

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

KEEPING OUR JEWISH MEMORY | Rabbi Rachel Grant Meyer



At the end of January, I had the privilege of accompanying fourteen members of our CRuSTY high school youth group to Washington, DC for the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism's *L'taken* Seminar. This program gives students the opportunity to learn about a range of public policy issues, to study Jewish values surrounding these issues, to learn advocacy skills, and to participate

in lobby visits on Capitol Hill. Students also have the chance to visit some of Washington's most significant historical sites, including the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. During our afternoon visit to the Memorial Museum, as I wound my way through the exhibits, I paused to speak with one of our Confirmation students. As he took in the Memorial Museum, he found himself asking whether it would have a significant enough impact on visitors to truly help them understand just how atrocious and unspeakably evil the Holocaust was. In a hushed voice, he asked me and Rabbi Rothman whether we thought that, when the survivors of the Holocaust are no longer alive, something like this Memorial Museum will adequately do the job of conveying the horrific nature of the Holocaust.

Later, when CRuSTY gathered to debrief, I posed this question and some others to the rest of the teens. I asked: *Will we ever be able to fully convey the gravity of the Holocaust to future generations as the last generation to hear direct testimonial from Holocaust survivors? What are the ways we use memory to convey an experience within Jewish tradition?* The teens discussed the parts of the exhibit that had the biggest emotional impact on them. Many of them reflected on the intensity of walking through the room lined with shoes taken from victims of the Nazi concentration camps. They talked about the unique smell of the shoes, about picturing the individual people who once owned those shoes, and about the way in which each pair of shoes brought their owner to life in a way that no text on a wall ever really could.

Together, we talked about the concept of *shamor v'zachor* – to keep and to remember. The Torah teaches us that we are to keep and to remember the Sabbath day in order to make it holy. We spoke about the idea that, in order to keep and remember the Sabbath day, we employ the use of our senses – we kindle the Sabbath lights and watch their glow and feel their warmth; and we taste the sweetness of the wine and the delicious challah. I asked the teens whether that same idea might extend to the way in which we think about Holocaust remembrance. Rather than simply making the Holocaust into an academic study – something written about in books or on museum walls – we also have to truly keep it through the use of our senses to put ourselves back into the telling. When we show future generations

artifacts from the Holocaust and retell the testimony of survivors, it is then that we transcend mere remembrance and also keep the story alive.

That is the Jewish way. When we remember Jewishly we do not simply narrate from a distance, we put ourselves back into the story, utilizing our senses to immerse ourselves in the fullness of an experience so that we can not only remember but keep it for generations to come. It is the same thing we will do next month as we sit down to our Passover seders. We dip our herbs in saltwater, tasting the bitterness of slavery. We taste *matzah*, the bread of affliction. We will do more than simply retell a story about a time long past. We locate ourselves in that narrative and relive the history as though we ourselves had been there, as it says in the Hagaddah: *“as if you had come out of Egypt.”* We vividly recreate the tale of our exodus from *Mitzrayim*, from Egypt, from the Narrow Place.

“When we stand in narrow places with those who are not yet free... we truly ensure that we have both remembered and kept the narrative of our people.”

When we stand up from our Passover tables, though, our work is not done. The true work of keeping the narrative alive? That is the work of continuing to free ourselves and others from our narrow places. That is the work that we do when we volunteer to spend a night in the CRS Homeless Shelter. That is the work we do when we serve food at the St. Xavier's soup kitchen once a month. That is the work we do when we pack backpacks as part of our Backpack Buddies program. When we stand in narrow places with those who are not yet free, that is when we truly ensure that we have both remembered and kept the narrative of our people.

The four children of the Passover seder ask questions that we have answered and continue to answer in powerful ways through our retelling of the Exodus from Egypt. Now, our own CRS youth have begun to ask the powerful questions that come out of the Holocaust – *how is this moment in history different from all other moments in history and how will we properly remember it as such?* When we approach Yom HaShoah, our Day of Holocaust Remembrance, just two weeks after Passover, let us strive to tell the stories of the Holocaust in new and powerful ways as we put ourselves back in that narrow place in history so that we may commit ourselves anew to continuing the legacy of the Jewish people's story of survival.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT | Karen Berman



At this time of year, we will soon be at our seders, joyfully banging the table as we sing *Dayenu*. This 15-line poem recounts the stages of the Exodus from Egypt through the giving of the Torah to bringing the Jews into the land of Israel and building the Temple. “If God had provided for our needs in the wilderness for 40 years, *dayenu!* If God had fed us manna, *dayenu!*” After each verse, we sing *dayenu*—it would have been enough. This reminds us that while the entire story of our redemption is truly miraculous, any one of those acts alone is reason to be thankful and to praise God.

