



Newsletter

22 Shevat - 20 Adar I

February 2024

First Friday Family Shabbat



FEBRUARY 2, 2024

SERVICES @ 6:00 PM

DINNER @ 7:00 PM

**CORNFLAKE CHICKEN, ROASTED POTATOES,
GREEN BEANS AND SALAD BAR**



**CHICKEN TENDERS FOR KIDS
VEGGIE & GLUTEN-FREE OPTION**



In conjunction with Black History Month

FEBRUARY 21, 2024 7:00 PM
IN FEINSTEIN HALL



Join us as we talk to Chattanooga photographer Stephen Greenfield who discusses his book, "Sticks and Stones and Metal Bones," photographs that focus on some of the lesser-known architectural treasures along Martin Luther King Boulevard.

Also, we will learn all about the extraordinary life and achievements of Horace Brazelton. Historian Stefanie Haire will also join us to discuss Brazelton's pioneering career and inspiring leadership in the Chattanooga black community.

Brazelton was the first African American to open a professional photography studio in Chattanooga. His camera lens captured countless portraits of middle-class black communities during the first half of the 20th century.



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT...

1 Shevat 5784
January 21, 2024

Dear fellow congregants,



Vicki Lewis

The rabbi's walk and talk about the Parshat this past week was about loving our neighbors as ourselves, as the Jewish "slaves" were exiting Egypt. I thought, "Am I doing enough?"

I participated in the Jewish Federation Shabbat of Joy. Around my table were members from B'nai Zion. Some of those folks I had never met, and I reflected on the Rabbi's message, which was to love your neighbors. I remember growing up in Birmingham, and not knowing many of the members at the other synagogue and that made me sad. And I learned the situation was similar here. I found Jewish people who were just like me, except we belong to different synagogues. Some of my guests, I barely knew, and some I had never met before. We had the same similar interests; we enjoyed talking about Jewish food. We all talked about our Jewish backgrounds. We were all Jewish, so in that respect, I was certainly welcoming my neighbors. And I hope I see them again. I will recognize them and feel comfortable around them. Another example is what **Stefanie deOlloqui** and **Brenda Binder** are doing with Social Action: teaching us about all of the organizations that are helping our neighbors in our greater community. If you have not yet written a letter to an inmate, it's never too late. This Wednesday night, a program with the Catholic Diocese, with a speaker from Atlanta, Brendan Murphy, will have occurred by the time this article comes out. **Jed Mescon** has worked tirelessly to arrange this program because we all need to love and respect one another.



I am so impressed with all that has, and will happen at Mizpah, since I became President. This is not because of me. I have had guidance from **Marilyn Center, Janet Sivils, Alan Richelson, Warren and Donna Dropkin, Bev Coulter, Dana Banks, Rabbi Lewis** (of course), and the list goes on. I have mentioned numerous times how dedicated so many of our members are. In so many synagogues you find a few dedicated members, but the feeling is different at Mizpah. I find these individuals inspiring. When we began to upgrade our security after Covid, **Frank Miller** as President worked with **Richard Waxler**, prior Chair of Physical Properties, to secure a security grant which, as explained to you by **VP David Israel** last month. **Andy Hodes** has become Chair of security and is organizing a team to keep all of us safer. At the same time, **Richard Waxler** has been interviewing contractors and will soon be placing orders for the products necessary to make a safer

building. If any of you are capable grant writers, we would like to find an ADA grant for making our building more accessible.

Mizpah is a very special congregation. As I continue to mention, we have so many dedicated members to the Jewish community. **Austin Center** is the Chair of the Community Relations Committee of the Federation. **Judy Sachsman** is President of our local chapter of Hadassah. **Dana Waxler** has been on the regional and national boards of Hadassah. **Vivian Hershey** has devoted much of her time helping local immigrants. **Flossie Weill** has been working with groups to help create reasonable state laws to prevent gun violence. These are just a few of our members who are helping to make our world a better place. Let's celebrate all the good deeds our members are making.

