



# THE BULLETIN

Congregation Agudas Israel  
Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky

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## The Legacy Project - A Dream Coming True

by Grant Scharfstein

life interrupting our regular schedules. But here it is.

After some delays in getting funds raised, getting plans completed and contractors selected work on the Legacy Project got underway in the fall of 2019. Not included in our original schedule was the removal of asbestos throughout the building. And the more they investigated it, and started the asbestos remediation process, the more they found. The end result was a delay of 3 - 4 months in getting the demolition and renovations started. In addition, this asbestos remediation ended up costing over \$200,000.00 more than originally planned for due to a number of circumstances,

including having to switch contractors to complete the remediation. However, this most important and necessary task was completed so we can now rest easy that our building is finally asbestos free.

In January 2020 our general contractor, Orko Developments Inc., got started on the demolition and renovation of the building. Our committee worked closely with the designer, about, to complete

plans and construction then began.

To have the plans approved by the City of Saskatoon everything, and I mean everything, had to be brought up to current code requirements. This, of course, necessitated a complete, 100% renewal of all the electrical, heating, ventilation, air conditioning and plumbing aspects. Essentially nothing mechanical



in our building met current code requirements. With everything in place, plans completed,

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## 66<sup>th</sup> Virtual B'nai Brith Dinner

by David Katzman, President – Saskatoon B'nai Brith Lodge 739, Dinner Co-Chair

In 1954, a litre of gas was a nickel, a new car cost \$1700 and Saskatoon B'nai Brith had its first Silver Plate Dinner, \$25/person, in the basement of the Marigold Chinese Café. I am guessing the Dinner provided some of the funds required to buy the land that our synagogue now stands upon.

The 66<sup>th</sup> event was SOLD OUT. It is a tribute to the generosity of Saskatoon's citizens that they still bought our \$200 tickets

even though there was no Dinner. Co-chair Michael Shaw put together a very effective social media communications package that promoted our tickets and the Silent Auction. The Virtual event was held Tuesday, Nov. 3, hosted brilliantly by co-chair Joel Bernbaum. The We Are Proud of You Award was presented to the Frontline Healthcare Workers, in honour of their dedication and bravery confronting Covid-19.

The 115 item Silent Auction was assembled by Ron Gitlin, with invaluable support from Bryce Sasko, Harold Shiffman and Kevin Sharfe, with significant assistance from Linda Shaw, Jan Gitlin and Nikki Gitlin.

Arnie Shaw organized the ticket sales and conducted the draw. That was a lot of work for one person, so Linda Shaw and Dianne



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Congregation Agudas Israel and the Saskatoon Hebrew School invite you to the

### Online Hanukkah Family Celebration

KAHOOT GAME WITH PRIZES  
HANUKKAH TIKTOK VIDEO CONTEST  
SONGS – MENORAH LIGHTING

**Monday, December 14<sup>th</sup> from 5:15 to 6pm**

Visit [agudasisrael.org](http://agudasisrael.org) for the Zoom link

(Have your Menorah prepared at home and put on your Ugly Hanukkah Sweater!)

This page is sponsored by Gladys Rose of Toronto

Deadline for the next Bulletin is February 20th, 2021

## FROM OUR CONGREGATIONAL FAMILY

### The Mission Statement of Congregation Agudas Israel

Congregation Agudas Israel is a spiritual, religious, educational and social home committed to deepening the quality of Jewish life in Saskatoon and district. We are an evolving link in the historical traditions of the Jewish people. We are a progressive, democratic and sensitive congregation responding to the widest spectrum of Jewish thought and practice.

*Written at the 2002 Kallah by the members of Congregation Agudas Israel*

#### Mazel Tov and Congratulations to:

**Sherwood and Elaine Sharfe** on the engagement of their Granddaughter, **Naomi Bielak**, daughter of Pamela and Yakov Bielak of Toronto

**Robert Englebert** on the recent publication on his book, co-authored with Andrew Wegmann, *French Connection: Cultural Mobility in North America and the Atlantic World, 1600-1875*. Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University Press, 2020.

#### Condolences To:

**Harold and Lisa Shiffman and family** on the death of Harold's mother, Bev Shiffman on November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

#### Shalom and Yasher Koach to:

##### Ose Sokariboa

“The hardest part of moving during a pandemic is not been able to personally say thank you and hug everyone that has been part of my journey. I just want to say thank you, to everyone that has helped me, given me a ride, invited me to your home and fed me. Thank you all. I am very grateful for all your support, hugs, and kind words. I have learnt so much from this community; they say it takes a village to raise a child, and you are all part of the village that raised me. If you are ever in Hamilton Ontario please do not rent a hotel: you have a place to stay. Love Ose. “



#### Welcome New Board Member

**Robert Englebert:** My family and I have been members of Congregation Agudas Israel for a number of years now, and I was thrilled when I learned that I had been elected to the Board. I grew up in a Jewish family in Montreal and Toronto, but I wasn't part of a Jewish community until coming to Saskatoon. What I have found here is an open and welcoming place where one can raise a family and explore, learn, and live a Jewish life. Like all communities, we face challenges. And yet we have a history at CAI of punching far above our weight, doing much more than our small numbers might indicate. My hope is to continue to build on the work of our previous indefatigable Board members, reaching out to old and new members, continuing to foster a sense of inclusivity, and helping us to identify the needs of our community as we adapt to face the challenges ahead.



## University of Saskatchewan Pays Tribute To Honorary Degree Recipient Max Eisen



Max Eisen is a Holocaust survivor who has been our keynote speaker for Congregation Agudas Israel's Holocaust Memorial Service and friend of our community.

Max Eisen, a Holocaust historian, is the only member of his family to survive the Auschwitz concentration camp horror during the Second World War.

Eisen has spent the past three decades travelling coast to coast telling his first-hand account of a horrible chapter in human history. He also testified at the trial and conviction of two Nazi SS guards from Auschwitz.

As a part of Max Eisen's honorary PHD, he made a presentation to a group of University of Saskatchewan College of Education students. Max digitally shared his powerful story; profoundly impacting a group of future educators. At 91 Max tells his story with clarity, poignancy and impact. Simon Wisenthal's education coordinator was on line, and Judge David Arnot brought greetings to the students. I had the honour of moderating this unique format. Dr. Michelle Prytula, the Dean of Education was visibly moved by Max's story and committed to more of these learning opportunities. The event itself was a closed to the general public, but in the coming weeks once it's downloaded to a university YouTube channel, it will be available for sharing.

Heather Fenyes

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# Editorial



by Steven Goluboff

We are nearing the last days of what will be remembered as a year that our children and grandchildren will forever remember. It will rank at the top of disasters and loss but will also be marked by human ingenuity and resilience. Our scientists have been able to create vaccines with unprecedented speed that will hopefully give some light at the end of the long dark tunnel and we hope and pray that we will all be vaccinated by the end of 2021. Fear still looms large in the minds and hearts of many but with appropriate caution, which is sadly lacking by many in our communities, the risk can be largely mitigated. Yasher Koach to our Rabbi and community leaders who have managed to keep us connected albeit in small numbers with our synagogue and each other. The magic of Zoom is truly a life raft for many of us. Mazel Tov to B'nai Brith which orchestrated an incredibly successful Virtual Silver Plate Dinner, gaining support from our non-Jewish friends and wonderful feedback about our *We're Proud of You Award* given to the Frontline Health Care Workers. The proceeds that go towards many worthy causes in the city are also vital to our own financial viability at Congregation Agudas Israel. It was gratifying to have several new young leaders taking responsibility for the event, but we are a long way from future sustainability with regards to ticket sales. We need all our members to participate with these fundraisers. We wish the organizers of the Silver Spoon Dinner much success and need

them to be creative in something that will be unlikely to draw 1000 people to TCU Place in the Spring. Our almost completed renovated Synagogue will be ready for the move back in by early in the new year. As Grant Scharfstein has written in *The Bulletin*, it will be a fabulous home with great potential but going along with a massive deficit due to issues beyond our control. Our Board and leadership must develop a rejuvenated fund-raising plan directed to our own community and our Saskatoon Jewish diaspora. I believe that it is likely to be more successful when everyone can see the finished product. I encourage everyone to reach out to former members and families who have not yet contributed to The Legacy Fund and to those that have considered ongoing contributions. Thank you to Past President and now Financial Affairs Committee Chairman who has clearly explained in this issue more about our Saskatoon Jewish Foundation, its many funds, and the opportunity to honour loved ones by donating. Although we do not have a formal Israel directed fund raising campaign in this difficult time, we appreciate the generous offer UJA Canada, through an anonymous donor, a contribution of hand sanitizers and 3-ply disposable masks to be used as we return to pray in our new sanctuary in the new year. I am thrilled that with Rabbi Claudio's support and blessing, the new year will offer opportunities to have shared events with all Jews in Saskatoon, regardless of their synagogue affiliation. This is a timely example of healthy outreach and cooperation. These kinds of activities can do nothing but enhance our programming and relationship with everyone involved. To end

on a lighter and humorous note I would like to thank Burna Purkin for forwarding classical Yiddish expressions adapted to Covid times, several which are printed in this Bulletin. It may be time for a Joys of Yiddish column in *The Bulletin*.

