



Kol K.L.

learn. inspire. grow. together.



May 2018 | Iyar–Sivan 5778

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

Jewish Musicians & the Evolution of Jazz

Andy Kelly & the Gypsy Jazz Ambassadors entertain and inform

On Sunday evening, May 6th at 7:30 p.m., Knesset Israel is in for an incredible treat! Led by Andy Kelly, the audience will learn how certain gifted Jewish immigrants who settled in New York City influenced the “new” American music we know as jazz. Musical arrangements in the hands of this talented combo, the Gypsy Jazz Ambassadors, will be intertwined with historic commentary. The audience is sure to have an uplifting and “swingin’” experience that night.

Andy Kelly, a Berkshire native and graduate of Williams College, always had a passion for music. He is a gifted musician and teacher of many styles of music from rock to classical. Andy served as Chair of the Pittsfield Cultural Development Commission and in 2005, helped found the Pittsfield City Jazz Festival to present mainstream and traditional jazz downtown. If there is a festival or event in Pittsfield with a musical group involved, Andy is likely to be present!



Andy also helped found the “Jazz in Schools” program, which features performances, demonstrations and discussions throughout many of the schools in Berkshire County. The program exposes literally thousands of students to live jazz. Several of its participants have even toured abroad, led by, you guessed it—Andy Kelly! According to a recent interview in the Berkshire

continued page 7

Shavuot at K.L.

Celebrate with us!



Shavuot, the Hebrew word for “weeks,” occurs seven weeks after Passover. The holiday celebrates God’s gift of the Torah to the Jewish people at Mount Sinai.

Like many other Jewish holidays, Shavuot began as a harvest festival. Today, it is a celebration of Torah, education, and actively choosing to participate in Jewish life.

For information on Shavuot observances, Tikkun, and service schedules as well as ritual times, please turn to page 5.

Knesset Israel welcomes all who wish to join us.



In This Issue

Jewish Musicians & Evolution of Jazz	1
From the Rabbi.....	3
Calendar.....	4
Key K.I. & Emergency Contacts	4
Shavuot Observances & Services.....	5
How Good it is When Women Gather	6
Musical Musings.....	9-11
Yahrzeits, Funds & Endowments....	13-15

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KNESSET ISRAEL

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Member Mitzvahs & Mazel Tovs

■ **Mike Cohn** and his team Bob Moskowitz, Kolman Diamond, and Arnie Kaminer competed in a fundraiser for Magen David Adom and came in first amongst 35 teams. A total of \$150,000 was raised from their Florida community which will fund an ambulance in Israel.

■ **Ev Bastow's** grandson, Jarrett will be receiving his Master of Arts in Leadership and Cultural Management this month from Colorado State University. Jarrett is currently Administrative Director of the Tulsa Youth Orchestra and a bass player with the Tulsa Symphony, Ballet and Opera.

Share your joy!

We want to kvell with you! Let us know about all of your nachas—big or small. Submit to Susan Miller at sunpath2@gmail.com

Birthdays

- | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------|---------------------------------|--------|
| ■ Maya Dahari | May 1 | ■ Jessica Lotto | May 21 |
| ■ Barry Leeper | May 2 | ■ Barbara Hayden | May 21 |
| ■ Evie Cook-Dubin | May 3 | ■ Heidi Ferren | May 22 |
| ■ Burton Edelstein | May 3 | ■ Beth Kruvant | May 22 |
| ■ Jill Wollins | May 4 | ■ Norman Moskowitz | May 23 |
| ■ Enid Fuhrman | May 5 | ■ Shelley Berend | May 24 |
| ■ Roselyn Koldny | May 6 | ■ Joel Prives | May 25 |
| ■ Dana Caleb Sebestyn | May 6 | ■ Mark Snowise | May 26 |
| ■ Eric Glaberson | May 6 | ■ Rebecca Caine | May 27 |
| ■ Kendall Lamm | May 7 | ■ Sharon Karlin | May 27 |
| ■ Dorothy Margolin | May 9 | ■ Roberta Smith | May 27 |
| ■ Sara Perles | May 10 | ■ Roger Kruvant | May 28 |
| ■ TaliaCaine | May 11 | ■ Morton Taubin | May 30 |
| ■ Kayla Bellmore | May 12 | ■ Evelyn Zwerner | May 31 |
| ■ Ellen Rosenblatt | May 12 | | |
| ■ Jeffrey Cook | May 13 | | |
| ■ Gary Schecter | May 13 | | |
| ■ Robert Sutter | May 14 | | |
| ■ Joseph Weiner | May 14 | | |
| ■ Suzanne Woller | May 14 | | |
| ■ Gail Weis | May 14 | | |
| ■ Anna Yantovsky | May 16 | | |
| ■ John Bergman | May 16 | | |
| ■ Robert Ferren | May 17 | | |
| ■ Hannah Link | May 20 | | |
| ■ Anthony Segal | May 21 | | |
| ■ David Weiner | May 21 | | |

Anniversaries

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------|
| ■ Lara & Jonathan Denmark | May 4 |
| ■ Nan & Allan Lipton | May 8 |
| ■ Natalya & Sergey Yantovsky | May 18 |
| ■ Cindy & David Bell-Deane | May 24 |
| ■ Jane & Alex Rosen | May 24 |
| ■ Leslie Fishbein & Thomas Sebestyen ... | May 26 |
| ■ Janet & David Rothstein | May 27 |
| ■ Renee & Rick Robbins | May 27 |
| ■ Lea & David Finck | May 28 |
| ■ Roselyn & Edwin Kolodny | May 31 |

From the Rabbi

Hesed ~ Love Put Into Practice

Shavuot and the Book of Ruth

The holiday of Shavuot, marking the fiftieth day after Passover, an ancient festival of first fruits and the anniversary of the giving of the Torah, has few observances today. The highlight, for many of us, is the custom of eating sweet dairy food and no meat—milk and honey to celebrate our connection with Torah and the Land of Israel. The holiday also invites us to revisit two biblical passages—on the first day, the giving of the Torah at Sinai, and on the second day, the short but profound Book of Ruth.