Passover, observed during the spring, is also thought of as a time of rebirth and new beginnings. It provides us with a wonderful opportunity to not only celebrate large accomplishments, but also to find joy in the everyday blessings that we may at times overlook. While miracles like the parting of the sea and the giving of Torah are important, it is the daily recurring

wonders—the love of a parent or child, the joy one gets from studying, the comfort one receives from friends—that are the building blocks on which Judaism is built. After all, our most important holiday is not a rare occasion that comes once a year, but the weekly observance of Shabbat.

As we emerge from the polar vortex of the past winter, I encourage you to spend some time at Rodeph Sholom, where we are dedicated to making these small miracles happen each day. Here, through a ritual experience, an education class, or a community service project, you can connect with your community, nurture your soul, and expand your mind. Only by making time for introspection, learning, and connection, do we truly appreciate the miracles around us.

Please know that you are very welcome to join your Rodeph Sholom community’s seder (see Page 3 for details). Wherever your seder table is, may it be filled with friends, family, and blessings too numerous to count.

Jonathan, Simon, and Asher join me in wishing you a *hag sameach*.

THE CRS CONTINGENT AT THE URJ BIENNIAL

This year’s Biennial featured: the passing of the HUC-JIR torch from (our own) Rabbi David Ellenson to (also our own) Rabbi Aaron Panken, speakers Vice President Joe Biden and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, celebrating 60 years of the American Conference of Cantors, praying together at Shabbat services, learning opportunities, and a music festival.



*“I am 73 years old. I’ve seen everything.
I’ve met the kings, the queens, the presidents, I’ve been around the world.
I have one thing that I would like to do: to try to reach peace.”*

Ariel Sharon 1928-2014

PASSOVER SERVICES

Shabbat Morning, Saturday, April 12

11:00 am–12:00 pm Shireinu Shabbat and Passover Service (Schafler Forum)

Tuesday, April 15

8:45 am Adult Study
10:15 am 1st Day Passover Service
The Children’s Choir will participate.

Monday, April 21

10:00 am Concluding Passover Service
Yizkor Memorial Prayer

SHIREINU SHABBAT AND PASSOVER SERVICE

Shabbat Morning, Saturday, April 12, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm

Members and non-members, please join the Rodeph Sholom family for a warm, inviting, musical, and interactive worship experience! Designed to be accessible and sensitive to a variety of needs, there will be a Sign Language Interpreter and snacks will be available. The clergy and extended Rodeph Sholom family look forward to sharing prayer, Torah, and music. RSVP encouraged. Contact: specialneeds@crsnyc.org or 646.454.3124. Please specify your name, email address and/or phone number, number of people attending, the age of the individual with special needs, and the nature of the special need (optional).

Would you like to help someone in our community attend our Congregational Seder?

To make a donation, please go to Page 6 for details.

John Kowal/Rev. Preston Washington 24th Annual Freedom Seder

Friday, April 25 at 7:30 pm
Following the Erev Shabbat Service

Come join us for our annual joint Seder in the Schafler Forum following the Erev Shabbat Service with clergy and congregants of Memorial Baptist Church sponsored by the Community Concerns Committee. We will rejoice in song and words the special relationship we have with Memorial Baptist, as we share our stories of Exodus and freedom. To make a reservation, please contact Helen Freedman at freedomseder@crsnyc.org or call 646.454.3121. The cost is \$25 per person and you can send checks to Congregation Rodeph Sholom, Att: Freedom Seder, 7 West 83rd Street, NY, NY 10024, payable to CRS.

“... Walk into the world
Refusing to be either slave or slaveholder.”
(Muriel Rukeyser)

Passover With Our Clergy at Our Annual Seder

Monday, April 14, 6:00 pm

Reservations (per person):
Members \$80 adult \$45 child (12 & under)
Non-Members \$100 adult \$60 child (12 & under)

Enclosed is a check made out to Congregation Rodeph Sholom in the amount of:

\$ _____ for _____ adult(s) and _____ child(ren).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: (day) _____

(evening) _____

Email: _____

Please indicate seating preference:

_____ singles under 50

_____ singles over 50

_____ families with children (ages _____)

_____ families with older adults

_____ other _____

TO RSVP PLEASE COPY (OR CUT) AND SEND THIS FORM:

BY MAIL: Congregation Rodeph Sholom

7 West 83rd Street, New York, NY 10024

BY FAX: 212.877.6526

BY EMAIL: passover@crsnyc.org

If you have questions, please call 646.454.3120.

