to publish it and is an appropriate person to invite to give a talk. But it does not necessarily advance our mission to bring in people who are not scholars.

As for public talks and lectures, away from a university: That's a harder question, and it is an empirical question. I don't know what happens after such public debates.

5 The FIRE Disinvitation database shows a marked decline in incidents in 2018. To what do you attribute this change?

Much of the violence and intimidation was fueled by the passions of the presidential election, so 2016 and 2017 were the peak years. The actual violence was mostly in the first four months of the Trump presidency. But there is no evidence that students are walking on eggshells less than they were two and three years ago.

6 As adults, how do we develop habits of intellectual humility?

Read Jewish authorities on the value of humility and the need for viewpoint diversity. Then read Dale Carnegie and Ben Franklin for advice on how to talk to people in ways that convey openness.

7 What's the most important thing parents in our community should be doing to raise happy kids?

Everyone should go to LetGrow.org and sign up for mailings. Then contact the principal of your children's school and ask them to do the Let Grow project and the Let Grow Playclub, if it's an elementary or middle school. Then, beg the principal to try to set a clear school norm: Nobody should have a social media account (such as Instagram) until high school. Social media directly contributes to the rise in depression, anxiety and suicide, especially for young girls. Get it out of middle school. Wait till high school. And insist that all kids put all screens out of the bedroom at least 30 minutes before bedtime. Kids need sleep, not constant social anxiety.

Love Thy Cousin

“What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellow.” —RABBI HILLEL

HOWARD HERMAN

WE’VE ALL HEARD THE ADVERTISEMENTS FOR DNA KITS. “Learn about your family’s roots,” they say. “Discover new cousins! Find out how you’re going to die!”¹ Well, in the spring of 2018, I took the plunge; several weeks later, I learned that I was 99% European Jewish—the only surprise was the missing 1%. The company linked me to an enormous list of my DNA matches, thousands of fourth cousins² or closer, and thousands more distant than that. It included contact information for my newly discovered relatives, and was arranged with the closest matches on top, so I promptly sent messages to a few unfamiliar names near the top of my list.

I obtained some startling information and heartwarming responses. Previously, I had thought that my maternal grandfather had three sisters; in fact, it was five. I discovered several new second cousins and their families, and they discovered me. I knew virtually nothing about my paternal grandmother’s family, but soon found a trove of new second cousins from her side as well. I’ve since created a family tree with more than 900 people. More importantly, I’ve gotten together with many of my newly discovered cousins and we’ve shared stories and photographs.

The most remarkable photograph came from Jan in Atlanta, a new second cousin. It was of a large extended family looking out at us from around a Passover Seder. Based on the ages of the children in the photo, we were able to deduce that it was taken in 1927, in an apartment in Woodhaven, Queens. Of the 18 people in the photo, Jan could identify five, including our mutual great-grandparents, and the little boy who grew up to become her father. I had never before seen a photo of my great-grandfather! I was able to identify eight more people, including the girl who would grow up to become my mother. How remarkable to learn that, though Jan and I had never met, our parents were first cousins who had attended a Passover Seder together long ago.

1 Admittedly, they don’t exactly put it that way.

2 Ed. Note: If you are fourth cousins with someone, it means you have the same great-great-great-grandparents, and are legally obliged to let them use your Netflix password.



Then, in December, I received a message from our own temple president, Ron Epstein. He had been looking at his own list of DNA matches and discovered that we were estimated to be fourth cousins! In the days that followed, though, I began looking a little more closely at my list of thousands of matches. I soon found that that Cantor Vlad Lapin and I were distant cousins, likely joined by a pair of ancestors who lived in Ukraine or Belarus at the turn of the 19th Century!

You can imagine how relieved I was to be on good terms with both Cantor Vlad and Ron. What if I'd learned that I had been less than kind to someone who was my kin?

Upon further reflection, I have come to realize that having good relationships doesn't have to be a matter of happenstance. What if we always bore in mind the idea that anyone we know might be a cousin? And what if we resolved to treat our family members, however distant, with love and respect?

Then, toward everyone, we would be known by love.

At Sacré-Cœur

LEN SCHIFF

At Sacré-Cœur, I sneezed a sneeze
That clanged and echoed in the vault.
“It’s allergies,” I cried, “Je suis
“Très desole—it’s not my fault!”

The celebrants on bended knee
The bishop and his silver crook
All turned at once to gape at me
And crucify me with a look

And marble Saint Bartholomew
He raised one stony hand and cried
“Expel at once this noisy Jew!”
I’m telling you, I could have died!

Till Jesus, robed in holy flame,
Appeared and said, “Don’t worry, kid.”
“These churchy types are all the same.”
“Gezundheit. *Shver tsu zayn a yid!*”

1 It’s hard to be a Jew.



Green Team Update

Changing Habits and Making a Difference

*It is not for you to complete the work.
...but neither are you free to desist from trying.*

PIRKE AVOT 2:21

JEWISH TRADITION CHALLENGES US TO FIRST EMBRACE AWARENESS and then move to action. We can all participate in the TBE Greening Initiative by becoming educated, and making small, but significant, changes in our habits of consumption.

Temple Beth-El is proud to be the first synagogue on Long Island to strive to completely eliminate single-use plastics.

We are now using the the products below including clear cold cups, paper hot cups and compostable utensils, napkins and plates made from a variety of materials: cornstarch, wheat straw, and sustainable paper alternatives. Once used and disposed of, they will decompose into nutrient-rich soil in four months' time.

