PUTTING THE TORAH ‘UPON’ YOUR HEART (RATHER THAN INSIDE IT)
by Rabbi Robert Scheinberg

These are among the most well-known words of Judaism. They function traditionally as the “bookends” for each day, recited when awaking in the morning and when going to sleep at night. And they function traditionally as the bookends for each Jewish life, as they are often the first words of prayer taught to a young child who is beginning to learn to speak, and they are an important part of the Jewish deathbed prayer.

These words of the Shema and Va’ahavta (read in Jewish communities around the world in the Torah portion of Vaet’hanan, read this year on August 5) are among the most familiar and weightiest words in all of Jewish prayer. They assert that there is only one God, and that we have a responsibility to keep God’s words and teachings with us at all times—speaking of them at home and away, when we lie down and when we get up, teaching them to our children, writing them on our doorposts.

(Cont’d on p. 2)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Fri Aug 4, 6pm Shabbat in the Park
Fri Sep 8, 5:30pm Shabbat in the Park at KPS
Sun Sep 10, 10am Mitzvah Day
Sat Sep 16, 9pm Slichot program & service
Wed Sep 20, 7pm Rosh HaShanah evening service
Thurs Sep 21, 9am Rosh HaShanah (1st Day) morning service
Thurs Sep 21, 4:45p Public Shofar blowing service
Thurs Sep 21, 5:00p to 5:30p Mincha Rosh HaShanah
Thurs Sep 21, 5:30p Tashlikh (casting away sins) Pler A Park
Thurs Sep 21, 7pm Rosh HaShanah eve service
Fri Sep 22, 9am Rosh HaShanah (2nd Day) morning service
Fri Sep 29, 6pm Mincha (afternoon) service before Yom Kippur
Fri Sep 29, 6:15pm Kol Nidrei service for Yom Kippur eve
Sat Sep 30, 1 pm Yom Kippur Musaf service
Sat Sep 30, 4 pm Public Yizkor service
Friday night services 7pm
Saturday morning services 9:30am
See www.hobokensynagogue.org & USH Facebook page for more info on these and other upcoming events!

(Cont’d on p. 2)
One of the Hasidic masters, Menachem Mendel of Kotzk, made a perceptive comment about one verse in this paragraph. The third verse of this paragraph reads, ‘vehayu hadevarim ha'eleh, asher anochi metzav'cha hayom, al levavecha.’ "These words that I command you this day shall be upon your heart.”

The Kotzker Rebbe noted the unusual construction in this verse: let these words be 'upon' your heart. Wouldn't we have expected that the words would actually be 'in' our hearts rather than simply 'upon' them?

The Kotzker answers his own question: certainly the ideal is for the words of torah to be within our hearts. But sometimes our hearts are closed -- so our strategy should be to pile the words of torah upon our hearts, so that at the moment our hearts open, the words of the torah will slip right in.

This inventive interpretation realistically describes what it means to benefit from spiritual wisdom and to cultivate a spiritual practice. Even the most spiritually attuned person does not always have a completely open heart. There are numerous reasons why each of us sometimes has a heart that is closed up to new teachings or new experiences. Sometimes all we can hope for is for the wisdom to be piled up, as it were, on top of the closed heart in anticipation of the future point at which that heart will open.

One personal example: I have spent basically all of my adult life as a rabbinical student and rabbi, and I devote much of my time and attention to helping people through various kinds of crises, especially the crisis of bereavement. I have learned a lot about the Jewish wisdom about loss - especially the loss of close family members. But until I had experienced a loss in my close family, there was a part of my heart that was not open to this wisdom. There were aspects of those Jewish traditions and insights that I fully understood with my head, but not with my heart. And upon the loss in my own family, it was as if all those teachings that I had understood cognitively but not emotionally and spiritually had been piled on top of my heart, such that when I experienced my loss, my heart suddenly opened, and all those teachings and insights entered it.

And a much happier personal example: Jewish tradition has so much to say about the experience of parents preparing their children to move on in their lives and to be independent. Only now, as I prepare to take my oldest daughter to college, is my heart most truly open to the various stories in the Torah that describe the experience of being a parent to children who are adults themselves.

