



THE CENTRE CALL

GERMANTOWN JEWISH CENTRE

Volume 26, Issue No. 2

Heshvan 5779 / November 2018



Build a Practice of Blessing

by Ari Witkin, Student Rabbi

One of my goals for 5779 is to work toward slowing down, so that I may appreciate with awe more of the wonder in the world around me. Whether it be experiences of nature, art and music in community, or the admiration of the uniqueness of each individual, I want to make more space in my life to be wowed. Luckily,

Judaism has a wonderful set of tools that can help facilitate these moments. Our catalog of *brachot* (blessings) and the rituals that accompany them are invitations and blueprints for cultivating a sense of reverence for the beauty and the mystery of life.

Many of us are familiar with a whole host of blessings. We know the blessings for Shabbat: *l'hadlik ner*, *kiddush*, and *ha-motzi* (blessings over candles, wine, and bread). As a community we recite many blessings during our prayer services: the *brachot* in the liturgy of the siddur, and those we say when called for an *aliyah* to the Torah. Our holidays also have accompanying blessings, for the *hanukiyah*, the *lulav* and *etrog*, the items of the *seder* plate, and of course *shehecheyanu* for new and special moments.

The ancient rabbis recognized that the opportunity to praise that exists in the myriad of awe-inspiring moments and experience deserved their own unique *brachot*. As such, the Talmud and the *halachic* (legal) literature that follows engage in lengthy discussions about the various blessings and rituals that should complement our encounters in life.¹ The rabbis offer unique blessings for seeing wonders in nature – different offerings for the sighting of different animals, for rainbows and for thunder and lightning – prayers for seeing old friends, for great teachers, and for things strange and unknown. When I review the list of prescribed blessings, I am reminded of just how often I have the opportunity to pause and be amazed, to take a step back from the overwhelming and automatic pace of modern life.

My renewed interest in daily *brachot* was ignited this past summer while I was in Vermont for a conference of the Wexner Graduate Fellowship. One of my peers, a young rabbinical student at Yeshiva University, worked hard to convince our group of roughly 100 Jewish professionals from almost every sector of American Jewish life to gather together for the ritual of *kiddush levanah*.

Seldom practiced outside the orthodox world, *kiddush levanah* is a ritual blessing of the new moon offered upon its sighting

as the first Shabbat of the month is coming to a close. However, if the moon is not visible the ritual is postponed until it reveals itself. Such a postponement worked in my colleague's favor, as his daily announcements of "tonight we will..." built the suspense and intrigue throughout the week. Finally, on our last evening together everyone filed out into the hotel courtyard and we were led through a series of rituals and recitations of Psalms welcoming the moon and declaring the wonder of God's creations.

As our voices lifted together that evening and members of different communities came forward to offer their interpretations and tunes for each piece of the blessing ritual, the experience itself opened me up to a new encounter. Of course, I have seen the moon many times, but in utilizing our tradition to take pause, I felt as if I saw that shining white light with new eyes. In that moment, in the first days of the month of Elul's call to return, something as old as time appeared brand new. More than that, though, in taking the time to bless an object of everyday life with a sense of wonder, I felt as though a world of possibility emerged in relation to everything else around me.

There is something powerful about the utilization of tradition and ancient ritual to experience the world. In calling out the words and *brachot* that our ancestors have said for generations, my blessings are connected to theirs and ring out harmoniously through the echo chamber of generations. Through the richness of Jewish practice we each receive an invitation to experience the world with a sense of wonder. And yet, while our tradition is packed with unique blessings to be offered in all different moments of life, there is also space within it for us to create new offerings.

The wisdom of Jewish tradition provides a framework through which to pause and proclaim our gratitude for, and wonder of, the world in which we live. It also gives us the vocabulary to offer our own words in the moments that strike us, even those that are beyond the moments our rabbis imagined and prescribed. As we move further into this year together, I bless each of us that we be able to pause and appreciate the wonder of the world in which we live, that we find the words, both deep in the history of our tradition as well as afresh on our tongues, to offer blessing and gratitude for the gift of our experience.

¹ See Mishna Brachot and Shulchan Aruch Orach Chayim 228

SHABBAT & HOLIDAYS

November 3

- Charry Memorial Shabbat
- Charry Weekend Afternoon Program

November 10

- HAZAK Shabbat

November 17

- Charry Service: Mazel tov to Sol Elsila, son of Mikael Elsila and Dina Pinsky, on becoming Bar Mitzvah

December 1

- Charry Service: Mazel tov to Levi Rudick, son of Paul Rudick and Denise Wolf, on becoming Bar Mitzvah
- Kol D'mamah at 10 AM

December 8

- Charry Service and Dorshei Derekh: Presser Memorial Shabbat

January 5

- Charry Service: 2nd Grade Siddur Ceremony

Kabbalat Shabbat - Fridays, 6 PM

Shabbat Morning Services - 10 AM

Shabbat Morning Kids Space: Kids are welcome to play Shabbat-friendly games in Room 305.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Alan and Elyssa Cherney
Moorea Malatt and Joanne Cunningham
Brandi and Justin DeFields
Sara Engel
Alex and Jessica Gurvich
Katherine Sheridan
Emily Steinberg

ISRAELI DANCING

Sundays at 10 am

November 4, 11, 18 • December 2, 9, 16

Taught by our wonderful instructor Grant Shulman, GJC's Israeli dance group welcomes dancers of all ages and levels. We begin each session with 45 minutes of beginner dances, followed by instruction, review, open dancing and requests with increasing levels of difficulty. GJC's dance group is proud to be friendly and inclusive.

**For more information, please contact
Tamar Magdovitz at tamarmagdovitz@gmail.com**



MAZAL TOV! IN CELEBRATION OF...

Marti Reinfield and Ildefonso Burgos, on the birth of their daughter, Meital Eliana

Jake and Linda Kriger, on the birth of their grandson, Evan Ziv, born to Rachel Kriger and Nick Corso

Louie (Ina) Asher, on the birth of her grandson, to son Jacob and Kendra

Louie (Ina) Asher, on the birth of her granddaughter, to daughter Aviva and Daniel

Burgandy Holiday and David Kanthor, on the birth of their daughter, Zoraya

Albert and Peninah Berdugo, on the birth of their new grandson, Jesse Abraham, son of Michal Berdugo and Arash Sanieoff

Ella Berman, daughter of Dan and Lila Berman, on becoming Bat Mitzvah

Asher Leon Zarro Frank, son of Jeremy Frank and Jennifer Zarro, on becoming Bar Mitzvah

IN MEMORIAM

Judith Heep, mother of Jeremy Heep, and grandmother of Amira and Daniel

Delfine Keinigsberg, aunt of Rabbi Joan Sacks, great aunt of Ben and Rachel

Joyce Goodman, mother of David Goodman

Hilda Wormser Teutsch, mother of David Teutsch, grandmother of Zach and Nomi, and great-grandmother of Shula and Sender

Sidney August, husband of Rosalie August, father of Lynne Ellis and Ina August, and grandfather of Danny and Josh

Bernice Horn, mother of Burton Horn, grandmother of Abby Horn, and great-grandmother of Risa and Simon

Frances Metric, sister of Cherie Goren

Robert Venturi, husband of Denise Scott Brown

Ira Somerson, husband of Beverly Somerson

Bernard Kolman, husband of Judith Kolman

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Denise Wolf, GJC President



Tekiah!