Changing habits of consumption means changing our habits of mind. The next time you are at Beth-El, think twice before tossing your waste, and be conscious about what you bring into the building. Whenever possible, choose reusable items such as metal or glass water bottles. If you must use a disposable item, always choose paper over plastic.

Interested in joining our Green Team? To help with our synagogue greening efforts and grass-roots environmental activism, contact Rabbi Tara Feldman, tfeldman@tbegreatneck.org, or 516-487-0900, ext. 116.





LEA WEINBERG

Israeli-American Sculptor and Installation Artist Lea Weinberg, based in New York, has shown extensively in galleries and museums in Israel, Europe and the US, where she has received numerous awards.

She creates sculpture in wire mesh with mixed media, as well as bronze. Her “Memory Tree” sculpture is a centerpiece in the Garden of Remembrance at the Friedberg JCC in Oceanside.

Being a daughter of two Holocaust Survivors, Lea is presenting a visual message preserving the stories she has personally heard, bringing to life personal stories

intertwined with the Shoah history, through art and lectures. Her main inspiration is a special story of her mother-survivor.

In her Contemporary Memories Installations Lea is expressing her mother’s journey through emotional interpretations and symbols using found objects and meaningful humble materials. Each memory is transformed into a contemporary piece of artwork that memorializes those who lost their lives and embraces survival, with hope for a better future.

Find out more at www.leaw-sculptor.com.

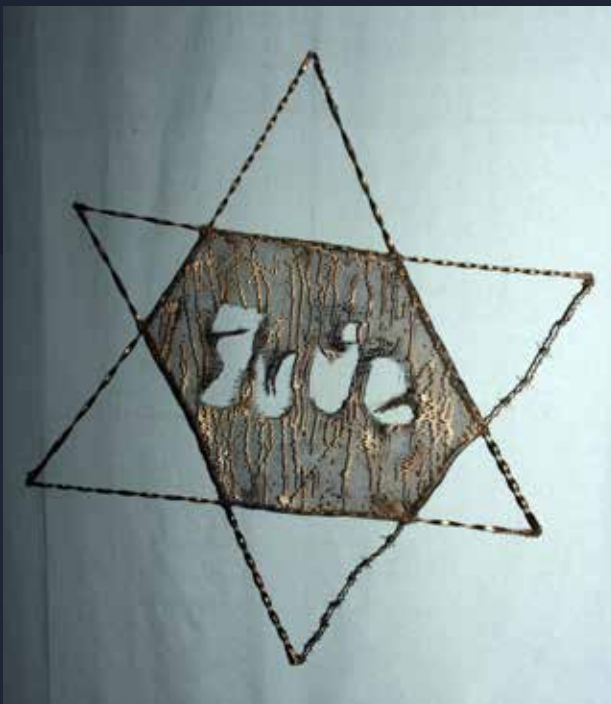


TEMPLE BETH-EL ART GALLERY SHOW
LEA WEINBERG

Contemporary Memories Inspired by My Mother-Survivor

April 23-May 5, 2019

Meet the artist on Sunday, April, 28, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.



It's Not a Matter of If, but When

NINA KOPPELMAN



EACH PURIM, I AM INSPIRED BY ESTHER, who risked her life to save the Jews of Shushan from Haman's genocidal schemings. Purim is about our vulnerability as Jews and what it takes to survive. I once thought that the lessons of *Megillat Esther* belonged to another time; now, I'm not so sure.

In 1953, when I was 8 years old, my family moved to the suburbs. We were part of the first wave of Jews to leave the tightly-packed avenues of the city for tree-lined suburban streets. Many of the towns outside of New York City had unwritten policies that restricted the sale of homes to Jews. After World War II, though, real estate developers saw opportunities to buy tracts of land, divide them into one-acre plots and build three-bedroom ranches, perfect for postwar families with children. Like many first-generation Jewish Americans, we settled in Great Neck—and when we did, we joined Temple Beth-El.

My parents wanted me to learn what it meant to be Jewish, so I attended Hebrew school; that way, I could

take pride in my religion and its teachings when I experienced anti-Semitism. Not *if*—*when*. They told me that the Jews had experienced persecution throughout their history, but always rose from the ashes to face another day.

In 1960, Adolf Eichmann was captured; his 1961 trial, held in Jerusalem, was widely televised and brought a new, widespread awareness of the Holocaust. I was 16, terrified by the stories of survivors, the images of emaciated bodies and footage of mass rallies electrified by the spewing of hate. But that was in Germany; nothing like that could happen in the United States, could it? My parents weren't so sure: They shared their own brushes with anti-Semitism, which they had experienced while attending college in the South. My mother had learned that the files on the Jewish women attending Duke University were kept separately. My father was asked by a fellow student to see his horns.

In the 1970s, I lived in small towns in Michigan and Indiana, and so did anti-Semitism. My 8-year-old

daughter was informed by a schoolmate that all Jews burn in hell—that's what the girl's church and family had taught her. On another occasion, a neighbor's welcoming call became an opportunity to tell me about the "Jew" house on the next block, so-christened because of the Jewish family who had once lived there. I let her know I was Jewish; later, I took out my menorah, decorated with a Magen David, and placed it on my mantel to let my neighbors know: There was another Jew house in town.