A TIME FOR MUSIC AND WELCOMING FROM THE EDITOR | Yvette Perry

Music is a big part of our Jewish traditions. Especially at Passover, when we sit around our seder tables and sing our beloved songs – and with such gusto! We put our all into *Dayenu*, *Adir Hu*, *Chad Gadya*. We rejoice in being together, and rejoice that once in Egypt, we are now free. At this year’s URJ Biennial, music was especially celebrated, too, at services, concerts, and the music festival. Singer Neshama Carlebach’s revelatory article in *Jewish Week* (January 3) personified Rabbi Jacobs’ welcoming Biennial message of inclusiveness. The daughter of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, whose idea of honoring his Judaism was through music, Neshama spoke about growing up Orthodox. But after “*davening with 4,999 Reform Jews*,” she found herself easily embracing our Reform Jewish community. Of being at the Biennial she says, “*I was overwhelmed by the music, by the davening, and by the ever-present light of Torah.*” On this Passover, always a time of welcoming, we welcome Neshama, the opportunity to be inclusive, and Elijah – with spirited voices and triumphant songs.

SAVE THE DATES

Thursday, March 6, 7:00 pm: CRS BOOK CLUB. All are welcome to join the return of the CRS book group. Meetings are self-moderated and meet at the Synagogue. The book we will be reading is *My Promised Land: The Triumph and Tragedy of Israel* by Avi Shavit. Contact: bookgroup@crsnyc.org.

Tuesday, March 11, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm: LUNCH TOGETHER. In the Eisner. A dairy lunch will be served. A contribution of \$8 is suggested. The next dates are Tuesdays, April 22 and May 20. Co-sponsored by Adult Education, the Caring Community Committee, and Sisterhood. Please join us for great socializing and engaging presentations. Contact: lunchtogether@crsnyc.org.

Thursday, March 13, 1:00 – 4:00 pm: MAH JONGG. Novices and veteran players are welcome. Cards will be available for purchase. Next dates are Thursdays, April 10 and May 8. RSVP: mahjongg@crsnyc.org.

Friday, March 14, 5:00 pm: CONGREGATIONAL PRE-NEG. Start your Shabbat off with wine, cheese, and good conversation at our communal get-together before Erev Shabbat Services.

Thursday, April 3, 7:00 pm: CANTOR'S CABARET.

Friday, April 4, 4:15 – 5:45 pm: VA-YINAFASH. Join us as we prepare together for Shabbat with meditation, study, reflection, and stopping to take a deep breath.

Saturday, April 19, 1:00 – 3:00 pm: CHAMBER MUSIC AT RODEPH SHOLOM. Artistic Director Eliot Bailen brings back another season of chamber ensemble concerts highlighting our Jewish musical heritage and featuring world class musicians in the congenial and intimate setting of the Schnurmacher Chapel following Shabbat Morning Services. Contact: chambermusic@crsnyc.org.

Friday, April 25, 6:00 pm: EREV SHABBAT SERVICE/YOM HASHOAH COMMEMORATION. With special guest speaker, Rabbi Erinfeld. Join us for the Freedom Seder following the Service. See Page 3.

Sunday, April 27, 10:00 pm–Monday, April 28, 6:00 pm: READING OF THE NAMES: A YOM HASHOAH COMMEMORATION. The Upper West Side community will gather to read the names of Jews among the six million murdered in the Holocaust. Rabbis from the Upper West Side will begin the reading at 10:00 pm at a Congregation TBD, and continue throughout the night. It will resume at 9:00 am on Monday at the JCC, 334 Amsterdam Ave. at 76th St., in the 7th floor beit midrash, ending at 6:00 pm with the recitation of Kaddish. Go to the CRS website for the exact time that CRS rabbis and congregants will read names. Come to read or to witness.

Wednesday, Thursday, April 30 and May 1, 7:00 pm, Saturday, May 3, 8:00 pm, and Sunday, May 4, 1:30 and 6:00 pm: CRS THEATER COMPANY PRESENTS 42ND STREET. Contact: rstheater@crsnyc.org. See Page 6.

Friday, May 2, 5:00 pm: CONGREGATIONAL PRE-NEG. Start your Shabbat off with wine, cheese, and good conversation at our communal get-together before Erev Shabbat Services.

Friday, May 2, 6:00 pm: ISRAEL'S 66TH BIRTHDAY EREV SHABBAT SERVICE. Followed by a Shabbat dinner celebration with the Israel Committee in the Schafler.

Wednesday, May 7, 7:00 pm: MIDRASH HOUR.

Monday, May 19, 7:00 pm: 172ND ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING. All congregants are welcome to the Eisner Auditorium for election of Trustees and Officers and other business. Refreshments will be served.