## These Yiddish Words Will Get You Through Quarantine

- 1. Tsedrate**  
adj. (tsuh-DRATE) All mixed up, confused. Before the Covid-19 virus, tsedrayte meant we couldn't remember if we promised to meet a friend for lunch on Thursday or Friday. Now we don't know what day of the week it is. These days, just getting the mail makes us tsedrayte. Do we leave the letters on the floor for 24 hours? Do we wipe the package before we put it on the floor or wash our hands and then wipe the package? And what do we do after we open it?
- 2. Oy**  
n. (OY)  
Perhaps the most popular Yiddish expression, oy conveys dozens of emotions, from surprise, joy, and relief to pain, fear and grief. Bubbe Mitzi used to say that just groaning "a good oy" could make you feel better.
- 3. Eynghesparter**  
n. (AYN-guh-shpar-ter) A stubborn person; someone who cannot be convinced with logic. These are the people who are protesting to end the shutdown before it's safe, ordering "cures" on the Internet, and claiming the pandemic is all a hoax.

## Fun with Fund Accounting

by Harold Shiffman, Chairman Financial Affairs Committee



While Congregation Agudas Israel is a small organization, its accounting can be quite complex. Under the hood of its financial operations are many different funds, all with their own rules and purposes. On several occasions I have been approached by members wondering exactly what funds we have, and which ones they should donate toward. Today I will take the time to list our funds and explain how they are used.

### CAPITAL ASSET FUND

Our Capital Asset Fund is comprised of several smaller funds that make it possible for our community to make large capital purchas-

es for the sake of things like building maintenance. These funds are the Clarice and Sid Buckwold Fund, Grace and Nate Goluboff Fund, Gladys and Gerry Rose Fund, Clara Columbia Fund, Victor and Mirka Pollack Fund, and the Michael Levine Fund.

### SASKATOON JEWISH FOUNDATION

Like the Capital Asset Fund, the Saskatoon Jewish Foundation is also a collection of numerous funds, but unlike the Capital Asset Fund, these funds have their own individual terms of use.

- Miriam Pavey Fund  
Interest earned goes toward the CHEP Lunch Program at Saskatoon Schools
- Sharfe Cantorial Fund  
Principal and interest can be used for hiring a cantor for the High Holidays
- Mike Kanitz Fund

Interest earned can be used for Holocaust Education programs and events

- Avivi Shlichim Fund  
Used for Shlichim and potentially other emissary-like programs
- Rabbi Pavey Fund  
Interest available for Tikkun Olam-type activities
- Grant and Marsha Scharfstein Scholarship Fund  
Interest can be used to assist Jewish Children in participating in Jewish Educational Programs that they would not otherwise be able to afford.
- 40/50 Cantorial Fund  
Interest is available for cantorial expenses
- Jacob Goldenberg Fund  
Interest is available to help the congregation

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This page is sponsored by Steven, Leila, Sarah and Shaina Goluboff and families

# From the President



*Kevin Sharfe, President, CAI*

It can no longer be all about the pandemic. We have adapted. We have pivoted. We have adjusted, and we have overused every social media buzz-word known to millennials. At Congregation Agudas Israel, lemonade has been made and it is time to admit it. We are a high functioning synagogue and Jewish community. Period. I hope to bring recognition to what's happening without hesitation or qualification. I believe that disclaimers like "in spite of" or "we'll get past this" are no longer helpful and they undermine the value of what is being delivered to our members.

From a religious and spiritual perspective, Rabbi Claudio's online services have attracted a minyan on a regular basis, and this

is an accomplishment by every measure for a Jewish community of our size. Not every person is moved to pray on Shabbat but the community spirit the services facilitate transcends religion. For instance, Rabbi Claudio leads a Kiddush at the end of service while members and guests stay zoomed for a toast and conversation.

Learning is being offered consistently on a weekly basis with Rabbi Claudio's *Torah in The Times of Corona*. This borderless classroom provided by Congregation Agudas Israel has attracted folks and family members from around the world. Our members are exposed to a range of provocative topics through the many guest speakers invited to speak at our online programs. I think the consistency and content of Congregation Agudas Israel's online programming as a measure of outreach

can be used as an example to other small congregations. Among many examples, we have three unique events planned for Channukah this year. Drive-in menorah lighting anyone?

It brings a smile to my face that refuses to settle knowing that some of our members will be reading this article from the inside our new synagogue. In this new home, the aesthetics will enhance our experience, the glass wall will brighten our sanctuary, the sound system will bring clarity to our voices, the Hebrew school classrooms will inspire learning and the bema will welcome members and friends. Most importantly, our members will fill the space with meaning and love that design and structure could never replace.

And that, folks, is why I don't think it's all about the pandemic.



## Divrei Harav – Rabbi Claudio's Message On Hanukkah, the Pandemic and Jewish Fundamentalism

*By Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky*

As I sit to write this article, I feel very troubled by the attitude of some ultra-orthodox groups in New York

who sued the local authorities for the restrictions imposed on religious gatherings, which had the purpose of preventing the spread of Covid-19. The legal suit, filed by Agudath Israel, the largest ultra-Orthodox umbrella group in the United States, eventually succeeded in the Supreme Court of the United States last week, on the basis of religious freedom and complaints against religious discrimination.

Beyond the legal and constitutional considerations of the case, which are totally out of my area of expertise, I am extremely concerned – and embarrassed – about my brothers and sisters, who in the midst of one of the worst catastrophes in the modern history of humanity, are worried more about the ritualistic aspect of our tradition than the most important of all the Mitzvot: The preservation of life, or Pikuach Nefesh. Instead of accepting the legal limit of 10 people for religious gatherings imposed by the authorities – ironically the same number required by Jewish law – these Ultra-Orthodox Jews chose to sue the authorities to be able to gather in big numbers

for weddings and funerals, something that they were actually already doing although illegally, and without asks or social distancing.

Many people wonder how those who devote their lives to a strict religious practice can't understand that the prevention of the spreading of a deadly virus takes precedence over religious services and traditional celebrations. This is not only logical for most human beings, but also a commandment codified by Jewish Law. Why is it, then, that they ignore what is obvious for us, both from a logical and also traditional point of view?

Ultra-Orthodox Jews live separated from the rest of the society, therefore they experience the world under a totally different paradigm. I don't mean that they necessarily live physically separated or that they won't engage in a friendly conversation with us, but that the way they comprehend the world responds to different codes than the ones we use. They do understand the threat of the coronavirus and the dangers of big gatherings, but they don't share with us the understanding of how the virus came, how it operates and how we can prevent an infection. We have to remember that Ultra-Orthodox kids don't learn science because it's considered heretic, young adults don't attend regular high-schools or universities. Science is foreign and rejected

by them. A deadly virus, according to their understanding of the world is a punishment sent by God, and the way to address the threat is showing religious devotion through prayers and ceremonies. The only way to be protected, following their logic, is to gather in big numbers and ask God to end the disease.

Religious fundamentalism is bad for the Jews and for the entire world. From religious wars, persecution against infidels and the reaction to a pandemic, the fundamentalist paradigm understands the world based on a "all or nothing" philosophy. They separate people between "us and them" and judge reality starting from a "right and wrong", "true or false" principle. There is no space for doubt or conflict; life is never grey. What we may think are new challenges, are actually old problems with pre-established solutions. The answer to Covid-19 comes not from decades of scientific research and the sacrifice of scientists and front-line workers. They believe it's actually their prayers and massive religious gatherings that are influencing God to bring a vaccine.

Although Jewish fundamentalism likes to project an image of Jewish authenticity, their beliefs and practice contradict most of what our texts, through the generations, show about our tradition. Judaism has always believed

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# Courage and Context

by Matthew Taras, Associate Editor



I'm starting to get excited about the prospect of the newly renovated synagogue. Not having a common place to worship was difficult before COVID, but after COVID hit when we had neither a synagogue nor a place to gather, things became tougher. I think most people in our synagogue found their motivation slowly sapped over the last few months. The Rabbi, to his credit, put on an amazing show. He has fought to ensure that we had a worthy celebration for the high holidays and kept engagement as high as he could through Torah studies and cultural events. For this I thank him profusely and with great admiration. Despite his effort, I think it is still a struggle to really be a community from behind our computer screens. I could not be more excited to be back in the synagogue, whatever that looks like, in 2021.

An arch cannot hold without a keystone, and neither can a community be together without actually being together. Community physical togetherness is important. The smaller the population, the more important it is for us to get together; and I am

not referring to online services.

We came together and gave millions of dollars for the renovation and rejuvenation of our communal space. Let us make the most of it. I worry that we will open the building, with seating for 300+, and not use it for fear of this pandemic. What a shame that would be. We rarely used to fill the space except on special occasions. Surely, we can use the great deal of open space we are blessed with to social distance and follow health guidelines for the resumption of normal weekly services. Rarely do we get more than 30 people at services, that still leaves 5 empty seats on each side of you, front and back as well. We invested in a speaker system so that those at the back can hear those at the front, let us use that to make sure we are spread out. There is no reason we cannot pray through a mask. Fear cannot stand in the way of us being a community. We do not have to kiss each other on the cheek to be together. Let us use our advantages to make sure in person meetings actually happen.