Rabbi David Weiner

mi is penniless and Ruth is childless, vulnerable and under no obligation. Boaz shows Ruth *hesed* when he sees her gleaning among the poor in his field, and he goes above and beyond to take care of her. For that matter, when Boaz finally figures out who Ruth is and the challenge she faces as a foreign-born, childless widow, his response is pure *hesed*. He agrees to give Ruth—and therefore Naomi as well a child and heir.

Although this might sound like an easy choice, Boaz's assumption of this re-

And where does this *hesed* lead? The book concludes with the birth of a prominent lineal descendant of the union of Boaz and Ruth: King David. *Hesed*—love translated into deed—is what carries the world closer to reaching its potential for healing, justice and wholeness.

It turns out that the connection between Shavuot and Ruth is profound. The plot of the Book of Ruth pivots on *hesed*, love. For its part, Shavuot celebrates the giving of the Torah, itself a manifestation of God's loves towards the Jewish people. Twice a day, just before we say the Shema, the siddur encourages us to reflect on Torah as an outgrowth of God's love for us—*With an eternal love You have loved Israel your people, giving us Torah*

The link between the book of Ruth and the holiday of Shavuot is not clear. At first glance, it seems like the main connection between the two is one of setting—the drama of the book begins 'at the season of the wheat harvest,' that is to say, around Shavuot. Enough said?

It turns out that there might be far more going on. The leading word of the Book of Ruth is *hesed*, love put into practice. Indeed Ruth's name has come to signify kindness in even the English language. (Think 'ruthless' without the '-less!') In the Book of Ruth, almost every character acts on the basis of *hesed*. Ruth shows Naomi *hesed* when she follows her back to the Promised Land even though Nao-

sponsibility is actually an expensive and selfless decision. Ruth's child will need to be raised—that's costly, in and of itself—and then the presence of that heir will dilute Boaz and his other children's claim to the family landholdings. That Boaz is ready to take care of Ruth, Naomi and assure descendants to a branch of his family that has faced so much tragedy, despite his economic interests, is presented as a sign of character.

and *mitzvot*... Ruth's love transforms Naomi. Boaz's love transforms Ruth and the entire future of the Jewish people. God's love moved our ancestors to respond, committing themselves and us to lives inspired by God and by God's word, the Torah. You might say that if Passover celebrates our birth as a people, then Shavuot marks the anniversary of our relationship with God. The Torah, which we've continued to cherish for all those years, is our *ketubah*.

So I guess it isn't outrageous to say that I hope to see you at our 3700th anniversary celebration (give or take)—services and opportunities for study will take place at K.I. on Saturday evening, May 19, and Sunday and Monday, May 20-21.

Hesed—love translated into deed—is what carries the world closer to reaching its potential for healing, justice and wholeness.

KOL K.I. publication notes

Editor: Susan Miller • Production: Liz DeMarco • Photo Editor: Nan Bookless • Printer: Aldam Press

DEADLINE: THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH

Copy will not be accepted after that date to ensure our publication date.

Bulletin material and photographs will be accepted VIA EMAIL ONLY and sent to:

Susan Miller at sunpath2@gmail.com

May Calendar

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CANDLE LIGHTING

Friday May 4 7:38 PM
 Friday May 11 7:46 PM
 Friday May 18 7:53 PM
 Monday May 21 9:04 PM
 Friday May 25 8:00 PM

REGULAR SERVICE SCHEDULE THROUGH LABOR DAY

Sunday 8:45 AM & 7:00 PM
 Tuesday 7:00 PM
 Friday 5:45 PM*
 Saturday 9:30 AM
 *Friday, May 18, *Shirei Shabbat* 5:30 PM
 Friday, May 25, NO evening minyan



KOSHER MEAT DELIVERY

Order by May 7 for May 21 pick-up.

CLASSES

Torah Portion of the Week (Library) Tue., May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 10:00–11:30 AM
 Enhanced Prayer Study Wed., May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 10:00–11:30 AM
 CHAI Community School (Temple Anshe Amunim) Wed., May 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 4:00–6:00 PM
 The Ethical Life (Library) Thu., May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 10:45–Noon
 The David Story (Teens only) Sat., May 5, 12, 19 8:40–9:30 AM
 Walking with Mitzvot (w/Judith Weiner) ... Sat., May 5, 12, 19 9:00–10:00 AM
 Hebrew School Sat., May 5, 12, 19 9:00 AM–12:00 PM
 Tikkun Levi Shavuot Sat., May 19 7:30 PM

EVENTS & MEETINGS

Israel at 70 (Library) Tue., May 1, 15 7:30 PM
 Jewish/Jazz Connections Sun., May 6 7:30 PM
 Cemetery Committee Meeting Tue., May 8 7:30 PM
 Niggunim Singing Circle Mon., May 14, June 11 7:00 PM
 K.I. Board Meeting Wed., May 16 7:30 PM
 Shirei Shabbat Fri., May 18 5:30 PM
 Rosh Chodesh Meeting /place TBA Tues., May 22 7:00 PM
 Shabbat Across the Berkshires Fri., June 1 (at Hevreh) 6:15 PM

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.