Paula Israel and I are stepping down from coordinating the Temple Passover Seder, which will occur on Monday, April 22. The notes are in a file in Angela's office with recipes and instructions as well as a timeline for preparation. As in the past, our congregational volunteers cooked and prepared the meal. If no one steps up, we will hire a caterer, which will result in a significant price increase, and time is passing quickly. We are going to have to make a decision by the end of this month. If you think you might be interested in coordinating this, please let me know.



Passover

I hope that all of you have been satisfied with the programming, the spiritual offerings by **Rabbi Lewis** and the education that is occurring both at Machanooga and at Mizpah Hebrew School. We have a fabulous Rabbi who is bringing in 20 to 25 people to adult classes, Torah study and other small group programs. The rabbi will respond to your request for learning. I would like to ask what you have to offer Mizpah? Join us for one of these activities or more and you will enrich your life and your family. And come spend time with your Jewish family at Mizpah.

L'dor va dor - From generation to generation, **Vicki**

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR RABBI...

I am issuing a challenge to Mizpah Congregation. Before I tell you what it is, I want all of you to collectively shout, “Challenge accepted!” I’ll wait... Really, I want to hear it in my office at 923 McCallie. I want it to reverberate throughout Chattanooga and around the world. Mizpah shall be of one accord, knowing what I ask will be good. I’m still waiting. It’s simple. Just say, “Challenge accepted!”.... You could skip a couple paragraphs to see what the challenge is, or you could be like our Israelite ancestors in the desert who, when offered the gift of Torah, proclaimed, “*Naaseh v’nishmah*,” literally, “we will do, and then we shall understand.” In other words, people of faith enthusiastically proclaimed, “Challenge accepted!” I promise not to hold a mountain over your head or use other forms of coercion. I’m still waiting.... It’s awfully quiet here in the rabbi’s study. Hold up. Maybe I just couldn’t hear you over the wall heater or the ambulance that just passed by. Maybe you should say it again... No. Still nothing. Say it so loud that the cat darts out of the room and the dog tilts its head to the side. Say it so the kids are forced to turn the volume up on their video games. Trust me, you will be okay.



Rabbi Craig Lewis

Of course, a wise person does not accept a challenge blindly, so I don’t blame you for holding back. Have we asked why the Israelites were willing to accept their challenge at Sinai? Could it be that they had developed a level of trust that whatever was about to be asked of them would be good, just like the first Israelite who boldly stepped into the sea before it parted? I’m still waiting...I’m looking at Facebook and Instagram wondering if this is the medium by which you are choosing to accept this challenge. Please make sure you tag me or Mizpah so you can receive full credit. I would love my notifications to be full of congregants typing, “Challenge accepted!,” that is in the absence of hearing the shout. You can even add an exclamation point, or two, for emphasis. Still waiting... I am hoping you trust in me and in Mizpah enough to know nothing would be asked if it were not for some greater good, greater than me, greater than you, greater than our beautiful, yet mysterious horned Moses statue. Maybe you can consider this Midrash, “when the Jewish people accepted [the Law] with joy and with one heart, they became guarantors for each other” (Tanchuma, Yitro 13). If you don’t do it for me, please do it for each other, the rest of the Mizpah family, our community members past and present, as well as those we hope will join us. Maybe my wait is over?

So here is the challenge. Go out and proclaim the goodness of Mizpah. I don’t think we say it enough. You have reasons for belonging here—community, music, food, learning, social justice. Some of you might even like the rabbi. Whatever it is, tell your friends. If they have not been for a while, ask them “why not?” Invite them to join you for a service, class, dinner, or social event. If they are not members yet, tell them why you love it. Invite them for a service, class, dinner, or social event. If we have done something good, that touched your soul, inspired you, gave you cause to celebrate, do not keep it to yourself. Speak openly about it. Share it on your social media pages. Don’t be shy. No need to be humble. Belonging to Mizpah means something. It is a link to history as well as a promise for the future. It is a values statement in the practice and philosophy of Reform Judaism. If you have benefited from our policies of openness, welcome, belonging, and flexibility to meet every single person where they are at on their religious journey, then tell that story to anyone willing to hear it. Be proud of this congregation, and invite others to feel the sense of community that brought you here and keeps you connected.

