



# MA CHADASH!

# מה חדש!

What's New! The newsletter of Temple Shalom Synagogue Center, Auburn, Maine

ק"ק היכל שלום

April 2021, Nisan/Iyar 5781

## Temple Shalom Celebrates Passover, Experiences New Jewish Music and Old Jewish Dance, and Travels to Jewish Spain and Muslim Morocco!



### Lag B'Omer

Friday, April 30th, 6:30 P.M.

## FROM THE RABBI



Funny thing about us Jews is that we love to compete with each other for bragging rights to who is suffering the most!

From the Talmud: *“Rabbi Yochanan said: The task of providing a person’s food is twice as difficult as the suffering endured by a woman in childbirth.”* (Pesachim, 118a). So, working for a living—historically, a man’s job—is twice as difficult as childbirth! Lest you think this bit of “mansplaining” is plucked out of thin air, rest assured that Rabbi Yochanan (a man if you hadn’t already figured that out) has a biblical verse to “support”

his statement. When Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden, and Eve—and all future women—were eternally cursed with the pain of childbirth, The Torah uses a singular form of the word “pain.” However, when Adam—along with all future men—were cursed with eternally having to suffer to make a living, the word “pain” is in plural form. The minimum plural is two, so, if you think about it, Rabbi Yochanan was actually being generous to women by “limiting” his statement to only *twice as difficult!*

But it goes on. The Talmud next asserts that eking out a living from the soil is in fact more difficult than “redemption” and equivalent in difficulty to the splitting of the Red Sea! So, if you’re keeping score, the suffering of working men is twice as difficult as childbirth, somewhat more difficult than “redemption” and as difficult as splitting a sea. Rest assured, there are “supporting” biblical verses here as well.

But we’re not done yet. If we’re already talking about things that are very difficult and painful, obviously constipation had to enter into this discussion? The Talmud concludes by asserting that splitting the Red Sea and dealing with the pain of constipation are also equivalently difficult!

Asking what the point of this bizarre Talmudic discussion, is, I think, a fair question. Well, for one, it shows us that you cannot have a truly comprehensive and frank discussion of life’s suffering if you’re squeamish. This is a point that will surely be appreciated by those who attend our Shabbat morning services from the very beginning—when we get to talk about bodily functions--as well as Jewish grandmothers everywhere. Not to mention, that constipation was undoubtedly the closest the Rabbis ever came to experiencing the pain of childbirth!

Seriously though, what do childbirth, working for a living and dealing with constipation have in common? They are all situations where no matter how difficult and painful they get—you just can’t quit. The baby will come out, people need to eat, and that colon has to be cleared. In other words, as desperate as you might be to just throw in the towel and walk away, biological imperative will force you to see all of these through to the end.

Redemption, on the other hand, can seem optional. We all hope to bring the world to a better place, but it is so difficult—and so tempting to simply throw up our hands and give up trying. World peace, gender, class and race, divisive politics, hate, climate, hunger, disease, all seem so beyond our reach. These Talmudic comparisons, as bizarre and flawed as they may be, make the point that we can in fact do things that are immensely difficult—so overwhelmingly difficult and painful that we question our very ability to see them through. But we do. Because we have to.

Rabbi Sruli

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



The Central Artery tunnel in Boston is three lanes of (usually) fast moving bumper to bumper traffic. When driving through the Central Artery tunnel in Boston, I'm always leaning forward trying to see around the corner, to the light at the end of the tunnel. When I come into the light, I can relax my grip on the steering wheel and know that I am past the difficult part. But, I don't relax until I am out of the tunnel, as the danger of the tight three lane tunnel is there until we come into the light.

I'm sure most of you already know where this is going. Covid is the tunnel. My tight grip on the steering wheel is all of the precautions we have and are continuing to

take and endure.

Our fear and caution around Covid is dwindling. We can see that light at the end of the tunnel. Over 100,000,000 Americans have now been vaccinated. We may have herd immunity sometime this summer. But we are not there yet. We still need to keep a tight grip on the steering wheel. We still need to take precautions. We still need to mask up and social distance. Even if vaccinated, we cannot gather in large groups. We must remain vigilant.

Now more than ever, I think of Henry Gunther. He was the last American killed in WWI. He died one minute...just one minute...just 60 seconds before the armistice went into effect on November 11, 1918. How tragic would it be to drop our guard...to drop our precautions, after 16 months of vigilance and become one of the last to die during this pandemic? Hold onto that steering wheel just a bit longer.

Covid may never go away, but it will become manageable. With herd immunity and vigilance, it will become another disease we have to be aware of and take care with, but not one that will transform our lives. But, again, we are not there yet.

