

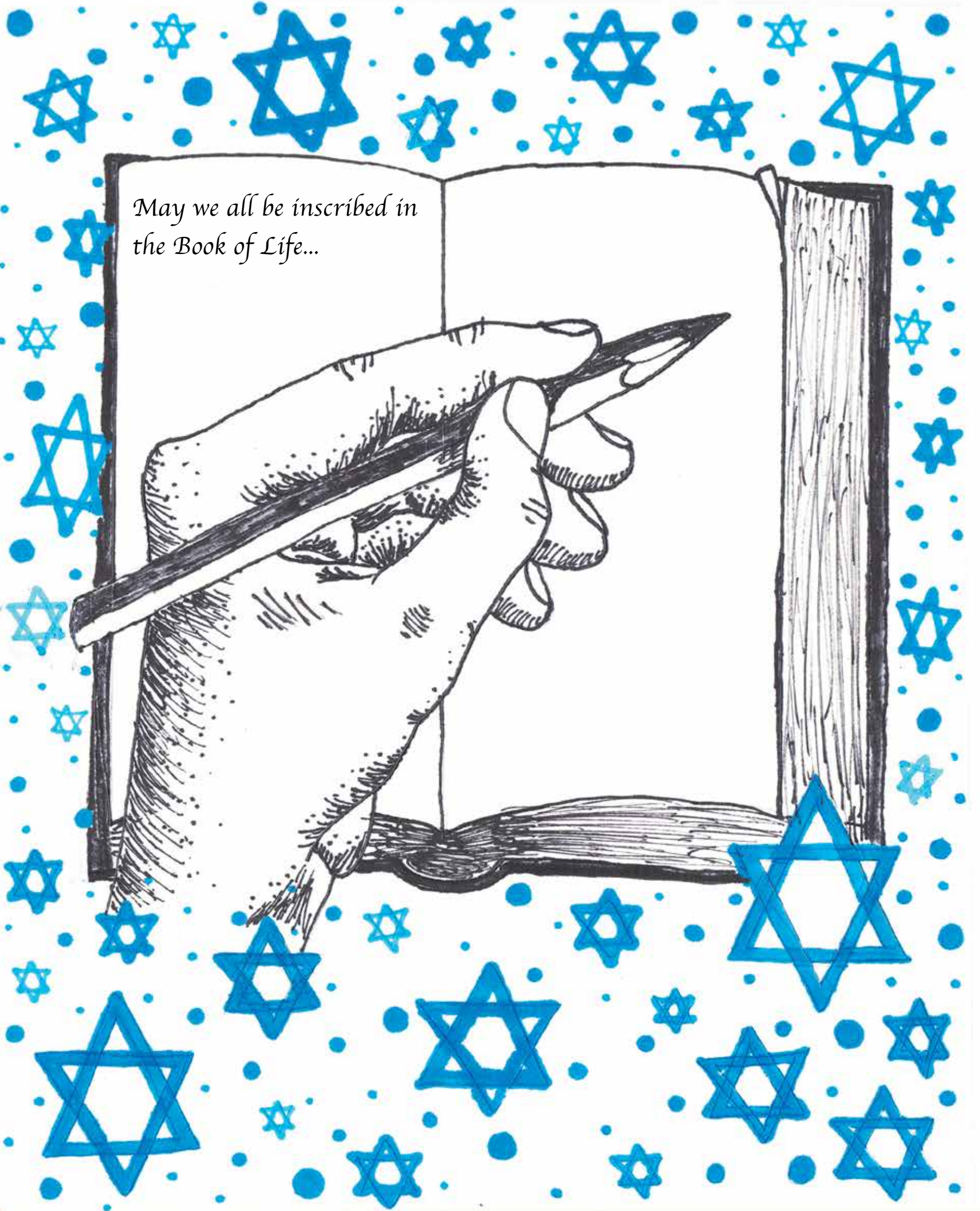
# THE REPORTER

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Volume XLIX, Number 32

## Happy Rosh Hashanah 5781



*May we all be inscribed in  
the Book of Life...*

## Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

## With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

I have a quote on my fridge. Written on what is now an old, stained sticky note, it has been there for years. I heard it during a podcast, scribbled it down and impulsively stuck it up. I have looked at these words countless times over the years, taking direction from them. The quote, by poet and author Mark Nepo, says, "In the practice of our days, to listen is to lean in, softly, with a willingness to be changed by what we hear."

To be honest, I always viewed Nepo's words with a critical mind. "Be a better listener, be a better person," I would tell myself. But now, with practice, I see these words with greater comfort. They are a road map to a fulfilling life. When you take the time to be present, to drop pre-conceived ideas and be patient with those around you, you find yourself surrounded by love. I

have found this also to be true for all the political and emotional strife present in our society. Rather than digesting the turmoil, I can see that it needs to be held softly, because underneath the surface is pain. This is life changing. Is this easy to do? No. It takes prayer, patience and practice.

During this month of Elul and time of self-reflection, I know that Nepo was also speaking about inward listening. Be it a critical voice or a voice of comfort, hold your gaze inward, softly, and be willing to really hear, for this is where God lives in each of us.

As the Federation moves toward the beginning of the annual Campaign, I hope that each of you will take the time to reflect on what this community means to you. Where would we be without a Jewish community? Right

now, we are physically distant, but we are connected spiritually and faithfully. And we need each other more than ever.

Whether it is supporting those in need through Jewish Family Service, holding communitywide gatherings for healing, connecting the community through *The Reporter* or funding special projects, Federation is often behind the scenes, keeping our community whole and moving forward. Please find the time to go to our website, [www.jfgeb.org](http://www.jfgeb.org), and make your pledge. Pledging early is a mitzvah because it will reduce exposure for our volunteers.

On behalf of the Federation, *Reporter* and JFS staff, I wish you all much peace and good health in the New Year. God willing, we will all be together again soon. Know that I am holding you all softly in my thoughts and prayers.

## Can calls for unity and moderation unite divided societies?

By Jonathan S. Tobin

(JNS) – It says something about the state of Israeli society that a speech containing many platitudes and little in the way of practical suggestions not only went viral, but is also being lauded as a model for other politicians to follow. Yet for all of its vagueness, Tehila Friedman-Nachalon's words deserve to be heard and pondered for what they might mean for both Israelis and Americans.

Her appeal for a new coalition of zealous moderates who are determined to heal a society riven by political, religious, cultural and social divisions that appear too wide to be bridged struck a chord with many Israelis. That it did says a lot about the nastiness of Israeli politics and the way issues have become weaponized in a nonstop political civil war that she likened to the suicidal conflict that raged within the walls of besieged Jerusalem during the Roman siege that led to its destruction. Invoking the lesson of the *sinat hinam* – senseless or baseless hatred – that traditional Judaism teaches us was the cause of the fall of the city and the burning of the Holy Temple, Friedman-Nachalon aptly noted that the same spirit prevails in Israel today.

"In the middle of the corona days, in the heart of a health, economic and social crisis the likes of which we've

never experienced before, in the middle of a crisis of our institutions, after a year-and-a-half of inactivity, without an approved budget, with a troubling deficit and an economic depression, we have again those voices that would like us to chop off our brother's head, that want to take every social wound and scar and scratch it until it bleeds, once again indifferent and scornful of the pain of others," she said in Hebrew.

Instead, she called on Israelis to stop trying to beat each other and, in effect, make their opponents disappear in a zero-sum conflict.

Friedman-Nachalon, who describes herself as "Jewish, religious, a religious Zionist, a nationalist, a feminist, a Jerusalemite," took a circuitous route to her maiden speech in the Knesset.

A lawyer who worked at a nonprofit that concentrated on education and policy in the religious Zionist community, she joined Yair Lapid's Yesh Atid Party that espouses a left-leaning centrism. Along with the rest of that faction, she became part of Benny Gantz's Blue and White coalition, but was ranked too low in the party's list in any of the three elections that were fought in the last 18 months to get into the Knesset. After Gantz joined forces with Prime

Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to form the current coalition government in April, Lapid's party pulled out of Blue and White to sit in the opposition. But Friedman-Nachalon switched to Gantz's party. At that point, due to Israel's adoption of the so-called "Norwegian law" – a lofty term for a shady patronage scheme that allows Knesset members who become cabinet ministers to resign their seats in order to allow lower-ranked colleagues to join the parliament and reap the not-insignificant benefits of being officeholders – Friedman-Nachalon got her moment in the sun.

But however she got there, the idealism of her maiden Knesset speech resonated among Israelis and throughout the Jewish world.

Israelis are still bitterly divided about Netanyahu's continued tenure in office, so much so that opponents have been regularly demonstrating outside his official residence demanding that he resign because of the legal charges, however dubious, that led to indictments against him. That's why her talk of unity is, at one and the same time, the last thing that most partisans are interested in, while also being exactly the tonic that a country that is suffering the ravages of the coronavirus pandemic and sick to death

See "Unity" on page 17

## In My Own Words

## Statute of limitations and the High Holidays

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

A 19-year-old Jewish college student dropped out of a state house race after admitting to harassing female students when he was in middle school. A non-Jewish doctor was fired from two training programs and her medical training certificate was revoked because of antisemitic material she posted on social media between 2010-13. Both individuals have apologized for their actions. I'm not excusing their behaviors because they should have known better. My query is about their apologies. During the High Holiday season, we are asking to not only seek forgiveness for our sins, but to forgive those who have sinned against us. So, the questions become this: Should they be forgiven? Should he be able to run for public office and should she be allowed to continue her medical training? What I'm debating is whether there should be a statute of limitation on punishment for people's actions – that is, if they truly understand they have done wrong.

ATV police drama I watched recently brought up a similar issue and, even though the event featured was fictional, it resonated with my search for an answer. A policeman was one member of the group that shot an innocent man shortly after 9/11 when fear of terrorists ran high. The others resigned from the force, but he kept his head down, admitted his wrongdoing and, years later, wanted to be promoted to sergeant. The final result was something that might only

happen on a TV show: The police commissioner arranged for him to take a position in a police force outside of New York City. What matters here is the question the policeman asked: Was his life always going to be judged by his one mistake? On the one hand, I felt for him: What happened was not premeditated murder and the experience left him scarred. Should he not be able to move forward without that act shadowing his every move? On the other hand, the victim's family was changed forever. They can't ignore what happened because the pain will remain forever. Is there a fair outcome? Not really; what occurred that day may haunt all of them forever.

Forgiveness may be easier when dealing with friends and family. There we can do something that might be called "forgive, but not forget." I may be able to forgive someone for what they've done to me, but their betrayal of my trust might mean that I may not want them in my life anymore. That is my choice. Then again, there are some people I could not imagine my life without, and I think I would stand by them even if they did something I think is wrong. That doesn't mean I would excuse their behavior/action, but I know enough about them as a person to understand that one action doesn't define their whole life. And I know they have stood by me when I've floundered. That connection is too strong and too important

to break. Yet, what if they were someone to whom I was not close or whose action was too horrific? I can't even contemplate that.

Once again, I have more questions than I do answers because each person needs to be judged on the merits of their particular case. The slate cannot automatically be wiped clean for everyone: Judaism demands true repentance. What does that mean? True repentance is said to occur when someone is given the opportunity to perform the same sin, but does not. It demands there be action (or lack of action) involved, not just feeling. But should that person be allowed to become a doctor or run for public office? How many years does the person need to wait before their sin is erased? One person may offer complete forgiveness, while another will say they can never be trusted again.

No one truly knows what is occurring in another person's mind – whether or not repentance is real. There is one clue as to how we should behave. On Yom Kippur eve, we publicly declare that we are granted permission to pray with sinners. And we say the confessional in the plural form because we have all sinned – no one is perfect. That doesn't necessarily mean the slate is wiped completely clean. But we would do well to forgive ourselves and those who are truly repentant for the sins we have all committed.



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## 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.

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# Federation to launch annual Campaign 2021 on Oct. 18

**By Reporter staff**

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton announced that it will launch its annual fund-raising Campaign on Super Sunday, October 18. The theme for this year's Campaign is "Socially Distant, Spiritually Connected."

"Running a fund-raising campaign during a pandemic is not something I ever thought I would be challenged to do, but here we are and I look forward to working hard



to make the Campaign a success," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "Due to the pandemic, we are not holding any in-person programming and we need to limit the time

volunteers gather to make phone calls. So, in order to keep our volunteers safe, we are asking people to pledge early."

Campaign Chairwoman Marilyn Bell added, "Our community needs us even more now, but we also need to keep our volunteers safe. Please do a mitzvah and pledge early."

Pledges can be made three ways:

- ◆ Visit the Federation website at [www.jfgeb.org](http://www.jfgeb.org) and click on "make a pledge."
- ◆ E-mail Hubal at [director@jfgeb.org](mailto:director@jfgeb.org) with "pledge" in the subject line.
- ◆ Fill out the form in the ad on page 9 and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

"I know that the past months have been difficult for most of us," Hubal continued. "Many of our local Jewish institutions are in great need and we need to keep our organizations strong. By working together, we can make this happen. I know this community and am so proud to be a member of it. I look forward to a time when we can gather in person. Although we may be keeping our distance socially, we are all spiritually connected as Jewish people."

## Film Fest to hold virtual film event

**By Reporter staff**

The Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton will hold a virtual showing of the film "They Ain't Ready for Me" directed and produced by Brad Rothschild. "They Ain't Ready for Me" is a full-length documentary about Tamar Manasseh, an African American rabbinical student who is leading the fight against senseless killings on the south side of Chicago. It explores the challenges and motivations of the community leader as she works to prevent more people from being killed by gun violence. A discussion on the film with Rothschild will be led by Ben Kasper, professor emeritus of social science at SUNY Broome and a member of the Temple Israel Executive Board.



Producer/director Brad Rothschild



Poster of "They Ain't Ready for Me"

People will be able to register on the Federation website, [www.jfgeb.org](http://www.jfgeb.org). The film will be streamed free for up to 100 computers. After Shabbat ends on Saturday, September 12, a link to the film will be sent to those who sign up in advance. The film will be available for viewing on personal devices for 48 hours.

On Monday, September 14, at 7 pm, Kasper will facilitate the online video discussion of the film.

