

Tefilla Notebook

8 Adar • Terumah • Parshat Zachor

February 19-20, 2021

Steven Dorfman, President

Rabbi Pini Dunner, Senior Rabbi

Nati Bar-Am, Chazan



SHABBAT SCHEDULE

FRIDAY FEBRUARY 19TH

CANDLELIGHTING 5:22pm

FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICES 5:25pm

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20TH

PESUKEI D'ZIMRA 8:45AM

MORNING SERVICES 9:00AM

MINCHA 5:30pm

SHABBAT ENDS 6:27pm

WEEKDAY DAVENING TIMES

Sunday 8:00am & 5:30pm

Mon- Fri 7:00am & 5:30pm

Services are also on zoom

<https://zoom.us/j/226829899>

Passcode: yinhb

PURIM 2021

Thursday, Feb. 25th

Fast Begins: 5:12am

Shacharit: 7:00am

Mincha (with kriyat HaTorah): 6pm

Maariv & Megillah: 6:30pm

in-person and on zoom

Friday, Feb. 26th

Shacharit & Megillah: 7am

in person only

Second Megillah Only: 10am

in person and on zoom

All Megilla readings will be leined by

Chazzan Nati Baram and will take

place at the Nissel Tennis Court.

RSVP is required to

attend. RSVP by Feb 23rd at

beverlyhillssynagogue.org/megilla

Thank you to **Joe & Galina**

Samuel for sponsoring the break

the fast-to-go following

services. The sponsorship is in

memory of Joe's mother, **Esther**

Samuel, Esther bat Dovid a"n

whose yahrtzeit is on 16 Adar; and

in memory of Joe's brother, **Victor**

Samuel, Yitzchak ben Yaakov

z"l, whose yahrtzeit is on 18

Adar.

Dear Members and Friends,

The celebrated American novelist Veronica Roth, whose Divergent trilogy was successfully adapted into a series of blockbuster sci-fi movies, deliberately infused her best-known work with important moral lessons. In particular, the protagonist and narrator of Divergent, sixteen-year-old Beatrice "Tris" Prior, begins her roller-coaster journey in the belief that selflessness is a debilitating weakness which one needs to overcome. But early on she is disabused of this notion; deuteragonist Tobias Eaton, better known as "Four", informs Tris that it is only "when you're acting selflessly that you are at your bravest." It is a powerful lesson, and it foretells the dramatic climax of the trilogy, when Tris gives up her own life to save her brother.

One of the great challenges of the human condition is the ever-present tension between self-interest and selflessness. Curiously, countless studies have shown that focusing on self-interest to the exclusion of the needs of others does not guarantee happiness. No matter how much one has managed to accumulate in terms of material possessions, or to what extent one has managed to isolate oneself from the outside world – happiness and contentment may well continue to be elusive. In fact, a 2015 study carried out by two economics professors at Emory University empirically demonstrated that great wealth often decreases one's happiness.

Every human being on the planet is driven by selfish needs and desires, and yet the evidence is that being successful does not guarantee the happiness we all constantly seek. If so, how is it possible to find happiness? The answer appears to be – both for those who have accumulated wealth, as well as for those without it – to engage in acts of compassion.

At the most basic level, this is because doing whatever you can for others stimulates the brain's pleasure pathways and makes you feel good. It might sound crazy, but brain-imaging research has revealed that performing a kind act – for example, donating money to charity or putting yourself out for others – actually activates the brain's pleasure centers in the same way as eating a sweet dessert or buying new clothes. But the difference is, when we divert our focus away from self-interest, and particularly if we focus on the needs of others, we will be less preoccupied with our own anxieties. Specifically, the positive feeling that accompanies a compassionate act will enable you to face the issues which are a downer in your life with fresh energy and a constructive attitude.

Concerning yourself for others can also have a positive impact on your physical health. In 2007, the Washington DC based Corporation for National and Community Service reported that those who volunteer for 100 hours each year or more are 33% less likely "to report bad health" in comparison to those who never volunteer – and the evidence shows that these same people will have reduced their risk of hypertension, and even premature death. Other studies have shown that those who engage in regular acts of charity and compassion have a better chance of avoiding dementia in old age.

