



Congregation
Etz Chaim
A Reform Jewish Congregation
Fairport, New York

CONGREGATION ETZ CHAIM

September- October 2018

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From the Rabbis Desk

As we head into the weekend with a Sukkot potluck on Friday and Simchat Torah on Sunday, we come to the end of our fall holiday season.

Fresh off 10 days of teshuvah, culminating with the physically and emotionally draining Day of Atonement, hopefully we feel spiritually refreshed and renewed. How do we channel that renewal?

Sukkot reminds us, through the lulav and the etrog, of the importance of both ritual and ethics. In the lulav, we have a plant that has neither taste nor scent, one that has taste only, one that has scent only, and then we have the etrog: the fruit with both taste and scent. It reminds us that one who is ignorant of Torah and does not do good deeds is like the palm – no scent, no taste. Those who know Torah and do not do good deeds, and those who do good deeds but do not know Torah, are like the willow and the myrtle – they are incomplete.

But putting Torah together with good deeds – in Micah’s words, do justice, love mercy and walk humbly before God – is symbolized by the combination of lulav and etrog together. And with Simchat Torah coming two nights after our potluck, we have a chance to

celebrate the Torah that contains all our ethical principles.

But there is a day in between our celebration this Shabbat and Simchat Torah most Reform Jews have forgotten: the 7th day of Sukkot, Hoshanah Rabbah. Torah tells us that the seventh day of Sukkot is one on which no work is done, and a holy gathering would take place in the Temple. As rabbinic Judaism evolved, the sacrifices of the seventh day assembly were replaced by prayer, and after the Torah reading in the additional (Musaf) service, the entire congregation would parade around the sanctuary chanting the Hoshanah prayer. It’s a simple plea: “Help us, God.”

It is a continuation of the Teshuvah we practiced between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. We remain humble and contrite, and ask for guidance in recommitting ourselves to the principles and practices to which we dedicated ourselves when we asked the Almighty just days earlier: “Forgive us, pardon us, grant us atonement.”

We read on Yom Kippur that tzedakah, teshuvah and tefilah – good deeds, repentance and prayer – find favor with God.

The onset of the fall festival gives us the chance to implement them. As we celebrate this weekend, let us do so with joy, but also with humility.

Hoshanah. Help us be partners with You, HaShem, in tikkun olam.

Rabbi David Abrahams

Alaska's Jewish History

by Lynn Harris

Bayles, David, Koslosky, Gottstein, Green, and Loussac – names that figure prominently in the Jewish history of Alaska. Who knew? But when my friend Sharon and I visited Anchorage a few weeks ago during a trip to Alaska, we found that there is not only a Jewish history in that state but even an Alaska Jewish Museum. A small building that used to be a branch bank, it houses a wealth of information that surprised and enlightened us.

In 1915, President Wilson announced that the U.S. Government would assume responsibility for building a railroad linking many parts of Alaska. Even before the construction began, this decision lured early settlers to the far North with thoughts of abundant resources such as furs, fish, copper, and gold. They set up a tent city in Ship's Creek Landing, a site that became the city of Anchorage within a few years. Among them were Jewish pioneers who ultimately made Anchorage their home. They not only brought their families but also traditions that helped to create a vibrant Jewish community in the area.

The museum highlighted stories about several of these families. Isidore Bayles was one of the first residents of the

Ship's Creek tent city. Eventually a clothing store owner, he is considered one of the founders of Anchorage and was instrumental in getting it incorporated as a city. Leopold David, an Army pharmacist's assistant, became a lawyer as well as Anchorage's first mayor in 1920. Isaac Koslosky, originally a clothing store owner in Kansas City, went to Alaska looking for gold. He didn't strike it rich but did become Alaska's most prominent fur trader and buyer.

Jacob Gottstein of Des Moines, Iowa, came to Alaska in 1915 and built a business selling groceries, cigars, candy, and sundries in the tent city. This became the foundation of a large Alaskan grocery store company. Gottstein's wife, Anna, started the first PTA in the Anchorage school system. Zachariah Loussac fled tsarist Russia for Alaska in 1907, eventually finding his way to the Ship's Creek area. He opened a drugstore when Anchorage was established, then retired as a philanthropist. He was also a two-term mayor of that city. The main library in Anchorage is named for him. David Green, arriving in 1922, became a master furrier in a well-known business that his descendants still run today.

There were several other fascinating exhibits to examine in this museum. One told the story of an airlift of more than 50,000 Yemenite refugees to Israel during 1948-50 by Alaska Airlines. We were familiar with Operation Solomon in the early 1990's that involved moving Ethiopian Jews to Israel, but had not been aware of the massive effort on behalf of the Yemenites – a very compelling story. Another exhibit related the attempt and failure of the U.S government to enact an

immigration policy allowing Jews escaping from Nazi Germany in the 1930's – early 40's to settle in Alaska – another story we hadn't heard. We just missed an exhibit about Ruth Gruber, a humanitarian and photojournalist whose work as a news correspondent included some of the earliest color photos of Alaska when it was still a Territory.