Remain vigilant and cautious. Do not release your grip until we really do get to the end of the tunnel...until we are in the light. Hang on. Get your vaccine. Be safe. Follow Maine and Federal CDC guidelines.

Don't die at the end this year long tragedy. Don't be Covid's Henry Gunther.

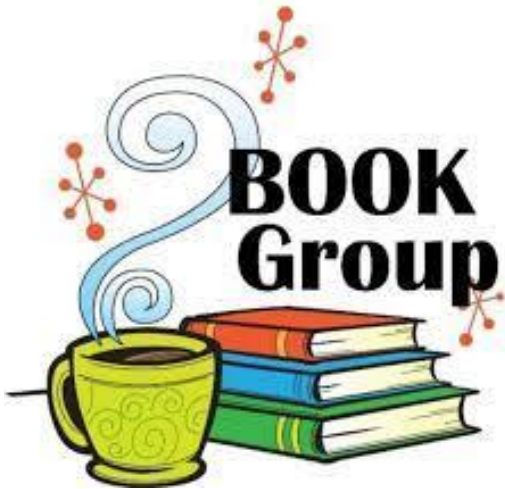
On another note, many have asked when we will open the Temple. At the last Board meeting, we decided to follow the Maine and Federal CDC guidelines. Chances are, when they indicate it is safe to re-open, we will re-open. I am very optimistic that we will be open for the High Holidays and probably sooner.

Be safe. Protect yourselves and others. Get a vaccine as soon as you can.

David Allen



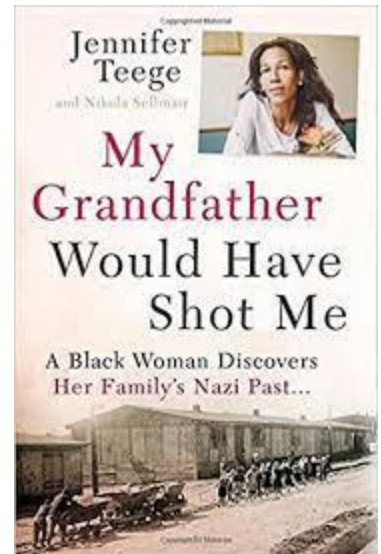
!!BOOK GROUP NEWS!!



Purim is celebrated in the month of Adar, so we read Anna Solomon’s *The Book of V* for our March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. The book is a retelling of the Esther and Vashti story. Present were Fredda Wolf, Judy Abromson, Babs Shapiro, Mitch Ross, Margaret Meyer, Bertha Bodenheimer, Bonnie Faiman and me, Lesli Weiner. While the group could not agree on whether we liked the book or not, we did agree that it was a fascinating intergenerational discussion about the many different women who live in every woman: the lover, the mother, the artist, the rebel, the friend, the caregiver, the beast, the survivor. It takes a bit to get into the story, but once you do, I felt it was a tale worth telling.

Our next book has a provocative title: *My Grandfather Would Have Shot Me* by Jennifer Teege. Booklist says it’s “a stunning memoir of cultural trauma and personal identity”. Here’s the publisher’s description:

“At age 38, Jennifer Teege happened to pluck a library book from the shelf—and discovered a horrifying fact: Her grandfather was Amon Goeth, the vicious Nazi commandant depicted in *Schindler’s List*. Reviled as the “butcher of Płaszów,” Goeth was executed in 1946. The more Teege learned about him, the more certain she became: If her grandfather had met her—a black woman—he would have killed her.



Teege’s discovery sends her into a severe depression—and fills her with questions: Why did her birth mother withhold this chilling secret? How could her grandmother have loved a mass murderer? *Can evil be inherited?*” What do you think?

We’ll be meeting on MONDAY, APRIL 12 at 4PM via zoom. Please bring your suggestions for our next set of books. Hope you’ll join us.....lesli



BOARD MEETING

Temple Board of Directors’ Meeting

Monday, April 12, 2021

7:00 pm (via Zoom)

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Finley Barter-Levine	Apr	1
Robert Laskoff		2
Elliot Katz		5
Stanley Tetenman		6
Sharon Day		7
Zachary Olstein		8
Judith Ross		12
Julie Cohen		13
Teagan Barter-Levine		15
Daniel Penan		15
Allyson Casares		16
Janet Zidle		16
Joan Levenson		17
Lesli Weiner		17
Andrea Levinsky		19
Riley Barter-Levine		22
Steven Cohen		24
Susan Brown		25
Michael Meyer		29



## HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO

Paul & Marion Rausch      Apr 14

## Yahrzeiten

Sally Faiman	Apr	1
June Margolin		2
Murray Nussinow		2
Pearl Salberg		4
Lillian Schneidman		5
Betty Cohen		7
Sara Supovitz		9
Carl Cutler		11
Burton Wilner		12
Louis Silverman		16
Sylvia Greenberg		19
Herman Kleeger		20
Wilfred Goodman		21
Stephen Steinman		23
Morris Amsel		25
William Goldstein		26
Murray Rubinstein		27



Ma Chadash/What's New is published monthly by Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center. Temple Shalom is an independent congregation and a member of the Lewiston-Auburn Jewish Federation.

