



PASSOVER PREPARATION • MOAT HITTIM • KI SHABBAT CENTRAL • TRANSITIONS

Kol K.I.

learn. inspire. grow. together.



16 Colt Road | Pittsfield, Massachusetts 01201 | 413.445.4872 | knesetisrael.org • Rabbi David Weiner | Richard Simons, President



Announcements!

Passover service times will be announced in the April Kol K.I., and in email communications.

Kneset Israel has begun reopening synagogue services to in-person participation! See page 4 for details.

Because COVID guidelines change often, K.I.'s scheduling can also change on very short notice. Find up-to-date information at:

knesetisrael.org and click on **KI Shabbat Central** (at bottom of home page)

Updates are made every Thursday for the following week.



Marching On

K.I. looks for a path forward / volunteers needed / rabbi visits



frankie's/Shutterstock.com

March always strikes me as an in-between month in the Berkshires. Winter is not quite over, but mud season has not yet started, never mind spring. The worst storms are over, but the snowbirds have not yet returned. We might not be snowshoeing regularly anymore, but we are also not hiking freely yet because of packed ice that remains on the ground, especially in the woods. Jewishly speaking, March this year coincides with the period between Purim—the holiday whose traditional food is hametz—and Passover, the calendar deadline by which all hamantashen must be consumed and even the crumbs removed from the house. (Incidentally, the festival also celebrates our freedom and birthday of the Jewish people.) We are very much in between things.

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Member Mitzvahs & Mazel Tovs

March Birthdays

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|----------|
| ■ Ezra Sutter..... | March 2 | ■ David Bell-Deane..... | March 24 |
| ■ Richard Woller..... | March 3 | ■ Andrew Geller..... | March 24 |
| ■ Dana Siegel..... | March 3 | ■ Sopheap Nhim | March 25 |
| ■ Lorenzo Cook-Dubin | March 4 | ■ Benjamin Cook-Dubin | March 25 |
| ■ Donald Simon..... | March 6 | ■ Joel Radsken..... | March 26 |
| ■ Susan Gordon | March 8 | ■ William Wright..... | March 26 |
| ■ Steven Skoblow | March 8 | ■ Harold Shair..... | March 31 |
| ■ Mona Lanzer..... | March 9 | ■ Barbara Akresh | March 31 |
| ■ Michael Rosenthal..... | March 9 | | |
| ■ Andrew Levine | March 12 | | |
| ■ Robert Bildner | March 14 | | |
| ■ Edwin Kolodny | March 15 | | |
| ■ John Huffaker | March 16 | | |
| ■ Jane Rosen..... | March 17 | | |
| ■ Cynthia Helitzer..... | March 17 | | |
| ■ Naomi Schwartz..... | March 19 | | |
| ■ Phyllis Lieberman | March 19 | | |
| ■ Lawrence Kaplan | March 20 | | |
| ■ Mia Wax..... | March 20 | | |
| ■ Michael Helitzer | March 22 | | |



Anniversaries

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|
| ■ Richard and Sharon Sutter | March 6 |
| ■ Steven and Ruth Rosenthal ... | March 19 |
| ■ Marty and Glenna Bloom | March 23 |
| ■ Amy and Howard Herman | March 29 |



Your community wants to share in your good news! Send KOL K.I. editor, Susan Miller the details about any happy news we can celebrate with you!
Susan Miller: sunpath2@gmail.com
High resolution photographs welcome!

KOL K.I. PUBLICATION NOTES

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We welcome submissions. Publication will be at the discretion of the editorial staff, and may be subject to editing for clarity, facts, and length.

Submit articles & photographs VIA EMAIL to:
Susan Miller at sunpath2@gmail.com

From the Rabbi

Marching On

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A Gradual Revival

This year March is liminal in yet another way. The pandemic continues to loom large in our lives, restricting us from embracing each other and continuing to disrupt everyday routines and relationships. Some of KI's congregants have received their vaccine, some are in the process, and others are still awaiting their first dose. Rather than waiting for a moment of grand reopening in the late summer or fall, KI's leaders have decided to pursue a strategy of reviving synagogue life gradually, staying within the bounds of public health recommendations. Our goal is to continue to protect the safety and health of our community and neighborhood while also beginning a process of healing and renewal.



Rabbi David Weiner

Over the next few months, we intend to focus primarily on strengthening our connections with each other and with Judaism and offering mutual support. We intend for everything else – exactly which services, programs and classes we schedule online or in-person, how KI staff allocate their time, what we ask of volunteers and donors, how we prioritize for budgeting purposes—to follow from that. That may mean that familiar programs are a little different, services continue to evolve, and the summer turns out to be unique, distinct both from last year and the year before. As has been the case over the last several months, some of the experiments along the way will work out brilliantly, while others will not gain traction. We are just going to keep trying and eventually figure out what works.

