



February 2024
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Hakol • הקול

A Heart of Many Rooms

By Rabbi Benjamin Barnett

I've written previously about the disputes between Hillel and Shammai as a model for navigating tensions among and within us. One rabbinic text wonders what to learn from such entrenched disagreements, and concludes: "Make for yourself a heart of many rooms, and enter into it the words of the House of Shammai and the words of the House of Hillel."

This instruction is, for me, one of the most profound in our tradition, one I apply in my life and in my understanding of the world. And nearly four months after October 7, I feel the need for it more than ever. I'm not speaking here about differences of political analysis, though of course it has its place there as well. But right now I feel this text as a call to remain diligent about honoring the humanity of every person suffering amid this horror. Which is why I resonate so deeply with **Standing Together**, a grassroots movement of Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel. They are among the leaders of the anti-war protests in Israel, and at the same time are crystal clear about their vision of a shared future for Palestinians and Israelis. A recent **article** in Haaretz highlights what is at the heart of that vision: "...Israelis are 'forbidden' to show pity for Gazans, and Palestinians are 'forbidden' to show pity for Israelis. Standing Together is effectively proposing a third way...You can feel pain for both." And feeling pain for both peoples, it is important to note, does not mean remaining silent or



Havurahniks gathered together at our Hanukkah Celebration this past December.

avoiding controversy, as demonstrated by the organization's courageous calls for a ceasefire.

We have so much work to do as Jews to genuinely recognize Palestinian humanity. I want to state clearly as well, though, that I find troubling how the left often brushes aside what Israelis have endured since October 7. I am not talking about from Palestinians, whose own trauma and grief and fear is of course all-encompassing. But those of us raising our voices in solidarity with Palestinians need to distinguish opposition to the Israeli government and military from how we consider and talk about the lives and experience of Israeli people.

I do not believe that Israel's military assault will make anyone safer. I believe it will be looked back upon as a moral and strategic disaster. So I am unequivocally for ceasefire, for

a negotiated return of the hostages, for a diplomatic rather than military path. But that in no way diminishes my solidarity with Israelis in their trauma, grief, and fear. I want an end to this violence because I want all Israelis and Palestinians to live safely.

Making a heart of many rooms is not easy. Much in our world conspires toward a more constricted view. And sometimes that view is necessary. But those of us removed from this violence, I believe, have a responsibility to maintain that many-chambered heart. Not solely for compassion's sake, but because honoring everyone's humanity might most effectively support the possibility of Israelis and Palestinians one day creating a future of mutual safety, freedom, and dignity.

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Havurah Simchas

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Hakol • הקול

The Voice of Havurah Shalom
Portland's Jewish Reconstructionist Community

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[Hakol Contribution Deadline](#)

Tuesday, February 20

[Havurah Website Calendar](#)

[Weekly Email \(Hineinu\)](#)

[Contribution Deadline](#)

Tuesdays by Noon

[Misheberach List Form](#)

Havurah Shalom: Our mission is to provide a vibrant, diverse, participatory Jewish community steeped in spirituality, learning, and acts of social responsibility.

Shabbat: Saturday Mornings

Weekly Torah Study

*9 am, Saturdays, Havurah Shalom
and Zoom Room Bet*

An in-depth look at the weekly Torah reading, led by congregants. No prior knowledge or study is necessary.

Shabbat Morning

*10 am, Saturdays, Havurah Shalom
and Zoom Room Aleph*

All are welcome at our Shabbat services, including b'nei mitzvah services.

B'nei Mitzvah

Havurah will call to the Torah the following B'nei Mitzvah:

February 17

Maya Oh

Child of Rachel & Han Oh

March 2

Samual Pomerantz-Roll

Child of Karen Pomerantz & Ian Roll

Please join us in celebration and in welcoming them as members of our community.

Condolences

Arthur "Artie" Keys, father of Patrick Keys, father-in-law of Rachell Keys, grandfather of Marissa and Brandon, passed away on January 1 in Ramsey, New Jersey.

Stacy Marger, sister of Jenn Louis, passed away on January 16, surrounded by family.

Mady Frydman, sister of Stephen Lebwohl, sister-in-law of Carol Stampfer, aunt of Rachel Oh (Han Oh), Mariah Lebwohl (Yshai Boussi), and Ben Lebwohl (Gwendolyn Kaplin), passed away on January 18.

Asdrubal "Cacho" Carranza, cousin of Carolina Martinez, passed away on January 2. Carolina's friend, **Maria Corredoira de Menjoulou**, passed away on January 21.

Lorraine Clara Veneklase, mother of Chuck Veneklase and grandmother of Rose and Roger Bobowick Veneklase, died on January 27 at the age of 96.



