

March 2023
Adar 5783

Rabbi Eric L. Abbott
Rabbi Emeritus Sunny Schnitzer



Purim

Celebration

DINNER & MAGIC SHOW

**FEATURING ILLUSIONIST
KOUROSH TAIE**

Saturday March 4
Dinner 7:00 PM
Show 8:00 PM

ADULTS \$50 CHILDREN (13 and under) \$20

Costumes Encouraged

FOOD COCKTAILS FUN

RSVP AT BETHEDAJEWISH.ORG

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Rabbi Abbott's
Online Scheduler
is now open!

Want to meet one-on-one?
[Click here](#) and pick a time
that works for you.

BJC REGULAR PROGRAMMING

Start Learning With Us!
Adult Hebrew Class



LEARN MORE

bethesdajewish.org

Make this the year
you learn Hebrew!

**JOIN RABBI ABBOTT FOR
WEDNESDAY TORAH STUDY**
7:00 PM ONLINE
ZOOM LINK IN BJC NOW
BETHESDAJEWISH.ORG

**MAHJONGG
AT BJC**
6601 BRADLEY BLVD, BETHESDA MD
Join Our Monthly Session!
GET YOUR **RAFFLE** TIX FOR PRIZES!
FREE TO PLAY! BEGINNERS WELCOME
REGISTER AT BETHESDAJEWISH.ORG

**single in
the city**
A new group for our age 50+ single members

ROSH CHODESH
join the women of BJC
for a monthly gathering

BJC Book Club Notice

The BJC Open Book Club meets virtually at 8 pm on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Our upcoming selections are:

March 22- *People Love Dead Jews: Reports from a Haunted Present* by Dara Horn is a profound exploration of how Jewish history is exploited to comfort the living. In these essays, Horn reflects on subjects as far-flung as the international veneration of Anne Frank, the mythology that Jewish family names were changed at Ellis Island, the blockbuster traveling exhibition Auschwitz, the marketing of the Jewish history of Harbin, China, and the little-known life of the "righteous Gentile" Varian Fry. Throughout, she challenges us to confront the reasons why there might be so much fascination with Jewish deaths, and so little respect for Jewish lives unfolding in the present. If you are not already on the book club's email list and would like to join us for any or all of our meetings, please let Evelyn Ganzglass eganzglass@gmail.com know and she will add you to the list.



BJC Administration

Spiritual Leader
Rabbi Eric L. Abbott
rabbiaabbott@bethesdajewish.org

Synagogue Director
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geryl@bethesdajewish.org

Program and Communications Director
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amy@bethesdajewish.org

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Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer
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THE RABBI'S MESSAGE

Rabbi Eric. L Abbott

Increasing Simchah—Finding Happiness and Joy in Adar

As a kid, one of my favorite movies growing up (and which will continue to make me laugh to this day) was *Who Framed Roger Rabbit*, the classic comedy that combined real-life actors and cartoons in a whimsical, film noir setting. The film stars Bob Hoskins as Eddie Valiant, a curmudgeonly private detective who embarks on a journey of self-discovery alongside the fun-loving, silly Roger Rabbit, whose purpose in life is to make people laugh. Roger will do anything for a laugh, because, as he puts it, “A laugh can be a very powerful thing. Why, sometimes in life, it's the only weapon we have.” Roger Rabbit would have loved the Jewish month of Adar!

This year, much of March will coincide with Adar, the month that contains the holiday of Purim. This is the festive day on which we celebrate the heroic actions of Queen Esther and Mordecai against the wicked Haman—actions which saved the Jewish people in Persia. The holiday comes with all sorts of fun activities and rituals: costumes, noisemaking, food and drink (sometimes excessively so!), and more. We remember the day that the Jews were supposed to be harmed and transform it from grief to joy, feasting, and merrymaking¹.