Resuming hospital and home pastoral visits:

With this goal in mind, I hope to resume hospital and home pastoral visits this month, assuming the public health situation in the Berkshires is conducive and risks can be managed appropriately. I know this will not work for everybody yet. Feel free to reach out by phone or email and let us know that you are interested in my dropping by in person one afternoon to listen and chat (with masks and distancing). Diana will also be able to answer questions about why we think this is feasible and give you a sense of if, when and how we might responsibly arrange a house call. Especially if a visit would really make your day, please pick up the phone and let us know.

Maybe you can help...

It is exceedingly difficult to look forward because we are, in a way, still standing on the Egypt side of the Red Sea. The crossing will take a few months and only after personally arriving at the other side will we be able to really visualize a path forward. Though things are still unclear, I think we will be looking for people to help out in all sorts of ways – person-to-person connection, programming ideas, service attendance and renewal, hospitality and kiddush, outreach to new residents of the Berkshires, inter-faith opportunities, gatherings to mourn the losses of the last year and to celebrate a homecoming. Anyone interested in helping rebuild is welcome to join in.

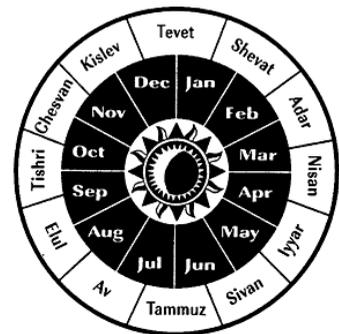
Watch K.I. events as they happen at

knesetisrael.org/livestream

Watch nearly any event or service by livestreaming at the link above.

The site also has links to recordings of some past K.I. events and to K.I. Shabbat Central.

A ZOOM and Livestream Cheat Sheet is on page 6.



About the Month Nissan...

The 1st month but not the new year!

Nissan is the first month on the Jewish calendar. Before the Jews left Egypt, on the first day of the month of Nissan, God told Moses and Aaron: "This chodesh (new moon, or month) shall be to you the head of months."

Thus the peculiarity of the Jewish calendar: the year begins on Rosh Hashanah, the first day of Tishrei (the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve), but Tishrei is not the first month. Rosh Hashanah is actually referred to in the Torah as "the first day of the seventh month."

Shalom!

Clip & Save!

Zoom & Livestream Cheat Sheet for Services, Classes, and Programming



Knesset Israel makes every effort to keep ZOOM numbers consistent. The most reliable updates go to knessetisrael.org and click on KI ShabbatCentral.

Updated announcements will be in our weekly E-news, on our website calendar & K.I.'s "COVID-19 Response" page.

The majority of our members and visitors will participate in Knesset Israel services, classes, and programming through their computers and devices (Zoom & Livestreaming). A few people, when allowed by COVID guidelines & through advance arrangement only, will gather in person in the sanctuary.

HOW TO ZOOM

- 1. Go to **Zoom.us** at the announced time.
 - 2. Click "join a meeting"
 - 3. Enter the Zoom ID number
- 4. If asked, give Zoom permission to use your camera and microphone.

HOW TO LIVESTREAM

Option 1

- Download the **Boxcast app** in your Roku, AppleTV or Kindle Fire TV
- Open the app and search for the Knesset Israel channel. You may view current and past recordings.

Option 2

- Go to knessetisrael.org/livestream at the announced time.
 - You may need to press the "play" button that appears onscreen.
 - On that page you will find suggestions to improve your experience.
 - Watch and sing along.

* HOW TO ATTEND SERVICES IN PERSON IN THE K.I. SANCTUARY

If you are comfortable periodically joining in prayer in the K.I. sanctuary, but have not yet done so, please get in touch with Diana or Rabbi Weiner. ■ You may sign up to attend weekend services (Friday evening, Saturday and Sunday morning) up to three weeks in advance at our knessetisrael.org website—click on KI Shabbat Central (bottom of home page) ■ You do not need to sign up in advance to attend, but it helps ensure a minyan. Questions? Please contact Rabbi Weiner or Stu Masters.

March 2021 Calendar



Because COVID guidelines change often, K.I.'s scheduling can also change on very short notice. For up-to-date information go to:

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(at bottom of home page)

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ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES

■ TORAH PORTION OF THE WEEK

with Myrna Hammerling

Every Tuesday in March 10:30 AM

Study the Torah Portion of the Week through the lens of scholars and commentaries. Myrna Hammerling continues her insightful approaches to seeking wisdom for our own day from these ancient stories and laws. Try it! You may really like it!!
ZOOM ID: 851-6320-8966

■ BEYOND DISPUTE

Rabbi's Adult Education Class

March 4, 11, 18

No class March 25 or April 1

Every Thursday morning 10:45 AM–NOON

ZOOM ID: 863-269-457

■ MUSSAR

with Rabbi Pamela Wax

Sundays 9:30-11 AM

For registered participants only. Since the class is at capacity, and is not accepting new students at this time.

March 14, April 11, May 16, June 13, July 11, Aug. 8



You're Invited!
Hebrew School
Passover Party!!