"As isolation due to COVID-19 continues, we wanted to do another film screening as a way to stay connected to community members," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "'They Ain't Ready for Me' is an inspirational film that shows the power of one person deciding to make a difference in this world. It is the perfect film to reflect on before the High Holy Days."

"Tamar and the organization she founded, MASK, Mothers and Men Against Senseless Killings, are proving that See "Film" on page 5

## About the cover

This year's Rosh Hashanah cover was illustrated by Katherine Sochor of Vestal.

*Happy New Year*

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## DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
September 25 .....	September 16
October 9.....	September 30
October 23.....	October 14
November 6.....	October 28

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Off the Shelf

# Family, friends and love

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Sometimes the way you feel about a book depends not only on your mood, but what else you've read recently. Before reading the novels in this review, I'd been actively engaged in two different, very exciting fantasy series. The second in one series ended with a cliff hanger and I so wanted to read the final book, but was afraid I wouldn't have time to finish reading and writing this review if I started the series' long (more than 500 page) conclusion. I also wondered if that would mean these novels wouldn't engage my interest because my mind was still focused elsewhere. To my surprise, they not only kept my interest, but made me care deeply about their characters. That was impressive, especially in light of the serious nature of their plots.

## "Separation Anxiety"

It began as a clever plot idea, but turned out to be much more. Judy, the narrator of Laura Zigman's funny, sweet and sad "Separation Anxiety" (Ecco), is so distressed that she starts wearing the family dog in a baby sling. The reason for her anxiety is understandable: Her marriage is breaking up, her son is growing up and

no longer confides in her, her career has hit the skids and her best friend is dying. Both her parents passed away not long before and Judy still grieves their loss. So, who can blame her for finding comfort by keeping her dog close? As she notes, "If the dog is helping me survive these dark days, then good for me. I shouldn't be ashamed. In fact, I should be applauded for finding a harmless, nonalcoholic, nonnarcotic, noncannabinoid solution to my pain. (Right?)"

Life becomes even more complex when problems arise at her son's alternative school. Judy also has to find a way to separate from the husband she still loves (due to financial reasons they share the house) while keeping their marital problems a secret from their son. To help defray tuition payments, they agree to host two young puppeteers – actually two people who dress as animals and pretend to be puppets – who are putting on a show at the school.

If this sounds complicated, it's because Judy's life is messy no matter how much she wants to simplify it. In spite of (or maybe because of) this, the novel is laugh-at-loud funny at times and poignant at others. Judy is a wonderful mixed-up character whose emotional ups and downs left me in tears – that is, when I wasn't laughing. Zigman's novel is about second chances – the chance to make things right and appreciate the small joys in your life. This is also Zigman's second chance; it's been years since she published a novel. Her acknowledgments at the end of the book note that her parents didn't live long enough to see it published. All I can say is, "Laura, your parents would have been so proud of you."

## "In Five Years"

For some reason, I thought "In Five Years" by Rebecca Serle (Atria Books) was going to be a light, romantic comedy. Rarely have I been so happy to be mistaken about a book. Its narrator, Dannie Kohan, is a believer in numbers who lists the minutes it takes her to do everything from getting dressed to walking to work. She also notes

the correct number of months to know someone before moving in with them and the right ages to be engaged and married. So far, her work life and her home life are going exactly as planned. This includes her wonderful boyfriend, David, who moved in with her at exactly the right time, and her marvelous, but impulsive, friend Bella, who prefers never to plan. Next up on her agenda is a job interview for the perfect job and the knowledge that David is going to propose that evening.

Everything does seem to be going according to plan, that is until Dannie has a very realistic dream of what her life will be like five years in the future: She wakes up in a different apartment with someone other than David. It's a dream she has difficulty shaking, especially when, after almost five years go by, she meets that man. To say more would spoil the plot, except to note that life is going to throw Dannie some curve balls she'll have difficulty dodging.

While the plot of "In Five Years" is wonderfully inventive, what makes this more than just a clever idea is that Serle has created a great character in Dannie. The novel also surprised me by going in a completely different direction than I expected. This work was so good that I ordered a copy of the author's first novel.

## "Florence Adler Swims Forever"

Something very dramatic happens in the first chapter of "Florence Adler Swims Forever" by Rachel Beanland (Simon and Schuster) that affects all the members of the Adler family. The story takes place in Atlantic City in 1934 and Florence Adler's plans to swim the English Channel are set. Her niece, Gussie, is staying with Florence and her parents, Esther and Joseph, in an apartment above the family bakery because their house is rented out to tourists for the summer. Gussie's mother, Fannie, is in the hospital on bed rest due to a problem pregnancy, and her father, Isaac, doesn't spend much time with either Gussie or his wife.

After the dramatic event happens, Esther is determined to protect Fannie from the bad news and forbids anyone to mention it to her. The ripples from that decision affect not only family members, but Anna, a young woman from Germany who is staying with the family, and Stuart, the non-Jewish swim coach whose feelings for Florence are more than platonic. The author speaks through all the different characters, revealing their thoughts and relationships to each other, which adds great depth to the novel.

"Florence Adler Swims Forever" does a wonderful job showing how life can change in a single moment. The ending took an

unexpected turn, which allows readers to see that for some people even the good moments in life can be tinged with sorrow. In her author's note, Beanland summarizes her story by writing that it tells of "what we are willing to do to protect the people we love." Perhaps not everyone in her novel does just that, but it's heart-warming to see characters who care so greatly for each other and are willing to break their own hearts to save another.

## "Other People's Pets"

I don't normally like to give away too many plot details of the books I read because it feels unfair to ruin the surprises. With that in mind, I am willing to say that "Other People's Pets" by R. L. Maizes (Celadon Books) is the only novel in this review that does not contain a moment of great tragedy. That doesn't mean that La La, the main character, has led any easy life. Things seem to finally be on track for her now, though. She's in the last year of her studies to be a veterinarian and her boyfriend, Clem, not only loves her, but happily tolerates her quirks. Things change when La La's father, Zev, is arrested for burglary and faces serious charges because the victim had a heart attack and is in the hospital.

La La knows that her father is a burglar and, in fact, after her mother deserted them when she was very young, she took part in the robberies. That changed after she and her father were arrested, and he took the blame to keep her from having a record. But the lawyer bills are expensive and La La needs to raise money for the one person who may be able to keep Zev from jail. The only way she knows to get those funds is to rob houses. But she decides not to steal from just any house. La La is an animal empath and can sense when an animal is suffering, so she robs only those houses with an animal in pain and cares for the pet while she is there.

What makes La La an intriguing character is that she can't relate to her fellow humans. She knows when animals aren't feeling well, but can't sense human discomfort. Her unusual childhood hasn't helped. Yet, La La also craves to connect to the people she knows, even though she believes everyone will desert her – just like her mother did. While I didn't agree with most of her decisions, I came to admire her for being willing to put her life on hold to help her father – even if that decision could negatively affect her life forever. "Other People's Pets" highlights the power of connection, even as it shows all the ways people keep each other at arm's length.

## Moving any time

### soon?

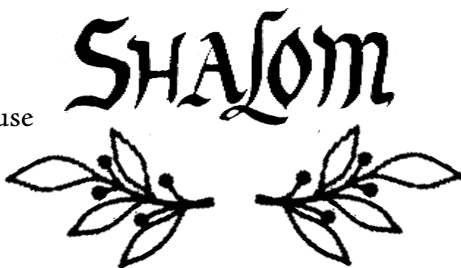
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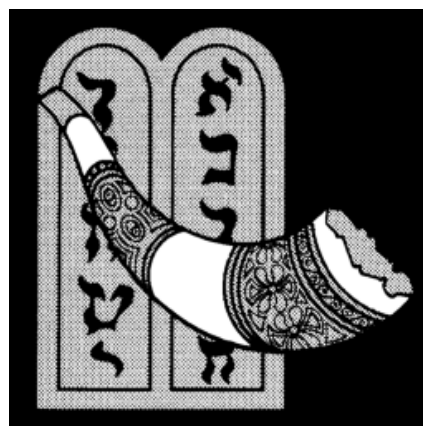
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# TC-IT to hold virtual *Selichot* concert with Dan Nichols

Temple Concord and Temple Israel invite the community to join them for a *Selichot* concert featuring Dan Nichols on Saturday, September 12, at 8:30 pm. "A number of congregations have joined together to bring about this concert for *Selichot* as we move closer to Rosh Hashanah and all the holidays we observe and celebrate in Tishrei," said organizers of the event. Anyone interested should contact Temple Concord (templeconcordaa@gmail.com or 723-7355) or Temple Israel (titammy2stny.twcbc.com or 723-7461) for the Zoom information for the program.

"Dan Nichols is a singular talent in the world of Jewish music," said organizers of the event. "He is one of the most dynamic, influential and beloved Jewish musicians in North America. Dan's melodies have become an integral part of the spiritual and liturgical experience of countless individuals and Jewish communities."

Nichols is a product of the Jewish camping movement. He spent 10 summers at the Goldman Union Camp in Zionsville, IN, before receiving his degree in vocal performance at the University of North Carolina. In 1995, realizing the potential of music to make a "meaningful connection" with Jewish youth, Nichols established the Jewish rock band Eighteen. Since that time, he and Eighteen have released 11 full-length studio albums. "Each one has received critical acclaim and has been celebrated by Jewish adults and youth alike," organizers added.

"Dan's anthology includes a wide range of sounds and styles, from energetic Jewish rock anthems to moving interpretations of traditional Jewish liturgy. Jewish youth and adults from around the world



Dan Nichols

draw inspiration from Dan's music and its positive message of Jewish values, identity and pride," they said. "Dan's live performances are legendary for their unrestrained energy and infectious spirit."

Nichols' studio concerts during the pandemic have continued his impact. His URJ "Campfire on Tour" concert in late June was the impetus for the program. Rabbi Steve Weisman reached out to him to put together an online *Selichot* musical and storytelling program.

Nichols has been featured at the conferences and conventions of nearly every major Jewish movement, including the URJ Biennial, NFTY Convention, BBYO International and Limmud. In addition to his musical talents, Nichols has been called a gifted teacher.

## TC Sisterhood planning for Whale of a Sale

Temple Concord Sisterhood is in the early stages of considering how Whale of a Sale could and/or should be held in 2020. "Whale of a Sale is an important Temple Concord Sisterhood fund-raiser," said organizers of the sale. "The proceeds are used to support Temple Concord and its religious school, as well as to make donations to local, state, regional and national charitable organizations."

To better plan, organizers request that people contact Lani Dunthorn at lani.dunthorn@yahoo.com or 348-4099 by Wednesday, September 30, with a list of items that they would like to donate to Whale of a Sale. The information provided will help determine the size of the inventory Whale might have.

"Whale items should be new or gently used items, such as fall and winter clothing and shoes that are in style, small appliances, small handheld electric tools, books published during or after 2010, and sporting equipment," organizers added. "Whale customers are not looking for men's or women's suits; kitchen, bedroom, bathroom and dining room linens; children's toys, strollers, car seats; dishes; and glassware. Instead, they are looking for quality, stylish and contemporary items."

Donations should not yet be brought to the synagogue. Once organizers have determined the conditions under which Whale of a Sale will be held, people will be contacted about where to bring donated items.

## Film.....

violence can be prevented," said organizers of the event. "With just her presence on the block – talking, joking and hanging out – she is making the forgotten members of the neighborhood believe that there are people who care whether they live or die. But she is more than just a concerned mother of two children – she's also a rabbinical student. Her unique background and upbringing give her a perspective that few people can claim. Both authentically Jewish and authentically Black, she brings an understanding of both communities, even as she struggles for acceptance in the Jewish world."

In his review of the film on the website Unseen Films, Nate Hood wrote, "Whether she's cruising the streets blaring Lauryn Hill, saving a group of terrified 4-year-old boys from the cops, or visiting the graves of her enslaved ancestors, Manasseh is a mesmerizing presence, a living embodiment of *tikkun olam* for Black America, both Jewish and otherwise."

Continued from page 3  
Rothschild is an award winning producer and writer with both a creative and a business background. He received a master's in international affairs and a master's in business administration, both from Columbia University. From 1995-97, he served as the speech writer and director of communications for the Mission of Israel to the United Nations. Rothschild produced the award-winning documentary feature "Kinderblock 66: Return to Buchenwald," which was screened at the Jerusalem Film Festival and at more than 20 festivals in the United States and around the world. He directed the documentary film "African Exodus," about the plight of Israel's African refugees, and the documentary film "Tree Man," about the people who come to New York City to sell Christmas trees every holiday season. "Tree Man" won the Audience Award at the St. Lawrence International Film Festival. Rothschild is currently directing a documentary film about Raoul Wallenberg.

## High Holiday service schedule

The High Holiday service schedules for area synagogues can be found on *The Reporter's* website at <https://www.thereporter.org/local-stream/high-holiday-services-at-area-synagogues>.

## In Business

### Savitch Agency

Savitch Agency, an insurance brokerage firm in the Southern Tier, has announced its partnership with Acrisure, a global top 10 insurance brokerage firm. The local firm will now have access to Acrisure's technological, administrative and operational support specialists, keeping business as usual on a local level, while seeking to keep business as usual on a local level.

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# Play Ball! Jews in the outfield (and the infield, too)

## Ballfield or synagogue: Hank Greenberg's High Holiday dilemma

By Bill Simons

In 1959, Yom Kippur – Tishrei 10 on the Hebrew calendar – fell on October 12. Although raised in an Orthodox Jewish home, Hank Greenberg, then 48 years old and living in Manhattan, was no longer religiously observant. Nonetheless, on this, the most solemn and holy day of the Jewish year, something stirred in him. Divorced and the custodial father of two sons, Greenberg told his boys, Glenn, 12, and Steve, 11, that they were not going to go to school that day because it was Yom Kippur. Glenn and Steve had not received a Jewish education, but Greenberg would take his sons someplace special on Yom Kippur 1959. It was not to a synagogue. Greenberg could not return to the traditions of his immigrant family. Instead, they went to the Hayden Planetarium, spending two to three hours there.

