



The Bet Ha'am Weekly Email

Words of Torah from Rabbi Saks

A great deal of text from this week's Torah portion, *T'tzaveh*, deals with the ritual clothing that Aaron, the High Priest, will wear, detailing the fabrics, the decorative stones, and so much more. Among the instructions is the requirement to place two stones on the shoulder straps of the *ephod* (a sacred vest worn by the High Priest). These two stones serve as a remembrance for the children of Israel so that Aaron would carry their names on his shoulders whenever he stood before God. According to *Me'am Lo'ez*, the 18th century Ladino commentary, these stones were there both to remind God of the merits of Jacob's sons (Jacob was also known by the name Israel.) who were the first ones to unify God's name. This would remind God to be forgiving with the Israelites based upon the merit of their ancestors. The stones would also remind the Israelites of those who came before them and their merits, encouraging them to emulate their ancestors. Rabbi Chaim ben Solomon of Czernowitz in his text *Be'er Mayim Chaim* teaches that Aaron literally carried the Israelites on his shoulders, like a person who carries a child on his shoulders to save him or her from danger. This imagery compels us to lift others up, to carry them through difficult situations, and to elevate their accomplishments for all to emulate.



Worship Schedule

We are now using **February** Zoom links for Shabbat worship and Torah Study.

Registrations close at noon on Fridays.

Links will be sent by 4:00 PM on Fridays to all who have registered.

We cannot send Zoom links after 4:00 PM on Fridays.

Read more about our service and our prayer book [here](#).

Friday, February 26

Friday Night Shabbat 7:30 PM

Thank you to board member Catherine Share for making announcements.

Thank you to Ginger Spiro for lighting our Shabbat candles in memory of Ray Spiro, at his birthday.

Register to receive the **Friday Night Shabbat Worship** Zoom link, [here](#).

Saturday, February 27

Torah Study 9:00 AM

Torah study using *The Mussar Torah Commentary* continues--but you don't need to own a copy. Read more [here](#), under the "Torah Study" heading.

We could all use a little celebration these days! Get your costumes ready, grab a refreshing drink, and join Rabbi Saks (who will be participating in the special challenge for our local clergy) and the Maine Jewish community for a festive Purim.

The celebration will include:

- A *spiel* presented by Temple Beth El, Augusta
- A costume parade and contest (Send a picture of your costume, details below!)
- A special challenge for our local clergy (shhh...it's a surprise)
- A traditional reading of the *megillah*, so get out your groggers and make some noise!

Half of all donations for this program will go to support Maine's Good Shepherd Food Bank, feeding the hungry in our state. It's an easy opportunity to fulfill the Purim mitzvah of providing gifts for the needy.

To receive Zoom details, please register below. After you sign up, you'll receive a confirmation email with the program link.

Statewide Purim Together Registration

February 28, 10:00 AM

Please check your junk/spam folders if you don't think you have received all of your emails from Sam or from the office. People are reporting that our emails are landing in the wrong folders within their own email programs. Please remember to mark Bet Ha'am staff email addresses as 'safe senders'. Thank you!



Bet Ha'am Purim Celebration

Rejoice during a morning of Purim celebration and fun on Zoom. This year's activities will include our annual Megillah reading and new Purim shpiel written by Mike Levine, *Good Morning Shushan: A Zoom Shpiel For COVID Times*. In our shpiel, a daily reporter gets the scoop of a lifetime at the royal palace. Join us to find out what happens!

Registration is required by Friday, February 26 at 12:00 Noon. Links will be sent out after 1:00 PM on February 26.

Bet Ha'am Purim Registration

Community-Building Workshop

Monday, March 1, 6:30-8:00 PM

Bet Ha'am Zoom Community-Building Workshop 3

Our relationships are enriched by personal sharing. Open to new as well as previous participants. Congregant Asherah Cinnamon, with assistance from her team of local facilitators, is pleased to offer another community-building workshop on Zoom for Bet Ha'am members. This will be a participatory group (not a discussion or debate) designed to strengthen our connections with each other. Asherah will open with Introductions and with a brief talk on "What is **internalized Anti-Semitism**, and How Might It Impact You and Yours?"