I moved back to Great Neck in 1980, and for three decades lived in this sheltered community, free from the fear of anti-Semitism that had hung over my parents' lives. Certainly, the world still offered its usual causes for concern, but after 9/11 I felt more threatened as an American than as a Jew. That changed last year, though, when, on a bright Shabbat morning in October, a right-wing extremist, armed with two

handguns and an assault rifle, entered the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and killed 11 worshippers. Long-simmering intolerance had exploded into mass murder. I began to ask myself what kind of country we were living in, where our houses of worship needed armed guards, where our President seemed reluctant to unequivocally condemn white supremacists and their hate-filled and violent ideology.

My parents believed it wasn't a matter of if, but when. Esther teaches us, though, that the strongest weapon against hatred is unity: the coming together of community to pray, to stand up to injustice and never lose hope. On Purim, we remember that, even when it looked like the end of the Jewish people, Esther called on her courage and had a history-changing impact. May we, too, find within ourselves a way to alter events, even as anti-Semitism again rears its ugly head—this time, closer to home.

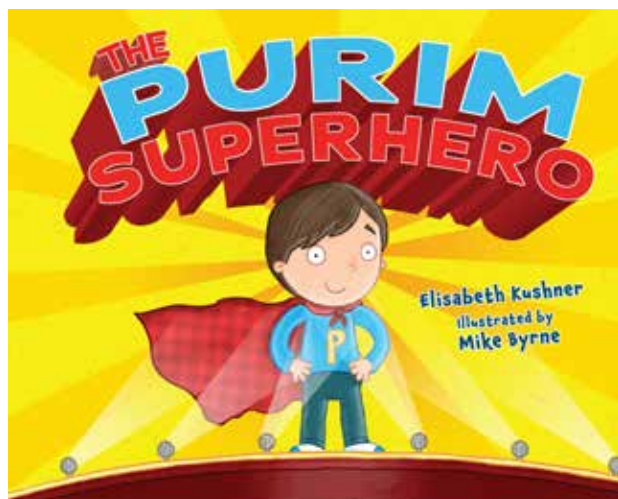


Children's Books: Family Reading

JENNIFER STILL-SCHIFF

The Purim Superhero

By Elisabeth Kushner, illustrated by Mike Byrne
published by KAR-BEN, 2013.



Nate needs to plan his costume for the Purim carnival soon, so that one of his dads has time to sew it. But he really loves aliens, and the other kids are all going as comic-book heroes. How will he be true to himself?

Most of us have felt like we didn't fit in, or were afraid of being different; it's an important discussion to share with the children in your life. *The Purim Superhero* can open a conversation on multiple levels, especially for families already familiar with Esther's story.

Enjoy this sweet picture book while also exploring the conflict of hiding or revealing your true self.

Sweep: The Story of a Girl and Her Monster

By Jonathan Auxier
published by Amulet Books, 2018.



The view from the rooftops as the sun rises over London is reserved for a lucky few: the climbers—children who assist the chimney sweeps up inside the dangerous chimney flues.

Nan is surviving the difficult conditions with a ragtag group of orphans, but she has something magical. Her inheritance is a *golem*, a protective creature made of soot and ash. Like the famous Jewish golem of Prague, this mystical creature will be brought to life at a moment of great peril and have life as long as his purpose allows.

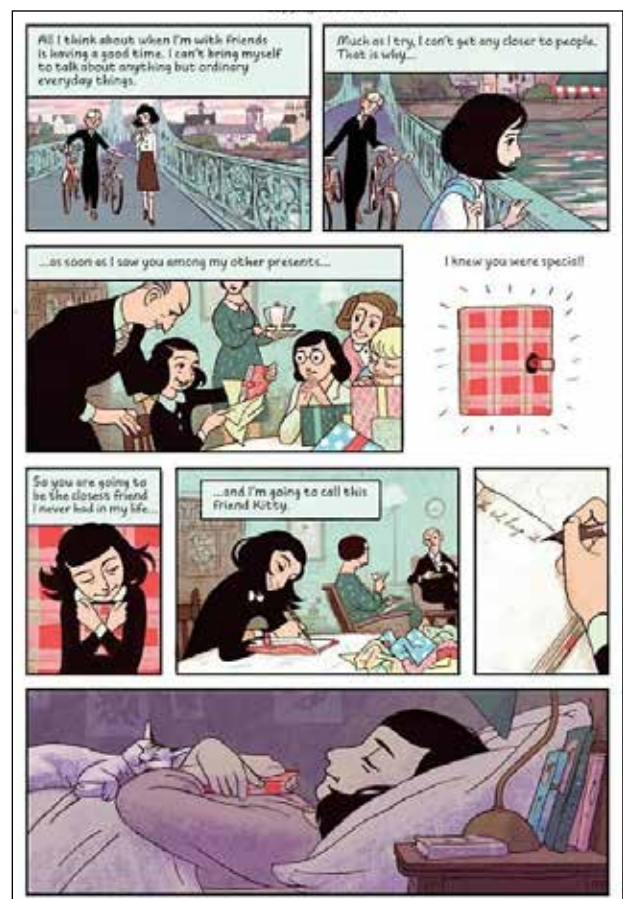
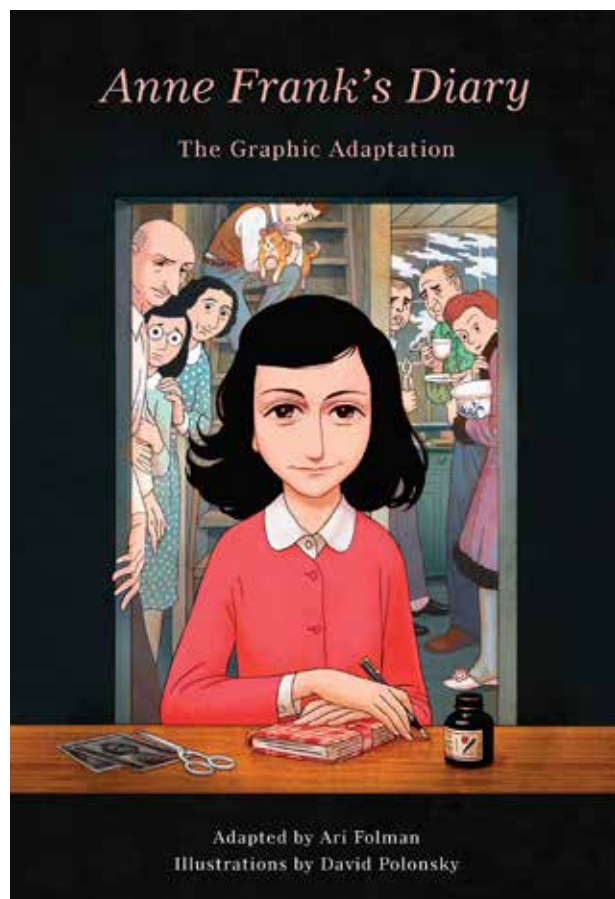
While this novel is part fairytale and part adventure, there's also a powerful story of social justice: The children organize a march to protest the mortal dangers of child labor. Sweeping change only comes when the workers demand it, and our readers will be moved by the courage and determination of the children in Victorian London, with an important message for children today.