Undoubtedly, in this unconventional observance of the sacred day, father and sons encountered some of the central concerns of religion – awe at the vastness of creation, consideration of the moral significance of the universe and the place of humanity within something much larger

than itself. Steve observed of his father on Yom Kippur 1959, “He took us someplace that was obviously special. Someplace that maybe represented the vast unknown; someplace he hadn’t been to for a long, long time. It was for him a reaching back to something, but he couldn’t go all the way.” Greenberg undoubtedly thought of another Yom Kippur, 25 years before in 1934, when his decision as a young baseball player concerning observance of the High Holidays attracted national attention.

Despite a career abbreviated by four-and-one-half years of World War II military service, Greenberg, a 6’4” first baseman-outfielder, ranks as one baseball’s greatest sluggers and stands with pitcher Sandy Koufax, a fellow Hall of Famer, atop the list of the game’s most iconic Jewish players. In the equivalent of nine-and-one-half seasons, Greenberg hit 331 home runs, accumulated 1,274 runs batted in, averaged .313, four times led the American League in both home runs and runs batted in, won two Most Valuable Player awards, and led his team to four pennants. Until 1998, no right-handed batter exceeded Greenberg’s 1938

season total of 58 home runs. His .605 career slugging percentage is exceeded by only five other players.

In contrast to Koufax, whose 1961-66 pitching peak coincided with a period of general acceptance of Jews in America, Greenberg’s 1933-40 prime seasons took place amidst resurgent domestic antisemitism, which was fueled by victims of the Great Depression who blamed hard times on the Jews and isolationists who believed that Jews sought to provoke a war between Nazi Germany and the United States. Moreover, Greenberg played for the Tigers, who shared a Detroit home with Henry Ford and Father Charles Coughlin, arguably America’s two most notorious antisemites. Automobile manufacturer Ford republished the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion,” a venerable forgery purporting to document a Jewish conspiracy to control international finance and world government. Coughlin, a Catholic priest with a national radio show, railed against Jewish dominance of the American economy, manipulation of politics and support of Communism. During the 1934 baseball season, public attention to Greenberg’s Jewishness peaked both amongst co-religionists and Gentile Americans.

The Tigers entered September 1934 battling for the American League pennant for the first time since 1909, and the 23-year-old Greenberg, the team’s top slugger, was crucial to Detroit’s chances. With the automobile industry devastated by the Great Depression, baseball provided Detroit with one of its few strong bonds of social cohesion. When Greenberg indicated that he might not play in Detroit’s September 10 home game against the Boston Red Sox because it conflicted with Rosh Hashanah, the press retorted that the Tigers needed Greenberg on the playing field more than even during this crucial phase of the pennant race. Detroit sportswriters emphasized Greenberg’s obligation to his teammates and to the fans. In response to queries, Detroit Rabbi Leo Franklin provided a statement that heightened the pressure on Greenberg: “In the Jewish faith, there is no power granted to the rabbi to give dispensation to anyone for doing anything, which reads contrary to his own conscientious convictions – indeed, we insist upon the doctrine of personal responsibility. In such a case as this, Mr. Greenberg, who is a conscientious Jew, must decide for himself whether he ought to play or not.”

While Detroit boosters asserted that Greenberg had a civic duty to play baseball on September 10, there were fellow Jews who reminded him that his failure to observe Rosh Hashanah would make it more difficult for co-religionists to absent themselves from school or work on the High Holidays. A great internal struggle raged within an anguished Greenberg between synagogue and ballfield. On *erev* Rosh Hashanah, he sleeplessly tossed and turned throughout the night. Come the morning of September 10, Greenberg attended Rosh Hashanah services at Detroit’s Sharrey Zedek synagogue. As afternoon approached, Greenberg, in something of a daze and half expecting divine retribution, arrived at Navin Field and took his position at first base. The Tigers defeated the Red Sox 2-1 in this crucial game. The Tiger scoring came as a result of two home runs, both by Greenberg. Following the game, Greenberg returned to Rosh Hashanah services at the Sharrey Zedek synagogue.

Greenberg made a different decision on Yom Kippur. He did not play on September 19, 1934, and attended Yom Kippur services. Without Greenberg, the Tigers lost to the New York Yankees 5-2. The folk poet Edgar Guest wrote: “Came Yom Kippur – holy fast day worldwide over to the Jew, / And Hank Greenberg to his teaching and the old tradition true / Spent the day among his people and he didn’t come to play.”

From rival dugouts and hostile fans, Greenberg heard many vile antisemitic slurs. At times, Greenberg responded with clenched fists, more commonly with his bat, saying, “I came to feel that if I, as a Jew, hit a home run, I was hitting one against Hitler.”

Although Greenberg missed most of the 1941 season due to pre-war military service, he re-enlisted the day after Pearl Harbor. There was a story, perhaps apocryphal, told in Jewish neighborhoods: “A big fellow is weaving his way around a World War II embarkation point, saying in a loud voice, ‘Is there anybody here named Ginsberg or Goldberg: I’ll kick the living daylights out of him.’ A soldier stands up and says, ‘My name’s Hank Greenberg, buddy.’ The drunk looks him up and down and replied, ‘I didn’t say Greenberg. I said Ginsberg or Goldberg.’”

During much of his adult life, Hank Greenberg felt an ambivalence about Judaism. Some of it derived from the pressure he felt as a young man thrust into the unwanted position of standard bearer for American Jewry, a status that reached its apogee in the controversy surrounding his 1934 High Holiday observance. Neither theology nor the synagogue played a significant role in Greenberg’s life in the years that followed. However, Greenberg expressed his Jewish identity in other ways – battling against antisemitism, contributing to Jewish charities and organizations, supporting Israel and boosting other Jewish ballplayers. See “Dilemma” on page 8




We wish you  
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and  
sweet new year!  
Sima & Neil Auerbach

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Michael & Emily Feuer  
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Chana Gittel, Raizel, Yaakov,  
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May peace,  
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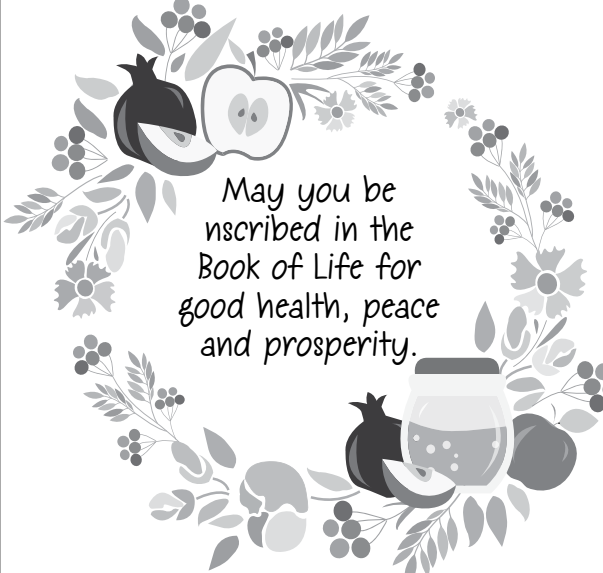


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Myra and Irving Memis  
Julie, Jared, Avi and Jonathan Shapiro  
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# Jewish resources to occupy your family during social distancing – part 20

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering online resources – educational and recreational – for those who are not allowed out of the house. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

◆ *The Forward* will present “On Lox and Life” on Tuesday, September 22, at 5 pm. Len Berk, the last Jewish lox slicer at Zabar’s, and Melissa Clark, *The New York Times* food writer and cookbook author, will offer a pre-Yom Kippur conversation about all-things-appetizing moderated by Jodi Rudoren, editor-in-chief of *The Forward*. To register, visit [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_kZKIUdj4QmqNAXfCpHzl5w](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kZKIUdj4QmqNAXfCpHzl5w).

◆ The Jewish Youth Climate Movement is offering programming in September, including a Teen Led Climate Panel and an Environmental Racism panel. For more information, visit [www.jewishyouthclimatemovement.org/calendar](http://www.jewishyouthclimatemovement.org/calendar).

◆ Hillel/Reboot is offering a variety of High Holiday programming featuring Broadway performers, Hollywood screenwriters, musicians and more. To sign up, visit <https://higherholidays.org>.

◆ HUC-JIR offers College Commons, a digital learning platform offering topical and scholarly content to congregations, schools, JCCs, Hillels and other educational institutions worldwide. For more information or to sign up for courses and programs, visit <https://collegecommonsinfo.levlearning.com>.

◆ *The Forward* will hold its first “Come As You Are Gala” on Monday, October 19, at 8:30 pm. The virtual event will include appearances from actress Mayim Bialik, comedian Avi Liberman and more. For more information, contact Roberta Caplan at 212-453-9446 or [caplan@forward.com](mailto:caplan@forward.com).

◆ Jewish Women’s Archive picked the books for the 2020-21 year of its Book Club. To view the list, visit <https://jwa.org/programs/bookclub/bookshelf>. For additional information about the Book Club, visit <https://jwa.org/programs/bookclub>.

◆ Chabad.org is offering an on-demand course called “How to Blow the Shofar: The Sound and the Spirit.” The course offers “practical tips and mystical insights” into the shofar. For more information, visit [www.chabad.org/multimedia/course\\_cdo/aid/4848963/jewish/The-Sound-and-the-Spirit.htm](http://www.chabad.org/multimedia/course_cdo/aid/4848963/jewish/The-Sound-and-the-Spirit.htm).

◆ The Jewish National Fund will hold a virtual “Fall Reading Series” hosted by Steven Shalowitz: Wednesday, September 23, at 8 pm, “Becoming Israeli: The Hysterical, Inspiring and Challenging Sides of Making *Aliyah*” by Akiva Gersh; Wednesday, October 28, at 8 pm, “Zionism: The Concise History” by Alex Ryvchin; and Wednesday, November 18, at 8 pm, “The Foods of Israel Today: More than 300 Recipes – and Memories – Reflecting Israel’s Past and Present Through Its Many Cuisines” by Joan Nathan. For more information or to register, visit [www.jnf.org/events-landing-pages/fall-reading-series](http://www.jnf.org/events-landing-pages/fall-reading-series).

◆ The interfaith group 18Doors offers a variety of virtual events connected to the High Holiday season. Events include a New Year’s seder and a mini-retreat. For more information or to register, visit <https://18doors.org/event/>.

◆ Jewish National Fund Arts and Entertainment presents “The Imagination Series” presented by Lee and Susan Berk. The first virtual performance will be by pianist Tamir Hendelman on Wednesday, September 23, from 9-10 pm. For more information or to register, visit [www.jnf.org/events-landing-pages/the-imagination-series](http://www.jnf.org/events-landing-pages/the-imagination-series).

See “Resources” on page 14

## On the Jewish food scene Holiday meals

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

“You mean you’re not even having chicken?” That was the cry of a family friend almost 20 years ago after learning we were not having a typical Rosh Hashanah-style dinner. For many people, there must be certain foods on the table or it’s just not a holiday. Before Passover this year, a friend asked her children what they absolutely needed to make their seder festive since there would be no guests due to the pandemic. Her children requested *everything* they normally eat, except for the homemade gefilte fish.

The reason our family friend was so distressed is that my mom and I were having a very atypical holiday meal: I believe that year it was a health-food pizza. There were several reasons for that. Pizza actually did feel festive to us. I can’t remember if my mom was already a vegetarian, but neither of us had the energy to cook a large, heavy meal. Plus, I’d gotten tired of having indigestion during the evening service. While I’ve enjoyed larger, fancier meals at friends’ homes over the years, you won’t find me making that type of meal for myself.

Is there actually a religious requirement to eat a large meal? Not exactly. We are required to rejoice on the holidays, as Deuteronomy 15:14 says, “And you shall rejoice in your Festival – you, and your son and your daughter and your manservant and your maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the orphan, and the widow, who are within your cities.” While that verse specifically refers to Sukkot, it’s come to mean we should rejoice during all festivals. That is understood to mean we should have special meal.

Why would a special meal help us rejoice? We need to remember that, in the past, food was not as plentiful as it is today. Few people ate meat every day or even every week, so meat was considered the perfect food for a celebration. Some families had more than one type of meat at a meal. (I remember at least two types – beef and chicken, at a minimum – sometimes in more than one format at my family’s gatherings when I was a child.) For Ashkenazic Jews, there also had to be bread, even if it was not part of

any specific dish. In fact, my grandfather – my mother’s father – expected there to be bread at every meal, no matter how many other forms of carbohydrates were on the table. It was simply not a meal otherwise.

For personal health reasons, I’ve moved away from those meat-based heavy meals. But that doesn’t mean I don’t plan to have a festive meal, even if others wouldn’t call it one. And sometimes the food matters less than the circumstances. Last Rosh Hashanah, my mother was in a rehabilitation center and I wanted to spend time with her before services. What I ate seemed less important than our being together. This year, I know I’m going to have to plan more carefully because the holidays will be very different due to the pandemic. But rejoicing should be less about the food we eat than an appreciation of having survived another year, something we should not take for granted. Whatever you choose to eat, may you celebrate the New Year with joy. *Shanah tovah*.

## New Year Greetings

Have a sweet, happy & healthy New Year!




Bernard & Ilana Segal

Wishing All a Sweet New Year!



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As we celebrate a New Year, we wish the entire community Shana Tovah.




Rabbi Barry, Jill, Alexander, Sarah & Zachary Baron

Have a sweet, happy & healthy New Year!



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Shana Tovah



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May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for good health, peace and prosperity.



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L'Shanah Tovah

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L'Shanah Tovah

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לשנה טובה תכתבו

Wishing you and your family a very Happy New Year. May you be blessed with life, health, prosperity and nachat.

Rabbi Zev and Judy Silber and family.



Off the Shelf

# Morality versus Divine command

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

“Thou shalt not murder” is one of the Ten Commandments. Yet, twice a year – during Rosh Hashanah and Shabbat Vayera – Jews read the *Akedah*, the binding of Isaac, which could also be called “the attempted murder of Isaac.” God tests Abraham by commanding him to sacrifice his son. Is obeying this command immoral or the ultimate sign of faith? Aaron Koller explores this question in his fascinating and complex “Unbinding Isaac: The Significance of the Akedah for Modern Jewish Thought” (The Jewish Publication Society).