And a communal example: Our synagogue maintains a mailing list of well over 3000 households -- far more people than participate in the life of the synagogue on a regular basis. When we encounter someone new, we immediately ask if we can put them on the mailing list. Sometimes people are surprised at our desire to maintain a mailing list that is so much larger than our synagogue membership. I respond with a variation on the words of Rabbi Menachem Mendel of Kotzk. It sometimes happens that someone makes first contact with the synagogue, but for some personal reason, is not truly “ready” to become fully involved with the community.

It frequently happens that some kind of life transition -- a change in family status or relationship status, or in employment status, or in the condition of their health, or any number of other life changes -- makes someone significantly more “open” to the role that Judaism can play in their life. That transition often happens somewhat suddenly. But there’s a benefit to having a Jewish education and knowledge about the Jewish community resting upon one’s heart, even if it’s not actually within one’s heart yet. Most hearts will open eventually.

For this reason, it’s not enough to look to Judaism for what it can provide for us immediately, today. It also makes sense for us to acquire those aspects of the Torah to which we are not yet fully open, because our hearts are likely to open to them in the future.

As we approach the new year 5778, may the teachings of Jewish tradition fill your heart - but may you also remember to put ‘upon’ your heart some of what doesn’t fit inside it right now. ✡

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Certainly, we could hire more staff, but if we did that, our costs would rise. And while we may have to hire some people, we depend on volunteer efforts to help offset those costs where possible. There is something about our community where so many people come together to help make these things happen that sets us apart for the better. In order to make USH run smoothly, it takes all of our efforts, a little bit at a time, over the year. Here are four ways where you can help now.

First is for Mitzvah Day and the Welcome Back BBQ. Both of these events, happening on Sept. 10, rely on volunteers. Mitzvah Day is about helping others – and not just the USH community, but Hoboken and Hudson County as well. There are so many separate events during Mitzvah Day, including projects for teens, and middle-grade students, that almost any area of interest can be met. The project chart is one the next page in the Shofar and on our website. I urge you to contact any of the Mitzvah Day co-leaders at mitzvahday@hobokensynagogue.org and to sign up at bit.ly/USH_Mitzvah_Day_2017 to sign up. The Welcome Back BBQ is our annual get-together after the summer and is always a fun time. We need people to help set up tables and decorate, cook and clean up. If you can spare a few hours to help organize this fun activity that touches all USH members and families, please email programming@hobokensynagogue.org.

Then there’s Casino Night. For 11 years, this has been the single largest source of fundraising outside of the Yom Kippur Appeal. Each year almost 90-percent of the funds raised go right back to USH to help meet our needs. The planning for this event starts months in advance and the committee needs help with many different aspects. A little help here can go so, so far. I encourage you if you want to help a little – or a LOT – please email casinonight@hobokensynagogue.org.

Finally, a LOT of administrative work is managed by the Board of Trustees, and we are looking for someone who would like to join the board and help manage our financial obligations. We are looking for a Treasurer and an Assistant Treasurer to help with budget oversight, coordinate with our accountant, and to manage a number of finance-related tasks. If you are well-organized and can help, please contact me directly at president@hobokensynagogue.org and I’d love to speak with you.

Wishing you a wonderful and relaxing end of the summer.

David Swirnoff, President

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS:

General Fund
Alix Biel
Ceil Chait in loving memory of Sylvia Robbins
Barry and Estelle Glasgow in loving memory of Bessie Auster
Sharon Stern

Scholar-in-Residence Fund
Ronald Sabban and Stephanie Gros in honor of Rabbi Scheinberg’s 20th anniversary
Ruth Charnes: in honor of Rabbi Scheinberg’s 20th Anniversary at USH

THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING KIDDUSH:
July 1 Josh Youdovin, Sheri Halperrn and Susan Youdovin as they say farewell to USH and prepare for their move to Atlanta
July 8 Joel Trugman and Razel Solow in honor of Mimi Lavine for all her volunteer service
July 15 Kaveh and Krista Shabtaie in honor of their 1st wedding anniversary
July 22 Avi and Rochelle Ohring, Vivian Greene and Jackie Danicki in honor of Jackie’s birthday
July 29 David Swirnoff and Merry Firschein in honor of their 7th wedding anniversary