Shevarim!

Teruah!

Tekiah Gedolah!

Awake, dear members and guests of Germantown Jewish Centre! Arise from your slumber, as the alarm is blasting.

For many of us, the sound of the shofar on Rosh ha-Shanah and Yom Kippur is at the core of our observance of the High Holy Days. For some, it is one of the highlights of the year.

When I hear it, it brings me back – back to childhood memories of attending High Holy Day services with my parents at Temple Emmanuel in Paterson, NJ. The sound is familiar and comforts me. It also transports me – to our ancestors, all of whom heard these concomitant mournful wails and celebratory bursts for thousands of years. It connects me – to Jews around the globe, and especially in Israel, who are hearing the same sounds, in the same order, and around the same time. It makes me reflect: what was happening in my life when I heard the blasts one year ago? What did I overcome this past year? And, it pushes me forward, to think about the year ahead, new hopes and new challenges.

Every year, I cherish that sound.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| <i>Tekiah!</i> | A long wail, summoning us to repent; |
| <i>Shevarim!</i> | Three sharp blasts, which show brokenness and imperfections, sighs of remorse; |
| <i>Teruah!</i> | Nine staccato, rapid bursts forcing our inner selves to tremble and anticipate with excitement; and |
| <i>Tekiah Gedolah!</i> | The final prolonged, great blast. We hear it with our ears and feel it with our entire bodies. It heralds in the new year. |

We at the Charry Sanctuary services are fortunate to have a talented, committed Ba'al ha-Tekiyah (shofar blower), our beloved Phill Goldberg. Although all eyes (and ears) are on him when he belts powerful, long-lasting blasts for the High Holy Days, he does not relish being in the limelight and is quick to say that it is not about him. Phill teaches that the mitzvah is to hear the shofar, not blow it. Numbers 29:1 instructs that hearing the shofar is a commandment: "It shall be a day of blowing the shofar for you."

Phill mentors other shofar blowers, including Susan Weiss. It is never too early or late to learn the art of shofar blowing. Phill was

gifted his first shofar on his bar mitzvah by Rabbi Bertram Korn of Congregation Keneseth Israel (KI) in Elkins Park. He began blowing it soon thereafter for children's services and hasn't stopped since. Susan seriously embraced learning the shofar in recent years. Phill and Susan and other shofar blowers feel a strong sense of responsibility to enable the rest of us to fulfill our obligation. For that we are grateful and enriched.

What thoughts pass through your mind when you hear the shofar on Rosh ha-Shanah? Do you close your eyes? Do you gasp with relief when the shofar blower expertly finishes that very long last note? For me, the shofar sound expresses all my emotions that are wordless. I find myself holding my breath alongside the piercing sound. For some reason, my eyes tear up. Unlike most times during my busy, action filled days, I am completely present in the moment when the shofar sirens. I am moved. I am lifted up.

I wondered what goes through the Ba'al ha-Tekiyah's mind. Phill explain that he focuses on the note that Rabbi Zeff has called. He strives to make sure that shofar calls are timed according to that corresponding note, that he blows the correct length, and that he reserves enough air to switch from Shevarim to T'ruah or for a T'kiah G'dolah. Phill is truly present in the moment. He also focuses on blowing out the negative energy in his soul – part of the process of *cheshbon ha-nefesh* (an accounting of the soul) during the month of Elul. When he told me that, I may have finally understood why my eyes tear up. The sounds are helping me cleanse my soul.

Our members are obviously deeply moved by the strong distinct sounds that emit from the long ram's horn, which Phill tucks close to his body when it is not on his lips. When Phill finishes his last note, there is a collective audible release of pure joy and awe that rises from the congregation. If you are near him after he descends from the *bimah*, you will witness children giving him high fives, and adults patting him on the back. The compliments are much deserved, but overwhelm such a humble guy. Phill reminds me that his *kavannah*, that is, his sincere intention, is to do the best he can to enable the congregation to perform the mitzvah. Given Phill's heartfelt, masterful blasts, we all accomplish the mitzvah commandment.

But that is not enough, according to Rabbi Zeff. The sounds are not only meant to awaken us, but to spur us into action in the coming year. What mitzvot will you be inspired to do this year? How many people can you help? The shofar blowers of GJC will no doubt feel satisfied knowing that their blasts inspired us to take steps to repair the world in the year ahead and perform even more mitzvot. As I have now learned, the shofar begins with listening and ends with action.

Over the next two years as president of GJC, it is my *kavannah* to listen to you and to help GJC continue along its sacred path of performing mitzvot within our own community and in the greater world.



**We gratefully acknowledge the community supporters
and members who sponsored the communal
Rosh ha-Shanah kiddush!**

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ROSH PINAH

"The humblest of stones has become the chief cornerstone." [Rosh Pinah'] (Psalm 118:22)

GJC expresses its deep gratitude for the generous support of its congregants who have chosen the Rosh Pinah (Cornerstone) level of membership. Their contribution provides crucial support, enabling us to serve the entire GJC community. We cannot adequately thank the following members for their commitment to Germantown Jewish Centre:

Marcy & Dan Bacine

Jane & Richard Baron

Marta & Chip Becker

Michael Beer

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Harold Berger

Dveera Segal & Brad Bridge

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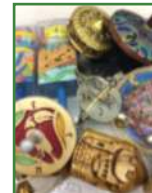
THE LITTLE SHOP IS HERE TO MEET ALL YOUR HOLIDAY AND GIFT NEEDS!

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Fri 12:00-4:00pm
Sun 9:00am-12:30pm



Monthly Specials discount of 10% on select items and **Early Bird Special discounts** of 10% when you shop weekdays 12:00 – 3:00pm. Combine for **20% savings!**

NOVEMBER EVENTS

- **Sunday, November 11th** – Flea Market Sale with HUGE bargains
- **Sunday, November 18th** – Mimosas
Stop by for some bubbly and **10% discount on Baron Herzog Champagne**

JANUARY EVENTS & GREAT DEALS!

- 20% off all items all month long (usual exclusions apply)
- Wine tasting

November Special Menorahs



December Special Candlesticks



IT IS A MITZVAH TO SHOP AT THE LITTLE SHOP!!!