The Torah records countless acts of charity and compassion, and it is clear that altruism is a value embedded at the heart of Judaism. But it is not until Parshat Terumah that this vital characteristic of our faith finds its first mandated act, when God requests that the recently redeemed nation parts with their newly acquired material possessions in order to build a sanctuary in His honor. Among the items listed for contribution were the twelve jewels designated to decorate the High Priest's breastplate. Central to the interpretation of Torah is the idea that no descriptive words are ever used by chance – which means that the fact the breastplate gems are referred to as *avnei millu'im* ("filling stones") is no accident. Rashi explains that each gem was intended to fill a cavity in the solid gold plate, but Ramban is puzzled by this explanation: why would the Torah define an object by what was going to be done with it once it was received for use?

More surprisingly, the stones seem to be defined by a negative – they would fill an empty space – rather than a positive, namely their sparkling beauty and arresting splendor. And, as we know, these stones were intended to represent the twelve tribes of Israel, all of whom had unique qualities; surely they should all have been defined by their unique qualities rather than by the fact that they would be used to fill a hole?

Rabbi Yochanan Zweig suggests a satisfying explanation for this anomaly, which dovetails beautifully with the idea that focusing on doing good for others is far more beneficial than being totally absorbed by self-interest. People often find themselves torn between remaining in a place which requires their talents or relocating to another location which may be more conducive to perceived personal growth. By referring to the breastplate gems as *avnei millu'im*, the Torah offers a solution to this dilemma, prescribing that it is preferable to remain in a place where one is needed – filling a hole – rather than relocating to somewhere better suited to one's own personal development.

The simple explanation is that a community needs each and every individual to contribute their unique qualities to the larger group, and if you choose the community's needs over your own, you are filling a gap that would be an ugly void if you weren't there. But truthfully, the Torah is offering an even greater insight, one that is reflected in the sociological studies I've already mentioned. In the final analysis, the choice to remain where you are most needed and where you are engaged in helping others is, as it turns out, what is most beneficial for you. Your personal growth is best served by serving others, not by focusing exclusively on yourself. Or, to put it slightly differently: it is not a jewel's beauty that makes it beautiful, but the fact that it fills a hole and thus enhances everything around it.

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

Sisterhood Corner

February

Don't miss out!

Trivia Night Is Back!

Sunday, February 28th at 7pm

Please register in advance at
Beverlyhillssynagogue.org/trivia

Many thanks to all of you who
signed up
for our annual Mishloach Manot!

This year has been one of the
most successful
in recent years.

Shabbat Shalom,
Cecile & Ruthie
Sisterhood Co-Presidents

Matanot Laevyonim

Matanot L'evyonim requires that we
give money to at least two people so
they can celebrate Purim. By
appointing Rabbi Dunner to
distribute the money on Purim you
can accomplish this Mitzvah. You
can give the money to your rabbi for
Matanot L'evyonim even before
Purim

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Rabbi Dunner is going to be  
distributing Matanot La'evyonim to  
needy families in Los Angeles and  
Jerusalem. You can contribute on  
our website or send in a check. The  
online cutoff date is **February 25th**.

You can donate directly at  
[beverlyhillssynagogue.org/donate](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org/donate) or  
mail a check to the Synagogue

## **YAHRTZEITS**



**Robert Rosenthal**  
Brother of  
**Karen Fisher**  
Yahrtzeit - 8 Adar

**Fania Fontak**  
Fania Tzipporah bat Yenta  
a"h  
Mother of  
**Janet Sasson**  
Yahrtzeit - 12 Adar

**Moritz Rosenfeld**  
Moshe ben Naftali Zeev z"l  
Father of  
**Robert Rosenfeld**  
Yahrtzeit - 13 Adar



*Abraham Czuker*  
*Dana Feldberg*  
*Samantha Cohen*  
*Robert Tanenbaum*

## **Happy Anniversary**

**Joe & Galina  
Samuel**

# **PURIM**

## **TRIVIA NIGHT**

**Sunday  
February  
28th at  
7PM**

**ONLINE  
VIA ZOOM  
PRIZES AWAIT  
OUR WINNERS**

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

**[beverlyhillssynagogue.org/trivia](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org/trivia)**



**BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE**  
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

# MISHLOACH MANOT 2021

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING FAMILIES FOR TAKING PART IN  
THE MISHLOACH MANOT THIS YEAR:

Michael & Susan Baum  
Michael & Maggie Bayer  
Nati & Carmit Baram  
Barbara Bernstein  
Ruth Brandt  
Bill & June Brenner  
Hart & Debbie Cohen  
Steve & Vivian Dorfman  
Rabbi Pini & Sabine Dunner  
Simon & Rita Elhiani  
Yeudah & Simi Feigen  
Marty & Eva Feldberg  
Howie & Shirin Fialkov  
Richard & Shawney Fine  
Harry Finkel & Shirley Aizenstein  
George & Suzi Fischmann  
John & Sherri Fogelman  
Jerry & Jean Friedman  
Jason Fuchs  
Aaron & Lillian Fuchs  
Tuvia Ganz & Joanne Sacks  
Larry & Judith Garshofsky  
Elie & Sharon Gindi  
Ernie & Regina Goldberger  
Reuven & Becky Grabel  
Evan & Liz Greenspan  
Susan Graysen

Daniel Gromis  
Ed & Cecile Gromis  
Chavi Hertz  
Jonas Herskovitz  
Patrick & Ginette Hodara  
Sam & Diana Hirt  
Rabbi Alan & Sandy Kalinsky  
Hillel & Ruthie Kellerman  
Jonathan & Faye Kellerman  
Ezra & Lauren Kest  
Mark & Amy Kestenbaum  
David & Roberta Kimmel  
Hillel Laks  
Bill & Linda Levin  
Bill & Joan Lopatin  
Vera Markowitz  
Isaac & Sarah Meier  
Stuart & Fran Miller  
Manucher & Nasrin Mostadim  
Sam & Diba Mostadim  
Barry Novack & Annie Baum  
Michael & Ariella Novack  
Mitch & Karen Parver  
Howard & Judy Raykoff  
Laurence & Sara Richards  
Weston & Denise Richter  
David & Leah Ross

Steve & Roz Rothman  
Simon & Susy Rubinstein  
Franck & Evelina Ruimy  
Faramarz & Sheilagh Sadeghi  
Lee Samson  
Joe & Galina Samuel  
Stephen & Jessica Samuel  
Moshe & Helen Sassover  
George & Irina Schaeffer  
Stephen Schloss  
Arnold & Sheri Schlesinger  
Avrumie & Maryjo Schnitzer  
Adam & Jesse Shaked  
David & Michele Silver  
Myrtle Sitowitz  
Jaime & Marilyn Sohacheski  
Norm & Virginia Solomon  
Seymour & Grace Stoll  
Benjamin & Ella Thompson  
Bart & Arleen Tanenbaum  
Sam & Sue Varon  
Michael & Shari Weiner  
Tammy Weisman  
Jonathan & Dalia Wizman  
Elyse Wolf  
Rosalie Zalis  
Bob Zeller & Nadine Gerson

## **VOLUNTEER**

If you are able to help pack the packages, please contact the office. We will be packing socially distanced on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday. Please call the office at 310-276-7650

## **PICK UP YOUR MISHLOACH MANOT**

This year, we are asking that you pick up your Mishloach Manot. We are offering 3 options:

Option 1 - After The Megilla Reading on Thursday Evening (at the Nissel Tennis Court)

Option 2 - After the Megilla Reading on Friday Morning (at the Nissel Tennis Court)

Option 3 - Friday Morning at the Synagogue between 12pm-2pm

If none of the above times work, please call the office to make another arrangement.



# PASSOVER SEDERS IN BEVERLY HILLS

Passover 2021

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1ST NIGHT, SATURDAY, MARCH 27TH

8:00PM

2ND NIGHT, SUNDAY, MARCH 28TH

8:00PM



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IN-PERSON SEDERS (PRIVATE AND COMMUNAL)  
TAKEOUT SEDERS AVAILABLE  
GOURMET GLATT KOSHER  
INTERNATIONAL WINE SELECTION

COMMUNAL SEDERS LED BY RABBI PINI DUNNER & CHAZZAN NATI BARAM

ADULT: \$195 (\$225 AFTER MARCH 1) CHILD: \$89 (\$99 AFTER MARCH 1)  
TAKEOUT: ADULT \$150 CHILD \$89

**412 BEVERLY HILLS SYNAGOGUE**  
YOUNG ISRAEL OF NORTH BEVERLY HILLS

9261 Alden Drive Beverly Hills, CA 90210

RESERVE AT:

310-276-7650 or [beverlyhillssynagogue.org/seder](http://beverlyhillssynagogue.org/seder)

Kosher for Passover OU Certification  
catering by:

*Bel Air*  
CATERING BY CHEF BZ