

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

THE OTHER STORY | Rabbi Ben Spratt



We sing songs of the brave heroism of the Maccabees, the courageous defiance of the Jewish leaders keeping at bay the creep of Hellenism, the expunging of paganism from the Temple and rededication of the heart of Judaism. We play *dreidl* and recall tales of Jewry learning Torah in secrecy, remembering Jewish freedom fighters hiding in caves, and the tidal wave of the Assyrian Greeks threatening the future of Judaism. In a modern

American era, these tropes help encourage Jewish pride while surrounded by Christmas, and celebrate isolationism from majority culture as our historic redemptive path. As we bear witness to a new bloom of anti-Semitism in nearly every country around the world, we are reminded of the dark realities of Jewish belonging in a global landscape. And for many as we enter this Chanukah season, the narratives of Chanukah may encourage us to turn inward and away from the encroaching, and even threatening, darkness. But there is another story of Chanukah, perhaps the very story we need this year and at this season.

In northern Israel, near the Kineret, sit the ruins of the ancient synagogue of Hamat Tiverya. There, embedded in the floor, is a large and elaborate mosaic. As one might expect, viewers are greeted with the familiar depictions of a menorah, a Torah ark, a shofar, and a lulav and etrog. However, those are mere side decorations to the focal point of the site: the synagogue floor boasts a Greek zodiac, and at the center of it, King David depicted as the sun god Helios. Much has been written about why a pagan calendar and appropriated foreign god would be present in an early synagogue, but it is one of thousands of archaeological findings that show just how interwoven were the Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds.

We typically focus on the timing of Chanukah as a commemoration of the date the Maccabees purified the Temple. However, the timing was in fact a reaction to the timing of pagan worship. In the book of First Maccabees, we learn that when the Temple was regained by our ancestors, they chose to rededicate it on the anniversary of the day it was defiled by Antiochus and the Assyrian Greeks. However, many scholars believe Antiochus chose to use the Temple for pagan purposes on the 25th of Kislev for a reason. In the words of Dr. Louis Finkelstein, *"Antiochus set the date for idolatrous worship not by a popular Jewish celebration, but by his own festivities...his purpose to superimpose the solstice festival on the Temple."*

On the shortest day of the year, the Greek world would hold a week of grand celebrations using torchlights and sacrifices to Helios, the unconquerable god of the sun, helping inspire his rebirth and ensuring a return of warmth and light. When our ancestors rededicated the Temple and set Chanukah as an eternal Festival of Light for the Jewish people, they also appropriated this pagan day and placed it into the pantheon of Jewish sacred days.

The other story of Chanukah, with gratitude to the Assyrian-Greeks, we Judaized a pagan holiday and gained the image of celebrating light in the face of darkness. What lurks beneath our more popular tales of Chanukah as a triumphant opposition to assimilation may indeed be the opposite message;

the very heart of Chanukah may be the Jewish endeavor to be enmeshed with a larger world.

In 1966, the late Chancellor of the Jewish Theological Seminary, Gerson D. Cohen, delivered a commencement address with the provocative title, *The Blessing of Assimilation in Jewish History*. In it he argued that Judaism has thrived most when the barriers with the outside world have been lowest, and Jews have adopted the best of surrounding culture and used it to revitalize Judaism itself. As David Ruderman of the University of Pennsylvania argues in his recent book *Early Modern Jewry*, there exists a causal relationship between Jewish mobility and cultural production. We arrive in a new place, we appreciate and absorb the blessings of that world, and we are rendered a stronger Jewish community because of that encounter.

Ours is a tradition of the most ancient roots that has grown and adapted throughout ages and geographies. At a season when we feel the sharp bite of winter, our inclination may be to insulate ourselves from the world beyond. At a time when we feel the all too familiar cut of swastika and hate, our impulse may be to let fear isolate us. In the Talmud, one of the only early requirements for the celebration of Chanukah is the placement of the *Chanukiah* – it must be placed in a window or doorway that can be easily seen by passersby. During these eight days of festivities, we are enjoined to claim our identity as Jews, and to send light out into the world.

At the same time, however, we should know this very act and ritual, one that has burned brightly for two millennia, is a blessing gained by letting in the outside world. In this comes a challenge – may we be generous enough to pour forth light even into an often harsh and darkened world, and may we also be courageous enough to let the light of the wider world within our homes and hearts.

Join us as we create light and celebrate community at our festive Erev Shabbat Chanukah service and annual Latke Party on Friday, December 15. As we bring generosity and gift-giving into our own homes, may this season ignite in us the urgency to extend it as well, beyond our walls. Inside this Chronicle, you'll find ways to bring light to the world during our Festival of Light! Micah, Ayalah, Jonah, and I wish you a meaningful Chanukah. May the many stories of this season inspire us to offer gratitude for the light given by others, even as we bear the torch of bringing light out to the world.

HEARTFELT GRATITUDE

Thank you so much for all your kind wishes, notes, contributions and kindness in memory of our beloved Marv/Mike Gellman. We are so very blessed to be a part of this sacred community and your love is elevating us during this most difficult time.