Jews have always worried that our synagogues would be empty mausoleums where once vibrant communities existed. The age-old fear was that anti-Semites would end our tradition, by pushing us to worship in hiding or by outright extinguishing us. All that re-

mains after that fear is realized is the historical architecture. Like many Jews I have travelled to Europe and seen Jewish tourist sites that are tombs of what used to be. We have collectively resisted this for 5000 years, and now I call upon all of us at Congregation Agudas Israel, specifically the young and healthy, to gather in person at the new building when it is completed. We must manage our fears about this disease and safely renew a vibrant, living, coterie.

I'm not saying we should ignore the advice of health experts or forget that a pandemic exists all around us. I am saying: let us make sure we use every scrap of knowledge, every advantage we have in our community – from medical experts, to our large building, creative professionals and committed members – to ensure that we can resume our normal lives and activities safely.

We need a synagogue. I am elated that the building appears to be coming along, but fearful that we will not use it. I don't want the arch that has sheltered all of us and our forebearers to fall over without its keystone. And I definitely don't want to have the keystone finally put in place but not supported by the voussoirs of use, enthusiasm, and enjoyment.

## Memories of Bev Shiffman

by Lisa Shiffman

On November 26<sup>th</sup> my mother in law closed her eyes for the last time. A mother of 3 sons and one daughter. A grandmother to 11 and a great grandmother to 5. She was a lady that I would describe as full of sensibility yet she also had a mischievous and humorous side. After I married her youngest baby, Harold, I would talk with her a couple of times a week on the phone just to check in and see how she was. She always had these amazing stories to tell me from her times as an office admin in the Cobalt Bomb Cancer Clinic in Toronto. She told me about her Eastern Star meetings where she became friends with my great-grandmother who saw little Harold running amok at the meetings. Little did my great-grandmother know that years later I would marry that little tot. She spoke fondly of Mah Jong events with "the ladies". Apparently her baba and mother's cooking and baking skills



could not be surpassed. She liked to talk and as a quieter person, I liked to listen, even if the stories were the same as the last time we had talked. She told me stories about how Kenny would run the record player at 2 a.m. when he was a tot, just because the music moved him to do so. I heard the story of how Carol saved Kenny from a bear in Flin Flon. Stories of Howie's university friends and their crazy antics – I honestly don't know how she kept her cool with that lot. The story about how Harold drove her car across the street by releasing the parking brake when he was around 5 years old. Harold decided not to tell anyone of the new location of the car so the household found out about this when one of the older siblings came home from school and asked why mom's car was sitting in the schoolyard across the street. She would laugh about

these crazy stories, yet also told me about the early years when she lived in a home that was hardly more than a shack with poor heating in the winter. She sacrificed a lot to allow Jack (with whom she celebrated her 68<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary with this year) to pursue his education but never said it was a chore. She was a professional home maker and from time to time worked to bring in extra money to help them get by. Life was tough, but she did whatever she could to make the home a happy one.

She enjoyed doing projects with her hands. Cross stitch was a favorite of hers and I now own many of her projects, such as shabbat table clothes with matching serviettes and challah covers. She cross stitched until her vision got too bad to do this. She was also an avid reader and sadly had to stop reading around the same time she stopped cross stitch.

Bev loved watching old movies. She could tell you the entire plot line from any movie from the 50's or 60's because she had seen these movies over and over. I always found it amazing that she could retain so many movie

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This Page is sponsored by Joan and David Taras of Calgary, Alberta

# Biography of the Month: Ruth Bader Ginsburg

by Stan Schroeder

**Joan Ruth Bader** was born March 15, 1933, at Beth Moses Hospital in Brooklyn, New York, the second daughter of **Celia (née Amster)** and **Nathan Bader**, who lived in the Flatbush neighborhood. Her father was a Jewish emigrant from Odessa, Ukraine, at that time part of the Russian Empire, and her mother was born in New York to parents who came from Kraków, Poland. The Baders' elder daughter **Marylin** died of meningitis at age six, when Ruth was 14 months old. The family called Joan Ruth "Kiki", a nickname Marylin had given her for being "a kicky baby".

When "Kiki" started school, Celia discovered that her daughter's class had several other girls named Joan, so Celia suggested the teacher call her daughter "Ruth" to avoid confusion. Although not devout, the Bader family belonged to East Midwood Jewish Center, a Conservative synagogue, where Ruth learned tenets of the Jewish faith and gained familiarity with the Hebrew language. Starting as a camper from the age of four, Ruth attended Camp Che-Na-Wah, a Jewish summer program at Lake Balfour near Minerva, New York, where she was later a camp counselor until the age of eighteen.

Celia took an active role in her daughter's education, often taking her to the library. Celia had been a good student in her youth, graduating from high school at age 15, yet she could not further her own education because her family instead chose to send her brother to college. Celia wanted her daughter to get more education, which she thought would allow Ruth to become a high school history teacher. Ruth attended James Madison High

School, whose law program later dedicated a courtroom in her honor. Celia struggled with cancer throughout Ruth's high school years and died the day before Ruth's high school graduation.

Bader attended Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, and was a member of Alpha Epsilon Phi. While at Cornell at age 17, she met **Martin D. Ginsburg**. She graduated from Cornell with a BA degree in government on June 23, 1954. She was a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the highest-ranking female student in her graduating class. Bader married Ginsburg a month after her graduation from Cornell. She and Martin moved to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he was stationed as an ROTC officer in the U.S. Army Reserve after his call-up to active duty. At age 21, she worked for the Social Security Administration office in Oklahoma, where she was demoted after becoming pregnant with her first child. She gave birth to a daughter in 1955.

In the fall of 1956, Ginsburg enrolled at Harvard Law School, where she was one of only 9 women in a class of about 500 men. The Dean of Harvard Law reportedly

invited all the female law students to dinner at his family home and asked the female law students, including Ginsburg, "Why are you at Harvard Law School, taking the place of a man?" When her husband took a job in New York City, Ginsburg transferred to Columbia Law School and became the first woman to be on two major law reviews: the *Harvard Law Review* and *Columbia Law Review*. In 1959, she earned her law degree at Columbia and tied for first in her class.

President **Bill Clinton** nominated Ginsburg as an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court on June 22, 1993, to fill the seat vacated by retiring Justice **Byron White**. She was recommended to Clinton by then-U.S. attorney general **Janet Reno**, after a suggestion by Utah Republican senator **Orrin Hatch**. At the time of her nomination, Ginsburg was viewed as a moderate, and as a consensus builder in her time on the appeals court. Clinton was reportedly looking to

increase the court's diversity, which Ginsburg did as the first Jewish justice since the 1969 resignation of Justice **Abe Fortas**. She was



the second female and the first Jewish female justice of the Supreme Court. She eventually became the longest-serving Jewish justice.

Ginsburg died from complications of pancreatic cancer on September 18, 2020, at age 87. She died on the eve of Rosh Hashanah, and according to **Rabbi Richard Jacobs**,

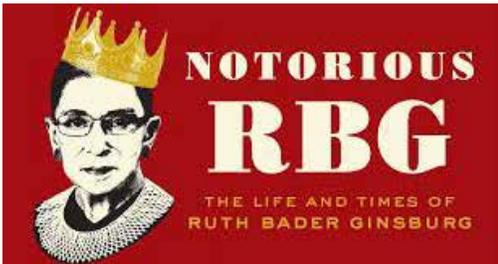
"One of the themes of Rosh Hashanah suggest that very righteous people would die at the very end of the year because they were needed until the very end". After the announcement of her death, thousands of people gathered in front of the Supreme Court building to lay flowers, light candles, and leave messages.

Five days after her death the eight Supreme Court justices, Ginsburg's children, and other family members held a private ceremony for Ginsburg in the Court's Great Hall. She received, for the first time in American Jewish history, a traditional Jewish funeral at that site. **Rabbi Lauren Holtzblatt** of Conservative Congregation Adas Israel in Washington, and Ginsburg's personal friend presided. Holtzblatt's husband, a lawyer, once served as Ginsburg's law clerk. Chief Justice **John Roberts**, who also presided, described Ginsburg as thoughtful, careful, compassionate, and honest.

In March 2015, Ginsburg and Rabbi Lauren Holtzblatt released an essay titled "*The Heroic and Visionary Women of Passover*", an essay highlighting the roles of five key women in the saga: The text states "These women had a vision leading out of the darkness shrouding their world. They were women of action, prepared to defy authority to make their vision a reality bathed in the light of the day ... In addition, she decorated her chambers with an artist's rendering of the Hebrew phrase from Deuteronomy, "*Zedek, zedek, tirdof*;" ("Justice, justice shall you pursue") as a reminder of her heritage and professional responsibility.