Families Together invites you to join us on **Sunday, March 21** for **Moses and Aaron's Excellent Exodus and Passover Party!** The festivities begin at 2:30pm on the field of Knesset Israel. More details are on page 11 in the Families Together update!

March 2021 Calendar



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT!!

Knesset Israel began reopening synagogue services to in-person participation on February 12! Livestreaming of these services will continue. Should things change, we will keep you informed through email updates.

HOW TO attend services in person, as well as how to ZOOM AND LIVESTREAM appear on PAGE 6. Also see the email sent on February 10 at 12:48 pm answering your questions about in person attendance.

FEBRUARY SHABBAT & WEEKDAY SERVICES

■ KABBALAT SHABBAT

FridaysLIVESTREAM OR *IN PERSON** 5:45 PM
 March 5—Musical Minyan
 March 12 & 26—Traditional Service
 March 19 —Shirei Shabbat

■ SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

SaturdaysLIVESTREAM OR *IN PERSON** ...9:30-11:30 AM

■ HAVDALA & SOCIAL PROGRAMS

Saturdays 6, 13, & 20.....ZOOM 7:00 PM
 March 27 is first seder – no havdala program
 ZOOM ID # 556-224-391

■ MORNING DAVENING

SundaysLIVESTREAM OR *IN PERSON** 8:45 AM
 March 7, 14 & 21
 March 28 is the first day of Pesah – service schedule tba

■ EVENING DAVENING (includes mourner's kaddish)

Tuesdays & Thursdays....ZOOM 7:00 PM
 ZOOM ID # 934-910-554

Schedule of Observances for the
 Week Before Passover, Sale of Hametz and
 Maot Hittim Passover Fund Drive ON PAGES 8 & 9

Passover Service times
 will be announced in the April Kol K.I.,
 and in email communications.



MARCH CANDLE LIGHTING:

Friday, March 5, 20215:30 PM
 Friday, March 12, 20215:38 PM
 Friday, Mar 19, 20216:46 PM
 Friday, March 26, 20216:54 PM
 Saturday, March 27, 20217:56 PM
 Sunday, March 28, 20217:57 PM

APRIL CANDLE LIGHTING:

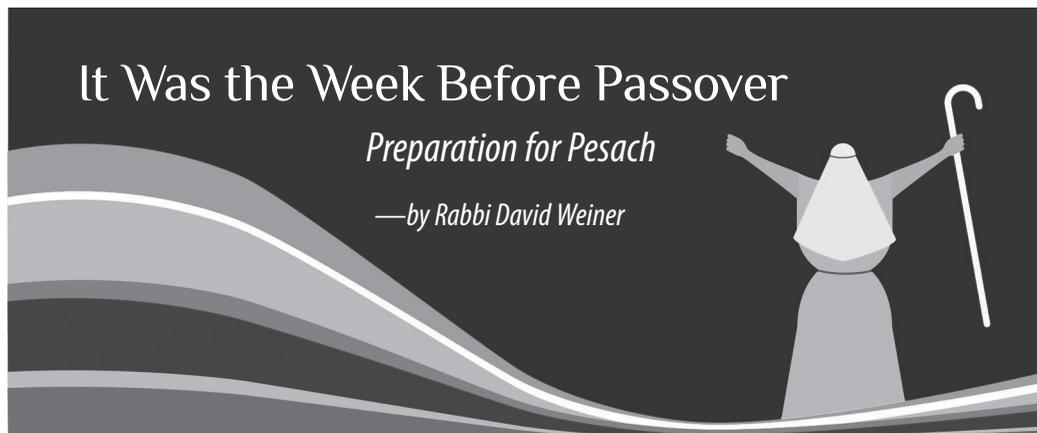
Friday, April 2, 20217:02 PM
 Saturday, April 3, 20218:04 PM



Knesset Israel Statement of Purpose

Welcome.

We are here to nourish mind, heart, and soul.
 We are here to inspire through word and deed.
 We are here to accompany each other on life's journey.
 We are here to celebrate in community.
 We are here to bring life to the wisdom
 and values of Torah.
 We are here to transform our world.



When Passover begins on a Saturday night, the customs of the week leading up to the holiday change somewhat. For the most part, the descriptions below follow traditional Jewish practice. Knesset Israel families have developed a variety of ways to honor the holiday. The information offered here, are meant to be suggestions of additional ways congregants might connect with the wider Jewish world through the distinctive rituals of Pesah, across space and time.

Cleaning the House

Those cleaning and shopping for Pesach might be looking for a refresher. The new Rabbinical Assembly Guide for Pesach was not yet available before the bulletin deadline. For now, an older version may be found at rabbinicalassembly.org/pesah-guide; changes from year to year are usually minor. Updates will appear in the weekly email.