Knesset Israel's funeral arrangements are handled with Flynn-Dagnoli funeral home. Please call 413-663-6523 or 413-442-1733. You can also email flynn-dagnoli@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 Knesset Israel, 413-445-4872, ext. 10 and we will be in touch with you.

May Calendar



Shavuot Observances at K.I.

The festival of Shavuot celebrates the giving of the Torah, but there are few customs associated specifically with the holiday. Hundreds of years ago, Jewish mystics instituted the practice of *Tikkun Leyl Shavuot*, a night of Torah study to begin the holiday and commemorate our ancestors' anticipation of God's revelation at Sinai. Recognizing the difficulty of staying up that late, never mind all night, our *Tikkun* will take place in the waning hours of Shabbat, Saturday night, May 19.

Tikkun Schedule

Saturday, May 19 – Erev Shavuot

Shabbat Mincha.....7:00 PM
 Study Session with Rabbi Weiner (see below) Approximately 7:30 PM
Maariv.....No earlier than 9:00 PM
 Cheesecake reception to follow

Study Session

Redeeming Redemption The coming of the Messiah—the hope that someday a redeemer will arise for the Jewish people and the world—is nothing if not complicated. Some of us find the idea—sometimes called *tikkun olam*—intuitive, empowering and inspiring; others, focused on this world, are overwhelmed or puzzled by it. Still others look at the history of Messianism in Jewish and world history, see how it has played out in calamity century after century, and wonder why we would dream for such a day. Tonight, we will explore perspectives on the coming of the Messiah—some well-known, some 'new'—that might help restore our capacity to attest with a full heart: "I believe with complete faith in the coming of the Messiah."

Shavuot Services

Sunday, May 20 – First Day of Shavuot

Festival *Shaharit* (includes the reading of the Ten Commandments)..... 9:30 AM
 Festival *Mincha* only7:00 PM

Monday, May 21 – Second Day of Shavuot (*Yizkor*)

Festival *Shaharit*..... 9:30 AM
 Torah Service & *Yizkor*.....approximately 10:30 AM

Shavuot Ritual Times

Friday, May 18.....Light candles no later than 7:53 PM
Saturday, May 19.....Light candles no later than 8:54 PM
Sunday, May 20.....Light candles no later than 8:55 PM
Monday, May 21Light candles no later than 8:56 PM

Cemetery Hours

K.I. Cemetery gates will be open on the following dates:

Sunday, May 13
Mother's Day 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Memorial Day Weekend,
Sunday, May 27 & Monday, May 28
9:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Sunday, June 17
Father's Day 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM

For access at other times, you may borrow a key from the office.



A Bintel Brief Rehearsal Schedule

REHEARSALS

May 7; May 14; May 21;
 and Thursday, May 31
 K.I. Sanctuary • 6:30 pm

PERFORMANCE DAY

Sunday, June 3 • K.I. Sanctuary
 2:30-4:00 pm: Rehearsal/entire cast
 4:00-5:30 pm: Rehearsal
 entire cast with music
 5:30-6:30 pm: Dinner break
 7:00 pm: Performance in the
 K.I. Sanctuary

Rosh Chodesh

How Good it is When Women Gather...

The Rosh Chodesh Women's Seder —Maxine Bookless

As we do on a regular basis, a small group of Rosh Chodesh members met to plan the group's programming for the upcoming months. Some of the group had participated in the Berkshire County Women's Seder years ago, and loved it, but the community-wide Seder had taken precedence in recent years. What better idea for the month of March than for this women's group to have our own Seder?

After some discussion we decided to design a customized Seder, which we called the K.I. Rosh Chodesh Women's Seder—"Highlights." Our intention in creating this Seder was to celebrate our empowerment as Jewish women through a female interpretation of this important tradition. For the service, we perused many Haggadot, and in the end compiled our own, incorporating meaningful and favorite "highlights" enhanced by personal additions and interpretations. Through song and poetry, readings and blessings, wine and discussion, we would focus on a woman's viewpoint as to why this night was different from all other nights.

We decided to forgo a full Seder meal, and instead feature a few culinary highlights, such as favorite Ashkenazi and Sephardic charoses and family-favorite Pesadich desserts. Fran Wolk graciously hosted this Seder in her beautiful home, setting the tone for a warm feeling of community and inclusiveness. Each participant brought copies of their recipes for all to share, and their family's seder plate for display and discussion.

We began our journey together with an opening song: "How good it is, and how pleasant, when women gather together in unity." We each lit a candle as we said our own names, our mother's name, and our grandmothers' names.

We also shared some special ways we made our family Passover celebrations unique. For instance, some women include the symbolic Miriam's cup filled with water on their Seder table. Miriam's association with water (placing Moses into the Nile, and with the well that traveled with the Children of Israel through the desert)—has led to this innovation on the Seder table. It is meant to remind us of the important role that women played in the Exodus from Egypt. Others include an orange on the Seder plate—a practice that was begun as a gesture of solidarity with Jewish lesbians and gay men, and others who are or feel marginalized within the Jewish community. Our day was definitely enriched by learning and discussing new ideas and rituals.

At the conclusion of our "Seder Highlights" celebration, we voiced as collective reflection, the last lines are from the poem "The Blessing of Tears" by Adela Karliner:

**"When we gather together to worship as women,
I thank God that I was born a woman."**

Photos – top: Orange on a Seder plate; middle: Ann Krawet, Sheila Donath, and Beth Radskin; bottom: Beth Radskin and Merle Feber



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.

Jewish Musicians

continued from page 1

Eagle, Andy and his talented cohorts play between "100-150, but I think closer to 150" gigs per year."

Members of the Gypsy Jazz Ambassadors, include Charlie Tokarz (woodwinds), Eileen Markland (violin), and John Kelly (double bass).

