

The Jewish Post & Opinion • *National Edition*

Presenting a broad spectrum of Jewish News and Opinions since 1935.

Volume 85, Number 1 • October 31, 2018 • 22 Cheshvan 5778

www.jewishpostopinion.com • <https://go.usa.gov/xn7ay>



Cover Art by Rabbi Yitzchok Mouly
(see About the Cover on p. 5)

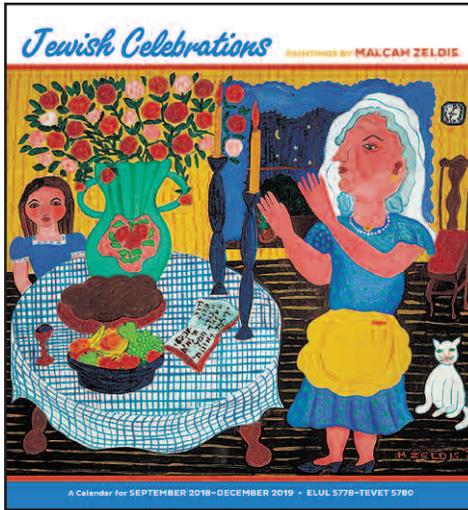
New Year Calendars: Timeless Trove of Jewish Culture

BY ROSE KLEINER

Even though we're a month in, it's not too late to bring the new 5779 calendar into one's home, bringing the essence of Jewish culture into one's life. The days, weeks, months, and all the seasons in that calendar are an invitation to experience one's heritage and to let it enrich our lives. The Jewish calendar is a mirror of our culture, from its very beginnings to our own time – our companion to the year that lies ahead.

First, on the weekly level is the Sabbath, or *Shabbat*, beckoning us to bring more light into the home and giving us the exact weekly candle lighting times. The *Shabbat* date on the calendar invites us also to experience something more profound – a chance to read and study a weekly portion of the greatest book ever, the *Torah* and of the prophets, all of which come in modern English translations that speak to the reader of the 21st century.

Then comes the calendar's monthly invitation to make the first day of each month (*Rosh Chodesh*) into a day of celebration. In many Jewish circles where



the calendar is a part of the home, it is not unusual on the first of each month for people to wish each other "have a good *Chodesh* (month)".

Then within the calendar there are the dates of holidays, feast days, solemn days and fast days, as well as other minor holidays all to guide us in embracing our heritage.

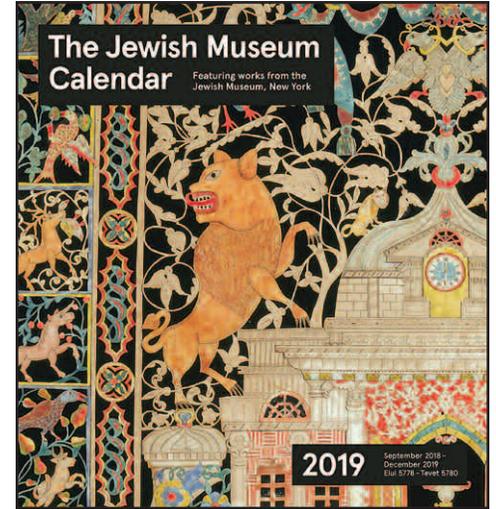
Besides the above features, Jewish calendars have an aesthetic dimension that enhances, even more, their presence in one's home.

Among the publishers of Jewish calendars there is Universe, with its wall and desk calendar, Pomegranate with its two wall

calendars, and Karben Publishing, with its calendar for youngsters, and its 'mini pocket' calendar.

The 2019 Jewish Calendar from Universe has illustrations of items from the Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam. It also has a list of Jewish holidays through 2032. The beautiful objects displayed in the calendar are a feast for the eyes and spirit.

From elaborate 18th century silver filigree Portuguese *Torah* Finials and a beautiful, gilded silver 19th century *Torah* Crown to a richly engraved silver *Torah* Shield from (see Kleiner, page 5)



Jewish Democrats endorse

Sen. Joe Donnelly

for Indiana

Sen. Donnelly shares our values and will fight for us

VOTE TUES.
NOV. 6



Paid for by Jewish Democratic Council of America, jewishdems.org, not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee

Editorial

Since Saturday, Oct. 27th, my inbox has been inundated with emails relating to the tragic shooting that killed 11 Jews attending Sabbath services at the Tree of Life synagogue in the Squirrel Hill neighborhood of Pittsburgh, Pa. May the memories of the victims forever be a blessing.

Besides all the national Jewish organizations, local synagogues and Jewish organizations, I have received email messages of solidarity from Christians, Hindus, and Muslims. Below in italics is an excerpt from one of those.

Shocked Hindus strongly condemn Pittsburgh synagogue massacre

Hindus have strongly condemned Saturday morning's massacre at Tree of Life Or L'Simcha Congregation, a synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pa.

Hindu statesman Rajan Zed, who is President of Universal Society of Hinduism said in a statement in Nevada: "We are deeply saddened by this horrific tragedy. Our hearts go out to the victims and their loved ones and the entire Jewish community. Targeting of innocent people at the sacred worship place is abhorrent. It was a senseless and shocking act of violence."

Rajan Zed further wrote: "We are praying to Almighty to provide the mourning families help and consolation in dealing with this tragedy at this difficult time. Besides these families, we also express deep sympathies to the injured and their relatives and friends and all others affected. It was heartbreaking and appalling for the entire Hindu community."

Urging for interfaith unity, Zed stated: "We, as people of faith, despite our different belief systems, must take a stand against violence by coming together with kindness and love." He urged all the Hindu temples and prayer-centers in USA to hold special prayers for all those who were touched by this tragic loss in Pittsburgh.

As have been taking place in other cities, a local communitywide memorial gathering took place Oct. 29th at Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation where the community was joined by many interfaith partners and city leaders. (Find video of this memorial gathering at IHC at: <https://www.facebook.com/IndyJCRC/videos/2374476419450941/> or go to JCRC on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IndyJCRC/> and scroll down to video.

This tragedy happened 13 days before the 80th anniversary of Kristallnacht, the "night of broken glass," that took place in Germany on Nov. 9, 1938. That moniker comes from the shards of broken glass that littered the streets after Jewish-owned

stores, buildings, and synagogues had their windows smashed. Some historians consider this the beginning of the Holocaust. The estimated deaths from that night were in the hundreds.

Just the night before this Pittsburgh tragedy, I watched the PBS premiere of the award winning Eva Kor documentary by Ted Green titled, *Eva A-7063*. Kor suffered tremendously at age 10 in experiments by the infamous Nazi Dr. Mengele, and now teaches about healing through forgiveness. A month prior I saw the play *Becoming Dr. Ruth*, about the early life of well known sex therapist Dr. Ruth Westheimer.

I knew Eva's story from our articles about her, watching an earlier documentary on her life from 2006 titled, *Forgiving Dr. Mengele*, and from hearing her speak several times. This new movie has much more footage, details, tributes by famous people, and more about her efforts to bring peace and encourage forgiveness.

I did not know Dr. Ruth was also a Holocaust survivor similar to Eva Kor. Dr. Ruth was born Karola Ruth Siegel in Frankfort, Germany in 1928 and was 10 years old when her parents put her on Kindertransport (a train transporting children) to Switzerland. Her parents told her they would come for her later, but she never saw her family again. And also similar to Eva Kor, after World War II, she ended up serving in the Israeli army before immigrating to the United States. What a huge loss it would have been for our country had they not been allowed to immigrate to the United States!

My purpose for mentioning these two female Jewish Holocaust survivors is that they eventually excelled in spite of the disastrous treatment they received as children and have led exemplary lives as adults where they have helped improve the lives of so many others.

This is a turbulent time in our history but we have managed to survive and thrive in spite of a long history of anti-Semitism. To read an example of surviving after a challenging time and then later thriving, see Rabbi-Cantor Judy Greenfield's book excerpt on pages 11.

We must do as much as we can to work toward improving the prejudices and discrimination currently taking place in this country. Besides Jews also Blacks, LGBTQs, Muslims, Immigrants and others are being targeted. However at the same time, it is possible to live a productive life with many happy times as well as the sorrowful ones.

Good and bad circumstances can take place simultaneously, and a lot of good is currently taking place, such as the raising of funds by Muslim nonprofit organizations and Iranian immigrant Shay Khatiri who set up a GoFundMe page to help the

Inside this Issue

New Year calendars	2
Jennie Cohen: (Editorial)	3
Jennie Cohen: Finding Unity, Peace, & Hope in Difficult Times	4
Rabbi Benzion Cohen (Chassidic Rabbi) Good News	4
About the Cover	5
Melinda Ribner: (Kabbalah of the Month) Cheshwan – A Month of Cleansing and Purification	6
Jim Shipley: (Shipley Speaks) Anti-Semitism As a Political Issue ...	7
Ted Roberts: (Spoonful of Humor) The Missing Gift	7
Miriam Zimmerman: (Holocaust Educator) Women, the Holocaust, & Genocide	8
Rabbi/Cantor Judy Greenfield and Dr. Tamar Frankiel: (Book Excerpt) Entering the Temple of Dreams – Spiritual Dimensions of Forgiveness	11
Professor Arnold Ages (Book Review) Preventing Palestine – Examining Proposals for a Two State Solution	12
Amy Lederman (Jewish Educator) Fiddler on the Roof Revisited	13
Rabbi Elliot B. Gertel: (Media Watch) FBI and Murphy Brown	14
Morton Gold: (As I Heard It) Song Not Appropriate for Worship ...15	
Sybil Kaplan: (Seen on the Israel Scene) Judith and Cheese for Chanukah	16
Sybil Kaplan: (My Kosher Kitchen) Not Just Potato Latkes	17
Matthew J. Silver: Missoula Welcomes First Residential Ordained Rabbi to Congregation Har Shalom	20

The Jewish Post & Opinion

Jewish News and Opinion since 1935.

1389 W 86th St. #160

Indianapolis, IN 46260

email: jpostopinion@gmail.com

phone and fax: (317) 405-8084

website: www.jewishpostopinion.com

publisher & editor: Jennie Cohen

graphic designer: Charlie Bunes

See Historical Digital Issues of
The Jewish Post & Opinion since 1930
at <https://go.usa.gov/xn7ay>,

Read recent digital issue online at:
www.jewishpostopinion.com

survivors of the synagogue tragedy.

Another example of good can be seen in the movie about the life of Fred Rogers titled, *Won't You Be My Neighbor?* From 1968–2001 he wrote, created, produced and hosted a preschool TV show titled, *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*. He started each (see Editorial, page 5)

Finding Unity, Peace, & Hope in Difficult Times

BY JENNIE COHEN

We live in a world of duality, Yin and Yang, male and female, light and dark, active and passive, abundance and scarcity and so on. We always have. Throughout our history there have been periods of violence and other times that were more peaceful. Right now we are living in a time of change which is filled with turbulence but tranquility can also exist simultaneously.

One example is an annual event I attended for a few years beginning in 2005. An Interfaith Peace Prayer Service left me feeling hopeful. Held for several years at the Carmelite Monastery in Indianapolis, Ind. when it was located on Cold Springs Road near 38th Street, something about the atmosphere lent itself to serenity but it was more than that. What could be more calming than hearing religious and lay leaders of different faiths – who sometimes have opposing beliefs – coming together to share their respective religions' prayers for peace.

A similar but more elaborate event that made me believe a more peaceful future is possible was the inaugural Festival of Faiths I attended in 2013. Sponsored by the Center for Interfaith Cooperation (CIC), the theme this year's for the sixth annual Festival was "Compassion in Action." It took place at the Indiana Veterans Plaza and Indiana War Memorial on Sun., Oct. 14., with a Community Youth Forum inside the Indiana War Memorial.

Some of the activities this year were music, dance and tasty cuisine from many cultures, activities for kids, thought provoking discussions, Procession of Faiths, Drumming Circle, Spirituality and Art Exhibit, Indiana Authors Fair, Mini Film Fest, Meditation and Mindfulness Across Traditions, and Compassion through Action Expo. You can read more about it at centerforinterfaithcooperation.org.

We are fortunate to have so many valuable programs such as this in October and November, one of which is the 20th annual Ann Katz Festival of Books and Arts at the Indy JCC. Another is Spirit & Place taking place from Nov 2–11 (spiritandplace.org)

The most recent of these uplifting events (July 30th) was the positive reaction to the hate crime at Congregation Shaarey Tefilla (CST) that took place on July 27th. We covered the solidarity gathering at CST in our previous editions with photos that can be seen on our website at: <https://jewish-postopinion.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/CST-Vandalism-Aug8-2018.pdf> and <https://jewishpostopinion.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/CST-Vandalism-p13.pdf>

Others in attendance had powerful remarks about it and I am sharing three of those here. The first is from an Op-Ed in the Bloomington, Ind., newspaper, *The Herald-Times*, on Aug. 3, 2018 by Rabbi Ron Klotz with the headline "Response to hateful graffiti in Indianapolis was inspiring".

"We lived in Indianapolis for more than 35 years, so, of course, I saw a lot of familiar faces in the crowd. But those in attendance were from all groups in the community. That's what was so inspiring. I expected the Jewish community of Indy to show up. It was heartwarming to see all the others who cared. The speakers at the rally last night included rabbis, priests, a mayor, leaders of the Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist communities.

