

# THE REPORTER

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## Campaign 2021

# Campaign, community and the pandemic

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton says that its Campaign is continuing, but this is the most difficult year for fund-raising in recent memory. “The problem is not just that it’s more difficult to raise funds when we can’t hold events or meet in person,” said Shelley Hubal, Federation executive director. “It’s that local organizations are also hurting because of the pandemic. Their income is down due to reductions in programming and advertising, and an increase in expenses for equipment and sanitizers so everyone entering their buildings remains safe.”

Hubal noted, “In addition, members of our community have also lost income due to the pandemic. Whether due to layoffs, businesses closing or reduction of hours, many people don’t have as much disposable income as normal. Our mission is to ensure our local institutions endure, now and for future generations. We are working hard every day to make that happen.”

Federation beneficiary organizations that have been affected by the pandemic include:

- ◆ Hillel Academy of Broome County: Additional expenses occurred when Hillel Academy went virtual for the end of the 2019-20 school year. There are also



increased expenses for supplies needed to keep teachers and students safe.

- ◆ Jewish Community Center: The JCC has lost income from a decrease in membership, programming and daycare. The JCC ran a successful summer camp, but, due to COVID-19 restrictions, had a greatly reduced number of campers.

- ◆ Jewish Family Service: JFS has seen an uptick in needs for its clients. “During this pandemic JFS has experienced an increase in requests for assistance with food, rent, utilities and, more recently, medical co-pays,” said Rose Shea, director of JFS. “The people reaching out for assistance consist of those who have lost their jobs and those who have experienced a decline in their work hours as related to the pandemic. Additionally, JFS has seen an increase in a need for emotional support, and a need for referrals for counseling as related to the pandemic and recent world events.”

- ◆ *The Reporter*: Advertising income is down due to businesses cancelling ads due to

the pandemic. “If businesses and restaurants are closed, we certainly understand their need to cut back on advertising,” said Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of *The Reporter* Group. “We’ve reduced expenses by going bi-weekly, but that can only do so much. Our Federation allocation is an important part of our funding and we wish Campaign 2021 great success.”

The Federation also allocates money to support programs of the Jewish Federations of North America. These programs

are located in Israel (for example, Lunch and Learn – Dimona and the JDC Center for Independent Living – Bnei Brak), the former Soviet Union (for example, Hesed Eliyahu – Tbilisi, Georgia) and across the world for its Aliyah of Rescue, which helps Jews who live in hostile parts of the world emigrate to Israel.

“Help us keep all Jewish life strong, both here and across the world,” Hubal said. “Thank you for your support. I assure you, every gift has a positive impact.”

## Save the date

# Federation to hold drive-up Hanukkah event

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a communitywide drive-up Hanukkah event on Sunday, December 13, at 4:30 pm. Partnering in the event are Beth David Synagogue, the Jewish Community Center, Temple Concord and Temple Israel.

“We are working on the details for

this event, but are so excited we wanted to make sure people save the date,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “This will be a fun, safe way for the community to get together for Hanukkah.”

More information about the event will be available in the next issue of *The Reporter*.

# Federation to hold virtual “Conversation with Michael Oren” on Nov. 30

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold a virtual “Conversation with Michael Oren” about his new book of short stories, “The Night Archer and Other Stories,” on Monday, November 30, at noon. Dora Polachek, associate professor of romance languages and literatures at Binghamton University, will moderate. There is no cost for the event, but pre-registration is required and can be made at the Federation website, [www.jfgb.org](http://www.jfgb.org). Additional sponsors of the event are the College of Jewish Studies, the Temple Israel/Temple Concord Adult Education Group and Beth David Synagogue.

“It’s an honor to have someone as accomplished as Michael Oren speak to us,” said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. “I look forward to learning how he came to write the many stories

that appear in his book. I would also like to thank Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell for alerting us to this opportunity.”

Best-selling author Daniel Silva called “The Night Archer and Other Stories” “an extraordinary collection of stories that sparkle with wit, intelligence, tenderness and penetrating honesty.” According to [TheJewishPress.com](http://TheJewishPress.com), “[Oren’s] characters are terrifying, tragic, passionate and yes, funny as hell.” A.J. Jacobs, *New York Times* bestselling author, called the book “delightful.” Liel Leibovitz, an Israeli-American journalist and author, wrote that “Oren delivers a heartfelt and heartbreaking account of who we are as a species – flawed, fearful, and lonely but always open-hearted, always trusting that transcendence is possible, if not imminent.” (See



Michael Oren

*The Reporter*’s review of the book in the November 6 issue or online at [www.thereporter.org/past-articles/feature-book-review/feature-book-review-stream/book-review-stream/off-the-shelf-stories-by-oren-and-schwartz-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman](http://www.thereporter.org/past-articles/feature-book-review/feature-book-review-stream/book-review-stream/off-the-shelf-stories-by-oren-and-schwartz-by-rabbi-rachel-esserman).)

In addition to his collection of short stories, Oren is the author of several nonfiction works, including “Six Days of War,” “Power, Faith, and Fantasy” and “Ally: My Journal Across the American-Israel Divide,” all of which made *The New York Times* bestsellers list. He has also received the *Los Angeles Times* History Book of the Year Award, a National Humanities prize and the Jewish Book Award.

Oren served as Israel’s ambassador to

the United States for almost five years before becoming a member of Knesset and deputy minister in the Prime Minister’s Office. Oren is a graduate of Princeton and Columbia universities. He has been a visiting professor at Harvard, Yale and Georgetown universities. In addition to holding four honorary doctorates, he was awarded the Statesman of the Year Medal by the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Legacy Prize for International Service.

Oren was named by NPR as “one of the best college commencement speakers ever.” Politico called him “one of the 50 most influential thinkers in America.” *The Forward* placed him on its list of “the five most influential Jews in America,” while *The Jerusalem Post* said he was “one of the 10 most influential Jews worldwide.”

# Giving Tuesday matching grant of \$500 for Reporter

By Reporter staff

*The Reporter* announced that it has received a \$500 matching grant for Giving Tuesday, December 1. The grant is courtesy of the David and Virginia Eisenberg Fund. Donations can be made from now through Tuesday, December 1. Donations may be made several ways:

- ◆ Give online through The Reporter Group website, [www.thereporter.org](http://www.thereporter.org).
- ◆ Through Giving Tuesday e-mails that will be sent by the Jewish Federation of

Greater Binghamton. Anyone who does not receive Federation e-mails, but would like to be on the list, should e-mail [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org) with “Federation e-mail list” in the subject line.

- ◆ Mail donations to The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850 with “matching grant” in the check’s subject line.

“We are thrilled to receive this matching grant,” said Rabbi Rachel Esserman, executive editor of *The Reporter* Group. “Every penny counts in this economic

climate. So many Jewish newspapers are either going under or turning into online productions only. Although *The Reporter* has gone biweekly, I am pleased we are still able to produce hard-copy newspapers for our readers. I know that I prefer to read offline. Plus, a hard copy is great for those of us who like to read the paper on Shabbat, but don’t get on the computer that day.”

Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation, was also pleased that *The Re-*

*porter* received the grant. “I think the paper is a valuable addition to our community,” she said. “It not only lets me know what local organizations are doing, but helps keep us connected. Thank you to the Eisenberg Fund for their gift. This is the first time we have run a Giving Tuesday mini-campaign and I know the generosity of our community will make it succeed.”

Other community members have also expressed their support for the paper. Their comments can be found in the ad on page 5.

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# Jewish resources to occupy your family during social distancing – part 25

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.

◆ Clal and the Klezmer Company Jazz Orchestra will hold a virtual “Hanukkah in Jazztime” program on Monday, December 14, at 7:30 pm. The cost to attend is \$18 per household. For more information or to register, visit [www.clal.org/project/hanukkah-in-jazztime/](http://www.clal.org/project/hanukkah-in-jazztime/).

◆ Hillel International will hold its first virtual Hillel College Fair from Sunday-Tuesday, November 22-24. It will allow attendees to meet with current students and Hillel staff from schools they are thinking of attending. The fair is free for students, their parents/guardians, and anyone who wants to learn about Jewish college life. For more information or to register, visit <https://welcome.hillel.org/virtual-college-fair/>.

◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage will hold several virtual events: the Klezmer-rock band Golem will perform on

Sunday, November 15, at 7 pm, with a sliding scale cost; and GENERALLY Speaking with Stephanie Butnick and Beth Kean on Tuesday, November 17, at 7 pm, featuring a discussion of third- or fourth-generation Holocaust survivors. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjnhyc.org/current-events/>.

◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy presents a four-part workshop “Have You Ever Wanted to Write Your Life Story?” on Zoom for those who want to write their See “Resources” on page 11

## Opinion

From the Desk of the Federation Executive Director

### With gratitude

SHELLEY HUBAL

Our Jewish community is changing. We are shrinking. There is no denying this fact. If you are lucky enough to go to Florida this winter, you will have lots of opportunities to see former Binghamtonians (or Bing-a-lings as my sister calls them). The changes we are experiencing are nothing new. I moved here 25 years ago and I recall discussions at Federation board meetings at that time about our shrinking community.

So, as Federation director, and a person who cares deeply about this community, what should I do? Can I fix this? I will be honest: I am not sure what to do. I have spent a lot of time thinking about this problem – worrying about how to cultivate future leaders, how to cultivate new sources of funding and how to attract the next generation of Jewish families who want to raise their children here. There are no easy answers. We may have to make difficult decisions

in the future. Do we let some of our institutions fail? What would our community look like without the Jewish Community Center? What if we did not have *The Reporter* to keep us connected? What if one of our synagogues closed its doors? Anyone that cares about the Binghamton Jewish community and works to keep it whole does not want to see these things transpire.

So, we move forward. Have you heard of a radio show called “A Way with Words”? It airs on NPR and is described as “a fun radio show and podcast about language examined through family, history, and culture.” I enjoy listening to “A Way with Words” on Sunday afternoons, usually as I am driving around town doing errands. Looking at something as complex as language from a wider perspective gives me comfort. What I like most about this show is how

well it illustrates the evolution of language through time. Language is always changing, as is our community, and it always endures. Maybe in a different form, but it endures.

We will evolve. We will endure. One thing I know for sure is this community is, and always will be, filled with compassionate people. Whether it is being on any number of local boards for years at a time, volunteering to raise funds, to cook a meal for a bereaved family or to make a donation, I have the pleasure of seeing the best of this community. So, let me say to the members of the Federation board, to all of our contributing members and to the community at large, thank you for being compassionate people who want to make the Binghamton Jewish community better for us all. I see your grace and kindness, and for that I am most grateful.

In My Own Words

### Reflecting on tragedy

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

In July 2019, I took part in a “Lights for Liberty” vigil at Temple Concord after Friday night services. Members of the synagogue were joined by other faith groups in a silent protest against the inhumane treatment of refugees. Earlier that day, I’d suffered another bout of vertigo and asked a synagogue member who lives nearby to drive me to services. I was using my cane and given a chair to sit on during the vigil because it was hard for me to stand. As we all gathered on the lawn outside the building on Riverside Drive, a disturbing thought entered my mind: We made an easy target for a drive-by shooting. One automatic weapon could have mowed us down in minutes – long before we could have run inside for safety.

Fortunately, there was no violence that night, but reading “Bound in the Bond of Life: Pittsburgh Writers Reflect

on the Tree of Live Tragedy” edited by Beth Kissileff and Eric Lidji revived that memory. The book of essays was published to commemorate the second anniversary of the Tree of Life shooting: 11 members of the three synagogues that met in that building were murdered. It’s thought that the shooter was upset by support offered to refugees and immigrants by one of the congregations. So, it really shouldn’t have been a surprise that I wondered if someone might take offense at our vigil. The people who were killed in Pittsburgh, though, were not taking part in a protest at that moment, but getting ready for what was supposed to be an ordinary Shabbat.

Several writers in the anthology noted that most of us feel that events like that shooting always happen somewhere else – not here, not where we live. I know that feeling

except I have to remind myself that’s not true: I know two people who were brutally murdered. Yet, my brain doesn’t want to accept that because it’s too hard to live with that truth. Other writers in “Bound in the Bond of Life” note that, while for some the killings in Pittsburgh seemed an anomaly, for others, it was part of the general pattern of life. They write that even with all the outpouring of love that occurred after the shooting, there was – and is still – hatred in Pittsburgh. But most of the writers aren’t forced to acknowledge that fact daily. That’s true for most of the people reading this column, including me. And while we should count our blessings, we also shouldn’t forget those who do live in fear every day of their lives.

What was unexpected about the anthology is what it doesn’t contain: There is no list of the 11 people who died. Although people mention a few of them, there are no biographies of each individual. There is a sense that the book doesn’t want to exploit those people’s lives or expose their families to prying eyes. Almost all those who write are a step or two away from the inner circle of grief. They focus on how they felt about the events and learned to deal with them. The book is not about reliving the tragedy, but, as its subtitle notes, reflecting on it as time passes and wounds begin to heal.

If you are looking for answers about why tragedies like this occur, you won’t find them in these essays. The writers struggle with that because there is no one clear answer. Instead, they look at the ways people can reach out and help each other as a way to create meaning. It’s not enough just to reach out to our own community, though. We must reach out to others, near and far. It’s a daunting task because it is a never-ending one – we will never rid the world of hatred and fear, but that doesn’t mean we should stop trying. As the wise words that appear in Pirke Avot (Words of Our Fathers) note, “You may never complete the task, but you are not free to avoid it.”

Letters

### TC has new audio system

To the Community:

Temple Concord’s new audio-video system has arrived!

This year, we have faced considerable challenges in keeping our synagogue family engaged in meaningful worship, learning and social connection while the pandemic forces us to keep a safe distance from each other. Our existing sound system prevents people in the sanctuary and people at home from being able to hear at the same time. Because of that, we couldn’t have even a small number of people in the sanctuary for services while also being able to include people at home.

The new equipment solves that problem while offering many other features, as well. Among them, the system will allow for closed captioning, making

our services and programs even more accessible to everyone. It is also portable and can be used in the library, social hall and Kilmer Mansion, as well as the sanctuary. It’s inaugural run was for the Music in the Kilmer Mansion Fall Concert on November 14. The purchase of this equipment opens up many new possibilities for us to connect with members of our synagogue family and beyond!

Our deepest thanks go to Ruthanne Koffman. Her generous gift through the Evergreen Fund, in memory of her husband, Burton Koffman, made the purchase of this vital system possible.

Lisa Blackwell  
President, Temple Concord



**Jewish Federation**  
OF GREATER BINGHAMTON

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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.

#### ADS

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

#### DEADLINE

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# TC to hold Lunch 'n Learn programs in December

Temple Concord will hold three Lunch 'n Learn programs with Congregation Shaarey Zedek and Rabbi Amy Bigman of East Lansing, MI. On Thursday, December 3, Dr. Amy Simon will speak on "Teaching the Holocaust and Antisemitism in 2020." On Thursday, December 10, Dr. Kenneth J. Levine will discuss on "How Samuel David Rocker and Die Yiddishe Velt Turned Jewish Immigrants into Jewish Americans." On Thursday, December 17, Dr. Margot B. Valles will lecture on "Jewish Werewolves and What We Can Learn from Them." All programs will take place from 11 am-noon. For Zoom links, contact the temple office at TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com or 723-7355.

"The December series has some surprising, thematic overlap," said organizers of the event. "Each of these three presentations will deal with the meaning of Jewish identity in a complex world. In addition, all three speakers are professors involved with Jewish Studies at Michigan State University. Amy Simon will speak about her experiences teaching the Holocaust and antisemitism to students at MSU. Ken Levine will speak about a Midwestern Yiddish newspaper, *The Jewish World*, and how it helped Jewish

immigrants socialize to the U.S. in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Margot Valles will talk about what we can learn from Jewish werewolves."

Simon is the William and Audrey Farber Family Endowed Chair of Holocaust Studies and European Jewish History, participating in the Department of History, James Madison College, and Jewish Studies. Her research examines victim representations of perpetrators in Yiddish diaries written in the Warsaw, Lodz, and Vilna ghettos during World War II. She completed her Ph.D. at Indiana University in 2015 and was the recipient of a Saul Kagan Claims Conference Fellowship as well as the Leon Milman Memorial Fellowship at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC.

Levine earned his J.D. at Case Western Reserve University and his Ph.D. at Michigan State University. He is a faculty member in the College of Communication Arts and Sciences at Michigan State University. His research agenda concentrates on leadership, organizational communication and small group communication within organizations. His organizational communication research centers on anticipatory socialization, specifically looking at the messages sent

by and received from the various sources of socialization and the impact of these messages on work, work life and career aspirations. He is currently researching the impact of STEM-related media on career choices for elementary school-aged children. His research into leadership looks at the perceptions of what makes a person a leader and what makes a leader effective.

Valles is an assistant professor in the Departments of Religious Studies and English at Michigan State University. She teaches classes on medieval literature, Jewish literature and other topics that have to do with her research interests in the relationships between religion, language, literature and cultural exchange. She is also the director of Congregational Lifelong Learning at Congregation Shaarey Zedek.