Friday, May 30, 6:00 pm: EREV SHABBAT RELIGIOUS SCHOOL HS GRADUATION AND YOUTH GROUP INSTALLATION SERVICE. Followed by a festive Oneg to celebrate the Religious School HS Graduates.

Sunday, June 1, 11:00 am – 4:00 pm: ANNUAL SALUTE TO ISRAEL PARADE. Honoring Israel's 66th birthday.

Tuesday, June 3, 6:00 pm: EREV SHAVUOT/CONFIRMATION SERVICE. Followed by a celebratory Oneg.

Wednesday, June 4, 10:15 am: SHAVUOT YIZKOR SERVICE.

Friday, June 6, 6:00 pm: ANNUAL LGBTQ PRIDE SHABBAT SERVICE AND DINNER. Celebrate 15 years of LGBTQ Community Shabbat Dinners at CRS, sponsored by the LGBTQ Outreach Committee. Everyone welcome. Dinner immediately follows in the Schafler at 7:30 pm. Reservations for dinner are required. Details on the CRS website. Contact: lgbtq@crsnyc.org or 646.454.3105.

ADULT EDUCATION COURSES

Spring Shabbaton: NEW DATE!

Dr. Norman J. Cohen | Friday, April 4 and Saturday, April 5
Judaism for Body and Soul

Community Learning Series: As If You Went Forth From Egypt

Tuesdays March 18, 25, April 1 | 7:00–8:30 pm
(Locations TBD; one session will be at CRS)

Our Haven and Our Strength: Personal and Spiritual Pathways through the Psalms

Rabbi Jacqueline Ellenson | Fridays, 12:00–1:30 pm
March 21, April 25, May 30

A contemplative and personal approach to text study based on the Book of Psalms supplemented by poetry and song. Learners of all levels are welcome!

How to Raise a Mentsch: The Parenting Discussion Group

Rabbi Benjamin H. Spratt | Tuesdays, 9:00–10:30 am
March 4, 18, April 29, May 13, 27, through June

Informed by Jewish wisdom and inspired by real life, this group offers an opportunity to ask the big questions of parenting in an intimate environment. Parents of children of all ages are welcome, and you can join us at one or all of the classes.

Shabbat Study Series: The Festival Megillot

Various Rabbis and Guests | Saturdays, 12:30 pm following services
March 8: Purim/Esther: Greg Weitzman, Rabbinic Intern

March 29: Passover/Song of Songs: Nicole Auerbach

May 31: Shavuot/Ruth: Rabbi Debra Goldstein

The Festival Megillot, the selected readings that accompany our holidays, offer lessons on life, love, and relationships. There will be lunch and lively conversation!

Sisterhood Torah Study

Wednesday, May 21: Evening Study Session

Women of Rodeph Sholom Torah Study gives the women of the congregation opportunities to explore text and identity in an intimate environment of friendship, using the new Women's Torah Commentary as our guide. Contact: sisterhood@crsnyc.org.

Hebrew Marathon

Michal Nachmany | Saturday March 22, 1:00–5:00 pm

An intensive Hebrew immersion that by the end of the day will have you reading Hebrew!

Basic Judaism

Open to all who want to take a closer look at how and why Jewish rituals have developed and how they create meaning in our lives.

Section 3: The Vocabulary of Jewish Texts

Rabbi Leora Kaye | Wednesdays, 7:00–8:00 pm

March 5, 12, 19, 26, April 2, 9, 23, May 7

Beginning Hebrew

Sara Rosen | Mondays, 6:30–7:30 pm or Thursdays, 9:15–10:15 am

Continuing Hebrew

Sara Rosen | Mondays, 1:30–3:00 pm or Tuesdays, 6:00–7:00 pm

Modern Hebrew

Sara Rosen | Mondays, 7:30–9:00 pm

For more information, go to rodephsholom.org, the Adult Ed brochure, Shabbat Shalom, or call 646.454.3029.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE PROGRAMS AND OTHER EVENTS AT RODEPHSHOLOM.ORG

MY FIRST URJ BIENNIAL | Henry Siegel

There's nothing like being part of a 5,000 person choir led by some of the most glorious voices on the planet. That's why Shabbat services at the URJ Biennial in San Diego last December were a highlight of the event. But not only was great music a part of all the major events, both plenary sessions and Shabbat Services, it seemed to be everywhere, all the time.

Thursday night, for instance, music took over the Gaslamp Quarter of San Diego with eight different performances in eight different venues. This was a great chance to socialize with delegates from other congregations and to enjoy outstanding performers. It was standing room only at the Operacaffe where we listened to Canadian and Israeli performers.