Not only is Purim itself festive, but the joy that comes with it spreads to the entire month. Adar itself is almost a mini holiday. In fact, the Talmud teaches us that “when the month of Adar begins, we increase our joy.”²

What is joy? Roger Rabbit no doubt has his definition, but in Judaism, the notion is complicated. The Hebrew word, *simchah*, can be translated as either “happiness” or “joy.” In daily parlance, these two words are synonymous, but the Jewish spiritual practice of *mussar* makes a distinction. According to Alan Morinis, a leading expert of *mussar*, happiness is a temporary, worldly pleasure that comes when our needs are met in the moment but which soon fades away; joy, on the other hand, is a much deeper, longer-lasting satisfaction that occurs when we feel connections with God, with other people, or with our meaning and purpose in life.³ We feel happiness when Roger Rabbit makes us laugh, but Eddie Valiant feels joy when he rediscovers his purpose.

This begs the question—what does it mean to enter Adar with *simchah*? Adar and Purim will surely give us happiness this year, with our costume contest, Megillah reading, dinner and beverages, and magic performance by mentalist Kourosh Taie. Our Purim celebration on Saturday, March 4 will be a ton of fun!

At the same time, I know that finding this happiness can be especially difficult right now: we have had multiple deaths in our community recently; there is increased violence between Israel and Palestine; there are new bills proposing legislation that discriminates

against LGBTQ and especially transgender people; the war in Ukraine has just entered its second year; there have been increased antisemitic attacks; the list goes on and on. The world can sometimes feel lonely, hostile, and frightening. These feelings and experiences are real, and they are not to be minimized.

Perhaps that is why our sages directed a whole month for finding joy—not just happiness, but lasting, purposeful satisfaction. We can find this joy when our inner feelings align with our outer expressions; when our moral compass points in the same direction as our actions; when we feel that we have a sense of meaning in our lives; when we live our lives directed toward a purpose, especially a Jewish or spiritual one; and when we build meaningful connections with others. As Alan Morinis writes,

Moments come when the heart dances in the light. So much more than the experience of fun or even happiness, joy erupts when the inner sphere scintillates in its completeness. An experience touches us to the depths of our souls, and in that moment we are graced with a vision—if only fleetingly—of the flawless wholeness and perfection of it all. Then the heart fills and flows over, even amid the brokenness of this world.⁴

As Roger Rabbit teaches us, a laugh can be a very powerful thing; a simchah, that much more powerful. May we increase our simchah this month in countless ways. May we find fun and happiness during our Purim celebration on March 4, and may we also deepen our joy in our relationships, our connections, and our sense of purpose this month and beyond.

1. Esther 9:22

2. Babylonian Talmud, Ta'anit 29a.

3. Alan Morinis, *With Heart in Mind* (Boston: Trumpeter, 2014), 55-56

4. Morinis, *Every Day, Holy Day*; cited in *With Heart in Mind*, 58

LET THE RABBI PROVIDE PASTORAL SUPPORT

Please be in touch with me in times of joy, sadness, or illness in your life or in the lives of a loved one or another member of the congregation. If you have a pastoral need, please call the BJC office at (301) 469-8636 or email me at rabbiaabbott@bethesdajewish.org. For a lifecycle emergency during non-office hours, please call (301) 664-4585.

When I am away, please contact Geryl Baer in the BJC office at (301) 469-8636, admin@bethesdajewish.org.
She will know how to contact me or my substitute.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!
RABBI ABBOTT'S INSTALLATION APRIL 14TH



FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

Harri j. Kramer and Wynne Busman

We want to let you know about a very important upcoming event! It is over a month away, but we want everyone to put this on their calendars. We are so fortunate Rabbi Eric Abbott has become BJC's spiritual leader. As so many of you have experienced in the nine months that he has been with us, Rabbi Eric serves BJC with joyful enthusiasm, awesome wisdom, and a warm and loving heart.

It will be a great pleasure and a memorable congregational evening as we officially install him as our rabbi during Shabbat evening services on Friday, April 14, at 7:30 pm. Rabbi Eric's installation is the beginning of the next phase of a process in which together we form a lasting covenant as rabbi and congregation. We are so excited that we are growing as a congregation and entering together into this next chapter of Bethesda Jewish Congregation's rich history.