## Rosefsky to lead Zoom class for TI Sisterhood on Nov. 22

Flora Rosefsky, formerly of Binghamton and now of Atlanta, GA, will lead a virtual art project class for Temple Israel's Sisterhood paid-up members on Sunday, November 22, from 2-4 pm. The class, how to create a "Legacy Collage," is based on Rosefsky's cut-out collages titled "Life Chapter Series," which contain many symbols recalling her life while raising her family in Binghamton during her 30s. It was a time when her four children were involved with the Jewish Community Center



Flora Rosefsky

and after school activities.

The basic supplies are complementary with a paid-up membership and are ready for pick-up at the synagogue. Some packets were delivered to members' homes. Snowbirds received their supplies by mail. Zoom meeting details will be sent by e-mail and are also enclosed in the packet.

"Thank you for supporting Temple Israel Sisterhood and joining the class," said organizers of the event. "We are apart and yet we can be together."

## TC to hold program on the Armenian genocide on Dec. 5

Temple Concord will hold *Havdalah* and a program on the Armenian genocide on Saturday, December 5, at 7:30 pm. Professor Nvair Kadian Beylerian, adjunct professor of history and co-director of the Center for Peace, Justice and Reconciliation at Bergen Community College in Paramus, NJ, will speak to a group of Reform congregations after the service. Thanks to technology, Temple Concord will join Rabbi Andy Dubin and his congregation, the Jewish Center of Northwest Jersey in Washington, NJ, for the program.

Zoom information for the event is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89974051634?pwd=c1NxbGt1Sm02YWRRSXZMdGhCUFduZz09l>, meeting ID: 899 7405 1634 and passcode: 980806.

Beylerian will speak about the history of violence from

the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and place it in the context to the Shoah. She will also speak about the violence that is currently taking place.

Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell became more aware of the Armenian genocide more than 30 years ago when she lived in Fresno, CA, which had the largest Armenian population outside of Armenia. "I feel it is important to learn about the Armenian genocide, which happened more than 20 years before the Holocaust, because it is important to honor the lives of those lost," she said. "The Armenian community looked to us to learn how to collect survivor's stories and chronicle their history. It is also important because it is happening again. We must remember all victims of genocide so that we continue our work against all violence."

## TC to celebrate 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary on Dec. 13

Temple Concord will celebrate its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary with slide show, a toast and lights before joining the World Union for Progressive Judaism Hanukkah celebration "Many Candles, One World" on Sunday, December 13. Following the local Hanukkah Jewish Community Drive-In Event (see article on page 1) at 4:30 pm, Temple Concord will light the Hanukkah menorah in front of synagogue and the Kilmer Mansion at 5:30 pm. The in-person lighting will be broadcast on Zoom and Facebook. The anniversary will take place at 7 pm on Zoom and the Temple Concord Facebook page.

The evening will culminate with the World Union for Progressive Judaism's celebration "Many Candles, One World," featuring Hanukkah music and traditions from around the world, and showcasing choirs, cantors and

celebrity guests. The event will be broadcast at 8 pm partnership with Central Synagogue on its YouTube channel. To register, visit <https://wupj.org/ch>.

Temple Concord was founded 70 years ago and held its first Shabbat service in the Kilmer Mansion in December 1950. "We will be bringing the building and the memories to participants in our celebration," said organizers of the event. "The celebration will include a slide show of holiday celebrations through the years, lighting our Hanukkah lights in our homes and raising a glass to celebrate the moment, honor the past and present, and look toward the future together.

"This year, the Sunday of Hanukkah will be filled with many meaningful celebrations," organizers added. "Be sure to join us in celebrating Hanukkah and our anniversary."

## TC Sisterhood's Judaica Shop open by appointment

Temple Concord Sisterhood's Judaica Shop will be open by appointment only through Sunday, December 20, in the Kilmer Mansion at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. To make an appointment, call the temple office at 723-7355 or Gift Shop Chairwoman Carol Herz at 722-2739 and leave your name and phone number.

In the gift shop, safe distancing and mask wearing will be practiced. Herz said, "Take advantage of it for yourself and all your gift giving needs."

Herz added, "We have a wide selection of decorative Hanukkah candles, menorahs and dreidels, plus a variety of battery operated and LED menorahs, which are perfect for dormitories and nursing homes.


"Need a wedding gift? We have candlesticks, hams and *tzedakah*," she continued. "Also, we stock Shabbat candles and *yahrzeit* candles. What we are missing is you, so please make an appointment to come, see and buy from your local Judaica shop."

*The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Lisa Tessman on the death of her spouse and Yuval Tessman-Bar-On on the death of her mother,*  
**Bat-Ami Bar-On**

*The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Howard Engel on the death of his wife,*  
**Sylvia Polokoff Engel**

*The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to Mary Goldenberg on the death of her mother,*  
**Christina Louise Nugent**

*The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to the family of*  
**Claire Shefftz**



### DEADLINES

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

| ISSUE                    | DEADLINE     |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| December 4 .....         | November 23* |
| December 18 .....        | December 9   |
| January 1-14, 2021 ..... | December 21* |
| January 15-28.....       | January 6    |

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Off the Shelf

# Biblical commentary

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

What makes studying the Bible so endlessly fascinating is that there's always something new to learn – an interpretation that takes you by surprise or a close study that offers new insights. When authors approach the text from different angles, they illuminate aspects of the verses that might have previously been overlooked. This is true of two recent works: "Genesis: A Parasha Companion" by Rabbi David Fohrman (Maggid Books) offers insights into the first book of the Bible, while Israel Drazin focuses closely on one biblical character in "Who Really Was the Biblical Elijah?" (Geffen Publishing House).

Fohrman wants readers to start by going back to the basics: carefully reading the original text without commentary or *midrash* (rabbinic stories). It's not that he ultimately ignores these; he quotes from commentary throughout the book. However, he wants readers to study the text itself – the actual words used – before trying to interpret them. This also means trying to read the text as if they don't know what is going to happen next – something that can be hard to do. But not assuming something had to happen in a particular way changes one's interpretation of what the character was trying to accomplish.

Readers don't have to agree with Fohrman's interpretations to enjoy his wonderful ideas about the text. For example, he looks at Rebecca and Jacob's deception of Isaac – when Jacob receives the blessing intended for Esau by pretending to be his brother. Yet, is that really what happened? Not according to Fohrman. He looks closely at the text to show that at no time does Rebecca suggest that Jacob pretend to be his brother. That was not part of her plan, but rather something Jacob did on his own. It's not possible to do justice to the verse-by-verse interpretation Fohrman offers, but it's fascinating to read.

The author also features a technique called an *atbash* pattern or chiasm to analyze several *parashot*. He notes that, in this pattern, "the first element of the text is a kind of mirror for its last element; the second element of the text mirrors the second-to-last element, the third the third-to-last, and so forth." Using graphics and color coding, he shows what occurred after God told Abram to circumcise himself and his family. The center of the chiasm points to the message offered by this section: that God not only entered into the covenant with Abram, but with all the children of Abraham (as he was now called) throughout the ages.

It's impossible to do justice to "Genesis" in a short review because understanding Fohrman's interpretation often depends on analyzing all the details offered by the text. That doesn't mean his work is difficult to understand. On the contrary, he writes as if he is talking to his readers and gives step-by-step explanations for his reasoning. This includes his interesting idea of how the Noah story shows the Earth moving from a God-based world to a human-based one, and an intriguing discussion of what actually happened to Joseph after his brothers threw him into a pit. Readers can enjoy this work on their own, but they may find themselves eager to share the insights it offers with others in Bible study groups, classes and discussions.

While Fohrman covers a wider sweep, Drazin concentrates on one character: the prophet Elijah. He notes that, in contemporary times, people think of Elijah as the wonderful and kind person who appears at a *bris* and visits homes during the Passover seder. However, this is far from the portrayal of Elijah offered in the biblical book of Kings. Drazin looks at Elijah's story verse by verse to present a far less positive view of the prophet, including what he sees as God's criticism of Elijah's behavior.

In fact, Drazin posits that Elijah may have been unfamiliar with the Torah: "[Elijah] never mentions [the See "Biblical" on page 6



Off the Shelf

# Exploring the nature of God

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines theology as "the study of religious faith, practice, and experience, especially the study of God and of God's relation to the world." Over the centuries, much blood has been shed due to the different ways people understand the nature of God, yet few do a systematic study of these competing theologies. Exploring and understanding different Jewish theologies is the purpose behind Rabbi Kari H. Tuling's "Thinking about God: Jewish Views" (The Jewish Publication Society).