*With so much love, gratitude, and appreciation,
Cantor Rebecca Garfein, Max, Jacob, and family*

IN THIS ISSUE | CHANUKAH GUIDE INSIDE

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|---|----------------|------|---------------|
| 1 | FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY | 4 | SAVE THE DATES | 7 | SCHOOLS |
| 2 | EXECUTIVE COMMENTARY | 5 | FEATURES | 8 | TEMPLE LIFE |
| 3 | CHANUKAH & SPECIAL COMMENTARY | 6 | DEVELOPMENT | 9-11 | CONTRIBUTIONS |

VOLUME 20 | NUMBER 2
WINTER 2017 | 5778

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS | Barbara Zakin



To all our new members, I wish you a very warm welcome. Perhaps you joined our community because your children are newly enrolled in RSS or the Religious School, or you just moved to the Upper West Side, or maybe you were introduced by friends. We are excited to have you as part of our Congregation Rodeph Sholom family.

Here at CRS you have the opportunity to build connections and relationships. We hope you will consider participating in **Minyan**, the new initiative that makes it easier for you to do just that (see Page 6). Our famous **Chanukah Latke Party** offers the perfect way to mingle and get to know your new community (see Page 3). And year-round, our inclusive **worship** services on Erev Shabbat, holidays, and festivals are joyful,

warm, and filled with music.

Adult Programming celebrates our Jewish heritage with a variety of inspiring subjects. In January alone, we have evenings with Marjorie Ingall, author of *The Jewish Mother: Mamaleh Knows Best*, ceramicist and designer Jonathan Adler and his partner Simon Doonan, fashion world staple; Vine and Fig Tree, an opportunity to sample the food and wine of Israel; and a study session on contemporary Israeli and Palestinian poetry (see Page 4).

You are vital to our community's growth and well-being. I welcome your participation and encourage you to get involved in the many spiritual, learning, and community service opportunities here. Please feel free to reach out to me any time at bzakin@crsnyc.org. I look forward to getting to know you – together, let's make your experience at Rodeph Sholom rewarding and meaningful.

New Members from October 26, 2016 – October 25, 2017

Jennifer Ashton	Carolyn Fox	Dr. Jill Drossman and Mr. Daniel Marks Cohen	Holly and Michael Schechter
Melinda Tamkins and Hal Bacharach	Jordan Freisleben	Susan Meisel	Robin and Allison Schneiderman
Sam Bahn	Shayna Freisleben	Stephanie Koleda and Matthew Melinger	Lindsay and Paul Schwartz
Tanya and Ryan Baker	Jennifer and Eric Friedland	Shara Mendelson	Gara and Joshua Schwartz
Randi Barr	Edgar and Rong Friedman	Lisa Meshulam	Nicole Schwartzberg
Adi Eckhouse Barzilai and Ori Barzilai	Elissa Grayer	Donna Messinger	Amanda Sugino and Scott Schwarzwalder
Louise Barzilay and Stephen Berenson	Morgan Greenetz	Beth and Matt Mezvinsky	Elizabeth Cirone Segal
Sarah and Jonathan Bergman	Jodi Mones and Ken Gruen	Laura and Andrew Milano	Alice Segal
Rachel Ackley and Andrew Borek	Katia Kravitz and Alexander Gusev	Jenny Pierson and Max Mileaf	Leanna Baxter Shalvi and Assaf Shalvi
Michael Bosworth	Shelley Halman	Ari Mintz	Lenny Shields
Diana and Steven Bradley	Lila and Martin Heilbrunn	Jessica and Tyler Modell	Talya and Eilon Shomron-Atar
Allison Hellman and David Braffman	Jennifer Schiffman Hines and Randall Hines	Sophie Moos	Sarah and Jonathan Shugar
Claudia and Ronald Braunstein	Darci and Michael Hirschberg	Nina and Daniel Mutlu	Maria Silverberg
Stephanie and Adam Braverman	Michael Howard	Elisabeth Ness Schneider and Ed Nescot	Mrs. Lauren and Cantor Daniel Singer
Dr. Anya Brodsky and Mr. Nathaniel Brodsky-Fay	Susan Illman	George Noble	Leanne Goldberg-Slocum and Andrew Slocum
Moran Mazig and Sella Brosh	Sara and Scott Jacobs	Todd Peskin	Claire Pige and Simon Slyper
Anat Lebow and Michael Burnett	Anna Karp	Emma and David Portnoy	Monique and Joshua Sock
Dr. Nancy Maruyama and Mr. Charles Cahn	Elizabeth Katchen	Linda Pruzan	Stephanie and Alexander Sonneborn
Susan and Joel Cartun	Gregory Zannitto and Michael Katz	Lydia Rentel	Jessica Share Spinner and David Spinner
Randi Melnick and Daniel Cohen	Laura and Daniel Kaufthal	Amanda and Gregory Robbins	Melissa and Simon Spitalny
Nasra Corbel	Kathy Frank-Klein and Franklin Klein	Valerie and Danny Robbins	Carrie and Matthew Sporer
Lisa Dale	Jordana and Lonny Kline	Deborah and David Roberts	Allison and Adam Sutker
Shari and James Day	Stacey and Glen Kopp	Audrey Rose	Sharon and Steven Usdin
Lauren Peelen and Ilya Dolin	Dr. Bart Kummer	Lauren and Gary Rosenfield	Brooke and Jordan Vogel
Liat Claridge and Omer Donnerstein	Julia Fishman and Jonathan Kurzner	Adorys Velazquez and Mark Rosenwasser	Elinor and Paul Wharton
Kara and Michael Doron	Susan Learner Barr	Elizabeth Flisser Rosman and Adam Rosman	Isai Peimer and Michael Wolland
Faige and David Drapkin	Rachel Hannaford and Justin Lerer	Paula Kovarsky Rotta and Joao Pedro Rotta	Samantha and Matthew Wolpert
Melissa and Mitchell Drucker	Capron and Matthew Levine	Shelley Greenwald and Lawrence Saftler	Lauren and Paul Young
Charlotte Edelman	Lisa and Daniel Levine	Carly and Jeffrey Samuels	Ashley Rape and Jordan Zaslav
Julianna Muir and Andrew Feinberg	Dr. Melissa Frey and Mr. Malcolm Levine	Felice Schachter	Pam and David Zaslav
Victoria and Harris Fischman	Monica Dugot and Dr. Todd Linden		
	Janet and Scott Lorin		
	Joanna and Edward Manheimer		
	Hazel and Arnold Manheimer		