Another highlight was the Shabbat luncheon sponsored by the American Conference of Cantors (ACC). Titled *The Cantors' Day Off*, it featured fifteen cantors performing songs ranging from *With a Little Help From My Friends* by Lennon and McCartney, to selections from *Marriage of Figaro* by Mozart. My personal favorite was *Alto's Lament* by Goldrich and Heisler that was performed by Cantor Tracey Scher. As a baritone, I completely relate – we never get to sing the melody! All in all, this was a truly sublime way to spend Shabbat afternoon.

Less formally, there were performances by cantors and song leaders

ISRAEL TRIP: A JOURNEY TO REMEMBER | Patti, Shanna, and Wade German

We were ten Rodeph Sholom families: eight congregants and two clergy, Rabbi Spratt and Cantor De Lowe. Before our December 21 departure date, most of the families shared no pre-existing relationship with any other, and none decided to join the journey in conjunction with another family's decision. Simply, we were all on this journey for different personal reasons, but shared at least one common motivation – *to be in Israel*.

Day-to-day we were escorted in a luxury bus, safely driven by a talented Israeli driver. We were educated throughout each day by a knowledgeable, experienced, and approachable Israeli guide, who made *aliya* from France years prior and was the daughter of Holocaust survivors.

As we moved through the country – from our Ben Gurion International Airport arrival to Tel Aviv, Caesarea to Tsfat, the Golan Heights to Jerusalem, and staying in luxurious David Hotels and a first-rate kibbutz – we had the opportunity to experience Israel both as independent families and as a unified group. This dual experience was facilitated in part by the pre-determined itinerary, but also as a result of our individual wishes. However, as we traveled through the ten days together, we believe that we all emerged knowing our shared experiences created a common bond for us.

Perhaps you noticed the frequent use of the word *journey*. This word was specifically chosen with Rabbi Spratt's encouragement for all of us to experience Israel as a *journey*, rather than as glib tourists on a sight-seeing trip.

For our family, the highlight of our ten days was the group's only Shabbat while in Israel. That morning, we woke up particularly early, bused to Masada, climbed to and then participated in a Shabbat morning service atop the mountain; came down and then floated in the Dead Sea; and we ended Shabbat with a Havdalah service overlooking Jerusalem.

To us, our service at the top of Masada was unique and special, and therefore, especially memorable. The simplicity of the environment – Jews gathered atop a mountain, in Israel, with Rabbi, Cantor, and chanting from the Torah – provided a glimpse into what being a Jew towards the beginning of our history may have felt like. A fundamental attraction to the religion became clear: a simple need to attach to written truths, and to do so not alone but as

almost every hour of the four day meeting in the Biennial Kikar. The climax was a celebration of the music of Debbie Friedman on Saturday evening when roughly 200 people gathered to sing her songs. This was followed by a Havdalah service. There was, in fact, more music than I could take in.

On the non-music front, I attended interesting sessions that included *Forging a New Relationship with Israel*, led by Dr. Yehuda Kurtzer of the Shalom Hartman Institute of North America, how to get adult males more involved in synagogue activities, and the new High Holy Days prayer book. All of these provided new perspectives on subjects I was interested in. I was particularly interested to learn that the ACC is sponsoring composition of new music for the High Holy Days. I look forward to hearing this music when we get the new *machzor* in a few years.

While all these activities were well worth the cost of attending, the most satisfying part of the event was the opportunity to meet people I didn't know from other synagogues, renew relations with people I haven't seen in a long time, and to spend time with my fellow CRS delegates.

Friends old and new made the Biennial an event to remember. It's amazing both what a small world we live in and how much larger it is than we sometimes realize. Never is that more apparent than at the Biennial.

a member of a group. The vivid memory of Torah chanting in front of picturesque mountain views, a cloudless light blue sky, and gliding hawks perfectly weaving in-and-out, certainly cannot be forgotten. This was truly a Shabbat to remember.

The Masada experience was a notable metaphor for the Jewish week. At home in NYC, we work hard each week to reach our goals, help each other through the work days, and often end the week with a peaceful Rodeph Sholom Shabbat service. Here, we trekked up the mountain, we helped and encouraged each other along the way, and we accomplished our goals with time to rest, to reflect, to enjoy the view, and to partake in a wonderful Shabbat service.

Throughout this journey, we repeatedly commented amongst ourselves on the pleasure of traveling with such an intelligent, educated, kind, caring, and noticeably non-smoking group of people. This experience was worthwhile and we wholeheartedly recommend that other congregants partake in Rodeph Sholom's future journeys to Israel.



