



AN UPSIDE-DOWN HOLIDAY

PURIM

Rabbi Evan Ravski

Purim is the holiday in the Jewish year when revelry and silliness aren't just expected, they are obligatory. On a holiday when we not only survived an evil plot but ended up as a more powerful influence in the community, Esther is Queen and Mordechai is the King's chief adviser, we celebrate things being turned around and upside down. We dress in costumes; we are loud and unruly; we appreciate that things aren't always as they seem.

Yet for as much as the holiday looks chaotic, it is in fact a structured, purposeful, and controlled chaos. To guide us through the day, there are four mitzvot (commandments) that we are required to perform. These mitzvot remind us, amid the revelry, that this is also a day of turning the world into what it is not, a place where all people are equal, giving, and content with what they have.

The first Mitzvah is perhaps the most well-known, to read or hear *Megillat Esther*, the scroll of Esther. There are two opportunities to do so, the evening during our congregational celebration and the next morning during Shacharit. While we only need to read or hear it once, we have more than one chance, in case you missed it the first time. In hearing the story, we are reminded of the miracles this holiday celebrates--not just that we survived, but that we, as a people, determined our future, and we are grateful for the moments when God interceded behind the scenes on our behalf. What's more, the best way to fulfill this Mitzvah is in public. The events of the story happen primarily in public settings: parties, palaces, the streets and markets; likewise our commemoration and celebrations should be in those same places.

If you follow the story closely, you will see that within *Megillat Esther*, the second and third Mitzvot are mentioned: Matanot L'Evyonim (gifts to the poor) and Mishloach Manot (sending gifts to one another). As the Jews of Shushan celebrate their victory, they recognize that the best way to celebrate is by sharing their joy and wealth. We give tzedakah on the day of Purim, not just by putting a few coins in a tzedakah box, but by actually going out and giving to someone or an organization, a little bit more than we normally would, enough so that if they wished, they could join in the festivities. And between each other, we send gifts which contain two 'portions,' two different items (or more!). Because both of these gift-giving opportunities are framed in the plural, we fulfill these mitzvot by giving to two or more people for each! More hamentaschen for all!



Click on the image to learn about this year's Purim!

STRUCTURED ON 4 MITZVOT

The last mitzvah of Purim brings us all together in the most classic of Jewish traditions, a festive meal. So much of the Purim story revolves around festive meals: it is the scene that starts the entire saga; it is at a festive meal where Haman's evil plan is revealed and the Jews are saved; and when the Jews of Shushan are finally able to rest from defending themselves, they again celebrate with eating and drinking. We remember all this; we reenact and recreate those elated moments through a meal of our own, surrounded by friends, family, good food and good drink!

Purim is a wonderful moment each year to be silly and festive in a place we are normally a bit more formal than costumes and noise. It is also a time to remember and celebrate a moment in our history unlike any other and use that moment to help make the world a little less the way it is and a little more the way we want it to be.

Chag Purim Sameach!



During Winter Break this year, I participated in a Hillel International Birthright Trip to Israel.

It was my third Israel experience: I had traveled to Israel with my Geshet classmates during middle school, and with my family four years ago. This was my first time in Israel traveling without teachers or parents.

My biggest impression from my first trip was the enjoyment of experiencing the Jewish homeland in person, after years of knowing it secondhand through books, maps, newspapers, and teacher anecdotes. The second trip was a fun experience with my family. However, the Birthright trip really challenged my internal ideas of what it means to be Jewish.

While I did not experience an epiphany at any particular moment, my Birthright trip led me to become prouder and more comfortable in being Jewish. Before Birthright, I often felt fearful to state my Judaism to anyone outside of my Jewish community. I rarely said that I went to a Jewish day school or that I attended Hillel. I usually just said that I went to a private school when I was younger and that I participate in many clubs in college.

At that time, I was concerned that people might internally separate themselves from me. Acknowledging that I was Jewish made me different from others. When you are different from others, you are no longer someone's friend; you now become their Jewish friend. So I tried to present myself as American rather than as Jewish. I was an American who happened to be Jewish, too.

However after Birthright, I feel proud to acknowledge who I am. I don't feel a need to announce it, but I don't intentionally

Jonathan Schwartz



try to hide it anymore. When I reflect on my trip, I will remember getting to know a bunch of people really well, having fun with new friends in Israel, having memorable experiences with my new friends at Masada and the Dead Sea, and surviving sleep deprivation as we crammed as much of Israel as possible into 10 all-too-short days. I made new Jewish friendships that will continue.