“Hospitality is even more important than encountering the Shekhinah, God’s intimate presence.”

(Talmud)

FROM THE PRESIDENT AT CHANUKAH

Martin Flumenbaum



When I spoke to the congregation on Yom Kippur, I emphasized that one of the principal ways for us to repair the world is to invest in this synagogue, and in this community. We cannot control most of the chaos and disorder in this world. We cannot control earthquakes, hurricanes, or even Washington's political dysfunction. But we can control what we do here in this synagogue and for this community and thus, each of us can begin to

repair the world, one person, one family at a time right here.

This fall, our congregation agreed to sponsor and to participate in the resettlement of a legally admitted refugee family. This will become one of the most important social action initiatives of this Congregation and I urge as many of you as possible to participate in this project. Janie Roher and Claudia Wagner, two fabulous members of our congregation, are spearheading this effort as part of our response to the devastating refugee crisis that plagues so many throughout the world. As Jews, we know firsthand the horrors of being refugees, of fleeing persecution, and of violence. And we also know firsthand what happens when countries are complacent – or worse – in the face of such horrors. As Rabbi Levine reminded us in his Yom Kippur sermon, our values and our Torah command us to “welcome the stranger.”

There is no better time to undertake this initiative than Chanukah, which starts in just a few days. At its core, Chanukah embraces life – the victory of courage over oppression and the triumph of light over darkness. More than 22 centuries ago, Judea was ruled by the Seleucids, Syrian-Greeks, who sought to dominate the people of Israel. Judaism was outlawed and the Second Temple in Jerusalem was looted. Against all odds, a small group of Jewish warriors, the Maccabees, led a successful revolt against a much stronger army, drove the Greeks from the land, and reclaimed the Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

When the Maccabees sought to rededicate the Temple, they found only enough oil to last one night. But they lit the menorah anyway and miraculously the oil lasted eight days, enough time for new oil to be obtained and purified for use at the Temple.

As Chanukah teaches us, a small band of Jewish warriors can make a profound difference. It is now our turn to become modern day Maccabees here at Rodeph Sholom, lighting the way for those who so desperately need our help. When we work together, the collective light will shine so much brighter and so much longer than any of us individually could contemplate.

As we light the Chanukah candles this year with our families, let us continue to think of new ways to light the path for those who require our assistance. Ruth and I and our family wish you a joyous Chanukah and a happy, healthy, and luminous 2018.

PROJECT KEHILA'S HURRICANE RELIEF

Project Kehila, our congregation's natural disaster response team, was founded in 2005 after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans. We then lent our support to relief efforts after Hurricane Sandy. We have reconvened to respond to the damage caused by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria, and the resulting wreckage they left behind in Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean. Rebuilding will be a long road. Information is at rodephsholom.org/project-kehila-to-address-2017-hurricanes.

Remembering Marv Gellman

Life. Love. Wisdom. Courage.



These four words embodied Marv “Mike” Gellman's outlook on life, noted Rabbi Levine at the memorial service. Marv had a passion for life, a big heart, and enormous strength in the face of adversity. And as Rabbi pointed out, he understood life's uncertainties and believed that with optimism life's problems can be solved.

Marv approached life with a smile on his face, a *sever panim yafot*, a sunny disposition, and a kind word to all, leaving us with a potent lesson. Like Marv, may we be gracious and considerate of others' perspectives; and greet every moment with light, with hope.

Together with our beloved Cantor Rebecca and their two boys, Max and Jake, we, too, have lost a special family member. Marv, your love for our community will always be remembered. Your Rodeph Sholom family will miss your good humor and ready smile.

CHANUKAH HAPPENINGS

LIGHT THE 1ST CANDLE TUESDAY, DECEMBER 12

Friday, December 15

6:00 pm | **Shir Chadash Erev Shabbat Chanukah Service.** With ASL.

7:30 pm | **Chanukah Latke Party**

Following the celebratory Shir Chadash service of the Festival of Lights, join us for the Congregational Oneg Shabbat Latke Party. There will be candlelighting, dreidl spinning, and delicious latkes! Sponsored by Brotherhood and the Membership Committee.

Saturday, December 16

11:00 am–12:30 pm | **Chanukah Shireinu Service and Celebration**

Share prayer, Torah, music, and dreidls! An accessible service that is sensitive to a variety of needs and interpreted in Sign Language. Open to the entire community and all ages are welcome. In the Schafler.

