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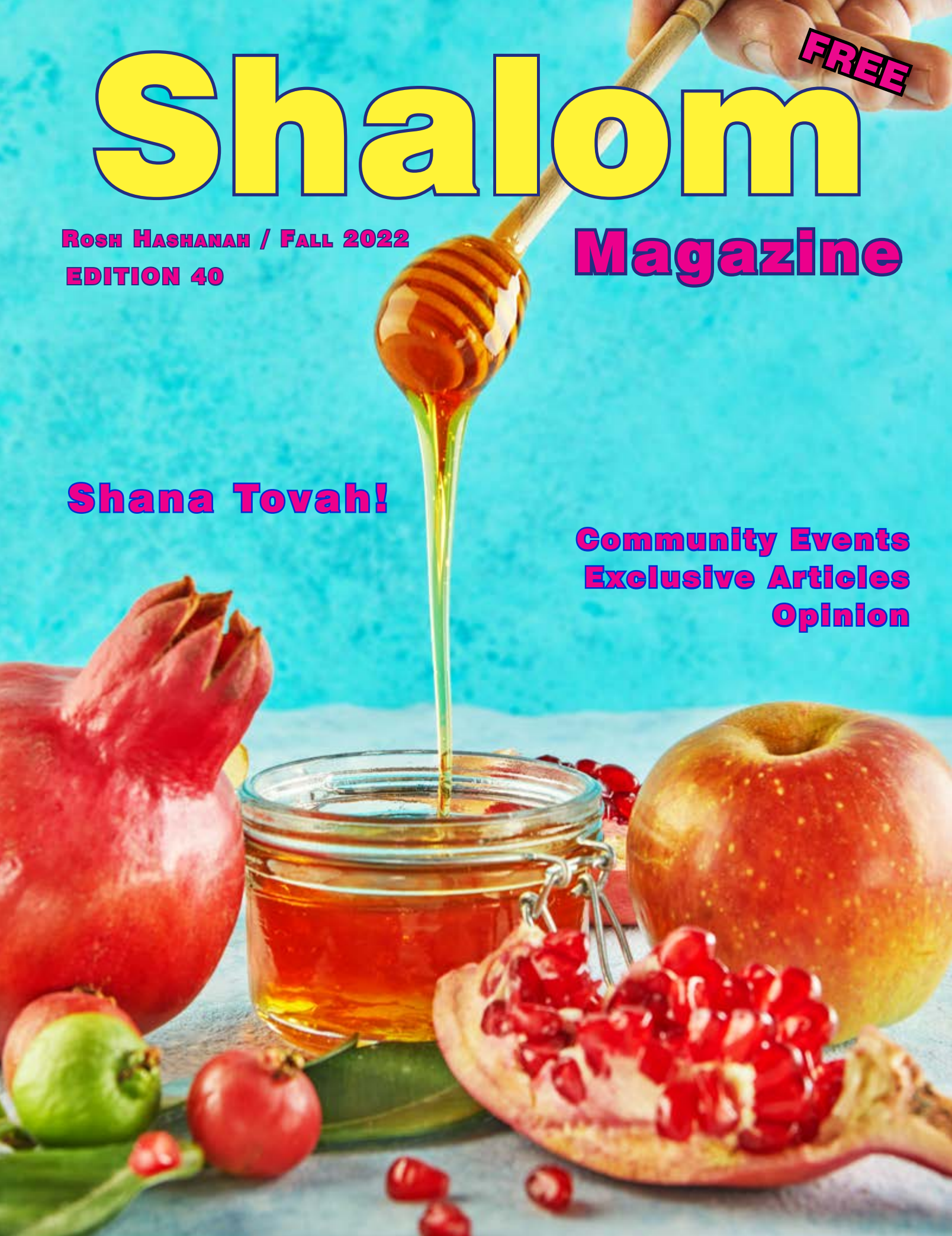
# Shalom

**ROSH HASHANAH / FALL 2022**  
**EDITION 40**

**Magazine**

**Shana Tovah!**

**Community Events**  
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**EDITORIAL**

***It's good to be back***



It is good to be back to producing Shalom Magazine. After a hiatus forced by the pandemic lockdown, where the world revolved into our homes and computer screens, my husband and I decided to resurrect the magazine in a print format.

We understand that many Jewish institutions and businesses are facing financial adversities, but we believe in the importance of a local Jewish media to unite us and showcase our ideas, events and culture, as well as to fight against antisemitism.

We thank G-d for all the support we received while getting Shalom Magazine back, and we thank all who helped make this edition possible: friends, advertisers and contributing writers.

For this edition, I had the pleasure of working with writers who are enthusiastic about bringing their ideas to a broader audience, as well as with community members who want to connect with readers to open their minds to a variety of topics from antisemitism, Jewish holidays, Israeli politics, the war in Ukraine, history, education and local community news.

I grew up in Brazil in a family who always supported the State of Israel and its institutions. My love for Israel is as strong as my Jewish pride. As a little girl I filled up the blue tzedakah box (from JNF) and brought it to my school so trees could be planted in the land of Israel. Not only because Jews need Israel as a place for refugees fleeing persecution, but because Israel is the land G-d reserved for us. Now with the war against Ukraine, while the world is supporting Ukrainian refugees, Israel is the only country welcoming Russians Jews as they are the recent victims of antisemitism.

I hope that you enjoy reading the articles even if you do not fully agree with their opinions and perspectives, because the most important thing in our community is to be open to debate and understand that being receptive to the diversity of ideas is what makes us stronger. There is no one kind of Jew; we come from different backgrounds, we come in different colors and from all walks of life. I believe the best way to bring Jews close to Judaism, as well as to explain to non-Jews about who we are, is to show all of our colors, the mosaic of our people.

I would like to invite you to keep in touch with us on social media and at our new website, [www.ShalomMA.com](http://www.ShalomMA.com).

May your family and loved ones have a happy and healthy new year.

*Shirley Nigri Farber - Publisher*

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*Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters 26th annual Yom Sport event for adults with disabilities was held in June at Babson College, Wellesley*



*Cantor Weiss and Rabbi Eric Berk (right) with the Red Sox World Series Trophy at Berks's first Shabbat Service at Congregation Sha'aray Shalom, Hingham, in July*

*Ben Barnhart*



*Michael Winograd performs at the 2022 Yidstock: The Festival of New Yiddish Music, an annual event of the Yiddish Book Center, Amherst in July*



*Summer Concert Series at Chelsea Jewish Lifecare*

*Shana Tovah!*

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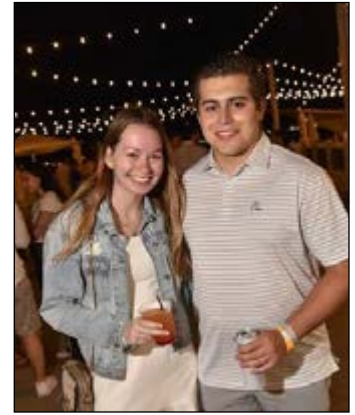
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*YJP (Young Jewish Professionals) Boston's Tu B'Shvat White Party took place on Aug. 14 at the Tall Ship at Pier 1 Boston. Hundreds of young adults gathered in white outfits to enjoy music, kosher sushi and beer.*



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***Yom Kippur:*** Tuesday Eve, Oct. 4 (Kol Nidre)

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*ADL CEO Jonathan Greenblatt with Esta Gordon Epstein at ADL's 2022 Woman of Valor event on May 18*



*CTI Officers: Jay Polonsky, Treasurer; Betty Polonsky, Vice President; Joanne Pressman, Secretary; Jerry Pressman, Incoming President; Doris Hershoff, and Elliot Hershoff, outgoing President*

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On June 12, Congregation Tifereth Israel celebrated its 100th Anniversary with a special luncheon at the Continental Restaurant. The event was attended by over 75 people, including some fifth-generation members, and descendants of the original founding fathers. CTI also honored retiring president Elliot Hershoff and his wife Doris, in appreciation of their 18 years of dedication and leadership.

*L'Shanah Tovah*  
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## Adam Street Shul, Newton

*On July 31, the historic Adams Street Shul in Newton hosted a breakfast and learn session. Rabbi Ahron Benmergui taught a fascinating shiur (lecture) about how lie detectors, DNA, fingerprints, recordings, and circumstantial evidence fit into Jewish law.*

## Wellesley-Weston Chabad

*In July, the Wellesley-Weston Chabad Shluggers won the Championship of the Mens Shul Softball League (MSSL) in Massachusetts*



## Ma'yan Tikvah

*Stephanie Kennedy, Education Director of Y'ladim BaTeva, the outdoor children's learning program at Ma'yan Tikvah, leading the end of school program on June 5 at Nobscot Scout Reservation, Sudbury.*

## Shana Tova

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*Sharon*



Ezra Schwartz Memorial Pavilion at the Ames Street Park, Sharon. In Nov. 2015, Ezra Schwartz was only 18 when he was killed by a terrorist along with two students while traveling in Israel. He lived in Sharon. The memorial pavilion is a place for community members to enjoy outdoors, and have a picnic.

*Photo: Ruth Freeman*



A celebration on Aug. 28 marked the inauguration of the Intergenerational Playground at Shaloh House Chabad in Stoughton that includes a climbing structure for the preschool, a special designated infants play area, a basketball court, a pickleball court and a special bike area.



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## THE NUMBER FOUR IN JUDAISM

By Sandra Lilienthal, Ed.D.



The number four appears many times in Jewish texts and rituals. Most people immediately think of the holiday of Passover, in which we have four names for the holiday, four cups of wine, four questions, the four sons.

But the number four reappears in the month of Tishrei as well. The High Holy Day season brings us four holidays: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot and Shemini Atzeret (Simchat Torah was added much later to Shemini Atzeret), and on Sukkot we take the four species together as we shake them in all directions. I would like to take a look at these two “fours” of the season which is upon us and propose that they might be somewhat related.

The Torah requires Jews to bring together four species – branches of a palm tree (*lulav*), the fruit of the hadar tree (*etrog*), boughs of leafy trees (*hadassim*) and willows of the brook (*aravah*). But the Torah does not really explain what to do with them; neither does it give any clue as to why we should bring these four different kinds of vegetation together.

This is where the *midrashim*, rabbinic commentaries, come in. One midrash, *Vayikra Rabbah*, says that each of the species “refers to the people of Israel,” but each of them points to a different kind of individual. There are those among the people of Israel who have both Jewish knowledge and good deeds; others possess knowledge but do not have good deeds; there are others who have no knowledge but perform good deeds; and there are also those who do not possess knowledge, neither do they perform good deeds.

They all have to be brought together in order for a person to fulfill their obligation of shaking the *lulav*. If one has three of the four, and only one of them is missing, the commandment cannot be fulfilled, and the whole product is defective. The midrash then concludes by saying that the people of Israel are composed of all four types of individuals, but they must all be brought and bound together. If even

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## THE NUMBER FOUR IN JUDAISM

one of them is missing, the Jewish community is not complete, just as our tradition teaches that in the Messianic Times, Jews from the four corners of the earth will be brought together.

I have always found this midrash very interesting, as it is also a little unexpected. Intuitively, we could assume that if a person has no knowledge and does not perform good deeds, why should we need them? And yet, the Rabbis teach that human beings are all equally valuable and that everyone serves a purpose. Even if it seems someone does not add anything to the whole, they actually do.

What is it that a person with no knowledge and no good deeds adds to those Jews who are either knowledgeable and/or are performing good deeds? If we were now speaking in person, I would wait for your answer - so give it a try!

If nothing else, this person gives the others the opportunity to share their knowledge and to be a role model of doing good deeds. That might help fulfill their personal mission in this world. And yes - I strongly believe every one of us is in this world for a reason, to accomplish something, even if only to smile to someone who is having a bad day. Without the ability to share ourselves with others, we do not have a Jewish community which is whole, shalem, the foundation on which peace is built.

The same can be said about the four holidays of this season. They form a whole that is somewhat defective if one of the holidays is overseen. Rosh Hashanah opens the month of Tishrei with a call for deep reflection: where are we now? What have we accomplished this past year? How close are we to whom we are meant to be? Ten days later, Yom Kippur is a chance we are given to make the changes we know we need to and want to make so that we are once again whole, once again aligned with the inner needs of our soul.

As we emerge from this deeply spiritual day, we begin building the sukkah, getting ready for a seven-day holiday that both celebrates the harvest and reminds us of how fragile life is. Living in a sukkah, a

temporary, fragile, structure for a week, reminds us that four walls can only protect to a certain extent; a beautiful metaphor for our bodies which can only protect our souls to a certain extent. Continuous care for the soul is always necessary, and both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are a reminder of that.

When we think we have had enough, with three holidays in three weeks, Shemini Atzeret arrives. Many of us have that feeling of "wait - another holiday? What now? Can we not just skip this one?"

And here comes the concept of the four that are bound together. Shemini Atzeret is as important as the other three holidays, as it brings it all together. The Rabbis say that on Shemini Atzeret, G-d said to the Jewish people: "You have been around for the last three weeks and now you will leave Me. Please stay an extra day" (or two outside of Israel).

From a human perspective, the extra day is needed to bring it all together. The last three weeks were spent on identifying our faults and committing to doing better, on understanding that our soul needs to be fed and cared for. Shemini Atzeret is the chance we have to take one more day (or two) to reflect on where we are going from here. Who was I a month ago, and who am I now? What have I learned, and how have I changed? How will I both nurture my soul and allow it to shine as it was meant to shine in the next 11 months?

