

# THE REPORTER

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## Global Day of Jewish Learning to be held on Nov. 5

**By Reporter staff**

A Global Day of Jewish Learning event will be held on Sunday, November 5, from 10 am-noon, at the Jewish Community Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal. The event is co-sponsored by Beth David Synagogue, the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, Temple Concord and Temple Israel. A light breakfast

will be served. A suggested donation from \$5-20 is requested. To register for the event, visit [www.jfgeb.org/](http://www.jfgeb.org/). Registration is due by Thursday, November 2.

The Global Day of Jewish Learning has been held annually since 2010 and was inspired by the late Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz. The event is held in groups and congregations across the country and powered by Limmud,

which supports the creation of “a diverse, cohesive Jewish community rooted in the importance of celebrating and learning from differences.” (More information on Limmud can be found at <https://limmudna.org/>.)

“The Global Day of Jewish Learning brings the community together to explore basic Jewish principles,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Feder-

ation. “That fulfills the mission of the Federation, and I am excited that we can bring this opportunity to Binghamton. This year’s theme is ‘The Values we Hold Dear: A Roadmap for Inspired Jewish Living.’ I hope everyone will come out to learn and shmooze.”

For more information about the program, see a future issue of *The Reporter*.

## Federation’s Campaign for 2024 underway: “Pledge early!”

**By Reporter staff**

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton has kicked off its Campaign 2024 with an emphasis on pledging early. Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation, has urged people to make their pledge before Super Sunday, October 15, which this year will be a day reserved for fund-raising. Calls will be made on Sundays, October 15 and 22, from 10 am-1 pm. Calls will also be made on Mondays, October 16 and 23. “We are looking for volunteers to help make Campaign calls,” said Hubal. “Making calls is a mitzvah that helps the whole community. If



you are interested, please contact me at 607-724-2332 or [director@jfgeb.org](mailto:director@jfgeb.org).”

Campaign letters will be sent to donors ahead of Super Sunday to encourage early pledging. People can also use the form on page 5 of this issue of *The Reporter* and send it to the Federation at 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850; call the Federation office at 607-724-2332; e-mail Hubal at [director@jfgeb.org](mailto:director@jfgeb.org); or visit [www.jfgeb.org/](http://www.jfgeb.org/).

The theme for Campaign 2024 is “We take care of our own,” based on a comment made by Marcy Yonaty. Hubal said, “To me, this theme is about compassion. It goes beyond giving; it is about sustaining

a community and extending traditions of care that generations have tended.”

Campaign Chairwoman Marilyn Bell emphasized the need for volunteers to help the Campaign run smoothly. “Volunteers are

the most important part of the equation,” she said. “We need them to help make calls and write thank-you notes. As our community has shrunk, so have the number of our See “Campaign” on page 8

## Federation board meeting open to community

The Jewish Federation will hold a full board meeting on Wednesday, October 18, at 7:30 pm, in person at the JCC. The community is invited to attend. Those interested in attending should make a reservation by calling the Federation at 724-2332 so that enough materials will be available.

## CJS fall 2023 series to feature “Jewish Encounters with Jazz: International Perspectives”

The College of Jewish Studies fall 2023 series will highlight “Jewish Encounters with Jazz: International Perspectives.” The series will offer three events that look at jazz in the U.S., in Eastern Europe, and in modern Israel and the Middle East. On Thursday, October 12, at Binghamton University’s Casadesus Hall (located in the Fine Arts Building), jazz musicians and scholars Allen Lowe and Lewis Porter will perform. On Thursday, October 26, at the Jewish Community Center, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, the documentary film “The Jews and the Blues” will be shown. The series will conclude on



Allen Lowe (Photo by Michael Rogers)



Lewis Porter (Photo by Bill May)



Jarrod Tanny (Photo by Jarrod Tanny)

Thursday, November 2, with a Zoom lecture by University of North Carolina Professor Jarrod Tanny on the history of Jews and jazz in Soviet Russia. All three presentations will begin at 7:30 pm.

“Jazz is America’s greatest contribution to world culture, and jazz has become a global phenomenon,” said organizers of the event. “Jews participated in its development and dissemination almost from the start, and have played a role in fostering jazz in many lands.”

### “The Jewish Encounter with Jazz”

On October 12, jazz musicians and historians Allen Lowe and Lewis Porter will present “The Jewish Encounter with Jazz.” They will perform compositions by Jewish composers, including their own, and discuss the key intersections between Jews and American jazz. The event is co-sponsored by the Judaic Studies and Music Departments, as well as the Harpur Dean’s Office. Those attending from the College of Jewish Studies should reserve seats in advance by sending their names to [jkarp@binghamton.edu](mailto:jkarp@binghamton.edu).

Lowe is a saxophonist, guitarist and music historian. He was named Artist of the Year in the 2021 Jazz Times Readers’ Poll. Lowe, who attended Binghamton’s Harpur College as an undergraduate, has performed nationally and internationally, including at New York City’s Dizzy’s, the Copenhagen Jazz Festival, Smalls, the Knitting Factory See “CJS” on page 8

## JLI course “The World of Kabbalah” starts Oct. 30

The Rohr Jewish Learning Institute announced it will hold “The World of Kabbalah,” a six-week course, beginning Monday, October 30, at 7 pm, and running for six consecutive Mondays, both at the Chabad Center and via Zoom. The course is open to individuals of all backgrounds and knowledge levels. The course fee is \$79 per participant or \$150 per couple. The fee includes the text book. Limited scholarships are available. For registration and additional course-related information, interested participants can write to [rshea@Jewishbu.com](mailto:rshea@Jewishbu.com), call Ruth Shea at 607-797-0015 or visit [www.myJLI.com](http://www.myJLI.com).

The course, which was developed in conjunction with JLI’s Wellness Institute, offers up to nine Continuing Education Credits for psychologists, social workers, LMFTs and LMHCs licensed in New York state. The Wellness Institute is recognized by the New York State Education Department’s State Boards as an approved provider of continuing education for these professions.

“If you were ever curious about Kabbalah’s best kept secrets, the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute’s (JLI) new fall course, ‘The World of Kabbalah,’ is just what you have been looking for,” organizers of the See “JLI” on page 2

## SILVER SPONSOR

The Reporter’s Editorial Committee and staff thank an anonymous donor for sponsoring this issue of THE REPORTER in honor of all those in our community who practice “Chesed”

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## Opinion

## The Tree of Life murders and trial, part IV: Survival

By Bill Simons

During a recess in the Tree of Life trial, the corridor outside the courtroom was, as customary, congested. A large contingent of Tree of Life survivors, family and friends attended the sessions. A woman from that group approached and looked me in the eye. She said, "Write a good story." Quietly, I responded, "I will."