CELEBRATIONS

Family Shabbat on Saturday, February 10

10:30 am to 12 pm, Saturday, February 10 — Havurah Shalom and Zoom Room Aleph

As part of our Shabbat School, families meet for a fabulous morning of singing, storytelling, and Torah learning. Especially for families with youth in Grades K-6. Everyone is welcome. [RSVP](#)

Purim Playtime, a Four-Session Class

7 pm to 8:15 pm, Mondays, February 26 to March 18 — Havurah Shalom

For all ages! This class is for anyone who has ever wanted to stage a play. As a group we'll figure out how to retell the story of Queen Esther dramatically in a way that's relevant for our times, and then perform that play on Purim for the Havurah Shalom congregation. Over four sessions, we'll explore what makes good theater, how to write a script and a song, and then turn our crazy ideas into a fully staged production. Actors, writers, artists, and musicians, no matter what your age or experience, this is your chance to show off your talents, create a captivating theater experience for your community, and have fun! Taught by Karen Polinsky. [RSVP](#)

Join Our Next Kabbalat Shabbat Celebration: Friday, February 9

Kabbalat Shabbat Celebrations—a family-friendly oneg followed by a service led by Rabbi Benjamin and Havurah musicians, with dinner afterward. Our monthly Kabbalat Shabbat celebrations take place on the second Friday of each month, October through May. *6 pm Oneg, 6:30 Service, 7:30 Dinner (dinner requires registration).* All are welcome!

Helping Out at the Celebration: Havurahniks, can you help out at the January Kabbalat Shabbat Celebration? Volunteering at Kabbalat Shabbat can be a nice way to connect with other Havurahniks, and many helping hands are needed to make Kabbalat Shabbat a success each month.

[Click here](#) to explore available volunteer shifts, which start at just 15 minutes.

Oneg and Service: The oneg (6 pm) and service (6:30 pm) do not require an RSVP/registration. All are welcome.

Requesting to Register for Dinner. ***As of this moment, we are virtually all booked for dinner, although there are a couple dinner slots left and we may also get cancellations.*** If you wish to inquire if you can register for the dinner portion (7:30 pm), learn [how to make a dinner registration request](#) for the Feb. 9 dinner. Please await email confirmation from Tara that your registration has been accepted (by the next business day), as we may run out of dinner slots. The suggested donation for dinner is \$18 per adult meal, and you'll be sent information on how to make any contribution you would like to make if your dinner registration can be accepted.

Cancelling Dinner Reservations: If you registered for the February 9, 2024 dinner and have since determined that you won't be able to make it, please email Tara Anderson (tara@havurahshalom.org) as soon as possible. Please include "Kabbalat Shabbat Dinner Cancellation" in the subject line of your email. Please also make sure to list the names of all people who are canceling in your party.

Working with Our Staff: Collaborative Performance Reviews

By David Kertzner, Co-President

Community members have asked us whether Havurah Shalom conducts performance reviews for the work of our staff. The answer is yes!

As an employer of seven people now, Havurah tries to follow best practices in our effort to provide a supportive work environment marked by clear expectations and opportunities for our staff to grow professionally and personally as valued members of our community.

Our Program Staff at Havurah includes our Program Director, Adela Basayne; our Education Director, Deborah Eisenbach-Budner and Rabbi Benjamin Barnett. Each of these staff members engages in a performance evaluation process that includes a survey of some community members with multiple-choice questions and open-ended text feedback. The Program Staff person helps design survey questions in collaboration with supervisors (members of the Presidents' Team).

The survey is sent to 40-60 com-

munity members – a list generated by the staff person (in collaboration with supervisors) that includes people from different community roles whom they engage with regularly. Responses are anonymous. The Program Staff member also completes a written reflection on areas of success looking back, and areas of focus for improvement for the upcoming year. They also identify responsibilities that might be appropriate for community members to take on.

Our approach to Performance Evaluations prioritizes the process as a collaborative learning experience for everyone involved. Not only is the staff member learning about themselves in their work, but the community is learning about this person's job – even our Rabbi's job – by reflecting on the staff member's engagement with those surveyed.

The process concludes with a supervisory meeting to review data and discuss learnings. So far, the system has been received positively by all parties involved.

A similar process for performance

reviews will be followed in the coming months for our Support Staff who are supervised by the Program Director and the Education Director. Support Staff members include our Office and Facilities Manager, Rachel Pollak; our Finance Manager, Shari Raider; our Youth Education and B'nei Mitzvah Program Coordinator, Carrie Kirschner and our Participation and Publications Coordinator, Tara Anderson.