As we enter the High Holy Day Season, I wish for all of us a period of honest reflection, which includes both identifying the changes we must make in our lives and giving ourselves credit for all we have accomplished in the past year. I hope we can all say, a year from now, that we did hard work and that we are a bit closer to who we really are meant to be: pure, beautiful souls.

*Shanah Tovah and G'mar Chatimah Tovah to all Shalom readers.*

*Sandra Lilienthal is an adult educator based in South Florida, and a 2015 recipient of the Covenant Award for Excellence in Jewish Education. [www.sandralilienthal.com](http://www.sandralilienthal.com).*



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# NATIONAL ART EXHIBIT "BE THE CHANGE"

## INSPIRED BY TZEDAKA BOXES

By **Susie Davidson**

The Newton-based Jewish Arts Collaborative (JArts) has joined with artist Caron Tabb in a national art initiative, "Be the Change," now appearing in the Fenway. Through Oct 26, you can check it out at Kilmarnock and Boylston Streets (maybe before a game or concert).

On display are six pieces of socially-conscious public art by local sculptors, and live music and other events are planned at the exhibit as well. "Be the Change" will also be shown in Cincinnati this fall and L.A. next spring.

It was the Jewish values of justice and the Tzedakah box tradition that inspired the initiative, which received a \$15,000 CJP grant.

"Each piece in 'Be the Change' is underpinned by active legislation, defined in collaboration with JALSA [The Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action]," JArts states on its website, calling it #artivism, where art can inspire action to confront racial and social inequalities.

"We were proud to host a virtual tour of the exhibit on Aug. 16, and a discussion with all six of the artists," said JALSA Executive Director Cindy Rowe. "This initiative gives us all action steps to be agents of change in our local and global communities."

Participating artists are Tabb (an Israeli American artist who is the wife of President and CEO of Beth Israel Lahey Health Kevin Tabb), Carolyn Lewenberg, Jason Talbot, Nayana LaFond, Ngoc-Tran Vu, and Sam Mendoza Fraiman.

Tabb's sculpture, "Prisoner a-7713" (Elie Wiesel's tattooed number at Auschwitz), includes a heart made of chicken wire and a tagline. "Antisemitism equals racism equals hate, sliding back in time, or did

we actually ever move forward?" it asks.

"Hate is still amongst us, antisemitism is on the rise, and antisemitism is racism which is not often viewed that way, and should be," Tabb said at the JALSA virtual event. "Racism is unacceptable, no matter against whom - race, creed, gender, religion."

"As a chain migration immigrant, I often think about those who have been less fortunate than me in their arrival to the U.S. and in general," she said.

The sculpture incorporates an eternal light, ner tamid, and its base includes inscriptions such as "Tzedek, Tzedek" and a Star of David.

The idea was first envisioned by JArts Executive Director Laura Mandel, Tabb, and Ruth Messinger, former president and CEO of American Jewish World Service.

It was inspired by two tzedakah boxes Tabb had created for "Humanity Is Not a Spectator Sport," her gallery

show of last year. Tabb called them "justice vessels" that honored Messinger and Clementina Chéry, a Boston activist who founded the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute following her son's death by accidental gunfire in 1993.

Events to be held at the Fenway exhibit will be announced on JArts' Tzedek Box app. Visit <https://jartsboston.org/tzedekbox>.

**Susie Davidson contributes to various news outlets and authored a 2005 book and documentary film, "I Refused to Die," about local Holocaust survivors and liberating soldiers. She is writing a forthcoming book on music culture history for Charlesbridge Publishing, Watertown.**

**Photos: Prisoner A-7713 by Caron Tabb (left); Vital Organs by Carolyn Lewenberg.**



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# JEWISH COMMUNITY OF CENTRAL MASS.

*By Steven Schimmel*

On June 14, the Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts, on behalf of the Tapper Family Charitable Foundation, presented the inaugural Tapper Charitable Foundation Righteous Gentile Award to Worcester Police Chief Steven Sargent.

Chief Sargent was selected because of his extraordinary support of Worcester's religious institutions, ensuring that safety and security measures at Worcester's houses of worship are coordinated with the assistance, guidance and expertise of Worcester Police Department. In particular, his attention to addressing the rise in incidents where religious institutions are targeted has been of great help to all religious communities in Worcester.

The same week that Chief Sargent received this award, an unknown group located in the Boston area released a map intending to draw connections between institutions in Massachusetts and support for Israel. In its statement, the shadowy group wrote it was a "multi-generational collective of activists and organizers located on the land of the Massachusetts, Pawtucket, Naumkeag, and other tribal nations (Boston, Cambridge, and surrounding areas) who wanted to develop a deeper understanding of local institutional support for the colonization of Palestine."

The online, interactive map was intended to highlight their targeted entities for criticism and punishment for their relationship to the Jewish state. "The Mapping Project," as it became known, listed hundreds of Jewish organizations across the Commonwealth, and it included the locations of these organizations and other information which could very easily be used to cause harm to people affiliated with

those organizations. It was even referred to as a "hit list" by concerned Jewish leaders, and was soundly denounced by elected officials.

In the Central Mass. area, the map included the Worcester Police Department. The Mapping Project doesn't go into great detail in their rationale for their selection of which organizations appeared on the map. Nor are its authors disclosed. According to newspaper reports, Boston BDS has stated in its social media accounts that they did not create it.

To this date, thankfully no incidents have been avowedly or directly related to its publication. But it is blatantly clear that while the Jewish Federation was celebrating and honoring a man who has dedicated his life to the service of people of all backgrounds and faiths, the Mapping Project had targeted his department.

It's fairly obvious that the Mapping Project is completely devoid of context or nuance. At

best, its organizers pushed insidious blanket criticism of its targeted organizations without any regard for any of the good they do. At its worst, the project can incite hatred and potential violence.

In the case of Worcester Police Department, the good that they have done for faith-based institutions should be lauded and upheld as a wonderful example.

We believe the Mapping Project is flawed and dangerous for a number of reasons, and in this case as well as the others, is also terribly mistaken. Hopefully, the presentation of The Righteous Gentile Humanitarian Award will help to instead build positive relationships and encourage more interfaith cooperation.

*Steven Schimmel is the Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Central Massachusetts. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of Jewish Federation or its members.*



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# LIZ OFFEN PROMOTED TO NATIONAL TEAM AT YACHAD

By Avrumy Jordan

Liz Offen has been promoted to national director of strategic partnerships for Yachad, the Orthodox Union's leading organization for individuals with disabilities in the Jewish community. Yachad's mission is to foster inclusion and connectivity to Judaism for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities within the broader Jewish community throughout the United States, Canada and Israel.

Offen has served for the past 10 years as regional director of Yachad's New England region, and brings more than 35 years of experience in nonprofit and government management to the newly created role.

As national director of strategic partnerships for Yachad, she will focus on building new partnerships with foundations and federations, maximizing and expanding financial opportunities for Yachad across all of its programs internationally, while also seeking to develop new and creative projects that support children, teens and adults with disabilities.

Offen will remain closely connected to the New England region as its director of development and fundraising, building on her decade-long successes.

"Liz will work within Yachad's National Development Department to broaden awareness of Yachad's scope among philanthropists and donors who maintain family foundations, so that Yachad is no longer seen as

a 'best kept secret'," said Yachad Associate Director Ken Saibel.

"We are thrilled to promote from within someone of Liz's caliber and experience to take the helm of this newly created role for Yachad," added Yachad International Director Avromie Adler. "Bringing Liz to the national level will allow her to focus her energy and enthusiasm across all of Yachad's programmatic areas to benefit hundreds of individuals and their families. He noted that Yachad is growing, and Offen is thus stepping into a critical position to ensure that the organization's financial footing keeps pace with its growth.

"It is an honor to further my professional role with Yachad and the OU," said Offen. "I'm looking forward to helping the entire network of Yachad programs and camps to realize their goals by creating new partnerships with foundations and federations across the globe."

She explained that while foundation support is critical to the work of the nonprofit community, many do not know about the great work Yachad does. "I hope to find the ways we fit into their priorities, and open dialogues about our shared goals to improve the quality of life for marginalized and underserved members of the Jewish community," she said.

A search for a new regional director is underway, and Offen will assist with the search and transition.

Offen lives in Boston with her husband, Ethan Mascoop.

Liz Offen can be reached at OffenL@ou.org, or by calling 617-209-6799, ext. 1.



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# CONGREGATION AHAVAS ACHIM 125TH ANNIVERSARY

Congregation Ahavas Achim's year-long celebration in honor of its 125th anniversary was kicked off with its participation in Newburyport's annual Yankee Homecoming Parade in 2021, and two programs this past spring featuring displays of synagogue memorabilia, tours of its historic building, reminiscences by longtime members, and the presentation of a proclamation by Newburyport Mayor Sean Reardon.

The closing celebration in August marked the issuance by the Commonwealth of a certificate designating CAA, as it is now informally called, as a non-profit religious organization on August 3, 1896, making it one of the oldest congregations in continuous existence in Massachusetts and, according to some records, the first on the North Shore.

But the history of the Jewish community of the Clipper City actually began several decades earlier. In the years following the Civil War, several Eastern European Jewish families, urban artisans and tradesmen looking to escape the persecution of pogroms and conscription into the Czarist Russian army, crowded into small apartments in the Ferry Wharf area of the city. They lived along Market Street between Market and the Joppa neighborhood in the South End.

They, and Jews who followed them, chose Newburyport because as strictly observant Jews, they could not work in the factories of Lowell, Lawrence and Haverhill on Shabbat.

Some worked as peddlers, while others became shopkeepers and opened businesses lining Pleasant and State Streets that included kosher butcher shops, clothing stores, a food market, a maternity store and a drug store.



By the late 1870s, many were sufficiently well established to be elected to public office, but still, they worshiped by themselves and observed the Jewish holidays in their own homes or gathered in small groups in rented rooms.

In early 1896, 17 members filed the paperwork to formally establish Congregation Ahavas Achim, and began worshipping as a community, first in a rented room in Market Square and then at the Old Central Music Hall at 31 Pleasant Street, where the congregation's first Hebrew School opened in 1902.

In 1907, they purchased a house at 41 Liberty Street in an old Salvation Army building. As the story goes, the owner of the building knew that the Jews wanted to buy the property and he did not want to sell it to them, so he arranged for it to be auctioned on a Saturday so that they could not bid on

it. A non-Jew who found this distasteful bought the building himself, and on the following Monday sold it to the congregation.

The Liberty Street synagogue included a women's mikvah and living quarters for the first Rabbi, Joshua B. Saklad, who was also a butcher. Soon, the Ladies Jewish Aid Society was founded and the Newburyport Hebrew Cemetery Association was formed to purchase land in Salisbury, where the first internment, of a woman named Aneida May Bomenbill, occurred in 1911.

The Jewish community and the congregation grew, and on September 10, 1933, they purchased their current building on Washington and Olive Streets, when the Methodist church that had occupied it merged with another congregation. The Daily News reported: "It was a big day for the Jewish people of Newburyport. It was estimated that over 700 members of the Jewish faith attended the opening ceremonies, plus hundreds more came to extend their best wishes."

The building has since undergone several renovations and improvements, and today, CAA remains a vibrant, diverse congregation that serves the Jewish community of Newburyport and the surrounding area of the North Shore and southern New Hampshire with regular services, a Hebrew school, adult education programming and other events for members and the community at large.

*Photos: CAA's historic building; Member of CAA with Hebrew School students, circa 1908.*



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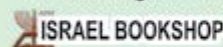
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# YOM KIPPUR IN A MINUTE: SECOND CHANCES

**By Rabbi Moshe Y Bleich**

Forty days after they received the Torah at Mount Sinai and committed to be G-d's chosen people, the Children of Israel worshiped a Golden Calf. Moses pleaded with G-d not to destroy His errant nation, and on the tenth of Tishrei G-d said, "I have forgiven."

Ever since, we observe this date as the "Day of Atonement"- a celebration of our indestructible relationship with G-d. It is the holiest day of the year, when we reconnect with our very essence, which remains faithful to G-d regardless of our behavior.



**Rabbi Moshe Bleich with Charles Evan raised tens of thousands of dollars, medicine, clothing, food and childrens toys to be distributed in Ukraine. Bleich spent the first few months of the war traveling throughout Ukraine, distributing the donations and supporting the Jewish community. He hosted a Passover Seder for over 400 at a refugee camp in Irshava run by his uncle, Ukranian Chief Rabbi Yakov Bleich.**

## Angelic Behavior

Yom Kippur is a fast day: from sundown on the eve of Yom Kippur until the following nightfall, we do not eat or drink. (If you're ill, consult a rabbi.) We also abstain from certain physical pleasures: wearing leather footwear, bathing or washing, applying lotions or creams, and marital relations. It is also a "day of rest," on which all work is forbidden (as on Shabbat).

## Five Prayers

We wear white clothes in emulation of the spiritual angels, and spend the greater part of the day in the synagogue engaged in repentance and prayer. There are five prayer services:

- 1) The evening prayers, which begin with the solemn Kol Nidrei.
- 2) Morning prayer.
- 3) Musaf, which includes a description of the Yom Kippur Holy Temple service.
- 4) Afternoon prayer, during which the Book of Jonah is read.
- 5) Ne'ilah, recited as the day wanes and the verdict for the new year is sealed. The first four prayers include a (private) confession of sins to G-d.