Sunday, December 17

10:30 am | **Young Families Chanukah Celebration**

Bring Hope and Help on Chanukah

VOLUNTEER to spend a night in our Rodeph Sholom Shelter. Sign up on VolunteerHub (crsnyc.volunteerhub.com).

SHARE the Chanukah spirit at the Chanukah Latke Party. Please bring a toy (new and unwrapped) for families transitioning out of homelessness through Women In Need/Project Moving On.*

SUPPORT the Refugee and Immigration Coalition. Participate, advocate, and help raise awareness. Contact: socialaction@crsnyc.org. (See President's article.)

SPREAD warmth throughout the cold winter months. Please bring women's hats, gloves, and scarves earmarked for Women In Need/Project Moving On.

* Toys will be collected throughout December and January!

SAVE THE DATES

Thursday, November 30, 6:30 pm: CHAMBER MUSIC AT RODEPH SHOLOM. Reception at 6:30 pm. Concert at 7:00 pm. Contact: chambermusic@crsnyc.org.

Monday, December 4, 6:30 pm: SISTERHOOD DAYS FOR GIRLS. The next dates are Mondays, January 8 and February 5. Contact: sisterhood@crsnyc.org.

Tuesday, December 5, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm: LUNCH TOGETHER. Enjoy socializing and an engaging presentation, with a dairy lunch. A contribution of \$10 is suggested. Next dates are Tuesdays, January 9 and February 13. Co-sponsored by Adult Programming, the Caring Community Committee, and Sisterhood. Contact: lunchtogether@crsnyc.org.

Thursday, December 7, 7:00 pm: CRS BOOK GROUP. All are welcome to join the self-moderated meetings in the Board Room at the Synagogue. Next dates are Thursdays, January 4 and February 1. Contact: bookgroup@crsnyc.org.

Saturday, December 9, 5:30: CRUSTY BEIT CAFÉ.

Thursday, December 14, 12:00 pm: MAH JONGG. Novices and veteran players welcome! Cards will be available for purchase. Next dates are Thursdays, January 11 and February 8. RSVP: mahjongg@crsnyc.org.

Friday, December 15, 6:00 pm: SHIR CHADASH EREV SHABBAT CHANUKAH SERVICE. With ASL. **7:30 pm: CHANUKAH LATKE PARTY.** Sponsored by Brotherhood and the Membership Committee. See Page 3.

Saturday, December 16, 6:00 pm: HAVDALAH UNPLUGGED. Join us for hors d'oeuvres and conversation, followed by the Havdalah Service, a musical and meditative ceremony. You'll feel energized and ready to start a new week!

Friday, January 12, 6:00 pm: SHIR CHADASH EREV SHABBAT SERVICE COMMEMORATING DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. A moving and musical service honoring Dr. King's dream of hope. With ASL.

Saturday, January 20, 10:15 am: SHABBAT MORNING BROTHERHOOD/SISTERHOOD SERVICE. In the Eisner. **12:30 – 2:30 pm: INSPIRING WOMEN OF THE CONGREGATION ANNUAL LUNCHEON.** Join us following the Shabbat Morning services for this very special annual event. You will be inspired! Hear CRS women discuss their careers, lives, and Jewish journeys and enjoy a complimentary lunch. Contact: sisterhood@crsnyc.org.

Friday, January 26, 7:30 pm: BROTHERHOOD FILM FESTIVAL. Following Erev Shabbat services, join us for a movie screening sponsored by Brotherhood. Contact: brotherhood@crsnyc.org.

Friday, February 2, 6:00 pm: EREV SHABBAT SERVICE. Rabbi Daniel Freedlander, President of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, will speak about Progressive Judaism around the world and in Israel.

Saturday, February 3, 12:30 pm: BROTHERHOOD FILM FESTIVAL. Following Shabbat Morning services.

RS THEATER COMPANY AUDITIONS

Be a part of our popular spring musical event!

Lionel Bart's *Oliver!*

Book, Music, and Lyrics by Lionel Bart

Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday
January 29, 30, and 31 | 7:00–9:30 pm
Thursday, February 1 | 6:30–9:30 pm

To book an audition time: rstheater@crsnyc.org.

Please come prepared with 32 bars
of a song of your choice.

LIONEL BART'S OLIVER! is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. MTIShow.com

ADULT PROGRAMMING

Attend a Live Recording of *UnOrthodox* Podcast

Tuesday, December 5, 7:00 pm

Mark Oppenheimer, Stephanie Butnick, and Liel Leibovitz

The popular UnOrthodox podcast is a smart, fresh, and fun take on Jewish news and culture. The panel will discuss the latest Jewish news, politics, and culture with seriousness but also irreverence. Register: rodephsholom.org/tablet.

Personal and Spiritual Pathways Through the Psalms

Rabbi Jacqueline Ellenson | Fridays, 12:00–1:30 pm

December 8, January 12, February 9, through June

A contemplative approach to our texts and the search for wisdom within them. This lunchtime class is a personal and participatory learning experience with poetry and song. Register: adulted@crsnyc.org.

The Jewish Mother: *Mamaleh Knows Best*

Marjorie Ingall, author | Tuesday, January 9, 7:00 pm

Can the stereotype overbearing Jewish mother raise self-sufficient, ethical, and accomplished children? Yes, believes Ingall. She shares her strategies on cultivating such qualities in your children. With anecdotes, humor, history, and science, she explains how you can become a better parent and raise a great human being. Register: rodephsholom.org/tablet.

