

Tefilla Notebook

9 Kislev • Parshat Vayetze

December 2-3, 2022

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

Nafi Bar-Am, Chazan

SHABBAT SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2

4:26PM CANDLELIGHTING

4:30PM MINCHA/KABBALAT SHABBAT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3

8:30am GEMARA SHIUR

9:15am SHACHARIT

4:35pm MINCHA

5:25pm MAARIV

5:25pm SHABBAT ENDS

WEEKDAY DAVENING TIMES

	Shacharit	Mincha/Maariv
Sun	8:00am	4:30pm
Mon-Thurs	7:00am	4:30pm
Friday	7:00am	4:30pm

MAZAL TOV



Aaron Fenner
on his Bar Mitzvah!
Mazal Tov to Parents
Adam & Debby Fenner

Mazal Tov

Jonathan Gromis
on his aufruf and upcoming
wedding to
Danielle Hekmatil

Thank You

Kiddush luncheon is co-sponsored
by **Adam & Debby Fenner** in honor
of their son **Aaron's Bar Mitzvah**;
and **Ed & Cecile Gromis** in honor of
their son **Jonathan's Aufruf**.

Lunch is for members and invited guests

THANK YOU

Sseudah Shlishit is sponsored by **Shari & Michael Weiner** in memory of Shari's father, **Jack Finkelstein, Abraham Yakov z"l**, whose yahrtzeit is on the 11th of Kislev.

Dearest Members and Friends,

Over the past week, following the passing of my longtime rabbinic mentor, Rav Chanoch Ehrentreu, I have been overwhelmed by a cascade of memories. "The Dayan," as he was universally known, was a towering rabbinic figure – one of the UK and Europe's preeminent rabbinic and halakhic authorities of the past 50 years. And yet, he was always utterly approachable and amazingly personable.



The Dayan was born in Frankfurt in 1932, but his family moved to the UK in 1938, to escape Nazi persecution. Despite his "Yekke" origins, he was a product of the "Litvak" yeshiva world, where he gained a name as a scholar of note. Educated at Gateshead and Mir yeshivas, he was a star of the famed Gateshead Kollel, and went on to form and head the Kollel in Sunderland, not far from Gateshead. In 1979, he replaced Dayan Yitzchak Yaakov Weiss as the head of Manchester's beth din (rabbinical court), and in 1984 he moved to London, at the invitation of Rabbi Lord Immanuel Jacobovits, to lead the London Beth Din, Europe's most prestigious rabbinical court. After his retirement from the London Beth Din in 2008, he headed the European beth din, halakhic arm of the Conference of European Rabbis.

Dayan Ehrentreu's influence on British and European Jewry during his many decades at the helm was colossal. But it was unique, because it wasn't the kind of ivory tower authoritarian influence that one would expect of a man of his caliber. Rather, it was the impact of someone who balanced the duties of his elevated role as a primary guardian of Jewish tradition with an astonishing capacity for fostering and maintaining warm personal relationships with an incredible array of people, from all walks of life and in every sphere imaginable.

My relationship with Dayan Ehrentreu began when I was in my early twenties, as I started out on my rabbinic and communal career. I had found that other orthodox rabbinic leaders were reluctant to involve themselves with any kind of "out-of-the-box" outreach work in the wider Jewish community, preferring the relative peace-and-quiet of predictable day-to-day communal concerns. But it was obvious that Dayan Ehrentreu had not read that particular memo. He actively embraced and assisted anyone who ventured beyond the safety of the orthodox "reservation" for the purposes of Jewish outreach, encouraging them to use their talents as creatively as possible, and promising them – and delivering! – his full support if they ever came under fire.

Dayan Ehrentreu's support was worth its weight in gold. A phone call from the Dayan to a disgruntled, troublemaking zealot was usually enough to neutralize the problem. And if it wasn't, Dayan Ehrentreu was always totally comfortable lending his full weight to a project he believed fell within the framework of halakha, even if it defied convention and precedent, and even if it drew negative attention toward him. More importantly, he was always available on the phone, from early morning until late at night, offering precise, confident guidance to those of us who were active in the field and needed his counsel for any matter at hand, large or small. As far as the Dayan was concerned, nothing you asked him was insignificant – because it wasn't what you asked him that mattered, it was "you" that mattered, and if what you were asking him was important to you, then it was equally important to him.

I have countless Dayan Ehrentreu memories to share. They all convey his unique personality – a combination of great intellect, warmth, accessibility, wisdom, and genuine empathy. In every setting, the Dayan's intuitive brilliance dovetailed with his broad experience – and each outcome reflected it.