While the review process described here attempts to be more formal and scheduled, we recognize that performance feedback should be continuous and ongoing. If members have constructive comments regarding staff performance that you think supervisors should be aware of, we encourage you to reach out to staff directly, or to anyone on the Presidents' Team. If you have comments or suggestions regarding supervision or the performance evaluation process at Havurah, please reach out to me, David Kertzner.

One thing is certain: we are grateful to have all our staff with us!

On the Proposal to Form a Committee for Palestinian Justice: A Message from the Havurah Presidents' Team

The Havurah Shalom Steering Committee recently considered a proposal to form a Committee for Palestinian Justice within the Tikkun Olam Cluster. After lengthy consultation, review and discussion, the proposed committee did not receive Steering Committee approval. If you are interested in learning more about the process, the Presidents' Team offers [these reflections](#).

CELEBRATIONS/TIKKUN OLAM

Racial Justice Committee Holds Gathering to Honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

By Kathy Gordon

Despite challenging weather, fifteen Havurah members gathered on Martin Luther King Jr. Day to watch an incredible documentary on the leader, share pizza, and engage in a post-viewing discussion. This MLK Day would have been Dr. Martin Luther King's actual 95th birthday. The 2018 movie we viewed is called

Racial Justice Committee

I Am MLK Jr. Along with historic videos and photos, the movie features many intimate first-hand accounts from Dr. King's contemporaries, as well as perspectives from current young leaders for whom he was

an inspiration. The film editing was very effective, powerfully presenting his accomplishments, his challenges, and the immense toll his journey took on him. The movie is readily available for streaming.

Stay tuned for other movies sponsored by the Racial Justice Committee!

Havurahniks gathered this past Martin Luther King, Jr. Day for a viewing and discussion of the film *I Am MLK Jr.*



Come Join: The Havurah Racial Justice Committee Meets on Second Thursdays

7 pm to 8:30 pm, second Thursdays (next meeting: February 8) — Zoom Room Bet

Join this monthly meeting (second Thursdays) to hear what the Racial Justice committee is up to and see how you can be involved! It's ok if you haven't attended before. If you have questions about what the committee does feel free to reach out to Julia Lager-Mesulam, Bob Brown, Kathy Gordon or Jennifer Bruml.

Our Hearts are Hurting

By Keren McCord, Vice President

I felt compelled to write a piece this month to share with my beloved community about the state of my heart as I witness the war in Israel and Gaza. My heart is hurting, and I get the sense that there other people whose hearts are hurting too. To me, it has felt like a collective pain for our synagogue, but one that has separated us from one another rather than brought us together. I think it is reasonable for us to be uncomfortable with each other right now. The state of Israel and Gaza has evoked strong emotions in all of us. As time moves on I hope we can find our way back to one another. I believe this is a tender time for our community, and I recognize that we have a lot of work to do for us to move forward.

As a new member of the Execu-

Steering Committee

tive Leadership team, I have spent the last several months listening to many members of our congregation. There have been different perspectives about how we have shown up as a leadership team and as a congregation. I think we have worked hard to remain open and listen with compassion and understanding to all voices. I believe for some that has not felt like enough while others have felt supported. I want to acknowledge this pain. It has been visceral for so many. I hope that we can find ways to support all members so you feel seen, heard and supported.

So what's next? Where do we go from here? How do we reconcile

with one another? How do we as the Executive Leadership team and Steering learn from the last several months? These are the questions that I am pondering – the ones that have kept me up at night. As we look ahead, I think it will be important for us to look backwards and process how this all unfolded. I want you to know that we are committing time, energy and resources to this.

In closing, I want to express my commitment to this community. The road ahead is long, and I imagine it will be tough. We will have different passions and opinions, and I think it will feel challenging at times to hear one another. I think it will take trust and vulnerability, things that may be in short order right now. I want to believe that we can build these things together. I want to believe that our tent is large enough for all of us.

Courtyard Gate Passes at Steering

By David Kertzner, Co-President

At the January Steering Committee Meeting, an amended proposal to install a gate for the courtyard passed, 11-0. The [original proposal](#) was reviewed in three hybrid community meetings in December and January. The amended proposal removed the gate for the Kearney Street exit. This installation was postponed, with the expectation that it will happen in 2025 and possibly before then. Funding for the courtyard gate will come from a DHS grant. Read a Q&A about the original proposal [here](#).

As was shared in the community

Steering Committee

meetings, the primary reasons for the gates are to control access to the courtyard and the alcove on Kearney Street, and to establish physical and behavioral boundaries.