We heard from the Anti-Defamation League, the Jewish Community Relations Council, gay rights groups, Urban League reps. All said about the same thing. We will not sit quietly while such hateful acts take place in our community. The standing room only crowd interrupted each speaker with rounds of applause."

The second comes from a video of Rabbi Benjamin Sendrow being interviewed by Channel 13 news after the perpetrators had been caught, posted on Twitter on Aug. 16th: "I'm not often at a loss for words but I can't articulate how much the [support from the community] meant to us. It made this act a complete failure because [the perpetrators] tried to evoke hatred and fear but what they produced was an outpouring of love, support and solidarity. Shaarey Tefilla has been sustained in ways that are indescribable."

What impressed me about that evening was it took place barely more than 48 hours after the vandalism was discovered. Without a rehearsal, one would expect overlap with the different speeches, yet with such a diverse group of speakers each speech added something new. Since one can view the entire event on Facebook, I will not quote them except to say how very encouraging they were. ([facebook.com/Fox59News/videos/10156796180664575/](https://www.facebook.com/Fox59News/videos/10156796180664575/)).

Wondering how this solidarity program could be so well organized on short notice, I spoke with Charlie Wiles, executive director of the Center for Interfaith Cooperation (CIC). He did not find out about the vandalism until Sunday morning the day before the gathering, when he got a text from CIC board member Pierre Atlas. JCRC Executive Director and CIC Vice Chair Lindsey Mintz was copied on that. "An attack on any one of our religious communities is an attack on all of us," he responded.

Continuing, he explained that within an hour CIC had created a public statement that they shared with their executive committee. By Sunday evening Mintz

Chassidic Rabbi

BY RABBI BENZION COHEN

B.H.

Good News

Reprinted from Nov. 6, 2013

Here is some *Good News*. A few weeks ago Friday night I walked to *shul* with four grandsons (ages 5–10). At one point they decided to have a race to a nearby light pole. They ran off. I said to myself "That looks like fun!" Then they decided to race again. This time I joined them. The good news?

1. I have grandchildren, *baruch Hashem*.
2. They love their grandfather, *baruch Hashem*.
3. They walk to *shul* with him Friday night, *baruch Hashem*.
4. I can still run, *baruch Hashem*.
5. My 7 and 10 year old grandsons can really run fast, *baruch Hashem*.
6. I came in third, and not last, *baruch Hashem*

The moral of the story? "Serve the Lord with joy!" Life is like a cup that is half full. If you look at the half that is full, you can always be happy. If you look at the half that is empty, you can easily get depressed. I could have said "Oy vey, I am getting old! My 7 and 10 year old grandchildren outran me."

This is especially important now, as we celebrate the holiday of *Chanukah*, "The Festival of Lights."

We all need happiness. I consider myself
(see Benzion, page 6)



told him about the community solidarity gathering planned for Monday, and added they are looking for speakers. For the next 24 hours they reached out to individuals asking who would be willing to speak. When someone agreed, the JCRC staff took over and told them when they will speak and where they will sit. The majority of those who spoke were CIC board members.

"It's hard to put a value on building and sustaining interfaith relationships in the moment, but when something like this happens, it's invaluable to be able to call someone and have that relationship already in place. It was a great honor and a real testament to our interfaith relationships for CIC to work with Lindsey Mintz and the JCRC, and Rabbi Benjamin Sendrow to help coordinate a powerful interfaith response to the hideous acts that occurred at Shaarey Tefilla," concluded Wiles.

To a more peaceful 5779!

Jennie Cohen. Revised from Indiana Edition: September 14, 2018. ✨

KLEINER*(continued from page 2)*

the 17th century, all are there to delight our senses. There is a charming painted ceramic *Kiddush* Cup from the 1980s and a painted ceramic Passover plate dated June, 1954 is inscribed with Hebrew and Dutch passages. There is a gold amulet from 1891, and various Alms (*Tzedakah*) boxes from different eras which are made of different precious materials.

The delicate beauty of the objects depicted speaks to us of the love with which they were created by the different artists and of the love with which they were treasured by the generations of families who used them.

The Universe Desk Calendar with its weekly, full-page calendarium, draws on the holdings of the Jewish Museum in N.Y., with an impressive variety of objects from the mundane to the priceless.

There is a 19th century wooden *Purim* pastry mold (Odessa, Ukraine), a Jewish Scottish Tartan Kilt (2015) “created with the collaboration of a rabbi”, an embroidered Sabbath Towel from 19th century Kremenchug, Ukraine, an ornate silver Book Cover from Jerusalem’s Bezalel School (1924), a 17th century Sabbath Lamp from Frankfurt am Main, two beautiful contemporary Marriage Cups from Cambridge, England (2002), and a 20th century silver amulet from Baghdad.

The Universe desk calendar’s “flow-chart” lists concise, useful information about all holidays, festivals, fast and feast days, giving their significance, theme, customs, history and much more.

The images in the Pomegranate calendar come from the Jewish Museum in New York. Their illustrations of the selected paintings (by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim, Ben Shahn, Raphael Soyer, and Max Weber, to name but a few) help set the mood of this fine calendar with portraits, both modern, and from earlier times.

Pomegranate’s illustrations of contemporary Jewish life are found in their wall calendar with Jewish Celebrations and Paintings by Malcah Zeldis. These illustrations are filled with bright colors, and cheerful themes. They would appeal to children as well as adults. There are the holiday and Sabbath paintings as well as images of such Jewish cultural activities as Carrying the *Torah* (in the synagogue), Cooking for the Sabbath, Studying for *Bat Mitzvah* and *Bar Mitzvah*, and *Benshen Licht* (lighting the Sabbath or holiday candles).

A calendar specifically for youngsters, but appealing to the youngster in all of us, is Kar-Ben’s delightful My Very Own Jewish Calendar. The entries and the images in this calendar take us on a journey throughout the ages and into many of

the world’s Jewish communities. Full of information about worldwide Jewish customs, history and culture, the calendar also provides an easy recipe on each of its monthly pages.

Children are made aware of the importance of *tzedakah*, and of a special day on the English calendar called Giving Tuesday which comes, appropriately, right after Thanksgiving Day.

To enrich our customs, the calendar brings examples of how other communities celebrate the different holidays. For example, to bring more light to the *Hanukkah* week, on each night of the holiday, the Jews of Gibraltar read a different passage from the *Book of Tehillim* (Psalms) that speaks of light. Children are encouraged to choose their own meaningful Psalm connected to light, which they can recite each night in their own home.

Children learn of a distinctive Iranian Jewish tea ceremony, which relates to the custom of *Hashmassar Orchim*, or welcoming guests into one’s home. For chocolate lovers there is the volume, *On the Chocolate Trail*. It traces the Jewish link to the chocolate trade, which goes back to the days of the Spanish Inquisition.

To those who are of Ashkenazi origin, the calendar explains the popular Sephardi Mimouna celebration kept in the communities of Algeria, Libya, Morocco and Tunisia, and now among Sephardi families living in North America.

There is a touching story about Louis Armstrong’s adopted Jewish family. A grandson of slaves and forced to fend for himself as a youngster, he befriended a young man, Myer Karnofsky who later became his business partner. Eventually Armstrong became a member of the Karnofsky family. In tribute to this family, Armstrong wore a *Magen David* (a Star of David), had a *mezuzah* on his door post, and spoke fluent Yiddish.

All the above calendars give candle lighting times for *Shabbat*, and holidays, and the weekly readings of the *Torah* portion. ✨

**EDITORIAL***(continued from page 3)*

episode of his show telling children, “I like you just the way you are” – a message that can be summed up as “love thy neighbor as thyself”. Ironically, the same Pittsburgh Squirrel Hill neighborhood was his real-life home for many years living just two blocks from the Tree of Life synagogue.

Also even at the time when we are experiencing huge challenges, it does not mean they will last forever. Eva Kor and Ruth Westheimer were in their pre-teens when they faced unimaginable trauma. Again it is easier with hindsight to see the

About the Cover

Disrupting Darkness
Acrylic on canvas 65x67 in.
By Rabbi Yitzchok Mouly



Reb. Mouly

Chanukah would not be complete for me if I did not attempt to share my joy of the holiday through my art. So after some thought, this is what I came up with. Recently I purchased some black gesso – this is what you prime the canvas with before you paint – for another project. Working with a blank black canvas is a whole new experience, and I’m enjoying the challenge.

Chanukah being all about lighting up the darkness was the perfect opportunity to work with a deep black canvas and see where I can take it. Beginning with a gold menorah at the bottom of the large canvas, I began painting in the glowing flames one day at a time, while taking photos and videos of the process. In keeping with the spirit of the menorah and the message of *Chanukah* to keep growing in our effort/holiness, I am shearing the images of the menorah as it grows and shares more light, day by day.

As a child Rabbi Yitzchok Mouly’s upbringing was off the beaten path. Raised by former hippies, Mouly was exposed to far more color than one would expect in the rigorously Orthodox *Chassidic* community. Mouly’s formal education in day schools in Australia and later at the Rabbinical College of America did not include formal art classes but his inner passion yearned for expression. After dabbling in various forms of art, Mouly found an expression for his creativity in the silkscreen process.

Mouly’s art contrasts strong Judaic and *Chassidic* images with vibrant bold colors to create a startling combination which he describes as “Chassidic Pop Art”. Mouly’s art reveals that the essence of *Chassidic* thought is far from black and white. Under the black hat there is a wealth of vibrant colorful energy waiting to be released.

Mouly also teaches art classes and will come to your city on request. He is the founder of The Creative Soul and lives in Hillside, N.J., together with his wife, Batsheva, and six children. See more of his work on his website: moulyart.com ✨



good outcomes that resulted, but in the 1930s and 1940s, it is unlikely they were able to fathom their future accomplishments. Now, many years later, one can see the great good that they have accomplished after being subjected to a horrific situation.

Jennie Cohen, October 31, 2018 ✨

Kabbalah of the Month



BY MELINDA RIBNER

Cheshwan – A Month of Cleansing and Purification

In the Jewish calendar, a new month begins at the time of the new moon. The Hebrew word for month is *chodesh* which also means “newness”. According to *Kabbalah*, each month offers new energies and offers new opportunities to realize one’s personal potentials. Just like there are various seasons and fluctuations in our weather, there are fluctuations in the spiritual energies available. Those who are attuned to these energies are very aware of such changes and know how to use this knowledge for their personal growth and success. Rather than promoting fatalism, this knowledge actually increases our capacity to make meaningful and effective choices for our highest good.

We welcomed the new month with *Rosh Chodesh Cheshwan* on the evening of October 9th. In the preceding month of *Tishrei*, we spent more time celebrating holidays than any other time in the calendar year. *Tishrei* is the month when we open and fill ourselves with blessings for the entire year.

In this month of *Cheshwan*, we begin to translate into reality the visions we received in *Tishrei*. Now is the time when we focus on our intentions and get back to work. Now is the time to let go of what is not essential and purify ourselves so that we are really able to contain the new. During this month, it would be most helpful to incorporate new supportive spiritual and physical practices to support you in going forward.

This month of *Cheshwan* is also a time of cleansing and purification. It is no coincidence that the *Torah* portion Noah is read to welcome in the month of *Cheshwan*. As you recall the story, Noah was instructed to build an ark to safeguard life from the destruction of the flood. *Cheshwan* is the month when we must build an ark within ourselves to afford us safety and security for this month and the coming year. There may be floods in the forms of challenges in the course of one’s life and particularly during this month of *Cheshwan*. Our internal ark will serve us through these intense times.

The Hebrew word for ark (*teva*) also means “word”. The arks we build in our lives are

the positive words of love, prayer and blessing that we utter. Positive words provide a sanctuary for us and we need to fortify ourselves with them during this month. We each need to make a conscious effort particularly this month to speak positively, to express words of love and blessing more than we might do otherwise. Positive affirmations of oneself are fundamental.

For this month, I am encouraging myself and others to reclaim the beauty of prayer and meditation. Prayer and meditation offer the most precious opportunities to experience God, to find the peace, the silence, the knowledge that is beyond the world, that is not dependent on what happens externally around you. When we find that inner peace we become bearers of blessing in the world rather than being simply reactors to events happening around us.

During this month of *Cheshwan*, it is helpful to know that it is natural to find ourselves letting go of what no longer serves the new spiritual order of blessing we opened to in the month of *Tishrei*. Loss is common this month. Just as the trees shed their leaves in *Cheshwan*, we also shed parts of ourselves as we are open to and reveal the new within us. Letting go of the old, letting go of what is not essential or is even detrimental may not be an easy one for many of us who are sentimental and want life to remain the same. What worked for us last year may not be relevant or even good for us this year. We need to contact the deeper resolve within us to go forward in our lives.

The month of *Cheshwan* corresponds to Scorpio. Pluto, the ruler of Scorpio, was known in mythology as the lord of hidden wealth. Many of the earth’s important resources such as iron, gold, silver, oil and mineral are hidden below the ground. To find these resources, we have to dig deeply, to get down in the dirt and mud and uncover and sort out the inner riches. Scorpio is associated with the scorpion, the eagle, and the phoenix, the mythological bird that rose from the ashes of destruction. The scorpion is dangerous. The eagle soars high and the phoenix renews itself from death.