Now I think of Judaism as a fundamental characteristic of my being. It is just who I am. As Avraham Infeld, President Emeritus of Hillel International, stated in a speech to my group, "The Jewish people are a mishpacha, a family. If you convert to Judaism, you are a Jew. You are not a 'converted Jew'." If you


See **BIRTHRIGHT TRIP** Page 5



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UNITEA

By Lori Frumkin, Clare Bachner, and Shari Boyett

People fail to get along because they fear each other; they fear each other because they don't know each other; they don't know each other because they have not communicated with each other.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

On January 12, approximately 80 Jewish and Muslim women gathered at Olam Tikvah to celebrate the teachings of Martin Luther King, Jr. with a UNITEA. Shari Boyett, Sisterhood's Community Service VP, and Clare Bachner, Social Action Chair, thought this year's holiday was a unique opportunity to create bonds of understanding and friendship between our cultures. Shari reached out to the Sisterhood of Salaam/Shalom (SOSS) and Clare contacted OT's Interfaith Communities for Dialogue (ICD) representatives Judith Shamir and Melinda Roth, who reached out to ICD Board co-Representatives Fatimah Popal from MakeSpace and Razia Deen from Dar Al Hijrah to invite their congregants to join us. There was a high level of interest in the gathering.

Representatives from OT, MakeSpace Muslim Center, Dar Al Hijrah Islamic Center, and Sisterhood of Salaam Shalom (SOSS) ate, listened to speeches, connected with each other and shared perspectives, and participated in a community service project.



Rabbi Kalender welcomes the group

We gathered in the social hall to enjoy elegant decorations and delicious tea sandwiches and desserts prepared by Sisterhood. Rabbi Kalender welcomed everyone and stressed the importance of bringing people together. Clare Bachner introduced representatives from the participating organizations. Melinda Roth and Judith Shamir spoke of the ICD, where religious organizations work together to improve communications, and encouraged the women present to participate in more interfaith events. Fatimah Popal and Fazia Deen talked about the importance of understanding our sisters in humanity and creating bonds of love to drown out fear and hate. Marnie Fienberg of 2forSeder encouraged us to invite people from different faiths to religious and cultural rituals, which adds an opportunity for discussion.

Nazli Chaudhry, Regional Director, explained the origins of the SOSS, which grew out of the tragedies of hate crimes and blossomed into an international organization for Jewish and Muslim women, with chapters across the nation and internationally. SOSS members support each another in times of joy and sadness.



Speaker's Table

After the speeches, the women began group conversations at their tables. Debbie Weber revealed, "We talked about the importance of Eid to Muslims and the importance of our High Holidays to us." Teacher Anita Dienstfrey related, "I just wanted to tell you how wonderful the UNITEA was, as I had a chance to chat with so many interesting women... The woman who sat next to me was a retired teacher from Fairfax. When teachers get together, they tend to share their stories, and we certainly did that!"

Afterwards, participants assembled food packs for the PowerPack program, to be distributed on weekends and during school breaks to elementary school children who don't have enough to eat at home. Everyone enjoyed working together.



Barbara Finkel wrote, "The UNITEA was more beautiful and meaningful than I ever imagined. Sharing the afternoon with 80 warm and loving Muslim and Jewish women, who wanted nothing more than to become acquainted with each other and work together to bring peace to our community, the nation, and the world, was very uplifting. From my vantage point as Sisterhood President, I watched proudly, as an extraordinary group of women from across OT carefully planned every detail of the event, so that our guests would feel welcome, be safe, eat well, and enjoy the day."

Fatimah Popal wrote, "What a beautiful event today. Thank you for taking care of everything and making everyone feel at home. So many from MakeSpace were excited to sit with others who value humanity and coming together. They all commented on how welcoming their Jewish sisters were. Rabbi Kalender and your OT President were great with sharing warmth. I truly enjoyed hearing all of the speakers share inspiring words with us and the SOSS members chiming in. Thanks for inviting MakeSpace to be a part of this."

As the event ended and the women bid farewell to old and new friends, small groups of Muslim women were seen talking on the OT grounds. It was observed that, just like Jewish women, Muslim women need 30 minutes to say goodbye!

Photos by Shari Schwartz



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Around Olam Tikvah

From Our Hearts

Mazal Tov

We wish a hearty mazal tov to...