Andy notes, "Jewish composers and performers have made some of the most significant contributions to jazz music. Without artists such as Irving Berlin, George Gershwin, Benny Goodman, and Stan Getz, jazz would just not be the same! We will have fun exploring this topic musically on May 6th!"

This program is sure to be of interest to the wider community. All are welcome.

Tickets and Information

Tickets—\$20 / \$8 for students—may be reserved by calling 413-445-4872, x16 or x10. Tickets will also be available at the door starting at 7:00 p.m.

At the Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield. Please enter through the driveway under the canopy.

Light refreshments will be served following the performance.



Shabbat



Across



The Berkshires

Shabbat Across the Berkshires – Israeli Style!

Join with friends from across the Berkshire Jewish Community for a musical, family-friendly Shabbat service, led by rabbis, spiritual leaders and musicians from across the County, followed by a festive oneg and birthday cake to celebrate Israel's 70th birthday.

Friday, June 1 at 6:15 p.m.

**Hosted by Hevreh of Southern Berkshire
and the Berkshire Minyan
270 State Road, Great Barrington, MA**

Sponsored by: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, Berkshire Minyan, Congregation Ahavath Sholom, Congregation Beth Israel, Congregation Knesset Israel, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, Temple Anshe Amunim, and Berkshire Hills Hadassah



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Share through leadership

Tikkun Olam...
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for opportunities!

JTS IN THE BERKSHIRES

Back to Nature:

JEWISH ENCOUNTERS WITH THE NATURAL WORLD

SUMMER
2018

Judaism's complex relationship to nature begins in Eden, where humans are commanded to subdue and to guard the earth. Join JTS scholars as they reveal the diversity of Jewish perspectives on nature and the sacred realm. How do our sources—literary, legal, and liturgical—conceive of the world around us and our relationship to other creatures?

FRIDAY, JULY 13, 11:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Rabbi Daniel Nevins, Pearl Resnick Dean of The Rabbinical School
BIOTECH AND THE BIBLE: JEWISH PERSPECTIVES ON GENETIC ENGINEERING



FRIDAY, JULY 27, 11:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Rabbi Mychal Springer, Director of the Center for Pastoral Education
WATERING THE SOUL: RAIN, DEW, AND SPIRITUAL CARE



FRIDAY, AUGUST 10, 11:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Dr. Alan Mittleman, Aaron Rabinowitz and Simon H. Rifkind Professor of Jewish Philosophy
IS NATURE SACRED?: REASSESSING THE VALUE OF NATURE IN JUDAISM



FRIDAY, AUGUST 24, 11:00 A.M.–12:30 P.M.

Dr. Raymond Scheindlin, Professor Emeritus of Medieval Hebrew Literature
GARDENS OF THE GOLDEN AGE: THE PLEASURES AND PERILS OF NATURE IN MEDIEVAL HEBREW LITERATURE



Shakespeare & Company, 70 Kemble Street, Lenox, Massachusetts

Cost: \$25 per session; \$85 for all four

Register at www.jtsa.edu/Berkshires

For more information, contact Lynn Feinman at (212) 678-8821 or lyfeinman@jtsa.edu.

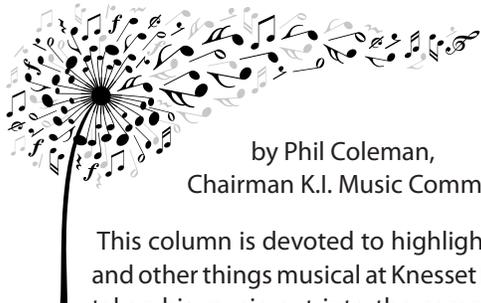


Presented in partnership with Kneset Israel and in cooperation with the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. Supported in part by a grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Music at K.I.

Musical Musings

Four Freedoms Coalition



by Phil Coleman,
Chairman K.I. Music Committee



This column is devoted to highlighting the musical talent and other things musical at Knesset Israel. Colin Ovitsky has taken his music out into the community in an influential and powerful way with the Jewish Musicians Collaborative.

Colin, it's great to sit down with you and feature the wonderful Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collaborative for my column this month. First of all, tell me how this came about.

Colin: Thank you, Phil, for the opportunity to share more about this project with the K.I. community. This past fall, in my work with the Four Freedoms Coalition, we began planning a concert for January called "Songs & Sounds of Solidarity," bringing to fruition one of our earlier ideas for an interfaith event with representation from various faith and folk music traditions. The concert was meant to bring our community together in solidarity with each other, not only as peoples of different faith backgrounds, but also in support of our immigrant community, people of color, under-resourced populations, and all who are under threat in our current political and social climate. We had groups from several local churches, spoken word performers, and the Williams College Gospel Choir, all of whom were amazing!

Once this concept was established, I decided to take on the responsibility of assembling a group to represent our local Jewish community, so I reached out to the various people with whom I've collaborated on Shirei Shabbat and the Purim Band at K.I. over the years. Thankfully, everyone enthusiastically agreed to join the project! Jonathan Denmark, with whom I've been playing music since childhood, has helped a great deal with the musical direction, arrangements and deftly guiding our rehearsals. Sherri James Buxton, in addition to lending her beautiful voice to our work, has offered wonderful insights in terms of song selections based on the meaning and messages of the songs. Paul Green has extensive experience in collaborative musical projects in different styles with other groups in the county and has allowed us to include klezmer in our repertoire, which has been a highlight for our audiences. Finally, Colby Lederman and Matt Mozian (of Hevreh) have been ready and willing to

participate, learn the music quickly, and show up whenever they're needed to enthusiastically lend their special talents to the group.