In this month, we tap into these three expressions of the energy of the month. We dig deep inside ourselves. We sort out what is true from what is not. In the process, we may become aware of the negative workings within and around us symbolized by the scorpion. Awareness is the first step for transformation. With awareness, our consciousness can then soar upward to new heights and swoop down to new depths like an eagle. And most importantly, throughout the month, we must remember that what may be

BENZION

(continued from page 4)

very fortunate that I found it. Until the age of 18 I lived a rather secular life. I looked hard for a good time, for happiness, but could not find it. I tried, unsuccessfully, to be popular. I tried out for sports, but did not make the teams. (Now I realize that even those who were popular and successful at sports were not much happier than me.)

I finally found true happiness 44 years ago. I looked into *Lubavitch* and found there happy people. I decided to try it out. I started to learn *Torah* and do *mitzvahs*. As it says in Psalm 19: “The *Torah* of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul...The precepts of the Lord are just, rejoicing the heart. The *mitzvah* of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes.”

One *mitzvah* that brings me a lot of happiness is “Love thy neighbor”. When I am able to help someone, to cheer up someone, they feel better. And I also feel much better, that I was able to help them. Now I go five days a week to the geriatric ward of our local hospital to help these people to pray, to give them hope and cheer them up. Their happiness is my happiness. And nothing makes me happier than giving one of my children or grandchildren a big loving smile, and getting an even bigger smile back.

Every *mitzvah* that we do makes the world into a better place. This is another way that doing *mitzvahs* makes me happy. I know that I am making the world better for all of us.

It is now up to each of us to do more *mitzvahs* in order to complete the job of making the world better and thus bring our complete and final redemption. Then *Moshiach* will help us to make the world completely good and wipe out all evil.

Let us start by doing the *mitzvahs* of the festival of *Chanukah*. [This year, 2018, the first candle is lit on Dec. 2.] We wish all of our readers a Happy *Chanukah*. We want *Moshiach* now!

Rabbi Benzion Cohen lives in K’far Chabad, Isarel. He can be reached by email at bzioncohen770@gmail.com. ✨



destroyed can take new inner and outer forms like the phoenix.

Blessings for a beautiful month of internalizing all that is good and true, no matter what floods are occurring outside of ourselves.

Melinda Ribner L.C.S.W. is also the author of Everyday Kabbalah, Kabbalah Month by Month and New Age Judaism, and The Secret Legacy of Biblical Women: Revealing the Divine Feminine.

(see Ribner, page 7)

Shipley Speaks



BY JIM SHIPLEY

Anti-Semitism As a Political Issue

There was a time when “real” Anti-Semitism was alive and doing well in the United States. I have written before that had we moved to Shaker Heights, Ohio two years earlier than we did, we could not have bought a house there. It was not until 1948 that the “No Jews” restriction was declared illegal.

At that time there were Quotas on the number of Jews allowed in many medical and law schools around the country. Most Country Clubs did not allow Jews (we retaliated by opening our own Country Clubs and not allowing Gentiles). Before the war, Jews from Europe fleeing the Nazis were turned away and sent back to certain death.

Well, we’ve come a long way. Two Jews serve on the Supreme Court (ladies, yet!). Quotas and religious qualifications are pretty much all illegal. But like roaches in the walls, it still exists. We are living in a political atmosphere that is designed to pull people apart. We have become tribal once again.

Political discourse has become toxic. When personal attacks become the norm, when in our social media world there are no rules about truth or sources, we tend to protect ourselves and our own.

In this, an election year, all the stop signs are pulled down. Truth takes a back seat to nuance and attacks. There are a plethora of fringe organizations that are blatantly anti-black and/or anti-Semitic. God help the candidate that is endorsed by them – unless of course they strike a chord that the candidate themselves endorse – if only by innuendo.

We all say and do stupid stuff. Many of our beliefs and attitudes are based on what we heard at the dinner table when we were kids. It is tough, as we grow and live in a world different from the one in which we were raised, to change certain ideas and patterns.

The world around us has changed drastically during the past two generations. Race and religion do not have the restrictive borders they used to. However, unfortunately, the extremes are still there.

So, as Jews we ponder. This candidate seems to follow my political ideas, seems to call for the changes I’d like to see. BUT – he is quoted as saying something

RIBNER

(continued from page 6)

Internationally known for her pioneering work in kabbalistic meditation and healing, she is also a spiritual psychotherapist and for more than 30 years has used kabbalistic wisdom as part of treatment. She offers a free newsletter on meditation, healing, kabbalistic energies of the months, holidays, and more. Website: www.kabbalahoftheheart.com. Email: Beitmiriam@msn.com. ✨



detrimental to Jews in a speech or a conversation at some time.

So? How important is this if the candidate’s platform and stance on issues agree with our own. For some of us, one statement, one quote that is detrimental or even borderline about Jews is enough to disqualify that candidate. For others it is dependent on the time that the statement was made.

Look – I was raised in a time when racial jokes were part of the daily lexicon – even if we bore no antipathy to the race we were demeaning. Today sensitivity is greater to any remark, joke or statement that might offend someone. So, no more black jokes, Polish Jokes, Italian jokes – or, God Forbid an anti-Jewish joke. Unless of course we are joking about our own ethnicity – and with a fellow Jew. Of course.

Funny, isn’t it? Jews can make jokes about Jews, Italians about Italians – but we dare not joke about anyone else’s ethnicity, religion, or cultural quirks. Anti-Semitism of course is different. In its most violent form it created the Holocaust. In its more subtle form it created quotas, discrimination and the occasional spray painted swastika on a suburban garage door.

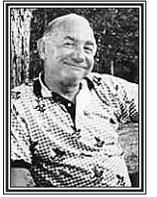
Jews, by taking the high road and integrating themselves into society through grit, determination and yes – skill; have, in most of society, taken our rightful place. But, just below the surface, the beast still breathes.

There are nations in the world in which few if any Jews live – but where anti-Semitism is rife. Why? How? Well, in many cases it is religiously driven. The record of the Catholic Church in the Second World War is far from stellar. Much of the Muslim world is totally anti-Semitic.

Traces of it of course remain in sections of our society. Whether created by religious belief or jealousy or just plain “gotta blame somebody!” It’s here.

So, if a political candidate made a statement or said something and was overheard no matter when – it is something to take into consideration. We must be aware. We must be awake. Anti-Semitism is, and I’m afraid will always be, a political issue.

Spoonful of Humor



BY TED ROBERTS

The Missing Gift

It had been a busy six days even for the King of the Universe. The earth and all its contents – well, that was accomplishment enough. But the galaxies and the rules governing their orbit – sun, moon, and stars and that concept of infinite space. He was particularly proud of that. Just imagine! The garden and its two occupants on planet earth dwelled not in a boxed enclosure, but in nothingness. No beginning, no end, no top, no bottom. It had to be that way since the universe was the mind of the Creator and no one should stretch out his hand and touch that boundary. Thus was the first mystery introduced into the world.

Now, at the end of this sixth day, He would rest. And so with great satisfaction, He surveyed his handiwork and meditated on all that He had done. It was flawlessly complete. At least as complete as He intended it to be. Several ragged edges were purposely left unfinished. The creature called man must have a major mission besides mere survival. Or else why His creation?

But what was that squeak, that dim voice from below? It was the human He had made. It was addressing Him, his Creator. He was asking for His attention.

“Master, Creator, are you up there? Can you hear me?”

“I, who can hear a grasshopper land on a blade of grass can certainly hear my most favored creation when he calls out for me. Speak,” roared the Lord, G-d of creation.

“Beg your pardon, Sir, but you forgot something.” Remember this was before the dialogues with Abraham, Moses, Job, and the Prophets. The Creator was the architect of the universe and this puny voice out of a structure that He had engineered was accusing HIM of carelessness. Impudence of the highest degree!!

“I know you imbued your creation with hate because Cain threw a sharp stick at
(see Roberts, page 9)



Jim Shipley has had careers in broadcasting, distribution, advertising, and telecommunications. He began his working life in radio in Philadelphia. He has written his JP&O column for more than 20 years and is director of Trading Wise, an international trade and marketing company in Orlando, Fla. This column was submitted on Feb 15, 2018. ✨

Holocaust Educator



By DR. MIRIAM L. ZIMMERMAN

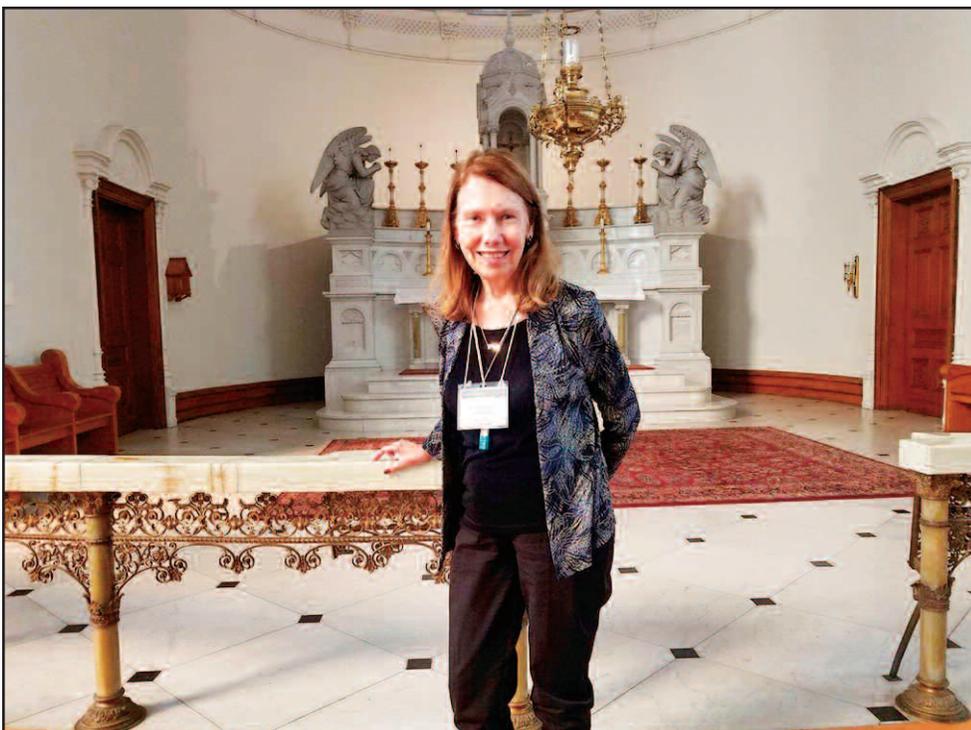
Women, the Holocaust, and Genocide – A Holocaust Conference for Catholic Educators

Corinthian columns support the dome of St. Joseph Chapel at Seton Hill University in Greensburg, Pa., home of the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education (NCCHE). The Center sponsors a triennial conference on Holocaust education. The 2018 Ethel LeFrak Holocaust Education had as its theme, “Women, the Holocaust, and Genocide.”

How could I, a Jew teaching a Holocaust course in a Catholic university, who began her journalism career at the *JP&O* writing under the byline “A Woman’s Voice,” not attend? My original columns for the *JP&O* complained about the role of women in traditional Judaism. A product of the feminist movement of the 1960s, I began my life-long career as a feminist by railing against “the erasure of women” in orthodoxy and the mixed metaphor of “a woman of valor.” Was it a blessing or a curse to be so regarded?

The mission of the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education “is to counter antisemitism and to foster Catholic-Jewish relations by making the fruits of Holocaust scholarship accessible to educators at every level, especially in Catholic colleges and universities throughout the United States. To this end, the Center sustains a vital cooperative program with Yad Vashem in Israel and designs events to assist educators in shaping appropriate curricular responses for students of every age.” In 1998, I had the good fortune to attend the NCCHE’s Summer Institute in Israel, studying the Holocaust at Yad Vashem.

A Catholic Mass preceded the conference with Bishop Edward C. Malesic, Celebrant (conducting the Mass). I have long made my peace with Catholic religious practices, having developed my own strategies for private Jewish prayer whenever I attend a Mass. I feel the spirituality of those praying around me, heightening my own. Although prayer might have a multiplicity of forms and vocabularies, I believe G-d listens to all prayers. The spirit of inclusivity and dialogue that permeated the conference proceedings and Bishop Malesic’s almost



Miriam Zimmerman in the St. Joseph Chapel.

Jewish sense of humor facilitated my ability to pray; ironically the Catholic setting made me feel more Jewish.

After the service, Director of NCCHE Dr. Tim Crain welcomed conference participants and presenters. He explained that the late New York philanthropist Ethel LeFrak wanted to enhance the experience of teachers by “educating the educators.” He thanked NCCHE founders, Sisters of Charity Gemma Del Duca, Ph.D., and Noël Kernan, Ph.D, and longtime NCCHE administrator, Sister Lois Sculco, S.C., Ph.D. He gave a surprise tribute to Dr. Wilda Kaylor, longtime Associate Director of NCCHE, acknowledged her 21 years of service to the Center and 42 years of service to Seton Hill University.

Other luminaries in the audience included Father John T. Pawlikowski, author of 10 books, and arguably, one of the “fathers of interreligious dialogue” in the United States. Father John accepted Dr. Crain’s tribute by downplaying the list of the many honors bestowed on him by



Miriam Zimmerman with Father John T. Pawlikowski.

both Jewish and non-Jewish institutions. Instead, he mentioned that his greatest accomplishment was (paraphrase), “to integrate fully the Center into the life of the University.”