Why does Tuling think it's important to study different Jewish theological viewpoints? She notes that "theology defines what happens in our lives. To give an example: If you believe in miracles, then miracles can happen in your

life. And if you do not, then they cannot. This is not a form of magical thinking but a statement about the role of belief. Our conceptions shape the contours of our world." In other words, our theology shapes the way we see the world and what happens in our lives. To better understand how we think and feel, we need to understand the way we define the role of God in the world.

"Thinking About God" is divided into four sections that ask, "Is God the Creator and Source of All Being – Including Evil?"; "Does God Have a Personality – or Is God an Impersonal Force?"; "Does God Redeem – or Might God Not Redeem?"; and "Is God a Covenantal Partner and Lawgiver – or Might These Roles Be Rethought in

the Modern Age?" Each of these sections are divided into chapters that offer more specific questions relating to the topic. For example, when discussing the idea of covenant, Tuling explores the relationship between God and Israel, the question of whether the covenant is binding and how the idea of revealed law should be understood.

Every chapter opens with three questions, which are followed by different Jewish writings on the topic. Included are biblical and liturgical writings on the subject, followed by rabbinic, medieval and modern thoughts. Tuling presents the complete text she is discussing before breaking it into small sections and unpacking the ideas included. At the See "Nature" on page 9

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# On the Jewish food scene

## Holiday fun with a cookie house

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

When I was growing up, Hanukkah was not a major celebration. Forget eight days' worth of gifts; we received one present and had the pleasure of listening to my mother tell us how all she received when she was young was a quarter and an orange. The major Hanukkah activity was lighting candles in the menorah. We didn't make Hanukkah crafts, nor did we decorate for the holiday.

Fast forward several decades: I walked into a holiday party at Broome Developmental Center and the room looked wonderful. It contained more Hanukkah decorations in one place than I'd ever seen: plush dreidels, some of which played music; decorative menorahs; and Hanukkah-themed garlands. The coworker who helped me organize Jewish celebrations found them at a major department store, something that would never have happened when I was young.

That may explain why I jumped at a chance to receive a do-it-yourself Chanukah House cookie decorating kit from the Manischewitz Company. The cookie house kit is part of



Charlotte and Sophie Coker posed with the cookie Chanukah House they decorated.

a promotion by Manischewitz to raise awareness for the PJ Library, which sends free Jewish books to households in the U.S. and Canada. Included in the kit is a subscription card for PJ Library. Books for two age groups are available for this year's holiday: for the youngest crowd, "Hanukkah" by Roni Schotter with illustrations by Maryline Hafner; and for the slightly older crowd (and the young at heart), "Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins" by Eric Kimmel with illustrations by Trina Schart Hyman. The cookie kit and the books (which are not included in the kit, but can be ordered separately) sounded like a lot of fun.

Since I've never made a cookie (or a gingerbread) house before I invited some friends to help. Being together during the pandemic is not easy, especially in the fall and winter months because of the need to meet outdoors. However, we were lucky with the weather. It was so nice outside that we didn't have to wear a coat. My friends had thought of wearing their Hanukkah sweaters, but it was too warm for them. I, on the other hand, did wear a pair of Hanukkah socks to get into the holiday mood.

What makes this cookie house a Jewish one? First of all, it's kosher. Second, it includes two Jewish stars and two menorahs, which are not edible, as part of the decorations. Anything else Jewish is left to the person decorating. The kit is very convenient since everything you need to put the house together is included. Plus, there is a plastic stand with slots to keep the house from falling over. I'm told that is not featured in every cookie/gingerbread house. The directions on the box were easy to follow and included photos with the step-by-step instructions.

How did it come out? You can look at the photos included with this article to see. I think we did – well, they did almost all the work – a nice job. We didn't eat the house, although it is edible. (I had another snack for us.) As I write, it's sitting on my kitchen counter reminding me that Hanukkah will arrive in a few weeks. It also serves as



The finished cookie Chanukah House.

a symbol that – pandemic or no pandemic – we can still create light during some of the darkest days of the year.

The cookie Chanukah House is available in stores and online. The PJ Library website, [PJLibrary.org](http://PJLibrary.org), has information to help parents celebrate the holiday with their children. Its Hanukkah Hub features crafts, recipes and information about the holiday. There is also a children's podcast, "Have I Got a Story for You," featuring Jewish folktales. All PJ Library resources are available at no cost.

### Biblical . . . . . Continued from page 4

Torah]. He never castigates the people for violating Torah law and... he violated the law concerning sacrifices" by offering sacrifices at an inappropriate place. The author also suggests that King Ahab was not as evil a person as he is often portrayed – even noting the time the king and prophet were not at odds. Drazin shows how it was Jezebel and Elijah who had something in common – they both performed a mass murder of priests, although those priests served different gods.

The author notes that little is actually known about Elijah, including what the word Tishbite (used as part of Elijah's name) actually means. For Drazin, the Torah

portrays Elijah "as a loner, an elusive wanderer, appearing and disappearing at a moment's notice." He is only called a prophet twice: once in the book of Kings (1 Kings 18:36) and another time in the book of 2 Chronicles (21:12). The author questions how Elijah can be considered a prophet when he never performed the task that defines a prophet: Elijah never predicts the future. Drazin also believes that the Torah does not see Elijah of the book of Kings as being associated with the concept of a messiah, something that is wrongly attributed to him from the mention of an Elijah in the biblical book of Malachi. The author sees no connection between Malachi's Elijah and the Elijah who

appears in the book of Kings. The legends many people know of Elijah are post-biblical and have little to do with the person presented in the biblical text.

"Who Really Was the Biblical Elijah?" is well done, but a little dry. Drazin sticks closely to the text, although he does offer some personal commentary on zealotry, of which he disapproves. Those who are only familiar with the legendary Elijah will be surprised to learn about the Elijah who appears in the book of Kings. Anyone interested in exploring Elijah or debating whether or not Elijah will be the forerunner of the messiah will find much to debate in Drazin's work.

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## Off the Shelf

### A gift from Elie Wiesel

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

During the fall season, publishers produce gift books – those works many people won't buy for themselves but which they think make great presents. That's clearly the case with "The Tale of a Niggun" by Elie Wiesel, illustrated by Mark Podwal and with an introduction by Wiesel's son, Elisha (Schocken Books). The work was recently rediscovered in a book of essays written to honor of one of Wiesel's professors. It's more short story than essay, though, and is printed in short, broken lines as if it were a poem. This beautifully designed work is an unusual gift due to the nature of the story it tells.

The tale takes place in an unnamed ghetto during the Holocaust on the night before Purim. The Nazis have told ghetto leaders they have 24 hours to turn over 10 Jews, who will die to avenge the deaths of Haman's 10 sons. If they don't turn over the 10 men, then the Nazis have threatened to kill all those living in the ghetto. The leaders are distraught and

turn to their rabbi for guidance. The rabbi spends the night searching for answers and, in mystical moments, talks to great and wise rabbis from over the centuries. The answer finally given is wise, moving and horrifying at the same time.

The book includes a glossary, which gives short biographies of the rabbis mentioned, along with information about related Jewish holidays and name places. It's possible to appreciate the work without knowing anything about the rabbis, but those familiar with the theology they represent will better understand their answers.

"The Tale of a Niggun" is obviously not your typical holiday gift. Yet, as heartbreaking as it is, it also portrays the way Jews have survived those who've sought to destroy us over the centuries. Although the story takes place the night before Purim, the tale is also relevant to Hanukkah as we keep the flame of Judaism alive during the darkest days of the year.

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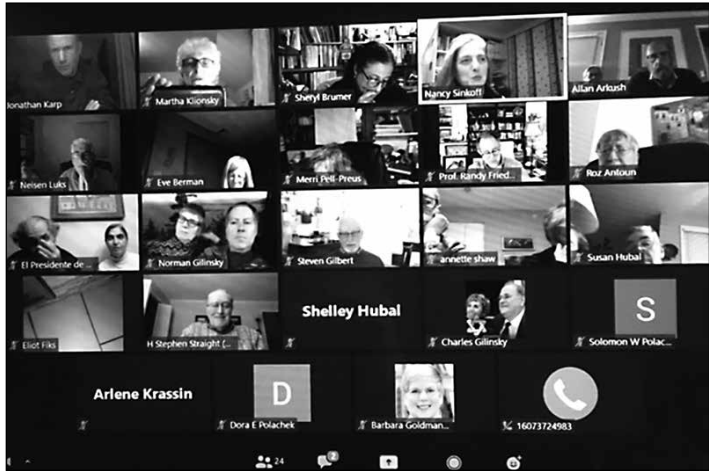
# CJS fall programs



Professor Nancy Sinkoff spoke about "From Left to Right: Lucy Dawidowicz and the Representation of the Holocaust" to the CJS audience via Zoom on October 29.