Thursday, July 13, 2023: phase three of the trial concluded with the jury finding Robert Bowers eligible for the death penalty. I felt a need to observe Shabbat on Friday, July 14, and intended to participate in the Tree of Life service. With their own building shuttered, the Tree of Life congregation met in Levy Hall at Rodef Shalom, a Reform temple. However, when I entered Rodef Shalom, I felt that this was not the Shabbat for a reporter to attend the Tree of Life service. Instead, I joined approximately 50 Rodef Shalom congregants in nearby Cohen Chapel.

During my summer 2023 return to Pittsburgh, I visited places once familiar from the Squirrel Hill of the 1970s. I stood outside the now closed Tree of Life and my old apartment, as well as the neighborhood commercial center at the intersection of Forbes and Murray avenues. The once prominent Jewish bakeries and restaurants were largely memory, several replaced by Chinese establishments. Although much of Pittsburgh's former Jewish population now lives in the suburbs, Squirrel Hill remains the heart of Jewish cultural and communal life. Squirrel Hill is still home to much of Pittsburgh's Jewish infrastructure: synagogues, the Jewish Community Center and Jewish day schools. I bought a corned beef on rye at Murray Avenue

## JLI . . . . . •Continued from page 1

course said. "The World of Kabbalah' invites individuals to embark on an awe-inspiring exploration of the interconnectedness woven into the fabric of creation. From unraveling the significance of the *seferot* to exploring the divine soul and the spiritual realms, participants will uncover a profound sense of purpose and harmony through developing an understanding of the divine and of God's universe."

"I am truly excited to teach this course; to make accessible Kabbalah's core ideas and terminology, and to share the profundity and wisdom that can not only fascinate and dazzle, but stimulate real life growth," stated Rivkah Slonim, course instructor.

Kosher. Eating on a bench, I observed diverse people. Contemporary Squirrel Hill is home to many, sometimes intersecting, groups: Asians, African Americans, Latinx, developmentally delayed and LGBTQ, as well as Chasid, Modern Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, Reconstructionist and secular Jews. On this day, I witnessed neither fear nor tension.

It has been said that the following summarizes Jewish history: our enemies tried to kill us; we survived; let's celebrate. The preceding contains truth, but it simplifies and obscures the Jewish experience. Jewish tradition records and remembers tragedy. At our weddings, a glass is crushed. We light the *yahrzeit* candle in remembrance of those we loved on the anniversary of their deaths. A time of mourning, Tisha B'Av (the Ninth of Av), marks not only the destruction of the First and Second Temples, but more generally the tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people across the centuries.

Tree of Life murderer Robert Bowers aspired to provide the match that would set off mass murders of Jews and make us afraid to practice our religion. He failed. Nonetheless, American Jews are now less secure. An uptick of antisemitic incidents has occurred, although not of the extent or severity sought by Bowers. Many of us have participated in active shooting training. Police and private security, including surveillance cameras, are now more commonly deployed by synagogues. On August 14, Andrew Lapin of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency reported, "[O]nline trolls targeted Jewish congregations for the fourth straight week with fake bomb and other security threats. At least 26 congregations in 12 states have received the threats, according to the Anti-Defamation League, which is raising alarm about the barrage."

Conversely, the support and friendship emanating from Pittsburgh Protestants, Catholics, Muslims and those of other faiths toward the Jewish community reflects the best of humanity.

Recovery from catastrophe is never complete or linear, but it is going forward. A week after the Tree of Life verdict, the Pittsburgh Pirates held their annual Jewish Heritage Night on Wednesday, August 9, at PNC Park. Hebrew t-shirts with the Pirates logo and pre-game kosher meals were available. Both the *Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle* and Tree of Life embraced the event.

In the anthology "Bound in the Bond of Life: Pittsburgh Writers Reflect on the Tree of Life Tragedy," Jewish

contributors, wedded to the institutional and social fabric of Squirrel Hill, share personal and contemplative essays about the calamity of October 27, 2018. For Linda Hurwitz, director emerita of the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh, it was the 29<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of Karen, her 17-year-old college-bound daughter. On the night of October 27, 1989, a male friend beseeched Karen to let him come over to the Hurwitz home, despite the lateness of the hour, to vent about the painful breakup with his girlfriend. In the Hurwitz backyard, the young man murdered Karen, strangling her with nunchaku and then mutilating her with a samurai sword. Emotionally drained by the still piercing memories of Karen's murder, Hurwitz and her husband remained undecided about walking the four blocks to attend Tree of Life services on October 27, 2018. Police sirens and television accounts of the Tree of Life murders then announced that the decision was no longer theirs to make. With the murder of her beloved daughter, relived in the original trial and years of judicial appeals, ever present, Hurwitz understands the pain of Tree of Life survivors, family and friends. By example, however, Hurwitz reminds victims of one of Judaism's key tenets: the obligation of physical and emotional survival. In the aftermath of Karen's murder, Hurwitz had the responsibility to inform her parents, both nonagenarian Holocaust survivors, that their precious granddaughter was no more. Summoning great strength amidst their own anguish, Hurwitz's parents told her, "You will get through it!" Comforting each other, Hurwitz and her husband resolved to find purpose again. They adopted two children, Jeffrey and Julia, who would have their *b'nai mitzvah* at Tree of Life. Karen's memory still burns bright, the good times recalled more than the tragic murder. And life goes on.

Following the verdict in the Tree of Life trial, the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh stated, "In the wake of the horrors of the worst antisemitic attack in U.S. history, our community neither retreated from participating in Jewish life nor suppressed our Jewishness. Instead, our community embraced our Jewish values – strengthening Jewish life, supporting those in need and building a safer, more inclusive world."

*Bill Simons is a professor emeritus at SUNY Oneonta where he continues to teach courses in American history. He is also the co-director of the Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture, and served as a speaker for the New York Council on the Humanities.*

## In My Own Words

## A few things, serious and silly

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

## Are they really serious?

Imagine if you are in third grade and are not allowed to talk about your parents. Why? Because talking about them would somehow corrupt your classmates. Am I speaking of mass murderers or pedophiles? Nope. I'm talking about children with two daddies or two mommies. I'm not joking: currently 11 states have forbidden any mention of the LGBTQ+ community in classrooms from kindergarten to third grade.

I'm not sure how saying that someone is gay or that someone has two parents of the same sex is really talking about sex, as in sexual intercourse. If it is, then we need to ban all conversation about parents. After all, heterosexual couples – gasp! – have sex. Unless they were adopted, the children of those folks had sexual intercourse and everyone who's had any sex education knows that. (Well, unless you believe the stork brings babies. If you don't know what that means, Google it.) Actually, I'm not sure why anyone would be talking about sex with a child that age.