Koller notes the dilemma underlying the story: “The core claim, put as concisely as possible, is that the biblical God would like to want child sacrifice – because it is in fact a remarkable display of devotion – but *more* does not want child sacrifice, because it would violate the autonomy

## Dilemma. . . Continued from page 6

In the years prior to his 1986 death at age 75, Greenberg made peace with having served as a hero to other Jews during a time of ascendant antisemitism. Greenberg came to understand what he meant to a generation of young Jews who came of age during the virulent anti-Jewish assaults of the 1930s and who, upon reaching maturity, joined other Americans in the war against Hitler: “When I was playing, I used to resent being singled out as a Jewish ballplayer. I wanted to be known as a great ballplayer period. I’m not sure why or when I changed, because I’m still not a particularly religious person. Lately, though, I find myself wanting to be remembered not only a great ballplayer, but even more as a great Jewish ballplayer.”

*Bill Simons is a professor of history at SUNY Oneonta, whose course offerings include sport and ethnic 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.*

of the children.” According to Koller, many people think of the trial as one between God and Abraham. Yet, they forget there is a third person present – the one for whom this is a life and death matter – and that person is Isaac. Koller uses the story to discuss individual faith and whether faith should ever triumph over a person’s moral compass.

Koller offers Jewish interpretations of the *Akedah* from the ancient rabbis to poetry written in contemporary times. He includes both those who see the story as a true test and those who condemn God for making the request. Some believe Abraham is a shining example of faith. Others rebel against the story, claiming that Abraham failed the test by not arguing with God. The author then explores the interpretation of Soren Kierkegaard, a 19<sup>th</sup> century philosopher. Although not Jewish, Kierkegaard’s writings have influenced commentators of all faiths. In his writing, he calls Abraham a knight of faith – someone willing to sacrifice his son even though he loves him: “The love [Abraham] had for his son is part and parcel of the sacrifice. Without that love, Abraham becomes cold, a killer in the name of God. With that love of Isaac burning hot, he is Our Father, the knight of faith and the bearer of the ultimate sacrifice.” Koller sees this as a very Christian interpretation in that Abraham steps outside morality, the rules and laws that govern Judaism. Even so, many Jewish philosophers have adsorbed Kierkegaard’s ideas, even if they don’t always directly address it in their work.

Two major Jewish thinkers who were influenced by Kierkegaard are Yeshayahu Leibowitz and Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik. Koller notes that they both put a Jewish spin on Kierkegaard’s ideas. Leibowitz sees the *Akedah* as the story of a conflict between religion and ethics. He believes that “true devotion to God takes no heed of human considerations, even moral judgements.” Koller has a problem with this interpretation because it separates religion and morality, and makes the *Akedah* the center of all Jewish action. Soloveitchik believes no one can be certain redemption will

follow any human action. He connects the *Akedah* to prayer and suggests that praying three time a day reflects Abraham’s actions. His act of prayer is the act of someone alone, though, someone who can only connect to God when alone. Keller sees this interpretation as incorrect because it doesn’t take into consideration that a third individual is affected by this action: the philosopher concentrates on Abraham and God, while ignoring the bodily harm that Isaac faced.

Koller also addresses what he sees as the major flaws in Kierkegaard’s thought. One problem is that the role of Isaac in the story – or as Koller sees it “the erasure of Isaac from the narrative” – is not addressed by the philosopher. Kierkegaard’s ideas can lead to what Koller calls “radical subjectivity,” something that allows each person to decide their own morality. But Koller thinks that will lead to chaos. As the author notes, “Ethics, divorced from religion, is now free to go in dangerous and indeed horrifying directions.” He also believes that religion – at least Judaism – is not a solitary activity; it is a covenantal one and its rules help people understand how to behave in a moral manner. In addition, Koller doesn’t think that God and ethics can be separated: “The ethical cannot be purposely suspended because God aspires to the ethical.” That is what makes the story so difficult to interpret, but the author believes that any Jewish interpretation needs to take at this idea seriously. In the end, he suggests a Jewish ethical teaching based on the *Akedah*: “As much as it is enticing to do so, one person’s religious fulfillment cannot come through harm to another.”

It’s impossible to do justice to “Unbinding Isaac” in a short review because this challenging work is so rich with differing interpretations. That means that even those who are familiar with the commentary on the story may still find a great deal to ponder. Anyone looking to seriously grapple with one of the most difficult stories in the Bible should read “Unbinding Isaac.” It offers an amazing amount of food for thought.



May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for good health, peace, and prosperity.

**Arieh Ullmann & Rhonda Levine**

L'shanah  
Tovah  
Tikatevu

**L'SHANAH TOVAH**

**HOWARD FISHER AND  
CAREN FISHER, OF  
BLESSED MEMORY**

L'SHANAH TOVAH

**Suzanne Holwitt and Family**

Happy New Year!

**Francine Stein & Family**

Have a sweet and happy New Year!

**Rebecca and Jeff Kahn**

שנה טובה  
Happy New Year

May this be a year of finding meaning, inspiration and well-being as we rise to new challenges and opportunities!

**Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell & Family**

Happy & Healthy New Year to all our friends and family!

**Harold & Toby Kohn and Family**

Happy Rosh Hashanah!

**Linda & Dennis Robi and Family**

לשנה טובה תכתבו

MAY YOU BE INSCRIBED FOR A GOOD YEAR

**Susan and Ben Kasper**

L'SHANAH TOVAH

**Rhona & Richard Esserman**

May you be inscribed in the Book of Life for good health, peace, and prosperity.

**Ann C. Brilliant**

Happy Rosh Hashanah!

**Olwen and Rick Searles**

# TikTok announces “zero tolerance” for antisemitism, hate speech, bigotry

By Jackson Richman

(JNS) – The video-sharing social-networking service TikTok has expressed that it has “a zero tolerance stance” on accounts linked to antisemitism and other forms of bigotry. “We have a zero tolerance stance on organized hate groups and those associated with them, like accounts that spread or are linked to white supremacy or nationalism, male supremacy, antisemitism and other hate-based ideologies,” said the company in an August 20 blog post on its website.

“In addition, we remove race-based harassment and the denial of violent tragedies, such as the Holocaust and slavery,” continued TikTok. “We may also take off-platform behavior into consideration as we establish our policies, such as an account belonging to the leader of a known hate group, to protect people against harm.”

The blog post was published six days before the museum at the former Nazi

concentration and extermination camp Auschwitz called a trend on TikTok in which young people portray themselves as victims of the Holocaust as “hurtful and offensive.”

In a statement to JNS on September 3, a TikTok spokesperson said that the platform “blocked the #holocaustchallenge earlier this week to discourage people from participating. We do not condone content like this and are redirecting searches for it to our Community Guidelines to further educate users about our policies and the supportive, inclusive community we are working to foster on TikTok.”

On August 31, a TikTok video surfaced of U.S. Army Second Lt. Nathan Freihof, an influencer on the video-sharing social-networking service with almost three million followers, making a Holocaust joke. “What’s a Jewish person’s favorite Pokémon character?” asks Freihof, followed by a laugh. “Ash,” he answers, referring to Ash Ketchum, the



TikTok image (Photo courtesy of Pixabay)

protagonist in the anime, and the remains of Jews who were gassed and cremated during the Holocaust in death and concentration camps. “If you get offended, get the f\*\*\* out because it’s a joke,” adds Freihof.

The U.S. Army is investigating the matter, saying the “statement made in the video is completely inconsistent” with its values.

Counter Extremism Project senior research analyst Josh Lipowsky told JNS that while social-media companies such as TikTok have been taking steps to combat bigotry, more needs to be done. He said that TikTok’s “comprehensive and specific hate-speech policies... are a step in the right direction for social media,” as “Twitter, Facebook and other platforms have also

instituted policies forbidding hate speech and symbols based on race, religion, sex, and other protected criteria.

“These policies are all great on paper, but we need to see the tech companies proactively enforcing [them] to protect their users,” he stressed. “TikTok and other social-media companies have to do more than just pay lip service to fighting extremism on their platforms. They need to quickly and uniformly enforce their policies to protect against the abuse of their platforms. These are private platforms and the companies that own them have a responsibility to the public to ensure that extremists are not abusing their sites.”

Lipowsky said “some may argue that this is an infringement of free speech, but the fact is these are private companies that have every legal right to limit how their services are used.”

Furthermore, he added, “they have the moral responsibility to ensure that their platforms are not being subverted for the promulgation of hate speech. If extremists manipulate these services into platforms for hate and recruitment to extremist ideologies, then the tech companies are ultimately responsible for those consequences.”

## Israeli health minister urges public to refrain from High Holiday gatherings

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Israeli Health Minister Yuli Edelstein on August 26 urged the public to refrain from large family gatherings during the upcoming High Holidays, which begin on September 18.

During a press briefing at the inauguration ceremony of the ministry’s new Coronavirus Control Center at Airport City in Lod, Edelstein said: “Despite the understanding for the needs of many people, this year our responsibility is not to gather in large groups around the family holiday table.

“If we all act responsibly and obey Health Ministry guidelines, I am confident that we can overcome the unknown and emerge victorious without damaging the delicate fabric of life in Israel, the needs of society and the economy,” said the health minister.

Israeli coronavirus project coordinator Ronni Gamzu, who also spoke at the briefing, rebuffed criticism of his handling of the pandemic by politicians, among them coalition chairman Miki Zohar, a member of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s Likud Party. “It’s not certain that all politicians and MKs understand what we are doing here and what path we have taken,” he said.

“The whole world is now saying ‘maybe we’ll manage [the second wave] without closures.’ But this comes with a price; it’s complex,” Gamzu added.

The inauguration of the new Coronavirus Control Center coincided with a Health Ministry report on August 26 that the new daily number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Israel has again reached approximately See “Refrain” on page 10

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# Israeli researchers study larger-than-average jellyfish in Mediterranean

By JNS staff

(JNS) – As a “huge” swarm of jellyfish appeared off the coast of Haifa, researchers at the University of Haifa’s Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences took the opportunity to get up close and personal with Israel’s all-too-familiar summer marine animals. And this year, they’re larger than ever.

“Overall, this is the summer bloom of jellyfish that we anticipate, but there’s a slight difference in the size of jellyfish – on average, they’re bigger this year than in other years,” said Professor Dror Angel. “We had a very rainy winter this year, and the runoff that reached the sea provided a lot of nutrients that contributed to the formation of the jellyfish bloom,” he explained. “The nutrients feed the algae, the algae bloom and are eaten by small plankton herbivores, and these are then eaten by the jellyfish.”

Could increases in the size of the jellyfish have anything to do with the coronavirus pandemic and the decrease in human presence in the country’s water and along its shores? According to Angel, that’s unlikely. “I don’t think the coronavirus has anything to do with the jellyfish,” replied the professor. “I think nature is the bigger player. We’re looking at cues like changes in temperature, as these probably play a role in determining when jellyfish appear. Rainy winters or more arid winters could determine the size of the bloom the following summer.

“We haven’t identified human-driven factors, like pollution, which could also be affecting the blooms,” he continued. “At the moment, we think natural phenomena have more of an impact than human effects.”

Situated at the doorstep of the Mediterranean Sea, the university’s school of marine sciences increasingly pursues



A swarm of jellyfish along Israel’s Mediterranean coast is being studied by researchers at the University of Haifa. (Photo by Hagai Nativ)

groundbreaking maritime research with practical applications. Regarding its research on jellyfish, Angel went on to explain: “We’re trying to understand the ecology of the various jellyfish in our coastal waters – when the blooms appear, why are they bigger or smaller in some years, and so on. We’re also looking for missing evidence in the life cycle of the nomad jellyfish – where are certain life stages found, what eats the jellyfish and what do the jellyfish eat, how they interact with the marine system. And we are exploring the use of jellyfish as a means to reduce microplastic pollution in the ocean.”

Said Angel, “One of the outstanding observations over the past decade is that we keep finding what we consider new jellyfish in our coastal waters. Different, intriguing species keep appearing. Although we consider them new, it’s possible that they’ve been around, and we just didn’t see them until they became more abundant. It seems that the more you look, the more you see.”



A swarm of jellyfish along Israel’s Mediterranean coast is being studied by researchers at the University of Haifa. (Photo by Hagai Nativ)

## From Hadera to Ashdod: Daily and seasonal commutes of Israel’s sharks

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Israel’s sharks travel about 50 kilometers (about 30 miles) between human-altered habitats along the shores of Hadera and Ashdod from season to season in a single-day commute, reveals research from the University of Haifa’s Leon H. Charney School of Marine Sciences.

Scientists at the University of Haifa’s Morris Kahn Marine Research Station have tagged a total of 62 sandbar and dusky sharks and taken fin-clip, muscle and blood samples to understand their biology. In addition, they have been monitoring their movement through satellite tagging and acoustic telemetry.

According to Eyal Bigal, manager of the station’s Apex Predator Laboratory led by Aviad Scheinin, it’s surprising to have such a high number of sharks in the area considering that the desert conditions of the water lower primary productivity.

“This doesn’t happen anywhere else,” said Bigal. “There’s something about the water off Israel’s coast that attracts apex predators that are, in the case of sharks, already endangered in the Mediterranean. Here, we see large numbers of sharks in human-altered habitats like power stations, gas platforms and fish cages. They’re not anywhere in the open sea.”

Describing the sharks’ seasonal movements, Bigal said that “for some of the sharks that we tagged in Hadera, on the same day they leave that city they go to the other hotspot in Ashdod, even if it’s quite far away. A few of our sharks disappeared from Hadera, and on the same day, they showed up at the fish cages in Ashdod just a few hours



Sharks have increasingly made their home along Israel’s shores, August 2020. (Photo by Hagai Nativ, University of Haifa’s Morris Kahn Marine Research Station)

later. Then they stayed there for a few months and moved back to Hadera, so they hopped between hotspots. And the same sharks are coming back every year.”

Researchers initially believed the sharks remained in Hadera from December to March, but this year discovered that the sharks stayed along Israel’s shores until June. “During this season, they don’t necessarily stay in Hadera,” said Bigal. “They sometimes go in and out every single day.

See “Sharks” on page 16



Outside of the sandbar and dusky sharks being tracked along Israel’s shores, researchers are seeing fewer sharks in the greater region this year, including blue sharks, mako sharks and thresher sharks, August 2020. (Photo by Hagai Nativ, University of Haifa’s Morris Kahn Marine Research Station)

## Refrain. . . . Continued from page 9

2,000. According to Health Ministry data, as of August 26, Israel had recorded 107,341 confirmed coronavirus cases, among them 20,581 active ones, with 855 patients hospitalized – 430 in serious condition, 161 in moderate condition and 118 on ventilators. The national death toll stood at 867.

