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# the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

DECEMBER, 2022

KISLEV/TEVET, 5783

For information on joining  
virtual services and events, please see our website:  
<http://www.etzchayim-hsv.org>

## FROM THE RABBI

### The Colors of anti-Semitism

We're all upset by the rise of anti-Semitism in America. I am further upset by the latest chapter in that ongoing ugliness -- I mean the apparent increase in black anti-Semitism.

In October it was the rapper Kanye West, a self-described admirer of Hitler and the Nazis. West announced that he was planning to go "death con 3 on JEWISH PEOPLE." Meanwhile the basketball star Kyrie Irving was promoting an anti-Semitic movie called *Hebrews to Negroes*. That work of art denies the Holocaust and claims that Jews controlled the Atlantic slave trade. Last month Saturday Night Live had Dave Chappelle offer the opening monologue precisely about West and Irving. Chappelle repeated the anti-Semitic stereotypes, albeit under the guise of comedy. (Note: It wasn't comedy. The funny man is distinctly un-funny.)

I point out the following: In medieval Europe the barons and lords pitted the peasants

against the tax collectors, otherwise known as Jews. Periodically the peasants revolted against the Jews. Peasants suffered, Jews suffered more. And the aristocrats remained above the fray, watching their underlings fight it out.

Shift to Birmingham, AL in 1963. Black people felt that at long last it was time to enjoy equal rights. The city fathers told the protesters that their quarrel was with the department store owners, otherwise known as Jews. The two minorities fought it out while the white racists tried to remain above the fray.

I'm not implying that there is a conspiracy among some anti-Semites (white ones) to array black people against Jewish people, while the puppet masters stay pure. No, I'm writing to say something much more fundamental. There is no excuse for anti-Semitism from white people, or from black people, or from Muslim people, or from any people. And that's because there is no excuse for prejudice against any group of people. We need to evaluate *individuals*. We know that some people do what is right and some people do whatever they want. We evaluate accordingly. But we don't

judge people by the color of their skin or other such externals. We start with the axiom that God is the Parent of ALL people. We Jews certainly know that — we're the ones who brought that idea to the world!

And so every color of anti-Semitism is an ugly color.

Happy Chanukah. See you December 9-11.

Stephen Listfield

With pride and joy, we cordially invite you to share a special moment in our lives as our granddaughter, Madison Ruth Gerlak, is given her Hebrew name on Dec 30, 2022 at the Synagogue during Sabbath evening services. Stephanie (Trudy) and David are looking forward to introducing her to the Etz Chayim Family.

Natha and Scott Hancock

### WELCOME

We would like to welcome the newest members to our Etz Chayim Synagogue Family.

Cynthia Elliott; Stuart Greenwald; Sandra McGuire; Jordan Petroff, Adam & Nanci; Adam Shafron; Kathy & Brian Stora.

Love having you part of us.

### ONEGS & RABBI WEEKEND MEALS

- Dec 02 Oneg Shabbat, Hirsch
- Dec 09 Oneg Shabbat, Rosenthal
- Dec 10 Shabbat Rabbi Luncheon, Edmondson & Schwartz
- Dec 11 Rabbi Brunch, Kolchin
- Dec 16 Oneg Shabbat, Liles
- Dec 23 Oneg Shabbat, Feigenblatt & Shepard
- Dec 30 Oneg Shabbat & Baby Naming, Hancock



## **ETZ CHAYIM CHANUKAH PARTY**

**Sunday, December 18, 2022**

**Location: 7705 Bailey Cove Rd.**

**BINGO STARTS AT 11:00AM**

**LATKES & FOOD SERVED AT 12:00 PM**

Tickets are \$8.00 for Adults.  
Children 13 and under are free.  
Checks or cash are welcome.

**FREE**



### SYNAGOGUE BOOK CLUB

The intelligentsia from the Synagogue Book Club will be reviewing Herman Wouk's classic novel, "Marjorie Morningstar" and discussing how Mr. Wouk could have made his novel even better had he only followed

the sage advice that we will be providing in our review of this terribly long book.

Even if you have not read the book lately, or not read it at all, you are most welcome to come to the review and kvelle over how intelligent the members of our synagogue are.

Thursday, December 8, at 11:30, at the synagogue.

Max

### SISTERHOOD

The Latke Party, sponsored by Sisterhood, is on December 18th. With the help of many, many indispensable people, we'll prepare an impressive salad bar and HOMEMADE latkes for lunch. Come play Bingo at 11, and enjoy lunch at 12. Children 13 and under are FREE. All others are only \$8 per person.

Sisterhood's Gift Shop is fully stocked! Check out our new items anytime you're here (how about while you're at the Latke Party?). Think of us for all your gift giving needs, even if the gift is for yourself!



WE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER  
PEARL HARBOR

DECEMBER 7, 1941  
THE BEGINNING OF WWII

### DONATIONS

#### General Fund

From: Beverly & Lou Weiner

From: Karen Isaia  
A Blessing to all.

From: Julie Lindy  
To: Shirley Roberts - In Honor of her 90th birthday.  
To: Sandra Wiederecht - For Good Health wishes for her son, Daniel.

From: Stuart Greenwald  
For High Holiday Aliyah honors.

From: Janet Schindler  
To: Shirley Roberts- In Honor of Shirley's 90th Birthday.

From: Sue Paddock  
To: Shirley Roberts - In Honor of Shirley's 90th birthday.