That so many Catholic educators devote their professional careers to Holocaust studies or include teaching about the Holocaust in their classes reassures me. Their many students will have a deeper understanding of the Holocaust, will have listened to a survivor, and will tell survivor stories to families and friends. Casual conversations among educators between presentations and during meals enabled them to network, discuss their research, and share best practices.

Dr. Mehnaz Afridi, Associate Professor of Religious Studies (Islam) and Director of the Holocaust, Genocide and Interfaith Education Center at Manhattan College spoke first. Dr. Afridi’s latest book is, *The Shoah through Muslim Eyes*. She herself is an American Pakistani Muslim. Her talk on “The Silent Victim: Female Memories of the Holocaust” highlighted pertinent issues relevant to women’s experience of genocide.

As a professor of communication, I appreciated Dr. Afridi’s clarity and organization. She prefaced her talk by briefly referring to Dr. Christine Blasey Ford’s recent testimony of sexual assault by then Supreme Court nominee Brett M. Kavanaugh. She cited specific statements by men in response to Dr. Ford’s alleged assault, in terms of men blaming the victim. Senator John Neely Kennedy, Republican, of Louisiana, stated, “You [Dr. Ford] should hide your head in shame



Dr. Mehnaz Afridi.

every day for the rest of your life.” Other comments include the command to the leaker of Dr. Ford’s letter to Senator Feinstein, “Hide your head in a bag.” Some in the media described Dr. Ford’s testimony as a “shame campaign.”

Dr. Afridi’s unifying theme was how religion shapes modesty attitudes, using three specific cases of rape in three different contexts: in Bosnia, in Auschwitz, and in a Nazi slave labor camp. By including Dr. Ford, Dr. Afridi brought her topic into the present.

Dr. Afridi pointed out that shame is in the forefront of Muslim culture. Messages of shame “are consistent with being a girl, and then a woman.” Believing Muslim women are told to “lower their gaze.” The ultimate message is that being female, by itself, is shameful. As a ten-year-old, the professor was told to cover her legs, lest she tempt men.

Muslim shame derives from Judaism, in part. Even Reform Judaism teaches constricting attitudes concerning women. Dr. Afridi cited Jewish sages as creating restrictive constructs such as modesty, timidity, and even bashfulness [in women] to be the hallmarks of Jewish marriage. New information for me: Hebrew Scriptures, in Genesis, denigrate nudity. A Jew cannot recite the *Shema* prayer while nude or in the presence of nudity.

Misogyny in Arab culture has roots in the Hebrew word for nudity, *awrah* (in Arabic *awrat*). This word also refers to genitals, encapsulating all the things that women are supposed to hide. Both words cognate with *tzuviut*, which refers to shame and nakedness and is used to describe the Adam and Eve story in Genesis. Awareness of their nakedness produces shame in both Adam and Eve.

Over breakfast the day after her lecture, Mehnaz (by this time we were on a first name basis), pointed out a difference between Judaism and Islam in their

ROBERTS

(continued from page 7)

me. He is going to be trouble, I can tell. I beg of you that when you issue your rules, it would be helpful to include one commanding our offspring not to throw sticks at their parents. And Sir, you forgot something else, unnamable, but necessary for the four of us and those yet to come – if we must live together on Your earth. We humans need it or we shall treat each other like the animals. You took great care with the mechanism whereby we nourish ourselves. A great job, Sir. And you marvelously designed the tools of procreation so that like the muskrats and elephants we could prolong our species. It seems to work splendidly. Already, two rabbits have grown to two hundred and it works wonderfully with mosquitoes, too. They swarm everywhere and feed off my flesh, but as I surveyed the garden, I noticed an unpleasant truth. Some of the species who existed on that first day no longer walked upon the garden’s mossy turf. I think I counted more rabbits yesterday. I think the wolves are eating the rabbits.”

The Lord listened with divine patience. Was He not patient? Later, did He not endure forty years of official complaints from the stiff-necked Children of Israel? So, surely He would listen to Adam, His first. He answered with controlled brevity. “Ah, you finally discovered the purposed flaw which I left in creation. Know that it is yours to correct, but what exactly is this thing you think is missing?”

“It is difficult to explain, Sir,” said Adam, for he was voicing the complaint that something that should be within us is missing. And consider that he had a limited vocabulary even when speaking from his heart. “A feeling of kindness, of warmth, plainly is lacking in the animals. And us, too, I’m afraid. I know it is missing



teachings about Adam and Eve. In Islam, Eve is not the temptress; Adam and Eve fall together.

In her lecture, Mehnaz pointed out that rape was different in the Holocaust and in Bosnia. During the Holocaust, it was illegal for an Aryan man to have sexual relations with a Jewish woman, although it happened. But in Bosnia, Serbian men were encouraged to rape, to impregnate Bosnian women as a means “to infiltrate and deny their ethnicity.” The orthodox Christian Serbs had a military policy of “rape for the purpose of genocide.” If impregnated, the Bosnian Muslim woman gave birth to a Christian Serbian child, eradicating the mother’s ethnicity. But during the Holocaust, it was impossible

(see Zimmerman, page 10)

because I do not have it for the woman – is that the right word – you made for me. It’s like a warm feeling in the chest.

“It is not necessary – this feeling – for me and the woman to make more of us. I know. . . wait. I know how to explain it. It is like the feeling you told me you have for us. In a lesser degree, of course, but it would be constructive if we had that glow for our fellow creatures, like the new one that the woman carries in her stomach. Please, Sir, bestow upon us that warmth. I call it love.”

“Your hearts are yours. I left them empty – how else could I implant free will? It must come from you,” boomed the Master of the Universe. “Even I have not the power to bestow it upon you without impeding your freedom. It is the blemish I left for you to cure. Without it you and generations yet to come will soak my earth with your blood. Now that you have discovered it – DO IT. I was waiting for you to notice its absence.”

And to show the universality of the human longing for goodness, perfection, an Armenian friend of mine, who nominally practices the Eastern Orthodox form of Catholicism, told me an ancient Armenian *Midrash*. Armenians are famed, you know, for rug making and similar skills. Like Jews, they suffered near genocide around 1915. Anyhow, my friend tells me that after months of weaving a rug for an emperor’s (or even a Wall Street Executive’s) palace, the rug maker leaves a small, almost invisible flaw in the tapestry. Why? I get a very Jewish sounding answer from my Armenian friend: “To remind us of the world’s imperfection and our mission”. It echoes of *Tikuun Olam*; i.e., mighty Lord of the Universe, I, too, like you, leave a shred of my work undone. Who can outdo their Creator?

But the Lord was proud of his creation and his wisdom. And without hesitation He bestowed the capacity to love upon his human creatures. But only the capacity. It was their responsibility to fill the void. And He imbued a small dose even into the beasts. Some inherited much – some a little. Consequently, given the effectiveness of the procreation mechanism and the Lord’s granting of Adam’s wish, His breed still walks upon the earth. And Adam loved his helpmate, Eve. And on Eden’s green fields the wolves, sometimes, lie down with the rabbits.

The humor of Ted Roberts, The Scribbler on the Roof, appears in newspapers around the US, on National Public Radio, and numerous web sites. Check out his Web site: www.wonderwordworks.com. Blogsite: www.scribblerontheroof.typepad.com. His collected works *The Scribbler on The Roof can be bought at Amazon.com or lulu.com/content/127641*. ✨

ZIMMERMAN

(continued from page 9)

for a Jewish woman to give birth to a German child since the Germans would never accept that baby as German.

In the Bosnian rape camps, men watched other men rape; it excited them. Not only men but children sometimes had to watch the rapes; often the rape of their own mothers.

In the Holocaust, Dr. Afridi posited that religion played a role in the way women felt about their bodies and as a result, survivors were too ashamed to talk about their rape. Thus, scholars do not know the extent of rape during the Holocaust. She pointed out that rape was rare in the death camps. That said, not only the SS but also male Polish prisoners raped Jewish women. The SS used rape as a means of control.

Mehnaz's talk was so nuanced and replete with examples and information new to me, that I felt hungry for more. She graciously agreed to have breakfast with me the next morning at our hotel. Mehnaz described her tradition as an "Abrahamic one that encompasses both Judaism and Christianity. Islam teaches that G-d had three messages: the first, to Judaism; the second, to Christianity." Apparently, neither Jews nor Christians got it right, so there needed to be a third message: Islam. She learned the stories of Moses and Noah while growing up.

Having read an article about her in Haaretz the night before, I knew Mehnaz came to the study of the *Shoah* during her study abroad at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. She related to me that when she went to the Western Wall, she was conscious of the nearby Church of the Holy Sepulchre and could see the Dome of the Rock; cognizant that all three religions had sacred places in so tight a space.

As Mehnaz told me her story, one of spiritual awakening and presence, I sensed the humanity behind the competent university professor and saw the depths in her eyes as she relived this moment. Fueled by her knowledge of the beginning of the Jewish people in this space and their subsequent dispersion, she realized that Muslims do not know the story of the Jews. Muslims are not taught that Jews were twice expelled from this Promised Land, promised to them by G-d. Muslims do not know about the Jews' twin exiles or their suffering.

One of her primary goals is to combat Muslim Holocaust denial. She has done so by writing her book, *The Shoah through Muslim Eyes*. She is the first Muslim director of a Holocaust center, and she works hard to educate Muslims about Jews and the *Shoah*. She will be co-teaching a seminar

on interreligious education and the Holocaust with *Shoah* scholar Dr. Victoria Barnett at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. She also addresses the Jewish-Palestinian conflict in her classes.

Mehnaz pointed out how Jews and Palestinians are so politicized, precluding any meaningful understanding of one another. The solution, no doubt derived from that spiritual moment when she physically experienced the truth of all three religions (my words, not necessarily hers) in Jerusalem, is grounded in neither religion seeing itself as superior to the others.

"The only way we can move forward in interfaith cooperation... is for each religious community to have a self-critique. Is your own community capable of genocide and violence [toward the other]? Such self-reflection opens up the [capacity] to see others in their shortcomings and suffering....

"We have to stop seeing our own religion as superior or our own genocide as more important," she emphasized. She added that the *Shoah* was "unprecedented," a word I first heard from Yad Vashem's Holocaust historian Yehuda Bauer, in reference to the *Shoah*. Being unprecedented does not make it more important. I believe Mehnaz is teaching that we must project our humanity, flaws and all, onto the other and let our understanding usurp our fears, lest we wage genocide on one another out of that fear.

As the shuttle bus whisked us from the Holiday Inn Express to the lecture hall at Seton Hill University, where another full day packed with presentations and discussion would absorb over 100 Holocaust and genocide educators and students, I realized a profound parallel between Mehnaz and me.

Although much younger, we had a similar spiritual awakening, facilitated by the stones of Jerusalem. When I studied the Holocaust in NCCHE's Summer Institute at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem so many years ago, with Sister Gemma leading our group of Catholic Holocaust educators, I had the privilege of experiencing Christian Israel.

Previously, I traveled in Israel only with Jewish groups. I had no idea there were so many convents and monasteries. One of the highlights of that pilgrimage for me was watching pious Christians weep and pray as Sister Gemma led us on the last several Stations of the Cross in the Old City of Jerusalem, culminating in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Although I watched and did not participate in the prayers or the singing of psalms at each Station, I felt the piety and devotion of the group. For the first time in my life, I experienced the profundity of the Passion Story of Jesus, which, as a Jew, had always

eluded me. Although I could not put it into words, I came to appreciate the appeal of Jesus for so many.

One of the Stations, in the heart of a Muslim marketplace, like Mehnaz's experience at the Western Wall, made me acutely aware of the juxtaposition of the three great Abrahamic traditions in such a confined physical space. Little Muslim boys darted around our praying and singing group, indifferent to the tears streaming down the cheeks of some.

I wished that the filmmaker Federico Fellini could be resurrected to capture the irony of the moment and its deep spiritual significance to me. I vowed that the next time I went to Israel, I would study with a group of Muslims; and hopefully, have a similar breakthrough in my understanding. The experience motivated me to find a Jewish-Palestinian group back in California, with which I have affiliated ever since.

It was wonderful to be in a setting where people had the goal of working together, exploring ways to prevent and respond to atrocities arising from genocide, war, and sexual violence, all of which did not end with the Holocaust. The participants at the conference shared a common goal, of *Tikkun olam*, to repair the world, and to heal from past enmities by forging positive relationships.

Their endeavors contrast starkly with those of our politicians, who routinely tear down one another and highlight differences, as we see in the daily headlines. There is so much need for humanity to heal, to find answers, and to have leadership to bring us together.

How ironic for me to learn so much from a young Muslim woman and to discover how much we have in common. I look forward to encompassing that learning in my work as Holocaust educator in a Catholic university and in my Israeli-Palestinian dialogue group.

During the lunch break, I ducked back into the chapel, now empty. I enjoyed a moment of spirituality all to myself. The vibrant stained glass windows reminded me of those from my childhood's Temple Israel, in Terre Haute, Ind. I realized that spirituality in all three Abrahamic traditions is so similar, yet continues to divide us. My prayer is for humanity to continue to ask questions why, not so we will necessarily find answers, but until we no longer have to ask such questions.