Since no one is suggesting that sex education be given to children that age, the "don't say gay" laws, as they have been called, don't make sense, at least no more sense than forbidding people from talking about their religion or

ethnicity. The next thing you know they will be punishing Jewish children for not believing in Santa Claus and telling their classmates he doesn't exist. OK, that's not exactly the same thing, but this is one slippery slope.

## A not serious pet peeve, or why do they do this?

Do I really want or need to watch television when I'm pumping gas? Yes, there are gas stations that offer TV screens on their pumps, which not only show ads for what's on sale inside the station, but actual TV shows. I know that talk and noise bother me more than many people. It's a side effect of my hearing loss, but this still doesn't make sense to me. Can't we stand for five minutes without being entertained? Is it that hard to amuse ourselves? It's pretty pathetic if we can't.

Plus, what if the show on the screen is interesting? Is anyone going to stand there for a half hour to find out what happens or what the person says next? I would have thought the point was for us to get our gas and then leave quickly so the next person can use the pump.

## Something very silly

I have a friend who has been trying to talk me into getting a cat, something that doesn't make sense because she doesn't like cats. I actually really like cats, but have no desire to own one. Fortunately, even when

I do get tempted, the people I work with quickly cure me of the desire: nothing like tales of your cat biting your fingers or ear to wake you up, or nearly slipping on cat vomit first thing in the morning, to make me *not* want to get a pet.

But there has been one unexpected result of my friend's encouragement and it's getting expensive. Well, not as expensive as if I had a real pet, but it still counts. That's because I've fallen in love with the cartoons featuring Simon's Cat, which I found when teasing my friend about reasons for me to not get a pet. The cat doesn't have a name, but the drawings are great (so few lines, but so much expression) and the cartoons (which you can find on Facebook or Youtube) make me laugh out loud in a way few things do. As for it's being expensive, I now have two Simon's Cat mugs, Simon's Cat stickers, Simon's Cat books (two were a birthday present, the third I bought myself and I have been tempted to buy more) and two Simon's Cat 2024 calendars, one a monthly and the other a daily.

That means my friend has literally filled my life with cats, even if it isn't the way she meant. But my new obsession means that I don't have vet bills or all the other expenses and aggravations that come with owning a pet. And best of all: I do *not* have to change the litter box!



**Jewish Federation**  
of Greater Binghamton

Shelley Hubal, Executive Director

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BINGHAMTON, NY

## OPINIONS

The views expressed in editorials and opinion pieces are those of each author and not necessarily the views of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton.

## LETTERS

The Reporter welcomes letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. All letters must be signed and include a phone number; names may be withheld upon request.

## ADS

The Reporter does not necessarily endorse any advertised products and services. In addition, the paper is not responsible for the *kashruth* of any advertiser's product or establishment.

## DEADLINE

Regular weekly deadline is noon, Wednesday, for the following week's newspaper.

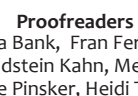
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www.thereporter.org

# BD Sisterhood to meet Oct. 11

Beth David Sisterhood will meet on Wednesday, October 11, at 1:30 pm, at Beth David Synagogue. The program will be a hands-on workshop, during which Stacey Silber will instruct those attending in the proper way to pot seeds to grow inside during the winter, in order to be ready for planting in the spring. Refreshments will be served.

The meeting will be open to the entire community. Membership in Sisterhood which is \$25, is always encouraged, but all are welcome including men. There will be a token fee of \$3 per plant taken home, since the Sisterhood will be providing seeds, pots and soil. Although not required, an RSVP texted to Silber at 607-727-9738 by Friday, October 6, will be appreciated.

In addition to being a gardener, Silber is the owner of Silber Creations, which sells crocheted and other items she

has crafted herself. As a fund-raiser for Sisterhood she sells new and used items, which have been donated to her for that purpose inside Your Needful Things, a multi-vendor indoor market located at 136 East Service Rd., Binghamton. Anyone wishing to donate items for sale should contact Silber at 607-727-9738 or by visiting [www.silbercreations.com](http://www.silbercreations.com).

Silber noted that, at the workshop, "I will be providing five types of seeds that are commonly used in our kitchens. I will explain the necessity for proper drainage and nourishment, and will provide instructions for the care and maintenance of the plants throughout winter so they can be planted outside in the spring, if desired."

Donations for CHOW will be collected at the meeting and Sisterhood dues or payment for mitzvah cards will be accepted.

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Kelli Goldin** on the death of her mother,

**Mary Jo Bell (Williams) Bopp**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Hertha Horwitz** on the death of her husband,

**Professor Bert Horwitz**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of

**Everett "Ezra" Lachman**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of

**Brian Zable**

# Todd Herzog to lead TC services Oct. 13-14

Todd Herzog will join Temple Concord as a visiting worship leader on Friday-Saturday, October 13-14. He will lead Shabbat evening services on Friday, October 13, at 7:30 pm, at Temple Concord (in person and via Zoom). On Saturday, October 14, he will join Torah study at 9:15 am and participate in Shabbat morning services with the religious school, as well.



Todd Herzog

in Los Angeles, CA, on a path toward rabbinic ordination. He is the son of Susan and Howard Herzog of Vestal and Toby Friedman of Phoenix, AZ.

He has worked with numerous songwriters and artists, including Burt Bacharach, Tonio K, Dave Koz and Michael Lington. His song "You and I" reached No. 2 on the Billboard Smooth Jazz Charts. His songs and his voice have also been featured in television and film in shows such as "The Young & The Restless," "All My Children" and "One Life to Live."

Herzog, a cantorial soloist at Temple Solel, a Reform synagogue in Paradise Valley, AZ, is enrolled in the Academy for Jewish Religion

# Sussman talk at TC on Oct. 15

Rabbi Lance J. Sussman will speak on "In Our Time: American Jewish Life at the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, on Sunday, October 15, at 2 pm. He will discuss his experiences and analyze of the reshaping of Jewish life in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century and read selections from his book. Following his talk, Sussman will sign copies of his recently published collection of sermons, "Portrait of an American Rabbi: In his Own Words" (Xlibris US). Copies of the book can

be found at online bookstores. The talk will also be on Zoom. Although the event is free and open to the public, people should RSVP to [merrypell.preus@gmail.com](mailto:merrypell.preus@gmail.com). Those planning to attend on Zoom should request the link be sent to them.

"The opening two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are widely viewed as an inflection point in the modern Jewish experience," said organizers of the event. "From September 11 to COVID, dramatic changes in American Jewish life and Israel challenged the Jewish status quo in almost every dimension. In his new book, Sussman includes dozens of essays presented in chronological order of his experience as a pulpit rabbi, and historian during this tumultuous period."