CONGRATULATIONS TO:
Aaron and Rebecca Weitman on the simhat bat of their daughter, Ariella, and to her brothers, Joshua and Gabriel
David and Randi Vissering on the birth and bris of their son, Levi Gerdes
Adam Bloom and Eve Merrill on the birth and bris of their son, Ezra William

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS
Adam Bloom and Eve Merrill
David J. Cohen
Jonathan Green and Elizabeth Thompson
Elliot and Janet Greene
Salomon Kalach and Jessica Horne Kalach

FAREWELL TO:
Jackie Danicki on her move to Atlanta, Georgia
Josh Youdovin and Sheri Halperrn on their move to Georgia

CONDOLENCES TO:
Myrna Kasser and Norman Kasser, on the loss of Myrna’s sister, Glenda Abbott

We hope you will join us for the

ACS Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk!

Team Name: USH Team Chai
Sunday, October 23, 2017
Where: Newport Plaza in Jersey City
Our goal is 18 participants (survivors, family, friends & pets)!
Let’s support a great cause! All are welcome!
$18 suggested contribution (or multiples of $18)
Wear your pink t-shirts that day!
Team Captains: Vivian Greene, Debbie Freeman, and Tammy Freeman

Contact info: east98girl@comcast.net and Debtaminc@aol.com
### MITZVAH DAY

**SEPTEMBER 10, 2017**

#### MITZVAH DAY

provides a great opportunity for the USH community - adults and children of all ages - to come together to make a difference in our community. **Start the new year** by learning about volunteer opportunities that you may be interested in doing regularly.

Look over the list of activities; choose a first, second and third choice. Most projects take place from 11am to 2pm.


Sign up early to maximize your chances.

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#### MITZVAH DAY PREPARATION

As part of two projects, we are now collecting:

***NEW and UNUSED travel-sized toiletries, to be donated to the Hoboken Shelter, and***

***Manufacturer’s food coupons (even expired ones!), to be donated to US military bases.***

There are boxes in the USH lobby for these items.

Thank you for your donations!