While visiting Israel in 2018 to receive a lifetime achievement award from the Genesis Prize Foundation, a prominent Jewish

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# Confessions of a Convert: Hanukkah is Hard

by Victoria Taras

“Snow! It’s Christmas! Santa will bring me presents!” my toddler gleefully told me on the way back from daycare. Awkward silence followed. I

internally rebuked the daycare for its assumption that everyone celebrates Christmas, then took a deep breath. I explained to my son that some people tell the Santa story at this time of year, but in our home we celebrate Hanukkah instead. The reply seemed inadequate, so I added that we get eight days of presents instead of just the one. I still felt that the response wasn’t good enough and my guilt was rising. How do I tell him for the umpteenth time that he had to sit out Christmas? I grabbed the crutch that I had relied on last year. “We’ll call Mémère and Grandpa on Christmas,” I spat out. My son had spent his past Christmases with my parents where they made cookies and decorated a Christmas tree; this year a phone call is the closest we could get because of the pandemic. My guilt doubled because not only had I told him that

he wouldn’t celebrate the holiday that was all the rage at daycare, but that he couldn’t even go through the motions. I glanced back at him to see if he was satisfied by the response. He was entirely nonplussed and silently playing hand puppets. Still, I couldn’t shake off the guilt.

When I was a child, I loved Christmas. I was determined to learn all the Christmas songs by heart. I was in the Church nativity play with other kids from my school. I decorated the family Christmas tree with crafts that my sister and I had made years ago and reminisced about the settings in which they were created. Other ornaments were inherited by my mother from her own childhood Christmases and we knew to be extra careful with those. I baked so many Christmas cookies that most of them went straight to the freezer. My sister and I scoured the TV schedule to make sure we didn’t miss our favourite Christmas specials and we watched them while drinking hot chocolate, giggling, and sharing a blanket. It really was the most wonderful time of the year.

Although my Jewish husband and I decided to raise our son Jewish, I initially thought that we could celebrate both holidays in our house. I knew other blended families did that and I couldn’t see the harm in continuing as my husband and I had for years. However, as I became immersed in Judaism, I no longer felt comfortable celebrating Christmas at home. The more I thought about Christmas and Judaism, the more they seemed dissonant. The Santa story highlights elements of Christian faith that I dislike and I found no echoes of values that I want to teach my child like appreciation for nuance, diverse opinions, and the intrinsic value of pro-social behaviour. Now my son sings Jingle Bells and I’m not sure

what to do. Do I join in and have fun with it? Do I try to divert him into singing a Hanukkah song? This holiday awkwardness wasn’t the plan. It’s strange to acknowledge that no, I don’t want my kid to join in the merriment, thank you very much. I made that choice.

But maybe I want him to join a bit. Maybe I can walk the line by keeping Santa within the realm of story alongside Paw Patrol and PJ Mask. Maybe he can appreciate the lights for their beauty rather than as a reminder that we choose to celebrate our Saturnalia analogue differently.

My household is building its own traditions around the holidays, and if I step away from the discomfort of navigating something new, I can see that there’s a lot of wonder and fun in that. During Hanukkah we’ll eat latkes, make cookies with blue sprinkles, and dance to a Hanukkah playlist on Spotify. I suppose I’ll try on the traditions from my own family that I feel comfortable passing on, like making tourtière and tarte au sucre to eat on a dark December night well after bedtime as we did for Réveillon on Christmas Eve. I’ll search for new activities and embrace opportunities for celebration with friends and the Jewish community. My son, my husband, and I are fortunate that we can spend this time with friends and the community (albeit through a screen as a Covid precaution, but that’s a rant for another Bulletin article). We don’t have to figure it all out alone. My son will not experience Christmas as I did as a child, but I can make sure he experiences Happy Holidays none the less. I choose to have Happy Holidays alongside him, even if there’s lots of guilt and awkwardness in there, too.

*Editor's Note: Victoria Taras is a new member of the Financial Affairs Canada of CAI.*

The Silver Spoon Dinner will look a little different this year! Event planning is underway. More details to follow!



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# An Update from B'nai Brith Canada

September-November, 2020

by Brian Herman, B'nai Brith Director of Government Relations



A cross-section of recent issues of interest, with links for those receiving this update electronically. All our news, and the documents referred to, can be found at the B'nai Brith Canada website.

If you want to receive news and updates via e-mail, or if you have any questions or comments, just send a note to Brian Herman, Director of Government Relations, at [bherman@bnaibrith.ca](mailto:bherman@bnaibrith.ca)

**Canada and anti-Israel Bias at the United Nations:** For the second consecutive year, Canada voted in favour of a UN resolution on Palestinian self-determination. We joined with Friends of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre and the Center for Israel and Jewish Affairs to make our objections known before the vote, and our disquiet afterwards. We continue to make our point with Canada's leaders that such votes do a disservice to Canada and the UN.

**Parliamentarians Unite Against Online Antisemitism:** A new international Parliamentary Task Force to Combat Online Antisemitism has been formed, with representatives from Israel, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States. Canadian MPs Anthony Housefather, Marty Morantz and Randall Garrison are engaged in this work. B'nai Brith Canada testified November 10, 2020, at the first Task Force meeting.

**Promoting a Uniform Definition of Antisemitism:** We continue to promote more widespread adoption of the working definition of antisemitism used by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA),

which Canada adopted in June, 2019. On October 27, 2020, Ontario became the first Canadian province to adopt the definition, including its examples of what constitutes antisemitism.

**Freedom of Expression vs Countering Hate:** B'nai Brith Canada has submitted detailed views to the new Canadian Commission on Democratic Expression. We'll have more to say in our next update. The views we've submitted build on an earlier paper prepared for the Department of Justice. Our fundamental point is unequivocal: *The right to freedom from hatred because of one's religion must exist on the same plane as the right to freedom of expression.*

**COVID-19 and Antisemitism in Canada:** Throughout 2020, B'nai Brith Canada has focused extensively on antisemitic incidents which attach blame for COVID-19 to members of the Jewish community or which propagate hateful conspiracy theories. This is a worrying trend. Read our new policy paper on 'COVID-19, Disinformation and Antisemitism'.

**B'nai Brith Canada at the World Zionist Congress:** The 38th World Zionist Congress convened October 20-22, 2020. The Congress, the highest legislative body of the World Zionist Organization (WZO), convened virtually this year because of COVID-19 restrictions, the Congress will be held virtually. B'nai Brith Canada was asked to join the B'nai Brith International delegation, which issued a statement on the B'nai Brith commitment to Jewish unity.

**Jewish and Iranian Communities Promote Human Rights:** B'nai Brith Canada and

leaders of the Iranian-Canadian community continue to work together in the promotion of human rights. We recently launched a petition calling on the Canadian government to take new, concrete steps to combat the Iranian regime's support for global terrorism and persecution of religious minorities, members of the LGBTQ community and political dissidents.

**Raising our Profile with Canada's Parliament:** To support our advocacy work, we've created a new body to strengthen our – and the grassroots Jewish community's – voice with parliamentarians and federal government agencies, The B'nai Brith Committee for Justice in Canada has been registered with the Office of the Commissioner for Lobbying. Have a look at one example of our work, a submission to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance.

**Taking Action against Nazi Glorification:** It's a growing problem, particularly in Europe, and we have long advocated for action by Canada and its partners to rid themselves of monuments glorifying individuals or military units that were complicit in Nazi-era killings of Jews and other ethnic groups. We've been advocating strenuously on this point – and that includes street names associated with the Nazi regime. Read about our latest success, and read our new policy paper on 'Opposing Nazi Glorification at Home and Abroad'.

**An Antisemitic Priest is barred from the Catholic Archdiocese of Edmonton:** A figure with a long history of inciting hatred has been denied a platform in Canada following community and B'nai Brith Canada advocacy. The Archdiocese of Edmonton, has barred Father Tadeusz Rydzyk, head of the controversial *Radio Maryja* radio station in Poland, from visiting the Archdiocese of Edmonton and affiliated parishes in the future, due to his station's longstanding promulgation of highly discriminatory and inflammatory content.

**Strengthened Outreach: Recent and Upcoming Events:** We commemorated Remembrance Day together with the Jewish War Veterans of Canada and the senior Jewish chaplain in the Canadian Forces; you can watch a video of our event. On November 30<sup>th</sup>, we'll be remembering the tragedy of Jewish Refugees from Arab Countries and Iran. And on December 10<sup>th</sup> we'll hold a panel discussion to highlight the human rights tragedy faced by Uyghur Muslims.

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# Two Shuls?

by Joel Reitman and Jeffrey Rosenthal Rescuer,  
The Centre for Israel and Jewish Affairs (CIJA)

“Why did you build two synagogues?”

Castaway: “This is the one where

I pray. And this is the one I NEVER SET FOOT IN!”

We are all familiar with this well-worn joke about divisions in our community. It relies on stereotypes about Jews that, let’s face it,

functions is to serve as a gathering place where we come together, unified by a set of profound ideas. If this pandemic has served any purpose, it’s been to remind us just how important community is to our Jewish life, identity, and wellbeing.

And here is where we get to the point.

We are a community and, while we may not agree on everything, we do agree on many things. That is true not only of Jewish Canadians, but also of the organizations that serve them. You may have noticed (we hope

all its evolving forms, is necessary. We were pleased to work with our partners in coordination with many Jewish groups across the province to advocate for the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism, and we were pleased, at the end of October, when Ontario did just that.

## Inter-Parliamentary Task Force to Combat Online Antisemitism

On November 10, we contributed to a discussion hosted by the Inter-Parliamentary Task Force to Combat Online Antisemitism. In our testimony, we provided concrete recommendations to legislators to help them understand and address this critical issue.

