
the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

NOVEMBER, 2019

CHESHVAN/KISLEV, 5780

Friday evening services begin at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday morning services begin at 9:45 a.m.

THE RABBI'S MESSAGE

SOME PEOPLE MIGHT PLEASANTLY SURPRISE YOU

Emil Fackenheim (1916-2003) was a Reform rabbi and a professor at the University of Toronto. He is best known for his statement that "Jews must continue to live Jewish lives so as not to allow Hitler a posthumous victory." He called it the 614th commandment.

Born in Germany, he was interned for a time at the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. I read an interview with Fackenheim in which he recalled something from his own life that rings true with human nature. I present it here for your contemplation.

Fackenheim said, "One of my best friends in the concentration camp was a capo who was a professional thief, yet he was one of the most decent men I ever met. He was supposed to finger the people who didn't work. He never fingered

anyone. So every day he got a punishment. There was another kapo who was a communist — ideologically committed to helping the oppressed — and yet he was a cruel and terrible man."

We all know the proverb "Don't judge a book by its cover." How much the more must we be wary of judging a fellow human being by external features. As a moral agent, Fackenheim's thief seems to have been light years ahead of the fellow who was going to save the world.

We generally like idealists and eschew thieves. And the Bible tells us that the righteous shall flourish while a vile person should be despised. But humans are complicated. I think we are best advised to follow the Jewish idea that every human being is created in the image of God. Some people seriously test that axiom. But we should begin by assuming the best in others. Plant a radish, get a radish... but we never can be sure of what another person might do. Someone we don't even like might be our next hero!

Have a wonderful November and happy Thanksgiving,

Stephen Listfield

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings,

The last month was very busy, and the High Holidays flew by. It was wonderful to welcome Rabbi Listfield and Leslie back to our congregation.

As we look forward to the coming year, I see a bright future for our congregation. We as Jews want and need a spiritual home: a gathering place to celebrate, worship, learn and mourn. As we experience the gamut of sorrow and joy throughout our lives, Jewish rituals help us move through the dark times as well as the bright times. We seek and value Jewish community. I believe with all my heart that Etz Chayim provides this for our congregation as well as to the Jewish community.

We have built an amazing spirit. Our board members and volunteers provide direction, support and energy to keep our synagogue vibrant and strong. They are always there to welcome new members and nurture long standing congregants. We celebrate Shabbat, holidays, sad times and simchas together. We are able to be inclusive and listen to diverse voices. Even if we do not always agree with each other, there is still respect and always caring. This is something that should be treasured. Each of us has the responsibility to keep this community thriving and growing for future generations.

I would like to take this time to thank my board, the many participants during the holidays, all of you who generously took time to come to make a minyan, provided man and woman power to cook, build and take down the sukkah and the many things that made it possible for us to enjoy each other's company with a sense of humor, without stress, and to have pure enjoyment during our most important time of the year.

I hope you will remember how special Etz Chayim is when you are considering your year-end gift. Please join me in making a donation to our very special congregation that is there for us in this time of threats and insecurities. It is important that we maintain our safe, vibrant and caring community.

Sandra Wiederecht, 256-797-4013

SISTERHOOD

Ladies,

I hope everyone had a wonderful new year celebration. I know that the Break-the-Fast was great thanks to the amazing number of volunteers who helped with everything. Thanks to Millie, Shirley, Lauren, and Janet for helping prepare the food and the trays. Thanks to Nannette and Sandra for help with the shopping. Thanks to Shirley, Michelle P, Karen, and Sandra for making wonderful kugels. Also, thanks to those who helped clean-up afterwards. If I left anyone out, thank you as well! And last but not least a big THANK YOU to the Brigadiers, who sponsored the food.

Sisterhood will have our annual Craft Night on November 18 at 7 PM. We will be painting Hanukkah hand towels, so it should be fun. All ladies are invited. The cost is only \$5.00.

If you haven't paid your Sisterhood dues for 2019-2020, please send \$18 to Brenda.

Natha

BOOK CLUB LOOKING TOWARD JEWISH RELEVANCE

The book club had an exciting discussion of "Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor," which included some eye-opening responses from Palestinians.