Anne Frank's Diary: The Graphic Adaptation

Adapted by Ari Folman, illustration by David Polonsky
Published by Pantheon, 2018.

Many of us are haunted by the faded, dark-eyed photograph that stares out of the cover of the *Diary of Anne Frank*. A new adaptation with winsome illustrations by Polonsky brings Anne charmingly to life again. This graphic novel portrays Anne's inner life and thoughts in pictures, fleshing out the all-too-human girl in her most unusual circumstances.

By choosing some of the most personal moments to portray, adapter Ari Folman brings her to life in a new way. These scenes could serve as an introduction to her story or a companion to the original text. Don't be fooled by the friendly pictures—this is not a light version of the story. Anne's own words, contemplating life, adolescent desire and fury, combined with original art based on careful research, create a rich lifelike re-creation of the annex. Recommended for readers in middle school or older.





The Sermons of Rabbi Jacob Rudin: *“Tsedek, tsedek, tirdof”*

MATTHEW MOSHEN

THINK OF A ROOM AT TEMPLE BETH-EL. Was it the Rudin Chapel? No surprise if it was—Shabbat services, b'nei mitzvah, High Holiday meditations and other religious functions all take place beneath its high wooden beams and stained glass windows. But how many congregants know anything about the man in whose honor it was named? Jacob Philip Rudin (1902–1982) led Temple Beth-El from 1930 to 1971, with one foot in the secular world and the other in the spiritual. Scholar and activist, teacher and sage, he defended the Reform Movement's emphasis on social-justice activism and promoted Jewish life, ritual, synagogue participation, and Jewish identity. In the collection of his sermons, *Very Truly Yours: A Creative Harvest of Forty Years in the Pulpit* (Bloch, 1971), we see this duality: Social justice and activism must co-exist alongside, and in conjunction with, the tenets of Judaism and the Jewish identity.

Raised in an Orthodox home in Malden, Massachusetts, the Harvard-educated Rudin received his master's degree from the Jewish Institute of Religion in 1928. He would later receive his Doctor of Divinity from the same institution in 1948. Rabbi Rudin was an assistant to and protégée of Rabbi Steven Wise (1874–1949), a giant in the Reform Movement, a champion for social justice and civil rights on a national scale and a cofounder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). A close friend, Rabbi Wise would officiate at Rabbi Rudin and Elsie Katz's wedding in 1926 and son Steven's bar mitzvah. In September 1930, Temple Beth-El of Great Neck chose Rabbi Rudin to lead the congregation after the untimely death of Rabbi David Goodis. Rabbi Wise gave Rabbi Rudin his blessing to move to Great Neck and lead TBE. Historian Judith Goldstein argues that through Wise, Rabbi Rudin received “The hallmark of [his] career: a strong emphasis on social issues; less stress on rituals; services in English; little communal study of Torah; a fervent belief in Zionism; and a use of spirited oratory, on behalf of social issues,

that magnified the centrality, personality and authority of the rabbi.” Perhaps more significantly, both men stressed the importance of the Jewish synagogue as a vital, integrated part of the local community. TBE would clearly maintain that tenet for the proceeding decades.

In *Very Truly Yours*, Rabbi Rudin gathers a collection of iconic, representative, or simply interesting sermons. One section titled “God in the Blackout” includes pieces reflecting on injustice, oppression and indifference. On an Erev Rosh Hashanah in 1940, he delivers a powerful sermon that both defines the true spiritual (or lack thereof) nature of the war in Europe and the cataclysm (though not yet fully understood) facing European Jewry and answers the crisis of faith the global conflagration created.