Dr. Zimmerman is grateful to Dr. Wilda Kaylor, Associate Director of NCCHE, for allowing Zimmerman to use the computer in Dr. Kaylor's office to write this article.

Dr. Miriam Zimmerman is professor emerita at Notre Dame de Namur University (NDNU) in Belmont, Calif., where she continues to teach the Holocaust course. She can be reached at mzimmerman@ndnu.edu. ✨

Book Excerpt

RABBI/CANTOR JUDY GREENFELD
DR. TAMAR FRANKIEL

Spiritual Dimensions of Forgiveness



"I hereby forgive each person who angered or antagonized me, or sinned against me –

whether against my body or my property, my honor or anything of mine, whether accidentally or willfully, unintentionally or purposely, whether in speech or deed, thought or fantasy,

whether in this incarnation or in another incarnation,

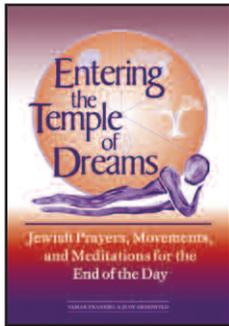
– everyone, and may no one be punished because of me."

~ *Bedtime forgiveness prayer from traditional Jewish texts*".

Entering the Temple of Dreams: Jewish Prayers, Movements, and Meditations for the End of the Day. By Tamar Frankiel and Judy Greenfield. Jewish Lights Publishing, 2000. 184 Pages.

From Chapter 3, "Hareni Mochel: Healing the Spirit through Forgiveness – The Gift of Raphael":

Flying in the face of all this comes the bedtime forgiveness prayer, (see sidebar above right) which asserts a general forgiveness to each and all, now and in the unknown past, not only offering forgiveness from the individual but also requesting an amnesty from God: "May no person be punished on my account." How can this be accommodated to the traditional Jewish sense of justice?



First, it is clear that in saying the forgiveness prayer, we are not forgiving on behalf of anyone else. This is a personal prayer, not one of the collective prayers commonly used in Jewish liturgy referring to "us." This removes one objection that was raised in the case of the Nazi soldier, who was asking one Jew to forgive what he had done to many others.

Yet, isn't it appropriate to expect that, before we forgive, the person who has harmed us will ask forgiveness? Normally, yes. This is part of the reciprocity that characterizes human society; it is the only way that justice can be done on this earth. That is why establishing courts of justice is a requirement not only for Jews but for non-Jews; it is one of the seven Noachide commandments. (Rabbinic tradition determined that the *Torah* contains seven commandments incumbent on all human beings: not to worship any deity except the One God; not to blaspheme, murder, steal, commit adultery, or be cruel to animals; and to set up courts of justice.)

But the situation of the bedtime forgive-

ness prayer is different. The crux of the matter is that this is not a court; the Bedtime Prayers have nothing to do with human society and its requirements. We are at a doorway, an entry point into another realm. We are preparing to enter into the dream world, where our souls will be traveling in the realm of spirit. We are moving into a realm not circumscribed or defined by ordinary human norms. We are about to make a soul journey.

This explains some bizarre features of the forgiveness prayer. Can you imagine a person asking forgiveness for a fantasy he had about harming you? "The other day I saw your new car and the thought popped into my mind: 'What would it be like to steal that car and drive it around the block?' I'm really sorry I did that to you." You might think that your friend should see a therapist, but you don't expect him to ask your forgiveness for the fantasy. And you don't have to ask him for forgiveness for thinking he should see a therapist.

Human society and human justice deal with actual harm done in the physical realm, or in *Kabbalistic* terms *Asiyah*, which is the world of action. Such harm may include emotional and mental suffering, but it can be supported by evidence available to anyone. Likewise, atonement and reparations have to be physical, such as money or another benefit that is given to the person who was harmed.

In personal relationships, we come a little closer to the spiritual realities of the forgiveness prayer. When a spouse says something inappropriate to his or her partner, the actual hurt may be so subtle that only the couple themselves would realize an injury had been done. "I'm sorry" maybe enough because the two people involved know each other so well that they can intuit the extent of the atonement that is needed. Yet there are good reasons why a bouquet of flowers often accompanies the "I'm sorry" of a husband, or an extra-special dinner comes with the "I'm sorry" of a wife. A sensitive person recognizes an extra measure of physical comfort can help the person

who was hurt. That is the way of the world of *Asiyah*.

In the higher worlds, which our souls have access to during sleep, the rules are still more refined. Every thought, every fantasy carries a certain reality. The energy is subtle and complex. We may think of a feather floating in the breeze, affected by every slight movement of air; yet even its slight weight pulls it slowly toward earth. When the soul enters into the dream world, we want it to be as weightless as possible so that it is free to do its work. Every emotion, every attachment to the earthly world, pulls it back toward the sleeping body and the dormant mind. The soul's first commitment is to heal our psyche, and it can spend the whole night doing that. But if we free it from the attachments of earthly life beforehand, from our pain and worldly involvement the soul can accomplish much more.

A Personal Story about Struggling to Forgive

Perhaps it will be possible to come to a deeper and more personal understanding through a story of how forgiveness can unfold in an individual's life. It is a true story—one of the authors story – about an event in which forgiveness seemed almost impossible:

"I grew up as one of five children in an upper-middle-class family in Ohio. My father was a prominent attorney, my mother a housewife until my siblings and I were teenagers. My mother then went back to school to get a degree in psychology. Both my parents were deeply involved in supporting Jewish causes, the State of Israel, Jewish education, and Jewish identification. We lived in the safety and beauty of a Cleveland suburb.

"My mother and father loved cultural events, and there was nothing unusual about their going out one night in December 1975 with another couple to see a play. After the play, as they were walking to their car, three teenage boys stopped them on the sidewalk and demanded money. One boy had a sawed-off shotgun, and he pointed it nervously at the group. As the men reached for their wallets, the gun suddenly went off. The boy with the gun had panicked. The boys ran and were caught by the police.

"The gun had been pointing at my father. He was killed immediately. My mother had to go home and tell her children the shocking news.

"I was in Canada visiting friends that night. I'll never forget being awakened, far too early in the morning, by my cousin Moe, who gave me the news and drove me to the airport. What I remember most profoundly after that is a sudden shift in

(see Book Excerpt, page 12)

BOOK EXCERPT

(continued from page 11)

my sense of time. Everything seemed to happen in slow motion. I could barely understand what my cousin said to me; I was frozen. Then I felt myself enclosed by a Presence of thick well-being that escorted me from his home onto the airplane. Once in the air, I looked at the beauty of the clouds sparkling in the sun, and I knew that, as great as the pain was, we were all going to be okay. I knew that a Presence was with me now, something I didn't have before. I experienced what could almost be a form of joy for my father and myself. This infused me with strength I didn't know I had; a strength that I felt must have come from some other source.

"As time passed, the reality of brokenness began to gnaw at my family and at me. Family gatherings became painful. I knew that life would never be the same again. I could no longer see the world as a carefree place, and I envied anyone who could.

"Questions consumed my mind. How could God let a wonderful, vibrant Jew come to an end like this? What did a girl of fifteen do to deserve being robbed of a father to share her life with? Why did it have to happen in such a terrible way? How would I ever heal this? Why did our justice system – which my father had worked for – not bring the boys to justice? How can I feel safe knowing that those boys – and others like them – were still on the streets? Many years later, I still found myself asking how I could help my children feel safe, knowing what I knew.

"Later, my mother told me the killer had written her from jail and asked her forgiveness. Could she dare to forgive? It seemed too difficult. My family rarely talks about the event now, but I wonder if my mother still replays in her mind the horrific scene of watching her husband being killed. I know I do.

"I was angry for a long time – at God, at the world, at my pain, and at myself for not being able to forget the pain. I was angry that I didn't have a father. As I grew older, I kept thinking of what my father missed. He never met my husband or my two beautiful children. He never got to see his fifteen grandchildren. He never got to read the books I wrote or watch me sing *Kol Nidrei* on *Yom Kippur*.

"This was the painful reality, and I couldn't change it. Sometimes I imagine I would have felt better if the boys responsible for the murder had been punished more severely. Because of their youth, they served a few years in a juvenile detention center and then were freed. But even if the punishment had been greater, I might still feel it wasn't enough. The question remained: Could I forgive?

"I had to forgive. That was the only way to heal the anger, sadness, and pain that I had lived with. It is the remedy, or at least the necessary catalyst for healing. In the process, I learned that if there is justice in the world or in the cosmos, forgiveness doesn't have a whole lot to do with it. They are two separate things.

"I continue to work and wrestle, like Jacob, with the angel of forgiveness. I can only pass along the wisdom of experiencing forgiveness, knowing that it is not the cure. I learned that I have to continue living life to the fullest. If I torment myself with questions or thoughts of revenge, I waste my energy. The best thing I can do is let the events of the past be what they were, and give my pain and my heart to God. That has been one of my hardest lessons in life. Another is whether I can trust and have faith in a God who allowed this to happen.

"I have found that God has been in my life to help me cope, in the same way that a Presence surrounded me when tragedy hit. I love the God that has helped me to move on, to sing and learn, to write and to express my Judaism. When I talk about having found the ability to forgive, I am not absolving that boy of his crime. His earthly payment may have been made, and God takes care of true justice. But I have been able to 'for-give' – to give the hateful energy of pain and revenge to God, and I have been released from it, most of the time.

"My father was famous for one saying that encapsulates his belief. He raised his glass of orange juice every morning and called out, 'Here's to love!' My lesson is that healing through unspeakable tragedy is God's even though it takes a good deal of work to uncover it.

"So Dad, here's to love!"

Rabbi/Cantor Judy Greenfeld After being ordained as both Rabbi and Cantor, Judy Greenfeld established the alternative Jewish Congregation and religious school, *Nachshon Minyan*, which serves the Los Angeles and San Fernando Valley. Greenfeld strives to encourage community members to reconnect to their faith and encourages a meaningful personal experience beyond the strict confines of more traditional synagogues. For further information, please visit: www.nachshonminyan.com

Dr. Tamar Frankiel, Ph.D. is President of the Academy for Jewish Religion, California, a transdenominational seminary educating rabbis, cantors, chaplains, and other community leaders. Prior to accepting this position in January 2013, she was the chief academic officer at AJRCA, and after several decades of teaching in universities. Her doctoral field is History of Religions (University of Chicago), and she has written many articles and several books on religion in the modern West. In Los Angeles, she has

Book Review



REVIEWED BY
PROFESSOR ARNOLD AGES

Examining Proposals for a Two State Solution

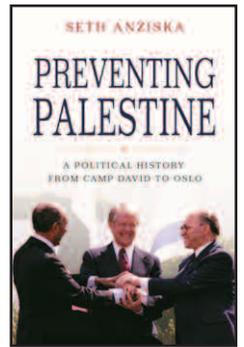
Preventing Palestine: A Political History from Camp David to Oslo. By Seth Anziska. Princeton University Press. 464 pgs. 2018.

This is simultaneously a moving, challenging and disturbing book, written by a young professor at University College London (England). It is a passionate, comprehensive and vital work of research and revelation written by a former *yeshiva* student at Gush Etzion, near Jerusalem who first recognized and understood the aspirations of the Palestinians under occupation as he was involved in mastering the Talmudic dialectic.

He did learn a great deal about the rabbinic grammar of logic but has used it in this book to inculcate Israel with the major responsibility for the inability of the Jewish State to resolve its problems with the Palestinians. This is unfortunate and this issue will be addressed in the latter part of this review.

This reviewer does not generally look at advertising blurbs on the back of the book jackets; however, the scholars listed there, both distinguished Israeli and Arab scholars, are of one mind in lavishing praise on Anziska's book. That is in itself a minor miracle and is supplemented in the essay by the author's extensive list of people whose works he read and with whom he carried on both correspondence and conversation. One name cited among his interlocutors is Avi Shlaim, an expatriate Israeli professor whose writings on Israel describe the state in terms of Dante's concentric circles of hell.

But that is getting ahead of the story. What the author has done is examine every conference held by international agencies from the Camp David encounter



(see Ages, page 13)



been a popular teacher of Jewish spirituality, and is author of *The Gift of Kabbalah*; *The Voice of Sarah: Feminine Spirituality and Traditional Judaism*; and co-author with Judy Greenfeld of two books on prayer, *Minding the Temple of the Soul* and *this book*. ★

Jewish Educator



BY AMY HIRSHBERG LEDERMAN

Fiddler on the Roof Revisited

In 1966, when I was just 13 years old, my parents surprised me by taking me to New York City to see Zero Mostel star as Tevye in *Fiddler on the Roof*.

I was enchanted by Shalom Aleichem's inspiration, *Tevye the Dairyman*, which was written in Yiddish in 1894. Set in a *shtetl* (Jewish village) in the Pale of Settlement, the story centers on Tevye and his attempt to preserve his Jewish faith and traditions as outside influences encroach on his family. Tevye learns to cope with daughters who wish to marry for love, each one moving farther away from Jewish customs and religion, until his youngest daughter runs off with a Russian soldier, breaking her father's heart and the traditions that define him.

Fast forward to 1970, when I was dating and my own parents were troubled when I brought home fellows who didn't fit the "Jewish doctor/lawyer" paradigm. My mother's cautionary words: "Every date is a prospective mate" haunted me throughout college and law school but never deterred me from dating a wide range of guys – few of whom were Jewish, let alone doctors or lawyers!