## Antisemite in PCO

David Lange at Israellycool.com discovered that a senior analyst at the Privy Council Office (PCO) had posted dozens of hateful, antisemitic messages on Facebook. Working with FSWC, CIJA alerted our senior contacts at PCO and an investigation is underway.

## Remembrance Day

CIJA was honoured to participate in Remembrance Day ceremonies organized by B’nai Brith in collaboration with the Jewish War Veterans of Canada. CIJA Board member Major General Ed Fitch (ret’d.) was invited to offer remarks during this important event honouring the women and men who have served Canada in uniform and the significant contribution by Canadian Jewish war veterans.

This is snapshot of a few issues we’ve worked on together and, while many contributed to these efforts, we would like to thank leadership at B’nai Brith and CFSWC for their collaboration.

Not long ago, these partnerships would have been unlikely, but the evolving nature of the challenges facing us, combined with calls from community members just like you, served as a reminder that much more unifies than divides us.

*Editor’s Note: Joel Reitman and Jeffrey R. Rosenthal are co-Chairs of the CIJA Board of Directors*

*A synagogue is many things, though among its most important functions is to serve as a gathering place where we come together, unified by a set of profound ideas. If this pandemic has served any purpose, it’s been to remind us just how important community is to our Jewish life, identity, and wellbeing.*

are rooted in truth. We’re diverse. We argue. We’re passionate. We care. Is it really outside the realm of possibility that, if stranded on an island, we might just build two shuls?

In the spirit of the same Jewish tradition behind that joke, however, we’d like to offer a different take recently brought to our attention that shines a light on another Jewish truth. Forget about *two* synagogues, why, if stranded on a desert island, would you build even one?

Because, as Jews, we crave, depend on, and draw important parts of our Jewish identity from our *community*. A synagogue is many things, though among its most important

you have!), recent collaborations among CIJA, Canadian Friends of Simon Wiesenthal Center, and B’nai Brith Canada.

While our organizations take different approaches to tackling the issues of greatest concern – antisemitism...antisemitism masked as anti-Zionism...security...Israel...justice...racism...equality...the list is long – we are united in our view that these issues must be addressed and we have agreed to be more deliberate about working together to tackle them.

Examples of outcomes we’ve achieved collaboratively on your behalf include:

**Calling on Canada to reject toxic resolutions, return to principled voting at the U.N.**

On November 16, all three organizations issued a statement which calls attention to a letter to Prime Minister Trudeau delivered Friday co-signed by leadership at our respective organizations urging Canada to return to its principled and unequivocal opposition to the basket of annual anti-Israel resolutions at the UN General Assembly.

## Defining antisemitism in Ontario

Combating antisemitism is our top priority, and we believe that defining it properly, in

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# Hanukkah Greeting

by Nikki Holland, President and CEO, Jewish Federations of Canada – UIA



Apart from the chanukiah, there is no object more associated with Chanukah than the dreidel. It was used as

a way for Jews to study the Torah and learn Hebrew in secret after Greek King Antiochus IV had outlawed all Jewish religious worship in 175 BCE. One could say that this practice was a form of survival. Something to preserve the Jewish faith and traditions and to help entertain and engage. Another view of the symbolism of the dreidel is that each side represents one of the four basic modes of being or life circumstances. These modes depend not only on the person, but also what is happening in their life in a certain day, month or year.

This holiday season is unlike any in our lifetime. Every single person has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic in some way. Like a spin of the dreidel, the way it has impacted each of us is different and random. We are all in different modes and circumstances. In communities across Canada we have seen vulnerable populations disproportionately affected by the pandemic. We have also seen an increased demand in social services like food banks and some of those who used to

donate are now the recipients of charity. Finally, we have also seen those who can still give, give all they can in tremendous show of tzedakah. We have seen highs and lows and everything in between.

This year, when you spin the dreidel, think about someone who has been thrust into a new mode of being to match to your roll...

Perhaps you spin a Gimmel. When you win and take all, think about those who newly rely entirely on the support of social services to ensure they have a place to live, a warm meal, and a way to recover when this is over.

Perhaps you spin a Heh. When you take half, think about those who have always been the ones to give what they can to charity and now they partially rely on those same organizations to make ends meet.

Perhaps you spin a Nun. When you skip a turn and are left to do nothing, remember that even if you are fortunate enough to be weathering things well, your next spin could be a Gimmel or Heh.

Perhaps you spin a Shin. When you pay into the pot, think about the incredible support the Jewish Community has provided to those who have needed it most. Consider whether you too can help by giving your time or a donation to a cause helping to lift your community.

As important as thinking about the

various phases this pandemic has thrust our community members into, it is equally as important to remember that each letter, each phase, is only one side of the dreidel. A single angle, a temporary moment in time.

For me I too have experienced these range of emotions and circumstances. I feel like I have had the opportunity and blessings to “win the pot” and take it all in (GIMMEL?) and I have also watched my son and family sit out and not be together with family during times of celebration and tribulation. These times have made me stronger, allowed me to appreciate what we have and why we have it and be thankful for to those who have made the moments easier. Regardless of what you spin this year, and what the pandemic has looked like for you, Jewish wisdom tells us the importance of remembering that while each of the letters have different outcomes, they are still part of the same dreidel. While we continue to face the pandemic largely in isolation at home, we too would do well to remember that no matter one's individual experience has been, we are all in this community together. And just like in the times of King Antiochus IV, we too can make the best of a game and use it to continue our Jewish learnings and traditions.

Chag Sameach

## Memories of Bev Shiffman... continued from page 5

details but these movies were a true love for her so they stuck with her.

She loved her grandkids and grand-dogs. Even when she was unable to actively participate in their lives she would find enjoyment in watching them as they played and ran around her. As long as she was able, she came to any events that the kids were involved

in. My oldest child has memories of summer days we all spent together at the cottage at Blackstrap. One memory that makes us all laugh is of the day that baba thought she was grabbing a scrubbie from the sink when in fact it was a dead bat that had curled up into a ball. In all the years I knew her I can not remember one time where Bev went from

chatty to dead silent in an instant other than this particular day. Her face went from happy to stone-faced so we were all perplexed until she had a moment to sit down, take a couple of breaths, then relay what had just happened to her. My response was simply “Well, I’m glad you grabbed it, not me”.

I know that my mother in law touched the lives of many people through her interactions with the various clubs she was involved in as well as social events. She always had a story to tell and an opinion to share. She was the life of any party and I will miss her dearly, as I know so many others will. My favorite singer, Ed Sheeran, has a line in his song titled “Supermarket Flowers” that sticks with me when I think of my wonderful mom in law. He says “A life with love is a life that’s been lived”. My mother in law loved and was loved, so her life was well lived. I know that I will think of her fondly at those times when I least expect her to come to mind, and I know others will too. She will be missed and always loved.



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by Nicky Gitlin

# Hebrew School Report

Hebrew school has been online since September. It is wonderful to see the dedication of the children and families joining week after week for their zoom classes.

Although there have been many challenges, one positive result of this new format has been our ability to have a shared Kabbalat Shabbat. After a bit of classroom learning, the entire Hebrew School comes together for songs, a story and lighting of Shabbat candles, Kiddush and Hamotzi. It has been wonderful

to come together in a meaningful way and to give all of our students a chance to welcome in Shabbat together. We are hopeful that we will be able to be together for in person gatherings in our newly renovated Synagogue when the Covid-19 pandemic is more under control in Saskatoon.

## The Legacy Project... *continued from cover*

contractors and sub-contractors hired, work could begin. A month and a half into the job the pandemic hit. This resulted in further delays caused by a work shut down for a while, and resulting in delays in getting material and increased cost of material for the project.

We persevered, and with a few bumps along the road, I am happy to report that the project is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year - yes, that's right, by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020. And it is going to be spectacular.

We have completely redone the kitchen with all new appliances (electric this time). We have ordered new sanctuary chairs, and new tables and chairs for the main hall, which will be able to seat up to 250 people at round tables for any function.

Downstairs we have completely redesigned the space to accommodate 4 large Hebrew School classrooms (the pre-school/kindergarten room with its own children's bathroom) and a common area for the kids to meet, have a snack and mingle.

There are four offices for staff, a Printroom with storage, a large meeting room/library/gift shop area to accommodate small gatherings and meetings, along with a boardroom for larger meetings and functions and more storage space.

The mikvah has been completely revised and renovated according to the Rabbi's specification and now includes a private change room with a shower to make it much more welcoming and functional.

An actual elevator is installed at the front entrance to take people up to the sanctuary level or down to the offices as needed. It is an

actual elevator, not a lift as was the old one.

A new, improved security system is being installed including interior and exterior cameras and a new sound system, including a video system, is being installed to enable any and all events to be recorded as needed.

Come January Rosy will need help to coordinate moving back into the building. Hopefully, when called on or asked, you will be able to assist. This will be a big job and one that will take at least a couple of weeks, or more. You will all be hearing more about this in the coming weeks. One upside to this pandemic is that even once the building is complete we will have time to get it set up and usable as it does not look like events can start there quickly in any event.