Professor Magda Teter discussed her book "Blood Libel: On The Trail of an Antisemitic Myth" with the CJS audience via Zoom on November 5.



At left: A screenshot of some of those attending the October 29 CJS program.



At left: A screenshot of some of those attending the November 5 CJS program.

# Global Day of Jewish Learning



At least 25 people attended the virtual program "Human Dignity - K'vod Habriot," which was part of this year's Global Day of Jewish Learning on November 8. Member of Beth David Synagogue, Temple Concord and Temple Israel studied with Rabbis Geoffrey Brown, Barbara Goldman-Wartell and Zev Silber. Shown is a screenshot of some of those who attended the program.

# IsraAID Guatemala brings relief in wake of Storm Eta

**By Abigail Klein Leichman**  
(Israel21c via JNS) - Israeli humanitarian aid agency IsraAID has launched an emergency response in Guatemala following Tropical Storm Eta, which has killed more than 150 people and affected the lives of some 200,000 residents of the Central American country.

IsraAID's locally based team arrived in Alta Verapaz, among the worst-affected areas, on November 9. The team immediately began offering psychological first aid, medical support, relief items, hygiene kits and water filters.

IsraAID has had a permanent team on the ground in Guatemala since the 2018 Volcán de Fuego eruption, which caused significant

damage across the southern area of Escuintla. This year, IsraAID Guatemala has provided guidance on psychosocial support and resilience to Guatemalan households in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, along with hygiene promotion and food distributions for vulnerable communities.

Eta first made landfall in neighboring Nicaragua on November 3, before moving slowly throughout the region, bringing heavy rains, flooding, and mudslides. Tens of thousands were evacuated from their homes and more than 7,000 are in temporary shelters.

"Alongside its immediate emergency response, IsraAID's team will perform See "Storm" on page 12

# CHANUKAH Greetings

Deadline: November 25 (December 4 issue)

Once again this year, *The Reporter* is inviting its readers and local organizations to extend Chanukah greetings to the community by purchasing a Chanukah greeting ad, which will appear in our December 4 issue (Deadline: November 25). You may choose from the designs, messages and sizes shown here - more are available. You may also choose your own message, as long as it fits into the space of the greeting you select. (Custom designs available upon request.) The price of the small greeting is \$20 (styles B, E & F), the larger one is \$38 (styles A, C & D) and the largest one (style G) is \$74.

To ensure that your greeting is published or for more information on additional styles, sizes & designs, please contact Colin Porter at e-mail [advertising@thereporter.org](mailto:advertising@thereporter.org). Checks can be made payable to *The Reporter* and sent to: *The Reporter*, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

# CHANUKAH Greetings

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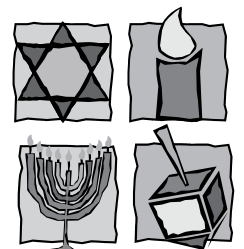
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 shine in  
 your hearts  
 forever



Your name(s)

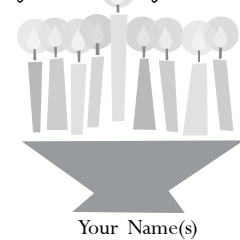
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Style F - \$20  
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YOUR NAME(S)

# Book examines Black Jewish indigeneity in South Africa

By Kate Blackwood

In 1996, a DNA study claimed to confirm what the Lemba, a group of people living in South Africa, already knew from centuries-old oral history and cultural traditions: They are Jews.

## Nature. . . .Continued from page 4

end of the section, she includes a summary of the different viewpoints so that readers can better compare the ideas offered by each theologian.

Tuling offers so much material that it's impossible to summarize the many topics she covers. One example is her discussion of whether God has a bodily form. She notes that while the biblical text suggests that God has a corporal body those verses could also be read metaphorically. Jewish liturgy moved from a theology in which God needs a physical, animal sacrifice to one where prayer suffices for forgiveness. Rabbinic texts often speak as if God has a body, but Tuling notes that doesn't mean they took that idea literally. Rather, their focus was on deciding God's place in the world. During medieval times, Maimonides rejected the idea that God has corporal form, even going as far as to say that no human words can describe what God is. It's only possible to describe what God is not – creating an image of God by using negative phrases. Two modern theologians prefer to talk about humans' relationship to God, rather than God's specific form (or lack of form). Martin Buber looked for ways to connect directly to God in a spiritual way, while Arthur Green suggests that there is no separation between God and humans – that from a mystical viewpoint, we are all part of God.

The differing viewpoints offered in "Thinking About God" are fascinating. Tuling's book works for solitary readers, although it would also be an excellent text for a class or discussion group. She does note something very important in her conclusion: "At the heart of it, all theologies in this book – and our own – are actually personal explanations for the world, defining what could be meaningful, what might become possible, and how everything we experience or imagine might come true." Spiritual seekers and those interested in the development of Jewish theology will find much to enjoy.

## Brandeis. . .Continued from page 5

echoed Brandeis' advice and ideology concerning the importance of regulating and curtailing the predatory power of large corporations by encouraging competition. Wilsonian legislation and programs – including tariff reduction, anti-trust legislation and establishment of the Federal Reserve banking system – reflect the influence of Brandeis.

A generation latter, Brandeis significantly impacted the reform legislation of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's Second Hundred Days of 1935. Cognizant of the imperatives of separation of powers, Justice Brandeis largely interacted with FDR's New Deal through Harvard-connected intermediaries, particularly future Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter. Such New Deal initiatives as the Securities and Exchange Commission and Public Utility Holding Company Act bear the Brandeis imprint. FDR displayed great respect for Brandeis, calling him "Old Isaiah." Indeed, in his later years, Brandeis possessed the bearing and moral gravitas of an Old Testament prophet. Yet, when FDR attempted to pack the court with pro-New Deal justices, Brandeis helped block this infringement on separation of powers.

Into his middle years, Brandeis, scion of an assimilated Louisville, KY, family of German descent, defined his Jewishness primarily as a matter of familial lineage and commitment to ethical precepts sans cultural, associational, theological or institutional affiliation. Brandeis' arbitration of the 1910 New York garment workers' strike commenced his sustained personal involvement with fellow Jews, including progeny of the recent mass immigration from Eastern Europe. In 1914, Brandeis accepted the presidency of the Provisional Executive Committee for Zionist Affairs. Given Brandeis' stature and prestige, his embrace of Zionism – support for a Jewish homeland in Palestine – provided impetus for other American Jews to do likewise. Moreover, Brandeis provided a strong intellectual statement that American patriotism and Zionism were compatible, even synergistic, as evidenced by his speech to a conference of Reform rabbis in 1915: "Let no American imagine that Zionism is inconsistent with Patriotism. Multiple loyalties are objectionable only if they are inconsistent. A man is a better citizen of the United States for being also a loyal citizen of his state, and of his city; for being loyal to his family, and to his profession or trade; for being loyal to his college or his lodge... Every American Jew who aids in advancing the Jewish settlement in Palestine, though he feels that neither he nor his descendants will ever live there, will likewise be a better man and a better American for doing so."

For American Jews, Brandeis' greatest legacy is perhaps that melding of American and Jewish identities.

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.

In "Genetic Afterlives," Noah Tamarkin, assistant professor of anthropology in the College of Arts and Sciences at Cornell University, writes about the Lemba with an ethnographic approach, opening larger questions about the relationship between genetics, citizenship, race and origins.

"These late-20<sup>th</sup> century DNA studies catapulted the Lemba into two international debates, one about the racial and religious parameters of Jewishness, and the other about the claims and implications of genomic science," Tamarkin wrote. "We think that DNA can tell us whether the Lemba are really Jews. This book shows instead that DNA provides more questions than answers."

In the book, Tamarkin analyzes how Lemba people have negotiated their relationship to the Jewish Diaspora, African indigeneity and South African citizenship, both before and after genetic tests connected them with Jewish genetic ancestry. "In doing so," he wrote, "it calls into question where and with whom we locate the meaning and significance of DNA."

Long interested in questions of identity and representation, and of social and racial justice, Tamarkin said he was drawn to study the Lemba as a way to think about the complexities of Jewish identity – "questions about who and what is a Jew, and where are Jews, and questions about how people are grappling in post-apartheid South Africa in the wake of having been subjected to racial oppression their entire lives."

Doing research for his ethnographic study, Tamarkin lived with families in Lemba communities. He did whatever they did: talking with neighbors, watching kids play soccer, going to work with people. He also conducted interviews with Lemba leaders.

