



PARK SLOPE JEWISH CENTER

December 21-29, 2018 | 13-21 Tevet 5779
Parashat Vayechi

Friday, December 21 13 Tevet				Parashat Vayechi Saturday, December 22 14 Tevet		
Candle Lighting 4:13PM Kabbalat Shabbat with Cornelia Dalton 6:30PM ATID Shabbat Dinner 7:00PM				No Hebrew School Winter Break Parashat Hashavua 9:30AM Shacharit 10:00AM Advanced Talmud 1:30PM		
Sunday December 23 15 Tevet	Monday December 24 16 Tevet	Tuesday December 25 17 Tevet	Wednesday December 26 18 Tevet	Thursday December 27 19 Tevet	Friday December 28 20 Tevet	Saturday December 29 21 Tevet
No Hebrew School Winter Break		December 25 PAI Walk Over the Brooklyn Bridge 11:00AM No Hebrew School Winter Break	Morning Minyan 7:15AM PAI Book Club 9:30AM No Hebrew School Winter Break		PAI Walking Group 9:30AM It's Friday Music Class 10:00AM Candle Lighting 4:18PM Kabbalat Shabbat with Steve Gradman 6:30PM	<i>Parashat Shemot</i> No Hebrew School Winter Break 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, Rabbi (rabbicarie@psjc.org) Ellen Brickman, President (president@psjc.org) Elana Ayalon, Director of Administration (office@psjc.org) Aileen Heiman, Director of Youth Education (aileen.heiman@psjc.org) For questions about Accessibility (inclusion@psjc.org)		

Todah Rabbah

To **David** and **Shoshana Cooper** for hosting the Shabbat Shmooze last Shabbat.

HaMakom Yenachem

Our condolences go to:

Ira Singer and family on the death of his mother, **Jackie Singer**, z"l.

Pam Kaplan and family on the death of her father, **Asa Kaplan**, z"l.

Yahrzeits observed 14-20 Tevet:

Bernard Arons, brother of Lenore Arons; **Helen Rubin**, grandmother of Harolyn Cohen; **Herbert Loewenthal**, father of Amy Loewenthal; **Juanita Miller**, mother of Richard Bayard Miller; **Leonard Singer**, father of Ira Singer; **Robert Mark Peters**, father of Jenny Peters; **Sabina Goldstein**, mother of Leon Goldstein; **Trudy Tursky**, aunt of Marc Korashan. *May their memories be for a blessing.*

Download The PSJC App Today After Shabbat! 😊

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When logged in members can see...

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



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Saturday, December 22

Parashat Hashavua | 9:30AM

Get a brief taste of the week's Torah portion with Cornelia Dalton, PSJC Rabbinic Intern. It's a great lead into the Shabbat morning services.

Advanced Talmud | 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.

December 25 PAI Walk Over the Brooklyn Bridge

Tuesday, December 25 | 11:00AM

PSJC's PAI invites you to join us as we walk over the Brooklyn Bridge. We'll meet up at 11:00AM at the Brooklyn Bridge/City Hall Subway Entrance (4/5/6 trains), directly facing the bridge. A great experience for every age! Everyone is welcome (and it's a great way to work up an appetite for Chinese food....)

PAI Book Club

Wednesday, December 26 | 9:30AM

This award-winning book *Homegoing* by Yaa Gyasi was hailed as a "hypnotic debut novel...that contemplates the consequences of human trafficking on both sides of the Atlantic." The book tells the story of two half-sisters unknown to each other and of the six generations that follow. Book Club locations are provided after signing up to attend on the PSJC website calendar. No Fee. NOTE: This is the last book group of 2018. If you have ideas for 2019 titles, for more information please contact positiveaging@psjc.org.

PAI Walking Group

Friday, December 28 | 9:30AM

Join us every Friday at the entrance to Prospect Park at 15th Street and Prospect Park West. Please register so we can let you know if a walk must be canceled: <https://www.psjc.org/event/positive-aging-initiative-walking-group.html>

Separate but Equal? Not Exactly. Learn more with YAFFED's Naftuli Moster at Lev Tahor

Friday, January 4 | 6:30PM

Join Lev Tahor, PSJC's community-led, all sung Kabbalat Shabbat service, for a spirited conversation about the secular and the sacred in K-12 education. Naftuli Moster, Executive Director of YAFFED/Young Advocates for a Fair Education, will talk about his experiences in higher-ed and the ongoing controversy about the secular (and legal) obligations of religious schools, including yeshivot. Sign up <https://tinyurl.com/ycmzybfc> for the dairy/pareve pot luck dinner that follows services.