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“And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”  
 Isaiah 2, IV

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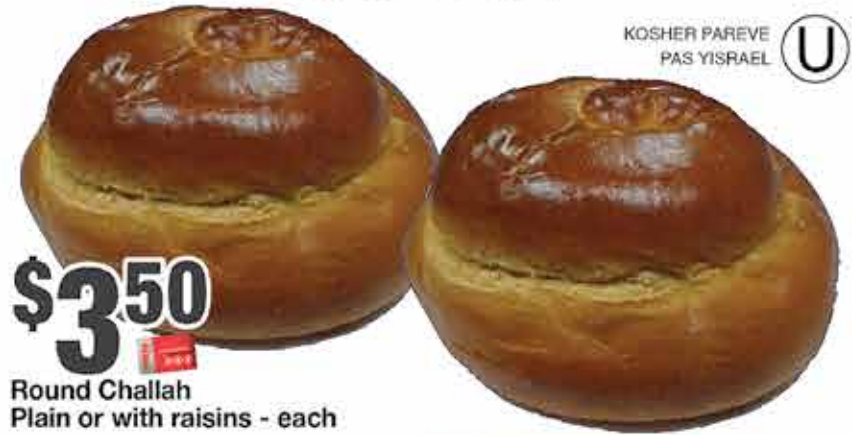
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# Family-pleasing menus for the High Holidays

By Vicki GJ PR, LLC

(BAYONNE, NJ)– The folks at KAYCO (a family of brands that includes Manischewitz, Gefen, Dorot Gardens, Galilee’s Delicacy and more) and Kosher.com are longtime fans of healthy, multi-cultural meals that are as easy to make as they are delicious. And when the High Holidays approach, their staff are always inspired to find some fabulous, family-friendly new dishes for an unforgettable Rosh Hashanah table.

Here are some intriguing options for welcoming the New Year – 5781 on the Jewish calendar, which this year begins at sundown on Friday, September 18. Some are classics with an updated spin; others will take you to surprising gastronomic heights. Super easy and right on

trend, these are just some of the current favorites from the Rosh Hashanah recipe collection at [www.kosher.com/recipes/rosh-hashanah](http://www.kosher.com/recipes/rosh-hashanah).

## Tzimmes

Recipe by Ronnie Fein for Kosher.com (reprinted by permission from Kosher.com).

- 1 pound medium carrots
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ¼ cup honey (or date honey)
- 3 scallions, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. fresh orange peel, grated
- 1 tsp. fresh ginger, finely chopped or 1 cube frozen ginger
- Salt, to taste
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste

- 1 cup golden raisins
- ½ cup dates, chopped
- 2 Tbsp. fresh mint, chopped

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Peel the carrots, trim the ends and slice the carrots into one-fourth inch rounds. Place the carrots on the prepared baking sheet.

Heat the vegetable oil and honey together over low heat, briefly, until the thick honey has softened a bit and is easy to combine with the vegetable oil (about one minute). Pour the honey mixture over the carrots.

Sprinkle the scallions, orange peel and ginger on top, and toss the ingredients to coat the carrots completely. Sprinkle with salt and black pepper to taste. Roast for 10 minutes.

Add the raisins and dates to the pan, toss the ingredients and roast for another 10-12 minutes, tossing once or twice, or until the carrots are tender and lightly crispy. Spoon the mixture into a serving bowl and sprinkle with mint.



Tzimmes (Photo provided by kosher.com)

## Citrus Teriyaki Salmon

Reprinted by permission from Kosher.com.

- 3 Tbsp. orange juice
- 2 Tbsp. light soy sauce
- 1 Tbsp. rice vinegar or other fruity vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. honey
- 2 tsp. ground fresh ginger or the equivalent dried ginger
- 1 tsp. minced garlic or 1 cube frozen garlic
- 4 salmon fillets, about 1 inch thick

Preheat oven to 450°F. Combine first six ingredients in an eight-inch square baking dish, stirring well.

Add fish to dish; spoon sauce over fish. Bake for 15-20 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork, basting occasionally.



Citrus Teriyaki Salmon (Photography and styling by Chavi Feldman)

## Creamy Carrot Soup

Recipe reprinted with permission from Kosher.com

- 3 cups baby carrots
- 2 cups water
- 1 bay leaf (optional)
- 1 clove garlic, crushed or 1 cube frozen garlic
- 1 Tbsp. flour
- 2 cups low-fat milk or unflavored soy milk
- Dash of ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp. butter or margarine
- 1 tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. fresh lemon juice

Combine carrots, water, bay leaf, if using, and garlic in a medium-sized pot. Bring to a boil.

Reduce heat, cover, and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove and discard bay leaf. Using a hand blender or food processor, blend carrot mixture until smooth.

In a soup pot, place flour; gradually add milk or soy milk, stirring until well blended. Stir in pureed carrots and nutmeg. Bring to a boil.

Remove from heat and stir in butter or margarine, salt and lemon juice.



Creamy Carrot Soup (Photo provided by kosher.com)

## Pomegranate Braised Brisket

Excerpted from “Peas Love and Carrots” by Danielle Renov. Copyright 2020 by ArtScroll Mesorah Publications, photos by Moshe Wulliger. Reproduced with permission of the copyright holder. All rights reserved.

- 1 (3- to 3½ lb./1½ kg.) second-cut brisket

- Rub**
- 3 Tbsp. sugar
  - 1 Tbsp. kosher salt
  - 1 Tbsp. sumac
  - 1 Tbsp. ground mustard powder
  - 1 Tbsp. paprika
  - 1 Tbsp. garlic powder
  - 1 tsp. cracked black pepper
  - 1 tsp. cayenne pepper

- Meat**
- 2 Tbsp. canola oil
  - 3 medium onions, halved and sliced
  - 1 tsp. kosher salt
  - 1 tsp. coarsely ground black pepper

- 3 cloves garlic, smashed
- 1 (11-oz./330-milliliter) bottle hard apple cider
- ½ cup tomato sauce (not marinara)
- ½ cup pomegranate molasses (syrup)
- 2 cups beef broth (or 1 beef bouillon cube dissolved in 2 cups hot water)
- ¼ cup pomegranate seeds, for garnish (optional)

1. In a bowl, combine all rub ingredients. See “Menus” on page 15



Pomegranate Braised Brisket (Photo by Moshe Wulliger, from “Peas Love and Carrots” by Danielle Renov)

## New Year Greetings from these Community Institutions



**May the sound of the shofar bring peace and good health to us all!**

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**THE REPORTER GROUP**

# U.S. Surgeon General briefs Jewish leaders on best practices for High Holiday gatherings

By Faygie Holt

(JNS) – The Surgeon General of the United States, Dr. Jerome Adams, briefed Orthodox Jewish leaders on COVID-19 and best practices for High Holiday services during a virtual talk and question-and-answer session sponsored by the Orthodox Union.

“I spent a semester at Brandeis University two decades ago during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur... and I understand how important this time is for your congregation,” Adams said at the start of his remarks. He told those on the call that “you all are on the front lines” and that “people will heed your advice in ways they won’t mine as surgeon general.” Then, Adams began to outline the best ways that rabbinic leaders can ensure their congregants are safe and healthy during High Holiday services amid the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Unlike other viruses, including the common cold, Adams said people can have COVID-19 and not know it: “It’s important that your congregation understand that it’s not just about how you feel and how someone looks, but assuming everyone has the virus, and putting barriers and limiting high-risk” activities.

In the context of holiday prayer, such high-risk activities include singing and reciting prayers aloud. Emphasizing that the safest option for congregations is to be online for the holidays – “I understand the virtual option isn’t something you look to do,” Adams said, noting as a doctor he needed to say it – the surgeon general said that best option would be told hold outdoor services if possible.

If individuals must be indoors, he said, they need to wear masks at all times, remain at least six feet apart from one another, and separate times between the services to allow a room to air out and for proper cleaning to take place. He also suggested that congregations direct foot traffic with arrows or dots on the floor showing people which way to walk, and where to stand and sit.

Acknowledging that the emotional impact of remaining at home is also a vital concern, particularly for those who are accustomed to being in synagogue on the holiest days of the Jewish year, Adams said that it was important for each religious leader to evaluate things individually. “There’s not a one-size-fits-all” solution, he said. “One

congregation may have mostly older congregants or be in a location with only 1 percent positivity for the virus and another congregation with 10 percent positivity.”

Adams said his family has been worshipping online since the pandemic began, and that they look forward to “the day we can once again attend in person.”

“We just have to get through this with minimal harm” to our congregations and communities, he said. “This is not forever.”

At right: U.S. Surgeon General Jerome Adams attended a roundtable on donating plasma on July 30 at the American Red Cross-National Headquarters in Washington, DC. (Photo credit: Official White House Photo by Tia Dufour)



## New Year Greetings from these Community Institutions

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Our Best Wishes to the Community for a New Year filled with Health and Happiness



**Hillel Academy**

## Shofar: A love song

By Deborah Fineblum

(JNS) – As first-chair trumpet in the Orville Wright Junior High School band in Los Angeles in 1966, Robbie Weinger didn’t know it, but he was training his lips for their destiny: to enable their owner to become one of the world’s master *shofar* blowers.

Weinger (who now goes by Robert) and other *shofar* blowers have never been more sought-after as they are this year during the global coronavirus pandemic with so many synagogues either closed for business or accepting limited or outside seating for the High Holidays.

That’s why when Jews the world over are looking for someone to blow *shofar* for them, Weinger plans to be in Jerusalem, part of a team of *shofar*-sounders dividing up the city by neighborhood so that citizens can fulfill the commandment to hear the *shofar* blown on the Jewish New Year. Rosh Hashanah begins after sundown on September 18 and continues until sundown on September 20.


Weinger’s life has taken something of a leap. As a kid, he was not only a trumpeter, but also a self-described “Hebrew-school rebel” who grew up to be a business executive and “a secular Jew to the core.” And now? Not only is he known in Israel and beyond as “*shofar* man,” Weinger is one of the world’s tops blowers – a true *ball tekiah* who’s running a *shofar* center in the middle of the Judean Desert. See “Shofar” on page 16

**שנה טובה ואתקה**

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Robert Weinger blew two shofars. (Photo courtesy of Robert Weinger)

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Director

Denn-York Jewish Community

Wishes the Community



**Happy New Year**

# Storage center in Jerusalem dates from Kingdom of Judah

By JNS staff

(JNS) – In excavations in Jerusalem near the U.S. embassy conducted by the Israel Antiquities Authority, more than 120 of some of the largest and most important collections of seal impressions stamped on jars were discovered, revealing information into tax collection in the period of the Judean monarchs some 2,700 years ago.

The impressions were stamped with the letters “LMLK” – meaning “to the king” – and were written in ancient Hebrew script, along with the name of the ancient city in the Kingdom of Judah. Other seals are associated with private individuals and bear the name of senior officials of the Kingdom of Judah or wealthy individuals from the First Temple period.



At left: Israel Antiquities Authority excavations at the Arnona site in Jerusalem, dating back to the time of the First Temple period, are revealing the remains of lasting structures. (Photo by Yaniv Berman, Israel Antiquities Authority)

The excavations are funded by the Israel Land Authority and administered by the Moriah Jerusalem Development Corporation.

The administrative storage center dates back to the days of Kings Hezekiah and Manasseh in the eighth century to the middle of the seventh century B.C.E. The excavations revealed an unusually large structure with 120 jar handles bearing seal impressions in what is being called one of the most important archeological collections ever uncovered as part of archaeological work in Israel.



Clay figurines of women and animals found at the Armona excavation site in Jerusalem. (Photo by Yaniv Berman, Israel Antiquities Authority)

Naria Sapir and Nathan Ben-Ari, directors of the excavations on behalf of the Israel Antiquities Authority, said: “This is one of the most significant discoveries from the period of the kings in Jerusalem made in recent years. At the site we excavated, there are signs that governmental activity

managed and distributed food supplies not only for a shortage, but administered agricultural surplus amassing commodities and wealth.

“Evidence shows that at this site,” they continued, “taxes were collected in an orderly manner for agricultural produce, such as wine and olive oil.”


## Resources.....

- ◆ The Center for Jewish History will show the world premiere of the documentary “Saving the Iraqi Jewish Archives: A Journey of Identity” on Sunday, September 13, at 6 pm. There is a \$10 charge and there will be a question-and-answer period with the filmmakers. The Iraqi Jewish Archives consisted of more than 4,800 books and artifacts. Among those are the records of the last Jewish education center in Iraq – The Frank Iny School. The documentary includes personal stories of escape, how the archives were discovered and what the archives may mean to future generations to come. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/event/journey-of-identity-2020-09-13>.
- ◆ *The Jewish Week* and UJA Federation New York will hold a virtual conversation with Natan Sharansky and Gil Troy, authors of the new book “Never Alone: Prison, Politics, and My People” on Monday, September

- 14, at 6 pm. To register, visit [www.ujafedny.org/event/view/community-sharansky](http://www.ujafedny.org/event/view/community-sharansky).
- ◆ The Jewish Publication Society will hold four webinars this fall: September 15, Aaron Koller and Shai Held, “Is Abraham the Lonely Man of Faith?”; October 12, Dan Ornstein and Pamela Barmash, “Cain and Abel – In the Room Where it Happened”; October 21, Jeff Salkin, Amy Scheinerman and Barry Schwartz, “Abraham’s Astonishing Legacy”; and October 26, Elliott Rabin, Michael Carasik and Malka Simkovich, “Abraham through the Ages.” All sessions will be held 7:30-8:30 pm via Zoom. To register, e-mail [office@jps.org](mailto:office@jps.org) specifying which program and an invitation will be sent.
- ◆ The Museum of the Jewish People at Beit Hatfutsot is offering online tours of the museum. Six different tours are available and can be conducted in English. For more information, visit [www.bh.org.il/live-online-tour-beit-hatfutsot](http://www.bh.org.il/live-online-tour-beit-hatfutsot).