Many laws and customs are associated with the prayer services; your synagogue rabbi will lead you along as needed.

## End of the Fast

Ne'ilah concludes with the congregation calling out the Shema in unison, and then a blast of the shofar signals the end of the day.

Yom Kippur is followed by a festive meal. We rejoice, confident that G-d has forgiven our sins.

**Rabbi Moshe Y Bleich, along with his wife Geni, co direct the Wellesley-Weston Chabad and will be hosting traditional High Holiday service at no charge, open to the public. For more info or to RSVP, visit [www.wjewish.org](http://www.wjewish.org).**



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## “A VICTIM OF ROYAL INGRATITUDE”

By R. Shlomo Pereira

On February 25, 1496, in the printing shop of the D'Ortas family in Leiria, Portugal, the first ever printing of the *Almanach Perpetuum* was completed. This was the last book printed in a Hebrew printing shop in the Iberian Peninsula.

It was the only incunabula printed in an Iberian Hebrew printing shop in a language other than Hebrew. And, it was the first scientific book printed in Portugal. In fact, it was by far the most influential Portuguese incunabula in any language or any genre.

On December 5, a mere ten months later, the Portuguese monarch D. Manuel I decreed the expulsion of all Jews from Portugal - the native community, plus a massive number of Spanish Jewish refugees from the aftermath of the Expulsion of 1492. This effectively triggered the immediate confiscation of Jewish ritual objects and Hebrew books, and the systematic dismantling of Jewish institutions. Organized Jewish life in the Iberian Peninsula would soon cease to exist.

The *Almanach Perpetuum* is a rendition, with versions in both Latin and Spanish, of *Chibbur HaGadol*, the Hebrew language mathematics and astronomy masterpiece of R. Abraham Zacuto (1452-c. 1515), written in Salamanca, Spain, between 1473 and 1478. The bulk of the book is a set of astronomical tables providing information necessary to perform various types of astronomical calculations.

R. Zacuto, who himself fled to Portugal in 1492, is identified in the colophon as the “astronomer of the highly serene King Manuel, King of Portugal.” The original text in Hebrew was translated into Latin and then into Spanish by Master José Vizinho, a Jewish mathematician, astronomer and medical doctor, who the colophon identifies as a disciple of R. Zacuto.

The *Almanach Perpetuum* addresses a key scientific issue created by the geopolitical situation at the time. The conquest of Constantinople by the Ottoman Empire in 1453 disrupted the European land trade routes with Asia. As such, the quest for alternative maritime routes was of the greatest strategic importance. Yet, the existing navigation

techniques, which were designed for sailing along the coast or along known routes and were based on polar observations, had serious limitations. They did not work for high seas navigation, or for unknown routes, or in places close to the equator where polar observations were not possible, all characteristics of the new maritime voyages.

R. Zacuto's work revolutionized ocean navigation by providing in this work the first tables allowing the use of the position of the sun for location guidance. At the same time, and given the obvious difficulties in measuring the position of the sun by direct observation, R. Zacuto developed a new metal nautical astrolabe to generate indirect measurements.

The *Almanach Perpetuum* and the new astrolabe constituted the global positioning system of the Iberian navigators. In Spain, Christopher Columbus, from his 1492 voyage on, used these tables extensively. Master Vizinho had brought them to his attention when he visited Lisbon a few years prior. A personal copy of the tables belonging to Columbus with his handwritten notes is extant in the Colombiana Library in Seville, Spain.

In Portugal, the tables and astrolabe were extensively used by the navigators, first in experimental exploits often under the direct guidance of Master Vizinho, and then, after 1497, directly by Vasco da Gama. Until the middle 1500s, these tables were the basic resource for location guidance when sailing to the Americas or to India.

The case of the printing of the *Almanach Perpetuum* in February of 1496 and edited by a Jew, based on the scientific work of another Jew, and printed by yet another Jew, epitomizes the policy dilemmas facing D. Manuel I and the corresponding dark clouds hovering over the Portuguese Jewish community.

In July of 1497, Vasco da Gama left with his fleet to discover the maritime route to India, taking with him R. Zacuto's charts and instruments. D. Manuel I had been for the last few years in the middle of difficult negotiations to promote the union of the Iberian

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## “A VICTIM OF ROYAL INGRATITUDE”

crowns through his marriage to one of the daughters of Ferdinando and Isabella of Spain.

He knew that the price the Catholic monarchs demanded was the expulsion of the Jews from Portugal. He also knew that expelling the Jews would mean a financial, scientific, and logistic disaster that would compromise maritime expansion and the development of new trade routes.

So, D. Manuel I faced a dilemma: He needed to get rid of the Jews, while at the same time, he needed to keep them. The solution? In December of 1496, a mere nine months after the printing, he decreed the expulsion of all Jews. By October of 1497, a mere 16 months after the printing, expulsion had fully morphed into forced conversions and the prohibition from leaving Portugal.

The Jewish community would cease to exist. The Jews themselves would have to remain, but now as New-Christians.

D. Manuel II (1889-1932), the last king of Portugal, having been deposed in 1910, was an avid bibliophile and a keen student of the events of the reign of his namesake D. Manuel I. He owned a very rare complete copy of the Spanish language version of the *Almanach Perpetuum* printed in 1496 in Leiria.

In the late 1920s, D. Manuel II wrote an article in “The American Hebrew” publication of New York entitled “A Victim of Royal Ingratitude.” In this article, he stated that R. Zacuto, “who paved the way for Portugal to achieve the zenith of its glory, was expelled by

the two sovereigns he so well served,” was therefore a victim of “a great and burning ingratitude.”

We must recognize that such sentiments should also be extended to Master Vizinho and his family, to D’Ortas and his family, to the countless families of Jewish artisans, merchants, physicians, and to the myriad, anonymous Jewish families who at the time called Portugal home, and had contributed so much to its history.

NOTE: This text is based on chapter 5 of my new book, cowritten with R. Eli Rosenfeld of Chabad of Portugal, entitled “Monuments of Paper and Parchment: The History of Hebrew Printing in Portugal,” that will be forthcoming in 2023. This is the third book in the bilingual (English and Portuguese) series “From the Mists of Memory,” published by Chabad Portugal Press, which focuses on bringing to the limelight the lives and contributions of Jewish leaders and scholars in the pre-1497 period of Portugal. The first book, “Jewish Voices from Portugal,” published in 2018, presents commentaries on Torah portions based on the writings of six

rabbis who lived then in Portugal. The second, “Jewish Ethics from Portugal,” published in 2021, does the same for commentaries on *Pirkei Avot*, Ethics of the Fathers.

**R. Shlomo Pereira is the Director of Education at Chabad of Virginia in Richmond.**

**Photo: Almanach Perpetuum. Printed in Leiria, 1496. Portuguese National Library, Lisbon.**



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## FOOD - THE MOST POWERFUL DRUG ON THE PLANET

By Rus Devorah Wallen, LCSW, ACSW

As we move along the wheel of wellbeing, we are now at the Nourishing Solutions wedge. It is quite remarkable how the quality, quantity, times, and types of foods we eat have an incredible effect on our health and mental health. Thomas Edison said, "The doctor of the future will give no medication but will interest patients in the care of the human frame, diet, and in the cause and prevention of disease." To me, this sounds like the holistic or functional medicine approach. Maimonides, The Rambam said, "No disease that can be treated by diet should be treated with any other means." There is also a concept of "Chrono nutrition" – knowing what times of the day it is best to eat, and then what types of foods to eat at those times.

One of my current mentors, the encyclopedic Dr. Leslie Korn, as well as another of my favorites, Dr. Mark Hyman, talk about the "SAD Diet" – Standard American Diet – which when consumed, literally makes us sad. This "diet" consists of foods that are often only food-like, "Frankenfoods." They may have artificial ingredients, additives, hydrogenated fats, preservatives, etc. My motto for such food labels is, "If you can't read it, don't eat it." If there are many ingredients as well, think twice before popping it into your mouth. Eating the SAD diet can cause inflammatory processes that contribute to cognitive decline, anxiety, depression, and more. Some of the causes of inflammation are stress, poor quality food, lack of exercise, being overweight, smoking, sleep deficiency, microbiome and gut problems, exposure to toxic materials, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, etc. Food is not just fuel or energy or something to fill a hunger need. Food is nutrition, medicine, internal instructions, and information. It also is connected to our individual cultures, which means a lot. Traditional cuisine and food-centered gatherings nourish us on many other levels. According to Dr. Mark Hyman, "Food is the most powerful drug on the planet. And it's not just calories, food is actually information, literally instructions, like code. So, you can upgrade or downgrade your biological software by what you put in your mouth every day."

According to Dr. Korn, "mood follows food." Eating the wrong things at the wrong time can affect our moods and attitudes. I mentioned this in one of the introductory articles about NOGA Wellness Solutions® – Wellness is a Many Splendored Thing. For instance, in chrononutrition, Dr. Korn recommends eating a hearty, grounding breakfast that is low-carbohydrate. (Unless you're on a particular diet such as intermittent fasting which would push it off.) She explains that you are nourishing the brain and the gut at the same time (your

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# FOOD - THE MOST POWERFUL DRUG ON THE PLANET

first and second brains). She also suggests these basic guidelines:

- Being relaxed when eating
- Becoming sensitive to what you feel after you're done eating. Much of the field of integrative nutrition explains that digestive problems can adversely affect mental wellness.
- Watching out for exposures, pesticides, preservatives etc. My rule is, "If you can't read it, don't eat it."
- We need to understand that everybody's biopsychosocial is individual and each person needs to be eating his or her own preferred diet for their system.
- Eat from the rainbow of fruits and vegetables. Dr. Korn calls the colors of the fruits and vegetables we should eat, the colors of the Brainbow because the whole color spectrum of nutrients helps our body-mind, and brain. She explains the diet is essential but it's not sufficient. We may need other things such as vitamins, minerals, fats and other things since our food supply is depleted of some of these things.
- We need to recognize that foods and nutrients can possibly if we eat good foods we may be able to diminish other cravings and addictions.
- When moving toward better habits, sometimes we need to use substitutions that are slightly healthier. I called it "tweaking up."

Enjoy tweaking up your nutrition profile. Consider the power of good nutrition. Remember it is a powerful drug for health, mental health, and an upgrade for your biological software! Lots of success on your health upgrade!

**President of Toratherapeutics®** (<https://toratherapeutics.com>) and **NOGA Wellness Solutions**, **Rus Devorah** specializes in healing workshops, webinars, retreats, individual therapy, and coaching. She embeds Torah-psychology as she teaches therapeutic relaxation and meditation, neuro-coaching, and sound healing techniques.

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# SHIN-DC SPOTLIGHTS JEWISH DIVERSITY

*By Franz Afraim Katzir*

Sephardic Heritage International (SHIN-DC) shines a light on Jewish diversity, ensuring that all our voices are being heard and represented worldwide. We work with embassies, Congress, and communities (Jewish and non-Jewish) to build peace and understanding. At the same time, we aim to actively expose threatening and divisive antisemitic narratives.

The organization's mission of cultural diplomacy is driven by the multifaceted nature of the Jewish people which provides opportunities for us to connect more effectively to the diverse world in which we live. SHIN-DC has conducted "Sephardic diplomacy" by working with foreign dignitaries and the Moroccan, Israeli, UAE and Bahraini embassies to support normalization and the development of Israeli-Moroccan ties and the Abraham Accords.

In 2021, SHIN-DC hosted a Chanukah-themed program, "Collaboration for the good brings more light into the world," highlighting artistic collaborations between Muslim and Jewish musicians in the Middle East. Opening remarks were made by Israeli Culture and Sport Minister Chili Tropper and Emirati Culture Minister Noura Al Kaabi.

Inspired by the Moroccan Jewish festival of Mimouna, which marks the end of Passover, SHIN-DC has conducted Mimouna programs with the Embassy of Morocco in Washington since 2015, celebrating the cultures of Moroccan Jews and their Muslim counterparts, as well as the festival's narratives of friendship, commemoration and the importance of neighbors working together. SHIN's Annual Mimouna Festival of Good Neighbors at the Smithsonian became the first Mimouna in the world that included government representatives from both Israel and Morocco, demonstrating how "Sephardic diplomacy" helped bring two countries together.

In 2021, SHIN-DC partnered with the Embassy of Greece in Washington and engaged Iraq's Ministry of Education to launch the Cosmopolitan Journeys program, aimed at creating a space where artists, nations and communities can build goodwill through culture

and musical traditions that are shared from the Mediterranean to the Gulf. In 2022, the shared Sephardic music of Greece, North Macedonia and Bulgaria played a crucial role in bringing these countries together in partnership with SHIN-DC for their first joint cultural program despite political challenges.

SHIN-DC also organizes an Annual Congressional Holocaust Commemoration (founded in 2019) to raise awareness of Sephardic and Romaniote experiences of the Holocaust in North Africa, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. This Commemoration is special because it provides education regarding diverse Jewish narratives from the Holocaust, as opposed to focusing solely on Ashkenazi ones, making the testimonies more globally relatable.

SHIN's Holocaust education efforts began in 2015 when several local Sephardic and Romaniote Jewish Holocaust survivors from North Africa and Greece attended the organization's annual Mimouna Festival of Good Neighbors, never having told their stories publicly. Some did not think their stories, including experiences at a concentration camp in Libya, were significant, so SHIN endeavored to convey to them and to the world that those narratives are important by bringing them to the U.S. Congress.

Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla, a Sephardic Jew from Greece, also shared his family's tragic story during the Holocaust for the first time ever publicly, at SHIN-DC's 2021 Commemoration. This Commemoration has grown to enjoy the robust support of members of Congress and foreign dignitaries from over 20 nations in Europe, North Africa, the Middle East and the Far East.

Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chair Bob Menendez noted at SHIN-DC's 2022 Commemoration that Sephardic Jews in Europe and the Mediterranean were also targeted by Nazi Germany's efforts to systematically eradicate all Jewish people, and were among the 6 million Jewish lives extinguished during the Holocaust. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chair Gregory Meeks said, "I am pained to see that antisemitism continues to rear its ugly head, and it does so globally."



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# SHIN-DC SPOTLIGHTS JEWISH DIVERSITY

Antisemitism reared its ugly head again in Boston this past June when a group called the "Mapping Project" targeted local Jewish organizations, schools and other groups by sharing their addresses. Despite the BDS (Boycott Divestment Sanctions) movement ultimately distancing itself from the "Mapping Project," BDS Boston had clearly endorsed this antisemitic mapping of the Jewish community on Twitter in June, via a Tweet that was later deleted. Additionally in June, city councilor Kendra Lara apologized for antisemitic comments criticizing the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals for upholding an Arkansas law restricting BDS' activities.

Jewish diversity plays an important role in combating antisemitism today, because a major pretext for antisemitism is that Israel is a "white settler state." In fact, Israel is neither a settler state nor is it predominantly white. This new form of antisemitism contrasts with the term as it was coined by German politician and journalist Wilhelm Marr, who justified his anti-Jewish animus and actions with arguments that Jews are not white and do not belong in Europe - the same pretext that the Nazis used for murdering 6 million Jews during the Holocaust.

Indeed, "whiteness" is merely a construct and the U.S. Census defines white peoples as persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa, including both Jewish and Muslim Arab peoples. In fact, some Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) groups have advocated in recent years - albeit unsuccessfully - for the Census Bureau to create a MENA category that is distinct from "white."

In 2010, veteran reporter Helen Thomas, who was of Lebanese

descent, stood at the White House and said that Jews in Israel should return to Poland. Yet over 60 percent of Jews in Israel actually have roots in Jewish communities of African and Middle Eastern countries, including Lebanon where a community once comprising 10,000 Jews in the 1950s now numbers about 25.

SHIN-DC exposes such misperceptions about who we are as a Jewish people, including the forms of antisemitism that these fallacies reinforce,

by crucially ensuring that all of our Jewish narratives are represented: Sephardic/Hispanic, Provençal, Italian and Romaniote heritages - which also comprise historical European Jewry - not to mention Jews of Color and the rich histories of all the Jewish communities of Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Israel and South America.

Sephardic Heritage International is pioneering a new and exciting area of cultural diplomacy, demonstrating that diverse Jewish narratives are a strength that effectively exposes and combats antisemitism. SHIN-DC's "Sephardic diplomacy" work - including advocacy so that all diverse Jewish narratives are heard - is building a better world for everyone.

**Franz Afraim Katzir, an MIT alumnus, is the Founding Director of Sephardic Heritage International (SHIN-DC) and Commissioner for**

**Middle Eastern American Affairs for the State of Maryland. He can be reached at: [katzir@shindc.org](mailto:katzir@shindc.org); <https://shindc.org/>**

**Photo: Katzir presents a historic print to the Bulgarian Embassy on behalf of SHIN-DC at a Ladino concert hosted by the organization in partnership with the embassy. The photo taken by Pascal Sébah was presented at the 1873 International Fair in Vienna and depicts the traditional costumes of a married Muslim woman of Salonika, a married Jewish woman of Salonika, and a Bulgarian woman of Prilep.**



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# WHAT THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS MEAN TO ME

By Larry Lencz

When the Abraham Accords were signed in the Fall of 2020, I, along with many others, felt that something special was about to explode on the world stage. Having traveled extensively as a child with my parents, and also as an adult, I have always valued the importance of knowledge about the world in which we live.

My dream has resulted in the creation of a nonprofit to support educational trips for college students, so that they can learn the lessons of the Accords and bringing countries and cultures the opportunity to practice their religious beliefs and fully prosper within their respective countries.

Although we are focusing on the three Abrahamic religions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, we don't want to forget the religious freedoms of all the Middle Eastern countries' inhabitants. With this aim, five board members plus myself formed that nonprofit, now called "Friends of the UAE Corporation."

The five members include Gordon Amgott, a retired CPA who serves as our Treasurer; Shirley Nigri Farber, Editor of Shalom Magazine; Josh Blumenthal, former Executive Director of Temple Israel in Sharon; Rabbi Jonathan Hausman of Ahavath Torah Congregation in Stoughton; and my son Davin Lencz, who is the only person I know who has been to Poland, Israel, and the UAE (prior to the Accords).

The UAE has stepped up to lead this effort, which will emphasize

the blending of the three religions on a specially designated campus that is home to a mosque, a church, and a synagogue. Our planned trip will begin in the UAE, and eventually will expand to the other countries that are part of the Accords.

We have made connections with many people in the region, as I, along with my former student Yaniv Kovalski, traveled there in early January of this year on a fact-finding mission. We have even connected with Rabbi Yehuda Sarna, who is the Chief Rabbi of the UAE. He is also the Executive-Director of the Bronfman Center at NYU, which happens to have a campus in Abu Dhabi, one of the seven emirates in the UAE.

Our college student trip is planned for early 2023. We have the opportunity to hold our classroom experiences right on the NYU campus as part of a ten-day trip, with the ability for participants to earn college credits.

For more information, please contact [larrylencz@gmail.com](mailto:larrylencz@gmail.com) or call 617-921-5170. My hope is that when we start gaining momentum, we can open this project up to older adults who also wish to gain knowledge about the Middle East and all of its intricacies.

*Larry Lencz is the President of Friends of the UAE, resides in Stoughton, and teaches at Stonehill College.*

*Photos: the author and Yaniv Kovalski.*



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# WHEN TAY-SACHS AWARENESS MONTH IS PERSONAL

*By Shari Ungerleider*

When I gave birth to my first child, Evan, in August of 1994, my husband Jeff and I were so happy that after nine long months of anticipation, we were blessed with a beautiful and healthy baby. We joyfully watched Evan develop normally for the next six months and had the usual hopes and dreams for his future.

But over the next few months we began to be concerned, as we realized that Evan was not developing at the same pace as other children his age. We witnessed our friends' children begin to roll over, sit up, crawl, stand, walk, talk and interact with each other. Evan was not able to do any of this; he just watched and smiled but soon his smile began to lessen and his observation became a distant stare. He was not even able to sit up by himself without falling over. We also started to notice that he was having difficulty eating.

At 10 months, we brought Evan to the pediatrician for what we thought was a standard well visit, but it turned out to be the beginning of our nightmare. After several months, visits to numerous doctors and endless tests, Evan was diagnosed with Tay-Sachs disease. This news not only devastated, but shocked us, since as an Ashkenazi Jew, I was tested for Tay-Sachs and told I was not a carrier.

I immediately contacted my OB/GYN who upon re-examining my records discovered that I had actually tested positive as a Tay-Sachs carrier.

As Evan's disease quickly progressed, he was unable to move on his own, suffered multiple seizures daily and had respiratory difficulty, which required us to suction him regularly. He eventually became blind and deaf. We had a feeding tube surgically inserted so that Evan would be able to stay properly nourished and medicated. He had to undergo several hours a week of physical therapy so that his muscles would not atrophy.

We wanted to care for Evan at home so that we could spend as much time with him as possible and not take a moment of his life for granted. We wanted to create a lifetime of memories with Evan in the short time he had left. We spent our days taking him to the park, pool, beach and zoo. He was constantly surrounded by people who loved him.

Evan lost his battle with Tay-Sachs when he was almost 4½ years old. We have three other healthy children, and with each of my other pregnancies, I updated my carrier screening for the additional diseases that were added to the testing panel.

Now knowing that my husband Jeff and I were both carriers for Tay-Sachs disease, we were able to make family planning choices that enabled us to have healthy children. We chose to get pregnant naturally and have the fetus tested via a CVS (chorionic villus sampling) test performed at 10 weeks. I also had two other pregnancies; one was a miscarriage and the other was affected with Tay-Sachs, and so my

husband and I decided to terminate that pregnancy.

From the bottom of my heart, I believe that every couple should be able to make educated decisions, based on accurate genetic information. We are so blessed to have our other children; however, it does not take away or replace the tremendous loss we feel every day for Evan. I constantly imagine what it would be like for us as a family if Evan were still alive.

To honor Evan, I decided to turn our tragedy into something positive, so that other families would be spared the suffering that we experienced, by raising awareness about the importance of carrier screening with genetic counseling.

I'm often asked when the right time is to undergo genetic testing, and my answer is any time before a pregnancy so that they have the information they need before family planning.

Some people choose to test before dating someone or getting engaged, and not continue with the relationship if they are a

carrier couple of the same disease. For couples who want to know their options, the genetic counselor will discuss them. They include using assisted reproductive technologies (such as IVF or egg/sperm donation) to ensure that they are not passing along the disease to future children, getting pregnant naturally (with the option to test a baby during a pregnancy and terminating if it is affected), or not having any more biological children and adopting.

To learn more and get tested, visit [JScreen.org](http://JScreen.org).

***Shari Ungerleider is a wife and mom who has been a passionate advocate for genetic screening coupled with genetic counseling for the past 25 years.***



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# GOOD GRADES DON'T MAKE HAPPY ADULTS

Changing the way we measure success isn't reserved for Montessori schools or hyper funded STEM programs. It lies in taking a step back and creating space for students to teach themselves. Or, as we say in our Jewish tradition: *"chanoch l'naar al pi darko"* (educate a child according to their nature).

By Brian Cohen

If you were to walk into a typical classroom today in the United States and observe a typical student who is actively engaged in a typical lesson, you would likely see a number of indicators that are reflective of a school in the 21st century. As opposed to a school in the past, you would hear updated language, witness technology incorporated on the individual and collective levels, and see more up-to-date textbooks and learning materials.

But with all the 21st century "updates" in schools are we truly preparing young learners for the demands of existing in the 21st century? On the whole, we fall short. Nationally, we have had a formula that is predicated on individuals successfully finishing high school and going on to college. But the demands of young adult life-

navigating the workforce, interpersonal relationships, rapidly changing geo-political dynamics, and the ever-increasingly complicated demands for innovative thinking - don't lie in a standard math lesson - or even a scripted play about the importance of being a good friend. They lie in the ability to succeed when the playbook is not provided.

It is our responsibility to prepare children to face a yet unknown world primarily on their own, and if we have built and sustained an educational system that is now outdated and ineffective, then it is incumbent upon us as the adults to change it now. Of the critical skills needed to succeed in this day and age, I would argue the most important are:

- The confidence to approach a new situation with an open mind, making sure to take in a good deal of information and perspectives prior to attempting a full analysis
- The ability to communicate effectively to express a perspective
- The capacity to actively listen, and to step back and create space when quieter or dissenting voices might need to be heard
- The ability to generate a design or theory of action to solve a challenge, and to identify which tools are needed and how to use them effectively
- The ability to thrive (or at least withstand) in work or with personal objectives without clear structure or direction

The late Richard Elmore, who spent 24 years as a Professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, a former professor of mine, held the contention that the truest marker of quality in education lies not in what students are being "taught," but what they are actually doing - and how what they are gleaned from any exercise will impact their development both academically and in life outside of an institutional environment. In accordance with this line of thinking we decided to focus intensely on what we had our students doing during the school day, and realized that we needed to create direct pathways to the acquisition of these aforementioned traits.



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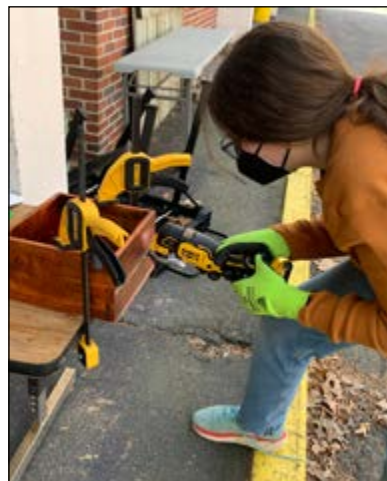
# GOOD GRADES DON'T MAKE HAPPY ADULTS

We created the “Design & Build” program. At MetroWest Jewish Day School, each student participates for no less than one and a half hours each week (preferably more, with plans to increase the saturation in years to come) in STEAM activities. “Lessons” are structured as challenges - but the “how” is up to a collaborative team. Disorganization is not punished; messy spaces are celebrated as markers for creativity; and an emphasis on how students interact with one another is paramount and explicitly practiced. In a challenge, students are given a brief overview of an open-ended problem or dilemma humans face. They have to ask clarifying questions, conduct research, share ideas, create a design for what they will build to solve or improve the situation presented, and then go about building their vision using a multitude of materials, such as wood, metal, plastic, cardboard, paints, string, tape, hardware, and handheld and even power tools.



