




PARK SLOPE JEWISH CENTER

June 30-July 7, 2017 | 7-13 Tammuz, 5777
Shabbat Chukkat

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|---|------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Friday, June 30 6 Tammuz | | | | Shabbat Chukkat Saturday, July 1 7 Tammuz | | |
| Kabbalat Shabbat with Steve Gradman 7:00PM Candle Lighting 8:13PM | | | | Shabbat Morning Services 10:00AM | | |
| Sunday July 2 8 Tammuz | Monday July 3 9 Tammuz | Tuesday July 4 10 Tammuz | Wednesday July 5 11 Tammuz | Thursday July 6 12 Tammuz | Friday July 7 13 Tammuz | Saturday July 8 14 Tammuz |
| | |  <i>Happy 4th of July</i> Office Closed | Morning Minyan 7:15AM | | Kabbalat Shabbat with Charlie Urich 7:00PM Candle Lighting 8:12PM | Shabbat <i>Balak</i> Shacharit 10:00AM |
| Park Slope Jewish Center 1320 Eighth Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11215 (718) 768-1453 Office hours: M-Th 9AM-5PM, F 9AM-2PM www.psjc.org email: office@psjc.org | | | | Rabbi Carie Carter, PSJC's Rabbi (rabbicarie@psjc.org) Ellen Brickman, President (president@psjc.org) Aileen Heiman, Director of Youth Education (aileen.heiman@psjc.org) Marsha Stanley, Administrative Assistant (office@psjc.org) For questions about Accessibility (inclusion@psjc.org) | | |

Mazal Tov

To **Stefanie Nanes** on the arrival of her daughter **Roslyn Marie**.

HaMakom Yenachem

Our condolences go to:

The family of our former PSJC member, **Myra Rosenbaum, z"l**.

Yahrzeits observed 30 Sivan-6 Tammuz:

Abraham Baumann, uncle of Fredrica Brooks; **Abraham Rothberger**, father of Harriet Baron; **Bernard Phillips**, uncle of Rabbi Regina Sandler-Phillips; **Dora Schuman**, grandmother of Adine Schuman Pusey; **Fanny Roberts Smith**, mother of Ann Smith; **Isidore Blatt**, father of Ralph Blatt; **Isidore Kessler**, father of Marla Kessler; **Janet Stone Holmes**, mother of Peter Holmes; **Lawrence Lieberman**, father of Geoff Lieberman; **Lucyle Kalish**, observed by the PSJC community; **Max Elfont**, grandfather of Adine Schuman Pusey; **Pauline Pollack**, grandmother of David Pollack; **Rabbi Howard Kummer**, father of Daniel Kummer; **Samuel Felder**, father of Vicki Felder; **Samuel Nash**, grandfather of Millicent Kitay; **Sol Kessin**, father of Faye Lewis. *May their memories be for a blessing.*

For a Sweet New Year - Support PSJC with Honey From the Heart!

Order honey for your friends and family and support PSJC while doing it!

Your cost is **\$11.00 per jar** which includes shipping and handling within the United States.

We will gladly mail orders outside the United States for an additional fee.

Order by **Monday, July 24** for free shipping! For more information and to order at: <http://orthoney.com/psj>



G'mach, Hevra Kadisha welcome new members If you are able to cook, deliver meals, visit, attend shiva minyanim, do shmira or tahara for those who have died, and support our members in good and bad times - please contact G'mach and Hevra Kadisha to add your name to the distribution list: gmach@psjc.org or hevrakadisha@psjc.org

Please Consider Making Your Contribution Today!

We now call upon all members to join our **\$750,000** Capital Campaign to provide **immediate repairs** and to ensure that PSJC continues to stand strong well into the 21st century!

Please stand up and generously donate to maintain and preserve our cherished spiritual home for this and future generations.

We are grateful for every donation and pledge!