All profits from your purchases at The Little Shop go to support GJC programs.

Todah Rabbah!

Todah rabbah to everyone who generously gave to the High Holy Days Appeal! Below is a list of gift dedications, representing the many ways each of us connects to Judaism and to this beautiful community. If you have not yet contributed, but would still like to please contact the office! We will list your name and dedication in the next issue of the Centre Call.

David Axelrod & Keira Chism Axelrod

Dan & Marcy Bacine

Richard & Eileen Bazelton, in honor of Rabbi Zeff

Lonnie Beer, in honor of Rabbi Zeff and Denise Wolf

Barbara Bloom, in honor of Rabbi Zeff

Chana Bonn

Ned & Caren Borowsky, in honor of the choir during High Holiday services

Albert & Ellen Brown, in memory of the friends they have lost this year, Richard Lewis and Stuart Merle

Lawrence & Ellyn Charap, in memory of their parents, Stanley Charap and Monty Specker, and in memory of aunt and uncle Jess and Rhoda Novick

Rennie Cohen, in memory of her husband, Cy Cohen and her parents, Don & Hilda Dorfman

Nan Daniels, in honor of her precious grandchildren, Tessa and Ian

Lyn Davis, in honor of Rabbi Zeff

Ramy & Monica Djerassi, in memory of Tika Djerassi

Henry & Kathy Donner, in memory of their parents, Harry & Sylvia Donner and Morton & Elizabeth Weiner

Art & Lynne Ellis

Sheila Erlbaum, in memory of George, Miriam & Nathan Erlbaum and Neely Snyder

Ari Feinberg & Kate Sheridan, in honor of Rabbi Zeff, Nina Peskin, and the choir

Walt & Rochelle Fellman, in memory of their parents, Arthur L. & Esther Abrams and Jerome W. & Shirley Fellman

David & Marcy Fish

Jeff & Karen Freedman

Abe & Sandy Gafni

Mindelle Goldstein, in honor of Rabbi Zeff, Nina Peskin, Martha Schleifer, and the choir for the meaningful High Holiday services

Marsh Greenberg & Addy Sugarman

Linda Hahn, with thanks to Martha Schleifer and the GJC choir

Jonathan Harmon & Martha Lask, in memory of the inspiring Lee Dushoff, and in honor of Elaine, Eshet Hayil and inspiration in all she does

Abigail Horn & Maria Pulzetti, in memory of Sylvia Pulzetti and Bernice Horn

Nina Israel, in memory of her parents, Ralph and Hanna, both of whom died on October 8

Lynne Jacobs & Alan Silverblatt

David Kanthor & Burgandy Holiday, in honor of the friendships they have made at the GJC Family Retreat

Sam & Connie Katz, in honor of their four dear grandchildren, James and Annie Katz, Asa and Zadie Smith

Isador & Myra Kranzel, in memory of their parents, Eva & Isadore Katz and Sonia & Frank Kranzel

David & Marilyn Kraut, in honor of their grandchildren, Jocie, Eli, and Aaron

Janet Kroll, in honor of

Rabbi Alanna Sklover

Judah Labovitz & Ellen Ufberg

Doug Lerner & Ken Cohen

Steve & Chris Levin

Seth Lieberman & Beth Janus, in honor of Dorshei Derekh for a fabulous High Holiday season

Barbara Lissy, in honor of Ellen Lissy Rosenberg and Ruth Lissy Rosenberg

Nathan Martin & Abby Weinberg, in honor of the entire staff of GJC and their amazing work to produce a wonderful High Holy Days experience for all

Jim & Sandy Meyer, to support GJC in its efforts to create a more just and peaceful world

Alex Molot & Adena Klem

Dan Moscow & Sharon Strauss

David & Nahariyah Mosenkis

Don Perelman & Elise Singer

Josh & Nina Peskin, in memory of Josh's mother, Rochelle A. Godshall

Michael Posner & Wendy Smith, in honor of all the work that is done to build a supportive community at GJC

Ilde Burgos & Marti Reinfeld, in honor of the birth of their daughter, Meital Eliana

Cyrilla Rosen, in memory of Rose Creshkoff Gaber, Abram Gaber, and Irving Rosen

Ivan & Rina Rosenberg, in gratitude for the warm welcome given them by the whole GJC community

Judith Rossman, in memory of her mother and father

Paul Rudick & Denise Wolf, with thanks to Phill Goldberg for his mentorship of Levi in blowing the shofar for Rosh haShanah

Alan & Barbara Schindler, in memory of their parents, Lillian & Joseph Schindler and Frances & Simon Kleiner

Charles & Martha Schleifer

Judy Schwartz & Jay Seitchik, in honor of Judy's most wonderful and thoughtful family and all that they do for her

Hideko Secrest, in grateful thanks to the members of Minyan Masorti who have made her a welcome part of their community for over a decade and for GJC's ability to house three different congregations harmoniously under one roof

Steve & Patty Segal, in honor of Dr. Christine Blasey Ford

Elliott & Ellie Seif

Marilyn Silberstein, in honor of the forthcoming marriage of Marilyn's daughter, Adina, in September 2019 and the Bat Mitzvah of her granddaughter, Elia Limareff, in Adelaide, Australia, in July

Marc Singer & Leah Lande, in honor of Rabbi Zeff for inspiring their family to use Jewish text and learning to help understand and improve the world around us

Michael & Marta Sivitz, in memory of Anna and Clemens Brand and Bess and Sidney Sivitz

Beth Stearman, in honor of the members of Minyan Masorti

George & Debbie Stern, in honor of the clergy and staff of GJC

David & Betsy Teutsch, in honor of their new grandson, Sender Jonathan Rosen Teutsch, son of Becca Rosen and Zachary Teutsch

Ken & Susan Weiss, in memory of Susan's mother, Frieda Sanders

Adam Zeff & Cheryl Bettigole, in memory of Lee Dushoff

Minna Ziskind and Gavi, Ari, Sara & Becca Miller

Thank you also to our donors who wish to remain anonymous.

TIKKUN OLAM

POWER Update by Andrea Moselle and David Mosenkis



POWER Shifts the Conversation on Public School Funding

POWER

Did you know that the state of Pennsylvania systematically shortchanges school districts with high populations of students of color, including Philadelphia? The blackest and brownest districts across the state receive, on average, **\$2,146 per student less** than their fair share from the state, while the whitest districts receive **\$2,158 per student more** than their fair share.

This past June, GJC members were among 500 POWER members and supporters from around the state who rallied in Harrisburg to support fair public school funding. Earlier, POWER had worked with State Representative Chris Rabb, who represents Mt. Airy and Chestnut Hill, to introduce legislation to end years of racial bias in the state's public school funding. The bill would distribute 100% of PA's basic education dollars using the state's funding formula, instead of the irrational way most of it is now distributed. Since then, POWER has helped garner 28 co-sponsors for the bill, from both political parties. If this bill were to become law, even with no increase in overall state funding, the School District of Philadelphia would stand to gain \$344 million in increased state funding – that's how much Philadelphia is currently being shortchanged compared to what the formula says is its fair share.