F.C. Raulinga, a Lemba historian and longtime general secretary of the Lemba Cultural Association, shared with

Tamarkin an extensive oral history of the Lemba that refers back to the destruction in 586 B.C.E. of the Temple in Jerusalem. Lemba keep this heritage alive by talking about their culture, history, religion and genealogies during frequent events, particularly funerals and annual cultural association meetings.

In the Lemba history, Tamarkin wrote, origins are multiple, movements are multi-directional and the past is organized around places of settlement and the lines demarcating "Lemba."

"It explicitly rejects the idea of singular origins and instead emphasizes how identities are formed and re-formed over time, in relation to multiple places and events, and in conversation with interested others," Tamarkin wrote. "In contrast to the claims of genetic ancestry, this aligns with decades of research by historians and anthropologists."

There is an existing literature about the Lemba, Tamarkin said, much of it written by researchers trying to determine "who they really are and where they're really from." The Lemba with whom Tamarkin spoke are frustrated with this literature, he said, for making proclamations about them, rather than engaging with them.

In contrast, Tamarkin said he's trying with his book to consider whole people – not just genetic facts about them – when determining genetic ancestry. Research subjects' knowledge about their identity and origins must be considered alongside DNA, he said.

"I argue that it is through former research subjects' genetic knowledge production that we can begin to grasp why DNA so powerfully compels us," Tamarkin wrote, "and what that might say about contemporary political belonging."

Kate Blackwood is a writer for the College of Arts and Sciences at Cornell University.



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## Weekly Parasha

Toldot, Genesis 25:19-28:9

# Passing on values and mores

RABBI AARON SLONIM, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ROHR CHABAD CENTER OF BINGHAMTON

Virtually every commentator on the Torah addresses the obvious redundancy in the first verse of this week's *parasha*: "These are the offspring of Isaac, son of Abraham, Abraham begot Isaac." All seek to crystalize the inherent message to the reader.

Rashi states, "Since the text wrote Isaac, the son of Abraham, it became necessary to state Abraham begot Isaac, for the scorners of the generation were saying: 'From Abimelech did Sarah conceive since for so many years

she tarried with Abraham and did not conceive from him.' What did the Holy One blessed be He do? He formed the features of Isaac's face similar to Abraham and thereby attested to everyone 'Abraham begot Isaac' and that is why it is written here Isaac was the son of Abraham for there is testimony that Abraham begot Isaac."

The *midrash* observes that there are children who are ashamed of their parents and parents who are ashamed of their children. Not so in the case of Abraham and Isaac,

remarks the *midrash*. Isaac was proud to be the son of Abraham and Abraham was equally proud to be the father of Isaac, as is stated: "Isaac son of Abraham – Abraham begot Isaac."

Nachmanides explains this verse according to the more literal sense of the narrative. In his opinion, this verse is connected to a previous verse (25:12), which had identified Ishmael as "the son of Abraham whom Hagar, the See "Values" on page 11

## Congregational Notes

### 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 November and December. There will be a new Zoom link for Friday night services for December.

Friday, November 27: at 7 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Rachel Esserman and Jason Flatt at <https://bit.ly/31009vw>.

Saturday, November 28: No religious school or Torah study. At 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" at <https://binghamton.zoom.us/j/526246866>.

Thursdays, December 3, 10 and 17: Lunch 'n Learn programs from East Lansing, MI, Congregation Shaarey Zedek and Rabbi Amy Bigman. 11 am-noon. Topics are December 3 – "Teaching the Holocaust and Antisemitism in 2020," December 10 – "How Samuel David Rocker and Die Yiddische Velt Turned Jewish Immigrants into Jewish Americans," and December 17 – "Jewish Werewolves and What We Can Learn From Them." For more information, see the article on page 3 or contact the temple office.

From December 10-18: In person Hanukkah lightings each night at 5:30 pm in front of Temple Concord and the Kilmer Mansion, and lighting Hanukkah menorahs together on Zoom each evening at 7 pm.

Friday, December 11: at 7:30 pm, candle lighting and Shabbat services with Cantor Ellen Dreskin.

Saturday, December 12: at 9 am, religious school; from 9:30 am-12:30 pm, "Chevruta on Hanukkah: Communities collaborating in study," choose a study session with different CCAR rabbis. At 9:30 am, Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell will teach materials for Human Rights Shabbat. At 4 pm, "Shards Putting the Pieces Together" performance by Evan Kent on Zoom followed by Zoom Havdalah and candle lighting at 5:30 pm. Contact Temple Concord for the Zoom information.

Sunday, December 13: at 7 pm, Temple Concord 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Program including a slideshow and toast, with candle lighting on Zoom; and at 8 pm, World Union for Progressive Judaism Hanukkah Celebration. Contact Temple Concord for online link. To register for the 8 pm event, visit <https://wupj.org/chanukah/registration>.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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  
 Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen  
 Sisterhood President: Julie Paige  
 Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
 Administrative Assistant: Jane Griffith  
 Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced.  
 Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sundays and legal holidays).  
 Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday afternoons, 3:45-5:45 pm. The 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/HappeningAtTBE](http://www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE).

### 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.

### 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

### 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.

### 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, November 20, light candles before ..... 4:19 pm  
 Saturday, November 21, Shabbat ends ..... 5:19 pm  
 Friday, November 27, light candles before ..... 4:32 pm  
 Saturday, November 28, Shabbat ends ..... 5:32 pm  
 Friday, December 4, light candles before ..... 4:25 pm  
 Saturday, December 5, Shabbat ends ..... 5:25 pm

### 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, November 21, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Genesis 25:19-28:9 and the haftarah is Malachi 1:1-2:7. At 6 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, November 22, at 12:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom. From 2-4 pm, Sisterhood opening program "Family Legacy Collage Workshop" with Flora Rosefsky on Zoom. Reservations are required. For more information, see the article on page 3.

On Saturday, November 28, Shacharit services will be held at 10:30 am via Zoom. The Torah portion is Genesis 28:10-32:3 and the haftarah is Hosea 12:13-14:10. At 6 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom. Both will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown.

On Sunday, November 29, at 12:30 pm, Rabbi Geoffrey Brown will lead Torah study services via Zoom.

The temple office will be closed Wednesday, November 25-Friday, November 27, for the Thanksgiving holiday.

There will be an Executive Board meeting on Tuesday, December 1, at 7 pm, on Zoom.

### Temple Brith Sholom

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

### 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](http://www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership).



# Resources

life stories – either to just preserve memories, or for their family to read. It will be held on Mondays, December 7, 14, 21 and 28, from 10:30 am-noon. The cost is \$99. For more information or to register, visit [www.eventbrite.com/e/have-you-ever-wanted-to-write-your-life-stories-tickets-125523721831](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/have-you-ever-wanted-to-write-your-life-stories-tickets-125523721831).

◆ To find a variety of virtual events for the current week, check the list at Jewish Journal, <https://jewishjournal.com/streaming-guide/>.

◆ The National Library of Israel offers “The Reading Room,” a new virtual space that offers live lectures, conversations and interviews via Zoom, as well as a range of previously recorded events. To find English speaking events that have already occurred, visit <https://live-events.nli.org.il/english>.

◆ The Jewish Museum of Florida – FIU will hold a virtual authors’ talk “The Tuesday Memoir Group” on Sunday, November 22, from 3:30-4:30 pm. Members of the Tuesday Memoir Group – Jo Anne Bander, Rachel Blechman, Joy Malakoff, Tamara Nixon and Judith Wurtman – will talk about their new book. For more information or to register, visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/jmoffiu/event/822215/>.

◆ The Jewish Museum of Florida – FIU will hold its Annual Holiday Klezmer Music Concert, featuring the music of Heavy Shtetl, on Sunday, December 6, from 3-4:30 pm. The cost to attend the Zoom concert is \$18 for JMOF-FIU members and \$25 for non-members. For more information or to register, visit <https://secure.qgiv.com/for/jmoffiu/event/822197/>.

◆ Friends of the IDF will hold several virtual events as part of “FIDF Engage: Stories Behind the Headline” series including “Unearthing Terror’s Tunnels” with Col. Yuval Moshe, chief of the IDF Engineering Corps – Southern Command, on Tuesday, December 1, at 1 pm; “Fighting Media Bias against Israel” with Lt. Col. Jonathan Conricus on Tuesday, December 8, 1 pm; “Cyber Warfare: A New Dimension in Modern War” with Maj. Gen. (Res.) Nadav Padan, former head of IDF Central Command, on Tuesday, December 22, at 1 pm; and “The Northern Border: Exposed” on Tuesday, December 29, at 1 pm, speaker to be announced. For more information or to register, visit [www.fidf.org/covid19/engage](http://www.fidf.org/covid19/engage).