Our next book will be "God is in the Crowd: Judaism in the Twenty-First Century" by Tal Keinan. It's a bold proposal for discovering relevance in Judaism and ensuring our survival. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks calls it enthralling, searching, and profound; an extraordinarily powerful work on Jewish identity in the next century.

We'll get together to discuss it at the synagogue at 11:30 am on Thursday, December 12. That will give you time to get the book and read it if you'd like to become part of our group.

If you have questions, contact Jon Berger at 256-457-0277 (phone or text) or jonaberger@gmail.com

ONEGS

Nov 01 Thomason/Kirshtein
Nov 08 Paddock
Nov 15 Roberts
Nov 22 Weiner
Nov 29 Kolchin
Dec 06 Lapidus

DONATIONS

General Fund

From: Yossi Drake

In memory of Sarah Drake

From: Ron Goldberg

In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Ray Appelbaum

In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Olivia Pope Friedman

To: Congregation – Thank you for such a warm, welcoming and memorable Yom Kippur. My husband and I thoroughly enjoyed the service, the people and the delicious Break-The-Fast food.

From: Lisa Livingston

In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Michal & Gary Hall

In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Valerie & Dale MacMurdy

In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Marcia Bouska

In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Susan Friedman

In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Elizabeth Kessler & Dennis
Gilbride
In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Elaine Zitomer & James Dricker
In Honor of the High Holidays

From: The Dub Family
In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Natha & Scott Hancock
In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Charlotte & Joseph Marcus
In Honor of the High Holidays and thanks
for being a warm and welcoming
congregation

From: Dorothy & Bill Goldberg
In Honor of the High Holidays

From: Ginger Nelson

Building Fund
From: Ginger Nelson

Sacks Family Memorial Fund
From: Alan Sacks and Family
In Memory of my mother, Harriet Sacks
Yahrzeit of Randy Sacks

Jewish Education Fund
From: Ginger Nelson

Rabbi Fund
From: Millie & Max Rosenthal
To: Linda Kolchin & Family – In Memory
of Norma Maier, mother of Linda Kolchin.
May all your good memories get you
through these difficult days.

From: Diana & Howard Polin
To: Linda Kolchin – Thinking of you. With
deepest sympathy on the loss of your
mother, Norma Maier.

From: Shirley & Ted Roberts
To: Linda Kolchin & Family – In Memory
of Norma Maier, Mother of Linda Kolchin.
We are sorry for your loss.

From: Lucy & Charles Fisher
In Honor of the High Holidays

Rabbi Discretionary Fund
From: Ginger Nelson

Sisterhood BBYO Fund
From: Diana & Howard Polin
To: Arlene Averbuch – With deepest
sympathy for you on Jerry's passing.
His legacy of love and devotion will give
you comfort.

Greenbaum Security Fund
From: Lauren & Steve Goodman
In Honor of the High Holidays

Sisterhood Fund
From: Diana & Howard Polin
To: Raven Livingston – You and your
beautiful voice were missed at Services.
We hope and pray that you will feel
better soon.
To: B.J. Brigadier – No fair! You could not
be at the lovely and delicious Break-The-
Fast that you and Bill sponsored. We
hope you are already starting 5780 in
better health.
To: Brenda Liles – Your friendship is
special and your good deeds are many.
May you heal quickly for a healthy &
happy 5780.

To: Robin Kirby – We feel much sympathy for you on the sudden loss of your husband.

From: Ginger Nelson

From: Sandra Wiederecht

To: Linda Kolchin—In Memory of your mother, Norma Maier

Outdoor Lighting Fund

In Memory of Gertrude & Perry Schlein from their daughters Natha Hancock and Robin Slomka and their families.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Nov 03 Annual JWV's Blood Drive, 10-1 at TBS
- Nov 10 JWV Post 111, breakfast meeting at 8:30 followed by decorating graves in cemeteries
- Nov 15-17 Rabbi Listfield Shabbaton
- Nov 18 Sisterhood Craft Night at 7 PM, \$5/person includes craft and refreshments
- Nov 24 Hadassah's "Unconventional Convention," 2-4 PM at EC
- Dec 12 EC Book Club at 11:30 AM at EC