Answering the basic question, “Where is God?” Rabbi Rudin declares that “God is in the blackout. God is in the blood and misery, in the tumbled home, in the destroyed cities. ... We have dragged His purity through the mire and touched His holiness with sin and uncleanness.” Rejecting an analysis of the war in Europe as a purely political one, he said that by seeing the world through a spiritual, specifically a Jewish lens, the war must be placed in moral, not political terms. “This war is about German Jews who were hounded and torn and crushed into the Nazi mire. This war is about injustice concerning which men are kept silent, about unrighteousness that men accepted, about savagery, than men said were an internal affair of Germany.” Quoting Jeremiah, he read “For though you wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before Me, saith the Lord God.”

Then in a bold statement reflective of both the crisis of the times as well as his Reform Jewish philosophy, Rabbi Rudin exclaimed: “God is with us who cry out against injustice and oppression.... God is with men whose hearts are not hardened. God is with men

whose hearts feel pain and suffering. We know pain and we know suffering. And we know courage and we know faith.” In the prophetic tradition of Isaiah and Jeremiah, Rabbi Rudin argues that salvation comes to those who “keep justice and do righteousness.”

Nearly a quarter-century later, again on Erev Rosh Hashanah, Rabbi Rudin used his participation in the historic March on Washington in 1963 featuring Martin Luther King Jr.’s famous “I Have A Dream” speech to reflect on the theme of Rosh Hashanah and the Days of Awe. The first part of the sermon describes his trip down from New York, the diversity and universality of the marchers (“How delightfully American!” he asides) and the amazing organization and how “well-behaved” the young people were. He gave an anecdote about seeing a “giant of a man,” an African American, holding up a placard titled “National Federation of Temple Sisterhoods,” as an example. Finally, he remarked how King’s speech was, he believed, “an honored place in our national patriotic literature.”

Then, he shifted gears in the sermon to explain why to tell this story on Rosh Hashanah. He felt the immediacy of the plight of African Americans as if it was our own: “I looked at those young [black] faces [during the speeches against segregation] and the hurt that was

upon them, and I knew that they weren’t only [black] children. They were Jewish children, too. They were crying, as Moses cried, ‘Let my people go.’ They were outcasts. They were everyman’s slavery.” Bringing the theme back to Rosh Hashanah, he argued that during the High Holy Days Jews proclaim their faith in God;

a time for “putting our values into focus. What good is Rosh Hashanah if we do not know the hunger of our brother’s heart?...How can we pray to be written in the Book of Life when we close that Book of Life for others?” He said simply, “the Negroes’ fight is the Jew’s fight.”

More powerfully, Rabbi Rudin challenged his own congregation to heed his words and live by them. He told his congregation on Rosh Hashanah that “none of us can withdraw from the fight. It is a fight we need to wage here in Great Neck. The man in Great Neck who calls a

colored man a “nigger” traduces America. The man in Great Neck who says that Negroes have a right to live wherever they wish—but not next to him—undermines the American way.... The man in Great Neck who has a place for a Negro in his business and who doesn’t hire him narrows the meaning of equality.” Rabbi Rudin offered an incredible admonition and challenge to his own congregation members to live their daily lives by the words of Torah and the American creed.

Rabbi Rudin exclaims:

“God is with us who cry out
against injustice and oppression...
God is with men whose hearts
are not hardened. God is with
men whose hearts feel pain and
suffering. We know pain and we
know suffering. And we know
courage and we know faith.”

Interestingly, that 1963 sermon, save for the theme of Rosh Hashanah itself, doesn't seem to argue the "Jewish-ness" of fighting against racism, segregation and intolerance. He does not specifically infer anything particularly Jewish about supporting civil rights. Three years later, however, not in a sermon but in a speech to the Annual Assembly of the New York Federation of Reform Synagogues, of which he was a member of the Executive Board, Rabbi Rudin uses an image of broken pitchers from the story of Gideon in the *Book of Judges* to critique Reform Judaism. Instead of Gideon's army breaking pitchers, he would break metaphorical pitchers representing disturbing trends in Reform Jewry. While Reform Judaism must continue to declare "the centrality of the prophetic message;...the marriage of our faith and our times," he argued that "Reform Judaism is more than a social action program." If Jews fail to attend synagogue, participate in Jewish life and know our own history, "then we have abandoned the Jewish source and meaning of civil rights." Rabbi Rudin continued, "It gets sad and tiresome to hear Reform Jews talk about being good Jews in their hearts, and then watching them give their hearts to every cause except the causes of Jewish worship and Jewish practice and Jewish identity. This is not justice to our faith and people." In a damning rebuke of fellow Reform Jews, he added "There are more Reform Jews who can tell you what CORE and SNCC and NAACP stand for, but who aren't sure whether it's UAHC or AUHC; and what the letters mean, whichever their order." Clearly the message Rabbi Rudin intended to send not only in this speech in 1966 but at the end of his tenure, by including it in this collection of his thoughts, was that Reform Judaism, for all its emphasis on tikkun olam, social action and progress, must steadfastly remain Jewish. Judaism, our traditions and God's laws provide the moral and spiritual background for any social activism; any divorce of that social action from proper Jewish observance and Jewish identity makes such actions hollow.