POWER also successfully encouraged Governor Tom Wolf to take

a public stand in favor of 100% of state funding going through the formula, which incited a spate of accusations between Wolf and Scott Wagner, his opponent in this fall's gubernatorial election. This has made school funding a hot issue in the election, with both candidates claiming to support a significant increase in funding. Wagner has not responded to POWER's request to support 100% formula funding.

At a more local level, POWER continues to push Philadelphia officials to increase the city's funding for Philadelphia public schools and to identify revenue sources that do not put the entire burden on Philadelphia residents. Potential local sources for increased funding include ending or modifying the 10-year tax abatement program, instituting a PILOT (Payments In Lieu Of Taxes) program that would assess payments from huge local non-profits, and collecting full and predictable payment of the Philadelphia School District's share of on-street parking revenue from the Philadelphia Parking Authority (PPA).

GJC is a proud congregational member of POWER (powerinterfaith.org). If you'd like to get involved in POWER's work to fully fund public schools, contact Andi Moselle (andrea.moselle@gmail.com) or David Mosenkis (dmosenkis@gmail.com).

High Holy Days From Dorshei Derekh 2018 / 5779

Service Leaders

Christina Ager
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Alex Avelin
Debra Cohen
Tamara Cohen
Fredri Cooper
Andrea Jacobs
Michael Masch
Dina Pinsky
Chana Rothman
Reena Spicehandler
George Stern
David Teutsch
Deborah Waxman
Elyse Wechterman

Abby Weinberg
Leah Weismann

Torah and Haftorah Readers

Debra Cohen
Michelle Friedman
David Mosenkis
Nami Janus Lieberman
Barbara Pearson
Dina Pinsky
Jacob Slifka

Gabbaiim

David Nerenberg
Robert Tabak
Reena Spicehandler

George Stern

Divrei Torah

Gwen Kessler
Moe Martin
David Teutsch

Shofar

David Mosenkis
Nahariyah Mosenkis
Jacob Slifker
George Stern
Elyse Wechterman

Hagbah / G'lilah

Jennifer Paget

Mark Pinsky

Greeters

Dayle Friedman
Chana Dickter
Michelle Friedman
Betsy Teutsch
Amy Trachtenberg

Coordinators

Alex Avelin
Andrea Jacobs

Torah Reading Coordinator

Ruth Loew

TIKKUN OLAM (continued)

On Yom Kippur, in the Charry sanctuary, Elliott Seif introduced the Isaiah Haftorah for the Tikkun Olam Coordinating Team (TOCT). Here is what he said:

I grew up in a very, very Jewish neighborhood in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn. There were three large apartment buildings crowded together on my street, and virtually all the families in these apartments were Jewish. Our own mini Jewish community.

My parents weren't religious, but my grandfather was, and he would take me on the High Holy Days to his synagogue in our neighborhood, where I would meet my friends. After a while, my friends and I got restless, and we would go "synagogue hopping" to visit our other friends at the many synagogues in the neighborhood.

One of our rituals took place on Yom Kippur, in the middle of the afternoon. My friends and I would wander down to the local White Castle hamburger store, a little white hut located at Empire Boulevard and Utica Avenue (for those who know Crown Heights). There, with what seemed like hundreds of Jewish men dressed in their Yom Kippur finery, my friends and I would crowd into the store and, along with all the other men there, would buy one, two, three, maybe even four fifteen-cent hamburgers. I, the virtuous one, would not succumb to this temptation (this is true), but was of course horrified by all this. What was the world coming to? To my young mind, this was clearly a major victory for hypocrisy and deceit.

Today, looking back, my judgments are much softer, especially after rereading Isaiah's Haftorah for today. I now realize that fasting on Yom Kippur for the entire day is not the only, nor the major, way to judge piety. Please don't misunderstand me – I'm not advocating that we don't fast today. Fasting is good for the soul, for discipline, and for helping to put your life in perspective. But I am now much more focused on the words of Isaiah that we will be reading shortly:

"This is the fast I desire:
to unlock the chains of wickedness,
and untie the knots of servitude.
to let the oppressed go free,
their bonds broken.
It is to share your bread with the hungry,
and welcome the homeless into your home.
When you see the naked, to clothe them.
All people are your kin:
do not ignore them."

Isaiah's words suggest that fasting is not enough – we also need to perform concrete acts of service to those in need and demonstrate a moral and ethical foundation to our lives. In other words, we need to become activists for social justice. This raises some really important questions we should be asking ourselves at this time of repentance and atonement, such as: What actions did we take during the previous year to help others? Did we do

enough? As Isaiah asks: Did we help "loose the chains of injustice"? Did we do "Tikkun Olam"?

No matter how much you did, it shouldn't be that hard to find ways to do more. A goal for those of us on the GJC Tikkun Olam Coordinating Team – TOCT – is to make it easier to do Tikkun Olam year round. On the GJC website, under Tikkun Olam initiatives, you'll find lots of things you can do. Here are some:

- purchase fair traded food and gifts regularly to help provide decent incomes to people around the world;
- do some specific, simple activities to help the homeless when they stay at GJC;
- tutor a student for an hour a week at a local public school;
- work with others to help a new immigrant family rebuild its life.

You can also volunteer with POWER, an organization consisting of about 50 regional faith-based organizations, including GJC, that focus on redressing many social justice issues, such as fair and just wages for workers and obtaining full and fair funding for Pennsylvania's public schools.

You can join the Tikkun Olam mailing list in order to receive regular information about Tikkun Olam opportunities, and contact people on our Team if you are interested in discussing options or starting your own initiative if you have a good Tikkun Olam idea. Also you can help organize or attend the many GJC programs that educate about Tikkun Olam issues and suggest ways to get involved.

Of course, you can also decide to do Tikkun Olam on your own by giving your support, time, financial resources, and help to individuals, organizations, candidates, legislators, issues and activities that promote social justice here, in Israel, and around the world.

Today the Tikkun Olam options are endless, suited to the variety of individual and family needs and possibilities. All of us can make a difference – small contributions made by many together add up to big contributions to make a better world. As Mahatma Gandhi said: "The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems."

So good Yom Tov to all in this wonderful GJC community, and thanks to all of you who already do so much Tikkun Olam. May we all be inscribed in the book of life during this coming year and, as we begin the new year, may we all take to heart Isaiah's words and make repairing and healing the world a core individual and community goal. I hope you will think often during the coming year about the following quote from Arthur Ashe, the great tennis player and civil rights activist. Think of this as a Tikkun Olam mantra: "Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can."