BIRTHDAYS

- Nov 01 Linda Kolchin
- Nov 02 Kelley Zelickson
- Nov 02 Karen Hirsch
- Nov 03 Nannette Schwartz
- Nov 03 Jennifer Roberts
- Nov 05 Skylar Green
- Nov 09 Sharon Yalowitz
- Nov 11 Shirley Roberts
- Nov 16 Jonathan Levitt
- Nov 17 B. J. Brigadier
- Nov 19 Daniel Goodman
- Nov 23 Adam Kalachman
- Nov 23 Haley Rosenthal
- Nov 24 Shoshana Rosenthal
- Nov 26 Bill Goldberg
- Nov 27 Sandy Lieberman
- Nov 28 Yael Roberts
- Nov 30 Michael Kropp



Give local. Save local.

Second Annual Jewish War Veterans Blood Drive

Sunday, November 3

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

103 Lincoln St SE Huntsville, AL

All donors will receive a recognition item and a free cholesterol screening. Donors must be 16 or older, weigh at least 110 pounds, and show photo I.D. 16-year-olds require written parental permission.

LIFESOUTH
Community Blood Centers

ANNIVERSARIES

Nov 06 Natha & Scott Hancock
Nov 13 Mante & Arthur Polin
Nov 24 Barry & Mary Ann Meyer



HADASSAH
HUNTSVILLE

**UNCONVENTIONAL
CONVENTION**

**November 24th, 2-4pm
Etz Chayim
7705 Bailey Cove Road,
Huntsville, Alabama 35802**

Wear your old Hadassah regalia or your new Hadassah regalia, pins, hats, anything you might wear today or in years past. We will show only the best of the Hadassah Convention videos, have a kosher nosh and a selection of vintage drinks.

No charge, but donations gladly accepted for the many great works of Hadassah.

RSVP to
HuntsvilleHadassah@gmail.com or
call Karen Hirsch at 940 257 7444



Nov 20	Cheshvan 22	Morris Goldberg*
Nov 20	Cheshvan 22	Leon Treister*
Nov 20	Cheshvan 22	Sam Ginsburg*
Nov 23	Cheshvan 25	Dr. Abraham Feitelberg*
Nov 24	Cheshvan 26	Joan Zelickson
Nov 26	Cheshvan 28	Rose Feitelberg*
Nov 27	Cheshvan 29	Samuel Belsky*
Nov 27	Cheshvan 29	Rose Goldberg
Nov 30	Kislev 02	Dr. Harold Isaac Goldman*
Dec 02	Kislev 04	Suzanne Ivy*
Dec 03	Kislev 05	Rose Soble*
Dec 03	Kislev 05	Rhonda Beth Baker*
Dec 04	Kislev 06	Abraham Belsky*
Dec 04	Kislev 06	Sam Sokolow
Dec 04	Kislev 06	Molly Levy Buchman
Dec 07	Kislev 09	Pauline Baron Kripke*
Dec 07	Kislev 09	Florence Goldstein*

* Plaque

**Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

Simcha and Memorial Plaques: \$50.00 and \$75.00 respectively. Please contact Bill Goldberg for further information at 256-882-2918 or by email at wm.goldberg@yahoo.com

THANKSGIVING, 2019- IT'S OK, ENJOY By Ted Roberts

"Treat it in a Jewish way

And it becomes a Jewish day."

The Plymouthscher Rebbe

Massachusetts Bay Colony

November 1621

Here's a brainteaser that hundreds of thousands of Jewish families will face in early November: Is Thanksgiving a Jewish holiday? And consequently, hundreds of Rabbis - pressured by their inquisitive congregants - will retire to their

Yahrzeits**

Oct 31	Cheshvan 02	Adele Krigelman
Nov 01	Cheshvan 03	Sarah Goldstein*
Nov 01	Cheshvan 03	Sara Osovsky*
Nov 06	Cheshvan 08	Ruth Harris
Nov 10	Cheshvan 12	Martin Goldner*
Nov 11	Cheshvan 13	Herschel Tzvi Rabinovich
Nov 13	Cheshvan 15	Pauline Rudoy*
Nov 13	Cheshvan 15	Pierre Secher*
Nov 17	Cheshvan 19	Abe Soble*
Nov 17	Cheshvan 19	Elise Margaret Hoehne
Nov 19	Cheshvan 21	William Polin*

study, lock the door and madly pull down books from their well-stocked shelves. Chumashim, Talmudim (both Palestinian and Babylonian), Kaballim, Midrashim, 1997 Sports Highlights, Rabbinical Job Ops, Northeast U.S. - oops, wrong books.