Sussman is the rabbi emeritus at Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel in Elkins Park, PA. He was formerly the rabbi of Temple Concord, Binghamton, and the former Temple Beth-El of Endicott, and served as the chairman of the Jewish Studies Department at Binghamton University-SUNY. He has published numerous books and articles, including "Isaac Lesser and the Making of American Judaism" and "Sharing Sacred Moments" (a collection of his sermons); he also served as an editor of "Reform Judaism in America: A Biographical Dictionary and Sourcebook." Sussman is currently the chairman of the Board of Governors and a professor of Jewish History of Gratz College in Melrose Park, PA.

## DEADLINES

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming issues of the biweekly **REPORTER**.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
Oct. 20-Nov. 2	October 11
November 3-16	October 25
November 17-30	November 8
Dec. 1-14	November 20 (early)

All deadlines for the year can be found at [www.thereporter.org/contact-us/faqs](http://www.thereporter.org/contact-us/faqs) under "Q: What Are the Deadlines for the Paper?"

To advertise or for more information, e-mail Kathy Brown at [advertising@thereporter.org](mailto:advertising@thereporter.org)



# TC Religious School



Temple Concord Religious School welcomed the New Year by baking honey apple cake.

Looking for this issue's "Jewish Resources"? Visit [www.thereporter.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309?](http://www.thereporter.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309?) to find out what's happening online."

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**THE MOUNTAINTOP**  
BY NATOURI HALL

The night before his assassination, Martin Luther King, Jr. returns to the Lorraine Hotel after delivering his last impassioned speech, "I've Been to the Mountaintop". A mysterious maid delivers his room service, though she seems to have more on her agenda than a simple cup of coffee. A riveting, poetic journey through what might have happened before that fateful day on April 4, 1968.

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First person

# Encounters with a Litvak past – part 2

By Rhonda F. Levine

The first part of this article appeared in the September 22 issue of The Reporter. It can also be found at [www.thereporter.com/features/first-person-encounters-with-a-litvak-past-part-1-448748](http://www.thereporter.com/features/first-person-encounters-with-a-litvak-past-part-1-448748).

After two days in Vilnius, we headed to Kaunas (Kovno), which at one time was the capital of Lithuania and a cultural center. Like Vilnius, not much is left of the Jewish past. Prior to World War II, 37,000 Jews lived in Kaunas, with 40 synagogues and prayer houses and a great number of Jewish schools. We were able to visit the one remaining synagogue, the Kaunas Choral Synagogue, that houses a museum of artifacts in the balcony. It is only in the last several decades that there has been an attempt to recapture the Jewish, more specifically, the Litvak, past. Of the 37,000 Jews that lived in Kaunas before World War II, only about 3,000 survived. We visited the site of the Kaunas Ghetto, a small area where poorer Jews had lived before more well-to-do Jews were forced to relocate under Nazi rule.

The ghetto was one of the longest running ghettos in Lithuania and one of the most photographed in Europe. The ghetto was turned into a concentration camp in 1943 and burned in the summer of 1944. We saw the monument commemorating the pogrom that took place there in 1941, during which 3,000 people were killed. Another 10,000 were taken to the Ninth Fort, which was originally a defensive fort, then turned into a city prison, then, in 1940, during the first Soviet period, was a political prison and then, in 1941 under Nazi occupation, became a site for mass murder alongside a prison. It is estimated that 30,000 Jews were murdered at the Ninth Fort.

We visited the Ninth Fort, walked through the prison and also walked by the open areas where the mass murders took place in 1941. We learned that two years after the mass murders and burials, the Nazis organized a prisoner unit that had to dig up the graves and burn the remains in order to leave no evidence of the atrocities. Mass murders at the Ninth Fort continued through 1944. Having learned

about the Ninth Fort and the Kovno Ghetto, I could not help but be even more thankful that my grandmother's parents decided to leave Janova some 40 years earlier. Yet, I wondered how many Salomons who remained in Janova more likely than not perished under the aforementioned horrendous conditions.

From Kaunas, we traveled to Klaipeda, once known as Memel, the only seaport in Lithuania, and a vacation spot of Lithuanian Jews. We visited the small Jewish Community Center near the Jewish Cemetery that was by and large destroyed during the Nazi period. Fragments of headstones were embedded in a wall that serves as a memorial. We, then, visited the Siauliai region of Lithuania where prior to World War II nearly 40 percent of the population of cities and towns in the region were Jewish.

In Siauliai City, we visited the Chaim Frenkel Villa and learned that Frenkel was a Jewish businessman who owned one of the largest leather and footwear factories in the Russian Empire. In addition to being one of the largest employers in the city by early 20th century, Frenkel had built for the Jewish community a Talmud Torah school, a nursing home, a hospital and a synagogue. In the town of Pakruojis, where 70 percent of the town's population was Jewish by the beginning of the 19th century, we visited the oldest (built in 1801) wooden synagogue in Lithuania. Prior to the murder of the entire Jewish community in 1941, in addition to the large wooden synagogue, Pakruojis also housed a small synagogue, a *cheder* and a *shtiebel*, none of which exist today.

After World War II, when no Jewish community of Pakruojis was left, the purpose of the large wooden synagogue had changed, housing a theater at one time, later a gym and warehouse of the local education department. It was not until 2017 that the Pakruojis Synagogue received a



The Winter Red Brick Synagogue in Joniskis. (Photos courtesy of Rhonda Levine)

number of grants and was renovated. And what a site to see! From Pakruojis, we traveled to Joniskis where we viewed a former complex of synagogues, a White Synagogue, referred to as the summer synagogue and, next to it, the brick-built Red Synagogue, the winter synagogue. Both buildings are part of the Joniskis History and Culture Museum. Our time in Lithuania and the Pale came to end as we were on our way to first Riga in Latvia and then, a few days later, to Tallinn in Estonia, both beautiful cities with their own interesting Jewish histories.

Our encounter with a Litvak past left me both stimulated and sad, yet inspired. I was stimulated by everything I had **See "Litvak" on page 5**



The memorial at Ninth Fort

## Off the Shelf

# Jews and the Hebrew Bible

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Many academic books about the Bible focus on the history and evolution of the work. What is often ignored is the changing relationship between Jews and the biblical texts. That's one reason why Frederick E. Greenspahn, the Gimmelstone eminent scholar of Judaic studies emeritus at Florida Atlantic University and a former professor at the University of Denver, wrote "Judaism and Its Bible: A People and Their Book" (Jewish Publication Society). The goal of his work is "to explore the reality of the Bible's place in Judaism: how it came to be, how it is used, and how it has been understood." Greenspahn is interested in behavior, meaning "what Jews do rather than what they say they do."