◆ The Center for Jewish History will hold the virtual program

“Family History Today: What’s New with Yad Vashem’s ShoahNamesDatabase?” on Thursday, December 3, at noon. Serafima Velkovich, an archival researcher in the Reference and Information Department of the Yad Vashem, will highlight the Central Database’s new features and sources. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/tickets/family-history-today-2020-12-03>.

◆ Pardes will offer the virtual “Awakening in Challenging Times: A Pardes and Or HaLev Jewish Spirituality Retreat” from December 27-January 1. Most of the retreat will be spent in silence, meditation and yoga, including meditation instruction and questions and answers. There will also be daily teachings as well as text study and discussion, and additional spiritual practices that complement and support meditation practice. For more information or to register, visit [www.pardes.org.il/program/na/awakening-in-challenging-times-a-pardes-or-halev-jewish-spirituality-retreat/](http://www.pardes.org.il/program/na/awakening-in-challenging-times-a-pardes-or-halev-jewish-spirituality-retreat/).

◆ The Hadassah-Brandeis Institute will offer several virtual events: “Ruby of Cochin: A Malayali Jewish Woman of Kerala, India” on Monday, November 30, from 12:30-1:30 pm; HBI Virtual Conversations with Anna Solomon, author of “The Book of V,” on Wednesday, December 2, from 2-3 pm; and “Studio Israel: Conversation Series” with Vered Nissim, an Israeli based visual artist, on Thursday, December 10, from 9-10 am. For more information or to register, visit [www.brandeis.edu/hbi/events/index.html](http://www.brandeis.edu/hbi/events/index.html).

◆ The Diller Tikkun Olam Awards honors Jewish teens, 13-19 years old, who demonstrate leadership and engagement in projects that embody the values of *tikkun olam*, “repairing the world.” Up to 15 recipients will be awarded \$36,000 each to further their project or for their education. For more information, visit [www.dillerteenawards.org/apply-and-nominate/](http://www.dillerteenawards.org/apply-and-nominate/).

◆ Classrooms Without Borders is an independently funded program of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh that offers a variety of virtual lectures. Upcoming lectures include “Dr. Felix Klein: ‘Jewish Life is a Part of Germany’” on Monday, November 23, at noon; and

◆ “Menachem Begin: Peace and War” post-film discussion with film director Levi Zini on Thursday, December 3, at 3 pm. For more information, to register for programs, visit <https://classroomswithoutborders.org/events/>.

◆ The Yiddish Book Center will offer several virtual events: “Keeping It in the Family: Yiddish Writers and Their Legacies” on Thursday, December 3, at 7 pm; “How Folkways Records Planted the Seeds of the Yiddish Renaissance,” with Hankus Netsky on Thursday, December 17, at 7 pm; and “The Extraordinary Voyages of the Yiddish Jules Verne,” with Sebastian Schulman on Thursday, January 7, at 7 pm, which will explore how Verne’s Yiddish translators reshaped the writer. For more information or to register, visit [www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events-and-store/virtual-public-programs-calendar](http://www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events-and-store/virtual-public-programs-calendar).

◆ The Jewish Studies Department at Cornell University

will hold the virtual conference “Di Linke: the Yiddish Immigrant Left from Popular Front to Cold War” in December. The conference will explore the complex history of the Jewish People’s Fraternal Order. Webinars include Sunday, December 6: “America: Communism, the Jewish Left, and Unity” at 1 pm; Monday, December 7: “A Fraternal Society with Emmas: Mutual Aid, Insurance, Acculturation, Civil Rights and Feminism” at 3 pm; Tuesday, December 8: “Virtual Tour of the Archives and Library” at 3 pm; Wednesday, December 9: “The Internationale” at 3 pm; Thursday, December 10: “Kultur Arbet: Creativity and Repression” at 3 pm; and Monday, December 14: “The Art of Resistance” at 3 pm. Registration is required and can be made at <https://jewishstudies.cornell.edu/yiddish-immigrant-left>.

◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will hold “Hello Gorgeous: An Hour or so with Fanny Brice – the consummate performer!” on Zoom on Monday, December 21, from 7-8:15 pm. Dr. Sharon Keller will discuss Fanny Brice’s career as an American comedienne, singer, theatre and film actress. For more information or to register, visit [www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/fanny-brice-talk-on-zoom](http://www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/fanny-brice-talk-on-zoom).

◆ HUC Connect Online Learning will offer several classes: “Thinking Jewish in a Changing America,” on Tuesday, November 24, at 1 pm; “American Jewry: Where Do We Go From Here?” on Tuesday, December 1, at 6:30 pm; “Arguing about Immigration,” on Tuesday, December 8, at 6:30 pm; and “The Supreme Court in Transition,” on Tuesday, December 15, at 6 pm. For more information or to register, visit <http://huc.edu/registration-huc-connect-online-learning>.

◆ The American Sephardi Federation will present “Sephardic Culinary History with Chef Hélène Jawhara-Piñer: Hanukkah Special; Challah, Candles and Bimuelos (Two-Ways)” on Sunday, November 29, at 10 am. For more information or to register, visit <https://americansephardi.org/event/sep-hardic-culinary-history-with-chef-helene-jawhara-piner-4/>.

◆ Centro Primo Levi will hold the webinar “Sephardic Journeys Through the Twentieth Century” on Monday, November 30, at 5 pm. Sarah Stein will speak about her book “Family Papers: A Sephardic Journey Through the Twentieth Century” with Aron Rodrigue of Stanford University. For more information or to register, visit [https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_H5vqRcnS\\_CcF0-3LKLsag](https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_H5vqRcnS_CcF0-3LKLsag).

◆ Ritualwell will hold several courses in December and January: “Lighting the Path Within: Jewish Mysticism and Meditation” led by Hadar Cohen on Tuesdays, December 1, 8 and 15, from 7-8:15 pm; “Femme Fatale or Fierce Woman Warrior? Writing Feminist Midrash” led by Sivan Rotholz on Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16 and 23, from 7-8:15 pm; and “In Their Own Words: American Jews and Social Justice” led by Dr. Reena Sigman Friedman on Tuesdays, January 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2021, from 7:30-8:45 pm. For more information or to register, visit, <https://www.ritualwell.org/learn>.

For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, [www.thereporter.org](http://www.thereporter.org).

# Values

Continued from page 10

Egyptian servant of Sarah, bore to Abraham.” The verse under discussion comes shortly after to establish and identify Isaac as the primary son of Abraham. The Torah reverts to the ancestral head of a family when it records the genealogy of distinguished people. In this case, it is to give honor to Isaac.

The Lubavitcher Rebbe saw in this verse an important lesson to parents and children, and, in a more general sense, to Jewish educators. In raising children, the Rebbe explained, responsible parents seek to pass on the values and mores which they hold to be true and important. Hopefully, their efforts reap success and the worthiness of the parents and the teachings they espoused are reflected in the children. In Hebrew and Yiddish, this is referred to as *yichus*, lineage or pedigree. This is implied in the words “Isaac son of Abraham.”

However, continues the Rebbe, as important as it is that the children be a positive reflection of their parents, there is yet a higher aspiration. That is, that the child not rely upon his or her past for support, but rather become recognized as an independent entity with strengths and virtues that are in and of themselves meritorious, *yichus*. The words Abraham begot Isaac teach us just this. Isaac grew to be a great and distinct force, a son in whom Abraham took tremendous pride and could point to as his *yichus*.

This teaching brings to mind a story concerning the great Magid of Mezritch. When the Magid was just a young boy, he and his widowed mother barely escaped alive from their home, which burned to the ground in front of their eyes. The little boy, in seeing his mother’s copious tears, sought to console her by pointing out that they were both safe. His mother explained that the source of her grief was an irretrievable treasure that the fire had consumed. Like most of that bygone era she had owned and cherished a *sefer hayichusin*, a book of genealogy, which documented her illustrious lineage. She explained to her son that now he would never have documentation of his great *yichus*. The young child, a future scion in Jewish life, turned to his mother and said, “Cry not my mother, the *yichus* will now begin with me!”

A dual-faceted approach to our Judaism is always needed. On the one hand, we must draw on our past, learn our history, proudly bear our legacy and constantly rededicate ourselves to our covenant with God at Sinai. In tandem with this approach, must be the realization of the responsibility we bear as the Jews of today. We cannot just get by. Judaism is not about survival or even continuity; it is more than anything else about growth. We must become a spiritual force to be reckoned with: we must write a glorious epoch in the history of the Jewish people, one which Abraham would be proud to “beget.”


The Baal Shem Tov was said to have stated: There is no future unless the past is vitally present. The past and a vital present that are inextricably bound are crucial for ensuring the future.