You, our cherished members, are the best PR team we have. The Chattanooga community needs to know about what we do. The Jewish community worldwide should likewise be on notice. We have something special here, and your challenge is to unabashedly invite others to share it with us. So, one last time. For yourselves, for each other, and for me.

On three: One. Two. Three.
“Challenge accepted!”

Rabbi Craig Lewis



MIZPAH CONGREGATION YAHRZEITS - January 28 - March 2

January 28-Feb. 3

Arline Dubow
Jack M. Spitalny
Abraham B. Spector
Isadore F. Gordo
Violet Gordon
Jeanette Lippmann
Joyce Abish
Hershel Ullman
Joseph Cohen
Mary Becker Shutting
Sam P. Diamond
Dr. David R. Weill, Jr.
Ralph Anderson
Sam Slaughter

February 4-10

Gertrude Jacobs
Samuel John Young
Anna Kopkin
Betty Schechtman
Eisen
Leonard Israel
Martin S Greene
Anita Lamport
Ruth Barshay Brener
Helen Barshay Brener
James Stewart
Sam Simonds

February 11-17

Jake Roobin
Micol Schejola
Fannie Edelstein
Henry Stoloff
David Blanck
Lawrence Blanck
Louise Schneider
Milder
Tom Bledsoe, Sr.
Gus Jenkins

February 18-24

Ben Mott
Bella Berz
Jim Young
Lena Stein Bittner
Bernice Waltzer
Witten
Dorothy Schulman
Leonard Bernstein
Celia Levine Harris
Harry Barnett
Leila Eyoub Sigmon
Philip L. Angel

Feb. 25- March 2

Clara Beker
Irving Caminez
Lillian Rechtweg
Marilyn Simonds
Robert E. Haesloop
Ruth Regenbaum
Andy Wear
Bernard Pollack
Florence Burk Milder
Louise Mittenthal
Betty Weill Long
David Weill, Sr.
Elaine Laband
Joan Lodge



Mizpah
est. 1864
CONGREGATION

TECHILAH

JUDAISM FOR OUR LITTLEST LEARNERS

2/17 MITZVOT

This monthly family and child program explores Judaism through interactive play, music and crafts.
Suitable for toddlers.

Join Miss Susan 10 AM in the Preschool Room

RSVP: EDUCATION@MIZPAHCONGREGATION.ORG

SOCIAL ACTION UPCOMING EVENT

Please join us on Tuesday, March 12, 2024, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. as **David Binder** leads us on a tour of **The Siskin Museum of Religious Artifacts**. The Museum contains over 400 religious pieces: 247 Judaic and 140 Christian, ranging from the 16th to the 20th century. Other religions and philosophies represented in the museum include Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism.

The Museum is located on the property of Siskin Children's Institute at 1101 Carter Street.

Parking is provided beside the Institute.



A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDUCATION AND YOUTH COORDINATOR...

Dear Mizpah Families, We're not that far away from our next big holidays—Purim & Passover! Every year *after* Passover I always kick myself for not making the time to write my own Haggadah. I've always felt I could make quite an entertaining one retelling our story. Speaking of stories—nothing is quite as riveting as Queen Ester's! These are great times to engage our kids, but if you're like me, you need a good heads up to plan and make them meaningful. Here's a few helpful ideas to put in place in advance of the holidays! Enjoy!- **Susan**



Susan Caminez

Prepare for
Purim



Make your own grogger with two plastic spoons, a plastic egg, rice and colorful duct tape. Try Dollar Tree!

Level up your Grogger game and Watch "How to Shake Maracas with John Santos" on YouTube. AH-mazing!



Make Miriam's timbral with a paper plate, bells and twist ties! Then you can practice at services during Mi Chamocha!

Neighborhood Mishloach Manot! Pick 3 neighbors you could gift with sweet treats and hand deliver!



Now's the time to start thinking about your costume!



Prepare for
Passover



Watch "Musical Maggid, a fun, musical telling of the Passover story" on YouTube. You might just recognize the narrator!