The desired outcome has only two real requirements - to be of the student group's own ideation - and to create and present a design and prototype based on the group's theorized solution. When working with teachers, I impress the central importance of celebrating process over product. Most of the prototypes presented are completely original, and often discarded following the presentation as the importance was on what the group was able to convey, and not on what they might have created.

One of my favorite experiences with the *Design and Build* program happened when I was observing one such challenge lesson in a lower school grade level. One team followed a common pattern of human behavior wherein the few most vocal students decided on what the group should do, and did not make space for other perspectives. In the end, their project failed. But upon careful reflection of their process with a teacher they were able to realize how they should have operated differently. They ended up presenting to the class their “keys to effective idea sharing in the design process.” It was a very important moment for the class; just as important as succeeding with the proposed challenge of the day.



Creating impactful educational experiences takes work - but not the kind we're used to. Let's drop the standardized, formulaic approach to academics - and empower our students to have powerful learning experiences that will allow them to develop and practice the most critical mindsets and skills needed to succeed in life. Sometimes, that simply means we need to light the way and step aside.

*Brian Cohen is the Head of School at MetroWest Jewish Day School in Framingham. He received his Masters in School Leadership from the Harvard Graduate School of Education in 2009. Photos: MetroWest Jewish Day School.*



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## HOW SWEET IS YOUR ROSH HASHANAH?

*By Ronit Treatman*

Rosh Hashanah evokes images of red, juicy apples drizzled with golden honey. But honey is not necessarily the sweetener of choice for every Jewish family celebrating the Jewish New Year.



There is a historical debate about the meaning of the biblical Hebrew word “Dvash” or “honey.” Therefore, throughout Jewish history, families have served bee’s honey, fruit syrup, and cane sugar when saying the blessing for a sweet New Year.

Most Jews consume bee’s honey without ever stopping to wonder why it is considered kosher. If honey bees are unkosher insects, which are not permitted, then why is their honey kosher?

In Judges 14:9, Samson finds a beehive in the carcass of a lion and eats the honey. And in the Babylonian Talmud, in Bekhorot 7b:4, the Sages explained that honey is nectar from flowers, gathered by the honeybees and stored in their bodies, not excreted by them. Therefore, the honey of bees is permitted.

There is no written record of beekeeping in the Torah. No one is sure when people in Ancient Israel started building their own beehives. In 2007, Dr. Amihai Mazar discovered the first apiary from Biblical times. It was uncovered in Tel Rehov, in the Beth Shean Valley in northern Israel. This apiary dates back to the early 9th Century BCE, when King Solomon ruled and built the First Temple. This evidence points to the widespread availability of bee’s honey in Ancient Israel. However, the “honey” in the Seven Species of the Land of Israel is not thought by scholars to refer to bees’ honey.

Deuteronomy 8:8 lists the seven species of the Land of Israel as, “wheat and barley, and vines and fig-trees and pomegranates; a land of olive-trees and honey.” Historians believe that because the only article on this list that is not a plant is the “honey,” it refers to fruit syrup. Grapes, figs, dates, and carobs were picked at the peak of ripeness in the fall. They were then slowly boiled down to a thick, sweet syrup to preserve them for use throughout the year. A special type of sweet fruit syrup made its debut in the Land of Israel during the Muslim Umayyad Caliphate.

Sugarcane is a type of grass native to the tropical regions of India. At first, sugarcane was a plant that people chewed to savor the sweet juice. This juice was used in ayurvedic medicine.

Then, Indian farmers crushed the sugarcane between two stones to extract the sucrose laden juice. Cane juice was boiled down to a thick, sweet syrup to preserve it. Some Indians dried it in the sun, until golden crystals remained. They called these sugar crystals khandas, which is the origin of the word “candy.”

This raw sugar was brought to the Land of Israel by Muslim traders via the Silk Road, sometime in the 6th Century CE. By the 10th Century CE, sugarcane was being cultivated and processed in Israel, and its sweet, golden granules found their way to the Rosh Hashanah celebration.



# HOW SWEET IS YOUR ROSH HASHANAH?

The principal sweeteners used in ancient Israel were dried fruits and fruit syrups. Dried figs and raisins were pressed into cakes, and fruit syrups sweetened foods and wine. Ancient Israelites celebrated Rosh Hashanah with fruits and fruit syrups. Sephardic Jews and Jews from the communities of the East include dried dates as one of the symbolic foods in their Rosh Hashanah Seder.

Honey was adopted as the sweetener of choice by many Jews in Medieval times, when it became more accessible. Apples and honey are the traditional celebratory Rosh Hashanah foods of Ashkenazi Jews to the present day. Many families make a special effort to purchase Israeli orange blossom honey for a sweet taste of Israel.

Some Sephardic Jews stopped using honey for their Rosh Hashanah blessing in the late 1800s. This is because of Hakham Yosef Hayyim, known as the Ben Ish Hai, who was a Baghdadi Sephardic Rabbi. He wrote a collection of laws based on halakha called The Ben Ish Hai.

He instructed Sephardic Jews that when saying the blessing over the bread, they were to dip it three times in sugar, and then three times in salt. The salt was required because the dining table was likened to the altar in the Temple, and the bread was like the offering (Leviticus 2:13). The Ben Ish Hai was inspired to replace the honey with sugar by the recipe for the Temple incense, which specifically forbade honey (Leviticus 2:11).

Why not embrace all of these traditions at your Rosh Hashanah table by serving date, carob, grape, or fig "honey," bee's honey, and a bowl of cane sugar? Your Rosh Hashanah blessings will be three times as sweet!

*Ronit Treatman is the author of Hands-On Jewish Holidays, available at Amazon.*



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## THE CIRCLE OF LIFE: A FAMILY PROJECT

*By Rabbi Katy Allen*

Rosh Hashanah is sometimes referred to as the Birthday of the World. As the beginning of the New Year, it also marks the anniversary of the beginning of the first year of the world, 5783 years ago. Although we know from science that the world is actually billions of years older than this, we nevertheless mark the years of the Jewish calendar according to the Biblical counting, and the Biblical story of Creation in Genesis 1 is an alternative Torah reading used in some shuls.

Connecting to the natural world is important to our wellbeing, as experts can tell us and as many of us know from personal experience. One way to bring our celebration of Rosh Hashanah into the out-of-doors is through the creation of a nature mandala representing the seven days of Creation. Loosely translated, mandala means circle and is a geometric spiritual symbol in Asian cultures. A visual representation of the universe, a mandala represents wholeness and the interconnections of all life. It can remind us of the many circles with which we connect in our lives - the celestial bodies of Earth, Sun, and Moon, our circles of friends, family, and community, and the cycle of the year, which begin agains at Rosh Hashanah.

In Hebrew, the word shleimut means wholeness, and is connected to the word shalom, meaning peace. Shleimut is a sense of our own inner

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# THE CIRCLE OF LIFE: A FAMILY PROJECT

integrity and connection to our best selves. The process of teshuvah, return, in preparation for Yom Kippur, can be thought of as fortifying our sense of shleimut.

As a family activity, building an impermanent nature mandala representing the seven days of creation can be a vehicle for a discussion about wholeness and being the best person we can be, to ourselves, our families and communities, and our world.

To make a nature mandala, first collect all kinds of nature objects: sticks, stones, shells, pine cones, flower petals, grass, leaves, acorns, bits of bark, and other materials you find along or a trail or in your back yard or a park. Begin at the center, and work outward in a symmetrical manner, placing objects on the ground to create a series of seven concentric circles, each one representing the aspect of the natural world created on that day:

- Day 1 – dark and light;
- Day 2 – sky;
- Day 3 – lands, sea, plants, and trees;
- Day 4 – sun, moon, and stars;
- Day 5 – creatures in the water and sky;
- Day 6 – animals, creepy crawlers, and humans;
- Day 7 – rest.

Nature objects can be placed in the mandala in any way that makes sense to the person arranging them to represent the Creation on a particular day.

Once completed, this nature Creation mandala can provide the opportunity for discussion about becoming more whole through how we interact with the natural world and with each other.

**Rabbi Katy Z. Allen is the rabbi of Ma'yan Tikvah – A Wellspring of Hope, which holds services outdoors all year long and is the founder of the Jewish Climate Action Network, MA.**

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# BOSTON COLLEGE PROGRAMS

## *First Publication of Rare Manuscripts, Art & Music Brings Fullest Picture Yet of Remarkable Cultural Life in Nazi Camp*

Terezín concerts, artists, stories of camp life come to light with “Our Will to Live”

“To know the Holocaust in great detail is one thing. But to hear and feel it from the souls of those who were in the midst of it becomes a singular revelation in this monumental new book. . . exhilarating in life-affirming ways.” - *David Stearns*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer*

“Our Will to Live” reveals the fullest picture yet of the astonishing artistic community that arose against all odds inside the Terezín (*Theresienstadt*) Nazi Camp. At its center are the 26 Terezín concert critiques penned by imprisoned composer Viktor Ullmann - here elegantly translated to English for the first time with the help of Terezín survivors - plus a trove of rarely seen concert posters, programs, portraits and scenes rendered by imprisoned artists. Replete with an original collection of new and vintage recordings of the music Ullmann wrote about, the book takes us deep into the recitals, opera productions, and choral, cabaret and chamber concerts through which interned artists - many of them luminaries of the stage and concert hall before the war - kept despair at bay. Making music in Terezín, where 33,000 people died, was an effort, Ullmann wrote, “commensurate with our will to live.”

This bounty of firsthand reports, stunning art and stirring music - all given historical context by an introduction, essays and copious annotations by author Mark Ludwig - sheds new light on Terezín’s cultural outpouring. Cellist Yo-Yo Ma calls the book “a testimony to the inextinguishable strength of the human spirit. There are moments of excruciating beauty, there are heartrending stories, all reminding us that if we lose our humanity, we are nothing.” Indeed, at any Terezín concert, humanity - accomplished and aspiring artists, children, workers, the hungry and the dispossessed - were united in moments that transcended despair.

Ludwig, a Fulbright scholar of music during the Third Reich and founder of Terezín Music Foundation, spent 30 years researching and preparing the book. He sees it as a memorial and tribute to all the artists silenced in the Nazi Holocaust. “Artists are always among the first to be vilified and shut down by autocracy, as we have seen from Sarajevo to the Ukraine and throughout history,” he says. Auschwitz survivor Anna Ornstein says it “keeps the memory of terrible events alive; music also heals the wounds.” Human rights activist Khizr Khan says the book is “a fitting memorial to the murdered artists and a timely message to us all that we must honor life, decency, and humanity.”

Copies are available at [our-will-to-live.org](http://our-will-to-live.org), where you can also find a list of upcoming concerts and talks inspired by the book, and a video about the inspiration and work behind it.

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Hitler greets the Protestant Reichsbishop of Nuremberg, Ludwig Müller, and Benedictine Abbott Albanus Schachleitner at the Reich Party Rally of 1934. (Wikimedia Commons)

**Tuesday, October 25, 2022**

**4:00-5:30 PM**

**Devlin Hall 101 (across from Admissions)  
Reception following**

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Information: Prof. John J. Michalczyk ([michalcj@bc.edu](mailto:michalcj@bc.edu))

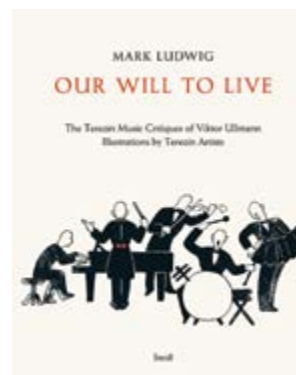
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Susannah Heschel is the Eli Black Professor of Jewish Studies at Dartmouth College. Her scholarship focuses on Jewish-Christian relations in Germany during the 19th and 20th centuries, the history of biblical scholarship, and the history of anti-Semitism. Her numerous publications include *Abraham Geiger and the Jewish Jesus* (University of Chicago Press), which won a National Jewish Book Award and Germany's Geiger Prize, and *The Aryan Jesus: Christian Theologians and the Bible in Nazi Germany* (Princeton University Press). She is the author of over seventy articles and has edited several books, including *Moral Grandeur and Spiritual Audacity: Essays of Abraham Joshua Heschel*, *Betrayal: German Churches and the Holocaust*, and *Insider/Outsider: American Jews and Multiculturalism*.

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**THE ARTS IN THE TEREZIN CONCENTRATION CAMP**  
With  
Author Mark Ludwig



Mark Ludwig, Executive Director of the Terezin Music Foundation, is violist emeritus of the Boston Symphony Orchestra and a leading scholar, teacher and promoter of Holocaust music.

**Tuesday, October 18, 2022 | 4:00-5:30 PM**

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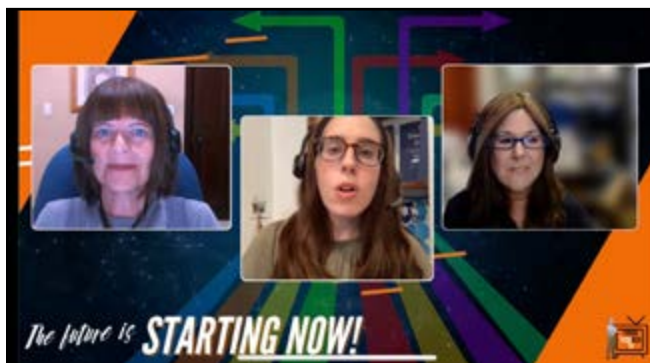


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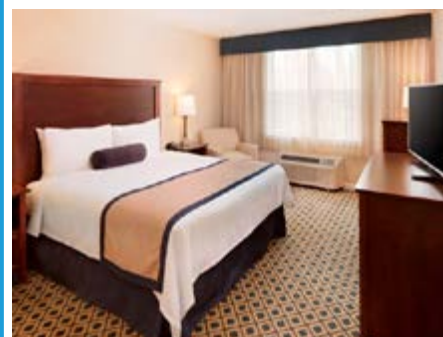
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## Op-Ed: How to Defend Israel and Stay True to Liberal Values



*By Daniel Pomerantz*

Israel deserves the same scrutiny and criticism as any country, yet when Israel is maligned in a way that is unfair or untrue, Israel and Jewish communities, and even Palestinians, pay a terrible price.