Jane & Bill Behrmann, on the engagement of their son,

Simon, to Rachel Winer

Florence & Robert Brodkey, on the birth of their grandson, Dov

Ilan Brodkey Sharon, son of Naomi Brodkey & Eran Sharon

Hemda & Ira Gold, on the birth of their granddaughter,

Tali Liv Gold, daughter of Lindsay & Avi Gold

Zohar & Mark Golub, on the birth of their granddaughter,

Lily Sophia, daughter of Melissa & Avi Golub

Ellen & Ronald Katz, on the birth of their grandson,

Theodore Owen Katz, son of Elizabeth & Joel Katz

Lisa Gross & Jordan Keitelman, on the birth of their son,

and to grandparents Andrea & Jerry Gross

Susan & Bill Kristol, on the birth of their granddaughter,

Louisa Devine, daughter of Delia & Joe Kristol

Samara & Dan Schulman, on the birth of their daughter,

Eliana Marissa

Margo & Pat Tamburrino, on the birth of their granddaughter, Lily

Rebecca Goldberg, daughter of Sarah & Daniel Goldberg

Bob & Dana Wolfson, on the birth of their son, Henry Joseph

Condolence

We acknowledge the passing of ...

Leon Greene, father of Bob Greene

Arnie Hecht, husband of Alice Sue Hecht

Gertrude Himmelfarb Kristol, mother of Bill Kristol

Blossom Silverstein, sister of Ed Diener

Cherie Watts, mother of Bob Watts

Kiddush Sponsors

Thank you for your donations to the Kiddush Fund, in honor of your February anniversaries.

February 8-13

Anne & Matthew Continetti

February 14-20

Brigitta & Marshall Hoffman

February 21-27

Lynne & Elliott Dubin (50)

Thank you to Linda Meyer, for making anniversary calls.

B'nei Mitzvah

Saturday, February 15

Nathan Trest,

Parashat Yitro

son of Rachel & Eric and brother of Zachary and Hannah, is a Frost Middle School 7th grader. He enjoys soccer, football, martial arts, video games, Legos, and outer space. As a child of a Navy family, Nathan cares deeply about ending Veteran Homelessness. He organized a group of volunteers to weed and rake leaves for veterans who were previously homeless and now have housing through **Operation Renewed Hope Foundation** (an organization providing housing and services to veterans). Nathan is excited to celebrate his bar mitzvah with his grandparents, Rita & Irv Federman of Chicago and Sharon & Jeff Trest of Rochester, NY, as well as with friends and family from across the U.S., Canada, and Israel.



Saturday, February 29

Emilee Margrett Robinson,

Parashat Trumah

daughter of Robyn Rose & Ira Robinson and sister of Benjamin and Lily, is a sweet and fun 7th grader at Frost Middle School. Emilee loves reading, art, swimming, and spending time with her family, friends, and dog Bailey. Emilee's mitzvah project is to volunteer for the Frost Middle School Buddies Program, where she will spend time with students with special needs, helping them with social activities and facilitating friendships and learning. Emilee is looking forward to celebrating her Bat Mitzvah with friends and family.

BIRTHRIGHT TRIP, from page 2

convert out of Judaism, then you are a 'converted Jew'. You can never leave. You are always a Jew! In the same way as a family, you can join one, but you can never leave."

Thinking of my Judaism as an integral part of my identity, associated with a group of people that is meaningful to me, has made me more openly proud to be Jewish.

Now I am not labeling myself as different; I am simply stating who I am. I am part of something bigger than myself: a member of the Jewish mishpacha. Birthright led me to rethink and more fully embrace my Jewish identity.