Anyhow, with the door closed to ensure privacy and a cup of tea to soothe the soul, the finest rabbinic minds in America will flip through religious texts with print as small as pepper seeking a reference to Thanksgiving. A waste of time that could have been spent urging Jewish editors to run more humorous commentary on holidays like Thanksgiving.

My mama, who wouldn't know the Kabbalah from a Sears & Roebuck catalog - equipped only with the Rabbinical cup of tea - answered this question November 5, 1958. "Teddy," she said as she poured me a cup of hot water mildly flavored by her previously-owned tea bag. "Teddy," she said again, "Thanksgiving is a Jewish day if you treat it in a Jewish way." She went on to suggest that we begin our feast with - guess what - a prayer of Thanksgiving from Psalms (checkout Chapter 105, verse 1). And we should give Tzedakah - charity - on that day.

And although she didn't explicitly mention it, her double use of that weary tea bag reminded me she hated waste, especially on a holiday.

I am my mother's son, so we usually get one of those Monster Turkeys with a chest like Pavarotti and bulging drumsticks like a Green Bay fullback. I don't worry about job security the months

of December and January because there's gonna be leftovers of Turkey Salad, Turkey Curry, Turkey Soup, Turkey Bread and Baked Turkey Alaska for dessert. Just like Mama raised me.

My delightful daughter-in-law, who's as frugal as me, loves to brag about how many meals she gets out of her turkey. She counts in meal units; one adult meal equals one unit, "Let's see, us and six guests for Thanksgiving itself - that's ten units; then two lunches - turkey and mayo sandwiches - for Russ, me, and the kids - eight more units; Turkey Curry for me and Russ, boss, wife, and two kids - that's six."

"Uh uh - nope," I cut in. "You don't get a full unit for kids; one child's meal is only half a unit."

But she knows as well as I that my mother, her grandmother-in-law, could have served as the U.N. High Commissioner for famine relief - that's how well informed my mama was about starvation around the world. "Sop up that gravy in your plate. They're starving in Africa. Finish your French fries, soggy or not, they'd gobble them down in Sri Lanka and a few soggy doughnut chunks won't ruin your coffee and milk. What they'd give for it in Calcutta." You know how mamas are.

So I honestly came by my hatred of waste. After we go through a fifteen-pound turkey, I can't wait to call my daughter-in-law who thinks she knows how to utilize a turkey. "OK, I got 14 full units while it was still recognizable as turkey," I brag.

Last year, I found a great recipe for Turkey Pate. Whatta disguise. Instead of a hybrid thing, half skeleton - half drumstick that would scare a Calcutta indigent, there's this spread. And you could mold it, I told her, say in the shape of a rib steak or meat balls or a bust of dear Aunt Helen, who comes every year with presents and homemade cranberry sauce.

What I do is throw the turkey meat, five hard boiled eggs, some mayo, a little relish in a blender and end up with a salad bowl full of a gray-green glob that looks like it grew out of a rotten log, but tastes like ambrosia. It was recycling at its finest. I'd turned our dull, holiday centerpiece into a family treat. And when the family surrendered, the gray-green remains went to my two cats and their backyard friends. Guess how many units THAT would add up to? (Big argument here with the daughter-in-law as to equation of cat units with human units.)

Then I explain that after a simple graveside ceremony attended only by the immediate family, we buried the carcass - IN THE GARDEN- next to the fig tree. It will disintegrate in accordance with nature's laws and nourish tomatoes and squashes next spring and grow thumb-size purple figs, sweet as honeysuckle nectar. "Dust thou art to dust returneth," was spoken of turkey as well as the human body. Now that's a Jewish Thanksgiving!!

Ted Roberts, "The Scribbler on the Roof," is a syndicated Jewish columnist and longtime member of our Synagogue. Buy Ted's collected works at Amazon.com or the Sisterhood Gift Shop. Ted welcomes your comment and/or critique and can be emailed at:

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