



MA CHADASH!

מה חדש!

What's New! The newsletter of Temple Shalom Synagogue Center, Auburn, Maine

ק"ק היכל שלום

March 2021, Adar/Nisan 5781

Temple Shalom Celebrates our Cherished Seniors, Tu B'shvat and Travels to The Temple Mount, Uganda, a Window in Toronto, and More!



Temple Shalom Passover Seder 2021



Sunday, March 28th, 6:30 P.M.

FROM THE RABBI



We needed Purim this year more than ever! At least I did.

Purim, traditionally, is both serious and frivolous. The serious obligations of Purim include the requirement to hear the Megillah (the Scroll of Esther) being read, sharing food gifts with each other (Mishloach Manot—or Shalach Manos), giving copious charity to the needy and engaging in a festive Purim meal. Our more frivolous traditions: loud and raucous noise making during the reading of the Megillah, wild costumes, parody songs, subversive Torah teachings, poking fun at the sacred in the form of Purim shpiels (comedy skits) and even

drunkenness. These frivolous traditions, understandably, are quite controversial and have frequently drawn the ire of many of our Rabbinic leaders—past and present.

So where do these frivolous traditions come from and why do they endure despite the strong opposition? The answer is in an idea expressed in two words in the Megillah—*V'nahapach Hu*—which loosely means, “their world was turned upside down.” It refers to the point at the end of the Purim story when, in an instant, almost certain genocide against the Jews was transformed into victory. But this isn't the only “turning upside down” described in the Purim story.

According to the Megillah the Jews of Shushan (Persia) first suffered the overturning of their world at the beginning of the story when out of nowhere their successful and happy existence was suddenly threatened by genocide—an experience all too common in Jewish history and usually without Purim's happy ending. Tragically, this is all too common in our personal lives as well. How quickly our successful and happy lives can be turned upside down—a medical diagnosis, a loss of a job, a horrible accident, family strife.

Our frivolous Purim traditions help us not to take life too seriously. Yes, we need to plan and prepare for our futures and, yes, we best accomplish this by taking life seriously—even very seriously. Virtually all of our Jewish teachings and practices (including our festive holidays) are geared towards helping us appreciate the seriousness of our existence and the serious consequences of our actions. But, at the same time, how do we cope with the constant, nagging thought: what if there isn't a future? Or, what if the future is unrecognizable?

And so, in order to keep our sanity, we sometimes need—desperately need—to cut loose and shout or drink or party or even mock—especially, mock. We need to remind ourselves that life is fragile, that everything can turn on a dime and all of our best laid—most serious—plans can be for naught. Frivolity helps us to survive the worst—and the anticipation of the worst. As one of our most-loved Purim songs puts it: *Utzu Eitza V'tufar, Dabru Davar V'lo Yakum*—*Their elaborate plans will not come to pass, their schemes will fail.* (Isaiah 8:10) This is as true of our own lives as it was true of Haman's plan to exterminate the Jews.

In early March of last year, Charlie and Johnny planned an elaborate birthday sleepover party (which—please don't judge us—Lisa and I actually agreed to). That and millions of other plans—and yet-to-be-made plans—didn't happen. Since then, countless families have been bereaved, and all of our lives have been turned upside down—*V'nahapach Hu*.

But we still plan, we still take our futures seriously. We have to. Life is serious. But our lives are also ephemeral. Everything can change in an instant. And so we have Purim. One day a year to remind us not to take our lives too seriously. It is an important secret of our survival.

Rabbi Sruli

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Generosity and kindness come in many forms. All of us learn both through examples set by others.

I witnessed an act of kindness just the other day, at Hannaford's. While waiting in the checkout line, a 40 something man was speaking to a 70 something woman. They obviously did not know each other. He was buying flowers for his wife, who was not with him. The older commented that the flowers were beautiful and said that her late husband used to buy her flowers every two weeks. Now, with her husband gone, she has to buy them herself. The woman moved on to the full-service check-out line and the man, with me behind him went to the self-service checkout. He commented to the supervisor, at the self-

service checkout, that he only had one bunch of flowers but would pay for two, as he wanted to give one bunch to the 70 year-old woman. He paid for both bunches of flowers. As I paid, I watched him take the flowers to the woman. She had a look of surprise on her face and then her eyes watered just a bit. She was so thrilled by this kind act of a stranger. This little act of kindness made MY day, imagine what it did for the two strangers who were part of it? Be kind to others, even in little ways. You may make someone's day.

I may have written about this before, if so, please forgive me. I learned generosity from my parents, grandparents and a 19 year-old friend, when I too, was 19. The friend and I grew up together and both went to Bentley College. At home we saw each other occasionally. At college, we did not hang around with the same crowd, so again, we saw each other occasionally. One day, on campus, we bumped into each other and decided to go out for Chinese food for lunch. We get to the restaurant and sit in a booth and order. During lunch, a man walks in who was apparently homeless. He sat down. The waitress came over and told him if he did not have any money, he would have to leave. My friend quietly told the waitress to let the man order whatever he wanted and put it on my friend's check. At 19, this friend knew enough and was not so self-absorbed, as many of us were at that age, to know to help those in need. That friend is Scott Shapiro, son of Mike and Babs. Thank you, Scott, for teaching me an important life lesson.