This is an opportunity for adults to express the personal impact of current events, including COVID-19, the rise in visibility of anti-Semitism and racism, and the tensions of politics in families and communities. In large and small listening circles, each participant has an equal opportunity to be respectfully listened to.

Asherah is a trained facilitator with decades of experience bringing people together. Her bio may be found on her website at www.asherahcinnamon.com.

Please register by Friday, February 26 at 12:00 Noon. Please register each person in your household who plans to participate, preferably on a separate device.

Please contact Asherah directly by email at acinnamon@meca.edu with questions. The Zoom link will come from Asherah's email before the event.

Workshop Registration

HIAS Refugee Shabbat



Friday, March 5, 7:30 PM

SAVE THE DATE!

Third annual HIAS Refugee Shabbat

This coming March 5, Congregation Bet Ha'am will be a proud participant in HIAS' Refugee Shabbat, during which Jews in the United States and around the world will take action for refugees and asylum seekers.

With more than 80 million people worldwide who have fled their homes due to persecution and violence, we are now witnesses to one of the largest humanitarian crises in history. As we welcome a new administration, we celebrate the opportunity to look towards a return to the value of welcoming those in need of a safe place to call home and continuing the Jewish community's support for pro-refugee and asylum seeker policies across the globe.

Join us on Friday night, March 5, at 7:30 PM for Shabbat worship. During this special service, congregants Sarah Olney and Faith Moritz will speak about Bet Ha'am's involvement with Greater Portland Family Promise, which serves homeless families, many of whom are new Mainers. They will also share ways in which we can engage with refugees and asylum seekers. We hope you will join us as we reaffirm our commitment to welcoming refugees and asylum seekers to our community.

Tikkun Olam

Join us in supporting the LGBTQ+ community

Please join an initiative organized by Keshet to send emails and postcards to our representatives and senators asking them to pass the Equality Act, proposed federal legislation to establish non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ+ Americans.

Click [here](#) to complete a brief form to (1) send an email or tweet to your representative and senator, and (2) sign up to receive a postcard package to complete and mail to your Maine representatives.

Join us on March 8th, 5-5:45pm to hear from Jon Cohen, Director of Community Mobilization at Keshet, the leading LGBTQ national Jewish organization, about the law and why it matters to us today. We will spend time at the end of the call emailing and writing to our elected officials, so if you don't get your postcards on time there will still be a political action you can take. Questions? Email Rabbi Lily Solochek: rabbi@adasyoshuron.org

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86290503225>

Help Set the Stage

Help Set the Stage
for **A DRAMATIC AFFAIR**
A Virtual Evening with Maine Dramatists
Saturday Evening, May 1, 2021



We need **your help** to produce Bet Ha'am's storied annual gala.

Can you help with:

- virtual event planning
- writing thank you notes
- virtual greeting during event
- record keeping
- composing various letters
- technical assistance during the event
- selling ads or raffle tickets
- creating social media and promotional content including short videos
- creating digital marketing materials
- creating digital program booklet
- mailings

Tasks are short term with few meetings and high reward.
Get Involved. Have Fun. Feel more connected.

For more information, contact Toby Rosenberg at story@bethaam.org

Ongoing Programs

Shabbat Candle Lighting

Please consider signing up to be a candle lighter at an upcoming Zoom Friday night service. You may choose to do this in memory of a loved one for whom you're observing yahrzeit, in honor of a celebration in your life, or just because you want to engage in this ritual. You can read more from Rabbi Saks [here](#); learn the candle lighting blessing [here](#) (on track 420); and find the words [here](#).