Celebrate at Shabbat Kulanu!

Saturday, January 5 | 10:30AM-12:15PM

We'll begin with fun and learning at Family Torah, followed by our all ages Shabbat Kulanu service. Students will be leading parts of the service, as well as receive honors during the Torah service. Let us know you are coming: <https://www.psjc.org/event/aleph-and-bet-class-shabbat.html>. Please contact Aileen with any questions.

PAI Medicare Workshop 2

Sunday, January 6 | 1:30PM

RSVP <https://www.psjc.org/event/pai--medicare-part-2-workshop.html>

Book and Clothing Drive, MLK Day of Service

Sunday, January 20 | 11:00AM-2:00PM

Is your bookshelf threatening to crumble? Your closet doors groaning in protest? Bring your gently-used kids' books and gently-used, CLEAN, clothing for babies, kids and women to PSJC on MLK Day of Service. We'll sort and pack donations for CHIPS, the Brooklyn Family Justice Center and Brooklyn Legal Aid, which gives free books to kids with Legal Aid cases. Clean out your excess for a good cause! Join the fun on January 20 th at PSJC. For more information: Helen Zelon (hzelon@gmail.com).



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Sunday, January 13

5th Grade Art & Text | 11:00AM

2021 Bnai Mitzvah Date Selection Meeting | 11:00AM

Are you expecting to celebrate your child's Bnai Mitzvah @PSJC in 2021? If so, please join us in the PSJC Sanctuary to learn about Bnai Mitzvah at PSJC and the Shaarei Mitzvah program and to begin the process of selecting Bnai Mitzvah dates for 2021. Please RSVP: <https://www.psjc.org/event/2021-bnai-mitzvah-date-selection-meeting.html>. We look forward to seeing you and taking the first step in your journey to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah!

PSJC Annual Meeting and Election of Board of Trustees | 4:00PM

We hope you will join us for Park Slope Jewish Center's Annual Meeting in the PSJC sanctuary. The meeting will consist of updates from synagogue leadership, Etz Chaim updates, thank yous to the outgoing Board of Trustees, a vote for the new Board of Trustees, minor synagogue business, Q&A.

It's Friday Music Class

Friday, January 18 | 10:00AM

Come sing and play with Abe every week for a fun-filled music class that combines your favorite Shabbat and children's songs, with a story, movement and more. Taught by a professional music instructor, our open-space, informal class allows children ages 0 - 3 and their grownups to explore music and Shabbat! Each class ends with a snack and open-play so that caregivers can connect with each other. We look forward to having you join us! \$15/drop-in class* or \$120 for a 10-class series (paid in advance) RSVP: https://www.psjc.org/sing_play_connect

Saturday, January 19

Kishkush Acharei Kiddush | 1:00PM

Are you comfortable speaking Hebrew? Do you want a place to speak with other fluent Hebrew speakers? Join us after services and kiddush where we have a Shulchan Ivrit - a table to sit around, drink coffee and talk with one another in Hebrew. Those who aren't sure if they are "fluent" or not are all welcome! Contact Michal: Kishkush.at.PSJC@gmail.com for more details.

Shabbat Shmooze | 1:30PM

Let's walk together over to the Shabbat Shmooze Potluck Lunch (after the Kiddush following Shabbat morning services). Bring a parve/dairy/veggie pot luck dish to share. The Shabbat Shmooze offers the chance to get to know some of the PSJC community and spend time with those you already know. It is a great way to keep the Shabbat vibe going all afternoon long.

Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 22 | 7:15PM

PSJC Board meetings are open to members in good standing.

Simcha Shabbat

Saturday, January 26 | 10:00AM

Join us as we will acknowledge our members who are celebrating their January birthdays & anniversaries.