DEVELOPMENT: A SPECIAL STORY OF COMMUNITY | Deborah Siegel

Community engagement is the new buzz word in the synagogue world, although there really is nothing new about it at Rodeph Sholom. In addition to worship, our members of all ages always have a myriad of activities for their spiritual and social enjoyment and education, from Adult Education classes to our upcoming production of *42nd Street*, our Book Club, Mah Jongg, and more. We have members who engage “hands-on” with projects such as Backpack Buddies, volunteering at our Homeless Shelter, or calling other members to wish a *Shanah Tovah*, Happy Chanukah, or to offer the community’s sympathy at a time of loss. Some members spend countless hours leading one of the many committees that deal with questions of procedure or policy. And thankfully, we have members who answer the call to supplement the synagogue’s budget via the Yom Kippur Appeal (see box below), Religious School Scholarships, our biannual Food Drive, or one of our special underwriting opportunities that offer budget relief for projects that enhance our congregants’ experiences.

We also have members who can’t get here very often, but who, nonetheless, cherish their relationship with the synagogue. Because of family history, a strong bond with one of the clergy, or the quiet satisfaction of attending services when able – they feel confident knowing that the synagogue will be here for them when they need it.

And this brings to mind my Mom’s synagogue style. She passed away recently, just shy of 101. Mom would proudly say that she was a life-long synagogue member – both “back North” and later in Boca Raton, a place where not so many of her friends bothered with community ties, even though they might have lived there for decades. No, I don’t think Mom ever took a class, or stayed at the shelter, but she felt connected to the rabbis, and never missed attending synagogue on the High Holy Days, unless she was ill. After Mom passed away, my family and I could feel the strength of her synagogue community around us – from the rabbi who met with us before the funeral

and so kindly questioned us about our family, to the rabbi and lay-leader who came to the house to conduct prayers during *shiva*. I was most touched when the rabbi stopped the head of maintenance who passed by her office when we were meeting. She wanted to instruct him to take more chairs to the chapel the next day for the funeral, because Mom “*was special – a member for more than thirty years.*”

Yes, Mom’s commitment to maintain a membership was significant, even though she didn’t have any children in the B’nai Mitzvah process, didn’t get to Sisterhood meetings, and wasn’t a very large donor. She made her statement by belonging, being a member of the community, for more than 100 years. And she passed that commitment on to her family, including me, who felt the warmth and support of my Rodeph Sholom community when I returned home.

UNDERWRITING OPPORTUNITIES

Gifts to fund special projects provide budget relief for costly projects so that more funds are available for education and other activities. You may either totally or partially underwrite a project. Here is an immediate opportunity:

Passover Seder. For many years, Peggy Igel subsidized members of our community, especially senior citizens who would like to attend the Rodeph Sholom community seder (see Page 3) but could not afford it. With Peggy’s passing, we are seeking a donor to carry on with this generous gesture. \$1,000 will cover costs for a dozen individuals.

Please contact Deborah Siegel, Director of Development, at 646.454.3050 or dsiegel@crsnyc.org to discuss how you can help.

YOM KIPPUR APPEAL

Many thanks to the more than 40% of the congregation who have made gifts to the 2013 Yom Kippur Appeal (see Pages 9 and 10). Because of your generosity, we are able to enhance our worship services and other activities for our large multi-generational community. These gifts are also helping to fund a special project that will enable us to develop a vision for the future of CRS and become a more vision-driven institution in an uncertain synagogue landscape.

If you would like to make a gift to the Appeal, it is still possible. Just contact Deborah Siegel at 646.454.3050 or dsiegel@crsnyc.org or make an online contribution at rodephsholom.org/secure/donate. Additional gifts will be recognized in the next *Chronicle*.

SABBATH MANIFESTO: TAKE THE UNPLUGGED CHALLENGE

The fifth annual National Day of Unplugging will take place from sundown on March 7 to sundown on March 8. Revitalize your Shabbat and unplug for the day. A pause from technology to rejuvenate your mind and soul – no tweeting, no texting. Register at sabbathmanifesto.org. So, *slow down, you move too fast*... How do you unplug?

HEALING SERVICE

Saturday, May 10, 9:00 – 10:00 AM

Led by our Clergy, this special service emphasizes the healing of body and spirit. All are welcome to share in song, prayer, study, and silent reflection.



*“Come and meet those
dancing feet,
On the avenue I’m taking
you to...”*

Who doesn’t get happy feet just hearing those famous lines? Please join us for the CRS Theater Company production of *42nd Street*. There’s great music and dancing in this Tony Award-winning musical about a famous director trying to mount a musical during the Great Depression. It will run Wednesday and Thursday, April 30 and May 1 at 7:00 pm, Saturday, May 3 at 8:00 pm, and Sunday, May 4 at 1:30 and 6:00 pm. Tickets are \$27 and can be purchased online at rodephsholom.org/theater or call 646.454.3108. Performances are held at CRS. Volunteers are appreciated. Contact: rstheater@crsnyc.org.