In early 2000, at the last minute, the bi-annual convention of the Conference of European Rabbis was hastily moved from Vienna, Austria, to Bratislava, Slovakia, after the formation of a government coalition in Austria that included Jörg Haider's neo-fascist Freedom Party. Despite the relocation to a different country, in a display of solidarity with Austria's Jewish community, the more than 200 rabbis who attended the conference traveled from Bratislava to Vienna in buses, for a dinner and discussions with Austria's Jewish leadership.

Someone suggested that I bring my guitar and lead singing at the event, but the somber atmosphere was not conducive to a singsong, and after a couple of hours we all boarded the buses back to Bratislava without the musical interlude. I was on Dayan Ehrentreu's bus, alongside a "Who's Who" of European chief rabbis and dayanim. Everyone was quiet, lost in thought, reflecting on the implications of Austria's lurch to the right for the small but significant Jewish community.

But the Dayan was, as always, upbeat. "Where's your guitar?" he inquired. I pointed to it, nestling on the back seat of the bus. "I think you should play it – let's sing a few songs," he said. "Really?" It didn't feel right. He smiled, and motioned towards the guitar. I looked around. The atmosphere was tense; no one seemed in the mood for music. I looked back at the Dayan, and he nodded and smiled. "Go on, what are you waiting for?" I picked up my guitar and began strumming and singing, and within a few minutes, the entire bus – chief rabbis, rabbis, and dayanim, who only moments earlier had been pensive and anxious – were smiling and singing along together. The negative atmosphere had lifted, and there was hope in the air. Dayan Ehrentreu looked at me with a twinkle in his eye and he smiled. "That's just what everyone needed," he told me afterwards, and he was right.

Although, in the same way that he could be soft and emotionally sensitive, he could be equally tough and unyielding. Several times, I accompanied the Dayan to kosher abattoirs for spot checks of the shochtim. And he never stood on the sidelines observing the shechita. Despite his advanced years, he would jump into the center of action – examining, checking, asking questions, and adjusting details. He was keenly aware that kosher meat and poultry consumers trusted his supervision, and he took that responsibility very seriously. The shochtim told me privately that he was the most conscientious dayan of all, and they relished his visits, which invigorated and enthused them to do better. The Dayan had no patience for slackers, excuses, or shortcuts; he was an overperformer, and he expected everyone else to be the same.

But the Dayan was also practical and considerate, with an uncanny eye for detail. Before I began performing weddings, I first had to pass a proficiency test for the weddings I officiated to be formally accepted by the

Office of the Chief Rabbi. Dayan Ehrentreu insisted on giving me the test himself and informed me what I needed to learn. It was an oral exam – the Dayan asked me questions about a range of scenarios that could crop up needing expert knowledge. He seemed pleased with my answers, and I felt very encouraged.

After asking me about a dozen questions, the Dayan handed me a ketubah: the Jewish marriage document that is written in Aramaic legalese and read out by the rabbi under every chuppa. “Read it,” he said. “Is this part of the test?” I asked him. “No,” was the reply, “but I don’t want you to make a fool of yourself.”

I have thought of that moment so many times since then, whenever I hear someone struggling with the rendition of the ketuba under a chuppa, mispronouncing and stumbling over the words of this arcane text. How wise and caring the Dayan was, making the effort to ensure that a novice rabbi would never embarrass himself. Truthfully, reading a ketuba badly has no bearing on rabbinic competence to perform a wedding – but it is so important. How would it look if a rabbi struggled to render the wording of a Jewish legal text? It’s just a minor detail, and hardly in the remit of a senior dayan to worry about. But Dayan Ehrentreu was no ordinary senior dayan – even the smallest detail mattered, especially if it concerned the dignity of Judaism and of its rabbinic professionals.

In 2006, I accompanied Dayan Ehrentreu and a group of senior European rabbis to 10 Downing Street, for a meeting with then-Prime Minister Tony Blair. It was the Dayan who led the discussions, after he had begun the meeting with an erudite Dvar Torah from the weekly portion, expressed in simple, easy-to-understand English, so that the prime minister and his aides could understand. Dayan Ehrentreu’s ability to convey Torah was enviable; whether it was a modest homiletic interpretation, or a complex Talmudic concept, Dayan Ehrentreu could nail it in a few easy sentences – always with a smile, and always happy to repeat it if you didn’t quite get it the first time.