That's why it's so disturbing that among young liberal-progressives Israel has come to be associated with oppression, colonialism, apartheid and many of the worst "secular sins" of the modern world. Yet, I believe it is possible to communicate about Israel in a way that is honest, fair and inclusive, even in a time of crisis and conflict.

I would like to share my personal opinion on how one might successfully communicate on this topic, which is based on years of successful conversations even under the most difficult circumstances.

### Israel in the modern world

In a report its own founder called "biased," Human Rights Watch accused Israel of "apartheid," despite the country's diverse population and equal rights for all citizens, a reality which stands in direct contradiction to the very definition of "apartheid." Amnesty International released a similar report, which the head of its Israel group similarly rejected. The International Criminal Court at the Hague is in the process of prosecuting Israel for "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity," in a process the United States has vigorously opposed under both presidents Trump and Biden. Though the ICC did not overtly draw attention to this fact, its claims against Israel are phrased with exactly the same words as some of the charges brought against the Nazis at Nuremberg.

This message has inundated popular culture as well: supermodel

Bella Hadid echoed the apartheid claims to her 53 million (mostly young and impressionable) followers on Instagram; last April, the Harvard Crimson student newspaper endorsed BDS (the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel); comedian John Oliver launched a tirade against Israel as it defended itself from thousands of rockets in May 2021, and more.

This creates a complex dilemma for those of us who wish to speak about Israel while staying true to liberal values, and safe in society at large.

For example, some young Americans believe that Israeli settlement expansion is the primary cause of violence in the region. Indeed, even Israelis vigorously argue about this topic. However, it is noteworthy that neither Hamas (which Israel fought in May 2021) nor Palestinian Islamic Jihad (which Israel fought just last August) share this view. To the contrary, both of those US designated terror groups state clearly and often that their attacks are motivated by a desire to completely eliminate the world's only Jewish state, in any borders whatsoever.

In addition to advocating (and fighting) for Israel's total elimination, Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad also brutally oppress the Palestinian people, much in the way that ISIS oppresses the people of Syria and Iraq in its quest to build a global empire. This means that to be "pro-Palestinian" is not the same thing as supporting the ideology of the very terror groups that oppress the Palestinian people.

So how can one be pro-Israel, and pro-Palestinian and pro-peace? How can one stay true to liberal values, while also supporting the homeland of the Jewish people even when we may sometimes disagree with her choices and actions?

To answer that question, let's examine a case study:

Last May, Al-Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh was shot and killed during an Israeli security operation in the West Bank, at which both Israeli and Palestinian forces were firing live rounds. The event



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## Op-Ed: How to Defend Israel and Stay True to Liberal Values

was clearly tragic, and caused great pain for many people.

Those critical of Israel claimed that Israel intentionally murdered a journalist. To some young liberal progressives, this is not open for debate, because it is in keeping with Israel's supposed character as an "apartheid state" that commits war crimes.

Some pro-Israel advocates take a framing that is adversarial and can even be taken as hurtful, such as placing the blame on the journalist herself for entering a live fire zone. Other Israel advocates hold that even if Israel did shoot her accidentally, the blame for Abu Akleh's death lies nonetheless upon Palestinian fighting forces, because they had initiated this particular round of violence.

All of these points of view are at least uncomfortable, and at worst entirely untenable, to those who deeply believe in liberal values. Yet there is another, very important point of view which has gone mostly unnoticed in the public debate:

Palestinian politicians claim the IDF shot Ms. Abu Akleh, but they have hidden a critical fact: that the Palestinian coroner has refused to confirm this. Meanwhile, for months the Palestinian government refused to allow an outside investigation, and when it finally relented under international pressure, the results proved inconclusive.

This is just the latest even in a long running pattern.

A similar event happened in 2018, when Hamas leaders claimed Israel had shot baby Layla Ghandor, but the attendant Palestinian doctors refused to confirm this. Several months later, an in-depth investigation proved baby Layla had not been shot at all, but had died from an unrelated, congenital heart condition. Similar misinformation surrounded the Al-Dura incident in 2000.

This pattern breaks down into three repeating steps: 1. Palestinian politicians make a claim that the Palestinian health care establishment does not support, 2. the Palestinian government suppresses the relevant information, and 3. after a thorough investigation finally takes place, Israel is often exonerated.

From a liberal point of view, the above incident, as well as the wider conflict in the Middle East, should not be seen as Israelis against Palestinians, or Jews against Arabs. Instead, I believe we are seeing a conflict in which certain Palestinian politicians and terror leaders stand opposed to Israeli and Palestinian civilians, doctors and journalists, against transparent investigation, and against all innocent people regardless of their "side" in this conflict.

It is my opinion that for the good of Israelis, Palestinians, global Jewish communities, and concerned people everywhere, we must begin reframing the events that surround Israel in a new way: a way that supports fairness, nuance, and the very best that Israel and all of humanity has to offer.

*Daniel Pomerantz is a public speaker, on-air political & law expert and an adjunct professor of law and finance for entrepreneurship, and he is the former CEO of HonestReporting. Born in Chicago, Daniel now lives happily in Tel Aviv. The content of this article reflects the author's opinion.*



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## CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE MIDTERM ELECTIONS

*By Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D.*

This article considers the seriousness of climate threats and why they are likely to soon become far worse, the Republican denial about the threats, and how Democrats can exploit the discrepancy between Republicans' views and the climate realities.

First, it is important to recognize how strong the scientific consensus is regarding climate change. Science academies worldwide, 97 percent of climate scientists, and virtually all the peer-reviewed papers on this issue in respected scientific journals agree that climate change is largely caused by human activities, and poses great threats to humanity. In 2018, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), an organization composed of climate experts from many countries, warned that "unprecedented changes" are necessary by 2030 to have a chance at averting a climate catastrophe. Yet, four years later, in May 2022, atmospheric CO2 reached a record level.

The world is already seeing very negative effects from climate change.

Every decade since the 1970s has been hotter than the previous decade, and all of the 23 hottest years since temperature records were kept in 1880 have occurred since 1998. The year 2020 tied 2016 as the hottest year worldwide. June, 2021 was the hottest June on record, and July, 2021 was the hottest month on record. The hottest seven years in recorded history all occurred within the past seven years.

Because of this increase in temperatures, glaciers worldwide are rapidly melting and threatening future food production, which depends on glacial water each spring for irrigation. Greenland and polar ice caps are also melting rapidly, thus raising sea levels and increasing the potential for future flooding. Already, coastal cities, including Miami, Florida, have experienced "sunny day flooding" during high tides. Permafrost is also starting to melt, releasing massive amounts of trapped greenhouse gasses, which accelerate climate change.

There has also been an increase in the frequency and severity of heat waves, droughts, wildfires, storms, and floods. Many such events happened over a short period in the summers of 2021 and 2022. California has been subjected to so many severe climate events recently that former governor Jerry Brown has stated, "Humanity is on a collision course with nature."

Unfortunately, prospects for the future are even more frightening. They include:

Due to self-reinforcing positive feedback loops (vicious cycles), many climate experts believe that we are close to an irreversible tipping point when climate change will spiral out of control, with disastrous consequences, unless major positive changes soon occur.

While many climate scientists think that 350 parts per million (ppm) of atmospheric CO2 is a threshold value for climate stability, it just reached 420 ppm in May, and the amount has been increasing by 2-3 ppm per year.

While all the severe climate events mentioned above are due to a temperature increase of about 1.2 degrees Celsius (slightly above two degrees Fahrenheit), the world is now on track for an average increase of three or more degrees Celsius, which would result in even greater human suffering and significant threats to human civilization.

According to their reports, the Pentagon and other military groups believe that climate change will increase the potential for instability,



## CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE MIDTERM ELECTIONS

terrorism, and war by reducing access to food and clean water and by causing tens of millions of desperate refugees to flee from droughts, wildfire, floods, storms, and other effects of climate change.

Averting a climate catastrophe must become a central focus for civilization today. Every aspect of life should be considered in terms of reducing our “carbon footprints.” Positive steps would include shifting away from fossil fuels to solar, wind, and other renewable forms of energy, reducing the consumption of meat and other animal products, designing more efficient cars, lightbulbs, and other items, and improving public transportation, recycling, and composting.

Despite the very alarming and documented situation, the Republican Party largely denies climate change. Many Republicans still support former president Donald Trump, who is not only in denial, but appointed other climate deniers to key environmental positions and did everything possible to repeal or weaken legislation designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Trump has called climate change “mystical,” “nonexistent,” and “an expensive hoax.” He stated that it was “created by the Chinese in order to make US manufacturing non-competitive.”

Republican members of Congress have been united in efforts to block Democrats’ proposed legislation to combat climate threats. The Supreme Court, with its 6-3 conservative majority, has made a ruling that makes it more difficult for the US to reduce climate threats.

Democrats should constantly stress the urgency of climate threats and the general Republican denial. At debates and other occasions, they should ask their Republican opponent if they agree with Trump’s climate change views or those of the overwhelming majority of climate experts, forcing them to make a difficult choice.

Since young voters will be most affected by climate change and are generally the most concerned, special efforts should be made to raise the issues with them. This should increase the historically low turnout rate for young voters.

If climate events continue as they have, there will likely be many more before election day, giving Democratic candidates many opportunities to raise the climate issue.

They should especially raise it in western states that have been hit very hard in recent years by long-term drought and widespread wildfires, and in Gulf states that have suffered significantly from very high temperatures and severe hurricanes. As I write, deadly floods have killed 25 people in Kentucky, and that number is expected to increase greatly since many people are missing.

Climate scientists should be encouraged to speak out and while not endorsing specific candidates, urge voters to support candidates who are working to reduce the threats.

Whenever a severe climate event occurs, Democrats should express sympathy and support relief efforts but also respectfully point out that such events are increasingly likely if Republicans again gain power.

If we want a decent, habitable, environmentally sustainable world for future generations, it is urgent that climate change be effectively addressed, and if we don’t avert a climate catastrophe, other issues will become insignificant.

Success is essential because there is no Planet B.

**Richard H. Schwartz, Ph.D. is president Emeritus of Jewish Veg ([www.JewishVeg.org](http://www.JewishVeg.org)). His most recent book is *Vegan Revolution: Saving Our World, Revitalizing Judaism*.**



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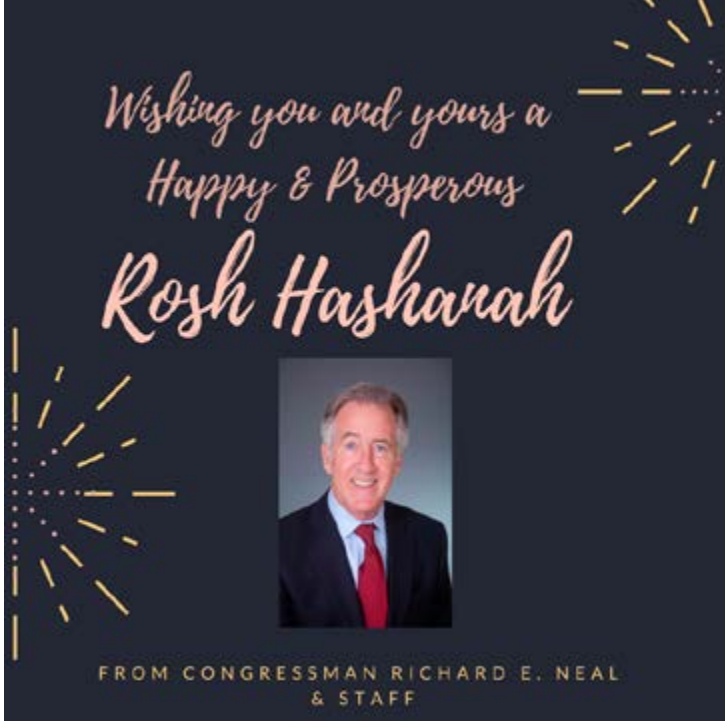
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## GLORY TO UKRAINE!

*By Yuliya Zis*

I immigrated to Boston from the Ukraine in May, 2000. I was nine years old. As I grew up into an adolescent and then an adult, I was always asked where I was from. I would always say things like “Oh, you probably never heard of it,” or “It’s a small country near Russia called Ukraine.” Most people told me that they had heard of it, and sometimes I remember being shocked. It was not until Feb. 24 of this year when the war officially began, where I would no longer be shocked to hear statements such as; “Oh no, I am so sorry,” or “Do you still have family there?”



No one in my family thought that the war would actually happen. A few days before it did, I asked my grandmother what she thought. She replied that it was only a threat from Putin, and that he would not actually start bombing Ukraine.