Religious School

A FIXED HABIT | Kerith Braunfeld

We learn in *Pirke Avot*, the Ethics of the Fathers, to “*Make your study of Torah a fixed habit... don’t say, when I have leisure, I will study—perhaps you will never have that leisure.*” In the Talmud it says, “*Which is greater, study or action? Rabbi Tarfon spoke up and said: Action is greater. Rabbi Akiva spoke up and said: Study is greater. The others then spoke up and said: Study is greater because it leads to action.*” So the implication of the first verse teaching us that we need to make time to study Torah, will ultimately lead us to taking sustained action in the world. This call to action is *tikkun olam*, to fix our world, to make it a better place.

This year our students and families continue to make study and action a priority. Through our Monthly Mitzvah Initiative (MMI), we’ve donated money to the West Side Campaign Against Hunger, the Backpack Buddies program here at Rodeph Sholom, to victims of Typhoon Haiyan, and many other organizations. Our students and parents have also rolled up their sleeves and put themselves into action every other week packing 35 backpacks with food for food insecure children at the Lincoln Square

Neighborhood Center, and every month shopping for healthy food items and delivering them to the West Side Campaign Against Hunger’s food pantry as part of our Shop & Deliver program. Our 8th graders visited New Orleans in February to learn about the issues still facing the city and to contribute to the rebuilding efforts.

Our High School students have also learned that physically helping people in immediate need is very important but our action can’t stop there, that is just the band aid. In order to tackle the larger problems that lead to all of the need, they went to the Religious Action Center in D.C. this January to participate in the *L’taken* Seminar learning about the issues facing lawmakers today and then lobbying our senators and representatives from our liberal point of view. The students learn that their voices do count and that they can make a difference not only in their own community but also on a national level.

We are so proud of and thankful for all of our families for their continued commitment to *mitzvah* work, study, and *tikkun olam*.

PURIM CELEBRATIONS

Saturday, March 8

12:30 pm Shabbat Study Series: The Festival Megillot Purim/Esther

Following Shabbat Morning Services, join Greg Weitzman for study, conversation, and lunch.

Wednesday, March 12

5:00–7:00 pm Purim Carnival
In the Schafler

Saturday, March 15

11:00 am–12:00 pm Shireinu Shabbat Morning Purim Service
Share prayer, Torah, and music in a warm, inviting, musical, and interactive service. Accessible and sensitive to families with special needs, the service is interpreted in Sign Language. There will be healthy snacks (hamantaschen, too!). Costumes are welcome, but no masks or *groggers* (noisemakers). Open to the entire community and all ages are welcome.

Saturday, March 15 – Erev Purim

5:00 pm Erev Purim Service
7:00 pm Brotherhood’s Adult Purim Experience

Sunday, March 16 – Purim

10:15 am Purim Morning Service and Megillah Reading

A PURIM MITZVAH

Purim is a holiday about social justice. The commandments to eat, drink, and be merry are accompanied by the mitzvah of *matanot l’evyonim*. We cannot rejoice unless we make it possible for those less fortunate to join in the festivities. Please make a donation to the CRS Food Drive.

SAVE THE DATE

*Our Director of Religious Education,
Tirza Arad is Retiring*

*Join us, Friday, May 16 for a special
Erev Shabbat Service and dinner
honoring this extraordinary educator
who has blessed our community
with her presence for the past 14 years!*

Invitation to follow.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT RODEPHSHOLOM.ORG

Community Matters

HOMELESS SHELTER

The Rodeph Sholom Shelter for Homeless Men provides a clean, safe, and caring temporary home for homeless men. It will remain open, Monday through Friday, until at least through May. If you would like to volunteer to spend a night or more, please contact Jay Kranis at 212.362.9341 or jkranis@verizon.net.

WEEKDAY MINYAN

Are you celebrating a joyous occasion, marking a yahrzeit, or in need of a prayer for healing? You are welcome to come worship in a supportive, caring community. You may request a service any evening Monday through Thursday. Please contact Cantor Shayna De Lowe at 646.454.3039 or maariv@crsnyc.org.