Getting Along: Simon Doonan and Jonathan Adler

Thursday, January 11, 7:00 pm

Barney's creative ambassador and fashion world staple, Simon Doonan, sits down with his partner, ceramist and designer Jonathan Adler, for a wide-ranging discussion of their relationship and how Judaism figures in it. Register: rodephsholom.org/tablet.

Vine and Fig Tree: Sample the Food and Wine of Israel

Thursday, January 18, 7:00 pm

Award-winning foodies and wine experts from Israel will offer their insight on current hidden food gems, trends, and 3-star restaurants. Come sample artisanal cheeses, award-winning chocolates, olive oils, and wines. \$36. Register: rodephsholom.org/vine-and-fig.

Grappling with Issues of Land and Peace in Israel Through Contemporary Poetry

Rabbi Sarah Reines | Tuesday, January 23, 7:00 pm

We will delve into love of nation, conflict, and the hope for peace through works of modern Jewish Israeli, Arab-Israeli, Palestinian, and Palestinian-American poets. Register: adulted@crsnyc.org.

A Page A Day

Monday, March 5, 7:00 pm

Adam Kirsch, Tablet Magazine columnist, will discuss with Rabbi Levine what he's learned from reading the Talmud everyday. Register: rodephsholom.org/tablet.

Jewish Basics 2.0

Rabbi Greg Weitzman and Rabbinic Intern Juli Karol

Mondays, 7:00 pm

December 11, February 5, through June

For those who converted within the last five years and want to deepen your understanding of Jewish life and practice. You'll learn about Shabbat, righteous giving, prayer, kashrut, and more. \$180. Register: rodephsholom.org/Judaism-essentials.

Shabbat Study Series:**How Ancient Law Grapples with Modern Questions**

CRS Clergy | Saturdays, following Shabbat services. Lunch included.

December 2, February 10, April 21

We'll dive into responsa literature and examine how the Reform Movement determines its position on ethical and religious issues. Come to one or more sessions! Register: adulted@crsnyc.org.

Hebrew Bootcamp

Michal Nachmany | Wednesdays, 7:00–8:30 pm

January 10 through March 7 (no class February 28)

In this intensive Hebrew immersion you'll learn the Hebrew alphabet and gain basic reading and pronunciation skills to make you feel more comfortable in Shabbat services. \$120. Register: rodephsholom.org/Judaism-essentials.

More information can be found in your Adult Programming booklet
or go to rodephsholom.org/education/adultprogramming5778.

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

~ A CONGREGANT'S VOICE ~

IF YOU BUILD IT, THEY WILL COME: MY HIGH HOLY DAYS IN PARIS | Sandy Abramson

First the French police searched the prayer house with their dogs. Satisfied for our security, we could begin setting up. It was the afternoon of Erev Rosh Hashanah 2017 and I had volunteered to help a reform (Liberal) synagogue in Paris prepare for the High Holy Days. What unfolded next and again at Yom Kippur was rather miraculous and totally biblical!

My husband, Steve, and I had attended services many times at Kehillat Gesher, a small synagogue in the 17th arrondissement in Paris. Rabbi Tom Cohen, originally from Portland, OR, founded this French and English-speaking synagogue 25 years ago and created a tri-lingual *siddur*

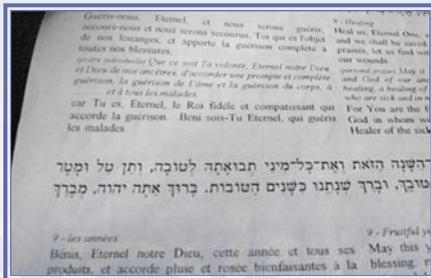
and *machzor* (see left). The sanctuary, a room the size of our Hahn Chapel, could not accommodate its 170 families, so High Holy Day services were held in a church nearby. This meant bringing all of the

synagogue's necessary items to the church and back – twice.

As part of a corps of dedicated volunteers, my job was to help set up the *bimah*, essentially changing the church into a synagogue. "...And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I show you, after the pattern of the Tabernacle ... so shall you make it." (*Sh'mot* 25:1-9) I kept thinking of these words as my experienced coach showed me the ropes of *bimah* construction: we blew up beautiful white balloons to cover the Christian prayer on the archway; we hung tall curtains to hide the many crosses; and we set a long white table cloth (ironed on the spot!) to sanctify the surface upon which the collapsible reading lectern sat.

On Rosh Hashanah, I assisted. On Yom Kippur, I directed. Three of us set up the portable Ark, a wooden box with slats and curtain, and unpacked the three Torahs from their travel duffel bag and down quilt cocoon. Dressed in their High Holy Day finery, the Torahs and yads, along with candlesticks and goblet, were settled into their temporary home. The *bimah* was now ready for services.

Although I missed my beloved and familiar CRS, I won't soon forget the elegant simplicity of this synagogue and its traveling tabernacle.



CRS ISRAEL FAMILY TRIP

Rabbi Greg Weitzman



This past summer, I had the opportunity of a lifetime to travel to Israel with 25 members of the CRS community. From the ancient city of Jerusalem to the modern streets of Tel Aviv, our group experienced the best that Israel has to offer. The highlight of the trip was certainly the conversations and the community that was created.