[Candle Lighting Sign-Up](#)

Stone Soup

Stone Soup is a Shabbat gift to our congregants. Read all about it [here](#) (on the Stone Soup tab). Many thanks to those who have donated to support Stone Soup.

B'Yachad | Together

Come relax and talk virtually with your Bet Ha'am community before Friday Shabbat services! We will meet every Friday except the second Friday of the month when there is a 6:00 PM Family Shabbat service. [Read more here](#). [Register here](#). Please contact congregant [Alan Davis](#) with questions.



TV Discussion Group

Please join congregants Melissa Montefel and Wendy Hayes, co-facilitators, for a discussion group about Jewish-themed shows. The group meets at 7:00 PM for fun, talk, and insights. Please email [Wendy](#) for the login or with questions or suggestions for future movies.

March 3:

Two movies are being generously offered by the Maine Jewish Film Festival. See MJFF.org to get a pass for the February 19-21 MJFF Weekend Edition.

They Ain't Ready for Me - "The story of Tamar Manasseh, an African American rabbinical student, who has led the fight against gun violence in her Southside Chicago neighborhood. A fascinating look at the complex identity and motivations of an extraordinary person who is Jewish and black, and how these intersecting identities offer her a road map for addressing one of America's most urgent crises."

Rosenwald - "The story of Julius Rosenwald, the son of an immigrant peddler, who rose to head Sears, and partnered with Booker T. Washington and African American communities to build 5,400 Southern schools in African American communities in the early 1900s during the Jim Crow era. As much the chronicle of African American struggle and achievement as the story of a remarkable individual who was inspired by the Jewish ideals of tzedakah (charity) and tikkun olam (repairing the world). Commentary from George C. Wolfe, Julian Bond, John Lewis and Maya Angelou, an alumna of a Rosenwald school."

March 17:

Midnight in Paris - A Woody Allen film - "This is a romantic comedy set in Paris about a family that goes there because of business, and two young people who are engaged to be married in the fall have experiences there that change their lives. It's about a young man's great love for a city, Paris, and the illusion people have that a life different from theirs would be much better." Available on Amazon Prime



Curbside Library Borrowing

Although the building remains closed, you may borrow a book from our wonderful library using curbside pick up. Read more on our [library page](#).

Notable Upcoming Services

Saturday, March 6
Julia Young Bat Mitzvah

Saturday, March 13
Zephyr Conford Bar Mitzvah

There is So Much Going on in Our Community!

We are fortunate to be in a community where there is so much going on Jewishly that we cannot possibly list all of the happenings here. Please check out the websites listed below for all kinds of activities – movement, art, spirituality, books, movies, Jewish education, and more. Bet Ha'am often co-sponsors programs with these community leaders.

***The Passover Haggadah: A Biography* with author
Rabbi Vanessa Ochs**
Thursday, March 4, 7:00 PM

Free. Advanced registration required by Wednesday, March 3 at
<https://mainejewish.z2systems.com/eventReg.jsp?event=73510&>

The Zoom link will be emailed to registered participants on Wednesday afternoon, March 3.



"And you shall tell your son on that day..." This simple command in Exodus has led to more than five thousand versions of the Passover story. Ochs recounts its life beginning with various mentions in the Bible and ending with the profusion of Haggadot today; these variations reflect the geographical spread of Jewish communities, the diversity of

practice, and historic events. For anyone interested in the emergence and complex evolution of the Haggadah, this biography offers a trove of information in engaging and inviting language.

The book is available to order at this link:

<https://press.princeton.edu/books/hardcover/9780691144986/the-passover-haggadah>

[Jewish
Community
Alliance of
Southern Maine](#)

[Center for Small
Town Jewish
Life](#)

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Jewish
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Association](#)

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Museum](#)

[Levey Day
School](#)

[Maine Jewish
Film Festival](#)

Donate to Bet Ha'am

Please consider donating in any amount to Congregation Bet Ha'am--with your help, we can close the budget gap! We are grateful for your support.

[Donate Now](#)

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