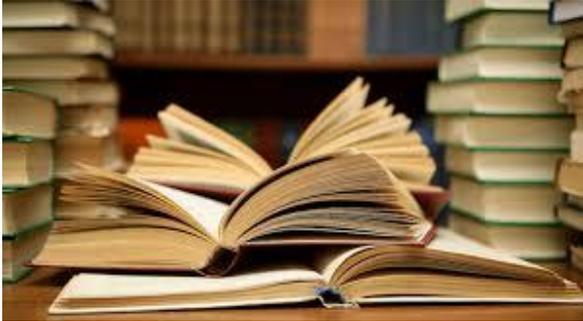
I again learned generosity just the other day. While Julie, the Temple admin is in Florida, for the winter, I am getting and opening the mail. Many of the checks -and thank you for all of the checks- that come in are accompanied by a note. One, I opened last week, really struck me. One of our members had received his stimulus check and since it was 'found' money, that he was never expecting, he sent all of it to the Temple. This struck me as a great and generous idea. When you get your stimulus check, please consider sending it to the Temple (or other worthy charity). During the pandemic, donations have been way down. Anything you can do, any generosity you can show, is appreciated.

Many of you have started to get both your first and second shots. Congratulations! The end of this pandemic is in sight. There is light at the end of the tunnel. But, please follow the CDC guidelines and continue to protect yourself and others, even after you have been vaccinated.

To my knowledge, none of our Maine members have had Covid. I know family members of our members have, but so far our Maine members have been lucky. Keep up the protection. Keep social distancing. Keep wearing a mask. Keep your vigilance. It would be a shame and a tragedy to get so far through this pandemic and then get sick or worse because you became complacent. Do not become complacent just because the end is in sight. I want all of us to get through this and celebrate the re-opening of our Temple TOGETHER!

David Allen

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!BOOK GROUP NEWS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



Apparently, everyone's hunkering down with a good book this winter, for we had another large group on February 8. Present on zoom to discuss *The First Mrs. Rothschild* by Sara Aharoni were Margaret Meyer, Mitch Ross, Fredda Wolfe, Helene Perry, Bertha Bodenheimer, Babs Shapiro, Judy Abromson and me, Lesli Weiner. As this novel is based on Gutle Rothschild's diaries, it is truly a story of a wife, a mother, a grandmother, and everything domestic. There are no details about the

banking empire, but plenty of descriptions of the cramped living quarters of the Jewish ghetto in 1779's Vienna. And her obsession with housework, breeding and cooking made the book slow and somewhat boring. I suppose one could like this book depending on what you were looking for. Some did.

Our next book is *The Book of V* by Anna Solomon. (Please note our change from our originally scheduled title.) We'll be reading it over the week we celebrate Purim. Perfect timing! Here's the description on Amazon:

"For fans of *The Hours* and *Fates and Furies*, a bold, kaleidoscopic novel intertwining the lives of three women across three centuries as their stories of sex, power, and desire finally converge in the present day.

Lily is a mother and a daughter. And a second wife. And a writer, maybe? Or she was going to be, before she had children. Now, in her rented Brooklyn apartment she's grappling with her sexual and intellectual desires, while also trying to manage her roles as a mother and a wife in 2016.

Vivian Barr seems to be the perfect political wife, dedicated to helping her charismatic and ambitious husband find success in Watergate-era Washington D.C. But one night he demands a humiliating favor, and her refusal to obey changes the course of her life—along with the lives of others.

Esther is a fiercely independent young woman in ancient Persia, where she and her uncle's tribe live a tenuous existence outside the palace walls. When an innocent mistake results in devastating consequences for her people, she is offered up as a sacrifice to please the King, in the hopes that she will save them all.

In Anna Solomon's *The Book of V.*, these three characters' riveting stories overlap and ultimately collide, illuminating how women's lives have and have not changed over thousands of years."

We will meet via zoom on MONDAY, MARCH 8 at 4PM. Please let Julie know that you'd like to get the zoom link if you're not already on the list.