Make a plagues menu. Ask your kids what food they think represents each plague and add it to your seder event. Feel free to set some ground rules (*actual* food for example)

Grow your own parsley. We did this one year and I'll never forget how special it made the seder plate.

Upcoming FEBRUARY Mizpah Family



**Family Shabbat &
First Friday Dinner**

February 2 at 6 PM



Techilah - Saturday, Feb. 17 at 10:00 am

This family and child program explores Judaism through interactive play, music and crafts.

Suitable for toddlers.

This meetup we explore mitzvot!

Join Miss Susan in the
Preschool Room (second floor)

SAVE THE DATE



Hamantaschen Making—Fri, Mar 1 at 5 PM

Prior to Family Shabbat, join us in the library for hamantaschen making. These yummy cookies will bake while we'll in services and we'll enjoy them with dinner!

MIZPAH FUNDS: YOUR DONATIONS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED!

Donations received by the 15th of prior month \$18 - "chai" - minimum donation

Archives
Building
Capital Campaign
Cemetery
Educator
Endowment
Flower
Garden of Life
Goldman/Moses
Mary W. and Jacob L. Levine

Leadership Development
Library
Miller/Lefkoff
Marks Memorial
Mazon (Feed the Hungry)
Miller/Schwartz
Music
NFTY (Youth Group)
Operating
Oneg
Prayer Book

Physical Property
Religious Activities
Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
Rabbinic Endowment
Rita Russ Speer
Religious School
Social Action
Staff Support
Kindertransport Chapel

Operating

In Memory of Elizabeth Raisin

Fuz Spector

In Memory of Dr. Steven Coulter

Steven Scheinman

In Memory of Frances Levine

Anita Levine

In Honor of Rabbi Lewis for being wonderful to Lee Rosenberg

Lisa Ann Reiner

In Memory of Ethel Goldman

Anita Levine

Music

In Memory of Harold Shalett

Susie Stayer

Teddi Mendel

Wendy Farber & Family

John & Rozzie Brink

In Memory of Joan Cohen

Sam and Dana Banks

Social Action

In Memory of Gerald Lyons

Thomas Lyons and Debra Dubow



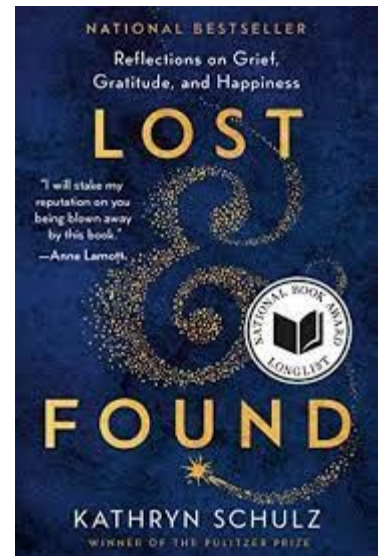
The Cemetery Board reports that the fence repair around the cemetery will begin in a few weeks. We hired a company months ago. They said they would do it the end of January.

Dana Banks, Chair

MIZPAH BOOK CLUB

Mizpah Book (and Brunch!) Club will meet next on Sunday, March 31st, 10:30 am at the home of **Hope Flammer and Jay Shaffer**. We will be reading Lost and Found, by Kathryn Schulz, . It is a Pulitzer Prize winner, a National Jewish Book Award finalist, and was longlisted for the National Book Award.

Eighteen months before Kathryn Schulz's father died, she met the woman she would marry. Lost & Found weaves the story of those relationships into a brilliant exploration of the role that loss and discovery play in all of our lives. The resulting book is part memoir, part guidebook to living in a world that is simultaneously full of wonder and joy and wretchedness and suffering--a world that always demands both our gratitude and our grief. A staff writer at The New Yorker and winner of the Pulitzer Prize, Schulz writes with curiosity, tenderness, erudition, and wit about our finite yet infinitely complicated lives. Lost & Found is an enduring account of love in all its many forms from one of the great writers of our time.