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Marilyn and David Kraut

by Linda Kriger



David and Marilyn Kraut have become such an integral part of GJC's activities that it's hard to remember a time when they weren't involved in the synagogue.

Of course there was such a time. David, 71, was born in a Displaced Persons (DP) Camp in Germany after World War Two. He was eighteen months old when his parents came to America under the auspices of HIAS, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. David's parents "met in the DP camp, married in their forties and emigrated to America without speaking English," Marilyn said. "It was very difficult for them. Imagine having to start over at that age like that." David's first language was Yiddish and he didn't speak English until he went to kindergarten.

His father had survived the war after being drafted into the Russian/Polish army. David's mother had been lined up in front of a ditch and shot at, along with others from her *shtetl* (small town), but the shots missed her. She fainted, and later crawled out. She was immediately encountered by a German soldier, to whom she said, 'Kill me now. What do I have to live for?' He said, 'If you're not dead now, I'm not going to kill you. Run into the woods.' She spent the rest of the war with the Jewish Partisans. She made her way after the war to a DP camp. That's where she met David's father and they married. They came to Philadelphia, sponsored by an aunt. David went to Central High School, Penn State and the University of Pennsylvania Law School. "I'm probably one of the few lawyers out there who actually loved law school and enjoys being a lawyer," David said, smiling.

Marilyn and David met in their sophomore year at Penn State and were married two weeks after graduation. "We dated, got pinned, but had no engagement," Marilyn said. "I didn't want to spend the money on an engagement ring. We got married on such short notice that people thought ours was a shotgun wedding. But in fact it was nine years before we had children." Their 50th wedding anniversary will be in June.

Marilyn and David have a son, Larry, 36, who went to Penn, lives in London and just got engaged. Their twin daughters, Rebecca and Alisa, are now 40. Rebecca went to Barnard and is married to Brian Cooke. They have two sons, Aaron, 5, and Eli, 8, who attend the Miquon School. Alisa is married to Chris Rugen and they have a daughter Jocie, 10, who attends Masterman Middle School. All three grandchildren attend GJC's Religious School. Alisa recently joined the GJC board. "It's hard to believe we have three generations at GJC," David mused.

When David graduated from law school, he worked five years for Community Legal Services representing indigent clients. He next worked as Chief Regional Civil Rights Attorney for the United States Department of Education, just before Clarence Thomas became the head of his agency.

"After Reagan was elected, I was doing civil rights work and realized it wasn't a growth industry," David said. He took a job in Montgomery County with a law firm for two years and then started his own law firm, Kraut Harris, in Blue Bell. "I do commercial litigation," he explained, "mostly representing small businesses and individuals in business."

After graduating college, Marilyn ran into the kind of discriminatory interview that was common at the time. As a clothing and textiles major, when applying for jobs as a buyer at department stores, she was asked why she wanted a job with hours that would make it hard to cook for her husband. "I hate cooking," Marilyn flatly declared.

"But I decided to go in a different direction. I was a congressional intern during college and they connected me to the Defense Personnel Support Center at 20th and Oregon. I moved quickly into Human Resources. I was with the feds doing HR work but quit and started a back-up child care agency in 1983, because I couldn't figure out how to handle unexpected childcare problems. When a kid got sick and your childcare arrangements fell apart, what did you do? It was the second back-up childcare agency in the country. I had a cadre of 40 people working for me and families signed up for a fee. I did it for three years, then I got chronic fatigue syndrome and had to close the business." In 1992, a national childcare and eldercare referral agency based in Lansdale asked Marilyn to create a national backup care program – the first of its kind.

"They laid me off after they got venture capital and shifted their focus," she said. "Life is serendipitous, because in 1995, I got the greatest job at the University of Pennsylvania in human resources to work on their family work/life issues. It was just then becoming a workplace focus."

Marilyn set up activities to show employees that the university cared about them: appreciation events – a 2,500-person picnic

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT (continued)

and football game; award ceremonies, health promotion events, working families perks, including backup care and flexible work options, that allowed employees to work out arrangements with their supervisors to work flexible hours.

"How do you care about your employees and help them to function?" Marilyn asked. "It's hard for the leadership to talk to 16,000 faculty and staff, which is the size of Penn's workforce. That's where these policies and programs come in."

Marilyn was born and raised in Jacksonville, Florida, which felt more like the deep South than your grandmother's Miami Beach. When it came time to apply to college, after spending a lot of time at University of Florida football games, Marilyn looked to the Big Ten schools. "To me, college had a Big Ten feel," she said. "Good students chose to go north. I was looking for a good school that had the major I wanted and a good football team." Penn State fit the bill.

After graduation and marriage, David and Marilyn lived in the Art Museum area. "A lot of people from legal services were moving to Mt. Airy," she said, and so did they, to Ellet Street, just doors from GJC. Later, they moved to Wyndmoor because David was practicing in Montgomery County and thought it was important to be involved in the Montgomery County community. However, their life stayed in Mt. Airy/Germantown. Their children went to Germantown Friends School and David became president of GJC during the 60th anniversary campaign in 1997-8. "The Campaign raised \$1.8 million to pay off the Centre's \$500,000 accumulated deficit, create an endowment and improve various davening spaces in the building. Marilyn was head of the bar/bat mitzvah committee, the catering committee, and was involved with the Women's Club. She's also given a lot of HR advice to Weavers Way and GJC over the years.

Marilyn created a small empire at the University of Pennsylvania to work in their HR department, and after 20 years, Marilyn

retired in 2016. "I had a lovely retirement party with speeches and a lot of goodwill," she said. Four people took over her job and she hopes it's going well. "When you've created something and you leave, you have to let it go," she said. Since retirement, her health has needed a lot of attention: she underwent shoulder and knee replacements, had pericarditis three days after her knee replacement; and was hit by a car in June 2016.

Despite those setbacks, Marilyn and David have taken a lot of dream trips since she retired. She also agreed to take over the Purim Bash that grew out of the auction she had created some 25 years earlier. "I ran it for the first three years, then Marcy Bacine took it over. When Marcy retired, Nan Daniels helped the Women's Club create the Purim Bash. She took it over from Nan in 2017. Marilyn stays involved with the Arden Theater Company, going there to work once a week. "I call it going to the office," she said, "and I do a lot of stuff with Weavers Way. I developed leadership training for them, and ran a workshop for staff on how to maintain a respectful workplace."

Daughter Alisa is assistant curator at the National Museum of American Jewish History. Rebecca, a lawyer, works in mergers and acquisitions for a company in Dresher. Larry, 36, who lives in London and has dual citizenship in Poland, works as an advertising account director.