UNION FIELD CEMETERY

Owned and operated by Congregation Rodeph Sholom, Union Field Cemetery is located at Cypress Avenue in Ridgewood, Queens. The Cemetery Committee invites you to visit anytime to experience the quiet serenity of our grounds, to meditate, to remember departed family members, and to consider plans for the future. There is a refurbished chapel on the premises for memorial services. Grounds hours are 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Sunday through Thursday (closed on Shabbat and major Jewish and secular holidays). Contact Antonio Jones during office hours, 9:00 am to 4:00 pm (3:00 pm on Fridays) at 718.366.3748 or ufc@unionfieldcemetery.org.

COUNSELING & SUPPORT SERVICE

Ruth Kobrin, LMSW, is a social worker on staff part-time at CRS. All inquiries and consultations are strictly confidential. Contact: 646.454.3180 or rkobrin@crsnyc.org.

I N M E M O R I A M

George Lieberman, brother of Alan Zimmermann

Douglas Nemens, husband of Dr. Susan Nemens,
father of Katherine and Deborah Nemens

Rudolph Kupfer, father of Peter Kupfer

Philis Babbit Weiss, mother of Peter Weiss

Lucille Gemson Griffith, aunt of Kim Erle

Sarah Berenbeim, daughter of
Jane and Ronald Berenbeim

Dr. Donald Tobias, husband of Brenda Tobias

Marie Yellen, mother of Jonathan Yellen

Rosalind Weinstein, mother of Karen Laufer,
grandmother of Rabbi Sari Laufer

Susan Kremnitzer, mother of Ronald Kremnitzer

Barbara Jacobs, mother of Ellen Eisenstadt

Min Siegel, mother of Deborah Siegel

David Gonta, father of Igor Gonta

Alvin Krauss, father of David Krauss

Jeanne Griffiths, sister of Liz Hilton Segel

Edith Naaman, mother of Shira Ronen

Marian Handwerker, widow of Bernard Handwerker,
mother of Marissa Effman

Suzy Lowinger, long-time member

Vera Simel, mother of Susan Burris

Marcy Glanz, wife of Marion Stewart,
mother of Jeremy and Joshua Stewart

Robert Schuster, father of Steven Schuster

Julian Levine, husband of Helen Levine

Annette Zweig, mother of Gail Zweig

Bess Snyder, grandmother of Randi Cuba

Dr. Leonard Glass, father of Cynthia Scheinfeld

Nathaniel Brody, husband of Rita Aizer-Brody,
father of Ab and Jacob

Frances Goldstein, sister of Sandra Levitt

“In Israel, in order to be a realist you must believe in miracles.”

(David Ben Gurion)

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REMEMBER THE
STRANGER IN
YOUR MIDST

CELEBRATE
PESACH

SHARE YOUR HOLIDAY
JOY WITH OTHERS

ABOUT CONGREGATION RODEPH SHOLOM

Rodeph Sholom, one of New York's most distinguished Reform congregations, embodies a strong commitment to purposeful Jewish living and the pursuit of human dignity. Our congregation is a true community, excelling in meaningful worship, educational opportunity for all ages, social and tzedakah programs. We strive to be an extended family of people who care about each other and our community.

Founded in 1842 on the Lower East Side, Rodeph Sholom has always sought to blend the teachings of our Jewish heritage with the best lessons of modern culture. We are proud of our beautiful worship services, our commitment to social action, and our emphasis on Jewish education for people of all ages. Rodeph Sholom was the first Reform congregation to open a Jewish Day School. Our schools, like our congregation, are flourishing. Remaining true to our name which is Hebrew for "pursuer of peace," Rodeph Sholom takes great pride in our history and is hard at work to fulfill the promise of our future.



Congregation Rodeph Sholom

Robert N. Levine, D.D. Senior Rabbi
Sari R. Laufer Associate Rabbi
Benjamin H. Spratt Associate Rabbi
Rachel G. Meyer Assistant Rabbi
Rebecca Garfein Senior Cantor
Shayna De Lowe Associate Cantor
Ephraim Biran Cantor Emeritus
Greg Weitzman Rabbinic Intern
Benjamyn Ellerin Cantorial Intern
Michael Kimmel Executive Director
Marc Fried Chief Financial Officer
Deborah Siegel Director of Development
Rabbi Leora Kaye Director of Community Engagement
Rabbi Lyle Rothman Director of Youth Engagement
Ruth Bernstein Director of Membership Services
Gail Becker Sexton

Rodeph Sholom Religious School

Tirza Arad Director
Kerith Braunfeld Associate Director
Marcia Stein Assistant Director

Rodeph Sholom School

Dr. Jerrold I. Katz Head of School
Susan Weiss Newman Head of Schnurmacher Early Childhood Division
Colleen Dundon Head of Hirschberg Elementary Division



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Maxine Borenstein Head of Middle School Division
Erin Korn Director of Admissions

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Yvette Perry Editor