Fast of the Firstborn

The Fast of the Firstborn falls one day earlier than usual, on **Thursday, March 26**. We will not be holding a special service or study session at Knesset Israel to help firstborns avoid the fast. Instead, those interested can join a group that is celebrating the completion of study of a tractate of Talmud online. Ideas and Zoom information will be provided in the weekly email.

Search for Hametz

Marking the end of the cleaning that prepares us for the holiday, the candlelight search for Hametz takes place **after dark on Thursday, March 26**. Recite the blessing before, and the formula after (kol hamira), as usual (see any Haggadah for the text).

Burning of Hametz

Burning of Hametz should take place **before 10 a.m. on Friday, March 27**. Traditionally we destroy what we “found” during the search for Hametz. This is the last time we eat Hametz until after Passover, even though the holiday does not start until Saturday night. No blessing or formula is recited.

Candle Lighting

Light candles on Friday, March 27 night as usual, with only the shabbat blessing, before 6:55 p.m. (in Berkshire County). For the most traditional observance, add a long-burning candle, such as a yearzeit candle, so that on Saturday and Sunday nights you may transfer its flame to your holiday candles. **The holiday candles on Saturday and Sunday nights—with the holiday blessing and shehechyanu, are lit no earlier than 8:04 p.m.**

Meals on March 27 & 28

We eat neither hametz nor matza from midmorning Friday, March 27 through seder on Saturday night, March 28. Use your Passover dishes for these meals, and **use egg matza (2 “loaves”) for each shabbat meal.**

Nullification of Hametz

Nullification of Hametz should take place before 11 a.m. on shabbat morning. We will incorporate this declaration into services at Knesset Israel that morning. You may find the traditional formula (kol hamira) in any Haggadah alongside a description of the ritual of burning Hametz.

continued next page

Everything we do to prepare for and to celebrate Passover is imbued with substantial spiritual significance.

Seder Preparation

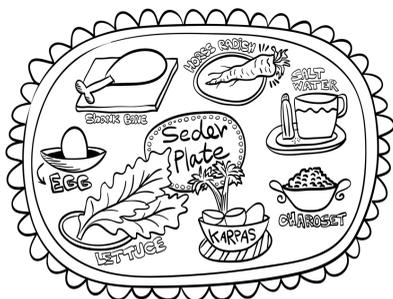
Seder preparation does not supplant Shabbat observance. Preparation, especially the transformation of ingredients into food using heat, should pause before sundown on Friday night (6:53 p.m.) and resume at nightfall on Saturday (after 7:55 p.m.).

First Seder Timing

The mitzvot of seder—eating matza and maror, enjoying a festive meal, drinking four cups of wine—apply on the first night of Passover, not the day before. Seder is meant to coincide—literally—with the anniversary of the first seder our ancestors celebrated, which took place at night, on the eve of their departure from Egypt. Those seeking this layer of meaning might begin seder after 8 p.m. on Saturday night, March 28. Seder meals should conclude before the middle of the night, i.e., approximately 1 a.m., though the songs at the end of the seder may continue well into the wee hours.

First Seder Start Time Compromise

Many seders include young participants or elders who find a late-night seder to be physically uncomfortable. Those in such a situation looking for a compromise might time the seder so that the second cup takes place after nightfall. Food preparation and warming should still not begin until after nightfall. For more ideas about how to modify the rituals and meal to suit, please speak with Rabbi Weiner.



Sale of Hametz & Maot Hittim: Passover Fund Drive

Consider donating Hametz to local food pantries!

Although we make every effort to rid our homes of hametz for Passover, Jewish tradition is aware that this discipline might prove financially prohibitive or wasteful. When feasible, make donations of unopened boxes of hametz to a local food pantry—South Congregational Church in Pittsfield, for example—and discard open boxes or containers of hametz. Some food (or drink, or pet) that is considered hametz might remain in your home, with or without your knowledge, and this needs to leave your possession to enable a full experience of the holiday. To empower Rabbi Weiner as your agent for selling of your hametz, please fill out the form below and mail it to the synagogue no later than Monday, March 22 or (even easier) click through the link that will be provided in the weekly email as Passover draws closer.

Our tradition mandates that those who are financially able help Jews who are in need celebrate Passover—“Maot Hittim”. As you empower Rabbi Weiner as your agent for the sale of hametz, please enclose a donation to help all Jews eat matza, the bread of freedom, this year.

I hereby authorize Rabbi David Weiner as agent for Congregation Knesset Israel, Pittsfield, Massachusetts, to act on my behalf to sell, transfer and assign all hametz of whatever kind and wherever situated in my residence or my business or any other place without reservation or limitation.

All the aforesaid *hametz* is to be sold to a non-Jew who is to have free access to the hametz acquired by him or her. I further state that the *hametz* covered by the agreement will be stored away and not used by me during the period commencing no later than 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 26, 2021 and ending no earlier than 9:04 p.m. on Sunday, April 4, 2021.

■ Enclosed is my (our) contribution of \$ _____ to the Maot Hittim Drive, Congregation Knesset Israel. Please distribute these funds in my (our) behalf to individuals in need and to organizations which are helping our fellow Jews observe Passover with dignity and joy and to help alleviate the distress of hunger from all those in need.