The mission of Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center is to foster a strong Jewish identity and an active Jewish Community.

Rabbi Sruli Dresdner

Office Manager Julie Waite

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#### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

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	Paula Marcus-Platz
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## SPEEDY RECOVERY

We pray for refuah sh'leimah – the full and speedy recovery of **Rachel Corvi, Dougie Fleck, Sara Graf, Robert Galumbeck, Isaak Gekhtin, Detlef Gerlach, Ariella Green, Chris Hatch, Sharon Hemond, Michael Jeser, Elizabeth Johnson, Suzan Katzir, Lynn Kaduson, Linda Koskela, Henry Lefkowitz, Lee Leveille, Bruce Meyer, Sandy Miller, Alice Richman, Joel Salberg, Bob Scott, Sandy Traister, Neal Weiner, Jack Weinstein, William White**, and all others who are not well at this time. *We like to hear good news! Whenever you request that a name be put on this list, please let Temple Shalom know when it can be removed.*



**Rabbi Sruli is always happy to speak with and meet with members or our Temple. Please call or text his cell phone at 914-980-9509 if you would like to speak with him or to arrange a time for a meeting. You can also call or leave a message at the Temple office and Rabbi Sruli will get back to you.**

# **CONTRIBUTIONS**

## **GENERAL FUND**

Howard & Judith Kahalas

In honor of Behzad Fakhery's 90th birthday

Andrew & Sharon Bodenheimer

In memory of Bert Bodenheimer

Arthur & Donna Silverman

In memory of Adele Silverman

Bonnie & Larry Faiman

In memory of Milton Faiman

In memory of Salle Anne Faiman

In memory of Joseph Margolin

In memory of June Margolin

Steve Goodman

In memory of Shirley Goodman

Lewis & Helene Perry

In memory of Ida Perry

In memory of Abraham Perry

Philip Laine

In memory of Edward Laine

Tom Reeves

In memory of Dr. Helene Reeves

In memory of Dr. Edward Reeves

Bertha Bodenheimer

In memory of June Chason

In honor of Joel Goodman's birthday

Joy & Lewis Zidle

In memory of Joseph & Lillian Zidle

Sandra & Allen Miller

In memory of Paulyn Rosenthal

Patricia Suzanne

In honor of Rabbi Sruli

## **FAMILY HEBREW SCHOOL FUND**

Patricia Suzanne

In honor of the Sim Shalom Chorus

& Johnny & Charlie

## **NUSSINOW PRESCHOOL FUND**

Amy & Scott Nussinow

In memory of Rose Nussinow

In memory of Sheldon Nussinow

## **RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND**

Nancy & Ken Levinsky

In honor of the birthdays of Dr. Behzad Fakhery,

Bertha Bodenheimer, Ilana Dresdner

Jeff Stern

In honor of Rabbi Sruli & Lisa

The Sharon Day Family

In memory of Nathan "Nick" Day

Dr. Karen & Lara Reeves

In memory of Dr. Helene Reeves

In memory of Dr. Edward Reeves

Patricia Suzanne

In honor of Sheri Olstein's birthday

**ABROMSON MEMORIAL FUND**

Judy Abromson

In memory of Benjamin Abromson

**BODENHEIMER PASSOVER FUND**

Patricia Suzanne

In honor of Rebbetzin Lisa

**RANDALL SILVER LIBRARY FUND**

Trudy Nemeth & Rachel Nemeth Cohen

In memory of Leonard Nemeth

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In memory of Shirley Goodman

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In memory of Shirley Goodman

**BELL MEMORIAL CHAPEL FUND**

**CEMETERY FUND**

**COHEN/LEVOY GARDEN FUND**

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**KITCHEN/BREAKFAST FUND**

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**PRAYER BOOK/PULPIT FUND**





**Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center**

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Our committee is currently interviewing prospects for the Lead Teacher/Director position for our Preschool! We hope to have staff in place very soon. We are currently

accepting applications for the 2021-22 school year. Please spread the word that we are reopening, folks can check out the website [www.templeshalompreschool.com](http://www.templeshalompreschool.com) for more info/applications or call Julie at 207-786-4201.