Thankfully, at the age of 28, a girlfriend fixed me up with Ray, a "nice Jewish doctor" from Los Angeles. I knew before the chips and salsa arrived that this man with the soulful eyes and beautiful smile would be my husband. And in him, I found my soulmate and best friend.

So where does that leave Tevye today? Would we find him sitting *shiva* (mourning) for his daughters or joining the more than 70 percent of Jewish families who are coping with and adjusting to the exponential increase in intermarriage?

The statistics are stunning: According to the 2012 Pew Research Center Survey of U.S. Jews (a telephonic survey of 3,475 Jews conducted nationwide), the overall intermarriage rate among all Jews is 58 percent, up from 43 percent in 1990 and 17 percent in 1970. Among non-Orthodox Jews, the intermarriage rate is 71 percent and according to a recent article by Sylvia Barack Fishman, Steven M. Cohen and Jack Wertheimer, experts in Jewish contemporary life and trends, 20 percent of Reform Jews marry other Jews and only 8 percent of the grandchildren

of intermarriages are being raised in the Jewish religion.

Most of us don't get a vote, let alone a veto, on the decisions and choices our children make – in life or in love. And while we may feel frustrated or disappointed when they make decisions that don't comport with our world views or personal hopes, we do have a choice as to how we react and respond to their autonomy and self determination.

With between 70 to 80 percent of today's Jews marrying non-Jews, staying open and welcoming to the non-Jewish partners our children choose is a necessity if we hope to remain relevant and a part of their lives. As my kids would say: "That train has already left the station." It's up to us if we want to be on it or not.

It seems clear that we can no longer play "hardball" with our children, threatening or demanding that they "marry Jewish." The better alternative is to find a way to leave the door and our hearts open so that staying connected to family and Judaism, in whatever form that takes, remains a viable option.

As parents, we can lead the way by remaining available to and interested in our children's choices thereby setting an example for them to remain open to us as well. We can become better role models, both as Jews and as parents. If our children experience our intentional commitment to communicate about their choices and challenges, if they witness our own renewed interest in Jewish learning and culture, we are more likely going to encourage, rather than damage, the relationship we seek to preserve with them.

Grandparents can play a very significant role in a family's dynamics. As the older generation, they can more easily transmit family traditions and values, particularly because their influence is more often accepted than ours is as parents. From our kid's perspective, it may matter little that lighting *Shabbat* candles or making a *seder* is preserved out of love for *Bubbie* rather than a dubious relationship to Jewish tradition.

While we may not always agree with or understand our children's choices, we can attempt to ensure a continuing, respectful give and take of ideas and values as they navigate the ups and downs of marriage and family life. For in the end, an open heart can permit us to understand who they are and how they want to live and love.

Amy Hirshberg Lederman is an author, Jewish educator, public speaker and attorney who lives in Tucson. Her columns in the AJP have won awards from the American Jewish Press Association, the Arizona Newspapers Association and the Arizona Press Club for excellence in commentary. Visit her website at amyhirshberglederman.com. ★

AGES

(continued from page 12)

with President Carter and Prime Minister Begin, through the Oslo deliberations and accord – in order to examine proposals for a two state solution (first proposed in a book by an Israeli professor originally from Canada).

Anziska has poured over the transcripts of all the documents produced by these deliberations, and if there is a villain in this piece, Menachem Begin emerges in that role because of the distinction he made between autonomy and sovereignty for the Palestinian Arabs under Israeli control. Naftali Bennet, a current Knesset member has used the term "autonomy on steroids" to update Begin's distinction.

In examining the various reasons the two state idea did not bear fruit, the author does introduce with rather extravagant detail the Egyptian involvement in trying to throttle Israel under Nasser and later Sadat; Anziska also describes the cold war rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union as well as the muddled thinking of Arafat and the PLO whose political aims vis a vis Israel were often thwarted by Arab governments who had their own agendas towards the State of Israel not all of which accorded with Palestinian views.

Perhaps the most cogent explanation for the impasse on solving the vexing problem of occupation was the comment once made by Ambassador Kurtzer who quoted Faisal Husseini to the effect "that there has never been a case with a people who have been able to negotiate their own way out of occupation." All this is interesting but beside the point.

Professor Anziska should perhaps write his next book and call it "Preventing Israel" – in which 70 years of Jewish statehood has been punctuated by wars, terrorism and violence from Syria, Lebanon, Egypt, Iraq and Gaza and applauded by large numbers of Palestinian Arabs whose leader currently offers monetary compensation for attacks on Israeli citizens.

Given this historical background it is no wonder that Israel cannot countenance the creation of another armed Gaza next door.

Professor Arnold Ages is "Distinguished Emeritus Professor" University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario Canada and "Scholar-in-Residence" Beth Tzedec Synagogue Toronto, Canada. ★

Experienced Rabbi available via Skype
to help prepare students for their
**Bar Mitzvah, or for adults to study Torah,
Talmud, Trope or Jewish Mysticism.**
To find out more, please contact him at:
jliindiana@gmail.com or 317-698-6423.

Media Watch



BY RABBI ELLIOT B. GERTEL

FBI and Murphy Brown on CBS's New Season



With the new series, *FBI*, producer Dick Wolf triumphs on CBS as he had dominated NBC with his *Law and Order* and *Chicago PD*, *Fire* and *MD* series. *FBI* is well-paced and well-acted, but not without its annoying aspects.

Wolf wasted no time broaching a Jewish theme in his pilot episode, for which he is credited with the story, with co-creator Craig Turk listed as the writer. It is discovered that the detonator in the bombing of an apartment in a black neighborhood, in which a child is killed, is similar to that at an attempted synagogue bombing.

Gradually, our FBI agents focus on a Mr. Lawrence, a Neo-Nazi intent on blowing up African Americans and Jews. We learn that he opposed the opening of a synagogue and then tried to bomb it because it was "bad for America." His rationale was that New York already has more synagogues than any other city and that that synagogue was built on land that a hospice wanted to purchase.

It seems that Lawrence's Fund for National Greatness (a writers' attack on the Trump Administration?) is hemorrhaging, so Lawrence comes up with the idea of accepting money from the MS13 gang's drug business in order to replenish that fund, in payment for bombing black gangs who target Salvadorans whom MS13 wants to protect. Lawrence sees this as his contribution to a scenario in which "mud people blow each other up."

I have to admit that the writers have come up with a clever conspiracy. But did they think out the "Jewish" angle in all of this? Does the hospice reference end up making the synagogue builders look like land-grabbers? Was it necessary to give Lawrence any "rationale" for his hate group? And why gratuitously bring a synagogue bombing into the story line altogether?

With regard to the Muslim faith, by the way, this series is careful not to offer any rationales for resentment. In the second episode, a teenage girl falls prey to a Muslim terrorist organization which recruits jihadists with the promise of husbands and an ideal Muslim life in a Middle Eastern paradise.

According to FBI agent Maggie Bell (Missy Peregrym, of *Rookie Blue* fame),

this terrorist group exploits "teenage girls trying to find out who they are." A dark jihad web site threatens: "You will die by the hands of your own children." We are told that such jihadist outfits all have media departments and web site administrators, the marks of "terrorism in the modern age."

When the FBI catches up with the angry jihadist who has leaped from the anonymity of the internet to American soil, Muslim FBI agent Omar Adom Zidan (Zeeko Zaki) tells him: "Guys like you shouldn't get to say Allah's name." Here there is no ambiguity about terrorism being compatible with Islam, as there was about synagogues outbidding (or sabotaging?) other worthy organizations.

There are no Jewish FBI personnel in this series, at least so far. Maybe that is just as well, given the bad impressions left here by the handling of Jewish themes. I, for one, hope that the pilot episode will fulfill the quota on Jewish themes for the entire run of the series. Enough is enough.

Murphy Brown

CBS has revived the *Murphy Brown* series (1988–1998), starring Candice Bergen as a veteran newscaster given an early morning show. Obviously, CBS hopes to raise ratings through the rebooting of a once popular show, with most of the principals reassembled.

So far, the series has not risen above long pious sermons by Murphy critical of the current Washington administration, even though her son Avery (Jake McDorman) has been given the rival time-slot at the "Wolf Network," a Fox Network parody.

I dreaded the return of the Miles Silverberg (Grant Shaud) character, Murphy's sniveling and neurotic producer who always had to attribute his anxieties and fears to his being Jewish. Sure enough, in the pilot episode by producer/writer Diane English, Miles is afraid to return to production work on a news show. (We are informed that he spent two years on *The View*, and that the *Game of Thrones* atmosphere of gossip and back-stabbing led him to have a nervous breakdown.) Yet Miles seems to find his

way back to his old occupation without mention of his Jewish background.

Still, the pilot had to mention Nazis, after Murphy proclaims, during the show's incessant slamming of the Trump Administration, "O.J. is out, Nazis are in." Reporter Frank Fontana (Joe Regalbuto) feels constrained to declare that he hates Nazis.

The rebooted *Murphy Brown* continues an old standing joke of Murphy's being a difficult boss whose impossible demands make for a revolving door for secretaries. In the pilot episode, Hillary Clinton is trotted out to joke about her "experience with e-mails" and to play a "look-alike" of a former Secretary of State. While such an undignified parody was thought funny, I cannot say. The second episode comes up with an inebriated new assistant for Murphy (with Tequila on her breath from the previous night), who has to be named Addie Abrams (of course). This secretary/assistant can't remember phone calls from personages like Angela Merkel.



In the second episode, written by Tom Palmer, Miles Silverberg has to admit that he "occasionally fantasizes" about Sarah Huckabee Sanders: "I have a thing for domineering women. It started with my Hebrew School teacher, Estelle Fink. She had a smoking eye and a sneer I found arousing at [age] 13. I've said too much." How tasteless is that?

When Murphy resolves to crash a White House press conference though President Trump has banned her from attending any such event, Miles goes along but then ruminates: "Trespassing on White House grounds is a felony. What kind of executive producer am I?" "The small sweaty kind who makes everyone nervous," he is told. And all of this "Jewish neurosis" just so Murphy can preach predictable platitudes to a facsimile of the current press secretary.

The fourth episode, written by Laura Krafft, brought back in spades the old Miles. Bullied by network manager Diane Macomber (Merle Dandridge), afraid that Murphy will disobey Diane's mandate to

(see Gertel, page 15)

As I Heard It



BY MORTON GOLD

Song Not Appropriate for Worship

A lovely song with which I suspect many of you readers are familiar has a beautiful tune, and is so melodious that I used to play it *as a bridal march*. It has evolved over the years and in many congregations it is used in the *Musaf K'dushah*, and more often than not the music for two prayers. The name of this song is: "*Erev Shel Shoshanim*". This song has a composer, Moshe Dor, and a lyricist, Yosef Haddar.

This melody (quoting Google) is widely used by dancers for veil work. Although originally released in Hebrew, the song is popular throughout the Middle East. In Arabic-speaking countries it is known as "Yarus", and Armenian lyrics have also been recorded by Harry Saroyan using a song title of "Varter."

The original artist was Yafa Yarkoni, who recorded it in 1957. A year later, it was recorded by the duet HaDua'im and their version was the one that became a hit in Israel. In 1966, Zvi Hillman choreographed an Israeli folk dance to this song which has become popular with international folk dance clubs.

An (uncredited) English Translation of the song is as follows: "Evening of Roses, Let's go out to the grove, Myrrh, spices and incense are a carpet to walk on. CHORUS: The night comes slowly, A breeze of roses blows, Let me whisper a song to you quietly, A song of love. At dawn, a dove is cooing, Your hair is filled with dew, Your lips in the morning are like a rose, I'll pick it for myself."

Just look at the index of any new prayer book, and anyone who quoted a phrase from someone is given a wealth of information, everything but the author's mothers' maiden name. Sorry, I could not help digressing here. My original point was that in our "sacred" services we are using a tune with very secular words, and replacing those words with sacred text.

What's next? Singing the tune of "On Top of Old Smoky" to the words of "*Adon Olam*"? This is so reprehensible that I fear that someone may actually do so. Why? It's a tune that is familiar and the congregation will sing it.

AH...but SHOULD THEY and WHY NOT? No, they should not simply because it is not appropriate or suitable for

worship. I hear any number of tunes that fall into this category. One with the words of *L'dor Vador* would not be out of place at a circus. Another to the text of *Osey Shalom* has three different phrases. The first borrows from Runshinsky's *Sheyn Vie Di L'Voneh*, the second is identical to the Al Jolson favorite "I'm Sitting On Top of the World" and the thirds with the text "*Shalom Aleynu*" comes from a nursery tune I composed in 1969. If someone can demonstrate that this was known prior to 1969, I will acknowledge my use of it. There are no shortages of other criminal doings.

(As I recall one of the Big Ten Suggestions is: *Thou Shall Not Steal*) BUT, someone may suggest, we are simply recasting these tunes, giving them new life. Hogwash. Has anyone seen an asterisk stating that the melody of *Mi Komocho* was written by Moshe Dor, and published by...?

Personally I do not feel that recasting that melody with sacred text is appropriate. Something just as insidious is at work here. In the new *Mahzor*, the word *Hazzan* has been eliminated and replaced by some entity called a "leader." The implication is that any *shmegeggi*, even blessed with a tin ear, but who can pronounce the Hebrew (or English) is qualified to lead services.