The author does discuss the creation of the Bible, including noting that the people mentioned in the biblical text seem to have no concept of the Bible as we now know it. In fact, he shows instances when major characters broke laws that are listed in the first five books. Although the text refers to readings of undefined sections of the Bible, these are one time events, rather than weekly gatherings as part of a religious service. In fact, during biblical times, the main form of worship was sacrifices at the Temple in Jerusalem, not attendance at a synagogue. After the destruction of the Temple, the Bible became the central core of Judaism, even though all parts of the Bible were and are not treated equally. Greenspahn notes the importance of the biblical text by quoting the German poet Heinrich Heine, who said that the Roman's destruction of the Temple "made the Bible the Jews' spiritual and, fortunately, portable homeland."

Greenspahn also discusses the different ways the text has been used. These include biblical passages being placed on houses or in amulets as protective magic. Verses were also recited to heal someone ill or wounded, and to prevent bad dreams. The physical scrolls have been kept in private homes or taken on journeys as protection. They were also placed on rooftops when a town was attacked.

Selections of the text were quoted in the synagogue liturgy as rabbinic prayer replaced sacrifices. In addition, the text was quoted in study halls and regular readings in the synagogue took place.

Greenspahn notes that the ancient rabbis moved away from strict study of the biblical text, instead focusing on the Mishnah and Talmud, also known as the Oral Torah. That's because rabbinic practice was very different from biblical practice. According to at least one rabbi, one only needed to know the laws of the Talmud to truly understand what God wanted: the biblical text was not enough. However, interest in the Bible continued and was helped by the many different translations that became available and made it possible for those who did not read Hebrew to understand the text. Greenspahn notes that readings of the Torah in the synagogue context were supposed to include translations so those listening would understand what was being said.

In his discussion of the numerous translations of the biblical text, Greenspahn writes of how those authors often changed the simple meaning of the text, including leaving out problematic parts, or adding explanations based on the translator's theology. Other changes occurred because some words did not have an exact counterpart so words of similar meanings had to be used. Even when there were Christian translations of the Bible available, the Jewish community would often create its own version, although the translators were not above borrowing much of the translation from the Christian one.

"Judaism and Its Bible" is well written and accessible, making it useful for discussion groups or a synagogue class. Although the work is almost 270 pages long, only 140-plus pages form the basic text: the rest includes footnotes, a bibliography and an index. Those make it easier for anyone looking to learn more about the subject to expand their knowledge.

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# BD luncheon on Oct. 14 to feature Shay Rabineau

Beth David's 2023-24 monthly luncheon speaker series will begin on Saturday, October 14, with guest speaker Professor Shay Rabineau. He will talk about his 2022 Dead Sea trek, when he replicated a journey last undertaken in 1934 during the Palestine British Mandate period. People are encouraged to attend the morning service, which begins at 9:30 am. There is no charge for the luncheon.

"As you can well imagine," Rabineau said, "my 2022 circumambulation of the Dead Sea took place amid a vastly different physical and geopolitical landscape. I plan to illustrate what it was like to walk around 'the world's strangest lake,' as I navigated international boundaries, military zones, industrial areas, sinkholes and minefields. I also plan to discuss the Dead Sea's famous past, its character in the present and its possibilities for the future."

Rabineau is an associate professor of Israel Studies in the Department of Judaic Studies at Binghamton University, and the associate director of the Center for Israel Studies.

"Shay is an avid hiker," organizers say, "and has served as an expert trail development consultant, with strong trekking, fieldwork and strategic planning experience."



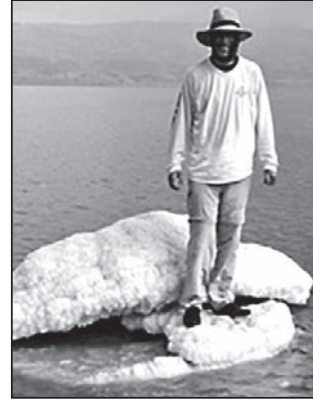
Shay Rabineau during his 2022 hike around the Dead Sea (Photo courtesy of Shay Rabineau)

He is currently working on a book project based on his trek around the Dead Sea, and we are thrilled to have him as our first guest speaker of the series!"

Beth David's Luncheon Speaker Series takes place the second Saturday of the month after Shabbat morning services, and is open to the community. Since the monthly series' continuation depends on the generosity of contributors, Beth David welcomes and appreciates donations to the Luncheon Fund in order to keep the program going. Donations as well as sponsorships can be made in honor of or in memory of someone, or to mark a special occasion. Those wishing an acknowledgment to be sent to the person being honored, or to the family of someone being remembered, can indicate that along with the necessary information. Donations can be sent to Beth David Synagogue, 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905, Attention: Luncheon Fund.

# BD luncheon on Nov. 11 to feature Tim Lowenstein

The Beth David Synagogue Luncheon Speaker Series will continue its focus on the Dead Sea, but this time from an earth scientist's perspective: Tim Lowenstein will speak on "What Can the Dead Sea Salt Tell Us?" on Saturday, November 11. "We are extremely fortunate," organizers said, "to have as our speaker one of the world's leading experts on the salt deposits of the Dead Sea. As all those who attend will see, his topic is of utmost relevance to our world today." People are encouraged to attend the morning service, which begins at 9:30 am. There is no charge



Tim Lowenstein (Photo courtesy of Shay Rabineau and Tim Lowenstein)

for the luncheon.

A member of Binghamton University's Department of Geological Sciences and Environmental Studies since 1985, Lowenstein and his team have been doing research on the Dead Sea since 2018. The project is sponsored by the United States-Israel Bimolecular Science Foundation and will continue through 2024. Lowenstein and two post-graduate students, in conjunction with a scientist from the Israel Geological Survey, are examining what can be learned by looking

at the salt deposits that have formed as the level of the Dead Sea has dropped more than 30 meters over the last 40 years. "How salt deposits help us understand lakes, climate change and human disturbance are the focal points of our research," Lowenstein said. "I look forward to sharing our findings and their implications."

Lowenstein is an author of more than 135 peer-reviewed papers and has given close to 200 conference presentations. He became a distinguished professor in 2016, a promotion and honor that recognizes a researcher's prominence in their field at the national or international level. Lowenstein has received more than \$2.8 million in external grant funding. Among his awards are the Israel C. Russell Award in Limnogeology from the Geological Society of America in 2012 and the Lawrence L. Sloss Award in Sedimentary Geology from the Geological Society of America in 2016. He is a Fellow of the Mineralogical Society of America, Society of Economic Geologists, and the Geological Society of America.