By calling it a "collaborative," my hope is that we will have a core group with those already involved, and that we will also be able to welcome additional members to perform as various opportunities arise. I also hope to be able to fold in more participants from other congregations as we go forward, as it's mostly K.I. members now other than Matt. As long as the music we're performing has some sort of Jewish connection, anyone is welcome to participate!

What are your musical inspirations for this group?

Colin: The inspirations for the group are manifold, as the roots and branches of Jewish music can go in so many different directions. Whether the music has a liturgical source, represents a particular region or era of Jewish music, or is simply written by a Jewish person with little direct connection to the religion, the broad concept of "Jewish music" allows for an incredible range of possibilities. We only have a very small repertoire so far, but it includes modern melodies to liturgical texts, a traditional klezmer song and a song by a modern Israeli world music group. We have considered music from the realms of Jewish summer camp songs, folk music by Jewish songwriters, and of course, Debbie Friedman and other well-known writers of mod-

...part of this project's aim is to demonstrate the breadth and depth of what can be considered "Jewish music," and to share all of this music with the wider community.

ern Jewish music. I would love for us to branch into jazz, pop, rock, Broadway, world music and other styles with so many important contributions from Jewish composers and musicians, as part of this project's aim is to demonstrate the breadth and depth of what can be considered "Jewish music," and to share all of this music with the wider community.

The connecting points of Judaism and Jewish people to these ideas and certain types of music go back a long time, and of course the theme of the band is tightly tied to the concepts of social justice. How relevant are these themes in your music and for the times we are living in now?

Colin: The social justice theme was part of the primary impetus for starting this group for the concert in January. While we came up with the name with the idea that we could continue to evolve and perform for other events, it was only after that original concert that we discovered there was more interest

continued on page 10

together.

Joyfully stuff envelopes
with other mailing mavens!

Be a GLEE star
at Shriei Shabbat

Comfort a loss
with Chevra Kaddisha

•
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learn.

Lifelong learning at KI!
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children to stimulating classes
and programs for adults...

•
Lunch & Learn

Discover your inner Torah
Feed your spirit through
artistic expression

•
visit the calendar page at
knessetisrael.org

grow.

Start where you are
Beam with new insights
Seek guides to the unfamiliar
Nourish mind, heart & soul

•
visit

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for opportunities!

Musical Musings

continued from page 9

from the community in having us do so. To me, the reception that we received at that initial event and the additional performance offers that were generated by that very brief four-song set, are a powerful statement about the universality of the themes of peace, solidarity, brother/sisterhood, freedom and protest against oppression that are so prevalent in Jewish music.



The Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collaborative: Paul Green, Sherri James Buxton, Colin Ovitsky, Colby Lederman, and Jonathan Denmark

The fact that ancient liturgical texts such as “Hine Ma Tov” and “Oseh Shalom” can have just as much relevance to our world today is a bit paradoxical to me. In one sense, it is disheartening that we still need to pray and yearn for peace and unity to this extent thousands of years later. However, I also find it inspiring that these themes have always remained at the core of Judaism, and that we can still find meaningful ways to share these messages with the world from our earliest texts and traditions. That simultaneous connection, both to our ancestry and to our local and global community today, has always been one of the most powerful elements of Judaism to me.

Tell me about the Four Freedoms group’s local activities and how that is tied in with the formation of your band.

Colin: The January concert was one of many events that we have planned over the past year, and really the only one that had a primarily artistic or interfaith focus. For those who aren’t familiar, “Four Freedoms” refers to values, articulated by President Franklin D. Roosevelt in a speech in 1941, which were “freedom of speech and expression,” “freedom of worship,” “freedom from want,” and “freedom from fear,” so all of our efforts are based on these core universal values. Most of our work focuses on civic engagement, encouraging and supporting people in the Berkshires to get involved in their local communities, support the causes and organizations that are important to them, advocate for and with those for whom these freedoms are being threatened, and even

Music at K.I.

to run for office. Bringing people together through music and other artistic forms is yet another powerful way to accomplish meaningful progress.

What was it like doing the concert in January in front of that huge audience?

Colin: There were around 400 people there, and it was great! I think most of us on-stage had at least some experience performing in front of larger crowds, but the difference in this case, for me at least, was the diversity of the crowd. In terms of age, religion, race, ethnic background, etc., this was by far the most heterogeneous crowd for which I have performed. There was even a strong representation from some of our K.I. teenagers, which was great to see, and they were especially supportive of Colby!

When the entire crowd started cheering for Paul's clarinet intro and then clapping to the beat during our klezmer song, that was very powerful and moving. Getting that level of response from such a diverse crowd to a somewhat obscure and older form of music from a relatively limited geographic region was really exciting, and to me, that moment really validated everything we were doing.

We recently performed for the Rites of Passage and Empowerment (R.O.P.E.) program's fundraiser. Through this program, a group of local young women of color are spending their April school vacation week on a service learning trip to South Africa, where they'll be volunteering at an orphanage, visiting historic sites such as Nelson Mandela's birthplace, and learning about the struggle of freedom against apartheid.

We were honored to be asked to perform, both as an opportunity to share part of our culture as well as to express these universal themes related to peace, unity and freedom. The struggle for equality is a common thread among so many people across the globe, but particularly for African Americans and black South Africans. It was especially powerful to share the Jewish perspective and perform Hebrew songs to a diverse multi-cultural audience, primarily made up of African Americans for a group of girls preparing to go to South Africa. We handed out sheets containing both our transliterated Hebrew lyrics and their English translations so that these meanings were more evident. Perhaps the best moment, though, was when someone requested "Hava Nagila," so we played an unrehearsed impromptu version while Sherri taught the hora to an enthusiastic group of dancers!