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agency Name</th>
<th>Description of Mitzvah</th>
<th>Details: When, Where, Who, How many</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandwich Making for Hoboken Shelter</td>
<td>How many sandwiches can we make this year? Last year we made more than 300! Sandwiches are carefully prepared, wrapped and boxed for shelter guests. We will then deliver them to the Shelter.</td>
<td>Shift A: 11am-12pm (especially for children age 7-12 and their families); Shift B: 12:15pm-1:15pm; Shift C: 1:30-2:30pm At USH, 115 Park Ave. Ages 7 and up 15 per shift (When you sign up, indicate your shift preference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting Seniors (Jewish Family Service)</td>
<td>Make an impact and engage in an age-old Jewish tradition: visit a Jewish homebound senior in Bayonne/JC/Hoboken, brighten their day and bring a Rosh Hashanah gift from USH.</td>
<td>11am-1pm Meet at USH All ages 12-15 people (having a car is helpful but not essential)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitzvah Story Time &amp; Sukkah decorations (for kids &lt;4 &amp; families)</td>
<td>Mitzvahs are for kids of all ages! Hear stories and make decorations for the USH Sukkah!</td>
<td>10-11:30am Meet at USH Kids under 4 along with their families Unlimited # participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coupons for Troops</td>
<td>Our soldiers on military bases need our help! Collect and sort coupons that will be donated to American soldiers and their families for use at PX stores.</td>
<td>11am-2pm Meet at USH ALL ages (who can use scissors) Unlimited # participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scouts Food Drive</td>
<td>Help the Hoboken Food Pantry feed its clients! Cheerfully encourage shoppers to donate food to Hoboken Food Pantry outside of ShopRite.</td>
<td>9am-1pm Meet at Hoboken Shoprite (9th/Madison) [Age 7+ (must be accompanied by adult) 15+ people needed]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toiletries Drive for Hoboken Shelter</td>
<td>More than 1,000 guests shower weekly at the Hoboken Shelter. Sort and pack travel-sized toiletries into mini-kits for guests of the Shelter.</td>
<td>1-2:30 pm Meet at USH Age 7+ 6 people needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemetery Clean-up</td>
<td>Perform an act of chessed shel emet - an ultimate act of loving-kindness for the deceased who are unable to repay the kindness. Rake leaves and clear growth and other debris in USH section at Riverside Cemetery. Your help will ensure all gravestones are respectfully maintained.</td>
<td>11am-2pm Riverside Cemetery, Saddle Brook NJ Adults 6-8 people needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spiffing up the sanctuary</td>
<td>Help prepare our sanctuary for the High Holidays. Cleaning and polishing the torah crowns and breast-plates, brass railing, plaques and other decorations, ironing prayer shawls, and other preparation tasks to beautify our sanctuary.</td>
<td>1pm-2:30pm. Meet at USH Age 15+ 5 people needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lighthouse</td>
<td>Cleaning, painting, gardening at a home for refugees and asylum seekers in Jersey City.</td>
<td>Timing TBA Age 15+ 6-8 people 68 Storms Ave, Jersey city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookies in a Jar (Middle School activity)</td>
<td>Create “cookies in a jar” that will be donated to clients of the Hoboken Food Pantry.</td>
<td>12pm-2pm prep, plus 2-2:30pm delivery Meet at USH; group will walk over to Our Lady of Grace Church, 411 Clinton St between 2-2:30pm 6th-8th graders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serving lunch at the Shelter (teen activity)</td>
<td>Prepare and serve meal for the guests at the Hoboken Shelter.</td>
<td>11am-2:30pm Hoboken Shelter, 300 Bloomfield St 9th-12th graders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Pantry (Shift A and B)</td>
<td>Shift A: Sort clothing and food that has been donated to the Hoboken Emergency Food Pantry; Shift B: distribute items to the clients of the Food Pantry.</td>
<td>Shift A: 11:30am-1:30pm; sorting Shift B: 2pm-3:30pm; distribution Our Lady of Grace Church, 411 Clinton St. Age 10+ 4-6 participants</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Continued on next page!**
Erica Seitzman, who recently received a special award from the Hoboken Shelter, sets an amazing example for all of us. Her life is devoted to service -- and to friends and family and Hoboken and USH and Judaism and dogs and lots and lots of other things.

Erica has volunteered for all of her life. She was raised in Nyack, where her family were members of Congregation Sons of Israel, “a diverse egalitarian Conservative congregation.” When I asked her to list her volunteering activities my hand got tired and I could not keep up with the never-ending list. Just a few that I noted during her earlier years are:

- Giving her allowance at age 5 to the Jerry Lewis Telethon.
- Participating in service projects in high school, such as Students Opposing Starvation.
- Working with Habitat for Humanity.
- Volunteering with Midnight Run, “a volunteer organization dedicated to finding common ground between the housed and the homeless.”
- Tutoring and mentoring inner-city children in Roxbury, Mass., while in college in Boston.
- Chairing Tikkun Olam at Northeastern's Hillel.
- Bringing Oxfam to Northeastern.

Erica joined USH in 2002, and was primarily interested in its service aspect. She became the USH Habitat for Humanity coordinator, taking groups on Sundays to rehabilitate houses in Newark. She worked on Mitzvah Days. She helped with USH support of the Jubilee Center. And she promoted USH's extensive support of the Hoboken Homeless Shelter, having supported it as soon as she moved to Hoboken.

Erica is also a much-loved teacher at the Learning Center, currently teaching grades K-3 on Saturday mornings. Quite naturally, in her teaching work she focuses on service and contribution to others, and on teaching the values she learned from her parents and her synagogue.