Rabbi Rudin's collection of sermons touches on many different subjects, issues and historic events. This article has chosen a brief few. Over the decades, he discussed life and death, grief, generational disputes, intermarriage, life as a rabbi, liturgy, politics, his time spent as a military chaplain and other topics one



Rabbi Rudin in service (far left)

might expect a senior Rabbi to discuss. He included his sermons on McCarthyism, the Kennedy assassination and reflections on his 40-year tenure. It is an incredible document not only as an oral history of TBE during its earliest years and growth, but as a window into the mind of one of Reform Judaism's greatest voices. It is an amazingly poignant and relevant work to refer back to again and again for insight into not only our temple's past, but into our future.



The Spice of Life

MARK ESKEN

THE OLD NEIGHBORHOOD MARKETS are carved into my memory as vividly as Nanny's kitchen, fragrant with baking bread, counters crowded with bowls of marinating meats or vegetables, the eternal stockpot bubbling on the back burner, the final destination for aromatic scraps and trimmings. Finally, next to the cuckoo clock hung an alchemist's dream of a spice rack, shelves brimming with mysterious jars, and within them the keys to all of Nanny's fantastic creations.

An amazing tapestry of human history was reflected in the herbs and spices in those firmly corked glass bottles. Nanny taught us their names and uses, the foods they enlivened and ailments they'd cure. She said that spices help set humans apart from the rest of God's creatures, for only humans devote so much time to preserving, cooking and seasoning their food.

We've burned spices as sacrifices and incense, gifted them as doweries, treated the sick with them and incorporated them into burial shrouds. Spices even led to the discovery of the New World, for Columbus first set sail to satisfy Europe's taste for pepper, allspice, chilis and vanilla.



So, it is befitting that *b'samim*, Hebrew for spices, play a pivotal role in that most special of Jewish observances, Havdalah. As Shabbat draws to a close, celebrants gather together and kiddush is said over wine. Then, after a special blessing, a *b'samim* box filled with some combination of clove, cinnamon, cardamom, star anise or bay leaf is passed around; the fragrant, distinct aromas invoke memories of Shabbats past and engage the senses with warm, sweet scents to mark the holiday's end.

Researching the Havdalah spices brings to mind Nanny's special winter recipe for a tomato-based meat sauce. Nanny didn't know from kosher—her original recipe used pork, beef, butter and grated cheese—but this modified version is still delicious. The recipe calls for a cut of beef, but feel free to improvise, swapping in chopped meat, lamb, veal or mutton. Oxtails add flavor and succulence; marrow bones, richness. Hearty, and with plenty of “warm” spices, it's perfect for a slow cooker meal on Shabbat. Enjoy—and remember that whatever you're cooking, the main ingredient should always be *love*.

NANNY'S HEARTY WINTER MEAT SAUCE

Serves 4–6

1–2 pounds filet kolichel, flanken-cut short ribs, or shank meat	1 15-ounce can tomato paste
½ cup dry red wine, such as Merlot	8 cloves
1 cup kosher beef broth or cube beef Telma dissolved in 1 cup water	2 cinnamon sticks
1 large onion, chopped	6 buds cardamom, cracked
2 shallots, chopped	1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 head garlic, chopped	Dried red pepper flakes
4 tablespoons good olive oil, divided (I prefer oil from California)	6 to 8 peppercorns
1 28-ounce can crushed tomatoes—(2 cans if you are using 2 or more pounds of meat)	1 teaspoon Red Cap Goya Adobo
	¼–½ teaspoon Accent (optional)
	2 bay leaves
	Lea & Perrins Worcestershire sauce
	1 bunch fresh Italian parsley

1. Prepare slow cooker by wiping crock pot with olive oil. Add cup beef broth. Turn slow cooker on low setting for 7 to 8 hours.
2. To a heavy sauté pan on high heat, add 2 tablespoons olive oil, then sear the meat on all sides and place in the slow cooker. (Note: if using kosher chopped meat, there will be water released, preventing the meat from actually sizzling brown. This is ok; the water will evaporate in the next step.)
3. To the empty pan, add 2 tablespoons of olive oil, then add aromatics: onions, shallots and garlic. Over medium high heat, sauté till translucent, 3–4 minutes.
4. When then aromatics are translucent, add red wine and 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce, stirring to deglaze the pan. Add crushed tomatoes, thoroughly incorporating them, then cloves, oregano, cinnamon sticks, cardamom, dried red pepper flakes, 1 teaspoon Adobo and Accent, if you're using it. Once combined, add to slow cooker.
5. Add tomato paste to cooker, swishing ¼ cup red wine or water in the can to get all the paste. Cover cooker and walk away.
6. At 5 hours, skim excess fat from surface and add ¼ cup chopped parsley.
7. At 6.5 hours, add marrow bones, if using—the marrow will extract into the sauce.
8. When the cooking time is complete, the meat will fall apart. Serve with fresh pasta.



Special Shabbat with Nava Tehila

FRIDAY, MAY 17, 2019, 7:00PM

TBE welcomes the incredible Jerusalem-based musicians of Nava Tehila for a rare appearance in the United States! Nava Tehila was formed as part of the Nava Tehila Congregation in Jerusalem, a liberal, egalitarian religious community that has gained a reputation for its uplifting music. Rooted in Middle Eastern, Chassidic, contemporary Israeli and other “world” musics, Nava Tehila’s original compositions—alternately celebratory, meditative, joyful and reflective—are designed to be participatory with congregation or concert audience alike, with the end helping the spirit to soar.