"Since joining in 1980, GJC has been an important presence through many of our life stages: with children, as empty-nesters and into retirement," Marilyn said. "It's offered a place to connect with our heritage and pass it on to two generations, to help us understand the world and learn more about ourselves, to gain solace and support through difficult life moments, and to share life's celebrations and milestones. And we look forward to many more milestones and celebrations at GJC in the future."

SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, January 27, 2019 GJC's Annual Women's Clothing Exchange



Start collecting all the clothing and accessories that you are ready to give away!

Watch this space for further details.

WOMEN OF GJC

by Vilma Lieberman and Sandra Meyer, Co-Presidents WGJC

After many rainy weekends, the sun came out on the morning of September 16! And so did eleven women representing every generation and every part of Germantown Jewish Centre. We met at The Cedars House for the annual **Walk in the Wissahickon**, coordinated by the Women of GJC.

The best part of the walk is that there are no rules. People walk as far as they want, at the pace they want, and talk only if they want. We walked for about an hour, then went inside to The Cedars House for coffee, tea, and conversation. A lovely time was reflected in participants' comments:

"The weather was picture perfect and so was the company. What a great way to schmooze with some of our members."
(Connie Katz)

"A perfect walk in the woods that everyone enjoyed! The company was delightful, with scenery from Currier and Ives. Thank you Dena Lake (organizer of walk) for creating the time for us. I'm ready for next time." (Bernice Smith)

Would you like to join us for the next walk? Due to the popularity, the Walk in the Wissahickon may occur with more frequency. If you are interested, send a note to Dena Lake (denareva@comcast.net).

Lots of fun and energy were generated in the Temin Canteen Room during our Welcome Back Event in October. The program, sponsored together with Men's Club, featured Susan Watts and her band for some wonderful trumpet playing and singing.

The next timely event will be on Sunday, November 11, 2018, at 10:00 AM in the Canteen Room. We will have an update on gerrymandering by Fair Districts PA as a follow up on our program from last year. We will hear how well Pennsylvania is doing to restructure districts to create fair voting districts.

Sandy and Jim Meyer attended a taping of the Stephen Colbert Show using the VIP tickets they won at the 2018 Purim Bash



auction. They reported that the experience was terrific – much to laugh about and great entertainment from Colbert, his guests, and musicians. They highly recommend this opportunity if it is available for bidding again at the Purim Bash on March 9, 2019. (Please see Purim Bash article on page 14 for Purim Bash information.)

We hope you are receiving emails from the WGJC Google Group. If you are not, or have changed your email, please contact Hideko Secrest, our Technical Secretary, at gekobah@gmail.com to update your information.

Eve Pinkenson will once again teach **Synagogue Skills** study sessions for women who may feel tentative or just want to refresh their skills or practice new ones. Many women decline honors because they are not fluent with the aliyah blessings or knowledgeable in how to wrap the Torah properly after it is read. Join this opportunity to learn and become comfortable with synagogue skills in order to enhance your engagement in services. Study sessions will take place during the day (date TBA). If you're interested, please contact Eve at epinkenson@comcast.net.

On Yom Kippur, Sandy Meyer and Vilma Lieberman announced WGJC's new Building Beautiful project to the congregation. This year we are fundraising to update the lighting in the Magil Chapel, a lovely gem that is heavily used for worship services, especially for our children. This project will include a design plan and use of cooler LED lights. If you would like to make a Building Beautiful donation for the lighting project in the Magil Chapel, please send your donation to the office and mark **BB** on the envelope.

Happy Winter and have a joyous Hanukah filled with lights!

Kol D'mamah High Holy Days 2018 / 5779

Service Leaders

Ken Cohen
Tamara Cohen
Steve Masters
Dina Pinsky
Ari Witkin

Hospitality

Jonathan Harmon
Martha Lask

GJC's EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM (ECP)

by Michelle Bernstein



I would like to introduce myself to everyone. My name is Michelle Bernstein and I am the new early childhood director for ECP. I want to thank you for your very warm and inviting welcome to GJC. I have truly loved every minute of my time here – getting to know the staff, families, children and members and seeing first hand what a supportive, welcoming, and peaceful environment it is for everyone.

Here is a little bit about myself. I have been working in Early Childhood for 25 years – 15 of which I have been the director of two other programs in the Philadelphia suburbs. I have enjoyed creative quality, and loving environments for young children. I love providing them with opportunities to create, learn, love, and grow. The avenues are endless – and the more I do this work, the more I find we can create with young children.

ECP has been thriving! We are singing, painting, cooking, dancing, laughing, resting, making new friends, problem solving, and most of all having fun! We love coming to ECP every day! In

the next issue I'll include photos of the children. I bet they make you want to be a child again!

We welcome all of you to visit. Maybe you have a special talent you would like to share with the children? You are always welcome to stop by! Please call me at 215-844-1510 or email me at Ecp@germantownjewishcentre.org to arrange a time.

DID YOU KNOW?

ECP is a special place for young children from 6 months of age through 5 years of age and for their families. Through the lens of Jewish culture and tradition, our children learn about themselves and the world around them in a program which emphasizes learning through doing. The Early Childhood Program nurtures and respects individuality, while encouraging the children to develop a sense of community and friendship. The preschool follows the yearly cycle of the Jewish holidays. Jewish culture, traditions, and values are woven into our curriculum. Through Mitzvot (commandments), Tzedakah (charity), and Tikkun Olam (repairing the world), the children learn to respect themselves, others and the world they live in. We are committed to teaching and promoting respect and understanding of all persons. GJC's Early Childhood Program is open to all!

If you haven't already joined and wish to support Women of GJC for 2018-19, please use this form or join through the GJC website.

Women of GJC Membership

Please make your check for \$45 payable to *Women of GJC*, mark *Dues* on the memo line, and send it to:

Dues - Women of GJC (Attn: Rhonda Mandel), 400 W. Ellet Street, Philadelphia PA 19119

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Preferred Phone: _____

Over 90 years of age? No payment required. Circle **YES** and complete and return form.

New GJC member as of June 2018? No payment required.

Circle **YES** for a complimentary WGJC membership for 2018-2019, and return form.

Questions?

Please contact Peninah Berdugo at: peninahberdugo@gmail.com

PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

**Tuesdays at 7:15 PM
in the Quitman Library**

People of the Book reads fiction and nonfiction books of Jewish interest mostly written by Jewish writers and chosen by the group. Volunteers lead the monthly discussion. Join in!

**For more info, contact Nan Myers
at nanbmyers2@gmail.com.**

November 13
Memento Park
by Mark Sarbas

December 11
*The Beauty Queen
of Jerusalem*
by Sarit Yishai-Levi

January 8
Away
by Amy Bloom

February 12
*In the Land of the
Invisible Women*
by Qanta Ahmed



STRIKE UP THE BAND!

Save the Date!

Planning has begun for the 2019 Purim Bash!