In my mind, in all honesty I believed her. As I was watching CNN about midnight when the first bombs and sirens were heard, I immediately messaged my childhood friends, even though it was the wee hours of the morning and they were still sleeping. I had not kept much in touch with them, as they all had their own families now, and the only way I knew what was going on in their lives was through social media.

I could not believe what was happening in the country where I was born. I called my grandmother and told her “See, Putin was right,” even though no one wanted that man to be right. That day my grandmother told me, “Don’t worry, it will only last a few weeks.”

Well, six months later, the war is still raging on. I attended rallies in Boston and Newton, where I currently reside. I love to see the

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# GLORY TO UKRAINE!

Ukrainian flags in businesses and signs in homes.

I was born in a city called Dnipro. This city has not been hit as much by shellings as other cities, but sirens are something that they are now used to. When asking my friend who still lives there about it, she said that is now just part of their daily routine. The city of Dnipro has become a hub for many refugees fleeing cities that are in even worse conditions. According to Tanya Kaplunskaya, who is the director of Jewish Big Brother Big Sister in Dnipro, there are estimates that over 350,000 Ukrainian refugees have traveled to Dnipro for safety. She and many other volunteers are helping many refugees, whether they are Jewish or not. Many American businessmen help the community and the refugees. With the help of some wealthy people, volunteers along with Kaplunskaya are able to bring many much needed necessities to the refugees.

The Jewish day school that I attended when I lived in Ukraine has been virtual, and JBBBS has also been virtual up until about two months ago. Since they reopened, JBBBS has been meeting with children on Sundays to spend time with them and help them psychologically and mentally, so that for a short time they could feel like children again. Kaplunskaya told me that the rabbi of Dnipro, Rabbi Kaminetsky, has never left the city of Dnipro. He has been with the community since Day One, and will be celebrating the High Holidays and raising a glass for the victory of Ukraine. But unfortunately, the war is still raging on.

August 24, 2022 will mark the 31st year since Ukraine became independent. I myself was about six months old. I know that there will be many celebrations on that day. Ultimately we will win! Glory to Ukraine! Glory to its heroes!

*Yuliya Zis graduated from Simmons College and lives in Newton.  
Photo of a gas station in Ukraine taken by Rabbi Bleich.*

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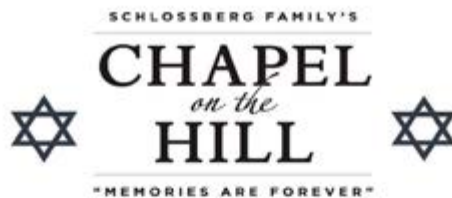


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# RABBI AND PASTORS UNITED FOR ISRAEL

## Rabbi Jonathan Hausman

Psalms 126 states “when G-d restores the fortunes of Zion, we see it as in a dream. Our mouths shall be filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then shall they say among the nations, ‘G-d has done great things for them. G-d will do great things for us and we shall rejoice.’”

In April 2008, I began a long and, for me, much different journey. I responded to three e-mails that I received from a coalition of Boston area pro-Israel activist groups. I was a member of two, and a founder of the third. The e-mail consisted of an invitation to a Christians United for Israel sponsored Night to Honor Israel hosted by Faith Christian Center in Seekonk. Host Pastors were Senior Pastor Dave Marquard (CUFI State Director, Mass.) and Associate Pastor Ray Zimmerlin. The featured speaker was Pastor John Hagee.

Several years prior to receiving this invitation, I had heard Pastor Hagee while attending several conferences in San Antonio. I attended a couple of services at Cornerstone Church, his church for two reasons. First, I am a huge Rock and Roll fan, a musical form with its roots in

Gospel and Blues. Second, I had heard of Hagee’s unflagging support for the State of Israel.

As a descendant of a Jewish family intimately connected to the Jewish state, I was bewildered by such support at the time. Why would this man put his life, his family life and his church at risk to support the only Jewish state in the world? And, to do so with no expectation of anything in return confounded me.

Growing up in Bridgeport, Conn., we experienced the antisemitism of the larger Christian community of an unfriendly Catholic diocese, the rapidly dwindling support of mainline Protestant denominations that were supposed to be friends of the Jews and allies of Israel communities. My father taught me never to be ashamed of who I am. My father’s closest friend, my “Uncle” Ziggy (himself, not Jewish) taught me to be a self-reliant Jew and to listen to my inner voice for strength, succor and support.

So, contrary to the skepticism expressed by a very small coterie of family members, a couple of trustworthy Jewish professional colleagues and friends with whom I shared this confluence of events, on May 8, 2008, I found myself amongst 1100 Evangelicals who loved Israel.

These Christians thanked me for being unabashedly Jewish. They expressed a profound understanding that the mission of the Chosen People is to bring G-d’s Word and glory to the entire world as a whole. Much of this has been accomplished by teaching the reality of One G-d. The revolutionary concept of monotheism is what is expressed on Genesis 12:1-2, as Abraham left his homeland, leaving home and the familiar to journey to a land that G-d would, in time, show him. It is from this act of faithfulness to G-d that the Jewish people began.

In the minutes prior to 2008 event’s beginning, I was dumbfounded that Ms. Hagee would verbalize such thanks to an insignificant Rabbi who labors in the bowels of Stoughton, Mass., thanks reiterated tens of times over by Evangelical colleagues and CUFI professionals that evening.

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# RABBI AND PASTORS UNITED FOR ISRAEL

I could only think of the verse from Psalms and Isaiah: “the heavens relate the glory of G-d” (Psalms 19:2) but that “to His wisdom there can be no comprehension” (Isaiah, 40:28). This was more than an education.

The events of April and May 2008 taught me an important lesson... in our era, eschatology is unimportant if we are equals. In this world, there is joy and laughter in a unity of purpose, to protect Israel, as she is G-d's gift to the Jewish people and a light unto the world, a beacon of democracy in a region of darkness, and proof that G-d has not abandoned the Jewish people, as the world is blessed through the Jew (Genesis 12:3).

My discovery of Christians United for Israel has led to quickly-developed, abiding friendships across the Dispensationalist/Apostolic/Pentecostal-Jewish line. In the years that have followed, I have been a featured speaker at churches across the country and in Canada (interesting experiences, as 2008 was my first time in a Church). The more interesting events were the numerous times that I invited such Pastors to speak at my synagogue, to watch a rather perplexed congregation listen to a Pastor explain why they support Israel and the Jewish people without desire of conversion and for Jews to remain faithful and covenantal Jews. Strangely, my congregants also heard these Pastors publicly thanked a Rabbi for “taking a chance.”

I have keynoted several CUFI Pastors' Luncheons and Middle East Briefings since 2008, have interfaced with Jewish Federations in Tennessee, Ohio, Michigan, Texas, Hamilton Ontario and Toronto, have lectured at Christian Bible Colleges and have spoken at CUFI's Annual DC Summit about this unique set of circumstances. Further, I have considered at great length how the Jewish people experience joy and laughter again with such love and commitment from a segment of our Christian friends.

It reminds me of the famous interaction between Theodor Herzl and Reverend William Hechler in 1896. Herzl had never met the bearded man who declared that he was at Herzl's front door to help him. But, the relationship established between the secular Herzl and the Christian theologian Hechler was enough to establish the foundation of what is termed Christian Zionism.

At one such Washington Summit, I heard the founder of Word of Faith Ministries, Bishop Keith Butler, recall vividly historic antisemitic events and posed the following question: “How would you as a Christian react if the Holocaust were to happen again? How would you as a Christian respond to a resurgence of Jew-hatred? Would you be a true ally as a Christian should have been in the 1930s and 1940s?” It was remarkable for a Jew to hear this once. However, I have heard such sentiments expressed too many times to count by CUFI associated Pastors these past 14 years.

The Nazis then and those who pedal in antisemitic hatreds and tropes today may want to take away our last bit of joy. But, there is a passage in Jeremiah (33:10-11), “*Od Yishama...still can be heard the joyous voices of the bride and the groom coming forth from the Mountains of Judea and from Jerusalem.*”

We use a cup during Kiddush over the wine as we enter Shabbat and joyous festivals. In Judaism, wine is a symbol of joy, not blood. In fact, it is traditional to fill the cup up to the very top so that when you pick it up a little wine should spill out. This is a mystical wish, a way of saying, “May your cup of joy overflow.”

Gifts do come from the most unlikely sources, as long as you are open to the experience.

***Rabbi Jonathan Hausman has served Ahavath Torah Congregation in Stoughton since August 1996.***



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## JEWISH LIFE DURING WARTIME IN UKRAINE

### *Six months of war in Ukraine. What are Jewish organizations doing in Ukraine now?*

*By Tatyana Kislaya*

There were many media reports about the impending war in Ukraine, and still, Feb. 24 was a shock to the world. Ukrainians found themselves faced with a great tragedy. Ironically, the Independence Day of Ukraine, Aug. 24, will be exactly six months since the beginning of the war. How is life in Ukraine today? Is there still Jewish life there today?

It is difficult to explain current conditions in Ukraine for several reasons. First, the situation changes dramatically almost every day. Second, Ukraine is a big country, and each part is unlike the other. Very conditionally, the whole of Ukraine can be divided into four parts.

The first is the occupied territory. It is difficult to say what is happening in the occupied cities, and in some places, it is even difficult to say whether there is life there. In the city on the shores of the Sea of Azov called Mariupol, there is not a single house left intact. The horrific documentaries that are coming from the city show burned houses and partially collapsed concrete boxes completely not suitable even for spending one night there. Mariupol has become a ghost - a city of the dead, a dead city.

The second part of Ukraine is the areas in which the war does not stop. The most striking example is the city of Kharkiv. This large city of almost 1.5 million-inhabited was, before the war, the cleanest and most comfortable city in Ukraine.

Now the civilian areas of the city are being attacked on a daily and nightly basis. Several city districts have been destroyed or severely damaged. A typical picture for Kharkiv looks like a picture from an old WWII movie - people waiting for hours in a long line for humanitarian aid. Former entrepreneurs, officials, civil servants, cultural workers - all are standing in a line for a loaf of bread or a package of pasta.

The third part of Ukraine consists of regions frozen in anxious expectation. This is predominantly the center of the country. Residents of these regions are waiting for what will happen tomorrow.

There are two scenarios: the front line will advance toward them, or it will move away from them. Every meter matters. But there is no numbness - while waiting, people try to live and work. The economy is very bad, many enterprises have closed, there are no jobs. In addition, there are many migrants who were at first helped by the local population, but now everyone is almost equally poor.

The fourth part of Ukraine - Western Ukraine - is a calm area affected by the war the least, and life in this part of the country reminds one of peaceful times.

Today, the situation in Ukraine in short can be described one way: it doesn't matter what nationality you are, it doesn't matter what language you speak, it doesn't even matter what citizenship you have: if you are in Ukraine, you are in danger.

Even the dead cannot rest in peace - rockets hit cemeteries and places of Jewish mass executions during the Holocaust: Babi Yar in Kyiv, Drobitsky Yar in Kharkiv.

Absolutely everyone, including Jewish organizations working in Ukraine, are facing the war. Some organizations left the country, and many, including Jewish organizations, hold online events, providing support to now very displaced communities and to continue educational activities.



# JEWISH LIFE DURING WARTIME IN UKRAINE

And, of course, life itself dictates the most necessary direction - charity. In Ukraine today, many people are engaged in all kinds of volunteering and helping people in-need. All Jewish organizations in Ukraine are now heavily involved in volunteering - running refugee centers, distributing food and medicine, and such humanitarian efforts.

There are even local Massachusetts connections there. A Needham-based all-volunteer organization, RememberUs.org, founded by Jewish immigrants



Now their scope of work has changed. From the first days of war, RememberUs.org has been helping people in Ukraine, regardless of nationality. Criterion one - people need help. The organization has already helped thousands of children with severe disabilities, large families, and the elderly.

This complex work continues the original focus of organizing the memory of the victims of the Shoah - as it is said, whoever saves one life saves the world entire.

The whole of Ukraine, and Jewish organizations within it, is trying to live under new conditions. The emphasis has shifted toward simple things: food, medicine, assistance, thirst for life. The biggest fear is that the conditions can get worse. The deepest desire - peace - unites little children, respectable gentlemen, stubborn teenagers, tearful mothers, and young beauties.

They all repeat one wish like a spell: “мирного неба,” which means “peaceful sky.” And the August sky in Ukraine is very beautiful, especially at night. At this time of the year, starfall begins: the sky dotted with bright dots is very low, and you can clearly see how the stars are falling. How soon will it be that the falling stars fulfill the innermost

desires of Ukraine, and millions of caring people around the world?

from Kharkiv, Igor and Julia Korsunsky, not only continues, but has also expanded its work.

Before the war, RememberUs.org was working on educational activities and commemoration of victims of Holocaust. In addition to their work in the U.S., they have a Ukrainian team, and they have created a number of Holocaust museums in Ukrainian public schools.