A *Hazzan* is assuredly a "leader," but anyone else, even with the designation is NOT. Over the last several decades, in order to increase attendance and congregational "participation" temple choirs have been done away with, (who has time, who needs them, what is this, a concert? And other Babbitt type of stupidities.) The title of Cantor has been kept, but that person's main job is to train students for *bar/bat mitzvah*, and read the *Torah*, and/or train others to do so.

Let us be candid. All these remedies have not achieved the hoped for results. Children have soccer, baseball and other activities scheduled for Saturday mornings; there are professional football, basketball and baseball games scheduled. Not to mention the lure or the necessity of shopping by busy, busy households. Besides, why should overworked and over scheduled families go to temple? When by necessity they attend a *bar/bat mitzvah*, they find the few "regulars" singing Ukrainian or Polish inspired tunes with Hebrew words, and usually at too fast a tempo.

Should they have to attend a service at another time for social reasons, the bulk of the time is spent by discussing (and discussing, and discussing) the *Torah* portion and then another twenty minutes or so actually reading it. Is there any kind of religious, musical, aesthetic experience gained by simply attending a Sabbath service?

If one has a *yahrzeit*, the congregation tolerates the reciting of *Kaddish* and then we seem to want something jolly to conclude

GERTEL

(continued from page 14)

interview a right wing writer and former Trump Administration staffer, Miles reflects (or complains), "I'm a 5'7" Jew with small calves and colitis. I've had a lifetime of not getting what I wanted." And this just so that Murphy can run into the writer and crowd-stirrer at her favorite dive in order to preach to him and tell him off. When he uses the expression, "swarthy crowd," to describe illegal immigrants, she angrily reminds him that opponents of (legal) immigration once used that very expression to refer to Italians and Jews"—and, she adds, to Irish people like this writer.

Miles does seem to have found a little bit of courage, but the whining remains a tribute to the depiction of his character the first time around.

Will Miles grow as a character this time around? I rather doubt that the writers, producers and actors are capable of that, given the tired talking points which constitute the "political commentary" on this show. People are sick and tired of such talking points from the left and from the right — or at least they should be.

Rabbi Elliot Gertel has been spiritual leader of congregations in New Haven and Chicago. He is the author of two books, What Jews Know About Salvation and Over the Top Judaism: Precedents and Trends in the Depiction of Jewish Beliefs and Observances in Film and Television. He has been media critic for The National Jewish Post & Opinion since 1979. ★



the service. If anyone can be a leader (or president?) regardless of training, we then need melodies that can be sung by that "leader" that can appeal to the tastes of 6th and 7th grade students. Jewish kids used to sing well, (also play the violin, clarinet and a host of other instruments.) Those were the days.

What I would like to see happen is for our leaders, and if not them, then "We the People", to realize that this experiment in do-it-yourself type of service is as inappropriate as the tunes we are singing. We need professionals as well as interested and dedicated lay people to be organists, sing in choirs, and make music to praise and glorify the name of the ONE.

We no longer come to *shul* simply to amuse ourselves. Yes, "*Erev Shel Shoshanim*" is a lovely tune I would agree. Let us sing it if we wish, anywhere we would or could, but not in *shul*, please. *Es Passt Nicht* (It doesn't fit). Ofttimes a Yiddish phrase is more telling than a well translated English equivalent. (It's really not suitable).

Dr. Morton Gold is a composer, retired educator and the proud son of a Hazzan. ★

Seen on the Israel Scene



BY SYBIL KAPLAN

Judith and Cheese for Chanukah

Mention food for *Chanukah* and everyone immediately responds – *latkes* and *sufganiyot*. But someone may say cheese pancakes. Cheese? Why?

The *Shulchan Aruch*, or Code of Jewish Law, written in the 1500s by Rabbi Joseph Ben Ephraim Caro, a Jew from the Iberian Peninsula, is a digested version of commentaries on laws in the *Talmud* [commentaries on the first five books of the Bible]. This *Shulchan Aruch* is meant to be an authoritative volume on commandments.

In this volume, supposedly there is a legend that dairy dishes and cheese pancakes were to be eaten for *Chanukah* to commemorate the bravery of a woman named Judith, who was a Hasmonean, the same clan as the Maccabee family.

So who is Judith and why do some Jews honor her at *Chanukah*? The *Book of Judith* is actually part of the Apocrypha (books not included in the Bible as read by Jews and Protestants). Originally written in Hebrew, the 16 chapters of the standard version of the *Book of Judith* are in Greek. It is surmised that the author of this book was a Jew who lived and wrote in Palestine and probably lived near Shechem.

In the *Book of Judith*, interestingly enough, Judith is not mentioned in the first half of the story. In the second half, first her lineage is described then we are told that this young woman was a widow for three years and four months, widow of Manasseh, who belonged to her tribe and who suffered some kind of heat stroke while overseeing the barley harvest and subsequently died in the town of Bethulia in northern Samaria where they lived.

We read: "She was beautiful in appearance and was very lovely to behold." Judith was also wealthy, having been left gold and silver and menservants and maidservants and cattle and lands.

In the story, it is related that Bethulia was under siege by the army of Holofernes, Commander-in-Chief of the 6th century BCE Assyrian King, Nebuchadnezzar. Holofernes was a soldier who wanted to destroy any people who did not support his king. In the story, he cut off the water supply of Bethulia. After 34 days, when the town leaders were ready to surrender to Holofernes, the town magistrate, Uzziah, suggested five more days as a compromise

to see if G-d would intervene.

Of course the people were thirsty, and Uzziah told Judith to pray for rain. She was not happy with that suggestion, so she convinced the magistrates to let her try to do something independently – "Stand at the town gate tonight so that I may go out with my maid... Only, do not try to find out what I am doing; for I will not tell you until I have finished what I am about to do."

First, she put ashes on her head and uncovered the sackcloth, then she prayed to G-d to hear her, and she prayed for strength to G-d to strike down the enemy. "Give to me, a widow, the strong hand to do what I plan."

She then went to her house with her maid, removes her widow's clothes, which she had worn for the past three years, washed her body, anointed herself, braided her hair and dressed beautifully as when she was married. She adorned herself with bracelets and chains and rings and earrings and ornaments – "to entice the eyes of all the men who might see her."

She and her maid then went outside the city gates with wine and oil, roasted grain, fig cakes and bread, and dishes on which to eat. Together they went down to the gate of Bethulia where Uzziah and the elders stood. They opened the gate and she and her maid walked down the mountain, past the valley until they were out of sight.

She was greeted by the Assyrian soldiers who took her into custody. They inquired who was she and where was she going. She told them she was a woman of the Hebrews fleeing from them. She told the soldiers she had information on the Israelites for Holofernes and she would show him how to capture the hill country.

The soldiers then chose 100 men to take her to his tent. The men who were with Holofernes left his tent, and Judith went inside where Holofernes was laying on a bed under a canopy woven with purple and gold and emeralds and precious stones. She bowed before him, and his servants helped her up. They talked, and she told him she would give him information so he could attack Bethulia. Holofernes and his servants were impressed.

Holofernes offered Judith food and drink, but she refused. She then left and went to sleep in her tent. She remained in his camp for three days and each night, she bathed in a nearby spring and then returned to her tent.

On the fourth day, Holofernes asked his eunuch to persuade Judith to come to a banquet in his tent. It appeared she had gained his trust. This time, she accepted. She adorned herself, and her maid entered his tent and placed skins on the ground near where Holofernes was sitting.

When Judith entered, we read:

"Holofernes' heart was ravished with her and his passion was aroused, for he had been waiting for an opportunity to seduce her from the day he first saw her."

Judith drank and ate what her maid prepared. "Holofernes was greatly pleased with her, and drank a great quantity of wine, much more than he had ever drunk in any one day since he was born."

His servants left them alone, and he fell asleep dead drunk. Only Judith and Holofernes were in his tent. Her maid was outside. Judith prayed for help from G-d. "Now indeed is the time to help your heritage and to carry out my design to destroy the enemies who have risen up against us."

She then took his sword, took hold of his hair and struck his neck twice and cut off his head. She pulled his body off the bed and covered it with the canopy. She gave the head to her maid to put in their food bag. They left the camp and returned to Bethulia.

When the men of the city heard her voice, they called the elders to gather at the city gate and open it for her. Judith took the head of Holofernes out of the bag and showed it to them. They were astonished, and they thanked G-d. She told them to hang the head on the wall. At day break, then they should take up their weapons and look as if they were going to attack the Assyrian outpost. Holofernes' men will run to Holofernes, they will panic and flee and the men of Bethulia will pursue them and cut them down.

At dawn, the men of Bethulia hung the head of Holofernes on the highest part of the wall and waited at the mountain passes with their weapons. The Assyrian soldiers could not believe their eyes, so they went to Holofernes' tent and found his body on the floor. The eunuch ranted and raved about what this woman had done.

One of Holofernes' men is so shocked, he wants to be circumcised himself and asks to become one of them. The high priest came from Jerusalem to salute Judith and bless her. He gave the tent of Holofernes and his possessions to Judith. Then all the women of Israel ran together to see Judith and they blessed her and performed a dance in her honor. They adorned her with olive branches, and she went before all the people in the dance, leading all the women, and the men followed the women.

The procession continued to Jerusalem where Judith took the possessions of Holofernes and offered them as a gift to the Lord. The celebrations in Jerusalem lasted three months.

Then Judith and the townspeople returned to Bethulia. Judith continued to live there and rejected all the proposals

(see Kaplan/Israel, page 17)

My Kosher Kitchen



BY SYBIL KAPLAN

Not Just Potato *Latkes*

An old folk proverb does say: “*Chanukah latkes* teach us that one cannot live by miracles alone.” Joan Nathan, Jewish food writer and cookbook author, contends the word *latke* is not Yiddish as everyone presumes but stems from “a Russian word, *latka*, and a pastry, from obsolete Russian *oladka* or flat cake of leavened wheat dough.” This, in turn, probably came from a Middle Greek word, *eladion*, or oil cake, stemming from *elaion*, meaning olive oil.

Potato pancakes do seem to have originated among poor Eastern European Jews, but potatoes did not become a staple until mid-19th century. John Cooper, in *Eat and Be Satisfied – A Social History of Jewish Food*, comments that Jews from Lithuania ate pancakes made from potato flour for *Chanukah* and had borrowed the idea from the Ukrainians who made a potato pancake dish with goose fat called *kartoflani platske*, which they ate for Christmas.

Since *Chanukah* fell about the same time, and there were plenty of geese to provide goose fat or *schmaltz*, we could conclude that *schmaltz* became a substitute for oil. Jews living in the Pale of Settlement in the 17th century probably adapted it for *Chanukah* as a way to dress potatoes differently for the holiday. Cooper also states that many Eastern European Jews ate buckwheat *latkes* for *Chanukah*, while Polish Jews made *placki*, pancakes, from potato flour and fried them in oil.

But what happens when you get tired of potato *latkes*? Here are some variations for *Chanukah*.

Old Jerusalem Zucchini Pancakes

(Adapted from *The Delights of Jerusalem* by Rena Valero, Steimatzky, 1985) (20 patties)

6 zucchini
salt
salt and pepper to taste
1 diced onion
2 Tbsp. chopped parsley
2 Tbsp. chopped dill
2 large eggs
1/2 cup *matzoh* meal
1 Tbsp. vegetable oil
oil for frying

Grate unpeeled zucchini into a strainer. Sprinkle with salt and drain for 30 minutes. Squeeze to remove remaining liquid.

KAPLAN/ISRAEL

(continued from page 16)

from men who wanted to marry her. At the age of 105, she freed her maid and distributed her property since she had no children. She died and was buried in a cave in Bethulia with her husband.

“No one ever again spread terror among the Israelites during the lifetime of Judith, or for a long time after her death.”

One might ask, is there any historical truth to this story? Although the original Hebrew



In a mixing bowl, combine zucchini, salt, pepper, onion, parsley, dill, eggs, *matzoh* meal and 1 Tbsp. oil. Heat oil in a frying pan. Form zucchini mixture into patties. Fry for a few a minutes on each side. Drain on paper towels.

Carrot-Parsnip *Latkes* (16 patties)

(source unknown)

5 grated parsnips
2 grated carrots
1/4 cup flour
2 eggs
1 tsp. dry chives or onion
1 tsp. dry parsley
1/2 tsp. salt
oil

Grate parsnips and carrots into a mixing bowl. Toss with flour. Add eggs, chives or onion, parsley and salt and mix. Heat oil in a frying pan. Make *latkes* by hand, add to oil, and fry until brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels.

Vegetable-Feta *Latkes* (10–12 patties)

(source unknown)

1 cup grated carrots
2-1/2 cups grated zucchini
1 cup grated potatoes or
1 cup grated kohlrabi
1/2 tsp. salt
3 eggs
salt and pepper to taste
3/4 cup flour
1/2 cup chopped fresh parsley
1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
1/4 cup vegetable oil

Place carrots, zucchini and potato or kohlrabi in a colander. Cover with cheese-cloth or paper towels and squeeze out as much liquid as possible. Sprinkle salt and let them drain 15 minutes. Then squeeze in paper towels. Place vegetables in a mixing bowl. Add eggs, salt and pepper, flour, parsley and cheese. Heat oil in a frying pan. Form mixture into patties. Fry in hot oil until brown on both sides. Drain on paper towels. ✨

versions did not remain and the story was translated into Greek, it appears that the king was Antiochus Epiphanes, so the period of the story was Hellenistic when the Maccabees were battling their enemies.