- ◆ The Technion in Israel will hold “#WomenSupportingWomen: From Shattering Glass Ceilings to Purifying Wastewater” with Professor Ayelet Fishman and Assistant Professor Adi Radian on Tuesday, September 15, at noon. Merry Sherman, Ph.D., will moderate the webinar. To register, visit [https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/2215968161651/WN\\_wokSTvmmRTm7qKYtTqwKCQ](https://zoom.us/join/zoom/register/2215968161651/WN_wokSTvmmRTm7qKYtTqwKCQ).
- ◆ The Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage, a museum of diversity and tolerance, offers a “Stop the Hate Learning Portal” at [learn.maltzmuseum.org](http://learn.maltzmuseum.org). The portal provides online access to the museum’s anti-bias education content, where students can take the new “Stop the Hate” digital tour. The site also includes resources for teachers.
- ◆ Ritualwell will hold a webinar titled “Return to Self through the Writings of Ety Hillelsum: A Five-Day Intensive” Monday-Friday, September 21-25, from noon-1 pm. The cost of the five sessions is \$180. The intensive will feature the spiritual practices inspired by the writings of Ety Hillelsum. Instead of focusing on the ways in which people have “missed the mark” this year, it will explore how people can come closer to their inner voices and direct connection to God. There will be meditation, writing exercises, personal prayer and discussion. All are welcome regardless of religious background. For more information or to register, visit [www.ritualwell.org/return-self-through-writings-etty-hillelsum-five-day-intensive](http://www.ritualwell.org/return-self-through-writings-etty-hillelsum-five-day-intensive).
- ◆ The National Yiddish Theater Folksbiene continues to hold events at <https://nytf.org/live>. September events include Magda Fishman’s concert “A Sweet New Year”

- Continued from page 7
- on Wednesday, September 16, at 1 pm, and Budd Mishkin interview of comedian Robert Klein on Wednesday, September 23, at 1 pm. Past concerts, interviews and events can also be seen on the same page.
- ◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the program “Conscious History: Polish Jewish Historians before the Holocaust” live on Zoom on Tuesday, September 22, at 4 pm. Natalia Aleksium and Samuel Kassow will discuss the legacies of Jewish historians before the Holocaust who wrote both academic and popular history for their community, and engaged in creating a sense of Polish-Jewish belonging, while also fighting for their rights as an ethnic minority. For more information or to register, visit <https://conscioushistory.bpt.me>.
- ◆ The Jewish National Fund will hold a Virtual National Conference from Sunday-Friday, October 18-23. There is a cost to attend. To learn more about the conference, visit <https://www.jnf.org/visit-israel/tours/virtual-national-conference/virtual-national-conference-2020-schedule>.
- ◆ Ritualwell will hold “Building a Shelter of Peace: A Multifaith Poetry Workshop Series” on Sundays, October 4, 11, 18 and 25, from 2-4 pm. The cost of the four sessions is \$144. Four writers of different faith traditions will offer instruction. Participants will be encouraged to try different writing exercises and connect with each other through shared poetry. People of all backgrounds and levels of experience are welcome. For more information or to register, visit [www.ritualwell.org/building-shelter-peace-multifaith-poetry-workshop-series](http://www.ritualwell.org/building-shelter-peace-multifaith-poetry-workshop-series).
- For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, [www.thereportergr.org](http://www.thereportergr.org).




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HAPPY ROSH HASHANAH



# Jewish communal institutions jump hurdles to meet social needs during corona, economic crisis

By Faygie Holt

(JNS) – In the first few weeks of the global pandemic, the Jewish Family Service and Children’s Center Service of Passaic-Clifton, a regional JFS organization in New Jersey, saw an immediate increase in requests for food aid, especially as the Passover holiday approached. By the summer, staff had welcomed more than 145 new clients in need of services – everything from counseling, job assistance, financial aid and food from their food bank.

Across the country, the Jewish Family Service of Los

Angeles anticipated similar needs, though given the size of its population on a much larger scale. It launched a COVID-19 emergency fund-raiser in March, bringing in \$2 million in three months, while its needs rose astronomically in same time frame. Its SOVA Food Pantry in the San Fernando Valley alone saw an increase in demand of nearly 50 percent.

Ask nearly any Jewish nonprofit in the United States these days and administrators will likely tell a similar story: The needs are expansive, the costs of services are rising, and yet they are determined to help as best they can with limited resources in the midst of a global pandemic and economic downturn.

“Jewish human-service agencies have seen marked increases in requests for emergency financial assistance, food assistance, mental-health counseling and employment services—all related to the continuing impact of COVID-19, the related economic fallout, the continued uncertainties and the lasting emotional impact,” said Reuben Rotman, president and CEO of the Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies, which includes many Jewish Family Service and Jewish vocational-service organizations. “Agencies have increased staffing to address these areas and continue to seek funds to ensure continued and increased service delivery.”

According to Jacob Solomon, president and CEO of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, the pandemic “has affected every aspect of communal life and individual life. The primary concern is for people who are the most vulnerable, and from the beginning, our communal priority was on social-service needs: nutrition, isolation, access to our services.”

He noted that the number of people utilizing the Jewish community’s food bank went from 300 to more than 500, while the number of people needing home-delivery of kosher meals went from 500 to 800.

“We have given out \$4 million in extra grants and loans,



Volunteers handed out food at a kosher drive-by distribution site sponsored by the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, Feeding South Florida, Jewish Community Services of South Florida and Temple Emanuel in July. (Photo courtesy of JNS)

and a lot of our organizations got the PPP [Paycheck Protection Program] loans, so it’s been a tremendous amount of assistance,” he noted, “but I feel we haven’t scratched the surface of the need we will be seeing.”

The Federation, along with partner agencies, is also hosting drive-thru kosher-food distributions. More than 1,000 families received packages of kosher meat, rolls, locally grown fruits and vegetables, and non-perishables at the event in July. Another food distribution took place in late August.

Taryn Baranowski, chief marketing officer of the Jewish Federation of Greater Houston, says it has been “challenging to figure how to manage this crisis. We’ve experienced crises before,” including severe floods resulting from hurricanes and storms that devastated neighborhoods, “but they are usually on a truncated timetable and a natural disaster. That See “Communal” on page 19

## Menus . . . . Continued from page 12

2. Rinse brisket and pat dry very well. Rub the spice mixture all over both sides of the brisket. (The spice rub makes more than you will probably need. Freeze the rest for another brisket.)

3. Place spiced brisket into a zip-top bag; refrigerate overnight. (If you’re short on time, just let spiced meat come to room temp for one hour. Then continue with the recipe.)

4. Remove from the fridge; allow brisket to come to room temperature. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

5. Heat a large Dutch oven or ovenproof pan over high heat. Add oil and brisket. Sear both sides of the meat for four to five minutes per side until nicely browned. Remove from Dutch oven; set aside.

6. To the same pot, add onions, salt and pepper. Cook for four minutes until onions are soft and translucent. Add garlic; cook for one minute.

7. Add hard cider, using a wooden spoon to stir it in and scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pan.

8. Add remaining ingredients. Bring mixture to a boil; return brisket to the Dutch oven. If you used a pan, pour the sauce and onions over the brisket.

9. Cover the pot tightly. Bake for about one and a half hours.

10. Remove from oven; turn brisket over. Return to oven. At this point, cooking time will vary based on the size of your meat. I suggest giving it another 45 minutes, no matter the size, and after that checking it every 30 minutes until it is soft and tender. Mine took three hours total for a four-pound brisket.

11. Remove from the oven and allow brisket to cool completely in the sauce. (Taking the brisket out of the sauce while it is hot will result in a dry brisket.)

12. If you want to shred the brisket, wait 45 minutes after you take it out of the oven and, while it is still warm, use two forks to shred it in the pot, where it can stay in the liquid.

13. To slice brisket, allow it to cool completely, then remove from sauce and slice against the grain. Garnish with pomegranate seeds, optional.

### Apple Bourekas with Silan-Sesame Drizzle

Recipe by Naomi Nachman for Kosher.com.

#### Bourekas

- 1 can apple pie filling
- 1 package 5-by-5-inch puff pastry squares, thawed
- Flour, for dusting surface
- 1 egg beaten with 2 tsp. water, for egg wash
- Sugar for sprinkling
- Silan Sesame Drizzle
- ½ cup sesame tahini
- 2 Tbsp. silan
- 1 tsp. confectionary sugar
- ¼-½ cup warm water, for consistency
- 1 tsp. black sesame seeds, for sprinkling



Apple Bourekas with Silan-Sesame Drizzle (Photography and styling by Jennifer Cherit)

#### Prepare the Pastry

1. Preheat oven to 400°F. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper; set aside.
2. Place thawed puff pastry on a floured surface. With a rolling pin, roll out so the pastry is an even, thin layer, about one-eighth-inch thick. Repeat with remaining squares.
3. Place a few slices of apple from the pie filling in the bottom right hand corner of each square, leaving a small border.
4. Brush egg wash onto the edges of each square, then fold the dough over, making a triangle. Use a fork to crimp the edges, stretching the dough over the fruit as needed. Just be gentle, so the pastry does not break.
5. Brush additional egg wash over bourekas; sprinkle with sugar.
6. Place bourekas onto prepared baking sheets; bake for 30 minutes, or until pastry is golden brown.
7. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

#### Prepare the Drizzle

1. In a bowl, using a fork or whisk, combine tahini, silan, confectionary sugar, and one-fourth cup warm water until it is smooth and pourable. As it sits, it will become thicker, so you can add a bit more warm water and mix until desired consistency.
2. Drizzle silan sesame mixture over bourekas. Garnish with black sesame seeds.

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**Shofar** . . . . . Continued from page 13

Weinger will tell you it all began with his personal "burning bush" encounter in 2003 on Mount Diablo (Devil Mountain) outside of San Francisco. He was 52. "That day, I felt for the first time that there was a supernal force managing my life," he says. "It brought me to my knees and I wept like a baby."

Another awakening came in 2008, when he fell deeply in love with the ancient instrument. The ram's horn was first referenced in the Torah when God used it some 3,700 years ago to call the Israelites together to hear the Ten Commandments at the foot of Mount Sinai.

By 2008, Weinger was in the *shofar* business full-time. By 2017, he had made *aliyah*.

Throughout this journey, the man will tell you that he was inspired by his father. After all, Jack Weinger was born just before Rosh Hashanah in 1917 and died exactly 100 years later on Rosh Hashanah 2017. His painting, "The Great Shofar," is now the insignia of the shop his son runs 7,567 miles from his California birthplace.

It didn't take that son long to establish Shofar So Great in Beit Hogla, a tiny sand-blown speck on the map in the shadow of the ancient town of Jericho. It was here that the Israelites entered the land and the priests blew the *shofars* and the people shouted, collapsing the city's walls.

The shop is stocked with hundreds of *shofars* in every size and shape, fashioned from the horns of kudu, gemsbok, goat and, of course, the traditional ram, many of them illustrated by Israeli artists. Visitors – be they families or groups – also get to hear Weinger share the history of the *shofar* or take workshops on the fine art of *shofar* blowing in the visitor's center.

"Robert also tells the story of his spiritual search and how it landed him in this small eclectic community – what he's doing here is attracting people to this somewhat hidden part of Israel," says tour guide Shalom Pollack who often brings groups here. "The people here are pioneers taking a dusty piece of land and making the desert bloom like our ancestors did thousands of years ago."

Of course, the pandemic has cooled off many, though not all, of the tours, and most of Weinger's sales are conducted online these days. He also reports a decided uptick since the Jewish world woke up to the fact that opportunities to hear *shofar* in synagogues will be limited, and they might need to blow *shofar* themselves for their family, friends and neighbors this year.

On the Jewish New Year, Jews not only pray to be inscribed in the proverbial "Book of Life" for a happy and (this year in particular), healthy new year, but also coronate God as king all over again and resolve to make a fresh start in the new year. And the *shofar* is an integral part of all that.

As the sound pierces the listener to the core, it's a cry of repentance on the day of



A young Robbie Weinger blowing the trumpet. (Photo courtesy of Robert Weinger)



A view of Jack Weinger's painting "The Great Shofar." (Photo courtesy of Robert Weinger)

judgment, hearkening back to the *shofar* used to call the Israelites to battle. Or, as Rabbi Yehuda Lave of Jerusalem puts it, "It's also no coincidence that it's on Rosh Hashanah that we read about the near-sacrifice of Isaac and the ram that was sacrificed in his place."

"The *shofar* is a prophetic instrument – hearing it awakens the power of Jewish history in every heart," says Weinger. "It's as if God speaks through it directly to His people and everyone who hears this sound – young and old, observant and secular – has an intense spiritual experience, of crying to God for mercy as opposed to judgment."

"I've never heard anyone blow the *shofar* like Robert," says Rabbi Hagi Ben Artzi who teaches at Bar-Ilan University in Ramat Gan, as well as a woman's seminary in Beit Hogla, where he first heard Weinger blow. "You can feel his *shofar* expressing something very deep, as if the sound comes from the bottom of his heart and spirit."

In fact, Weinger has developed his own uses for the instrument. Five or six times a day, he hears from people around the world asking him to pray for them or a loved one in trouble. So he sounds the *shofar*, "petitioning God on their behalf, and God answers."

"That's why he's living so close to Jericho, where the miraculous collapse of these walls occurred through the voice of the *shofar*," adds Rabbi Ben Artzi, who has the distinction of being Sara Netanyahu's brother (and the prime minister's brother-in-law). "Seeing the prophecy of God gathering His people back to their homeland being fulfilled, every time Robert blows, he's saying, 'Listen, God is here.'"

Smack dab in the season of COVID-19, High Holidays 2020 (5781) are shaping up to be challenging as Jews the world over scramble to plan for these all-important days.

Rosh Hashanah, the holiday rivaled only by Passover on the family-friendly scale, is expected to find families restricted from gathering. And since, along with Yom Kippur 10 days later, it is historically the No. 1 attendance magnet for synagogues, congregations everywhere are struggling to balance religious traditions and Torah-based *mitzvot* with government-mandated safety regulations.

Meaning that on Rosh Hashanah, when the primary *mitzvah* is to hear the *shofar*, limited seating is likely to pass many *shofar* honors to smaller neighborhood minyans. "Every neighborhood needs a *shofar* and someone who can blow the notes," insists Weinger.