Mark off Saturday evening, **March 9, 2019**, on your calendar for this evening of **fun**, good food, camaraderie and total good cheer.

Sponsored by the Women of GJC, the old favorites will be back - the restaurant auction and the 5-star and live auction of events and vacations - guaranteed to appeal to every age group!

We had an amazing collection of items for auction last year, including tickets to the Super Bowl and Phillies, and trips to Africa, Italy, New York, Sedona, and Scotland (to name a few). Another example of fun up for bid was VIP tickets to the **Late Show with Stephen Colbert**. Sandy and Jim Meyer won the tickets and, according to Sandy, they had a terrific time. "We laughed so much!" she recalls.

Once again, the talented Alisa Kraut is designing our communications. Check out her great work!

A colorful poster for the 2019 Purim Bash. It features a large, stylized graphic of a band playing instruments like a trumpet, trombone, and tuba. The text on the poster includes: "SPONSORED BY WOMEN OF GERMANTOWN JEWISH CENTRE (WGJC)", "Your support for the Purim Bash, Little Shop & other WGJC programs contributes to the GJC Operating Budget, Religious School, ECP, High Holiday Kid Care, Women's Shabbat & more.... With thanks to the Wolfe Family Foundation.", "SATURDAY MARCH 9 7:30 TO 10:30PM", "COSTUMES OPTIONAL", "RSVP BY FEBRUARY 23", "FREE KID PROGRAMS", "SING-ALONG SPIEL", "BUFFET & OPEN BAR", "SILENT & LIVE AUCTION", "DANCING", "2019 PURIM BASH", "STRIKE UP THE BAND", and "RSVP to nhd3505@gmail.com using the Purim Bash form at www.germantownjewishcentre.org".

SPONSORED BY WOMEN OF GERMANTOWN JEWISH CENTRE (WGJC)
Your support for the Purim Bash, Little Shop & other WGJC programs contributes to the GJC Operating Budget, Religious School, ECP, High Holiday Kid Care, Women's Shabbat & more.... With thanks to the Wolfe Family Foundation.

SATURDAY MARCH 9 7:30 TO 10:30PM

COSTUMES OPTIONAL
RSVP BY FEBRUARY 23

FREE KID PROGRAMS
SING-ALONG SPIEL
BUFFET & OPEN BAR
SILENT & LIVE AUCTION
DANCING

2019 PURIM BASH
STRIKE UP THE BAND

RSVP to nhd3505@gmail.com using the Purim Bash form at www.germantownjewishcentre.org

SAVE THE DATE: March 9, 2019

NEWS FROM HAZAK (55+ programming)

by Coleman Poses

On a crisp autumn afternoon, members of HAZAK and the GJC Men's Club gathered outside of a beautiful sukkah at the historic Leamy House in Mt. Airy, courtesy of Dave and Edna Berg and Herb Levine and Ellen Frankel. The purpose of this event was to experience and to bask in the comfort of some of the world's great scotches. Scotch enthusiast Paul Rudick guided us through this process, as we schmoozed, boozed, and ate plenty of food. On a journey which started in Scotland, and ended in Japan, Paul explained the differences between single malts and blended scotches, the "angel's share," and what it means when people talk about a scotch's "peatiness."

The following week, HAZAK sponsored a film version of GJC's Cherie Goren's autobiography, *Leaving Memel: Refugees from the Reich*. We were lucky to have the film's creator, producer Fred Finkelstein – who is also Cherie's nephew – in attendance. The film highlighted the joys and tragedies of Cherie and her remarkable family, and underscored the point that while all European Jews shared certain experiences, there were

wide geographic, social, and economic variations in their individual lives.

Our HAZAK book group explored the controversial and gripping *Son of Hamas*, the autobiography of Mosab Hassan Yousef, a Christian Israeli agent who grew up in the household of one of Hamas' top leaders. Our book for November is *Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History*, by Steven J. Zipperstein. We meet in the Silver Kiddush Lounge the second Wednesday of the month. We invite anyone 55 and older to join our discussions and to offer their insights, although anyone interested in our discussions is welcome to participate. Our next book group will meet on November 14.

Also, don't miss our HAZAK Shabbat, on November 10. Our guest speaker is Tamar Jacobson, who will discuss her research in childhood education that has culminated in her recently published book, *Everyone Needs Attention*.



Cherie Goren and her nephew, Fred Finkelstein,
film producer and our speaker



GJC Congregants listen to the presentation at the HAZAK program

DID YOU KNOW?

HAZAK programs are planned for those age 55+, and are geared to reflect both common interests and get us to "stretch" to try new activities as well. Our well-attended book group meets monthly all year long. HAZAK also sponsors book talks by local authors, as well as speakers on topics of particular importance to our interests. We host Sam Feinberg each August to discuss opera, and we show great films! We also take day trips to cultural and natural sites in the area, often to places members have never been. HAZAK is for all of us to stay connected to GJC and to each other: to venture out and experience parts of our city we haven't seen before, to read, learn and talk together, to keep us strong. We hope you will join us. Membership is \$10/year.

INTERFAITH HOSPITALITY NETWORK AT GJC

The next housing of homeless families at GJC is
December 2-16

New volunteers – please contact Debbie Stern at
debstern502@msn.com or 215-848-9503 to sign up.
Thanks!

The need for affordable housing in Philadelphia is greater than ever and the poverty level continues unabated. As our tradition tells us, it is not our job to solve every problem, but we have to try! We have been partnering with PIHN, the Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network, for many years to make a difference. Earlier this year, in the May issue, we highlighted some of our hard-working volunteers. In this issue four more volunteers talk about their experiences and motivations for continuing to do this important work.

Hillary Kruger: I have been volunteering with the Interfaith Hospitality Network for close to a decade. I started when my kids were young and I was looking for a way we could volunteer together as a family. I like cooking and serving meals and it is a very natural way to start a conversation. Sometimes a family just wants to be private and I respect their wishes; other families want to tell you their life stories. As much as I am trying to help the families, the families are truly helping me to see what is going on in our world and the work that we need to be doing to reach out to one another.



Herb Levine: I love being a volunteer with the Hospitality Network because it offers me a concrete way to act on my values as a Jew. It is one thing to read the haftarah on Yom Kippur about clothing the naked and feeding the hungry; it's another thing altogether to be involved in that work.

The most satisfying part of volunteering has been my previous service as our synagogue's coordinator.

I still think about some of the families who were our guests then and sometimes hear from Rachel Falkove about how they are doing. Another benefit to me and, I believe, to our whole community, is that no one group in our Centre has a monopoly on volunteering. The Hospitality Network unites us in ways that our individual worship communities and gender-based groups do not.



Selma Schlee: Our boys and the kids who visit with the Hospitality Network always have a good time together. The children are very sweet and we would like to support the families where we can.