Erica has provided astonishing support to the Hoboken Shelter. Phil Cohen summarized some of her contributions when recognizing her on behalf of the Hoboken Shelter as its Civic Champion:

"Erica is our Wonder Woman of event planning – since she started seriously volunteering for the shelter more than 8 years ago (serving as the Shelter's unofficial “CVO”) not a single Shelter event has happened without Erica's help. She makes sure that every detail is in place, and that everyone has a good time…

Now, let’s do some math: The shelter conducts 5 events a year. That means our Wonder Woman has contributed to the success of over 42 events!! Wow. 5 years ago, at the celebration for the 30th anniversary gala, Erica was so successful soliciting wine and beer contributions, that after the event was over, she organized ANOTHER event -- turning the Gala's leftover beer and wine into another $2,000 raised at a pizza party.

Erica is our wonder woman of Face Book. For more than 4 years, Erica has served as the volunteer administrator of the Shelter’s Face Book page. Because of her hard work, the shelter has a fantastic, vibrant social media presence. Erica has tripled the Shelter's number of followers. Now a plug: If you haven't liked us on Face Book, please do.

Erica is our wonder woman of spoons. About 4 years ago, Erica heard the Shelter was running low on plastic spoons. So, Wonder Woman to the rescue! She started the Shelter's annual “Spoonember” program, collecting thousands of spoons, including running an annual spoon collection from the United Synagogue of Hoboken during the Jewish New Year. This September, the United Synagogue of Hoboken will donate 5778 spoons for the New Year of 5778. And remember!: We can always use your plastic cutlery donations!
Finally, Erica is our wonder woman of toilet paper. Yes, toilet paper. About 7 years ago, Erica heard that the Shelter was running low. So, Wonder Woman to the rescue! Erica started an annual event “Can you spare a square?” Because of the success of this event sprung from Erica’s vision, the Shelter has been able to eliminate a $5,000 T.P. expense line item from the Shelter’s annual budget.

I asked Erica what drives her. Her answer was both simple and powerful. She just sees herself as a person who helps and she takes action accordingly. “Just be kind,” she says. “Be part of the solution, not the problem.” “Be empathetic and non-judgmental.” “Pick your cause and stick with it.” She says that it is as simple as Mr. Rogers taking responsibility for the neighborhood and encouraging others in the community to do the same.

She explained that if she sees a need she feels compelled to take action. When Super-Storm Sandy hit Hoboken, causing terrible devastation in the city, Erica was herself displaced. Instead of waiting for others to help her, she jumped into action to help Hoboken. She volunteered at City Hall. She saw that many ambulances in Hoboken were under water but no one was taking action, and so she organized an urgent fundraiser that then led to others jumping in and raising enough funds to buy a new ambulance. She was an originator of the Rebuild Hoboken Relief Fund. She explains that, “We worked with everyone in the community from the end of November 2012 through February 2013. We organized a Gala at the W Hotel. I called in all of my favors. We raised half a million dollars, so that we could give financial grants to people who were in need.”

Wow! I admire Erica very much. She sets a tremendous example for all of us to follow.

Refugee (Support) Committee and Refugee Fund

Purpose:
The Refugee Committee is a subset of the USH Social Action Committee. In conjunction with Church World Service (CWS), JC Vigil and other groups, we are providing refugees with employment help, ESL tutoring, transportation, cultural orientation, and other services. To work with refugees, volunteers must receive training and get a background check via CWS. Stay tuned for upcoming training sessions.

Participation:

Facebook Page
The Refugee Support Committee now has a Facebook group! Just search for USH Refugee Support Committee, or go to https://www.facebook.com/groups/230922364082703/ This group page is still being developed, but we would love you to join. You can find information about the refugee crisis and how local groups help with locally resettled refugees. This site is not officially part of USH.

Dinners and the Lighthouse
The USH Refugee Committee sponsored the third dinner catered by Fadila Maamo, a Syrian Kurdish refugee from Jersey City, who is trying to launch a catering business to support her family. The July 21 dinner was held at the Lighthouse in Jersey City, a warm and wonderful place which houses people who have been granted political asylum after a time in detention, as well as people waiting to hear whether or not they will be granted asylum. The 12 guests listened to the harrowing stories of five asylees from the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America. Most of us were moved to tears by the hardships each faced in their home countries and how terribly difficult it has been for them to find safe harbor in the United States.