# Sephardic music concert in Syracuse

The concert "Old and New: Sephardic Reflections" will be held on Saturday, October 21, from 7:30-9:30 pm, at the May Memorial Unitarian Universalist Society, 3800 E. Genesee St., Syracuse. The cost of a ticket is \$20 public/\$10 student. The concert will include early and contemporary music from the Jewish Sephardic tradition by fivebyfive and Pegasus Early Music/NYS Baroque. For more informa-

tion, call 585-703-3990 or e-mail deb@pegasusearlymusic.org.

Sephardic music has its roots in the musical traditions of the Jewish communities in medieval Spain and Portugal. The two ensembles, fivebyfive and Pegasus Early Music, will offer audiences to "old" and "new" versions of Sephardic tunes, with artist Lynne Feldman presenting original tapestries celebrating Jewish life shared as

part of the performance.

Music by fivebyfive includes a new arrangement of Brazilian composer Clarice Assad's "Sephardic Suite" and a new setting of three Sephardic songs by Eastman graduate Keane Southard. Music from Pegasus will include some of these tunes as well as "Scalerica de oro," "Morena me llaman" and more.

# Litvak . . . . .Continued from page 4

learned and I now want to learn more and see more, much more. I was sad to learn how much of a Litvak past was destroyed first by Nazis and Lithuanian collaborators, and then overlooked during the Soviet period. I am not sure if the many monuments, plaques, memorials and restorations we saw are aspects of Lithuanians coming to terms with their past, or merely ways to increase tourism. Still, I am inspired by the work done now throughout Lithuania to recapture parts of the Litvak past that had been lost for decades.

Rhonda F. Levine is a professor of sociology, emerita, at Colgate University.



The ghetto memorial at Kovno.

**Moving any time soon?**

Whether you're moving across town or across the country, please let *The Reporter* know so you can stay up to date on community news! E-mail [treporter@aol.com](mailto:treporter@aol.com) with "Reporter Address change" in the subject line, or call 607-724-2360, ext. 254, to let *The Reporter* know about your new address.



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- 3) Fill out the form in this ad and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

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## Weekly Parasha

Shemini-Atzeret Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17; Numbers 29:35-39

This Shabbat, we will be celebrating Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. This is the last set of holidays in this Jewish holiday season: we sounded the *shofar* on Rosh Hashanah, fasted on Yom Kippur, ate in the sukkah and shook the lulav and etrog.

What is the significance of this holiday and what practical takeaway can we glean from this holiday season?

“The eighth day shall be a time of restriction for you; you shall not perform any mundane work. You shall offer up a burnt offering, a fire offering for a spirit of satisfaction to the Lord: one bull, one ram and seven lambs, [all] unblemished.” (Numbers 29:35-36)

## Stop and absorb

RABBI ZALMAN CHEIN, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND RITUAL, CHABAD OF BINGHAMTON

The one bull is in contrast to the total of 70 bulls that were brought throughout the seven days of Sukkot, corresponding to the Jewish people praying and bringing sacrifices on behalf of humanity. On this day, God says to the Jewish people: “You were busy taking care of everyone else. Today, I want you to stop and pray for yourselves; for ‘your’ communal and personal needs.”

A busy person, a communal activist, may have a hard time stopping to take care of his/her needs; they are not wired that way. Perhaps that is why the Torah uses a distinct word when describing the restrictions of this holiday: “*atzeret*.”

Have you ever seen a stop sign in Israel? Many of them

have the universal stop symbol and the words “*atzer*” written inside. *Atzeret* means stop. *Atzeret* and *atzer* have the same root.

In addition to stopping and focusing on the day at hand, the Chasidic masters teach that *atzeret* is associated with the word absorption, as if to say stop and absorb. This teaches us that this final holiday is about stopping and internalizing all the things we have accomplished during the past month; analyzing and contemplating our achievements until now and what we want to carry forward into the upcoming year.

May God grant each of us the strength to achieve this balance of taking care of our personal, physical and spiritual needs – yet always remembering to be there for others.

## Congregational Notes

### Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative  
Rabbi: Micah Friedman  
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 607-723-7461 and 607-231-3746  
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm  
E-mail: titammy@stny.twcbc.com  
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org  
Service schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Micah Friedman via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants).

On Saturday, October 7, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants). The Torah portion is Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17 and the haftarah is 1 Kings 8:54-66. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 7:30 pm.

The temple office will be closed on Monday, October 9, for Columbus Day.

On Saturday, October 14, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held via Zoom and in-person (masks are required for unvaccinated participants). The Torah portion is Genesis 1:1-8 and the haftarah is I Samuel 20:18-42. A Zoom Havdalah service will take place at 7:15 pm.

A Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 17, at 7 pm.

A Ritual Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 18, at 10 am.

### Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869  
B'nai B'rith: William H. Seigel Lodge  
Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.

### Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Cantor: David Green  
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820  
Phone: 607-432-5522  
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com  
Regular service times: Contact the temple for days of services and times.  
Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings.  
For the schedule of services, classes and events, contact the temple.

### Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated  
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045  
Phone: 607-756-7181  
President: Nick Martelli  
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744  
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org  
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/  
Service leaders: Lay leadership  
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.  
Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis. Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is “Likrat Shabbat,” while the Saturday morning siddur is “Gates of Prayer.” The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.

Services and programs are held by Zoom on the first and second Fridays of the month.

### Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

For specific information regarding services (including online services), meetings and classes at any of the area synagogues, contact them by phone or e-mail.

### Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union  
Rabbi: Zev Silber  
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone: 722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 722-7514  
Fax: 722-7121  
Office hours: Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm  
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com  
Rabbi's e-mail: rabbisilber@stny.rr.com  
Website: www.bethdavid.org  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton  
Classes: Rabbi Zev Silber will hold his weekly Talmud class every Tuesday evening after services.

### Congregation Tikkun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY  
Phone: 607-256-1471  
Website: www.tikkunvor.org, E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org  
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman, rabbishifrah@tikkunvor.org  
Presidents: Sue Merkel and Laurie Willick, presidents\_22@tikkunvor.org  
Education Director/Administrative Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky  
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin  
Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail info@tikkunvor.org for the times and links. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 am. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat and other special services at least once a month. Call for the weekly schedule.  
Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for second through seventh grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth and seventh grades also meet on Wednesday afternoons. Family programs for kindergarten and first grade held monthly.  
Adult Education: Offered regularly throughout the year. Check the website for details.

### Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch  
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors  
E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu  
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com  
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095  
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com  
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education  
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com  
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development  
Chabad DOWNTOWN Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton  
E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com  
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming  
E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com  
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.  
To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad's office at 797-0015.  
Chabad will be holding pre-Shabbat virtual programs. For more information, visit www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership.