From: Sondra Abraham  
In Honor of Shirley Roberts' 90th birthday.

From: Brenda & Cliff Liles  
To: Shirley on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday - Until 120!  
To: Barry Meyer – Hope you are feeling better!

From: Steve & Lynne Edmondson  
To: Shirley Roberts - In honor of Shirley's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday.

#### Outdoor Lighting Fund

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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Dec 7 Pearl Harbor Day  
Dec 9-11 Rabbi Listfield Shabbaton  
Dec 18 Chanukah begins; light the first candle this evening  
Dec 18 Latke Party & Bingo, 11 AM Bingo, Lunch at Noon, \$8 per person and children 13 & under FREE.

## BIRTHDAYS

- Dec 04 Joe Paddock  
Dec 06 Gabi Lapidus  
Dec 12 Nicole Sacks Dillard  
Dec 13 Joe Roberts  
Dec 13 Martin Freeman  
Dec 16 Sue Paddock  
Dec 21 Eric Bram  
Dec 23 Sarah Shepard  
Dec 27 Kaitlin Polin  
Dec 30 Tia Smith  
Dec 31 Joshua Dixon

## ANNIVERSARIES

- Dec 23 Dorothy & Bill Goldberg

## YAHREZEITS

- Nov 28 04 Kislev Suzanne Ivy\*  
Nov 29 05 Kislev Rose Soble\*  
Nov 29 05 Kislev Rhonda Beth Baker\*  
Nov 30 06 Kislev Abraham Belsky\*  
Nov 30 06 Kislev Molly Levy Buchman  
Dec 03 09 Kislev Pauline Baron Kripke\*  
Dec 03 09 Kislev Florence Goldstein\*  
Dec 06 12 Kislev Margareta Bernstein\*  
Dec 06 12 Kislev Helene Kamisher\*  
Dec 06 12 Kislev Beatrice Kolchin  
Dec 07 13 Kislev Gertrude S. Goldberger  
Dec 12 18 Kislev Lily Yedid  
Dec 18 24 Kislev Charlie J. Fisher\*  
Dec 21 27 Kislev Moe Post

- Dec 22 28 Kislev David Amiel Wertheim\*  
Dec 22 28 Kislev Morris Freeman  
Dec 23 29 Kislev Rita Goldstein\*  
Dec 25 01 Tevet Meyer Rodkin\*  
Dec 25 01 Tevet Murray Golub  
Dec 26 02 Tevet Dr. David Sidel  
Dec 27 03 Tevet Max Theodor Hoehne\*  
Dec 28 04 Tevet Freida Makower\*  
Dec 30 06 Tevet Fannie Ginsburg  
Dec 30 06 Tevet Estelle Okeon

\*\*Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

## CHANUKAH AND CHRISTMAS: A STUDY IN ECUMENICISM

By Ted Roberts, (1930-2020), the *Scribbler on the Roof*



Chanukah and Christmas have many similarities: They both fall in December. They both delight the merchant classes. They're both lighthearted holidays that don't sufficiently emphasize

their religious and historical origins. And both festivals love light.

Jews light candles. Christians light up evergreen trees. And finally, they're both followed by a flood of bankruptcy filings by Christian and Jewish families who have blown the December budget on munificent gifts to kids who will forget their parents' names, address, and phone number by the time they're 21. ("City Bank writes monthly about their new credit card, but not a word from Marvin," says one of my neglected friends.)

Chanukah used to be a skimpy little holiday – more patriotic than religious. Jewish families feasted on fried potato cakes or latkes – a delightful medley of potato, onion, and matzoh meal – de riger on Chanukah. This is followed by long periods of togetherness as the family holds hands,

suffers from heartburn, and chews Roloids together.

The Jewish family laps up potato cakes while their Christian neighbors dine on a great golden goose surrounded by festive delicacies. This menu inequality, and perhaps a disagreement over the arrival date of the Messiah, is all that keeps Christians and Jews from some serious cost-cutting with a corporate merger.

In Jewish homes, after the prayers, candle lighting, latke feast and anti-acid therapy regimen, a long-winded story teller, like this author, tells the tale of Chanukah: the campaign of liberation waged by the Jews of the 2nd century before Christ.

In the old days, kids enjoyed a frugal Chanukah. They usually received a coin each day of the eight-day celebration. But sometime around the middle of the 20th century, inflamed by their Christian neighbors and their frenzied December generosity, Jews turned Chanukah into an eight-day orgy of gifts. It was a giant step toward economic assimilation and bridge building between the two sister religions. Jew were now ALSO broke in January. Their checks bounced as well as those of their Christian friends. They could even tell better shopping stories due to the eight-day frenzy of exercising their credit cards.

I remember the scene when I was a youthful Chanukah celebrant. My grandmother, enthroned in the softest chair in the living room, handed out holiday coins to a line of grandkids, nephews, and nieces. There was a protocol – like when you were introduced to the Queen. You held out your hand as Grandmother reached into her purse and selected your coin.

This was no egalitarian exercise. The coins ranged from quarters to silver dollars. Both behavior and kinship went on the scale. A

courteous well cleaned up cousin with clean fingernails could cop a bigger prize than a grandkid who never called grandmother. The ceremony ended with a long, slow kiss to grandmother's cheek, an obligation which smart kids realized affected next year's disbursement.

My cousin, Arlene, as far-sighted as the prophet Elijah, was even smart enough to help cut up her Bubbe's latkes. And that was Chanukah in my day.