Perhaps there is no better way to explain the experience of Israel than to encourage you to join us in 2019 for our next trip! If you are interested, please let me know at rabbaweitzman@crsnyc.org.

I also recommend checking out the daily blog of our trip which is posted on our website.



WRJ HONORS SISTERHOOD



We are delighted to announce that our **CRS Sisterhood** received Women of Reform Judaism's (WRJ) **Gold 2018 Or Ami "Light of My People" Award** for their outstanding work with the Days for Girls project. They will be honored at the WRJ Fried Leadership Conference, March 1–4 in Nashville. Beth Rubin and Hilary Steinman (who is also speaking on partnering with outside organizations) will accept the award. Days for Girls, a grassroots non-profit, makes feminine hygiene kits for women and girls living in poverty who would otherwise miss work and school days because they can't afford to properly take care of themselves. Sisterhood has made this program a stirring success and model for other synagogues. WRJ values your commitment to the spirit of *tikkun olam*, sisterhood, and community. Your congregation couldn't agree more. Mazel tov and *yasher koach*!

COUNSELING & SUPPORT SERVICE

Ruth Kobrin, LMSW, CRS's resident social worker, wears many hats. She helps us to deal with the many challenges, problems, and crises we may face. Providing counseling and support services, she also offers information and assistance to those needing health care, facility, or assisted living situation. And she reaches out and visits our congregation's lonely, ill, and housebound. If you need help, do not hesitate to call – it's confidential.

Contact Ruth for an appointment:
646.454.3180 or rkobrin@crsnyc.org.

(Ruth Kobrin, LMSW is Senior Social Worker at Congregation Rodeph Sholom, part of the Partners in Caring program of UJA-Federation of New York.)

DEVELOPMENT | Lyndsie Levine

Hillel the Elder tells us, “A single candle can light a thousand more without diminishing itself.” It seems the perfect metaphor for this Chanukah season. This is a time of year filled with celebration, joy, and gratitude for the gifts in our lives. It is also an important time to remember what we can do to give of ourselves – how can we light a thousand more candles? Or even just one?

I am always inspired to see the ways that members of our community give back to others. For some, it is through supporting our Food Drive, a profoundly important fundraiser that honors our congregation’s duty to feed the hungry within our very own community. Others volunteer their nights in our Homeless Shelter, fulfilling yet another commandment to provide shelter to those in need. Hundreds of people of all ages participated in our annual Mitzvah Weekend, performing mitzvot like cleaning up Central Park, visiting seniors, and giving blood. Others make calls and visits to those who are sick or need cheering up through our Caring Community. And many support the entirety of our congregation with a gift to the Yom Kippur Appeal.

The Yom Kippur Appeal does so much for CRS – what would it mean to our community if we did not have your support? We would not be able to offer the wide array of programs and worship experiences for all ages and stages that we do now. We could not maintain our aging building, which is beautiful and historic, but requires constant care. We would not be able to support our dedicated team of clergy who are there for us in so many moments that shape our lives, nor could we retain the remarkable educators who are helping us teach our Jewish values to the next generation. What about new and innovative programs like our small groups initiative, Minyan? Or how about providing dues assistance and Religious School scholarships to any family in need? We couldn’t do any of this without you.

I hope you will join me in supporting CRS with your *zedakah* as this calendar year comes to a close. If you have never contributed to the YKA, I hope that you will consider participating – your contribution, at any level, will make a difference. If you have supported the Appeal in the past, I hope we

can count on your generosity again this year. And if you are able to consider increasing your support, even by 5-10%, it would be deeply appreciated.

We are each of us a candle, capable of lighting another without being diminished. Thank you for all the ways you share your light with our community.

Wishing you good health and happiness in 2018!

Making your gift: If you would like your donation to qualify for a 2017 tax credit, please be sure to make an online gift by midnight on December 31 or send in a check before the end of the year. Any mail postmarked by December 31 will qualify. Please note that the synagogue offices will be closed from December 25 through January 1, so if you would like to make a gift of appreciated stock, please be sure to leave enough time for the transaction to be completed during this busy season. You can call the Development Office at 646.454.3052 for transfer instructions.

UNDERWRITING OPPORTUNITIES

Gifts that partially or fully underwrite large projects at CRS are a wonderful way to make a tangible impact in our community. Here are two immediate opportunities:

Small Torah A small, lightweight Torah is needed to supplement our weekly children’s programming and b’nai mitzvah services. This is a wonderful opportunity to honor a loved one and give the gift of Torah to the next generation. A gift of \$50,000 will cover the full cost of a new Torah.

Sukkah Lattice The lattice that covers our beautiful Sukkah is in need of replacement. A gift of \$1,000 will fully underwrite the new materials.

Please contact Lyndsie Levine, Director of Development, at 646.454.3050 or llevine@crsnyc.org to discuss how you can help.

CRS AND CITY HARVEST FIGHT HUNGER

Yvette Perry

Our CRS community, this wonderful congregation, has the capacity to be enormously generous. Thanks to you, on Yom Kippur morning we filled this year’s City Harvest trucks with 12,715 pounds of food. That exceeded last year’s donation by 1,760 pounds! Our goodwill enables them to deliver food to its 500 community food programs in New York City.