My last face-to-face conversation with the Dayan took place in February 2020, a few months before he tragically lost his power of speech. Someone in Los Angeles had asked me about the widely publicized self-driving car trials in London in October 2019, which, according to Dr. Graeme Smith of Oxbotica, may precipitate autonomous vehicles becoming “a reality on our roads.” The questioner, an elderly lady with mobility issues, wanted to know whether it would be possible to use a driverless car on Shabbat, to get to synagogue for prayers? I posed the question to Dayan Ehrentreu, and we went through the various barriers created by Shabbat prohibitions, and also possible solutions. There would need to be an eruv; there could be no increase in required engine power as a result of the extra weight; the passenger or passengers could not sit in the driver’s seat, and preferably they would be in the back of the car, so that no one would think they were driving it; the car would need to be preprogrammed for the route and the doors would need to open and shut automatically, just as they do in a Shabbat elevator.

We were having fun with all the details, when the Dayan suddenly asked me, “do these cars actually exist?” I said, “yes, they exist, but they are still in the experimental phase, with some way to go until they are safe and made available for general use.” “Then come back to me when it becomes a real question,” he said, “and we can discuss it again. Until then, there’s no need to create problems where they don’t exist.” And then he smiled – his wide, effusive, generous-spirited smile. He was happy we had discussed the topic, but it was a hornets’ nest he was not ready to wade into – just yet.

Sadly, within a matter of months, the Dayan was no longer able to speak, and on my subsequent visits, while he was clearly able to understand everything that was said to him, he was no longer able to function as he had in his prime. His family, particularly his wife, Rebbetzen Ruchie, together with his close friends from the community, looked after his every need, and the Dayan’s spirits remained high until very shortly before he passed away. There was still always a gleam in his eye, and a smile constantly hovered on his lips. He was an inspiration until the very end.

Parshat Vayetzei begins with the pasuk (Gen. 28:10): וַיֵּצֵא יַעֲקֹב מְבָרָךְ שָׁבַע וַיֵּלֶךְ חָרָרָה - “Jacob left Beersheba and went to Haran.” Rashi points out that Jacob’s departure from Beersheba is an unnecessary detail. Obviously, he needed to leave Beersheba in order to get to Haran. So why mention it? Rashi explains that the verse means to tell us how the departure of a tzaddik, a righteous person, from his city creates a noticeable vacuum. As long as the tzaddik is in his city, says Rashi, he is its glory, its splendor, and its beauty. But when he leaves – that glory, that splendor, and that beauty is gone.

The world without the Dayan is not the same world as the one with the Dayan. When Dayan Ehrentreu was among us, he added glory, splendor, and beauty to our lives, and to the world. His departure leaves a gaping hole in the rabbinic world, in the Jewish world, and in the world at large. Life might go on, but it will never be the same again.

Wishing you Shabbat Shalom and a wonderful week ahead, *Rabbi Pini Dunner*

Sisterhood Corner

December

Chanukah is coming!

Annual Chanukah toy drive benefiting Chai Lifeline. Please help us lift the spirits of a child this Chanukah by purchasing a gift.

Visit the Chai Lifeline Amazon Wish List



Get ready for lots of Chanukah goodies! Latkes, sufganiyot, dreidels...

Celebrate Shabbat Chanukah with your YINBH family!

Chanukah Shabbat Dinner

Friday, December 23rd

RSVP at yinbh.org/chanukah



Our next YINBH Book Group read!

We will be reading

And After the Fire by Lauren Belfer

Winner of the National Jewish Book Awards

The book is available for purchase on Amazon

Tuesday, January 17th at 7:30 pm

Private home address will be provided upon RSVP

Get ready for an interesting discussion!

Shabbat Shalom,

Cecile & Ruthie

Sisterhood Co-Presidents

YAHRTZEITS



Diane Finkel

Dinya bat Avraham a”h

Wife of

Harry Finkel

Yahrtzeit - 11 Kislev

Jack Finkelstein

Abraham Yakov z”l

Father of

Shari Weiner

Yahrtzeit - 11 Kislev

THANK YOU

Lillian & Aaron Fuchs and Jason Fuchs for sponsoring next week’s parsha shiur in memory of Lillian’s brother and Jason’s uncle, **Jack Julius Glatter, Yaakov Yehudah ben Yitzchak z”l**, whose yahrtzeit is on the 14th of Kislev.