As part of the installation service we are delighted to welcome his mentor, Rabbi Jeffrey Sirkman, of Larchmont Temple in New York, where Rabbi Eric was a rabbinic intern. Rabbi Sirkman, who has been at Larchmont Temple for 30 years, also has had a role as a teacher and scholar engaging with senior rabbinic and cantorial students. We also will have a video message from Rabbi Emeritus Sunny Schnitzer. Please join us on Friday, April 14 and be a part of BJC history. In honor of Rabbi Eric's installation, we will have a dinner prior to services and a special Oneg Shabbat. Watch for details in BJC Now. We look forward to seeing you there!

Another important upcoming event is our Second Night Passover Seder, which will take place on Thursday, April 6. There will be delicious food catered by Attman's Deli, and it promises to be a lot of fun to be with our BJC Family and tell the Pesach story together.

On another note, tending to the business of our congregation, our Annual Meeting is not that far off in May. We have been working closely with our Treasurer Steve Turow and Financial Advisor Terri Reicher to develop our budget for next year, and getting input from Rabbi Eric, the staff, and the committee chairs. The details of the budget will be provided to you a few weeks prior to the May 11 meeting.

We do want to let you know now that due to inflation, paying back debts incurred a while ago, and increasing rent from the church, we do expect to have an increase in synagogue support (dues). We have security guards at all of our functions, which has led to an increase in security expenses. Although we have received a grant from Montgomery County, because of demand, it is smaller than last year's. We are examining our options, including a security fee.

We are, of course, doing our best to keep costs down, but wanted to make you aware of what to expect. On a positive note, according to our best projections, we will end this year in the black.

As always, we would be remiss if we didn't remind you that it's never too late to give. Like most synagogues, revenue from synagogue support and tuition doesn't cover our expenses. We would love to encourage you to be as generous as you can, and we also want to encourage you to come to BJC and be a part of our excitement.

B'Shalom,
Harri and Wynne



We need volunteers for Friday Night oneg! Celebrate a birthday or anniversary with BJC by sponsoring a Friday night nosh. [Pick your date here.](#)

GOOD AS WE GIVE

We are more than half-way toward our goal of \$90,000 - and there's still time to participate. The Good As We Give campaign continues through June 30 when BJC's fiscal year ends.

- Tribute donations are always welcome - in memory or celebration
- Gifts are tax deductible - BJC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization
- Pledge now - pay monthly by credit card
- Consider tax benefits for donation of stocks
- Age 70.5+? Give directly from your IRA for added benefits

Give through BJC website, by mail, or call the office for assistance.



To talk about making a meaningful gift; or for help with stock, IRA, or language for your will, please reach out to:

Geryl Baer, BJC Synagogue Director, geryl@bethesdajewish.org 301.469.8636

Sandra Walter, Past President & Fundraising Chair, sandra4bjc@gmail.com

1.202.550.7692

Want to remember or celebrate someone on a birthday, an anniversary, a milestone, or just because you were thinking of them? Make the moment meaningful by giving a gift of tzedakah in their name and BJC will send them a beautiful tribute card that you are honoring them or their loved one. [Donate online](#), or send donation by mail to BJC Office. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery of the card to the person you designate.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



Meeting the Abayudaya

By Karen Levi

On February 5, 2023, approximately 30 BJC congregants attended an interactive session with members of the Abudaya Congregation of Uganda to learn about their Jewish history and daily life. It was a beautiful hour together, as the congregants welcomed each other with open hearts. Abayudaya means Jewish people in the Luganda language of Uganda.

There are approximately 2,000 Jews in Uganda out of an overall population of 45 million.

Abayudaya has been in existence since 1919. At the present time, they coexist peacefully with the majority Christian and Muslim communities.



The members of the Abudaya congregation who live in Nasenyi B village are primarily farmers. Nasenyi village is close to Mbale, a thriving city in eastern Uganda, near the Kenyan border. We met with Yona, one of the congregants who completed the farmer training project. We also met Allen, the spiritual leader; Phincas Ziraba, congregational leader and agro project coordinator; and David and Saul, also farmers.