I want to impress on everyone that our fundraising efforts are, and must be, ongoing. The project will be significantly over budget as much as \$500,000 and we will be accessing some of the Congregations investments to complete the job. Over the coming years we must continue to raise funds to again replenish our investments for the future.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has given of their time and money to make this Legacy Project a reality. It would never have happened without the financial support of everyone who contributed to this project, and without the time, dedication and commitment of so many of you in conceiving this project, planning it and assisting in making sure it became a reality. This is truly a Legacy for our children and our children's children for generations to come. It will be a Legacy that we can all be proud of.

## B'nai Brith... *continued from cover*

Greenblat were there to help out, especially with the draw, which has to be done by hand.

The success of the Dinner will allow B'nai Brith to continue providing significant support to CAI. In addition, BB will now come close to completing its \$200,000 promise to the Legacy Fund. Our commitments to Kids of Note (\$25,000; a wonderful inclusive choir for children), Kidsport (\$25,000; so all kids can

play), and the Nutrien Wonderhub (\$15,000; so all children can explore the natural and built environment) will move forward towards completion.

B'nai Brith is open to any Jewish adult, and to those who have a Jewish partner. We need your time and your talents to continue our good works. Please contact me if you wish to learn more about B'nai Brith in Saskatoon.

## The Legacy Fund How high can we go!

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*L'dor V'dor*

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### Ruth Bader Ginsberg... continued from page 7

organization, Ginsburg said she was driven by the Jewish values of pursuing justice and the concept of *tikkun olam*, or repairing the world.

“I am a judge, born, raised and proud of being a Jew. The demand for justice, for peace, for enlightenment runs through the entirety of Jewish history and Jewish tradition.”

The Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles created an exhibition focusing on Ginsburg’s life and career in 2019 called *Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg*.

Following the private ceremony, Ginsburg’s casket was moved outdoors so the public could pay respects. Thousands of mourners lined up to walk past the casket

over the course of two days. After the two days in repose at the court, Ginsburg lay in state at the Capitol. She was the first woman and first Jew to lie in state. On September 29, Ginsburg was buried beside her husband in Arlington National Cemetery.

Three of her most well-known quotes: *My mother told me to be a lady. And for her, that meant be your own person, be independent.*

*“Fight for the things that you care about, but do it in a way that will lead others to join you.”*

*“It helps sometimes to be a little deaf in marriage and in every workplace, including the good job I have now.”*

We can remember Justice Ginsburg as someone with strong beliefs that she lived and promoted her whole life. But she also respected the beliefs of her ideological opponents and didn’t let ideology limit her personal life. She indeed was a role model for Jews in the United States.

*Editor’s Note: Stan Schroeder is the Editor of Congregation Shir Ami’s “Shir Notes” in Los Angeles which also won a Gold Medal for “Bulletins.” He writes biographies of famous Jews and has offered to share them with us. This article was first published in the Shir Notes. Steven Goluboff and Stan met each other in Jerusalem to discuss their community Bulletins several years ago*

### Fun with Fund Accounting... continued from page 3

run its daily operations

- General Saskatoon Jewish Foundation Fund Interest is also available to help the congregation run its operations
- Gladstone Family Fund & Milavsky Family Fund Portion of interest is available for operations; the remainder is reserved to earn more interest.
- Seymour Buckwold Cultural Fund Interest is available to pay for cultural events for the community.
- Rabbi Discretionary Fund Used by our community’s Rabbi to help the community or its members at his discretion.
- Chevra Kadisha Fund Used by the Chevra Kadisha committee as required.

- Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund

Used to provide proper care and maintenance for the Jewish Cemetery.

Our congregation could not operate without these funds, and we are forever thankful for the generous donations provided by their founders which has helped us continue to survive. As an example of how these funds continue to provide for us years after they were established, here is a list of the ways in which we utilized endowment money for the 2019-2020 financial year:

- Sharfe Cantorial Fund \$13,650 used for cantorial services, prayer books, High Holiday expenses and a Rabbinical Conference
- Seymour Buckwold \$1,200 used for Chanukah & Purim pro-

grams

- Rabbi Pavey Tikkun Olam Fund \$550 used for Syrian Refugee Program
- Saskatoon Jewish Foundation – General Fund \$3,340 used for Hebrew School rental (while our building was not available).

If you would like to donate to any one of the above funds, please visit our website at [www.agudasisrael.org](http://www.agudasisrael.org) and press the “DONATE” button on the far right. You will be able to enter the name of the fund you wish to donate to. If you wish to start a new endowment fund, please contact our office at 306-343-7023 extension 1.

### Divrei Harav... continued from page 4

that Pikuach Nefesh takes precedence above rituals, and that the authority of secular science and medicine has to be respected beyond any ritual consideration. That’s why Rabbi Israel Salanter ate food in the Synagogue on Yom Kippur during a cholera pandemic, and that’s why you are commanded to eat non kosher food if you are in danger of dying of starvation. Judaism is flexible and full of “greys”, specially when it comes to the preservation of life.

Every year when Hannukkah arrives I’m sad when I see that the message of a beautiful holiday is sometimes used to promote dangerous messages of extremisms. The story of Hanukkah is sometimes presented as the fight of Judaism against paganism, the Jewish against the Greeks, tradition over assimilation, light against darkness. Paradoxically, a holiday that is sometimes presented as the defeat of a “pure religion” over the influence of the Greek culture, has a history that reflects more greys than black/whites. The Hasmoneans/Maccabees in fact sought to find an integration

between Judaism and the Greek culture, and never tried to live separated from the rest of the non-Jewish society. Actually many of our traditions today come from that integration between Judaism and the Greek culture, like the Mikveh for example, a Jewish adaptation of the well known Greek-Roman public baths.

It’s a real “shanda fur die goyim” (a Jew who dishonor other Jews, in front of non-Jews) what these ultra-orthodox groups have done in New York, challenging the measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19, so they can continue with their religious practices. It’s an embarrassment not only because they misrepresent what Judaism is, but also because like it or not they represent us too, while they endanger the lives of thousands in the midst of a deadly pandemic.

This Hanukkah, let’s look at the lights of the Menorah remembering that Judaism is a tradition that preserve life above all. Hanukkah represents a history of pluralism and integration, a tradition that has known how to learn from the wisdom of all disciplines and

cultures, not an isolated religion that looks at the rest of the society as a threat. May the lights of Hanukkah bring us the realization that Judaism is a beautiful tradition that invites us to understand life in its complexity, with all its challenges and blessings.

Hanukkah Sameach,



**Scharfstein Gibbings**

**Walen Fisher LLP**  
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**Michael R. Scharfstein, B.Comm., J.D.**

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[mscharfstein@scharfsteinlaw.com](mailto:mscharfstein@scharfsteinlaw.com)

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*This page is sponsored by Dr. Edward Kaplan of New Haven, Connecticut*

*As my father planted  
for me before I was  
born,  
So do I plant for  
those who will come  
after me.*

from the Talmud

# The Saskatoon Jewish Foundation

gratefully acknowledges the following contributions:

● TO	GREETING	FROM
● Kayla Hock	<b>SASKATOON JEWISH FOUNDATION</b> In honour of your birthday	Hamish Cameron & Arlene Gladstone
● Estate of Mrs. Petty Landa		
● Stan Sinai	<b>GLADYS &amp; GERRY ROSE FUND</b>	
● Joel Bernbaum	<b>LEGACY PROJECT</b> Congratulations on receiving the Trudeau Foundation doctoral scholarship - the first ever awarded to a Usask student	Lesley-Ann Crone & Alan Rosenberg
● Kevin Sharfe & Jordyn Allen	Congratulations on your marriage	Lesley-Ann Crone & Alan Rosenberg Michelle Bobowsky, Valerie Poulin & Family
● In memory of Jennie Bobowsky		Rhoda Broudy
● In memory of Albert & Harry Broudy	Condolences on the loss of your father	Gladys Rose
● Robin Covin Family	Happy Anniversary	Gladys Rose
● Adam & Vered Sinai	Happy Birthday	Gladys Rose
● Mark Cooper	Happy Birthday	Gladys Rose
● Joseph Kates Rose	Happy Anniversary	Gladys Rose
● Mark & Alissa Cooper	Happy Anniversary	Gladys Rose
● Eden & Benjamin Klein	Happy Anniversary	Gladys Rose
● Mr. & Mrs. M. Kates	Happy Anniversary	Gladys Rose
● Svetlana Rozovsky	Happy Birthday	Gladys Rose
● Gladys Rose	In honour of your 94th birthday	Toby Rose & Les Klein
● In memory of Gerald F. Rose		Toby Rose & Les Klein
● In memory of Kathryn & Gerald Cooper		Toby Rose & Les Klein
● In memory of Naomi Rose		Toby Rose & Les Klein
● In memory of Anna Klein		Toby Rose & Les Klein
● Dr. Daniel Levin Family	With sympathy on the death of your Mom & Grandma, Chrisie	Gladys Rose
● James Taylor	With sympathy on the loss of your Mom	Gladys Rose
	<b>ELAINE &amp; SHERWOOD SHARFE CANTORIAL FUND</b>	
● In memory of Saul Scharfstein		Elaine & Sherry Sharfe
● In memory of Ed Vickar		Elaine & Sherry Sharfe
● Kevin Sharfe & Jordyn Allen	In honour of your wedding	Gilbert Kanter
● Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky	Thank you for your help with Judah's Bar Mitzvah	Lisa & Harold Shiffman
	<b>RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND</b>	
● Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky	In appreciation for your officiating and facilitating Kevin & Jordyn's wedding	Elaine & Sherry Sharfe
● Kevin Sharfe	Thanks for the beautiful High Holidays services	Sergio Jodorkovsky
● Rabbi Claudio Jodorkovsky	In appreciation for your exemplary work and innovation in providing meaningful virtual services and online teaching programs throughout these challenging times	Alan Rosenberg & Lesley-Ann Crone
	<b>MIKLOS KANITZ HOLOCAUST EDUCATION FUND</b>	
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	<b>NATHAN AND GRACE GOLUBOFF FUND</b>	
● Harold & Lisa Shiffman & Family	Condolences on the loss of your mother, Bev Shiffman	Steven & Leila Goluboff
● Jack Shiffman	Condolences on the loss of your wife, Bev Shiffman	Steven & Leila Goluboff

Your contribution,  
sent to:  
**Saskatoon Jewish  
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be gratefully received  
and faithfully applied.