**Sharks** . . . . . Continued from page 10

They're going out in the middle of the night and then they come back in the morning, stay there until the afternoon and then leave again. They're hanging around Hadera all winter, but they're not staying there."

Bigal said the proximity to power stations and other human-altered habitats is potentially detrimental to the sharks' ecology. "They might be diverted from their natural routes, where they're supposed to be swimming and reproducing and playing their role as apex predators," he said. "Instead, they linger at these hotspots. It might function as what we call an 'ecological trap.' It's good for them at the individual level; they're comfortable, and it's nice for them tem-

perature-wise. But at the population level, they might be diverted from functioning as apex predators and maintaining their role in the environment."

Given its home along Israel's coastline, the Charney school is positioned to study the Mediterranean Sea in an interdisciplinary manner. Bigal noted that outside of the sandbar and dusky sharks being tracked along Israel's shores, researchers are seeing fewer sharks in the greater region this year, including blue sharks, mako sharks and thresher sharks. It's unclear if and how this development is related to COVID-19, and the current less populated waters of the Mediterranean.

# Unity.....Continued from page 2

of unceasing political warfare needs.

Friedman-Nachalon struck a nerve among Israelis, as settlement movement leader Israel Harel noted in *Haaretz*, because it was “a speech reminiscent of the days when the spiritual and political leadership – and the entire people – knew to cherish the miracle of building the state, of the gathering of exiles. The days when the leaders knew they had to listen to each other and respect each other’s opinion, and to remember the lessons of history.”

That’s not the stuff of contemporary Israeli politics, as Netanyahu’s followers trash their opponents while those determined to see him locked up use similarly overheated rhetoric and over-the-top charges to discredit the prime minister.

The same is true in the United States, where Trump’s foes are ready to accuse him of every imaginable crime while his supporters use similarly overheated rhetoric, even if there’s no real comparison between the two men in terms of what they are accused of doing. Both sides see the upcoming election in apocalyptic terms. It would be one thing if their talk of the future of American democracy being at stake were cynical electioneering. But it’s clear that both sides really do believe that their opponents are evil and their victory is the last straw that will destroy the country.

A zealous centrism would seem just the tonic for Americans, too. But the problem with Friedman-Nachalon’s prescription is not in her lofty tone and appeal to the “better angels” of our natures. Rather, it is that the business of democracy is not unity and consensus, but in making choices.

Ironically, that kind of consensus right now seems more of a realistic possibility in Israel than in the United States. The once-bitter debate about security and

territorial issues has largely faded as most believe that peace with the Palestinians is not possible. That ought to allow more attention to be paid to the country’s many other problems. But instead of debating settlements and borders, Israelis are stuck in harsh arguments over Netanyahu himself.

Americans are also bitterly divided about Trump. Democrats hope the election will be a referendum about the president. But the protests and riots that have convulsed the nation after the death of George Floyd, the rise of the Black Lives Matter movement and a new focus on racism illustrate a deeper divide about basic issues that are fundamental to the future of democracy. In such an argument, there doesn’t appear to be any room to split the difference in a culture war about liberty and free speech that transcends the battle between Republicans and Democrats.

Quoting Yehuda Amichai’s poem about “Miracles,” Friedman-Nachalon said that, “From far away everything looks like a miracle, but up close even a miracle doesn’t look like one. Even a crosser of the divided Red Sea saw only the sweating back of the walker in front of him.”

Like Israelis who seem to have lost their ability to appreciate the miracle of the birth of Israel, many Americans also seem, in their zeal to denounce the faults of the past, to be blind to the miracle of the constitutional republic the genius of the Founding Fathers created.

We can only hope that when the dust eventually settles in the arguments about Netanyahu and Trump that Israelis and Americans will both be capable of listening to calls for unity, rather than continuing to settle scores with each other in a fight to the death in which opponents must be destroyed rather than listened to and respected. If Friedman-Nachalon’s message isn’t heeded, the cost of

the impulse to partisan warfare may be higher than most of us can imagine.

*Jonathan S. Tobin is editor-in-chief of JNS – Jewish News Syndicate. Follow him on Twitter, @jonathans\_tobin.*

## NEWS IN BRIEF


From JNS.org

### Saudi Arabia says flights between UAE and Israel can cross its airspace

Saudia Arabia announced on Sept. 2 that all flights between Israel and the United Arab Emirates can traverse its airspace. An official at the Saudi General Authority of Civil Aviation stated that it had approved the request by the aviation authority of the United Arab Emirates to allow all flights arriving and departing from the country to fly through Saudi airspace, the state Saudi press agency reported. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud said after the report was published that the country’s support for a Palestinian state with eastern Jerusalem as its capital had not changed, according to Reuters. The flight from Tel Aviv to Abu Dhabi takes approximately three hours via Saudi airspace, but up to eight hours if forced to use a roundabout route. Israelis can now purchase tickets on the UAE’s national carrier, Etihad Airways, to destinations in the Middle East, Asia, Australia and elsewhere, following the U.S.-brokered normalization agreement between Jerusalem and Abu Dhabi. The flights offered to Israelis will not take off from Tel Aviv, however, but from Abu Dhabi, Israel’s business daily *Globes* reported on Sept. 1.

# New Year Greetings from these Healthcare Professionals

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

Back in 2001, I interned at a yeshiva in Miami. One of the projects I worked on was a traveling Hanukkah experience, bringing the spirit of Hanukkah to schools and synagogues with hands-on crafts and activities, and virtual reality experiences. A few days before Hanukkah, my friends and I visited Rabbi Meir, a local rabbi, for some last-minute guidance. I still remember the words of advice that he gave me as coordinator of the project: "There are two times not to get angry in life: when you can do something about it and when you can't."

At challenging times, it's natural to feel angry or frustrated, and all too often the blame starts to fly. However, it's precisely at these times that it's most crucial for us to be there for each other, to support each other and to work in unison to solve the problem or to recalibrate. I cannot say that I always live up to Rabbi Meir's advice, but I strive to always remember how much we need each other.

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year and day of judgment, is fast approaching. In the midst of a global pandemic, we may feel uncertain about what the new

year will bring. As always, we turn to the Torah to look for guidance and direction.

This week's double Torah portion, Nitzavim-Vayelech, begins: "You are all standing this day before the Lord, your God: the leaders of your tribes, your elders and your officers, every man of Israel, your young children, your women and your convert who is within your camp, both your woodcutters and your water drawers, that you may enter the covenant of the Lord, your God, and His oath. See "Each" on page 19

## Congregational Notes

### Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative  
 Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown  
 Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850  
 Phone: 723-7461 and 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: Tuesday, 5:30 pm; Friday, 5:30 pm; Saturday, 9:30 am

On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom.

On Saturday, September 12, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Deuteronomy 29:9-31:30 and the haftarah is Isaiah 61:10-63:9. At 8 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, September 13, at 12:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

On Saturday, September 19, the Torah portion is Genesis 21:1-34 and the haftarah is Samuel 1:12:10. For more information about High Holiday services, contact the synagogue.

Office hours for Tuesday, September 15, will be 2-4 pm. The Board of Trustees meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 15, at 7 pm, via Zoom.

Temple Israel is collecting for CHOW during regular business hours. The bin is between the two sets of glass doors at the entrance. Buzz to enter the first set of doors to access the bin.

### 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 Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated  
 Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045  
 Phone: 607-756-7181  
 President: Bruce Fein, 607-423-3346  
 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 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
 Rabbi: Rachel Safman  
 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: rabbi@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org  
 Website: www.tbeithaca.org  
 President: Randy Ehrenberg  
 Sisterhood President: Julie Paige  
 Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
 Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith  
 Services: Frid. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced.  
 Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. 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 Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.  
 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/HappeningATBE.

### 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: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 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

### Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
 Rabbi-Cantor: George Hirschfeld  
 Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820  
 Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820  
 Phone: 607-432-5522  
 Website: www.templebetheloneonta.org  
 E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com  
 Regular service times: visit the temple website 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, see the website.

### Kol Haverim

Affiliation: Society for Humanistic Judaism  
 Address: P.O. Box 4972, Ithaca, NY 14852-4972  
 Phone: 607-277-3345  
 E-mail: info@kolhaverim.net  
 Website: www.kolhaverim.net  
 Chairwoman: Abby Cohn  
 Kol Haverim: The Finger Lakes Community for Humanistic Judaism, is an Ithaca-based organization that brings people together to explore and celebrate Jewish identity, history, culture and ethics within a secular, humanistic framework. KH is part of an international movement for Secular Humanistic Judaism and is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism, a national association with over 30 member communities and congregations around the country. Established in the spring of 1999, it offers celebrations of Jewish holidays, monthly Shabbat pot-lucks, adult education, a twice-monthly Cultural School for children, and a bar and bat mitzvah program. KH welcomes all individuals and families, including those from mixed religious backgrounds, who wish to strengthen the Jewish experience in their lives and provide their children with a Jewish identity and experience.

Friday, September 11, light candles before ..... 7:01 pm  
 Saturday, September 12, Shabbat ends ..... 8 pm  
 Friday, September 18, light candles before ..... 6:49 pm  
 Saturday, September 19, light candles after ..... 7:47 pm  
 Sunday, September 20, yom tov ends ..... 7:46 pm  
 Friday, September 25, light candles before ..... 6:36 pm  
 Saturday, September 26, Shabbat ends ..... 7:35 pm  
 Sunday, September 27, light candles before ..... 6:33 pm  
 Monday, September 28, yom tov ends ..... 7:32 pm

### Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
 Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell  
 Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
 Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm  
 Phone: 723-7355  
 Fax: 723-0785  
 Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com  
 Website: www.templeconcord.com  
 Regular service times: Friday, 8 pm; Saturday, 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.  
 Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays during the school year unless otherwise noted.

All services and programs are online only. Friday night Shabbat services will start at 7 pm for September.

Friday, September 11: Shabbat services and "Remembrance of the 9/11/2001 Tragedy" led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman and Jason Flatt at 7 pm. Services can be viewed on Zoom at <https://bit.ly/34dUPFj> (meeting ID: 853 4440 7579) or on [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](https://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/).

Saturday, September 12: Torah study at 9:15 am at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102>, or by calling 1-929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 342 411 102.

Saturday, September 12: "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7:30 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>, or by calling 929-205-6099 and entering meeting ID # 526 246 866, or on [www.facebook.com/templeconcord/](https://www.facebook.com/templeconcord/) followed by a Selichot concert with Dan Nichols at 8:30 pm. Contact Temple Concord ([templeconcordaa@gmail.com](mailto:templeconcordaa@gmail.com) or 723-7355) or Temple Israel ([titammy2stny.twcbc.com](mailto:titammy2stny.twcbc.com) or 607-723-7461) for the Zoom information for the program. (For more information, see the article on page 5.)

Tuesday, September 15: Hebrew school begins online.  
 Friday, September 18: Erev Rosh Hashanah Shabbat service at 8 pm.

Saturday, September 19: Family service at 9 am; morning service at 10:15 am; Torah service at 11:30 am; and Rosh Hashanah afternoon drive-through from 2-4 pm in the parking lot of St. Michaels Orthodox Church, 296 Clinton St., Binghamton.

Tuesday, September 22: Hebrew school online.  
 Friday, September 25: Shabbat Shuvah services led by Rabbi Barbara Goldman and Jason Flatt at 7 pm.  
 Saturday, September 26: Torah study 9:15 am at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/342411102> or call 1-929-205-6099 and enter meeting ID # 342 411 102.

Saturday, September 26: "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866> or call 1-929-205-6099 and enter meeting ID # 526 246 866, or on Facebook via the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Sunday, September 27: Erev Yom Kippur services: Kol Nidre instrumental prelude at 7:30 pm; Kol Nidre Amidah from 7:50-8:35 pm; and confessional, sermon and Kaddish from 8:50-9:35 pm.

### Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive  
 Rabbi: David Regenspan  
 Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815  
 Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 336-1523  
 Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.  
 Adult Ed.: Saturday morning study is held at 10 am. Call for more information and to confirm.

### Congregation Tikun 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  
 Presidents: Lauren Korfine and Shira Reisman  
 Rabbi: Brian Walt  
 Religious School Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky  
 Services: Fridays at 7:30 pm unless otherwise noted.  
 Intergenerational Shabbat, music services, and other special services. Call for the weekly schedule.  
 Religious School: Preschool through seventh-grade classes meet on Sunday mornings.  
 Sixth-grade Hebrew and seventh-grade b'nai mitzvah classes meet on Wednesday afternoons.  
 Adult Ed: Mini courses throughout the year. Adult Hebrew offered regularly. Call the office for details.

# Communal. . . . . Continued from page 15

is much different than the current situation.”

She noted that Federation’s annual Campaign is down slightly, just 8 percent. That was nowhere near the 50 percent reduction some had feared. They’ve also raised \$2.7 million for a COVID-specific fund with much of the monies going to the local Jewish Family Service and those most in need of aid.

The Jewish nonprofit world is not alone in its needs. The National Council of Nonprofits reports that “individual giving in the first quarter of the year was down 6 percent compared to the same time last year.”

“The state of nonprofits right now is challenging, to say the least, and it doesn’t matter what sort of nonprofit it is. They are facing unprecedented obstacles right now,” said Rick Cohen, chief communications officer and COO for the National Council of Nonprofits.

Adding to concerns about decreasing donations, nonprofits run programs that receive funds from local, state or federal governments. In some cases, those payments that have not been received, Cohen said. While the PPP loans did help nonprofits that were eligible, more is needed.

“Without something more and quickly, we will see a lot more nonprofits that aren’t going to be able to help their community. There is only so far they can stretch, and they’ve passed that point. They are doing everything they can, but there are limits,” he said. “Some of the stories we have been hearing over the last few weeks are heartbreaking.”

Knowing how crucial it is for people to step up and donate to nonprofits, a bipartisan delegation from Congress is pushing for a change to the federal tax code. The Universal Giving Pandemic Response Act would allow people who do not itemize deductions to deduct charitable contributions made in 2019 and 2020 on their taxes.

“Nonprofits and charitable organizations have long been leaders on the front lines of this pandemic, putting Americans first and aiding recovery efforts in our community,” Rep. Mark Walker (R-NC) said in a statement announcing the bill. “By increasing incentives for charitable giving, we can embolden our citizens to give back to those who have repeatedly given to us in this time of need.”