We can be very proud of our longstanding association with this incredible organization. In addition to their work for our own City’s hungry citizens, City Harvest delivered water and meal boxes to Puerto Rico, Texas, and Florida, all devastated by Hurricanes Maria, Harvey, and Irma.



Nancy Mendelow, who we lost in the past year, and her husband Steve (z”l) made an additional

contribution to our Yom Kippur Food Drive each year. We remember their love for Rodeph Sholom and the compassion they had for feeding those who need it most.

Hunger does not end when Yom Kippur finishes. Please support the CRS Food Drive so we may continue to provide hope and help throughout the year.

THE FOOD DRIVE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT MORE THAN EVER | Joanna Kapner

Twice a year the Social Action Committee asks for donations to the Rodeph Sholom Food Drive. Despite an improved economy, the need for food assistance keeps growing while government support declines. Here in the nation’s wealthiest city, food banks and soup kitchens struggle to fill their shelves. The Rodeph Sholom Food Drive supports our own Project Moving On, as well as a number of West Side programs that strive to ease the pain of hunger and poverty. But we can only succeed with your help. Please consider sending a check to Congregation Rodeph Sholom, 7 West 83rd Street, New York, NY 10024, with “Food Drive” on the memo line. Or you can donate online at rodephsholom.org/social-action/crs-food-drive.

MINYAN Creating sacred community, where each person counts.

There are many minyanim to choose from. Take a look at the offerings – there’s sure to be one (or more!) where you can enjoy camaraderie, learn facets of Judaism and its history, discover new things, and share experiences. **Try it, you just might find the community you are looking for.**

Go to crsminyan.com. Contact: minyan@crsnyc.org.

Religious School

LIVE AND ENJOY THE PRESENT | Kerith Braunfeld

In early October, the *New York Times* invited high school students to submit a *Letter to the Editor* responding to a news article, editorial, or Op-Ed essay from that week, and that the best entries would be published the following week. The most popular themes of the letters were, "...*Donald Trump, teenage anxiety, N.F.L. kneeling, birth control, Columbus Day, Harvey Weinstein, Puerto Rico, and the Boy Scouts.*" Of note from this list is that "teenage anxiety" no longer refers to the worries of teens in the past, such things as friends, cliques, romantic crushes, or blemishes.

From a young age, our children start feeling the pressure of their future. Middle school is no longer about navigating the awkward pre-teen years. It's about scoring high in classes and on standardized tests so that they can get into the top high schools. Once they are in that top high school, it becomes a race to get into the best college. One of the letters, authored by a sixteen year old and titled "*Letting Teenagers 'Have a Life'*" stated, "*Why do we have to think about our adult life every day as a teenager? I can't sleep at night; all I do is stay up thinking and planning. Why are more American teenagers than ever suffering from severe anxiety? It's because we get it into our heads that school is what's going to make things better; we live for the future instead of actually just living.*"

I understand how important it is for our children and teens to get into good high schools and do well so that they can attend good universities. I know this on a personal level now as a parent helping my eighth grade son get into high school. I also know as an educator, and someone who has worked with teens at Rodeph Sholom for the past eighteen years, that **now, more than ever, what we offer teens is what they need most.** A safe space to be themselves, where they can let their guard down, express frustrations and thoughts of failure, where they know they have trusted adults to talk to who aren't connected to their school, who aren't their parents. We offer programs that will teach teens skills they will need as they move through their education and development into adulthood, including those that help build a solid resume. But at the same time we also help because we care about our teens and listen to them without judgment.

So once the fall rush is over for the eighth graders applying to high school and the ninth graders adjusting to new schools, we invite all of our teens to come back to CRS. Whatever their interest is, we have it here: classroom experiences, paid internships, mitzvah work, trips to NOLA, DC, Berlin, social outings, and more! Connect your teen to a supportive environment where they can "actually just live" and enjoy the present.

RECIPE FOR APPLE LATKES

(WRJ Centennial Cookbook)

Ingredients:

- 2 eggs
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/3 cup water
- 3 cups chopped cooking apples
- 3/4 cup sifted all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- Oil for frying



Topping:

- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 cup sugar

Directions:

1. Beat eggs until foamy. Add sugar, salt, cinnamon, and water and mix until well blended.
2. Add apples, flour, and lemon peel and mix well.
3. Heat enough oil in bottom of pan to cover. For each latke drop about 1/4 cup of batter into hot oil. Flatten slightly and fry on each side until golden brown. Add oil as needed.
4. Drain on paper towels.
5. Combine sugar and cinnamon topping and sprinkle over hot latkes.



A wonderful program to share with your child! Receive FREE high quality Jewish books and music in the mail each month for children 6 months to 7 years old. The second Thursday of each month at 4:30 – 5:15 pm is PJ & Play Story time! Sign up at rodephsholom.org.

Rodeph Sholom School

Admissions season in NYC for the 2018-19 school year is well underway. We are thrilled to have so many families, congregants, and non-congregants applying to the Nursery as well as Kindergarten and above. At Rodeph Sholom School we believe that Jewish education exists not just for the sake of teaching Torah; Jewish education builds character and teaches children to be empowered contributing members of their community. Tours of Rodeph Sholom School are available by calling 646.438.8600 and applications can be found online at rodephsholomsschool.org. Priority is given to all CRS members. Financial Aid is available to all families who qualify. We are just across the courtyard and we look forward to welcoming you to RSS!