We learned that the children attend religious instruction and Hebrew classes in or near the village. Depending on parental preference, the youngsters may attend Jewish primary school and then move on to larger (secular, Christian, or Muslim) high schools. Distance is a huge factor in the daily lives of the people—schools, internet access, and medical care are spread far and wide. The hospitals in Uganda do not provide adequate medical care, according to Saul. This is a major concern, as is sufficient daily food intake.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

The money that the farmers earn—due to our support of the Green Jewish Farm—enables them to go to clinics for better healthcare and eat more often.

The spiritual leader, Allen, reported that it is “challenging” to learn about Judaism. The congregation in Nasenyi B village has a Torah but needs prayer books and tallits which we will be addressing. They celebrate Shabbat and all the Jewish festivals and holidays. He gave us a short history of the community. According to Allen, Jews were forced into hiding—in mountain caves—to follow their Jewish faith during the reign of Idi Amin in the 1970’s.

It has been a long time, since I have experienced the level of gratitude that emanated from the speakers we heard. They thanked us effusively for the minimum amount of financial support that we give them. Phincas also thanked BJC for its support during the recent floods.

Phincas Ziraba, the member who originally was in contact with Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer, stated that we, at BJC, are family to the humble Jewish farmers in Nasenyi B. I, for one, am privileged and honored to be included as such. I believe our support exemplifies mitzvah and Tikkun Olam. BJC, like Abudaya, is a small congregation that is focused on the essence of our faith—social action, family, education, and following the ancient teachings of the Torah. We are humble in our own right and chart a unique path in the practice of Judaism and interfaith cooperation. It is in this spirit, that I believe we have found brothers and sisters.

For further information about BJC’s Uganda Agro Project contact Laurie Mabile at mabileweb@gmail.com or visit the Green Jewish Farm’s Facebook page. You can watch a recording of the Feb. 5 session at the [BJC YouTube channel](#).





SNAPSHOTS

Getting Together for
Worship, Meaning, and Fun

WORSHIP SCHEDULE UPDATE

BJC continues our Friday night worship at 7:30 PM and Saturday morning services at 10:30 AM. Consult BJC Now for the latest information and for links to services if you prefer to worship virtually.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mar 4-Purim Gameapalooza at 5 PM

Put your thinking caps on and get ready for the ultimate Minute to Win It! Our day of Purim Celebrations kicks off with these fun games.

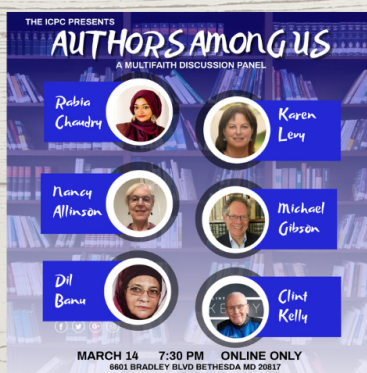


Mar 4- Megillah and Costume Contest at 6 PM

Join Rabbi Abbott in Covenant Hall for the recitation of the story of Esther. We have graggers for everyone so wear your costumes and get ready to MAKE SOME NOISE!

Mar 4- Purim Dinner & Magic Show at 7 PM

Enjoy a wonderful dinner catered by CAVA, a limited bar, and stay for the mind-blowing magic performed by mentalist Kourosh Taie!



Mar 14- Authors Among Us at 7:30 PM

You are invited to join us for the third Panel Discussion showcasing 6 authors. This event is sponsored by the Inter-Congregational Partnership Committee (ICPC).

[BETHESDAJEWISH.ORG/EVENTS](https://bethesdajewish.org/events)

BJC SOCIAL ACTION



Preserve the Historic Moses African Cemetery on River Road

By Josh Silver

Imagine if the local government permitted developers to desecrate a Jewish cemetery near your house. That would be ludicrous, you would think.

However, during the Holocaust, the Nazis destroyed Jewish cemeteries, often employing forced Jewish labor in the process of demolishing gravesites and re-using the materials for roads and other infrastructure.