Tzedakah

Annual Campaign

IN HONOR OF

Birth of Elias Samuel Kreiswirth, grandson of Ellen & Michael Hilert,

by Linda Halle & Richard Bopp

Olam Tikvah, by Sue Finger

Roberta Wulf's special birthday,

by Linda & Walter Meyer

Capital Improvement Fund

IN HONOR OF

Birth of Tali Liv Gold, granddaughter of Hemda & Ira Gold,

by Anita & Steve Dienstfrey

Norm Brand's big birthday,

by Anita & Steve Dienstfrey

IN MEMORY OF

Bernice Kaufman,

by Aurora & Gerald Malakoff

R'FUAH SH'LAYMAH

Deedy Eisenson, by Anita & Steve Dienstfrey

Rhonda Brown, by Deedy & Ed Eisenson

Emanuel Passamanek

Prayer Book & Tallit Fund

IN HONOR OF

60th wedding anniversary of Deedy & Ed Eisenson, by Jane & Bill Behrmann

Barry Bielsker, by Deedy & Ed Eisenson

IN MEMORY OF

Paul Sloan, by Rosalind Sloan

Richard Toobin, brother of Michael,

by Merle & Michael Toobin

Gerald Brissman/Lyle Miller/Carol

Samuels Youth & College Fund

IN HONOR OF

50th wedding anniversary of Shula & Jack Friedman, by Sue & Ken Cohn

IN MEMORY OF

Arnie Hecht, by Mimi & Len Levine

Donald Kashdan, by Davida & Alan Kashdan

Fay & Harry Silverman,

by Davida & Alan Kashdan

Louis Bryan, by Mimi & Len Levine

R'FUAH SH'LAYMAH

Barbara Villarruel, by Sue & Ken Cohn

Deedy Eisenson, by Mimi & Len Levine

Harold Rib Torah & Religious Articles Fund

IN HONOR OF

50th anniversary of Barbara's Bat Mitzvah,

by Barbara & James Finkel

Birth of Melanie Elise Kirsch, by Max Turk

Jerry Werbel Memorial Landscape Fund

IN HONOR OF

Birth of Oliver Levi Rigberg, grandson of Livia & Harold Jacob, by Judy Werbel

Birth of Evie & Jerry Stein's grandson,

by Sandy & Al Gabriel

IN MEMORY OF

Arnie Hecht, by Judy Werbel

Devorah Chernoff, by Deedy & Ed Eisenson

Irving Greenspon, by Sandy & Al Gabriel

Judith Chernoff, by Deedy & Ed Eisenson

Louis Bryan, by Judy Werbel;

Florence & Alvin Bernstein

Louis Chernoff, by Deedy & Ed Eisenson

Louise Scheinberg, by Susan Kristol

Norman Lipstein, by Judy Werbel

R'FUAH SH'LAYMAH

Barbara Villarruel,

by Florence & Alvin Bernstein

Barry Bielsker, by Judy Werbel

Deedy Eisenson, by Joan & Don Sacarob

Elaine Murray, by Merle & Michael Toobin

Kitchen Fund

IN HONOR OF

Deedy & Ed Eisenson's special anniversary,

by Bobbie Ebert

R'FUAH SH'LAYMAH

Deedy Eisenson, by Dotty & Al Fuchsman;

Linda & Walter Meyer;

Sylvia & Reuben Ambaruch

Rabbi Itzhaq M. Klirs

Memorial Adult Education Fund

IN MEMORY OF

Arnie Hecht, by Lois Karb

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In appreciation of Carol Gordon, Leona Shoon,

Sharyn Stahl, Michelle Stravitz, and Karen

Tovey & Ed Weiss, who supported me in my recent medical issue,

by Sarah Elpern & Bruce Waxman

IN HONOR OF

Birth of Melanie Elise Kirsch, by Max Turk

IN MEMORY OF

Arnie Hecht, by Anonymous

Helen Grauman, by Freda Tannenbaum

Louis Bryan, by Elaine Hackerman

Robert Agus, by Sarah Elpern & Bruce Waxman

Robert Natkin Religious School Fund

IN HONOR OF

3rd grade religious school teachers,

by Laura Korn

Aaron's teachers, Nechama and Amanda,

by Rachel & Eli Alper

OTRS Religious School Staff, Director, and

Elisheva Barkay, by Raena, Brad, and Jane Close

OTRS Teachers and Staff—Happy Chanukah,
by Leela & Jeff Borenstein

OTRS teachers Stuart Bender and Melissa Schwartz, by Brittanie & Dan Werbel

OTRS teachers, youth leaders, USY leaders, and Debra Beland Ackerman, for all you do and all the support you have given my 3 kids through the years. Happy Chanukah,

by Susanne Oshry

Stahl Family Experience Israel Fund

IN HONOR OF

Birth of Tali Liv Gold, granddaughter of Hemda & Ira Gold, by Debbie & Mark Weber

Engagement of Andrew Salzman

to Rachel Stahl, by Debbie & Mark Weber

My great grandsons, Mendy and Shmuel, grandsons of Devorah & Joseph Ebert,

by Bobbie Ebert

Seth Blumenthal's Bar Mitzvah,

by Debbie & Mark Weber

IN MEMORY OF

Klara Witlin, by Michael Witlin

Lois Gamerman, our heartfelt condolences on your loss, by Stephanie, Ilan, Alexa, Lia, and Noa Sussan

R'FUAH SH'LAYMAH

Rhonda Brown, by Debbie & Mark Weber

Deedy Eisenson, by Debbie & Mark Weber

Tzedakah Fund

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Genevieve Feder, by Neil Schlus

George Block, by Barbara Baker

Goldie Esterowitz,

by Sandra & Leon Esterowitz

Thank you for your donations,
which were received by December 31, 2019.