The legend in the Mishnah says Judith fed Holofernes cheese to make him thirsty. Since Judith lived about the same time as those of the clan from which the Maccabee brothers came, and they are the heroes of *Chanukah*, around the 14th century, some Jews instituted the eating of cheese pancakes and cheese blintzes at *Chanukah* in honor of her heroism.

Indeed, cheese is mentioned in some ancient versions of Judith 10:5, which list the foods that Judith took with her when she left the besieged city to visit Holofernes.26 Nevertheless, [the book of] Judith 12:17–20, which describes the way in which Judith got Holofernes to go to sleep, says explicitly that Judith gave him wine to drink and not a cheese dish!

Meanwhile, many Jews retain the custom of honoring Judith by eating cheese for *Chanukah*, and the custom of eating dishes like cheese, cheesecake and blintzes emerged from the story of Judith. Some believe the salty cheese that Judith served Holofernes may have been in the form of fried cakes. Recipes for ricotta pancakes in Italy and feta cheese pancakes in Greece may be modern versions of these ancient fried cakes.

Today many people serve sour-cream pancakes at *Chanukah* in memory of Judith. Others serve *rugelach*, a half-moon cream-cheese cookie, which may be a far cry from the original cheesecake, but is nevertheless a melt-in-the-mouth delicacy perfect for the fanciest party.

Sephardim typically prepare various rudimentary doughnuts (*bimuelos* and *loukoumades*) and fried pastries, such as *shamlia*s (fried dough strips) and *zalabiya* (batter poured into hot oil in a thin spiral, similar to Amish funnel cakes, and coated with syrup or honey). North African Jews enjoy *debla*, dough rolled to resemble a rose, deep-fried and dipped in sugar or honey. Italians honey-dip deep-fried diamond-shaped pieces of yeast dough called *frittelle*. The Bene Israel in India prepare milk-based fried pastry called *gulab jamun*. If you want to add a new custom to your *Chanukah* celebrations, serve some cheese dishes.

Sybil Kaplan is a foreign correspondent, book reviewer, food writer and lecturer. She has compiled and edited nine kosher cookbooks; she writes the food column for The National Jewish Post & Opinion; she created and leads weekly walks in English in Jerusalem’s Jewish food market, Machaneh Yehudah; and writes the restaurant features (photographs by her husband, Barry) for the website *Janglo*. They live in Jerusalem. ✨

SILVER

(continued from page 20)

of Montana who still lives there. He and his wife, Flo, moved there in 1949. They borrowed a *Torah* from the Helena congregation for son Bert's *bar mitzvah* after that congregation became inactive. The *Torah* lived in the Chessin's home for 10 years until the mid 1970s, and is now part of Har Shalom.

Chessin the elder said the first recorded Jew living there was Jacob Leiser, "who emigrated from Germany to the East Coast, sailed around the horn to California, then walked from there to Missoula" in 1870, which by then was already an established trading post.

Advance 137 years to 2007 when the leadership of the congregation took a leap, arranged financing through a local bank, purchased what had been a funeral home, and that became the home of Har Shalom, now celebrating 11 years in their own *shul*.

"For over 60 years, our Missoula community has gathered for Jewish holiday celebrations, religious education, services, and community service projects. Har Shalom offers *Shabbat* services, *Torah* study, Hebrew classes, festival celebrations, *b'nai mitzvah*, and other life cycle events – led by our resident Spiritual Leader and Student Rabbi, Laurie Franklin, and lay leaders. We also host concerts, lectures, social gatherings and outdoor activities," said Bert Chessin, two years ago. The congregation commissioned an eight-foot Menorah that now stands in front of the *shul* (below). It was built by students at Missoula College.



For several years, Lolo, Montana Hot Springs, a natural hot springs spot, has been the *Yom Kippur mikveh* for the congregation. Popular with Indians and explorers over 200 years ago, well before Lewis and Clark arrived in 1805, Lolo is 45 minutes from Missoula near the Idaho border. The naturally-fed springs maintain a temperature of 104 degrees.

Born and raised in Stuyvesant Town, in New York City in a family staunchly identified as Jewish, Franklin's experience cuts a wide swath from animal husbandry on a farm to academia as a rabbinic student. Her mother's parents were Yiddishists: childhood sweethearts, both

were born in Lithuania, her grandfather left for the U.S. to avoid conscription in the czarist's army. Her grandmother came over ten years later, and they were married in Kansas City. Her mother's first language was Yiddish.

"[My grandfather] died before I was born, but he was a legendary teacher. He loved kids," she exclaimed. "In those days before throw-away tissues, he carried a handkerchief, and if he saw a kid with a dirty face or a runny nose, he would stop to chat with them and clean them up. There is a school named for him, the Leib Shapiro Folkschul."

Her father was born in Ukraine but the family fled to Romania when he was a toddler, and a year later arrived in the U.S. "He was a mechanical whiz, and knew drafting well. As a Seabee in the Navy he worked on the early development of radar. He was not interested in rising in rank, but he had enlisted and had to stay," she chuckled. "He survived two beach landings during the war, and felt lucky just to be alive, basically celebrating that every day." Many soldiers perished during that era in WWII. Her parents were very active in social issues and campaigns during the 1940s and 1950s, an outgrowth of their Jewish belief in the pursuit of justice, and inculcated that responsibility in their children.

Franklin's sister lives in Helena, Mont., served in both houses of the state legislature and in the governor's office, and was a senior analyst in the Department of Health and Human Services. She currently is a lobbyist in the Montana legislature targeting health-related issues. "I'm very proud of her," she noted. Both sisters are seemingly steeped in *Tikkun Olam*.

"One of the things I'm very excited about is Har Shalom's connection to the larger Missoula community. I am a founding member of SALAM, Standing Alongside America's Muslims, which we began in 2016 during the presidential campaign to counter the anti-Muslim rhetoric. The next year we were responding to anti-Semitic activity in Whitefish, Mont. That climate of intolerance and targeting specific groups continues in this country right now because of the current leadership," says Franklin.

She is a board member of the Montana Human Rights Network, and helped found the clergy-member Montana Interfaith Network. Har Shalom is a member of the Missoula Interfaith Collaborative, which is currently focused on creating a shelter for homeless families in Missoula. The city has adult homeless shelters but inadequate resources for families. She says Montana is a low-wage state, which makes it difficult for families to find affordable housing. She notes there is a ten-year plan to end homelessness in Missoula but it is an uphill battle. The other two projects for the

Collaborative include prisoner re-entry to the community at large, and food drives for local food pantries.

Franklin zig-zagged across the country to gain her formal education, finally earning her BS degree in Washington state where her husband, Sandy, was doing post-doctoral work. "For seven years we rented a house that had acreage, so I raised goats, sheep, ducks, chickens and rabbits, and had a large vegetable garden, canned some, fed ourselves. It was definitely subsistence farming," she says.

They moved back east to Baltimore for more post-doctoral work, then back to Seattle, and finally from 1982 to 2002 they settled in NYC where her husband worked for Mt. Sinai Medical Center in the biochemistry department. "We raised our children, and I had a variety of jobs: I worked as a nature guide at a nature preserve, as a crew member on a replica of Henry Hudson's 1608 tall ship and as an editorial assistant for a publishing house. When the opportunity came up for Sandy to be a professor of biochemistry at the University of Montana, we said, 'Is there a bagpipe band, and is there a Jewish community?' The answer was yes to both, so we agreed – 'We can make a life there,' " she laughed.

There had been three student rabbis at Har Shalom before Franklin. "I had grown up in a secular environment and knew little about Jewish worship or Jewish liturgy, but I had attended a Yiddishists Folkschul and learned Yiddish poetry, but that was about worker's unions and social justice. What struck a chord was holding a Jewish music jam at my house, and (then) congregation president Toba Winston asked if I was interested in attending a synagogue musician's workshop. That awakened the spiritual connection in me, and in conjunction with leadership skills I gained from the Union for Reform Judaism, that catapulted me into the rabbinic studies program. When we acquired the building in 2007 we began holding services every Friday night."

A Chabad opened a few years ago, but Franklin does not see that as a focus: "I have a good relationship with the couple who lead the Chabad, but the people who go there would not likely come to our services anyhow," she noted. "They participate differently. We just have a different orientation in our religious lives."

Although the membership has grown slowly recently, the Har Shalom congregation itself has burgeoned, as it goes from strength to strength. World Jewry sends you much *mazel*, as we lift our glasses to you. *L'Chayim!* (www.har-shalom.org)

Matthew J. Silver is an Indianapolis-based writer, researcher, repairer of wood furniture and folk singer, mjsilverhouse@gmail.com. ✨

Saving lives. It's in our blood.



Efrayim Yanko
Paramedic, Kiryat Gat MDA Station

Efrayim saves lives every day, but he doesn't do it alone. Gifts such as yours help to mobilize our EMTs and paramedics who carry more than 700,000 Israelis to safety each year. We're Israel's emergency medical and ambulance service, Magen David Adom.

Together, we'll make this year a healthy one for millions of Israelis. Help save lives in Israel.

Saving lives. It's in our blood — and it's in yours, too.

Save a life in Israel with a gift to support Magen David Adom. Donate on AFMDA.org/give or call 888.674.4871



Missoula Welcomes First Residential Ordained Rabbi to Har Shalom

The Jewish Post & Opinion

1389 W 86th St. #160
Indianapolis, IN 46260

PRESORTED
STANDARD
US POSTAGE
PAID
INDIANAPOLIS, IN
PERMIT NO. 1321

BY MATTHEW J. SILVER

When I first began visiting Congregation Har Shalom in Missoula, Montana 15 years ago, services were being held in the local public library and in a Methodist church. Nestled in the Bitterroot Mountains on the Lewis & Clark Expedition trail in the southwest corner of the state, peripatetic rabbinical responsibilities resided with Rabbi Gershon Winkler from Santa Fe, N.M. Although Orthodox-trained, he combined new age practices and Indian chanting with Judaism for a religious practice he called Flexidox. He would come for Jewish holidays and the occasional *b'nai mitzvah*, appealing largely to younger adherents.



Rabbi-to-be Laurie Franklin in front of their handmade ark.

Although he did not agree with all of Winkler's practices, Dr. Scot Green, a dentist who moved from New York many years ago to take advantage of the ski slopes, engaged Rabbi Winkler to officiate at the *bar mitzvah* of his two sons. Additionally, several other student rabbis have come from Los Angeles for services from time to time.

Rental rabbis no more: Come January 2019 the ordination by the Aleph Alliance of Jewish Renewal of Rabbi Laurie Franklin will mark an historical first: She will be the first rabbi living in Missoula.

Speaking with Franklin recently, she said, "I have studied in the rabbinic program since 2011. I spent a year in Israel, 2012–2013, returned to the congregation in Missoula as the student rabbi. The congregation has been in the process of self evaluation and discernment over whether we want to be a congregation that has an ordained rabbi, and the financial challenges presented by that."

She says the congregation has redefined its core values reflecting a progressive egalitarian Judaism in Montana. Franklin: "We just celebrated our one year anniversary of *Beit Midrash* classes, which are every Monday evening. There are three aspects of

Judaism: prayer, community activism and learning. Saturday mornings we have *Torah* study, where we discuss the weekly *parsha*, the commentary and *Haftarah*."

In 2007, I visited Missoula, and introduced the story thusly: "In Missoula, Montana, the men of Congregation Har Shalom (Mountain of Peace) gather in the middle of the Clark Fork River that roars through downtown to fly fish. That's their venue. Some call it the Tallit, Tefillin and Tackle Club. 'Our gatherings are in the river in wading boots, instead of in some committee room at the shul,' said congregation president



Former Har Shalom President Bert Chessin at the Chanukiah in the sanctuary.

Bert Chessin. "These brotherhood ties are to fishing lines," he laughed. Born and raised here, and recently returned, his favorite *bar mitzvah* gift was a fly rod.

The Garden City straddles the Lewis & Clark Trail, the home of nearly 60,000 people plus some 12,000 students at the University of Montana. Originally founded as a logging area and trading post to service Indians, ranchers, miners and farmers, scenically it is absolutely stunning, nestled in a valley surrounded by the jumbo Bitterroot Mountain Range, grassy and treed peaks, still home to many bear, deer, and elk."



Entrance to the Congregation Har Shalom.

Ice caps dot the horizon, even in summer. In the Rattlesnake Canyon neighborhood, you notice nearly as many deer as you do squirrels on the north side of Indianapolis. In the fall, brown bears may be found in a tree in a neighbor's front yard, foraging for hibernation food. The flavor of the town, the mix of the new blood young and the lifestyle of the rural old, is reminiscent of other small towns centered around a large university. Cornell and Indiana University come to mind.

People do not flock to Missoula for Jewish community. In 1954 several university professors gathered to provide Jewish community education for their children, first meeting in each others' homes, and later in libraries, churches, and rented space. One of them was Meyer [Mike] Chessin, originally from New York, distinguished professor of botany from the University

(see Silver, page 18)