The authorization is legalized by my signature on this _____ day of _____.

Name(s): _____

Address(es): _____

Please fill in and mail this form to:

Congregation Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield, MA 01201

Email is even easier! — office@knessetisrael.org with name and address(es).

From the President

The Night the Rabbi Called

Creating a post-Covid community... together

I recall it as if it were yesterday. March 12, 2020. It was in the evening and I was at a meeting. My cell phone lights up and I see that it's Rabbi Weiner. I excuse myself to take the call.

"I think we have to cancel services this week", he blurted out.

"What?"; I answered somewhat incredulously. In my mind, we were being careful about the virus. People were starting to refrain from shaking hands during services and we were serving individual plates at Kiddush.

"I attended a meeting last night with public health officials. It's much more serious than we are currently appreciating", he continued.

"Ok, go on", I said feeling my heart sink.

The rest is as we say, "history".

It is hard to believe it has been a year since we have been responding to this pandemic. To be sure, we have lost a great deal. Family members lost the ability to hold the hand of their loved ones who lay dying isolated in a critical care unit. Mourners lost the ability to be physically embraced after experiencing a tragic loss. Parents, grandparents and children have been separated by a computer screen. And holidays where traditionally families gathered have been celebrated alone.

The isolation this pandemic has caused has been a great challenge to us all. But as this month marks the first anniversary of the "life with COVID", we have news that provides some hope and optimism. We are in the process of distributing an effective vaccine to our community. With the widespread administration of the vaccine, we can envision a day when we can gather together and rebuild what has been lost.

We have worked hard to maintain a shul community in spite of the COVID restrictions established to keep us safe. The experience has forced leadership to prioritize what is really important about a shul. As we begin to plan for our future, we start to ask the questions of "what changes must we make", "how to we effectively create the bridge from a COVID world to a post-COVID world"?

These are not easy questions, but ones we shall embrace as we move forward. Your thoughts and ideas are always welcome.

As always, I wish all of you continued health and safety during these times.



Richard Simons

Thank you



Thank you to the many people who respond to my requests for support for K.I. families in need.

I am so grateful for an amazing "Dream Team" that has been so responsive to requests for meals, shopping, and errands in answer to the needs of our congregants. The families are extremely appreciative of your help at a time when not just food, but also the message of a caring congregation was obvious in a tangible way.

We are still in the middle of the pandemic. I may be calling upon you again to help those who are still in need or are alone.

My sincere thanks to all of you for being so special!—Fran Wolk

Emergency Contacts

PASTORAL CARE.

If you are in need of emergency pastoral care for any reason, please contact Rabbi Weiner, 413-445-4872, ext. 10.

FUNERALS.

Kneset Israel's funeral arrangements are handled with Flynn-Dagnoli funeral home. Please call 413-663-6523 or 413-442-1733. You can also email flynndagnoli@albany.twcbc.com.

CARE COMMITTEE.

If you or another K.I. member you know is experiencing serious illness requiring support, please contact the Care Committee by calling the main office of Kneset Israel, 413-445-4872, ext. 10 and we will be in touch with you.



Berkshire Interfaith Organizing (BIO) Annual Meeting

Annual Meeting Report



On January 24, 2021, Berkshire Interfaith Organization held their Annual Meeting. The meeting was, of course, virtual, bilingual, and very successful. It was attended by 75 BIO members, with K.I. members Maxine Bookless, Rabbi David Weiner, Merle Ferber, Nancy Cook, Carole Siegel, and Myrna Hammerling among them.

Stories shared.

Rabbi David Weiner and Dondie Dean, the Lead Organizer for BIO, began by sharing their personal stories of the power of organization.

■ Rabbi Weiner reported that he was not immediately comfortable with the BIO setting until he got to know fellow religious leader Reverend Sloan Letman, IV. They both had gone to Jewish pre-schools, lived in Chicago and were coming together at BIO events. Rabbi Weiner didn't quite know what was expected of him and was simply slowly absorbing the aura of the organization. He learned that just showing up, thinking more, and listening rather than talking was a way to bring change.

It was at the "Together We Breathe" march from City Hall to Durant Park after the tragic murder of George Floyd that he felt his commitment and leadership come to the surface. The mutual respect with his new friend Sloan, who used Exodus imagery in his inspiring pre-march speech, also had deepened significantly. Rabbi Weiner was finding his way within the organization.

■ Dondie Dean, hired straight out of college as BIO assistant leader, now holds the organization's helm as Lead Organizer. She imagined herself in this position, winning battle after battle against power holders on behalf of the under-served—achieving victory after victory. By developing an understanding of what constitutes an interest group, she has been able to broaden her approach to her goals. An informal group has been meeting at a local coffee shop; the members informally call it Cafecito. The group shares their various issues with education, communication and community struggles. Dondie has come to realize that the big battles she imagined tackling are not



Dondie Dean, Lead Organizer, Berkshire Interfaith Organizing

necessarily the best way to impact change in our community. She is now translating her own personal discovery into major changes for the organization.