TZEDAKAH. *Continued from page 6*

Hannah Diamond Rubenstein,
by Ellen & Stephen Rubenstein
Hannah Lifland, by Judy Dietrick
Harry Gabriel, by Sandy & Al Gabriel
Henry Meyerowitz, by Jane & Herbert Myers
Ida Meyers, my much beloved Bubbie, who
taught me the true meaning of mitzvah,
by Rebecca Pollino
Ida Sacarob, by Don Sacarob
Ike Bryan, by Ann Bryan
Israel Weiss, by Mitchell Weiss
Jacob Goldfarb, by Sandy & Al Gabriel
Jacob Israel, by Doris Kaplan
Jenny Pozner, by Leslie Varkonyi
Jessie Rosenthal, by Steven Rosenthal
Joel Singerman, by Fred Singerman
Joseph Abrams, by Elliott Abrams
Joseph Speevack, by Beverly Slep
Joyce Brandt, by Barry Reisig
Leonard Israel, by Judy Dietrick

*OT Chorale, Fine Arts, and Social Action
Committee contributions
are listed in the Tzedakah Fund.*

To my dearest OT friends,

Thank you for your prayers, good wishes,
donations, delicious dinners, cards, flowers, and
calls after my recent accident. I can't begin to tell
you how much I appreciate everything you did,
and how it is helping speed my recovery.
I am very grateful for your love and support.
You are a wonderful, caring congregation,
and I am blessed to be part of it.

Deedy Eisenson

Mac Lichtenstein,
by Sandra & Leon Esterowitz
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Melvin Jacobson, by Ilese Vorcheimer
Meriam Williamowsky, by Diane Miller
Michael Frisher, by Gail Wolf
Mildred Elizabeth Ognibene, by Linda Noble
Milton Blumenthal, by Jack Blumenthal
Mollie Miller, by Rhoda & Mark Miller

Morris Feldman, by Marsha Feldman
Myer Rosenfelder,
by Beverly & Norman Polmar
Myles Rosenthal, by Jane & Bill Behrmann
Nettie Freirich, by Jane & Bill Behrmann
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Richard Cassell,
by Jo Enna & Alan Dockterman

See **TZEDAKAH**, page 8



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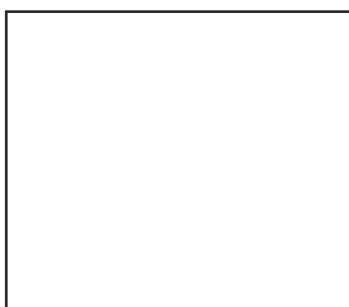
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February-March 2020 Calendar Highlights

FEBRUARY 2020

SUN	2	8:30am	World Wide Wrap
SUN	9	12:00pm	Family Pizza & Bingo
MON	10		Hypothermia Project at Lord of Life Church
TUE	11		Hypothermia Project at Lord of Life Church
SUN	16	9:45am	Hearing Men's Voices
SUN	16	10:00am	Israeli Folk Dance Class
SUN	23	3:00pm	Sisterhood Cards, Cookies, Cordials & Coffee
TUE	25	5:30pm	ReelAbilities Film at OT
WED	26	7:30pm	Adult Ed: The Minor Prophets
SAT	29	7:00pm	Abba & Men's Club Poker & Game Night

MARCH 2020

SUN	1	1:30pm	Sisterhood Persian-Style Jewelry Making Workshop
SAT	7	7:00pm	Spring Fundraiser: Purim Las Vegas Style
MON	9	TBD	Purim Evening Service
TUE	10	8:00am	Purim Morning Service
SUN	22	10:00am	Young Families Passover Workshop
SAT	28	9:30am	Kabbalat Siddur and Spring Training Kiddush
SUN	29	10:00am	Israeli Folk Dance Class

TZEDAKAH, continued from page 7

Rita Golub, by Mark Golub
Rose Klar, by Lynne & Elliott Dubin
Rose Stollar, by Rala Stone
Sadie Chesler, by Bernice Stern
Sadie Edelman, by Debra & Herman Stein
Samuel Levine, by Len Levine
Sarah Lerner, by Beverly Sleph
Saul Freilich, by Jeffrey Freilich

Solomon Levine, by Julian Levine
Stephen Cohen, by Barbara & Robert Cohen
Sylvia Richman, by Dvora Richman
Violet Gluck, by Irene & Gabriel Gluck
William Richman, by Jeff Handler
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