Friday, October 6, light candles before ..... 6:19 pm  
Saturday, October 7, light candles after ..... 7:17 pm  
Sunday, October 8, yom tov ends ..... 7:16 pm  
Friday, October 13, light candles before ..... 6:07 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, October 14 ..... 7:06 pm  
Friday, October 20, light candles before ..... 5:56 pm  
Shabbat ends Saturday, October 21 ..... 6:55 pm

### Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Rabbi: TBA  
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm  
Phone: 607-723-7355, Fax: 607-723-0785  
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com  
Website: www.templeconcord.com  
Regular service times: Fri., 7:30 pm; Sat., 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.  
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tues. and Thurs. during the school year unless otherwise noted.

Some services and programs are online only.

Friday, October 6: At 7:30 pm, Simchat Torah Shabbat service with Yizkor service led by Suzanne Holwitt, Rabbi Rachel Esserman and Robin Hazen. Masks are optional for those attending in person. Join via Zoom (contact office for link), or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, October 7: No Religious School or Torah study. At 10:30 am, Lee Foreman will celebrate his bar mitzvah.

Sunday, October 8: At 2 pm, Temple Concord Sisterhood program. RSVP to Deb Daniels at ddaniels2@stny.rr.com or 607-743-1427.

Tuesday, October 10: At 8 pm, Board of Trustees (General Board) meeting. Meetings are open to members of the synagogue. For the meeting link, contact the office at 607-723-7355 or at templeconcordaa@gmail.com.

Thursday, October 12: At 10:30 am, Rabbi Search Committee Town Hall meeting in social hall. For further information, contact Phyllis Kellenberger at 607-727-8305.

Friday, October 13: At 8 pm, Shabbat service led by Todd Herzog. Join via Zoom (contact office for link), or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/templeconcord/.

Saturday, October 14: At 9 am, Religious School; at 9:15 am, Torah study led by Todd Herzog, in person and Zoom (contact office for link); and at 10:35 am, family service led by Herzog.

Sunday, October 15: At 7 pm, Rabbi Search Committee meeting, Zoom-only meeting for those unable to attend in person. To participate in that call, contact the office for the link.

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: TBA  
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass  
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292  
Phone: 273-5775  
E-mail: president@tbeithaca.org, secretary@tbeithaca.org  
Website: www.tbeithaca.org  
Presidents: Melanie Kalman and Alexis Siemon  
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman  
Director of Education: TBA  
Services: Friday 8 pm; Saturday 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).  
Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The teen No'ar program meets twice per month (every other Sunday from 5-7 pm) and is designed with the flexibility to accommodate busy student schedules.  
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.  
For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE.

### Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive  
Rabbi: David Regenspan  
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815  
Phone: 334-2691  
E-mail: fertigg@roadrunner.com  
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 373-5087  
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.  
Adult Ed.: Shabbat study sessions are held on designated Saturday mornings at 10 am. Call ahead, text or e-mail to confirm dates.

# Federation and Chabad held "Farewell gathering to honor Michael Wright"



At left: The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and the Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life held a "Farewell gathering to honor Michael Wright" on September 13. Close to 40 people came to honor Wright, who is moving out of the area. Shown are some of those who attended. (Photos by Dora Polachek)



Attending the event (clockwise from right) were Richard Lewis, Lee Schechter, Arieh Ullmann, Howard Warner and Rabbi Zev Silber.



L-r: Rabbi Aaron Slonim, co-director of the Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life; Michael Wright; and Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton.



Michael Wright spoke during the event.



Richard Lewis offered a tribute to Michael Wright at the event.



L-r: Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu and Michael Wright



L-r: Suzanne Holwitt, president of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton; Federation Executive Director Shelley Hubal; Rivkah Slonim, co-director of the Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life; Susan and Michael Wright; Rabbi Aaron Slonim, co-director of the Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life; and Rabbi Levi Slonim, director of development and co-director of Chabad Downtown, Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Life.

## Jewish Community Center

### JCC Friendship Club

The Jewish Community Center Friendship Club met on September 20. Rabbi Rachel Esserman spoke about *Tashlich*, when people toss their sins into a moving body of water on Rosh Hashanah. *Tashlich* is not mentioned in the Bible. The first written mention of it appears in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. At first, it was only observed by Ashkenazic Jews, but the custom has spread around the world and now Sephardic Jews observe it as well. In medieval times, it became controversial because not all Rabbis thought you could just throw your sins away without repentance.

Lynne Green led us in the blessing over the cookies.

She also entertained us with her journey into teaching.

We welcomed three new guests: Tatiana and Stefano Giordano, and Julie Byers.

Sylvia Diamond read some humorous song titles and announced that we sent New Years' cards to Jewish residents of local nursing homes and shut-ins. Sue Herzog gave the treasurer's report.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday, October 18, at 1:30 pm, at the JCC. Dr. Jay Levine will speak about chiropractic benefits for seniors.

Sylvia Diamond, President



## Business Profiles



### Ernest H. Parsons Funeral Home

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 Fax: 607-724-1337  
 E-mail: parsonsfuneral@yahoo.com  
 Website: www.parsonsfuneral.com  
 Hours: 24/7/365

The Ernest H. Parsons Funeral Home, located at 71 Main St., Binghamton, has been a landmark since 1928 and is located in the J. Stewart Wells Mansion, built by renowned architect Isaac Perry, who completed construction in 1867.

Ernest H. Parsons owned and operated the funeral home from 1928 until his death in 1976. Charles Mills purchased the funeral home after Ernest's death and continued the tradition until his retirement in 2012. The current owners – J. Fritsch, R. Fynboe, S. Pitkorchemny and K. Vakiener – strive to uphold the original motto of the founder: "Let Us Serve You with Understanding." Parsons Funeral Home offers distinctive service with respectful attentiveness to the ceremonial rites and the utmost consideration of families' desires to accord a last tribute of affection and esteem to their departed loved ones.

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 Website: www.hefuneralhome.com  
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When faced with the death of a loved one, Hopler & Eschbach Funeral Home invites you to turn to its caring staff to help guide you through the funeral process. Deeply experienced and knowledgeable in the performance of Jewish burial customs, Kurt Eschbach and his staff are the most qualified professionals in the community to help plan and carry out your funeral or memorial services. They provide services at your synagogue, the funeral home or cemetery, and also provide cremation services and funeral pre-planning.