MIZPAH SOCIAL ACTION

Mizpah is a partner with **Chattanooga Endeavors**, which helps individuals with community reentry after incarceration. One of their campaigns is to ask people to write letters/send cards to those in the system of care.

Here is a synopsis of this organization:

Established in 1988 as Dismas House of Chattanooga and the first reentry program in East Tennessee, **Chattanooga Endeavors** has consistently provided innovative solutions to the unique challenges faced by people while they are incarcerated and as they strive to rebuild their lives when they come home. The organization's initial contact with those it serves is when they enter prison. For many, that is the beginning of a regular exchange of letters that helps to maintain the social ties to their hometown. If you have time to write a letter and would like to make a difference, please contact Chattanooga Endeavors at 423 266-1888 or at info@chattanoogaendeavors.org.



See you next month!

Stefanie DeOllouqui
Brenda Hodges-Binder

Using Jewish values for effective Climate communications

Monday, February 5, 2024
8-9 pm ET; 5-6 pm PT



Kait Birghenthal
NNOCCI President & Project Coordinator

Kait will highlight research identifying values that are particularly helpful in reaching people about the climate issue - and are part of Jewish law and tradition

Register for the session with a *copy and paste* of the following link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUtd-yhqzMvGNTf-nBh8EhCyEYsnZKT7DNb#/registration>

Note: Presentation is by the sister of Mizpah Treasurer Mike Birghenthal

923 McCallie Ave., Chatt. TN 37403

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Mizpah is a Reform Jewish Congregation. We offer worship, learning and social action / social justice programs designed to enhance our lives and improve our world. Mizpah is a welcoming congregation as we embrace interfaith couples, those of all faith-traditions and culturally-diverse backgrounds as well as families in all forms.



Find us on:
facebook®

www.MizpahCongregation.org
Office@mizpahcongregation.org
www.urj.org

Email: Office@mizpahcongregation.org
www.mizpahcongregation.org
Monday-Friday: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
423-267-9771
Craig Lewis, Rabbi
Rabbi@mizpahcongregation.org
Vicki Lewis, President
President@mizpahcongregation.org
Angela Rickert, Administrator
Susan Caminez, Education Coordinator
Richard Zachary, Newsletter

TEMPLE OFFICERS AND BOARD

July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024

Craig Lewis, Rabbi
Susan Caminez, Education Coordinator
Angela Rickert, Temple Administrator

OFFICERS:

President:	Vicki Lewis
VP-Administration	David Israel
VP-Programming:	Jed Mescon
VP-Annual Giving	Bev Coulter
Treasurer:	Mike Birghenthal
Board Secretary:	Beth Thomas
Immed. Past President:	Frank Miller

BOARD MEMBERS

Austin Center Gary Chazen Amy Cohen
Bob Marlowe Caroline Kaplan
Rachael Ruiz Holly Schwartz Edie Weiss

CEMETERY CONTROL BOARD

Dana Banks, Board Representative
Gary Chazen Donna White-Dropkin David Israel
Ruth Longway Andy Stone

TRUSTEES

Bob Berz, Board Representative
Gary Chazen Sandy Dittus
Jim Levine Flossie Weill

CALENDAR HIGHLIGHTS

Shabbat Eve Worship: Mizpah Sanctuary 6:00 pm: Family Shabbat and Dinner 1st Friday; Choir 2nd and 4th Friday

Torah Study: Every Shabbat 9:00 am Feinstein Hall

Shabbat Morning Worship: Mizpah Feinstein Chapel 11:00 am

Shirei Shalom: Every 3rd Erev Shabbat 6:00 pm

Mussar: Ethics, with Rabbi Lewis: Wednesdays 7:30 am (zoom only)

Improv! RSVP to Office; 2nd and 4th Saturdays, January thru April 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Mizpah Feinstein Hall

Federation Chai Night: February 10, 2024 7:30 pm

Techilah Kids Program: February 17, 2024 10:00 am

Intriguing Conversation: Black History Month: Stephen Greenfield and Stefanie Hair February 21st

Confirmation Class Trip to Washington, DC: February 23 - 26, 2024