More Business.

■ An amendment was presented at the meeting reflecting Dondie's understanding of how change takes place: the group will now be composed of regional communities of faith and values. It was approved unanimously.

■ Two new members were accepted into the BIO community: Ark Community (Dalton) and Zion Lutheran Church (Pittsfield). Other groups interested in joining BIO include members of Kripalu and some labor unions.

■ Some of the values that members are sharing: food projects, environmental projects, donating services, helping agencies in other cultures (Tanzania was mentioned), acts of kindness and random kindness.

■ Other meeting business included: budgets, inspiring messages from incoming and outgoing officers, and minutes accepted.

■ New President Rev. Sloan Letman, IV spoke inspirationally about working together. Rabbi Weiner closed with a recitation of "Lift Every Voice" by James Weldon.



Tikkun Olam ~ Heal the World

Spotlight On

Judith Weiner

An experienced, creative, engaging leader—by Phil Coleman

Welcome to my column this month Judith! It's great to catch up with you. It's difficult to believe you and your family have been here 10 years. You are deeply ingrained in our community, yet you've had a real international life, living in Hungary, Australia, Israel, and the U.S., including my hometown of Jacksonville, Florida. What are some of the differences you've experienced in Jewish life and practice around the world?

Judith: I can't speak of Jewish life in Hungary, as I was five when we left. Australia has a vibrant Jewish community that draws from around the world. Australia is a country of migrants—the Jewish community reflects that with people who can trace their roots back to Hungary, Poland, South Africa and a few who have been in Australia since before WWII. My experiences of community in Jerusalem and New York are the experiences of a student community. My experience in Jacksonville was as an introduction to the American south. In all the places that I have lived, there have been more experiences that were similar than different. Food is often different, but sharing meals is the same. Personalities are different, but being in a community is the same.

One of the key issues in contemporary Jewish education is keeping young people excited about Judaism and Ju-



daic values. Now with COVID and a profound disruption of normal learning, how do we reimagine traditional after-school Hebrew classes for the modern world, creating vitality and long-term commitment?

Judith: Re-imagining Hebrew School classrooms is an ongoing process that we at K.I. have been doing for many years. All of our teachers bring their amazing skills and experiences into the classroom to help our students engage with Judaism to create that lifelong connection. At K.I., one of our strengths is having students of different grades and ages

spending time together, whether in Junior Congregation, as tutors or as teachers' assistants. These connections, alongside the whole K.I. community, and combined with family involvement in the community are the bedrocks of the future. We have adapted to our new circumstances by moving our Judaic teaching to after school online, instead of Saturdays. Our largest change has been in skills development. We have exchanged a regular Hebrew class with individual Hebrew tutoring.

Tell us about the Families Together program at K.I., and how we might be able to leverage that to attract new families who are moving to the Berkshires. A lot of folks don't know much about it.

Judith: Our "Families Together" program is a place for families of all ages, but primarily those with kids, to be together and do "Jewish" together in a variety of programs. With the generous support of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, many of our programs focus on issues and mitzvot that are about service and social justice. We have baked for the Thanksgiving Angels, partnered with the Berkshire Jewish Film Festival, and also with K.I.'s Adopt-a-Family project. This year, we have focused on meeting in person outdoors (safely, masked, and social distanced) to allow families to see each other. We have hiked on Jewish scavenger hunts, played in the snow, and we are looking towards more outdoor fun in the future!

What's going on in the world of adult study at the synagogue, and how are you involved with it?

Judith: Myrna Hammerling, together with Rabbi Weiner, coordinate adult learning at K.I. With luck, I am sometimes able to

continued top of next page



A "Families Together" virtual event



Families Together... At Home

*A special website, full of fun
—just for YOU!*

A place filled with fun ideas, information and activities for families and kids of all ages. A site where you can stay connected with your K.I. friends and share your experiences. A place to go to learn what is happening in the K.I. Families Together community. Check it out at padlet.com/KnessetIsrael/KIHS2

Spotlight On *(continued)*

participate either by attending or occasionally teaching.

Here's a fun question. How did you meet David?

Judith: David and I met at Hebrew University in Jerusalem while we both took a year abroad.

We have terrific programming at K.I., thanks in no small part to you, Myrna, David, and the staff. Of course much of that has now gone virtual, too. How can we improve what we do, keep our members engaged, and plan for the future?

Judith: That is a question for the rabbi!!!!!!

Thanks so much Judith, this was a fun interview and I know our readers will enjoy getting to know you!

Studying and Celebrating...Together

An update from the Hebrew School

Hebrew School Update

March brings exciting events to the Hebrew School as we are preparing for the Passover holiday.