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

From JNS.org

**Israel, EU discuss rail link between Mediterranean, Gulf**

Israel and the European Union have begun talks regarding the possibility of creating a new rail link between the eastern Mediterranean and the Gulf states, Israel's Finance Ministry and central bank said on Nov. 16. The possible "regional peace railway" was brought up in the context of annual discussions that this year also focused on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, reported Reuters. The rail link would boost the economies of Israel, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. The Bank of Israel said the rail connection would be "shorter, faster, cheaper and safer" than currently used trade routes. The idea follows the recent historic peace agreements between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

**Report: Trump sought options to attack Iranian nuclear site**

U.S. President Donald Trump the week of Nov. 13 sought options for attacking the Natanz nuclear site in Iran, after the International Atomic Energy Agency reported an increase in the country's stockpile of nuclear material, sources told *The New York Times* on Nov. 16. According to the *NYT*, Vice President Mike Pence, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Acting Defense Secretary Christopher C. Miller and Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Gen. Mark A. Milley dissuaded Trump from pursuing such an option, on the grounds that an attack on Iran's nuclear facilities could escalate into a larger conflict. The IAEA had reported that Iran's uranium stockpile is 12 times larger than permitted under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action – the nuclear deal reached between the Islamic Republic and world powers in 2015 from which Trump withdrew in 2018 – and that the regime in Tehran was blocking access to a suspected site where nuclear activity had allegedly taken place. According to the IAEA report, Iran completed the transfer of a cascade of advanced centrifuges from a plant above ground to an underground site at Natanz.

**Anti-Jewish hate crimes increased by 14 percent in 2019, according to FBI report**

Jews were the most targeted demographic for hate crimes among religious groups in 2019, according to an FBI report released on Nov. 16. Out of the 1,650 religious-motivated hate crimes reported to the FBI, 60.3 percent, or almost 995, were anti-Jewish – a 2.5 percentage point increase from 2018. Last year consisted of numerous antisemitic attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions, from a lone gunman shooting at Chabad of Poway in Southern California in April 2019 on the last day of Passover, which left a 60-year-old woman dead, to a spree of anti-Jewish incidents in the New York metropolitan area. In 2019, antisemitic crimes increased 14 percent, according to the ADL.

**UAE national airline to start daily flights to Israel in March**

Ethihad Airways, the national airline of the United Arab Emirates, announced on Nov. 16 that it would begin operating daily flights to Tel Aviv in March. "Following the signing of the new bilateral agreement, Etihad is delighted to announce a direct link between these important cities," said Etihad Aviation Group Chief Operating Officer Mohammad al-Bulooki in a statement. "The commencement of scheduled flights is a historic moment and as an airline, cements Etihad's commitment to growing opportunities for trade and tourism not just between the two countries, but also within the region and beyond," he said. The flights are set to begin on March 28. The airline says they will connect Abu Dhabi to "key gateways across the Etihad network including China, India, Thailand and Australia." Dubai's budget airline, flydubai, has already started operating flights between

the two countries. A flydubai flight carrying Israeli tourists touched down the week of Nov. 13 at the Dubai International Airport.

**Second Israeli astronaut to head to ISS**

(*Israel Hayom* via JNS) – Eytan Stibbe, a former Israeli fighter pilot, will soon become the second astronaut in the country's history, the Israel Space Agency announced on Nov. 16 in a special televised statement from the President's Residence in Jerusalem. Stibbe is slated to take off for the International Space Station in late 2021 for a mission of a little more than a week. Israel's first astronaut, Ilan Ramon, and the six other members of the 2003 STS-107 mission of Space Shuttle Columbia were killed in a shuttle reentry disaster just 16 minutes before they were due to land back on Earth. Tal Ramon, his son, took part in the press conference at the President's Residence where Stibbe's space mission was announced. The 2021 mission is slated to last for 200 hours, which Stibbe is meant to use to conduct a series of experiments intended to advance Israeli technologies and scientific developments by researchers and startups, according to the ISA. Stibbe is slated to travel into space on a shuttle launched from Florida. His training is expected to begin early next year. "As a child, on dark nights I used to look up to the sky and wonder what's there beyond what I could see," Stibbe said in a statement. "It takes great courage for us to be able to release ourselves from that which ties us down, to leave gravity." Israeli President Reuven Rivlin said the announcement marked "a day of national joy, and great pride. An Israeli pilot with a blue-and-white flag embroidered on his shoulder will prove once again, as we have been showing here for 72 years, that even the sky is no limit for us." Rivlin lauded Stibbe as "Israel's representative in the human effort to understand the miraculous mechanism that enables life on this globe, and to crack the secrets of the universe. Go in peace, and return in peace."

**Argentina increases border security following tip of bomb plot against Jewish target**

Argentina announced on Nov. 14 that it is going to tighten security at its border with Paraguay after its embassy in Britain received an anonymous tip about a person possibly smuggling bomb-making materials into the country through that border. The tip warned about the transfer of ammonium nitrate "for a bomb with a Jewish objective," the Argentinean Security Ministry said in a statement reported by Reuters. Security authorities are investigating the individual mentioned in the tip. In 1992, the Israeli embassy in Buenos Aires was attacked with a car bomb, killing 29 people; in 1994, a truck bomb blew up the AMIA Jewish community center there, killing 85. Iran and its proxy Hezbollah were implicated in these attacks, and Hezbollah has used Paraguay as a base for its illicit financial operations.

**Israeli judoka Inbar Lanir wins European Championships**

(*Israel Hayom* via JNS) – Israeli judoka Inbar Lanir is the European Judo Champion in the under-23 category, having won a gold medal on Nov. 10. Lanir wasn't the only Israeli on the podium at the event: Maya Goshen won the silver medal. Women's team coach Shani Hershko said, "Gold and silver at the same championships, Inbar Lanir is the European champion – it's just amazing! To get to two final rounds in the European championships and to win gold is amazing, exciting, a historic achievement for the women's team and the Judo Association!"

**St. Lawrence U. student gov't adopts definition of antisemitism**

The student government at St. Lawrence University in New York unanimously passed a resolution on Nov. 11 that calls on the school's administration to adopt the widely accepted International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance definition of antisemitism. The IHRA definition says: "Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities." In a statement, Achiad Kalman, president of the Students Supporting Israel chapter at SLU, said the resolution's passage was "a big step toward combating antisemitism and ensuring the safety of the St. Lawrence Jewish community." Out of 2,392 undergraduates, about 50 are Jewish, or 2 percent of the undergraduate population. There are just 42 graduate students, with none recorded as Jewish, according to Hillel International.

**Iran moves first set of advanced centrifuges underground**

Iran completed the transfer of a cascade of advanced centrifuges from a plant above ground to an underground site, said a report released on Nov. 11 by the International Atomic Energy Agency. "They finished installing one of the three cascades, and they have started installing a second cascade," said a senior diplomat, according to Reuters. The move underground, which can protect the plant from aerial attacks, is another Iranian breach of the 2015 nuclear deal with world powers – notably, the agreement only allowed the underground plant at Natanz to use first-generation machines. The Trump administration withdrew from the deal in May 2018 and imposed harsh sanctions on Iran as part of a "maximum pressure" campaign. According to the IAEA, Iran has a quantity of low-enriched uranium much higher than the limit set under the deal.

**Rivlin mourns passing of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks**

Israeli President Reuven Rivlin on Nov. 8 mourned the passing of former U.K. Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, who died the morning of Nov. 7 at the age of 72 after recently being diagnosed with cancer. Sacks, prolific author of multiple books and articles on Jewish thought and religious tolerance, served as the chief rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth from 1991 to 2013, a position that has since been held by Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis. "I was deeply saddened to hear of the loss of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks ... a man of thought and a man of words, an original teacher and [a man] of creativity, a man of truth, whose generosity and compassion built bridges between people," Rivlin said in a statement. "Rabbi Sacks bravely faced difficult questions and always found the right words to illuminate the Torah and explain its paths," Rivlin continued. "We will always remember his warnings against violence in the name of God, and his belief that we have the power to heal a fractured world. ...My condolences to his family, to British Jewry, and to his many students. May his memory be a blessing."

**Storm. . . . . Continued from page 8**

a rapid needs assessment, focused on recovery needs in affected communi-



An IsraAID worker in Guatemala. (Photo: courtesy)

ties," said CEO Yotam Polizer. "Amid the current global pandemic, the recent storm creates a double disaster for Guatemalans. For the 7,125 displaced persons that have been sheltered in 86 centers, maintaining social distancing and regularly washing hands can be challenging. Our team will provide hygiene kits and other sanitation supplies to minimize the spread of the virus."

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This article was first published by Israel21c.

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