Rep. Chris Pappas (D-NH) added that “expanding the



Volunteers packed food for distribution as part of a kosher drive-by site sponsored by the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, Feeding South Florida, Jewish Community Services of South Florida and Temple Emanuel in July. (Photo courtesy of JNS)

## Each. . . . . Continued from page 18

which the Lord, your God, is making with you this day, in order to establish you this day as His people, and that He will be your God.”

These verses, which are read right before Rosh Hashanah, teach us that it is crucial that we all stand together as a people. Our leaders and our woodcutters are all equally precious in the eyes of God, and essential members of the community. In order to ask God for success in the new year, every member of society must come together and care for each other. When we do this, we can turn to God, and in the words of the prayers, pray of Him: “Bless us, our Father, all of us as one.” May God bless us and grant each and every one of us a sweet new year and a year of revealed goodness, health and blessings.

charitable giving tax credit is the easiest way to support our nonprofits in this difficult time.”

If there is any bright spot to be had, it may be that in the Jewish community at least, donors are stepping up. In a survey conducted by researchers from Brandeis University of Jews living in 10 mid- to large-size Jewish communities in the United States and the impact the pandemic has had on them, “lots of people said their philanthropy will increase because they know the need is now greater,” said Leonard Saxe, director of the Cohen Center for Modern Jewish Studies and director of the Steinhardt Social Research Institute at Brandeis University in Waltham, MA.

He noted that overall, those surveyed had fared relatively well during the pandemic. However, those who were already “living on the edge or just making it” prior the pandemic “are in many respects worse off.”

That many in the Jewish community are willing to boost their charitable giving is likely welcoming news to Federations, which are concerned about whether or not they will have enough communal support to address the growing demands for services.

Key to getting the buy-in from communal donors is making personal connections. “Some donors are saying, ‘You guys are doing a great job, and I am happy to give my gift again this year,’” related Miami’s Solomon. “Others say we want to be supportive, but we are not in a position to do so.”

The United Jewish Federation of Utah, which has a \$750,000 budget annually and serves a Jewish community of between 6,500 to 9,000 people, is currently 15 percent ahead of its fund-raising goals than usual at this time of year. This comes despite the fact that its annual fund-raising gala was canceled. “We found the community was ready and willing to help others and open their wallets,” said Federation director Alex Shapiro.

He noted that the biggest needs they’ve seen so far are requests for rent assistance and food from their food bank. “Our Jewish Family Service has been pounding since day one. The need has been great and enhanced, and fortunately, the community and individuals and Federation rose to the occasion, making sure there is enough funding to meet their significant increases now and for the foreseeable future.”

All told, the Jewish Federations of North America raised some \$175 million for communal needs in just three months. That number does not include the \$90 million Jewish Community Response and Impact Fund, created by a group of donors to provide zero-interest loans to Jewish institutions nationwide. It also provided grants to support critical and groundbreaking work in American Jewish communities and communal institutions that focus on Jewish education, engagement and leadership.

Recently, JFNA announced the creation of a \$54 million fund for human-services agencies serving the Jewish community. Moneys for the fund will come from seven different foundations and Jewish Federations nationwide. “Since mid-March, Federations have been in active crisis-management mode as the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted every part of Jewish communal life,” said JFNA Board Chair Mark Wilf. “They have used their endowments and launched emergency campaigns to support Jewish life and sustain their local agencies, yet the length and depth of this downturn remains unknown. We believe this effort will help alleviate Jewish families, seniors and others who have been hard hit by this pandemic.”

That news is music to the ears of Jewish human-service agencies grappling with individuals’ needs – needs that

At right: A little girl at the Greater Houston Jewish Federation helped organize grocery bags as part of the PJ Stocks the Pantry program for Meals on Wheels. (Photo courtesy of Greater Houston Jewish Federation via Facebook)



may well continue to grow as the pandemic drags on and government assistance, including unemployment payments and PPP loans, come to an end.

As Saxe noted, “The fact that we didn’t uncover widespread devastation” could be due to the availability of federal aid. “We will need to see what happens... We’ve heard anecdotally that some federated communities put money aside to help people in desperate need, but were surprised they didn’t need to use those funds.

“I don’t think it was because there wasn’t an underlying need, but because the government stepped in,” he said.

With the pandemic still in full swing, many questions remain, though Jewish communal leaders assure that they will be ready for whatever needs arise. “I really think this is a teachable moment for the community of why Federation exists,” said Solomon. “This is the reason Federations were created, and it’s very important that we do our job and do it well, and identify the needs to make sure people don’t go hungry and have a safety net under them.”



Volunteers handed out food at a kosher drive-by distribution site sponsored by the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, Feeding South Florida, Jewish Community Services of South Florida and Temple Emanuel in July. (Photo courtesy of JNS)

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

**EU warns Serbia, Kosovo Jerusalem embassy move could endanger membership bid**

The European Union warned Serbia and Kosovo on Sept. 7 that they could be hurting their chances for E.U. membership by moving their embassies to Jerusalem. "There is no E.U. member state with an embassy in Jerusalem. Any diplomatic steps that could call into question the E.U.'s common position on Jerusalem are a matter of serious concern and regret," said European Commission spokesman Peter Stano, according to AP. In a surprise move the previous week, U.S. President Donald Trump announced that Serbia and Kosovo had agreed to normalize economic ties as part of U.S.-brokered talks, and that Israel and Kosovo had agreed to mutually recognize each other, as part of which Belgrade would move its embassy to Jerusalem. Serbian officials downplayed the embassy move, with Serbian Foreign Minister Ivica Dacic saying the final decision depended on the government and "a number of factors," according to the AP report, which added that Kosovo President Hashim Thaci sought to control the fallout on his end on a call with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. "Such recognition will not violate under any circumstances the strategic, friendly and fraternal partnership with Turkey," said Thaci.

**Saudi imam praises interfaith cooperation**

The imam of the Grand Mosque in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, Abdul Rahman Ibn Abdul Aziz al-Sudais, delivered a sermon at the Grand Mosque on Sept. 4, listing various examples of the prophet Muhammad treating Jews well. In the sermon, which was aired on Quran TV on Sept. 4, al-Sudais said, "When the method of human dialogue is ignored, aspects of the clash of civilizations are being nurtured, and the language of violence, exclusion and hatred prevails." At the end of the sermon, al-Sudais prayed that Allah destroy the enemies of Islam and save the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem. "Oh Allah, give strength to Islam and the Muslims, humiliate polytheism and the polytheists, and destroy the enemies of Islam. Oh Allah, save the Al-Aqsa mosque. Oh Allah, save the Al-Aqsa mosque. Oh Allah, make it stand tall and glorious until the Day of Judgement," said al-Sudais.

**Malawi to move embassy to Jerusalem**

Malawi's President Lazarus Chakwera said on Sept. 5 that his country intends to establish an embassy in Jerusalem. The country in southeastern Africa will be the first African nation to establish an embassy in Jerusalem. Chakwera, who promised reforms after taking office in June, said in his announcement on Sept. 5 that "the reforms will also include a review of our diplomatic presence, including our resolve to have new diplomatic missions in Lagos, Nigeria and Jerusalem, Israel. I will be sharing more details about this in the near future." Malawi has had diplomatic relations with Israel since 1964, refusing to budge when it came under pressure to sever relations with the Jewish state following the 1973 Yom Kippur War. Lesotho, South Africa and Swaziland also maintained diplomatic relations. Chakwera became president of Malawi this past June. His statement comes on the heels of the announcement by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Sept. 4 that Israel and Kosovo have agreed to establish diplomatic relations, and that Kosovo, along with Serbia, will establish embassies in Jerusalem.

**Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad leaders meet in Beirut to coordinate activity**

Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh met with Palestinian Islamic Jihad leader Secretary-General Ziad al-Nahala in Beirut on Sept. 2 to discuss cooperation between the two terrorist groups.

The two organizations held talks about how they can coordinate their actions in light of the restrictions on movement into and out of Gaza and the normalization agreement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, and the Trump peace plan, Ynet reported on Sept. 3. The Hamas leader was in Beirut for a week-long visit to meet with other Palestinian factions over the warming relations between Israel and some Arab states, AlJazeera recorded. Hamas representative in Lebanon, Ali Baraka, said the joint discussions in Ramallah and Beirut seek to develop "a unified Palestinian strategy to confront normalization schemes ... and to reject plans to annex the West Bank, as well as [the Trump administration's] 'deal of the century.'" That deal also refers to the Mideast peace plan, formerly called the "Peace to Prosperity" vision. According to Ahmad Majdalani, a member of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organization, speaking in Ramallah, the talks aim "to open a new page, to end divisions, achieve national reconciliation and build a national partnership between all factions," according to the report.

**Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat to mentor students at Harvard's Kennedy School**

Palestine Liberation Organization Secretary-General Saeb Erekat will be mentoring students at Harvard. The Future of Diplomacy Project at Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs announced recently that Erekat will serve as one of four Fisher Family Fellows for the 2020-21 academic year. The other fellows include Julie Bishop, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party; Federica Mogherini, former High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs, and security policy and vice president of the European Commission; and Peter Wittig, former Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the United States. "We are proud to welcome these four respected global leaders to the Harvard Kennedy School for this academic year," said faculty chair Nicholas Burns in a statement. "They will strengthen our capacity to learn the lessons of effective diplomacy and statecraft." In a 2014 interview with Al Jazeera, Erekat stated, "I will never recognize Israel as a Jewish state." Jewish and pro-Israel groups, such as CAMERA on Campus, immediately countered the Harvard announcement. "Perfect timing just as UAE/Israel make peace @Harvard imports key Palestinian diplomat who always blamed #Israel, as Oslo peace partner Arafat then Abu Mazen unleashed hate and terrorism," tweeted the Simon Wiesenthal Center on Sept. 1.

**JAFI and Keren Hayesod to begin activities, education in UAE**

Jewish Agency for Israel Chairman Isaac Herzog, Jewish Agency CEO Amira Ahronoviz and Keren Hayesod World Chairman Sam Grundwerg spoke on Aug. 31 with Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Council of the United Arab Emirates Rabbi Yehuda Sarna and agreed to begin providing services to the Jewish community in the UAE, following the U.S.-brokered normalization deal between Israel and the UAE on Aug. 13. Sarna requested tools to foster Jewish communal life, including Jewish education and identity, as well as summer camps. The possibility of sending a permanent Jewish Agency emissary to the UAE was also discussed. This potential emissary would join the hundreds of Jewish Agency emissaries stationed in Jewish communities around the world. "After years of operating with great discretion on the margins of the global Jewish community, we are now ready to formally 'get on the grid,'" said Sarna in a statement released by the Jewish Agency. "This partnership with the Jewish Agency brings the interconnectedness we crave." "Our conversation with Chief Rabbi Sarna took place on the day the historic Israeli-American delegation took off on an El Al plane to Abu Dhabi," said Herzog in the statement. "A new chapter in the fascinating history of the Jewish people is being written as we begin working with the Jewish community in the Emirates." A joint team from the Jewish Agency, Keren Hayesod and the Jewish Federations of North America will be established in the coming days to work with Sarna to determine local needs. The Jewish community in the UAE is more than 1,000 members, centered in Dubai and Abu Dhabi. It's the first new Jewish community being built in an Arab country in centuries and is comprised of Jews from Europe, North America, South Africa and within the Arab world. Community members work in a variety of fields, serving as teachers, technicians, software developers, nurses and businesspeople.

**Israel, UAE sign protocol of understandings on banking, finance**

Israel and the United Arab Emirates on Sept. 1 signed the first protocol in banking and finance between the two countries. Ronen Peretz, acting director of the Israeli Prime Minister's Office, and UAE Central Bank Governor Abdulhamid Saeed signed the agreements in Abu Dhabi, according to a statement from the Prime Minister's Office. Peretz is a member of the U.S. and Israeli delegation that traveled to the UAE on Aug. 31 in the first direct commercial flight between the two countries. The goal of the visit is to advance the normalization agreement between the two countries, which was first announced on Aug. 13. The UAE Central Bank, the Israeli Finance Ministry and relevant financial regulators in Israel have agreed to set up a joint Israel-UAE committee to advance cooperation in finances and investments, according to the statement. The two sides will discuss lowering financial impediments to investment, advancing cooperation in banking services and payments regulations and how to create the conditions for joint investments that satisfy international standards regarding money laundering and financing terrorism. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Sept. 1 that more understandings between the two countries would be announced shortly. "I welcome the first understandings that have been signed in Abu Dhabi. These understandings will assist us in advancing mutual investments and widespread cooperation. We will soon announce additional agreements in aviation, tourism, trade and others," said Netanyahu.

**U.S. Army awards contract to Israel's Elbit Systems**

The U.S. Army has awarded a contract to Israeli defense company Elbit Systems worth up to \$79 million. It will provide the U.S. Army with commander hand stations, gunner hand stations and circuit cards for the Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle. "The gunner hand stations enable crew members to target and fire, and work in collaboration with the commander hand stations that drive the vehicles' turret. The circuit cards provide processing and power supply to the hand station units," according to Reuters. The contract will be administered over the course of five years.

**Report: P.A. hiding terrorists' salaries from international donors**

The Palestinian Authority appears to be hiding its salaries to terrorists by removing them from the itemized budget in English that it provides to the international donor community, Palestinian Media Watch reported on Sept. 1. According to PMW, the itemized budget in Arabic and English are identical, except for the line devoted to "Commission for Prisoners and Released," which has appeared only in the Arabic version of the monthly reports since February this year. PMW says that its reports on the payment of salaries to terrorists have led the United States, Canada, Australia and Holland to cut funding to the P.A. It also states that ever since it began to show donor countries that their money is being used in this way, the P.A. "has been doing everything it can to confuse and distract its donors." In 2014, for example, PMW says that the P.A. "closed [its] Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, and in 2015 it created the PLO Commission of Prisoners' Affairs. In 2018, it reopened the ... Ministry of Prisoners' Affairs, and in 2019 it changed its name to the Commission for Detainees' Affairs. Now in 2020, it is trying to hide its payments by moving them once again from the P.A. to the PLO."

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