As teachers, we join with our students looking forward to the Seder. Their enthusiasm is gratifying as they engage with materials in their Hebrew Studies. Each week that Hebrew tutoring continues, we are seeing great improvement in the writing and reading skills of all the students.

As the weather becomes warmer, we anticipate that some classes will be back in

the classroom. The Bar Mitzvah program and the Rabbi's Teen class are now meeting in person at K.I. again.

Families Together Invites you...

K.I. Families Together invites you to join us on March 21 for **Moses and Aaron's Excellent Exodus and Passover Party!** The festivities begin at 2:30pm on the field of Knesset Israel. There will be Passover themed games, and fun for the whole family. With an imposing title like that, you know that wonderful fun is planned.

RSVP: Judith at jweiner@knessetisrael.org



Rosh Chodesh

Our Thriving Women's Group

Looking back and ahead—by Jan Zimble

Pre-pandemic, Rosh Chodesh had been gathering at Knesset Israel for the past 6 years in the synagogue library and in individual homes. It is hard to believe 6 years have passed! From the beginning we have been enjoying each other and evolving in so many ways.

Our meeting agendas have ranged from Jewish music, developing a woman's Seder, family rituals and traditions, spirituality and healing, and more. We have had members present singing klezmer music, Ethical Will guidance and an introduction to the Chevra Kadisha experience. We have gone on a field trip to Mayyim Hayyim Living Waters to educate ourselves in Mikveh tradition—which culminated in one of our members being able to participate in her own immersion. The meditation garden at Mayyim Hayyim also influenced our Rosh Chodesh group—Ev Bastow in particular—to revive the Braun Memorial Garden so that once again it can be a space for reflection and celebration.

Life in the time of the COVID pandemic has been challenging but it has not curtailed our "getting together". We continue to meet via zoom to share our thoughts stemming from isolation. We voice our hopes, our frustrations, as well as nourishing our Jewish awareness. These meetings have allowed us to gather and remind ourselves that women at Knesset Israel are not alone. No matter where you are quarantined you can be part of a warm, welcoming, supportive group of women.

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Yahrzeits • March 2021 • Adar / Nissan 5781



17 ADAR - 3/1

Lillian Cohen
Walter Sturm
August Rossomando
Sol Smuckler

18 ADAR - 3/2

Dorothy Klein Harab
Eva Metropole
Rose Berkowitz
Morris Berkwitz
Anna Cohn
Sarah Deborah Katz

19 ADAR - 3/3

Paul Rich
Norman Seidler
Zipora Bril
Ruth Gutmann
Max Goodman
Adolph Berger
Peter Marvin

20 ADAR I - 3/4

Bessie F. Lippman
Esta Gallant Kornfield
Benjamin Novick
Ruth Goldin
Jennie Staskin
Samuel Teitelbaum
Sidney Gilbert
Samuels

21 ADAR I - 3/5

Samuel Lebovitz
Samuel Mones
Edward Pincus
Ruth Golos
Neil Talcove
Nathan Haft

22 ADAR I - 3/6

Rebecca Levine
Beth Anne Zocchi
Ira Bender
Joyce Abecassis
Sylvia Ende
Linda Robbins
Esther Minnie Maislen
Naftuly Vinshteyn
Sophie Steinman

23 ADAR - 3/7

Rosalyn Baron
Abram Kogan
Elsie Marmulstein
Goldie Stein
Harry Shenker
Abraham Adelson
Philip Bass
Max Kaplan

24 ADAR I - 3/8

Joseph Sherman
Fannie Leibowitz
Rose Rudnick
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Rose Wood Gruberg
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25 ADAR - 3/9

Lillian Farber
Sara Fribush
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26 ADAR - 3/10

Irving Rosenbaum
Anne Green
Celia Sumberg
Robert Green
Ethel Taubin
Sol Toscher
Abraham Benny Israel
Myra Miller Groobert

27 ADAR I - 3/11

Nathan Lazerus
Ruth Kalman Sugarman
Erna Gilbert
Dora Nelson
Julius Freed
Sandra Abeles Braun
Myron Shindler
Rosalind May
Cynthia Bercowetz
Harold Palefsky
Jules Kerbel
Gail Mindlin
Gussie Rod
Ioshua Shmerelevich
Kirshteyn
Morris Broder
Rachel Samel
Benjamin Brown
Israel Bialor
Joseph Schaitkin

28 ADAR - 3/12

Esther Mayer
Dr. William Rosenthal
Jack Galler
Jerry Sussman
Jack J. Daniels
Marjorie Goldman
Gerald H. Goodman

29 ADAR - 3/13

Seymour Haft
Louise Clark
Mary Weiser

1 NISAN - 3/14

Bernard Dondoy
Abraham Deutch
Mollie Goldstein
Leavitt

2 NISAN - 3/15

Anna S. Bookless
William Wortman
Rose Freed
Sophie Feller
Aron Grende
Lena Markowitz

There are stars whose light
reaches the earth only after they
themselves have disintegrated.
And there are individuals whose
memory lights the world after they
have passed from it. These lights
shine in the darkest night
and illumine our path....