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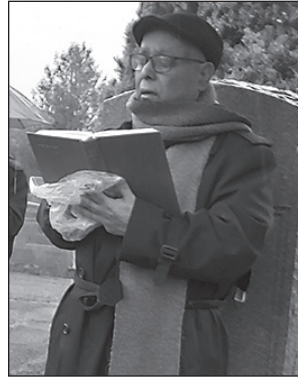
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# Holocaust Memorial event held Sept. 24



The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton held its annual memorial service at the Holocaust Memorial Monument in the Temple Israel Cemetery. More than 30 people attended the event even though it was raining.



Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu, head of Judaic studies at Hillel Academy of Broome County, sang "El Malei Rachamim."



Among those taking part in the service were Rabbi Aaron Slonim, director of The Rohr Chabad Center for Jewish Student Life (on left), and Charles Manasse (center). Art Siegel (on right), president of Temple Israel, helped keep the speakers dry.

## CJS..... Continued from page 1

and Sweet Basil. He has released approximately 20 compact discs under his own name, most recently the three-disc set "In the Dark and America: The Rough Cut." The author of numerous books, Lowe's 2021 volume, "Turn Me Loose White Man: How to Listen to American Music 1900-1960," was nominated for the Ralph Gleason Award.

Porter, a native of Scranton, is a pianist, composer and music historian. He received a Ph.D. in musicology from Brandeis University, and has taught at Tufts University, Rutgers, The New School and others. His album "Beauty and Mystery" was released in 2018, followed by the jazz-rock album "Transcendent" with guitar virtuoso Ray Suhy and his "Solo Piano" recording. Porter has also appeared on more than 30 albums by such notables as Dave Liebman, Marc Ribot and Gary Bartz. He is also the author of a number of books, including "John Coltrane: His Life and Music," "The Lester Young Reader" and "Lester Young," and is co-author of "Jazz: A Century of Change, Jazz from Its Origins to the Present." Every week, he publishes essays about jazz on Substack that have been described as "revelations."

### "The Jews and the Blues"

On the evening of October 26, CJS, in collaboration with the Binghamton Jewish Film Fest, will show "The Jews and the Blues." Voluntary contributions are welcome. The film follows director Drew Stone as he travels to Israel and discovers how the blues ties into a wide mix of cultures - Arab, Ethiopian and Moroccan - all of which are united through the universal tie of music. "Viewers will experience the unexpected on this expedition into uncharted territory," said organizers. The film will be followed by a discussion led by Judaic Studies Professor Jonathan Karp.

### "How They Swung in Odessa: Jews and the Birth of Soviet Jazz"

On November 2, Professor Jarrod Tanny will give a Zoom presentation titled "How They Swung in Odessa: Jews and the Birth of Soviet Jazz." To sign up for the lecture, visit the CJS Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/bingcjs/](http://www.facebook.com/bingcjs/).

Tanny said, "In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Jewish musicians from Southern Russia harnessed the traditional improvisational klezmer music of Eastern Europe to help create Russian Jazz. Although Soviet jazz musicians were heavily influenced by American jazz, the wild music performed by the Jews for swashbucklers, criminals and merry-makers

in the seedy taverns of Odessa left an indelible imprint on Soviet music. This music captured the spirit of the Odessa myth, a seaport town legendary for its Jewish gangsters and deviants who refused to conform to the 'proper' puritanical behavior demanded by the Soviet government."

Tanny is associate professor of history and the Charles and Hannah Block distinguished scholar in Jewish history at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. He received his Ph.D. from the University of California at Berkeley, and is the author of a study of "Jewish Odessa, City of Rogues and Schnorrers" (Indiana University Press, 2011) and "The Seinfeld Talmud" (Academica Press, 2023), a satiric take on the hit TV series, in which the rabbis of the talmudic era gather in a yeshiva to discuss and debate the issues raised in each "Seinfeld" episode in the context of Judaic law. He has also published numerous scholarly essays on Jewish humor in post-World War II America and its place within the larger context of the European Jewish past.

The College of Jewish Studies provides opportunities for adult Jewish education for the Broome County community by offering fall and spring programs. Drawing on local resources, and inviting scholars and experts from a range of universities and cultural and religious institutions, CJS sponsors a wide array of programs dealing with Jewish history, culture, religion and politics.

The College of Jewish Studies, founded in 1986, is an informal coalition between the Judaic Studies Department of Binghamton University and several area Jewish sponsoring institutions: the Jewish Community Center, the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, Beth David Synagogue, Temple Concord, and Temple Israel. Programming for CJS would not be possible without the additional financial support of grants from The Community Foundation for South Central New York - David and Virginia Eisenberg Donor Advised Fund, the Jacob and Rose Olum Foundation, the B'nai B'rith Lectureship Fund, the Victor and Esther Rozen Foundation, an endowment fund from the former Temple Beth El of Endicott, a grant from the JoyVel Charitable Fund and the donations of individual sponsors.

Anyone interested in becoming an individual sponsor so that the CJS can continue bringing programs to the community, or who wants to make a donation, should contact CJS at [bingcjs@gmail.com](mailto:bingcjs@gmail.com). The College of Jewish Studies is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

At right: Rabbi Micah R. Friedman, spiritual leader of Temple Israel, read a prayer for a "Day of Holocaust Remembrance."



## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### IDF to open elite commando units to women

Starting late next year, women will be allowed to try out for combat positions in the General Staff Reconnaissance Unit (Sayeret Matkal), the Israeli Defense Forces announced recently. As part of the pilot program, two other elite combat units will also be opened up to females, IDF Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Herzi Halevi said, provided enough women pass the screening tests. Women already serve in most combat roles in the IDF, often alongside men. Based on an ongoing pilot that allowed women to serve in Unit 669 - the air force's heliborne combat search and rescue extraction unit - and the Yahalom special operations combat engineering unit, the IDF believes enough female recruits will pass the tests for the General Staff Reconnaissance Unit and Unit 5515, which specializes in transportation and rescue of special forces through extreme terrain and live combat zones.

### Campaign. . . Continued from page 1

volunteers, and that has meant for the last few years the burden of making calls has landed on just a few people. It's very simple: we need help to sustain our community."

"We are breaking with tradition," Hubal added, "by not holding a brunch for Super Sunday this year. We are going with the old model and trying to call all donors of the Federation during the first weeks of the Campaign. Come in when you can and help us out as much as you can. All efforts are appreciated. And to show our appreciation, there will be a nosh so people won't go hungry."

Hubal added that everyone who does not pledge early will receive a phone call during the Campaign. "Pledging early is a mitzvah! It saves precious volunteer efforts. We've made early pledging as easy as possible," she said. "To see all that the Federation does for the community with funds from the Campaign, check out our Annual Report, which can be found on our website, [www.jfgeb.org/annual-report](http://www.jfgeb.org/annual-report)."

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