With deep gratitude and love, we are excited to announce the birth of

Judah Lev Lapin Muhlbaum

יהודה מנחם בן החזן אברם והרב אלנה

Judah was born on February 1, 2019, weighing 8 pounds, 13 ounces and measuring 21 inches. He can’t wait to meet his TBE family this Spring!

Vlad and Elle

(Photo credit: Charlie Juliet Photography)



Simmone Cora Allen

We are delighted to announce the arrival of a new member of our TBE family: Simmone Cora Allen. Simmone is the daughter of Joy and Josef Allen. Joy is our TBE Administrative and H.R. Associate. Simmone arrived on Monday, March 25, at 3:09 a.m., weighing 7 pounds, 8 ounces. She was given the Hebrew name, Simcha, after Josef’s father. Simmone, Joy, Josef and big sister, Violet, pictured with Simmone, are doing great. To the entire Allen family, we extend a hearty mazal tov!

The Time Is Now



In our tradition, when saying “Happy Birthday,” one may wish their loved one the blessing that they live to see 120 years old. Few will see this age and everyone will one day face the reality that the end of our earthly journey will come to an end.

The sages of the Midrash, the early interpreters of the Torah, had important wisdom for thinking about our end of days. In fact, they advise us to purchase a burial plot even while we are still alive and well. It is sometimes said that doing so will actually bless one with a

long life. On a more practical level, purchasing a grave avoids a burden left for a loved one. Sometimes this is a parting gift to those around us.

Our Temple Beth-El family is blessed to have its own sections of the Beth Moses Cemetery in Farmingdale. In the coming year, the purchase price for our plots will increase as we look to continue investing in care and upkeep of the property.

Please consider purchasing cemetery graves for your family. Graves are only available for purchase by temple members, but can be used for your extended family. Single graves are available and there are also plots for any number of graves, including 20+. Stu Botwinick, our executive director is happy to tour the grounds with you.

For more information, please contact Joy Palevsky in the main office at 516-487-0900, ext. 115, or jpalevsky@tbegreatneck.org

What Will Be Your Legacy?

In Jewish tradition, on the *yahrzeit* date (the anniversary of someone’s passing), we remember and read the names of loved ones who came before us.

Beyond a *yahrzeit*, we are so honored that every year, there are members of Temple Beth-El who make pledge to be remembered for their ongoing impact, well beyond their lifetime.

A bequest is one of the easiest and most significant

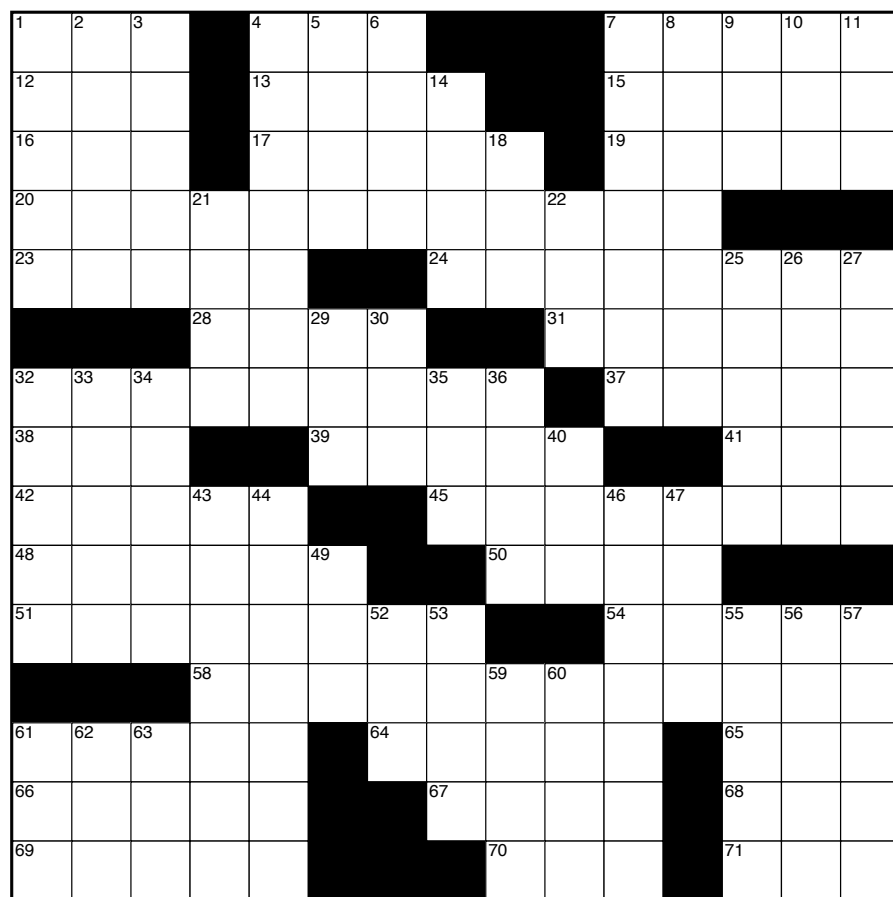
ways to leave a legacy. Even if you’re someone of modest means, your gift can go a long way.

As we look to our 90th anniversary and think ahead to next 90 years, make a pledge to our Jewish community. Will the next generation remember you as one of the giants upon whose shoulders they stand?