Fast forward eight decades, Montgomery County is participating in the desecration of a historic African American cemetery. The Bethesda African American Cemetery Coalition (BACC) is seeking to protect the Moses African Cemetery on River Road near Little Falls Parkway and Westbard Avenue. This cemetery served as a burial ground for enslaved persons and after the Civil War for a thriving African American community located on River Road.

In the mid-20th century, KKK violence and discrimination practiced by the local government combined to displace the community. Large-scale residential and commercial development occurred on top of the cemetery and desecrated it.

In 2021, a county judge agreed with the BACC and put a halt to a pending land sale by the Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) of Montgomery County to a private developer without any plans for the preservation and memorialization of the cemetery. Last summer, using our taxpayer dollars, the HOC appealed the decision.

The BACC is urging the HOC to stop its appeal and to work with the BACC to create a museum and memorial on the land the HOC is trying to sell. Future atrocities are avoided only if we preserve and teach history. Imaging all the field trips that local schools could take to the museum.

For more information, please go to the [BACC website here](#). A petition is towards the bottom of the BACC website. The BACC is also organizing a letter writing campaign. For information, email savemosescemetery@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP

SOCIAL ACTION

PROGRAMMING

EDUCATION

OUR MEMBERS

REMEMBRANCES

Ever confused about when we remember the yahrzeit of your loved one? You can choose to remember this special date according to the Hebrew or English calendar. Get in touch with Geryl Baer in the office to review and verify the accuracy of your records.

Shloshim:

Nathaniel Finkelstein, husband of Vivian Finkelstein

Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer, grandmother of Lyle and Faryn