Howard Spodek: Around 1965, I returned from one of my research trips to India, expecting to propose that GJC support causes in the third world. However, when I saw people sleeping on the streets of Center City Philadelphia, I thought that perhaps GJC should get more involved in issues of poverty here at home.



I saw three objectives: one was providing help to some people who were homeless. A second was participating in interfaith alliances with other congregations of northwest Philadelphia. The third was having the opportunity to meet a few homeless people during the time they were our guests. Middle class people do not get much opportunity to learn about the lives of homeless people. This could be a great opportunity for us to both help and learn.

In the early years of our participation, I almost always volunteered for dinner hosting, which was the best time to meet and talk with our guests. More recently, feeling pressed for time, I have mostly done overnight hosting. As I write this, I think that maybe now I'll mix my hosting, partly at the dinner hour, partly overnight.

THANK YOU

Germantown Jewish Centre would like to extend thanks and gratitude to the
Wolfe Family Foundation
for generously supporting and making our programming possible.

NEWS FROM THE MEN'S CLUB

by Dick Menin

Ari Witkin, GJC's Student Rabbi, gave a sermon on the second day of Rosh ha-Shanah in which he talked about the importance of community. The sermon looked at life in general, as well as at the role community plays specifically at the synagogue. I have always felt that community-building was the prime function of the Men's Club at GJC. There is nothing wrong with raising money and doing service projects, and we do both, but those activities are actually subordinate to our primary objective of bringing together people who share values in a way that deeper relationships can grow. When projects are done together, it is natural to "let your hair down" (what would I know about this?) and get to know others better. However, this doesn't just happen organically; we have to nudge the process along.

For this reason, over the summer, the Men's Club had several dinners, mostly to schmooze. We plan to have more such dinners.

Monthly, we work with the Jewish Relief Agency to pack food parcels and take them to people with food insecurity. We will be building the "Dancing Children" Hanukiyah again for this year's holiday. Because Thanksgiving is so close to Hanukah this year, construction will take place on Sundays, November 11th and 18th. We will begin at 9:00 AM each day. The work is not difficult, and the weather will be warm please consider helping us in this effort this year.

In December, Dr. Andrew Newberg, a neuroscientist at Jefferson, will continue the discussion he began last March on the neurobiology of spirituality. The program will be centered on his new book, *The Rabbi's Brain*, and will take place on Sunday, December 9th, at 10:00 AM.

We have several films planned as well.

All are welcome at all Men's Club programs.

GJC NEW FAMILY NEWS



We are delighted to extend a very hearty Mazal Tov to Marti Reinfeld and Ilde Burgos on the birth of their daughter, Meital Eliana Burgos. She was born on Shabbat Ki Tetze on August 25th at 9:19 AM, weighing in at 7 lbs, 2 oz. Meital is healthy, growing, and excited to check out the playground minyan.

The GJC Centre Call is interested in sharing with the whole congregation news of our newborn baby members. If you would like to include your newborns here, send a few words and a photo to epinkenson@comcast.net.

PLANNED GIVING & NER TAMID



Remembering Germantown Jewish Centre in your will, a trust, or retirement asset is a meaningful way to ensure that your commitment to our community continues to help our synagogue thrive for generations to come. For more information on how you can include GJC in your estate plans, please contact Nina Peskin at 215-844-1507 x12.

GJC ALUMNI IN ISRAEL

by Rina Rimon-Greenspan

We have recently celebrated our 6th anniversary of being back in Israel, which marks the same amount of time as we spent living in Philadelphia. After spending four years in Toronto, Canada, one in Center City, and five years in Mt. Airy, we returned to Jerusalem – a journey that reminds us of Noah's ark (on a smaller scale of course). We were two adults (Israelis), two children (Americans), two cats (Canadians) – and 12 suitcases.

We had moved to Mt. Airy on Labor Day weekend of 2007, with our new-born son, Nadav. He was only eight months old at the time of our move, and we chose Mt. Airy so he could join ECP and enjoy a quality Jewish education. We had heard about ECP from other Israeli friends and we immediately knew this was the kind of education we wanted for him. But we did not know that our experience would go far beyond just sending a child to daycare. Joining ECP meant for us being part of the special community of GJC.

In the five years we spent at GJC, we alternated between Minyan Masorti, the Charry sanctuary, Dorshei Derekh and the children's and the playground minyans. We always felt welcomed, and always felt that there are so many ways to be and to pray together at the rich and diverse communities at GJC.

During our time at GJC, our second child, Roni was also born, and, of course, she joined ECP as well. One of the most special experiences we had was that after her birth, we received meal deliveries from community members for four weeks! It was a kind, generous, warm and supporting act of friendship and community. Actually, one of my favorite activities was to organize and cook for meal deliveries to families with new-borns in the community. Even after returning to Israel, I was delighted to be able to organize a meal train for the Barkans when young Joshua was born.

Much has changed since we moved back to Israel; the most special change was the Israeli addition to our family, our four-year-old Nivi. Nadav is now almost twelve years old, and Roni is almost ten. My husband Itay is teaching at the Hebrew University, and I am working as a researcher in the field of disabilities and evaluation.



Hila, Itay and their children, Nada , Roni, and Nadav

Though it was very sad to leave Mt. Airy and our friends and community at GJC, we try to keep in touch and are always very happy and excited to host or meet GJC people. Since we moved back, we have been fortunate to meet and host some GJCers, such as the Barkan/Schrager family, the Shaws, the Sterns, Rabbi Adam, Cheryl and their kids, the Molot/Klem family, Danielle Stillman, Dina Pinsky and Mikael Elsila, the Bekelmans, the Goldshaws, and the Bermans, to name a few.

Our home and hearts are always open to our Philly friends and all are welcome.



TODAH RABBAH!

CONTRIBUTIONS from AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 2018

Sincere thanks and appreciation to those who remember to honor their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

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Inside Centre Call

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Rabbi's Message..... | page 1 |
| Shabbat & Holidays..... | page 2 |
| In the Mishpoche..... | page 2 |
| Welcome New Members..... | page 2 |
| In Memoriam..... | page 2 |
| Israel Dancing..... | page 2 |
| President's Message..... | page 3 |
| Tikkun Olam..... | page 8 |
| Member Spotlight..... | page 10 |
| Women of GJC..... | page 12 |
| ECP..... | page 13 |
| People of the Book..... | page 14 |
| HAZAK..... | page 15 |
| Interfaith Network..... | page 16 |
| Men's Club..... | page 17 |
| GJC New Family News..... | page 17 |
| GJC Alumni..... | page 18 |
| Contributions..... | page 19 |

If you are interested in writing for The Centre Call, we would love to hear your ideas! Please contact Kate Lawn at program@germantownjewishcentre.org. The deadline for every issue is the 1st of the previous month.



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