Looking at the Torah

Sunday, January 27 | 4:00PM

The Torah is an object of monumental significance to the Jewish people, but it is rarely examined as a physical object. Join Rabbi Carie Carter and Art Conservator Reba Snyder as they discuss the meaning and making of a Torah. Each of our experts will present their understanding of the Torah as a human-made object. Participants will work with some of the materials of a Torah, including writing with a quill pen on parchment. The class is limited to 30, please RSVP today: <https://www.psjc.org/event/looking-at-the-torah.html> and a materials fee (\$10 for members) will be charged.

Have announcements? Email by Monday 5:00PM (office@psjc.org)



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Triennial: Genesis 49:27-50:26 | Etz Hayim p.305; Hertz p.187

Haftarah: 1 Kings 2:1-12 | Etz Hayim p.312; Hertz p.191

D'var Torah: We Are Yaakov

In this week's parsha, Yaakov (Jacob) summons his twelve sons to bless them as he lies on his deathbed. He says to them, "Come together that I may tell you what is to befall you in the days to come" (49:1). Yet rather than predict their destinies, Yaakov instead proceeds to describe each of his sons and to catalogue their actions: Reuven, who is "unstable as water," slept with his father's concubine; Shimon and Levi, whose "weapons are tools of lawlessness," took revenge on the city of Shechem, etc. Why does Yaakov proclaim that he will foretell the future, but then describe the past instead?

Rashi, drawing on Bereshit Rabbah, offers one possible answer to this question: "Yaakov wanted to reveal the end [of days], but the presence of God departed from him, and he began speaking of other matters." According to Rashi, Yaakov fully intended to prophecy, but found that God was no longer "with his mouth." So instead Yaakov resorted to a more run-of-the-mill descriptive litany.

But why would God's presence suddenly depart from Yaakov? After all, this is the man who has wrestled with God and man and earned the honorary title "Yisrael"; and this is the man who is described as "perfect" when he arrives at Shechem. Surely there is no reason for the Shechina to depart from such a great man, especially not in the crowning moments of his short and difficult life!

The Tur (Rabbi Yaakov ben Asher, 1269-1343, Cologne & Toledo) may provide an answer in his comment on the opening verse of this parashah. He asks why Yaakov's lifespan is described with the smaller numbers first (i.e. seven years and forty years and a hundred years), whereas the lifespans of the other forefathers are described with the bigger numbers first (e.g. one-hundred and seventy-five years for Avraham). According to the Tur, Yaakov was different from Avraham and Yitzhak (Isaac) in that Yaakov became holy only after he performed many small good deeds; whereas Avraham and Yitzhak were infused with a large-scale aura of holiness that in turn then enabled them to perform those smaller good deeds. Avraham and Yitzhak knew from the very beginning that God had a destiny in mind for them; whereas Yaakov, whose life was marked by mistakes and misperceptions (Was he sleeping with Leah or Rachel? Was Yosef alive or dead?) had to figure everything out for himself.

Yaakov did not have a grand vision of his own destiny; thus, when God appears to him in his ladder dream at Beit El, he responds by making a bargain with God. He can never be sure that he will succeed – with his brother Esav, with his uncle Lavan, or with Pharaoh in Egypt. And so when he wishes to reveal the fates of his sons, he finds himself at a loss for words. The only way for Yaakov to know the future is by living it; but the day of his death has drawn near.

We are all, I think, more like Yaakov than like Abraham or Isaac. Like Yaakov, we do not know the path our lives will take. We may know what lies around the next corner, but we have no idea whether the doors down the corridor will be open or closed, or whether the windows will let in light. We move about in worlds unrealized, trusting in the divinity that shapes our ends. Perhaps it is for this reason that although Avraham is the father of our great nation, and although Yitzhak may furnish us with the ability to laugh at what seems so dearly desired, ultimately it is rough-hewn Yaakov who is the spiritual forebear of b'nei Yisrael.

This weekly commentary on the Torah portion is by *Ilana Kurshan, Conservative Yeshiva Faculty* "Torah Sparks" series produced by the Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem. A Haftarah commentary by Rabbi Mordechai Silverstein found at <http://www.conservativeyeshiva.org/torahsparks>.

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. **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, reading Torah, email Rabbi Sue Oren at leyning@psjc.org. **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.