Anyone who is interested in joining the group or learning more is welcome to contact me anytime!

Thank you Colin, you are amazing!

Thanks to all the members of the Berkshire Jewish Musicians Collaborative for this great story!

Important Funeral Fee Update

Kneset Israel and Dagnoli Funeral Home have agreed on a new discounted funeral package price of \$4,000 for K.I. members who will be buried in our cemetery or Ahavath Sholom Cemetery. This fee also applies to non-members buried in our cemetery.



This change is the first in the eleven years since K.I. entered into an agreement with Flynn and Dagnoli. The K.I. board of directors approved the change at its March 21 meeting.

The fee of \$2,920 for members of five years or more will not change.



learn. inspire. grow. together.

Niggunim Singing Circle



K.I. has formed an informal monthly Niggunim Singing Circle, a context for participants to learn and sing beautiful melodies. This contemplative practice based in the hasidic tradition is a growing trend in the American Jewish community. Listening to each other, we will create communal musical energy rather than musical perfection. All are welcome to come, sing and be inspired. Next meetings are scheduled for Monday, May 14, 7:00 p.m. in the chapel downstairs, and Monday, June 11, 7:00 p.m. in the library. For more information, contact Diana at office@knesetisrael.org.

Israel. 70 Years—70 Achievements —from “We Believe In Israel”, webelieveinIsrael.org.uk

April 19, 2018 marked the 70th anniversary of the State of Israel, and while its achievements are innumerable, many articles are trying to do just that. For the next seven months, KOL K.I. will highlight (in no particular order) ten of Israel's accomplishments—from the sublime and world changing to the small but important:

- 1. Statehood:** Israel survived an attack by 4 neighboring armies when it declared Independence in 1948. Newly formed Israel built an army to defend itself with 50% of the soldiers being Holocaust survivors.
- 2. Jewish Culture:** Israel has more museums per capita than any other country. Israel's most famous museums include Yad Vashem, the Israel Museum, Tel Aviv Museum of Art, and MadaTech.
- 3. Social Progress:** Israel is a multicultural society integrating people from 36 countries. Jewish people make up 75% of the population, Arabs 20% and other minorities 5%.
- 4. Social Progress:** Israel is the only country in the Middle East where the Christian population is increasing. Christians face persecution across the Middle East, except in Israel where freedom of religion is respected.
- 5. Technology:** Israeli navigation app, Waze, gets you from A to B based on live traffic data and hazard alerts. Waze won 'Best Overall Mobile App'-18th Annual Global Mobile Awards in 2013.
- 6. Medical:** Israeli company, Given Imaging, developed a swallowable camera, PillCam, to detect and diagnose problems around the intestine, instead of having an invasive colonoscopy.
- 7. Self-Defense:** Israel has developed its own martial art, Krav Maga, which is taught all over the world. It is a weaponless form of self-defense.
- 8. Green:** More than 90% of Israeli homes use solar power to heat their water.
- 9. Women:** Israel was the first country to pass a law requiring advertisers to note if a model's image has been photoshopped, and banning models appearing in fashion commercials if their BMI is under 18.5, in order to tackle eating disorders and promote body positivity.
- 10. Education:** Israel has the highest ratio of university degrees to its population.

To be continued next month!

Knesset Israel Volunteers Needed! Sunday, May 6

We will come together with members of the entire Berkshire Jewish Community to raise money for the Jewish Federation's Annual Campaign. Together, we can build, strengthen and care for our Jewish community across the Berkshires, in Israel and around the world.

MAKE THE CALL

Two convenient phone-a-thon locations.
Food, fun and training provided!

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
196 South Street, Pittsfield
9 am-12:30 pm

Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center
Administrative Office
244 Main St. Suite #3, Great Barrington, MA
9 am- 12:30 pm

Follow up phone-a-thons also need volunteers!

Tues, May 15, 3-5 pm or 6:30- 8 pm at Federation
Wed, May 23, 3-5 pm or 6:30-8 pm at Hevreh
Thus, May 31, 3-5 pm or 6:30-8 pm at Federation

RSVP: 413-442-4360, ext 10
or online at jewishberkshires.org



ANSWER THE CALL

If your phone rings on Super Sunday, answer it. Your contribution to the Federation's 2018 Annual Campaign -- whatever it is you can give -- will help feed the hungry, comfort the elderly and care for Jews in need here at home, in Israel and around the world. It will also help connect our young people to their Jewish identity, build community and help sustain Jewish life in the Berkshires, today and for future generations.

Knesset Israel is a proud affiliate and beneficiary of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires



Jewish Federation®
OF THE BERKSHIRES

Special thank you to the Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center, Berkshire United Way and Cohen, Kinne, Valicente and Cook

5/1- 16 IYAR

Anna Nathanson
Bruce Kolman
Eva Bookless Bialor
Israel Tighe
Louis Moiseff



“Those who live no more, whom we loved,
echo still within our thoughts, our words, our hearts.
And what they did and who they were becomes
a part of all we are, forever.”