## CAI

Kelly Mills Sieb • Lawrence Daks • David Stromberg, Micro Oil • Alexandra Popoff  
• Cliff Bell • Christopher Boychuk • Robert Gibbings

*This page is sponsored by Debbie Diament (daughter of Rabbi Saul and Ann Diament), of Toronto*

# Yahrzeits

## November 28

Hamir, Malke  
Waiser, Bessie  
Avivi, Chaya  
Fingard, Bernie  
Shapero, Eli  
Sklar, Annie  
Hatklin, Beatrice  
Soiffer, Aida  
Davidner, Mary-Ida  
Flikshteyn, Tanya  
Shaffer, Nathan  
Shore, Ben  
Teplinsky, David  
Lubin, Morris  
Blank, Anna T.  
Broudy, Yehudith  
Ehren-Lis, Rabbi Nomi Oren  
Green, Rebecca  
Neumann, Jacob  
Bender, Mary  
Lifshen, Samuel

## December 5

Blum, Alexander  
Kahan, Fannie  
Kolominsky, Chaim  
Podhorcer  
Brant, Joseph  
Laimon, Pauline  
Miller, Eva

## December 12

Korber, Reisel  
Gersher, Raya  
Marcus, Anita  
Goffman, Gertrude  
Goorovitch, Michael  
Korzen, Sara Y.  
Lubin, Isaac  
MacKay, David  
Pollak, Yosef  
Aaron, Freda  
Cohen, Marjorie  
Gimpel, Alex  
Levitsky, Hena Feiga (Rena)  
Aarons, Marvin  
Caplan, Edith  
Arlinsky, Hyman  
Blum, Martha  
Hillman, Susanna  
Kovish, Tom

## December 19

Kornfeld, Nathan  
Vickar, Charles  
Levson, Helen  
Mazer, Doris  
Edison, Leopold  
Katzman, Israel M.  
Katzman, Labe  
Bernstein, Velle  
Ditlove, Joseph  
Donen, Joseph  
Gitlin, Lil  
Handelman, Annie  
Gamm, Ida  
Singer, Arthur  
Singer, Julie  
Filer, Moses

December 26  
Davidner, Mary  
Davidner, Michael  
Gelmon, Syd  
Mondrus, Felix  
Rahamimova, Brilliant  
Brewster, Elizabeth  
Golumbia, Arnold

## Kislev 12

Nov 28 (12)  
Nov 28 (12)  
Nov 29 (13)  
Nov 29 (13)  
Nov 29 (13)  
Nov 29 (13)  
Nov 30 (14)  
Nov 30 (14)  
Dec 1 (15)  
Dec 2 (16)  
Dec 3 (17)  
Dec 3 (17)  
Dec 3 (17)  
Dec 3 (17)  
Dec 4 (18)  
Dec 4 (18)

## Kislev 19

Dec 5 (19)  
Dec 7 (21)  
Dec 7 (21)  
Dec 8 (22)  
Dec 10 (24)  
Dec 10 (24)  
Dec 10 (24)

## Kislev 26

Dec 12 (26)  
Dec 13 (27)  
Dec 13 (27)  
Dec 15 (29)  
Dec 16 (Tevet 1)  
Dec 16 (1)  
Dec 16 (1)  
Dec 16 (1)  
Dec 17 (2)  
Dec 17 (2)  
Dec 18 (3)  
Dec 18 (3)  
Dec 18 (3)  
Dec 18 (3)

## Tevet 4

Dec 19 (4)  
Dec 19 (4)  
Dec 20 (5)  
Dec 20 (5)  
Dec 21 (6)  
Dec 21 (6)  
Dec 21 (6)  
Dec 22 (7)  
Dec 22 (7)  
Dec 22 (7)  
Dec 23 (8)  
Dec 23 (8)  
Dec 24 (9)  
Dec 24 (9)  
Dec 24 (9)  
Dec 25 (10)

## Tevet 11

Dec 27 (12)  
Dec 28 (13)  
Dec 28 (13)

Trager, Baby  
Trager, Jacob  
Ames, Morris  
Caplan, Joseph  
Gladstone, Estelle  
Dragushan, Leon  
Goldstein, Anne  
O'Fallon, Sadie  
Shore, Anne  
Brown, Jerry  
Miller, Fanny  
Schachter, Joe  
Bricker, Gertrude  
Spector, Harry

## January 2

Cramer, Minnie  
Gutner, Tsilav  
Levin, S.B.  
Flikshteyn, Essie  
Sokariboa, Belema  
Buckwold, Harry  
Epstein, Sarah  
Goldenberg, Sarah  
Nisenholt, Irvin  
Avivi, Mordechai  
Cohen, Margret  
Meyers, Samuel, G.  
Sands, Gary  
Wiss, Samuel  
Cameron, Alice  
Laimon, Jacob  
Landa, Fanny  
Shaw, Solomon  
Pentol, Esther  
Claman, Morris  
Milavsky, Clara

## January 9

Avol, Rev. David  
Bernbaum, Faige  
Goldenberg, Chaje Taube  
Abelevsky, Abraham  
Meyer, George  
Schulman, Irving  
Fine, Charlotte  
Greenblat, Gerald  
Katzman, Solomon  
Trager, Bessie  
Scharfstein, Bert  
Abbey, Rhoda  
Singer, Isador S  
ugarman, Joseph  
Hanna, Marion  
Sklar, Michael

## January 16

Burns, Edward David  
Reznick, Chaim  
Shear, William  
Fayerman, Min  
Gitlin, Reuben  
Isaakov, Mizal  
Tzalkovich, Shimon  
Goluboff, Chaye  
Rahanim, David  
Crone, Doris  
Ludwig, Sonny  
Zion, Walter  
Gertler, Jeffrey  
Hesselson, Max  
Shore, Rebecca  
Tadman, Benjamin

## January 23

Brand, Sadie  
Neumann, Girt  
Pereira, Rabbi Sammy  
Scharfstein, Ethel  
Switzer, Joseph  
Feinstein, Charles  
Friedman, Chaim  
Resnick, Sondra

Dec 28 (13)  
Dec 28 (13)  
Dec 29 (14)  
Dec 29 (14)  
Dec 29 (14)  
Dec 30 (15)  
Dec 30 (15)  
Dec 30 (15)  
Dec 30 (15)  
Dec 31 (16)  
Dec 31 (16)  
Dec 31 (16)  
Dec 31 (16)  
Jan 1 (17)  
Jan 1 (17)

## Tevet 18

Jan 2 (18)  
Jan 2 (18)  
Jan 2 (18)  
Jan 3 (19)  
Jan 3 (19)  
Jan 4 (20)  
Jan 5 (21)  
Jan 6 (22)  
Jan 7 (23)  
Jan 8 (24)  
Jan 8 (24)

## Tevet 25

Jan 9 (25)  
Jan 9 (25)  
Jan 9 (25)  
Jan 9 (25)  
Jan 10 (26)  
Jan 11 (27)  
Jan 11 (27)  
Jan 12 (28)  
Jan 13 (29)  
Jan 14 (1)  
Jan 14 (1)  
Jan 15 (2)  
Jan 15 (2)

## Shevat 3

Jan 16 (3)  
Jan 16 (3)  
Jan 16 (3)  
Jan 17 (4)  
Jan 18 (5)  
Jan 18 (5)  
Jan 19 (6)  
Jan 19 (6)  
Jan 20 (7)  
Jan 21 (8)  
Jan 21 (8)  
Jan 22 (9)  
Jan 22 (9)

## Shevat 10

Jan 23 (10)  
Jan 24 (11)  
Jan 24 (11)  
Jan 24 (11)

Waldman, Jacob  
Adilman, Clara  
Bender, Joseph M.  
Golumbia, Annie  
Gonick, Rose  
Friedman, Lillian  
Gurstein, Pearl  
Plachte, Saralee  
Shore, Louis  
Spector, Louis  
Katzman, Chan  
Avivi, Yosef (Abe)  
Resnick, Seco  
Claman, David  
Goluboff, Nathan  
Holzberg, Harris  
Raisen, Sam