—Hannah Senesh

3 NISAN - 3/16

Bernard H. Starr
Jacob Kirsch
Ben Cohen
Leib Garbowitz

4 NISAN - 3/17

Dr. Lester H. Sugarman
Lester Sugarman
Harold Frisch
Minnie Schiller
Dr. Stanley Simkin
Rose Foster
Mollie Jacobs
Pauline Mass

5 NISAN - 3/18

Vicki Lebenbaum
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Rebecca Savitz
Morgenstein
Walter B. Samek
Sally Schatsky
Hilda Dunaieff

6 NISAN - 3/19

Shirley J. Bookless
Nathan Bass

7 NISAN - 3/20

Betty Braun
Robert S. Friedman
Machla Weis

8 NISAN - 3/21

Joseph Robinson

9 NISAN - 3/22

Harry Wasser
Willy Benari
Barnett Cotton
Lillian Jaffe
Anna R. Goodman
Elliott Lubin
Polly Shapiro
Liuba Benari

10 NISAN - 3/23

Alex Cohen
Fanny Novick
Esther Weisberger
Harry Schatsky

11 NISAN - 3/24

Robert Martin
Edelstein
Clinton William
Edelstein
Mollye Hoffman-
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Shirley Starr
Sylia Simme Frank
Phil Kruvant

12 NISAN - 3/25

Samuel Weiss
Sonia Weiss

continued next page

March Yahrzeits

(continued from page 13)

13 NISAN - 3/26

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Nanette Rosenthal
Florence Horn
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16 NISAN - 3/29

Florrie Solomon
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Bertha Rosenblatt
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17 NISAN - 3/30

Harry Weinberger
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18 NISAN - 3/31

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Rosh Chodesh *(continued from page 1)*

The January meeting focused on "Surviving the Pandemic". Women shared their feelings about zoom exhaustion, lack of sunlight and not being able to hug the ones we love. We also commiserated and laughed about how much money we are saving on clothes, cosmetics and travel. It was evident to all that showing up and seeing each other felt positive and reassuring.

Thanks to a volunteer group of Rosh Chodesh members we have planned the themes for this coming year.

Here is a look ahead at the next few months:

The February meeting will focus on Tu Bishvat and the significance of trees in our ecosystem.

The March meeting will brain storm ideas for a meaningful Pesach during a pandemic. How do we make it more than a 40 minute zoom gathering?

April's meeting will discuss the meaning of Tikun Olam. How does this have meaning for you personally?

In May we will highlight women we admire and how they have affected our lives and our world.

In the June meeting we will share our experiences of how life "hacks" have made your life easier. Puzzled? Join us and find out what this is about.

It is important to note that these meeting themes are flexible. We strive to be relevant and current. We want to stress that it does not matter where you live at this moment. The blessing of zoom is that being in Florida, New York or out of the country, you can easily join us. This is an open group. Therefore, we welcome all female members of KI. We would be especially delighted to welcome any new members. We hope everyone will participate, using Rosh Chodesh to reach out, listen and know that we are a community and support each other.

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact Jan Zimble janwz@aol.com or Maxine Bookless maxbookless@gmail.com



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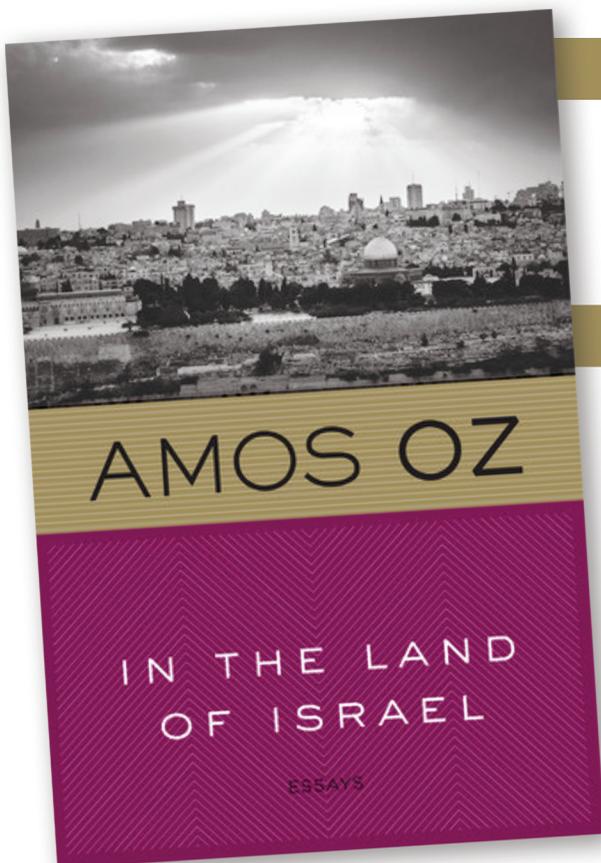


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