Visit <https://www.psjc.org/capitalcampaign>



PSJC Knitters is on hiatus during July and August and will resume in September. For more information contact marjorie.rothenberg@gmail.com

Independence Day

Tuesday, July 4 - Office Closed

Shabbat Shmooze

Saturday, July 15 | 1:30PM

Shabbat Shmooze is a get-together at Prospect Park during the summer months. We will walk together over to the Shabbat Shmooze Potluck Lunch after the Kiddush. Bring a dairy or pareve potluck dish to share. If anyone would like to host a Shabbat Shmooze in the coming year, please email shabbatshmooze@psjc.org, with the date they would like to host a Shabbat Shmooze (3rd Shabbat of the month).

PSJC Trip to the Center for Jewish History

Tuesday, July 25 | 6:00PM | 15 West 16th Street, Manhattan

Joel Levy invites interested PSJC members to visit an extraordinary exhibition presented by Corpus Christi College, Oxford; the Center for Jewish History; & Yeshiva University Museum. The free special tour is followed by a talk by Gerard Baker, editor in chief of The Wall Street Journal (media sponsor of the exhibition) who will speak at 6:30PM on "News and Journalism in the Age of Trump." A reception will follow. To RSVP's or for more information send an email to jkaplan@cjh.org.

The exhibition, "500 Years of Treasures from Oxford" showcases in America for the first time an extraordinary array of ancient manuscripts, books, and silver, including what has been called "the most important collection of Anglo-Jewish manuscripts in the world."

The 50 works include a late 12th-century Ashkenazi siddur, thought to be the oldest extant anywhere, that was owned by a Sephardic Jew from the Iberian Peninsula who emigrated to England and wrote notes on his business dealings in Judeo-Arabic, a 13th-century manuscript of Samuel and Chronicles that was used by Christians to learn Hebrew, and two of the oldest manuscripts of Rashi.

To request an Aliyah or other honor, email Rabbi Carter a week in advance (rabbicarie@psjc.org), or notify the usher if you arrive before the Torah Service begins; we honor requests whenever possible. **To usher services**, email Ira Drucker at ira.drucker@psjc.org.

Hebrew School Registration

Register now for the Hebrew School year 2017-2018
Email aileen.heiman@psjc.org for more information.

Annual Membership Renewal 2017-2018

Renew your membership today! It's easy and can all be done online.
Visit www.psjc.org and log in to your account.
We hope you will join us for another great year at PSJC!

We would love to get to 100% participation. No amount is too big or too small.
Please contact Eli Wolfhagen by email treasurer@psjc.org, if you have to arrange payments or limited income.

Advanced Talmud

Saturday, July 22 | 1:30PM

This class is an on-going self-study group appropriate for people who are proficient in Hebrew and have some prior experience in Gemara study. New students are welcome! Email aronrhalb@gmail.com

Tisha B'Av Services

Monday, July 31 | 8:45PM

Tuesday, August 1 | 7:00AM

The month of Av is almost upon us. We are deep in the midst of this season of reflection and semi-mourning, this low-point in the annual calendar of the Jewish people. Tisha B'Av The 9th of Av, the fast day on which we commemorate the destruction of the first and second Temples, will be observed this year on Monday night, July 31. We will begin together at 8:45PM with the chanting of Eicha (the Book of Lamentations) while sitting on low chairs or on the floor in the lower sanctuary. On Tuesday morning, we come together again for services at 7:00AM.