## January 30

Cherry, Susan  
Bondar, Harry  
Hearn, Sam  
Isaakov, Lida  
Trush, Gregory  
Viner, Albert  
Gootnik, Gitta  
Barenbaum, Shirley  
Korber, Isidor  
Siskin, Nathan  
Solsberg, Albert  
Adilman, William  
Glick, H.  
Tabachnicoff, Hyman  
Burtnick, Morris  
Gurstein, Meyer  
Katzman, Ethel

## February 6

Aaron, Harry Thomas  
Dunn, Joseph S.  
Gonick, Joseph  
Guttman, Abraham  
Laimon, Sarah  
Levington, Baruch  
Katz, Freda  
Miller, Jack  
Rabinovitch, Vera  
Tzalkovich, Male  
Freidin, Esther  
Freidin, Sol  
Kay, Jessie  
Kuenstler, Bertha  
Lee, Libby  
Shore, Percy  
Wolf, Len  
Kleyman, Perl  
Rabinovitch, Sam  
Trager, Abraham  
Sugarman, Fanny  
Gonick, Matthew  
Schwartz, Jack  
Danenirsch, Morris  
Faibish, Benjamin  
Kaplan, Harriett  
Mahlerman, Herman  
Nisenholt, Fanny

## February 13

Altman, Sarah  
Katz, Bill  
Cameron, John Albert  
Chochinov, Gertie  
Friedman, Elaine  
Horlick, Ruth  
Salz, Lily  
Diamond, Millie  
Trute, Ronald  
Berenbaum, Esther  
Buckwold, Hazel  
Chertkow, Gitman  
Sarin, Marcia  
Selchen, Rose  
Bressler, Boy

Jan 24 (11)  
Jan 25 (12)  
Jan 25 (12)  
Jan 25 (12)  
Jan 25 (12)  
Jan 26 (13)  
Jan 27 (14)  
Jan 28 (15)  
Jan 28 (15)  
Jan 29 (16)  
Jan 29 (16)  
Jan 29 (16)  
Jan 29 (16)

## Shevat 17

Jan 30 (17)  
Jan 31 (18)  
Feb 1 (19)  
Feb 2 (20)  
Feb 2 (20)  
Feb 2 (20)  
Feb 2 (20)  
Feb 3 (21)  
Feb 3 (21)  
Feb 3 (21)  
Feb 4 (22)  
Feb 4 (22)  
Feb 4 (22)

## Shevat 24

Feb 6 (24)  
Feb 7 (25)  
Feb 7 (25)  
Feb 7 (25)  
Feb 7 (25)  
Feb 8 (26)  
Feb 9 (27)  
Feb 9 (27)  
Feb 9 (27)  
Feb 10 (28)  
Feb 11 (29)  
Feb 11 (29)  
Feb 12 (30)  
Feb 12 (30)  
Feb 12 (30)  
Feb 12 (30)  
Feb 12 (30)

## Adar 1

Feb 13 (1)  
Feb 13 (1)  
Feb 14 (2)  
Feb 15 (3)  
Feb 15 (3)  
Feb 16 (4)  
Feb 18 (6)

Gersher, Chama  
Meth, Wolf  
Rose, Naomi  
Seitz, Shirley  
Melamede, Frances  
Mondrus, Raisa  
Wolfe, Rose

## February 20

Altschul, Annie  
Krolik, Albert  
Rotenberg, Fira  
Unknown, Dana  
Chertkow, Sadie  
East, William  
Golumbia, Itta  
Kleyman, Motas  
Shnay, Fred  
Sklar, Gussie  
Burt, Moses  
Mitchell, Maurice  
Abbey, Sydney  
Raisin, Ann  
Gertler, Clara  
Helfgott, Harry  
Kaplan, Samuel  
Meth, Leah  
Sarin, Harry

## February 27

Golumbia, Jacob  
Gitlin, Anne  
Goodman, Yetty  
Weiner, A.J.  
Levitt, Lillian  
Sklar, Lorraine  
Wilczak, Keren-Or  
Goodman, John B.  
Guttman, William  
Mathews, Tiby L.E.  
Schlucker, Vera  
Segal, Baby  
Sellinger, Rosie  
Vickar, Ed  
Freeman, Esther  
Hock, Reva  
Leffman, Anni  
Schmuck'vich, Malka  
Steiger, Harry  
Chertkow, Gertrude  
Gurstein, Morris  
Pepper, Mendel  
Rabkin, Jacob

## March 6

Pekurovski, Anatoly  
Brant, Reuben  
Epstein, Freda  
Bandar, Harry M.  
Segal, Rebecca  
Shafer, Yenta  
Wolfe, Goldie  
Bobowsky, Jennie  
Shore, Fanny  
Sklar, William  
Taylor, Max  
Goodman, Pearl  
Bodovsky, Keile  
Buckwold, Richard  
Forgan, Rebecca  
Ginsberg, Solomon  
Katz, William

## Adar 22

Mar 6 (22)  
Mar 7 (23)  
Mar 7 (23)  
Mar 8 (24)  
Mar 8 (24)  
Mar 8 (24)  
Mar 8 (24)  
Mar 9 (25)  
Mar 9 (25)  
Mar 9 (25)  
Mar 10 (26)  
Mar 11 (27)  
Mar 12 (28)  
Mar 12 (28)  
Mar 12 (28)  
Mar 12 (28)

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2020 - 2021



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Kevin Sharfe



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Dark in these times, let's celebrate together!

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# DRIVE-IN MENORAH LIGHTING and Havdallah

Hanukkah Songs - Sufganiyot (Doughnuts) - Presents

## SATURDAY DECEMBER 12, 7 to 7:30pm

Location to be announced



This page is sponsored by Norman Wine of Thousand Oaks, California and Myrna Silverberg of Natanya, Israel

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Kislev 15	2 Kislev 16 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	3 Kislev 17	4 Kislev 18	5 Kislev 19 <b>Vayishlach</b> *Harold Shiffman
6 Kislev 20	7 Kislev 21	8 Kislev 22	9 Kislev 23 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	10 Kislev 24 	11 Kislev 25 	12 Kislev 26 <b>VAYESHEV HANUKKAH</b> *Perry Jacobson <b>Drive in Menorah Lighting 7:00 - 7:30 pm</b> 
13 Kislev 27 	14 Kislev 28 <b>Hanukkah Family Celebration Online 5:15-6:00 pm</b> 	15 Kislev 29 	16 Tevet 1 Tanach Study 7:00 pm 	17 Tevet 2 <b>Hanukkah Israelit: Light Up the World</b> 7:00 pm 	18 Tevet 3 <b>HAPPY HANUKKAH</b>	19 Tevet 4 <b>Miketz</b> *Marsha Scharfstein
20 Tevet 5	21 Tevet 6	22 Tevet 7	23 Tevet 8 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	24 Tevet 9	25 Tevet 10 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	26 Tevet 11 <b>Vayigash</b> *Michael Scharfstein
27 Tevet 12	28 Tevet 13 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	29 Tevet 14	30 Tevet 15 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	31 Tevet 16		

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Tevet 17 <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	2 Tevet 18 <b>Vayechi</b> *Lesley-Ann Crone
3 Tevet 19	4 Tevet 20	5 Tevet 21	6 Tevet 22 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	7 Tevet 23	8 Tevet 24	9 Tevet 25 <b>Shemot</b> *Nicky Gitlin
10 Tevet 26	11 Tevet 27	12 Tevet 28	13 Tevet 29 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	14 Shevat 1	15 Shevat 2	16 Shevat 3 <b>Va'era</b> *Steven Simpson
17 Shevat 4	18 Shevat 5	19 Shevat 6 <b>Board Meeting</b> 7:00 pm	20 Shevat 7 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	21 Shevat 8	22 Shevat 9	23 Shevat 10 <b>Bo</b> *Grant Scharfstein
24 Shevat 11	25 Shevat 12	26 Shevat 13	27 Shevat 14 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	28 Shevat 15	29 Shevat 16	30 Shevat 17 <b>Beshalach</b> *Zoe Litman
31 Shevat 18						

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Shevat 19	2 Shevat 20	3 Shevat 21 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	4 Shevat 22	5 Shevat 23	6 Shevat 24 <b>Yitro</b> *Kevin Sharfe
7 Shevat 25	8 Shevat 26	9 Shevat 27	10 Shevat 28 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	11 Shevat 29	12 Shevat 30 <b>ROSH CHODESH</b>	13 Adar 1 <b>Mishpatim SHABBAT SHEKALIM ROSH CHODESH</b> *Joel Bernbaum
14 Adar 2	15 Adar 3	16 Adar 4	17 Adar 5 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	18 Adar 6	19 Adar 7	20 Adar 8 <b>Tecumah SHABBAT ZACHOR</b> *Matthew Taras
21 Adar 9	22 Adar 10	23 Adar 11	24 Adar 12 Tanach Study 7:00 pm	25 Adar 13 <b>FAST OF ESTHER Magillah Reading</b>	26 Adar 14 <b>PURIM</b>	27 Adar 15 <b>Tetzavch</b> *Robert Engleber
28 Adar 16						