If you are interested in attending or hosting a dinner, please contact Ben Zablocki (ben@benzablocki.net) for more information. We expect to be co-hosting more dinners at the Lighthouse in the future. Follow this link to learn more about the Lighthouse: https://firstfriendsnjny.org/2017/04/01/read-more-about-the-lighthouse-in-the-record/

ESL tutoring
If you would like to tutor English as a Second Language (ESL) or simply engage in conversation with refugees (to help them develop their language skills), please contact Razel Solow, razelsolow@gmail.com, for further information. Razel and Bess are tutoring an Eritrean family in Jersey City. Thanks to Rebecca Teichman for her guidance and loan of ESL materials.

USH Refugee Fund: Please contribute to the USH Refugee Fund to provide support for local refugees. Please call the USH office for help in donating to this fund. Thank you!

Contact: For general information about the USH Refugee Committee, please contact Hope Koturo at hkturo@hotmail.com.
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2017 High Holy Days Schedule

5778 Days of Awe 2017
THIS IS NOT A TICKET
PLEASE REMEMBER TO BRING YOUR NAME BADGE WHEN YOU COME TO THE SYNAGOGUE.

MITZVAH DAY / WELCOME BACK BARBECUE
Sunday, September 10
*Mitzvah Day Projects
9:00am-3:00pm
*Welcome Back Barbecue-3:00pm

SICHOT
Saturday, September 16
* Sichot: Program and service
8:00 pm

ROSH HASHANAH
Wednesday, September 20
* Shabbat Services
7:00 pm

Thursday, September 21
* Morning Service (including Shofar blowing) 9:00 am
Service concludes: 1:30 pm
*Public Shofar Blowing Service
4:45 pm
* Mincha (afternoon service)
5:00 pm
* Tashlikh (casting away sins)
at Pier A Park
5:30 pm
* Malav (evening service)
7:00 pm

Friday, September 22
* Morning Service (including Shofar blowing)
9:00 am
Service concludes: 1:30 pm

SHABBAT SHUVAH
Friday, September 22
* Morning Service: 7:00 pm
* Shabbat services: 9:30 am

Saturday, September 23
* Morning Service: 9:30 am

YOM KIPPUR
Friday, September 29
* Mincha (afternoon service)
6:00 pm
* Kol Nidre (evening service)
6:15 pm

Saturday, September 30
* Morning Service: 9:00 am
* Yizkor (morning service)
12 noon (approx.)

SUKKOT
Thursday, October 5
* Morning Service: 9:30 am

Friday, October 6
* Morning Service: 9:30 am

Saturday, October 7
* Morning Service: 9:30 am

YOM KIPPUR (day)
Saturday, September 30

Babysitting: 6:00-9:00 am (open to children who can walk, up to age 7)

Activities for students in grades 2-7: 6:15-8:30 pm

SHEMINI ATZERET
Thursday, October 12
* Morning Service: 9:30 am

SIMCHAT TORAH
Thursday, October 12
* Evening Services: singing and dancing in the streets
6:30 pm

Friday, October 13
* Morning Services: 9:30 am

All services and programs (besides Tashlikh) will be held at the Star of Israel Building, 115 Park Avenue, Hoboken NJ

Rosh Hashanah (evening)
Wednesday, September 20
Babysitting: 7:00-8:30 pm (open to children who can walk, up to age 7)

Yom Kippur (evening)
Friday, September 29
Babysitting: 6:00-9:00 pm (open to children who can walk, up to age 7)

Activities for students in grades 2-7: 6:15-8:30 pm

Yom Kippur (day)
Saturday, September 30
Babysitting: 10:00 am-2:30 pm, 3:45-7:45 pm

Activities for students in grades 2-7: 6:15-8:30 pm

Tashlikh (afternoon)
Thursday, September 21
5:30 pm, at Pier A Park, is especially family-friendly.

We reserve the right to include all in our services and programs. Contact office@hobokensynagogue.org to discuss individual needs.