PURIM SERVICES

Saturday, February 24

11:00 am – 12:30 pm | Purim Shireinu Service

A warm, inviting, musical, and interactive service accessible and sensitive to families with special needs. Open to the entire community and all ages are welcome. With ASL.

Wednesday, February 28 – Erev Purim

4:30 – 5:15 pm | The Littlest Megillah Service (ages 0-3 yrs)

Join us for pint-size celebration and shpiel where we'll learn about the characters in the Megillah and shake our groggers!

5:30 – 7:00 pm | Creative Congregational Megillah Reading and Shpiel (ages 3+): Come in costume and see the clergy dressed up and acting their hearts out in the Purim shpiel. Bring a box of pasta to use as a grogger, which will be donated to the West Side Campaign Against Hunger. Then it's the Carnival and costume parade!

Thursday, March 1 – Purim

10:15 am | Purim Morning Service and Megillah Reading

We read the Megillah, recounting the story of Esther and King Ahashueros, followed by delicious hamantaschen.

I N M E M O R I A M

Larry Leeder, father of Sara Bonin

Robert Glickman, father of Heidi Lurensky

Erwin David Sherman, father of Lisa Sherman

Jacob (Jack) Rosenthal, husband of Holly Russell,
stepfather of Chris Russell

Meyer Ahronee, father of Nicole Ahronee

Lilian Grundfest, mother of Judith Darr

Martin Oshrin, father of the late Edward Oshrin,
grandfather of Matthew and Jonathan Oshrin

Ann Scher, mother of Sekka Scher

Rudy Dieckert, stepfather of Cindy Cutler

Marv (Mike) Gellman, husband of Cantor Rebecca Garfein,
father of Max and Jake

Evelyn Schlesinger, mother of Eileen Cotton

Rose Schneider, aunt of the late Mike Gellman

Esther Yasser, mother of Sandra Friedman

Roslyn Meren, grandmother of David Friedman

Joseph Tabak, father of Jeffrey Tabak

Charles Fridman, father of Russell Fridman

Barbara Menis, sister of Mark Menis

Doris Lane Frank, mother of Linda Rodman

Leila Stone, wife of Robert Stone,
mother of Bonnie Sellers and Andrew Stone

Beatrice Fox, mother of Larry Fox

Berta Siniak de Feldman, mother of Yanina Feldman

Jacob Ettinger, father of Mark Ettinger

Myrna Umansky Levy, cousin of Barbara Lustig

Scott Richter, brother of Jonathan Richter

Stephen L. Freedman, brother of Ruth Kobrin

Ben Reber, cousin of Libby Rosen

Joan Tisch, mother of Laurie Tisch, grandmother of
Emily Tisch Sussman and Carolyn Tisch Blodgett

Meyer German, father-in-law of Patti German

Michael Segal, husband of Elizabeth Cirone Segal

“ *Darkness cannot drive
out darkness;
only light can do that.
Hate cannot drive out hate;
only love can do that.* ”

(Martin Luther King, Jr.)

VOLUME 20 | NUMBER 2

WINTER 2017 | 5778

HAPPY CHAN UKAH

CHANUKAH GUIDE
INSIDE

**HAVE YOU JOINED
A MINYAN?**

See Page 6

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.



7 West 83rd St., New York, NY 10024
 tel: 212.362.8800 | fax: 212.877.6526
 email: chronicle@crsny.org

Congregation Rodeph Sholom

Robert N. Levine, D.D. Senior Rabbi
Benjamin H. Spratt Associate Rabbi
Greg D. Weitzman Assistant Rabbi
Juliana S. Karol Rabbinic Intern
Rebecca Garfein Senior Cantor
Shayna De Lowe Associate Cantor
Ephraim Biran Cantor Emeritus
Tobias Glaser Cantorial Intern
Barbara Zakin Executive Director
Marc Fried Chief Financial Officer
Lyndsie Levine Director of Development
Ruth Bernstein Director of Membership Services
Rachael Evans Operations Director
Kirsten Major Communications Manager
Gail Becker Sexton
Rodeph Sholom Religious School
Kerith Braunfeld Director
Marcia Stein Associate Director
Jessica Cohen Assistant Director
Dina Newman Assistant Director of Youth and Teen Engagement
Daniel Strauss Assistant Director of Teen Engagement
Rodeph Sholom School
Danny Karpf Head of School
Susan Weiss Newman Head of Schnurmacher Early Childhood Division
Colleen Dundon Head of Hirschberg Elementary Division
Maxine Borenstein Head of Middle School Division
Leslie Silverstein Director of Admissions and Financial Aid

Officers

Martin Flumenbaum President
Peter Ehrenberg Vice President
Harry Frischer Vice President
Judith Gallent Vice President
Andrea Kretchmer Vice President
David Markus Vice President
David Resnick Vice President
Denise Sobel Vice President
Robert Steinman Treasurer
Stacy Kanter Assistant Treasurer
Karen L. Berman Chair of the Board
Jack Levitt Past President
Roger Meltzer Past President
Nancy Solomon Past President
Mark Biderman Past President
Jack Levitt Past President

Auxiliaries

Marc Landis Brotherhood Co-President
Brad Zizmor Brotherhood Co-President
Beth Rubin Chair, Sisterhood Steering Committee
Rachel Markowitz Sr. Youth Group President

The Chronicle

Yvette Perry Editor