5/2 - 17 IYAR

Jack J. Levine
Ruth Ann Ovitsky

5/3/ - 18 IYAR

Bernice Horner
Schwartz
Joseph Cohen
Morris Freadman
Morris Silver
Rodney Lowell Penziner

5/4 - 19 IYAR

Abraham J. Swirsky

5/5 - 20 IYAR

David Landa
Harry Haselkorn
Matilda Novick
Milton Seaman

5/6 - 21 IYAR

Emanuel Cohen
Isadore Goodheartz
Jean Ruth Goldstein

5/7 - 22 IYAR

Abram Kuskin
Ana Rosner
David Nissenbaum
George Slaminsky
Irene Staskin
Irving Wolfe
Molly Rosenshein
Shifra Perlman

5/8 - 23 IYAR

Abigail Toby Landa
Anna Samel Hyman
Less
Molly Battle
Shlomo Martin
Sophie Mandel

5/9 - 24 IYAR

Abraham Katz
Louis B. Horowitz
Maurice S. Marmulstein
Norman Palefsky
William Ovitsky
William S. Altman

5/10 - 25 IYAR

Fannie Shalett
Jennie Jaffee
Paul Mandel

5/11 - 26 IYAR

Esther Honigsbaum
Risa Graubard

5/12 - 27 IYAR

Annie Meiorowitz
Diane Reife
Gustave Secunda
Jacob Jack Cohen
Samuel L. Rosenberg
Sylvia B. Bookless

5/13 - 28 IYAR

Reba Kaufman

5/14 - 29 IYAR

David Miller
Helen Miller
Sadye Sokolove
Vladimir Zeygerman

5/15 - 1 SIVAN

Theresa Levinson

5/16 - 2 SIVAN

Alexander Hirshberg
Anne Cohen
Harold Marks

Helen Krawet
James Weisberg
Joseph Strul
Meyer Paskowitz

5/17 - 3 SIVAN

Anna Fainer Bookless
Arthur Rosenstock
Henrietta Garbowit
Ida Edelstein
Joseph Strul
Marion Kahn
Max Morgenstein
Stanley Fishman
Violet Schottenfeld

5/18 - 4 SIVAN

Arthur Green
David Zuckerman
Ethel Krancer
Ida Klein
Mary Garbowitz
Sidney Schlichter
William Abramowitz

5/19 - 5 SIVAN

Anna Levinson
Brochin
Ida M. Braun
Jerome Goldenberg
Laeita Israelite
Udell Rudnick

5/20 - 6 SIVAN

Bertha Jacobs
Ida Pill
Jacob Rosenblatt
Minerva Alperin
Norman M. Israelite

5/21 - 7 SIVAN

Harry Green
Mary Kay

5/22 - 8 SIVAN

Bentze Rozenblyum
Katherine Johnson
Morris Secunda

5/23 - 9 SIVAN

Alan Lipton
Goldie Kraushar
Herman Wolk
Joseph Weiser
Larry Dubin
Norma Bell

5/24 - 10 SIVAN

Alfred Kornbluth
Fae Model
Gertrude Jaffe Rispler
Harry Aronovitz

5/25 - 11 SIVAN

Anna Lovitt Levine
Bernard Udel
Dr. Howard Kanner
Eric Weeks
Marsha Weltman
Rabbi Avraham Soltes
Robert Lewis
Serena Lefkowitz

5/26 - 12 SIVAN

Chaina Gold
Ethel Bergman
Ira Milstein
Rebecca Stern

5/27 - 13 SIVAN

Herman Mindlin
Jacob Shalett

5/28 - 14 SIVAN

Albert Bashevkin
Beatrice Safran

David Minsky
Fannie Abramowitz
Israel Boxer

5/29 - 15 SIVAN

Dr. Benjamin Rosenthal
Isabelle Kosberg
Rose Freeman
Rose Kauderer

5/30 - 16 SIVAN

Abraham Samuel
Flashner
Arthur Zuckerman
Lillian Schechter
Pauline Weinstein
Samuel Adelson

5/31 - 17 SIVAN

Etta Stoll
Gertrude Wiederkehr
Herbert Lebowitz
Jerome Frank

6/1 - 18 SIVAN

Adelle Goldblum
Marian Liverman

6/2 - 19 SIVAN

Elizabeth Lipson
Ralph Levine
Sarah G. Cohen
Sarah Katsh
Stanley Shapiro



Funds & Endowments

ADULT EDUCATION FUND

With much appreciation for
Myrna's classes

Josephine Brunjes

In memory of Sandy Braun

Myra Abeles Feldman

In memory of Jerome Goldman

In memory of Paul Rich

Myrna and Elie Hammerling

ARTHUR AND TERRY WASSER ENDOWMENT

In memory of Harry Wasser

In memory of Paul Rich

Terry and Arthur Wasser

BUBBE AND ZAYDE SHINDLER ENDOWMENT

In honor of Elaine Shindler's birthday

Lori, Bruce, Larry and Alexander Fish

CEMETERY CONTRIBUTIONS

In memory of Mollie Jacobs

The Landa Family

In memory of Moysey Kirshteyn

Galina Sirota

In memory of Joseph Yurfest

Joseph Yurfest and Kathy Fraker

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In memory of Charles Robbins

In memory of Erma Raflowitz

Lois Kronick and Joanne Kronick

CHARLES KOBRITZ ENDOWMENT

In memory of Charles Kobritz

Jane Widitor

CHESED FUND

In memory of our father, Ben Cohen

Jerry and Anita Cohen

In memory of Isaac Zulutsky

Jane Widitor

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In memory of Shirley J. Bookless

Nan Bookless and Maxine Bookless

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In memory of Boris Zernitsky

Sima Berezkina

In honor of Steven Skoblow's birthday

In memory of Gertrude A. Goodman

Kermit Goodman

In memory of Ethel Taubin

Rochelle Leinwand and Morton Taubin

In memory of Stella Levine

Nan and Allan Lipton

In memory of Paul Rich

Martin and Shifra Perlmutter

In memory of Everett Fletcher

Laura Rosenthal

In memory of Paul Rich

Beatrice Selig

In memory of Vera Gangel

Barbara Gershen Swartz

HARVEY AND JANIS ZIMBLER ENDOWMENT

In honor of the birth of Jan and Harvey
Zimblers new grandson!