Jack Julius Glatter

Yaakov Yehuda ben Yitzchak z”l

Brother of

Lillian Fuchs

Yahrtzeit - 4 Kislev

Elyette Lévy-Bensoissan

Bereh bat Yossef a”h

Mother of

Ginette Hodara

Yahrtzeit - 10 Kislev

Max Novack

Menachem Mendel ben Yaakov z”l

Father of

Barry Novack

Yahrtzeit - 11 Kislev

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Isaac Meier

Michael Baum

Judith Lampert

Moshe Sassover

ב"ה
PLEASE JOIN US AT OUR SIMCHA
AS WE CELEBRATE THE AUFRUF OF
OUR DEAR SON

Jonathan

IN HONOR OF HIS FORTHCOMING
MARRIAGE TO

Daniella

*Saturday, December 3rd
at 9:15 am
Parshat Vayeitzei*

Luncheon following services

YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS
9261 ALDEN DR
BEVERLY HILLS CA 90210

On Monday, Rabbi Dunner led a 75th anniversary event at the Museum of Tolerance, commemorating the UN vote for Resolution 181 on November 29th, 1947, which paved the way for the creation of the State of Israel. The event was co-sponsored by the Israel Consulate, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, and the Mensch Foundation, and was attended by consular representatives from a range of countries who voted for the resolution, as well as the Consul General of UAE.



**Mazal Tov to Gina Raphael for being
presented with the WIZO woman of the year
award on Tuesday at the Four Seasons Hotel**

**TEEN
MINYAN**

ישיבת YINBH
BEVERLY HILLS SYNOGUE

**2022-2023/5783
SCHEDULE**

Dec. 10 - Vayishlach
Jan. 14 - Shemot
Feb. 11 - Yitro
Mar. 11 - Zachor | Tetzaveh
Apr. 15 - Shemini | Shabbat Mevarchim
May. 13 - Behar-Bechukotai
Jun. 10 - Beha'alotcha
Jul. 8 - Pinchas
Aug. 12- Re'eh | Shabbat Mevarchim
Sep. 9 - Nitzavim-Vayeilech
Dates are variable

**TEEN LED SERVICES
TEEN PARTICIPATION
10:00AM IN THE BEIT MIDRASH**

FOLLOWED BY A
TEEN ONLY KIDDUSH
CATERED BY JEFFS



2022 ANNUAL CHANUKAH TOY DRIVE!
BENEFITING CHAI LIFELINE

Participate by purchasing a gift from Chai's
Amazon wishlist!

Please purchase your gift by December 31st, 2022

Visit <https://tinyurl.com/ws8th4ws> to participate

BOOK GROUP EVENT

LAUREN BELFER

for Her Book "And After The Fire"

Tuesday, January 17th
at 7:30pm

RSVP at yinbh.org/bookgroup



THE CAIRO GENIZA

with Rabbi Aubrey Hersh

Thursday, January 5th, 2023 at 7pm

YINBH - 9261 Alden Drive Beverly Hills 90210

The most lucrative prize of the 19th century: 250,000 documents of antiquity. Tailed by scandals and forgeries, it took one single Hebrew fragment to change history forever.



Rabbi Hersh is the author of an extremely popular weekly podcast: "History for the Curious". Having spent over 25 years as an international lecturer and educator, he is renowned for his talks on History, Halacha and Jewish Thought.

RSVP at yinbh.org/cairogeniza

BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

HOW TO THRIVE DURING AN ECONOMIC CRISIS

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 7
AT 7:00 PM
BETH JACOB - RUBIN HALL



WITH
JONATHAN
GERBER

Jonathan Gerber was born and raised right here in Beth Jacob. He attended the Stern School of Business at NYU. After working at BDO's New York office, he joined his father's tax and accounting firm, Gerber & Co Inc. He obtained his Masters Degree in Taxation from USC. He and his father founded RVW Wealth, and built it into a \$1 billion wealth management firm with 21 professionals in 2 offices. Jonathan and his team at RVW Wealth serve their clients as Pure Fiduciaries - always putting their clients first.

RSVP TO FRONTDESK@BETHJACOB.ORG



CHANUKAH DINNER



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23RD
6TH NIGHT OF
CHANUKAH

- Menorah lighting
- Latkes
- Sufganiot
- Dreidels
- Chanukah Songs
- Magic show
- and much more

Early Bird Before Dec. 9th:

Adults \$45, Children 2-12 \$25

After Dec. 9th:

Adults \$55, Children 2-12 \$35

Planning Committee:

Jonathan & Julie Boyer
Jeff Gross & Gina Raphael
Mark & Marlene Perl
Daniel & Bella Strum
Michael & Tova Zaghi

RSVP at YINBH.org/chanukah