Michael Dalton, husband of Helen Dalton

James Kretz, husband of Sana Shtasel, father of Flanders and Alera

Yahrzeits: March 2023

Annette Altschuler, mother of Bernard Altschuler

Herman Bachrach, father of Burt Bachrach

Bernice Cahan, rrandmother of Sandra Walter

Albert Cassell, uncle of Wynne Busman

Esther Chabot, mother-in-law of Aleen Chabot,
grandmother of Elliot Chabot

Harold Coplan, uncle of Lois Rose

Florence Dubov, mother of Sharon Sinalevich

Morris Dubrow, grandfather of Laurie Dubrow

Curtis Evey, father of Wilma "Bunny" Roufa

Naomi Faigin, mother of Marty Faigin

Richard Getter, father of Lisa Getter Peterson

Joe Glassman, father-in-law of Nancy Glassman

J. Harvey Gleberman, father of Ellen Gleberman

Herbert Goldberg, father of Daniel Goldberg

Jakes Greenes, grandfather of Alan Dubin

Bertrice Haber, mother of Miles Haber

Louis G. Hecht, father of Louis Hecht

Shirley Hecht, mother of Louis Hecht

Saul Horn, father of Joan Schnitzer

Pauline Jerome, grandmother of Karen Jerome

Dorothy Kaufman, mother of Emily Van Agtmael

Donald Kerwin, brother of Aleen Chabot, uncle of Elliot Chabot

Minnie Kerwin, mother of Aleen Chabot, grandmother of
Elliot Chabot

Norman Douglas Kline, father of Samuel Kline

Marvin Kotz, father of Gary Kotz

John Krettmeyer, father of Nancy Glassman

Bella Kretz, mother-in-law of Sana Shtasel, grandmother of
Flanders & Alera

Theodore Landsman, father of Sandra Medlin

William Levine, father of Leslie Levine

Warren Lichtenberg, stepfather of Michelle Goldstein

George Lichter, father of Alan Lichter

Daniel Moyer, father of Barbara Faigin

Morris Poogach, father of Robert Poogach

Shirley Ratner, mother of Gary Ratner

Connie Reider, dear friend of Joan Kaufman

Benjamin Rouse, husband of Wilma "Bunny" Roufa

Herman Slacter, father of David Slacter

Ernest Schmalz, father of Lorraine McMillen

Estelle Schneider, mother of Cynthia "Cindy" Bogorad

Diane Schnitzer, mother of Sunny Schnitzer

Sam Schwartz, father of Linda Baum

Shirley Selditch, mother of Renee Asher

Molly Shaikun, grandmother of Stephen Turow

Bessie Hurwitz Shay, mother of Wendy Shay

Sam Stein, father of Helen DiStefano

Judith Taylor, mother of Lyne Taylor-Genser

Goldjean Turow, mother of Stephen Turow

Miriam Winkler, mother of Robin Doroshov

David Wolfe, husband of Helen DiStefano

OUR MEMBERS

THANK YOU TO OUR FEBRUARY ONEG VOLUNTEERS

Karen Levi

Anita & Warren Farb

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Laura Kahn

Ruben and Eileen Reyna

NACHAS NOTES

Editor's Note: Share the joys in your life! Send to: amy@bethesdajewish.org

- Happy Birthday to Rabbi Eric Abbott!

THANK YOUS

DONATION GENERAL

Sydney Baer in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer (Louis), grandmother of Lyle and Faryn

Diane Blumenthal and Craig Winslow in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Hal and Cheryl Bordy in Memory of Eugene Levine

Bruce and Wynne Busman in Memory of Nathaniel Finkelstein

Shoshanah and Brian Drake in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Shoshanah and Brian Drake in Memory of Michael Dalton

Ken and Dionne Fine in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Rabbi Bill Rudolph and Gail Fribush in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Maran Gluckstein in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Harri Kramer and Russ Hogya in Memory of Nathaniel Finkelstein

Harri Kramer and Russ Hogya in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Jim Korelitz and Liz Sloss in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Alan Lichter in Memory of George Lichter

Stephen Turow and Linda Blumberg in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Robin and Stuart Sorkin in Memory of William Baer, father-in-law of Geryl Baer

Lorrie Van Akkeren in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

GOOD AS WE GIVE

Bruce and Wynne Busman in Memory of Alice Rich, mother of Geryl Baer

Helen DiStefano

Robin and Stuart Sorkin in Honor Of Our beloved BJC Board and BJC Family

Lorrie Van Akkeren

RABBI ERIC ABBOTT'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Bruce and Wynne Busman in Memory of Jim Kretz

Bruce and Wynne Busman in Memory of Michael Dalton

Robin and Stuart Sorkin in Honor of welcoming Rabbi Eric Abbott to BJC

Lorrie Van Akkeren in Memory of Ida R. Goldstein



CONSULT BJC NOW FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION AND LINKS TO CONNECT VIA ZOOM

CALENDAR for MARCH 2023

Day	Date	Starting Time	EVENT
Wednesday	3/1	7:00 PM	Torah Today-Online
Thursday	3/2	11:00 AM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online
Friday	3/3	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	3/4	9:00 AM 10:30 AM 5:00 PM 6:00 PM 7:00 PM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online Family Ed Gameapalooza- Memorial Hall Megillah & Costume Contest- Covenant Hall Purim Celebration Dinner & Magic Show- Memorial Hall
Wednesday	3/8	7:00 PM	Torah Today-Online
Thursday	3/9	11:00 AM 7:30 PM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online Board Meeting-Online
Friday	3/10	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	3/11	9:00 AM 9:30 AM 10:30 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge Youth Education Shabbat Services and Youth Concrection- Covenant Hall and Online
Tuesday	3/14	7:30 PM	Authors Among Us Panel- Online Only
Wednesday	3/15	7:00 PM	Torah Today-Online
Thursday	3/16	11:00 AM 7:00 PM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online Mahjongg- Lounge
Friday	3/17	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	3/18	9:00 AM 9:30 AM 10:30 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge Youth Education Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Monday	3/20	7:00 PM	Rosh Chodesh Women's Circle- Lounge
Wednesday	3/22	7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Torah Today- Online Book Club- Online
Thursday	3/23	11:00 AM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online
Friday	3/24	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	3/25	9:00 AM 9:30 AM 10:30 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge Youth Education Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Sunday	3/26	7:00 PM	Passover Resin Art Session- Memorial Hall