And don't forget to sign up with the JCA in Portland for the author talk by Jennifer Rosner about her book *The Yellow Bird Sings*. See you soonlesli

Temple Board of Directors' Meeting

Monday, March 8, 2021

7:00 pm (via Zoom)



BOARD MEETING

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Emily Macaluso	March	3
Helene Fakhery		6
Julia Isaacson		11
Patti Levenson		13
Adam Allen		14
Jack Weinstein		16
Joseph Zidle		18
Able Kaplan		19
Joy Zidle		23
Charlie Dresdner		27
Johnny Dresdner		27
Kenneth Goodman		28
Cassandra Jensen		28



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO

Deena & Jack Weinstein	Mar	8
Barry & Roz Kutzen		31

Yahrzeiten

Shirley Goodman	Mar	2
Harold Shapiro		2
Mary Silverman		3
Benjamin Abromson		4
Annette Hertz		5
Marilyn I. Simonds		5
Leonard Nemeth		8
Nathan Day		8
Rose Nussinow		9
Poppy Traister		10
Lillian Kutzen		13
Marjorie Kraunz Basser		13
Pearl Steinman		15
Lillian Zidle		15
Sheldon Nussinow		17
Gertrude Berent		20
Ida Perry		20
Edward Reeves		22
Paulyn Rosenthal		22
Irving Isaacson		25
Robert E. Meyer		26
Edward Laine		27
Lydia Izenstatt		29
Chris Feinstein		29
Abraham Perry		30
Joseph Margolin		31



Ma Chadash/What's New is published monthly by Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center. Temple Shalom is an independent congregation and a member of the Lewiston-Auburn Jewish Federation.

The mission of Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center is to foster a strong Jewish identity and an active Jewish Community.

Rabbi Sruli Dresdner

Office Manager Julie Waite

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SPEEDY RECOVERY

We pray for refuah sh'leimah – the full and speedy recovery of **Rachel Corvi, Dougie Fleck, Sara Graf, Robert Galumbeck, Isaak Gekhtin, Detlef Gerlach, Ariella Green, Sharon Hemond, Michael Jeser, Elizabeth Johnson, Suzan Katzir, Lynn Kaduson, Linda Koskela, Henry Lefkowitz, Lee Leveille, Bruce Meyer, Sandy Miller, Alice Richman, Joel Salberg, Bob Scott, Sandy Traister, Neal Weiner, Jack Weinstein, William White**, and all others who are not well at this time. *We like to hear good news! Whenever you request that a name be put on this list, please let Temple Shalom know when it can be removed.*



Rabbi Sruli is always happy to speak with and meet with members or our Temple. Please call or text his cell phone at 914-980-9509 if you would like to speak with him or to arrange a time for a meeting. You can also call or leave a message at the Temple office and Rabbi Sruli will get back to you.

CONTRIBUTIONS

GENERAL FUND

Anne & David Allen

In honor of Bertha Bodenheimer's birthday
In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday
In memory of Georgette Belanger
With immense gratitude to Rabbi Sruli & Lisa
for all they do

Harriet & Behzad Fakhery

In memory of Bashi Elyeshmerni

Babs & Michael Shapiro

In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday
In memory of Adele Silverman

Bonnie & Larry Faiman

In honor of Neal Weiner's birthday
In honor of Bertha Bodenheimer's birthday
In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday

Olivia Solodar & Elliott Wincele

In memory of Adele Silverman

Joy & Lewis Zidle

In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday
Speedy recovery to Janet Zidle

Anonymous Donor

In honor of my wonderful cat George

Judy Brody

In memory of Adele Silverman

Carolyn Schnitzer

In memory of Jack, Pat & Leanne Schnitzer

Mitch Ross

In appreciation

Maida & Glenn Fund

In memory of Elinor Goldblatt

Steven Passerman

In memory of Hillel Passerman

Marianne Miller

In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday

John & Consuelo Isaacson

In appreciation

Roz & Barry Kutzen

In memory of Jules Asher

Bertha Bodenheimer

In memory of June Chason

Cathy & Stan Tetenman

In memory of June Chason

BODENHEIMER PASSOVER FUND

Mitch Ross

In appreciation

COHEN/LEVOY GARDEN FUND

Mitch Ross

In appreciation

LIBRARY FUND

Mitch Ross

In appreciation

Elcha Buckman

In memory of Michael Shain



MARCUS MEMORIAL GARDEN FUND

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In appreciation

MINYANAIRES FUND

Mitch Ross

In appreciation

Margaret & Hank Meyer

In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday

NUSSINOW PRESCHOOL FUND

Estelle Rubinstein

In memory of Jennie Rubinstein

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Helene & Lewis Perry

In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday

In recognition of Kris & Dan Rausch for their
dedication to the health of our community

Estelle Rubinstein

In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday

In honor of Jackie Laskoff's 75th birthday

In honor of Bob & Jackie Laskoff's anniversary

Harriet & Behzad Fakhery

To David Allen in honor of receiving the Person of
the Year award

To Rabbi Sruli & Lisa in honor of Zach's engagement

To Rabbi Sruli in honor of receiving the Rabbi of
the Year award

Mitch Ross

In memory of Meyer Ross

In appreciation

The Barr Family

In memory of Lois Barr

Elcha Buckman

In memory of Harvey Shain

Jeffrey & Susan Brown

In memory of Jean Brown

Jonathan Berent

In memory of Rabbi David Berent

RANDALL SILVER LIBRARY FUND

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In memory of Michael Steinman

In memory of June Chason

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