**Tatyana Kislaya is a Ukrainian journalist based in Kyiv and a volunteer for the international non-profit organization RememberUs.org.**

**Photos: 1. A child came back to see his home; 2. Kharkiv Hillel, one of the Rememberus.org partners organization.**

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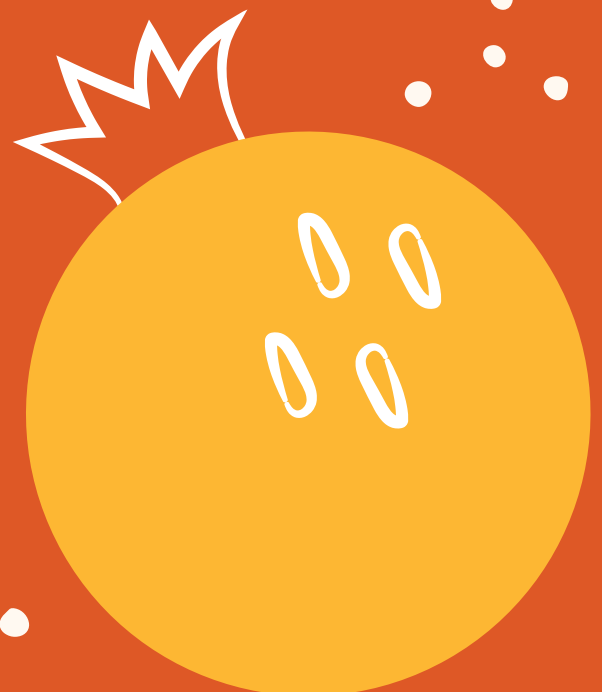
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## WHAT DOES 'JUDEO-CHRISTIAN' MEAN?



*By Tucker Lieberman*

I'm Jewish. I support abortion rights and other gender and sexual freedoms. I believe government should be secular.

I also believe it's important to make room for Jews, others who belong to "minority" religions, nonbelievers, and everyone whose intellect and conscience leads them to depart from dominant narratives.

Reflecting on where we are today, with the overturning of abortion rights in many U.S. states and the renewed attacks on LGBTQ people, I've been thinking about how religion is often perceived as part of the identity of U.S. democracy. One book I've found informative is K. Healan Gaston's *Imagining Judeo-Christian America: Religion, Secularism, and the Redefinition of Democracy* (2019). She lives in Framingham and is a lecturer at Harvard Divinity School.

Gaston tells the history of the term "Judeo-Christian." She writes that at the turn of the 20th century, it had a narrow meaning and was rarely used. The designation became popular between the First and Second World Wars, when people used it for "defining Western civilization and differentiating it from other civilizations," including when they're argue about whether to join the fight against the Nazis.

To find "the roots of America's culture wars," Gaston advises we go back to the World War II era, when liberals and conservatives began using "Judeo-Christian rhetoric" to hash out their "divergent views of American identity."

One implication of "Judeo-Christian" is that a nation ought to assert a religious basis for thoughts and actions. Some feel the United States represents the pinnacle of a religious tradition - although, of course, there is no singular hybrid Jewish-Christian religion. In the 1950s, such "Judeo-Christian exceptionalists" warned that secularism would lead us to Soviet-style communism. They said we could avoid totalitarianism by having the humility to view ourselves and our nation as "under G-d."

The term "Judeo-Christian" raises questions about interfaith alliances. Does it encourage Christians to fight antisemitism at home and abroad? Or does it encourage Jews to assimilate? And what are the long-term effects of excluding Muslims from this formula?

Another implication of the term applies to working together - or not - across racial lines. Martin Luther King, Jr. wrote in *Stride Toward Freedom* (1958) that "the noble teachings of our Judeo-Christian tradition" show that segregation is wrong. Some activists in the 1960s, though, as Gaston points out, felt that this language mostly appealed to white people, or invoked the idea of whiteness itself, and thus could be counterproductive.

As the concerns of U.S. conservatism and liberalism changed, religious meanings morphed as well. References to Christianity in the political sphere increasingly emphasized a preoccupation with sex.

In 1970, President Nixon ordered the IRS to deny tax exemptions to racially segregated schools, and for a while, white evangelicals rallied under the rubric of "religious freedom" to segregate their schools as they wished. After a decade of this, however, evangelical leaders decided that supporting segregation was a losing position and that opposing abortion, instead, was how they would win. (Abortion



# WHAT DOES 'JUDEO-CHRISTIAN' MEAN?

had always been a concern of Catholics, but not necessarily of evangelicals.) Part of the purpose of the term "Judeo-Christian," then, was to inspire unity between Protestants and Catholics regarding abortion while inviting Jews on board, too. This was a tactic used during the 1980 election that put Reagan in office.

Ever since then, in the United States, the term "Judeo-Christian" has tended to signal conservatism rather than liberalism, and it refers to sexual mores, especially opposition to reproductive rights and gay rights. In the mid-1980s, the political right unified around "Judeo-Christian" language when Jerry Falwell - who'd founded a whites-only Christian private school not two decades earlier - began using the term.

"Judeo-Christian" can also imply Zionism of the evangelical Christian variety. Some evangelicals link their theology to foreign policy and, in the process, they form a narrative about their American identity. The term conveyed an anti-Muslim message during the so-called "War on Terror" in the 2000s.

All told, there isn't just one answer about what "Judeo-Christian" means. As Gaston explains in her book, it's complex, ambiguous, and often problematic language. Nonetheless, an understanding of the term's long, varied history can perhaps prompt us to ultimately reflect on who we are, and also, on what we'd like to achieve together.

**Tucker Lieberman is the author of Most Famous Short Film of All Time, a novel about antisemitism, time, gender, the Zapruder film of the JFK assassination, and much more. He grew up in Sudbury, and studied journalism at Boston University. [www.tuckerlieberman.com](http://www.tuckerlieberman.com)**



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**Oct. 16, Yachad's** Annual Sukkah Party for all Ages at the Yachad Community Center, 384 Harvard St., Brookline. For more information, contact Jodi Saltzman, [SaltzmanJ@ou.org](mailto:SaltzmanJ@ou.org).

**Oct. 23, Volunteer with Yachad** for The Gleaning Project at Allendale Farm. Pick crops in the fields that will be donated to local food pantries and homeless shelters. A great event for families and community groups. For more information, contact Stuart Salzborg, [SalzborgS@ou.org](mailto:SalzborgS@ou.org).

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## ANDOVER

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**Saturday, Oct. 15, 4-6 p.m.** Sukkah decorating, beer tasting, Family fun and games. 6 p.m. - Havdalah Under the Stars

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#### Kol Nidre

October 4, 6:30 pm October 5, 9:30 am  
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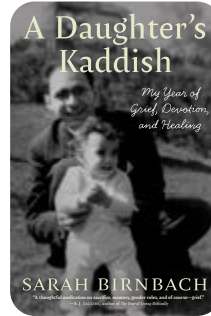
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# ARTS & CULTURE

## *A Daughter's Kaddish* *My Year of Grief, Devotion, and Healing*



*A Daughter's Kaddish* recounts Sarah Birnbaum's year-long odyssey to persevere through an unfamiliar world of Jewish prayer. To honor her beloved father, Sarah commits to reciting the Mourner's Kaddish twice a day in synagogue for eleven months - a Jewish mourning ritual that was historically reserved for sons - despite her father's initial request that she hire a male to do so. A novice worshiper and single working mother, Sarah's obstacles were many - including objections to her prayer practice because of her gender, her own daughter's near-fatal car accident,

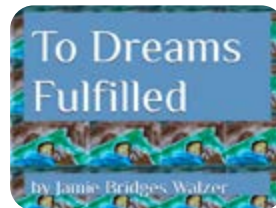
an incident that tore her synagogue apart, and her mother's dismissiveness. Throughout her year of devotion, Sarah takes comfort in the loving memories of her childhood while at the same time, grappling with some very painful ones - ultimately discovering how the path of faith and grief can lead to true healing.

*A Daughter's Kaddish*, which addresses the universal experience of grief, will resonate with the Jewish community, and appeal to Jewish feminists.

Sarah Birnbaum embarked on her encore career as a writer in 2015 after successful careers as a human resource management consultant and a licensed clinical social worker. Learn more at [sarahbirnbaum.com](http://sarahbirnbaum.com). Publisher: Wonderwell.

## *To Dreams Fulfilled*

By Jamie Bridges Walzer



Are you a Mom or a Dad? A teacher? An Aunt or Uncle or Grandparent? A friend of children? Want to connect deeply with your children and help them believe their dreams will come true?

If so, the perfect storybook to be reading is "To Dreams Fulfilled." After reading an illustrated sonnet together, your children will be encouraged to paint their own hopes and dreams with watercolor. Just imagine what they will create.

The book itself was written by a mom who illustrated a poem she wrote through watercolor paintings with her own children. (The paintings are of photographs taken from vacationing together in the Greater Boston area.) A link to purchase this book on Amazon can be found on the author's website: [jamiebwalzer.com](http://jamiebwalzer.com).

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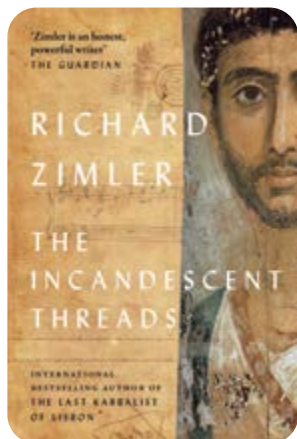
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# ARTS & CULTURE

## BOOKS



### *The Incandescent Threads*

by Richard Zimler.

Published by Parthian Books,  
available in the US in November  
**A Sunday Times Best Historical  
Fiction Book for 2022**

'A memorable portrait of the  
search for meaning in the shadow  
of the Shoah' - *The Sunday Times*

From the acclaimed author of *The Last Kabbalist of Lisbon* and *The Warsaw Anagrams* comes an unforgettable, deeply moving ode to solidarity, heroism and the kind of love capable of overcoming humanity's greatest horror.

Maybe none of us is ever aware of our true significance.

Benjamin Zarco and his cousin Shelly are the only two members of their family to survive the Holocaust. In the decades since, each man has learned, in his own unique way, to carry the burden of having outlived all the others, while ever wondering why he was spared.

Saved by a kindly piano teacher who hid him as a child, Benni suppresses the past entirely and becomes obsessed with studying kabbalah in search of the 'Incandescent Threads' - nearly invisible fibers that he believes link everything in the universe across space and time. But his mystical beliefs are tested when the birth of his son brings the ghosts of the past to his doorstep.

Across six non-linear mosaic pieces, we move from a Poland decimated by World War II to modern-day New York and Boston, hearing friends and relatives of Benni and Shelly tell of the deep influence of the beloved cousins on their lives.

Richard Zimler was born in New York in 1956 and now resides in Porto, Portugal. His twelve novels have been translated into twentythree languages and have appeared on bestseller lists in twelve different countries, including the United States, the UK, Australia, Brazil, Italy and Portugal. *The Incandescent Threads* is the latest in his Sephardic Cycle, an acclaimed group of independent works that explore the lives of different branches and generations of a Portuguese-Jewish family, the Zarcos.





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# The Silly World of Chelm

*The Dreamer*

In the little village of Chelm, Moshe, the Tailor opened a new shop where he was to sell ready-made clothing. This was a new thing in Chelm, because, whenever anyone needed clothing, they would have to go to Mosheto be fitted and measured. It took weeks, and even months, for Moshe to finish a garment. So the opening of the ready-made clothing store was a sign of progress.

After the first day, Moshe sat in his store and began to daydream:

"I went to the big city and purchased the ready-made suits. Now, if I opened another store, I would do

twice as much business as I did today! If I made twice the amount of money, I would then have enough to open two more stores! Now, if the good L-rd favors me, I would then be able to open more and more stores. I would never have to sit by a sewing table again! I would simply go from store to store to collect the money."

He leaned back in his chair as he continued to daydream: "Since I would visit each store every day, and if each store did well, I would have even 100 kopecks at the end of a day! But if I had that many kopecks, I am certain thieves that visit Chelm from neighboring villages would know this, and then one night they would wait for me outside my home and rob all my hundred kopecks. 'Gevald! I have been robbed,' I would scream, 'I have been robbed!'"

He didn't realize it at first, but he shouted so hard that his next door neighbor heard the scream and quickly called Shloimi, the chief of police.

Shloimi blew his whistle and all the townsfolk came running. "Moshe, our tailor of ready-made clothes has been robbed!" everyone shouted.

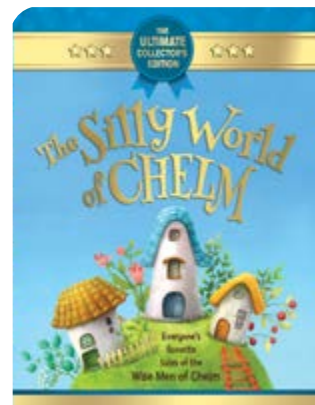
Then the Old Sage of Chelm came rushing to the store. Moshe explained what had happened. "Indeed, Old Sage," he cried, "I have been robbed. The thief took all the money I collected from my six stores of ready-made clothing!"

The Old Sage patted Moshe on the head softly and said, "You have not been robbed because everything you told me had an 'if' in it. You said if you did well in the store you would get a second. And if you did well in the second you would get a third, and if you did well you would get a fourth, and a fifth. So in order for this not to come true, if this store burned down with all the clothing inside, you would have no problem!"

Everyone agreed. Moshe took a match and set fire to his new store. As the last ember burned itself out, Moshe breathed a sigh of relief. "It is such a pleasure to have such a wise man among us. Oy, what aggravation I could have had!"

*Excerpted from the book "The Silly World of Chelm."*

*Available at [www.WorldOfChelm.com](http://www.WorldOfChelm.com) and at Amazon.com.*





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Ann and Owen Breitner wish you a healthy and happy New Year and an easy fast.