Rosh Chodesh Elul Minyan

Wednesday, August 23 | 7:00AM

A Back-To-School Ha'Sadnah

August 21-25 | 9:00AM-3:00PM

Ha'Sadnah (Hebrew for "The Workshop") is a boutique children's art program run by designer, Jordyn Jacobs, and artist, Reut Asimini. Ha'Sadnah art programs are designed to spark each child's creativity and to encourage curiosity and a handmade approach. Our craft program will focus on textile arts, including sewing, embroidery, and knitting. Registration is required. Please visit: <https://www.psjc.org/event/a-back-to-school-hasadnah.html#>



PSJC runs on community participation. If you are interested in: **leading Kabbalat Shabbat/Maariv Services**, email freddie.brooks@psjc.org; **leading Shabbat Morning Services**, email Elizabeth Schnur at davening@psjc.org; **chanting Haftarah**, email Alan Palmer at haftarah@psjc.org;

Got announcements? Email by Monday 5:00PM (office@PSJC.org)



Shabbat Chukkat

Triennial (Numbers 19:1-20:13): Etz Hayim p. 880; Hertz p. 652

Haftarah (Judges 11:1-33): Etz Hayim p. 909; Hertz p. 664

Is Halakhah Binding No Matter What?

The beginning of this week's parashah presents the description of the red heifer ritual. In a nutshell, a perfectly unblemished red heifer must be killed, certain rituals performed with it, and its body burned to ashes. Those involved in the preparation of these ashes become ritually impure. The ashes, however, are mixed with water and sprinkled on those who have become impure through contact with the dead in order to render them pure again. The strangeness of the whole procedure did not escape the attention of the sages.

A passage in Midrash Tanhuma has Rabban Yohanan ben Zakkai explaining the ritual to a non-Jew in a very "magical" way. His students then say to him: "You may explain it that way to him, but what do you say to us?" He answers: "The dead body does not literally make impure, and the water with the ashes does not literally effect purity. Rather, it is the decree of the King of Kings. The Holy One, blessed be He, said: Hukkah hakkakti (I have made a decree), I have issued an edict, and you may not violate My edict."

In the halakhic system a *hok* is understood to refer to a law of the Torah the logical underpinnings of which and the reasoning behind which are cryptic, unclear, or unknown. The name of our parashah means "the *hok* of," and the midrash above clearly supports the claim that the red heifer ritual is a *hok* – cryptic and unclear.

The fact that some of the commands/laws/mitzvot of the Torah are not easy to understand has never stopped rabbinic scholars and leaders from attempting to understand them. Indeed, there is a whole genre of rabbinic literature called *Ta'amei haMitzvot* (the reasons of the mitzvot) which is devoted to seeking to understand what motivated the Commander to command the specific mitzvot. BUT, as is the case with all legal systems, especially those in which the ultimate basis of authority is perceived to be God, the "commandedness" of the commands is NOT determined by the ability of the commanded to understand them or to agree with them. The ultimate basis of their authority is that they are mandated by the legal system to which the commanded are bound. As an American citizen, I am bound by the legal mandate of the American legal system to act in accordance with the law that the president must be native-born, whether I understand it or agree with it.

The Jewish legal system, halakhah, is no different. It is a legal system which the classical/rabbinic Jewish tradition has defined and accepted as binding upon Jews. That premise is no less true of the Conservative Movement than of Orthodoxy. The Conservative Movement, regrettably, has not done a very good job at educating its constituents to understanding this premise or to accepting it. The premise, however, has been an essential part of Conservative Judaism since its founding. May this week's parashah strengthen our commitment to the authority of halakhah, even those elements of it which we may not yet understand, or with which we may think we do not agree.

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by Rabbi Joel Roth, from the "Torah Sparks" series produced by the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem, <http://learn.conservativeyeshiva.org/torah-sparks/>. Rabbi Joel Roth, Louis Finkelstein Professor of Talmud and Jewish Law, the Jewish Theological Seminary, and Rosh Yeshiva of the Conservative Yeshiva, Jerusalem. A Haftarah commentary by Rabbi Mordechai Silverstein of the Conservative Yeshiva may be found at <http://www.uscj.org.il/learn/commentaries/>

All congregants and visitors (of all genders) are requested to wear a head covering in the Sanctuary. Cell phones and photography are not permitted in the synagogue during Shabbat. Please also refrain from applause during services.