Want to learn more? Contact Stuart Botwinick, executive director, 516-487-0900

BIG MEGILLAH, LITTLE KID

Len Schiff



ACROSS

- 1 ____-A-Lago
 4 Musical theater licensing company
 7 With 34 Down, 22 Down, and 51 Across, Beth-El bimah baby.
 12 "Cakes and ____," Twelfth Night
 13 Sudden seizure of power
 15 Where they found Captain America
 16 Where ladies come from?
 17 Kabbalist Isaac
 19 Tech news website
 20 Where you could be Haman
 23 Home base
 24 Local Lads
 28 Singapore Amateur Athletic Assn.
 31 Takes a bow
 32 Step dancer
 37 First thing my parents gave me
 38 Fraternity: Dental honor society

- 39 Collection of songs or photos
 41 Aran Island: Inis ____
 42 Anglo-Irish expression of surprise
 45 With 1 Down, new source of pain in Great Neck
 48 Biblical prophet
 50 Tennis champion Arthur
 51 With 7 Across, 22 Down and 34 Across, Beth-El bimah baby
 54 Manipulators
 58 Purim snack pack
 61 Later
 64 Definition—"____: _ Hawaiian feast."
 65 Baseball stat
 66 Star hunter
 67 Parts of archipel.
 68 Scottish out
 69 Arrogant
 70 Not likely!
 71 Ultimate

DOWN

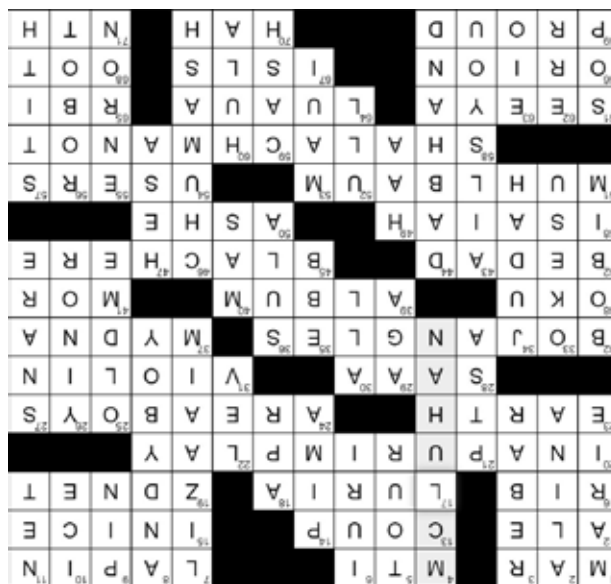
- 1 With 45 Across, new source of pain in Great Neck
 2 Singer Baraz
 3 Construction holdup
 4 Author, The Medium is the Massage
 5 ____ de France
 6 Possible title for spoonbender memoir
 7 Ms. Minelli, try to hit the target!
 8 Famed growers of greens
 9 Angelic dancefloor
 10 "Abolish ____"
 11 Somewhat less than gross.
 14 Luxury cotton
 18 Credit card consideration
 21 School org that includes educators, kids, parents
 22 With 7 Across, 34 Down and 51 Across, Beth-El bimah baby
 25 "Who, little ____?"

- 26 Taoist choice: ____ yang.
 27 Rabbit trap
 29 Cult cooker
 30 Without exception
 32 To Tambourine Man bard: "____, ____ pleased to meet you."
 33 Oklahoma Emergency Services Unit
 34 With 7 Across, 22 Down and 51 Across, Beth-El bimah baby
 35 Kander partner
 36 1973 Morrison novel
 40 Usually married to pas
 43 Good for what ____
 44 Someone deft at a skill 46 Torah
 47 "____ real nowhere man."
 49 Prolonged laugh?
 52 Lafayette campus of La. state school
 53 Moana's mentor
 55 Where Skilling made a killing.
 56 Wall*E or BB-8
 57 ____ Thompson, folklorist
 59 The Man in Black
 60 Often performed at 64 Across
 61 Absorb
 62 It's human to do it
 63 McDonald refrain: E-I-_-_-

Ethel S. Lernerantz



Facing a Challenge?





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President, Brotherhood

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Judi Rosenzweig**
Program Coordinators, Sisterhood

Carolyn & Paul Knepper
Co-Presidents, Club Chai

Jacob P. Rudin z"l
Rabbi Emeritus

Thank You Shela Pearl

SHELA PEARL, teacher, Shakespearean, poet, painter, bejeweled dresser and longtime TBE member, recently relocated to California for reasons of health; her exquisite home garden had to be dismantled. Eileen Walk, along with a few other noble volunteers and Shela's loving family, took some of the most beautiful ornaments from her yard and gave them a new home in our garden. Thank you, Shela, for continuing to bring beauty to Temple Beth-El, even from another coast—we miss you.

RABBI TARA AND SHEMA

Because I loved every step I took into Beth-El,
Because I want to share in the tradition
of our gracious religion,
I am delighted to offer parts of my collection
of purple plant vessels
To hold and display the beauty
Which had blossomed bountifully on Elliot Road.
In lieu of the Biblical garden,
The Rudin garden patch will now hold and nurture
my beautiful plants and give them the hugs
they need to continue to thrive.
On this Rosh Hashanah, I offer you my blessing
for a good and sweet year.
Renewing itself, life
in its season gives us fruit and honey,
Always from the Garden into our hearts.

Shela Pearl, August 16, 2018