Laura Rosenthal

Carole Siegel

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In honor of Rebecca Cook-Dubin for her
wonderful and inspirational work with
Junior Congregation

Ellen and Tobi Lanciano

In memory of August Rossomando

Janet and David Rothstein

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In memory of Fanny Novick

In memory of Paul Rich

Elaine Epstein

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In memory of Bernie Starr

In memory of Norma Siegel

In memory of Sarah Kaplan

In memory of Shirley Starr

The Karlin Family

KIDDUSH FUND

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Mazel Tov in honor of the birth of
grandson to Richard and Marcie
Greenfield Simons

Diana Geller and Andy Geller

In honor of the marriage of Michael and
Susan Albert

Stephanie Ilberg-Lamm

In memory of Abraham Deutch

In memory of Jerome Goldman

Jan Caryl Kaufman

In memory of Jerome Goldman

In memory of Pauline Mass

Alan and Margery Metzger

In honor of Beth and Bernie Abramson,
Mazel Tov on their big anniversary

In memory of Carole Schiller Krauss

In memory of Minnie Schiller

In memory of Paul Rich

Len and Alice Schiller

In memory of Jack Widitor

Jane Widitor

LIBRARY BOOK RESERVE

In memory of Rhoda Silverman Amron

Carole Siegel

MATTHEW RICH ENDOWMENT

In memory of Paul Rich

Barbara Kolodkin

Elaine and Lenny Lipton

MISHLOACH MANOAT FUND

In honor of Susan Gordon

Williams College

Thank you for the Mishloach Manot

Ruthie Frommer and Ken Amron

With sweet appreciation for the
mishloach manot.

Pattie Lipman and John Huffaker

Thank you for the Mishloach Manot

Roney and Gail Weis

PRAYERBOOK FUND

In memory of Ethel Prives

In memory of Jacob Kirsch

Joel and Loretta Prives

Funds & Endowments

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In honor of Ellie and Mike Geller
In memory of Jerome Goldman
With thanks for Mishloach Manoat
Amy Abramovich

In memory of Jerome Goldman
In memory of Paul Rich
Joel and Phyllis Curran

In memory of Abe Geller
In memory of Harry Weinberger
In memory of Jerome Goldman
Ellie and Michael Geller

With thanks
Cindy and Ed Helitzer

In memory of Elissa Landes
In memory of Rhoda Silverman Amron
Brenda and Fred Landes

In memory of Leonard Liverman
Thank you for the Mishloach Manot
Elaine and Lenny Lipton

In memory of Temah Rashken
Viktor Rashkes

In memory of Bertha Rosenblatt
Bob and Roz Rosenblatt

In honor of the birth of Marcie and
Richie Simon's new grandson!
Laura Rosenthal

In memory of Hilda Dunaieff
Harriet and Harold Shair

In honor of Susan Abramovitz
being honored by Town and Village
Synagogue in NYC
Carole Siegel

In memory of Nathan Bass
*Ruth, Robert, Nicole and
Alyssa Waldheim*

RENEWAL FUND

In memory of Moysey Kirshteyn
Carole Siegel

In memory of Jerome Goldman
*Bernie and Beth Abramson
Barbara and Murray Akresh
Yvette Bastow
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Dana and Jeff Siegel
Carole Siegel
Lora and Sig Tobias
Fran and Joel Wolk*

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In memory of Anna S. Bookless
Nan Bookless and Maxine Bookless

SHARON AND IRA SIEGEL ENDOWMENT

In memory of David Siegel
Sharon Siegel

MARCIE GREENFIELD SIMONS ENDOWMENT

In honor of the birth of Marcie and
Richie Simons new grandson!
Everett and Stephanie Ilberg-Lamm

STANLEY AND FAYE SIMKIN ENDOWMENT

In memory of Stanley Simkin
Peter Simkin

WILLIAM AND MARILYN SIMONS ENDOWMENT

In honor of Marcie and Richie Simons
being grandparents
In honor of Marilyn Simons being a
great grandmother!
Carole Siegel

**Minimum donation to funds is \$5.
Endowment fund minimum is \$10.
We welcome contributions in any
amount. Contributions of
less than \$5 not publicized.**

Spring Clean-up

*Professional headstone cleaning:
at a discount!*



Following on the success of our first monument cleaning last summer, the K.I. Cemetery Committee is coordinating another group discount cleaning. • We currently have eight monuments signed up. When there are cleaning requests for 25 monuments, we will schedule the contractor. The cost per monument is \$65.

Please e-mail Diana (office@knes-setisrael.org) with the name(s) on the monument(s) you would like to have cleaned.



Honor or remember
your special occasion or
a loved one with a
donation to the
Bima Flower Fund.

Call Naomi Schwartz at
413-841-0006.



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Did you know?

- that the weekly parshah is summarized at the bottom of our weekly e-news?
- The Book of Life, outlining K.I.'s policies and guidelines about death and burial, can be downloaded from our website?
- that the KOL K.I. monthly bulletin is archived on our website?

Shabbat across the Berkshires
Friday, June 1 at 6:15pm
hosted by Heureh
(details in this Kol K.I. page 7)
There will be birthday cake to celebrate Israel's Birthday!

Raffle Tickets are still for sale
The Kneset Israel Raffle continues with HUGE prizes including admission to summer and year 'round programming!
Full listing of prizes are on the back of April, 2018 Kol K.I. and on the K.I. website.

TICKETS
may be purchased from
Myrna at 413-445-4872 x 16 or
Diana at 413-445-4872 x 10

\$25 /Ticket
Buy 5 tickets @ \$100=
one FREE ticket

CELEBRATING ISRAEL 70 at THE BERKSHIRES

01234