We met and had a nice discussion with the curator of the museum, Leslie Fried. She told us that there are now about 3,000 Jewish residents in Anchorage with smaller Jewish representation scattered throughout the state. The Museum is adjacent to the Jewish Community Center. There is also a Chabad house nearby. The present mayor of Anchorage is Ethan Berkowitz, just elected to a second term this year. Bob Kaufman is the founder and CEO of the Alaska Channel, the state's foremost travel and movie company. His wife Yael was one of the “movers” to get the Jewish Museum up and running.

Probably the biggest surprise was when Sharon and I went to the Alaska State Fair, a really fun event. Chabad had set up an information tent to make fair visitors more aware of Judaism, it's history in Alaska, and to promote tolerance and good will for everyone. We introduced ourselves to the rabbi, a young man named Shmuli (didn't get his last name) originally from Brooklyn. He wished us L'Shanah Tovah, blew a small shofar for us, and made our day (and trip) so much more meaningful.

Sukkot Potluck

Please join us for our annual Sukkot Potluck, Friday, September 28th. We will build the sukkah at 4:00pm, and will begin our celebration at 5:20 in the sukkah with dinner and singing to follow. Please bring 1 a dish to pass for a dairy meal, as well as decorations for the sukkah (corn stalks, seasonal vegetables/fruits).

RSVP to Ashley by September 26th.

Simchat Torah Service

Our Simchat Torah service will be held on Sunday, September 30th at 7:00pm. This service will be the consecration of new Religious School students.

Membership Renewal Packets

Thank you to all who have returned their packets. If you still need to get yours to Ashley, you may bring it with you to any of our services in September or October. If I'm not there, just leave it on the desk in the office.

Evan Michaels Bar Mitzvah

Stacey and Lindsey Michaels would like to extend an invitation to the congregation to attend the Bar Mitzvah of their son Evan. The service will be held at Congregation Etz Chaim on Saturday, October 13th at 9:30am!

Mazel Tov Evan!

Etz Chaim Shout Outs!

Heath Barrett Popplewell arrived on June 18th. He is the grandson of Eileen Popplewell and the great grandson of Claire and Donald Dunn. His parents and two sisters live in Columbus, Ohio.

Pam and Marv Cohen's granddaughter Rachel will be turning 17 on September 23rd!

Congratulations to Pam and Marv Cohen will be married for 55 years on October 12th!

Pam Cohen will be turning 76 on October 13th.

Oneg Sign Up

If you haven't had a chance yet to sign up for a oneg or Holiday potluck, it's not too late! Just email Ashley to let her know when you can help. We understand that it's often hard to plan out months in advance, so just make your best guess. If it turns out that you're unable to help on your assigned date, let Ashley know and a replacement will be found.

The Board would like to invite members to sponsor an oneg and/or have an aliyah when you celebrate a birthday, anniversary, or special time in your life. Please email Ashley with information about your special simchas.

New Member!

Welcome to new members Dr Lynnne and Andrew Correll and their children Abbie and Grady! We are so pleased that they will be part of our Etz Chaim family.

Donation

Thank you so much for all of your generous High Holiday donations!

Phyllis Shapiro

Rachel Gordon and family

Carol Klinger in memory of Charlie Klinger

Lynn Harris in memory of Mark Harris

Stacey Freed

Steven Horowitz

Alan Priceman

Barbara Sforza

Gloria and Gordon Barnes

Stu and Carol Chester in memory of Mark Harris

Fran and Jason Barnes

Frank and Judy Weiner

Helga Strasser in memory of Alex Strasser

Terrence and Dorian Fine

Kenneth and Margaret Gordon

Barbara Noskie

Edward and Sandra Gilbert

Bernard and Joan Marcus

Sylvia Ball

Barbara Kaplan

Polly Grunfeld Sack

Bruce Dan

Month	Date	Day	Event	Time	Comments
SEPTEMBER	28	Friday	Sukkot Potluck and Service	6:00 PM	Mountain Rise (Set up begins at 4:00pm)
	30	Sunday	Simchat Torah	7:00 PM	Consecration of New Religious Students
OCTOBER	7	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	13	Saturday	Evan Michaels Bar Mitzvah	9:30 AM	Mountain Rise
	14	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	19	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	21	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	21	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
NOVEMBER	2	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	4	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	11	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	16	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	18	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	18	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	2	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC

DECEMBER	7	Friday	Chanukah Potluck	6:00 PM	Lower level, Mountain Rise
	9	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	16	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	16	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	21	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
2019	4	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
JANUARY	6	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	13	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	18	Friday	Tu'Bishvat Seder	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Social Hall
	20	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	20	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	27	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	1	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
FEBRUARY	3	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	10	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	10	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	15	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise

	1	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
MARCH	3	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	10	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	15	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
	17	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	17	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	22	Friday	Purim Potluck	6:00 PM	Mountain Rise Social Hall (DAIRY)
	24	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	31	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	5	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
APRIL	7	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	14	Sunday	Annual Meeting	6:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	14	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	20	Saturday	Community Seder	5:30 PM	Mountain Rise Social Hall (set up)
	21	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	28	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	3	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise
MAY	5	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	12	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	17	Friday	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM	Mountain Rise

	19	Sunday	Board Planning Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom
	2	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
JUNE	8	Saturday	Shavuot dairy potluck	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise (Ice Cream Social)
	9	Sunday	Religious School	9-12:00 PM	JCC
	23	Sunday	Board Meeting	7:00 PM	Mountain Rise Classroom