The gate will provide a deterrent for unwanted behavior in our spaces that we have seen over a long period, and will help make the space safer for everyone.

Our commitment is that the gate

will remain unlocked and latched open as often as possible. Staff will generate initial policies on managing the gate and modify those policies as we learn what is most effective. We will continue to welcome unhoused neighbors by day who follow courtyard rules and come to sit or to recharge phones in keeping with a central Havurah value of Rahamim: Care and compassion for all the ways in which we are suffering, and a commitment to patience and understanding with each other.

Many thanks to all the members who shared their thoughts on this proposal. Please contact David Kertzner, Co-President, with any questions or comments.

Examining American Racism through an Equestrian Lens

Horse, by Geraldine Brooks, winner of the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for *March*, is a story covering nearly 170 years of American history, stretching from antebellum Kentucky to present-day Washington, DC. Thoroughbreds provide the unifying element for this far-reaching narrative, but horses and the complex culture surrounding them are only devices for Brooks to explore her fundamental subject: race and its corrosive influence on our nation's foundation and cancerous impact on society today.

Told from the perspective of six characters, *Horse* interweaves the story of the Black equestrians who made their white masters fabulously wealthy with those of contemporary young professionals struggling to form relationships despite racial discrimination and misunderstanding. I was particularly impressed with Brooks' ability to interweave seamlessly the stories of her characters spanning different time periods. In

February Book Led by Leah Hershey

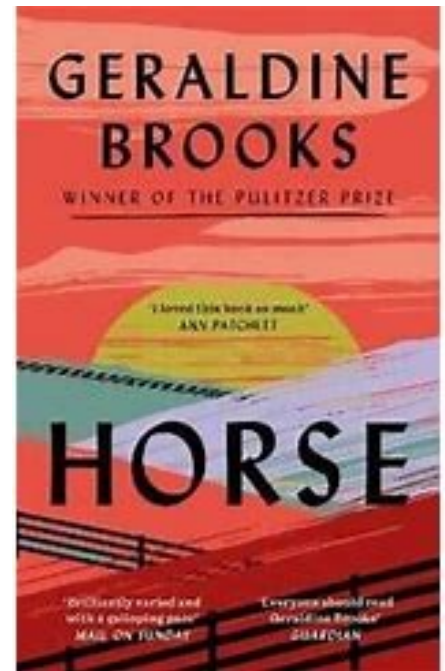
Horse

by Geraldine Brooks

Fiction, 401 pages

Tuesday, February 27
7 pm to 8:30 pm
Zoom Room Bet

addition, the development of horse racing in this country and the enslaved men who groomed and trained them was a fascinating piece of history with which I was unfamiliar. Based on the true story of Lexington, the greatest racehorse in American history, *Horse* is an imaginative and impeccably researched work of historical fiction, wonderful-



ly written as well as skillfully structured, with characters to connect to and a story that I cannot forget.

Discussion led by Leah Hershey. Nonmembers welcome. [RSVP](#) for Zoom info.

Havurah Lifelong Learning Committee: Adult Ed Looking for Members of Our Congregation Interested in Teaching a Class

The Lifelong Learning Committee is in the process of planning classes for the 2024/2025 year that will begin after High Holidays and run through the spring. Havurah Shalom has a rich history of offering congregant led adult education classes. Since Covid, classes have been both virtual and in person, depending upon what works for the subject matter and the instructor. The diversity of subjects have been grouped into three categories: experiential, cultural or spiritual. Examples include classes on Torah, Kabala, art, music, poetry, cooking, film discussions, history of Jews in various parts of

the world, and dealing with loss.

With the growth that Havurah has experienced in the last few years, we know that the expertise and knowledge that is available to us has also expanded. Even if you have never taught a class before—but have special skills, knowledge, and expertise—we encourage you to consider sharing that with others in the congregation.

While teaching positions are not paid, all of us are rewarded by this shared experience with a group of people who are eager to learn and appreciative of the opportunity. If this peaks your interest, please con-

tact Eve Berry, Joel Benin or Sue Abrams. They can help you talk through an idea for a class or provide you with more detail about how this process works. Their contact information is available in the [Havurah member directory](#).

Know that members of the Lifelong Learning Committee will be there to support you. We also welcome those who have taught classes in the past to consider once again participating, and we welcome suggestions you might have for a class but are not interested in teaching yourself.

Shared Israeli/Palestinian Society Events at the EJC

By Elinor Gollay

The Israel/Palestine Committee is co-sponsoring or recommending two important upcoming community events taking place at the Eastside Jewish Commons (2420 NE Sandy Blvd). We encourage all Havurah members to attend one or both events.

In this time of crisis, division, and seemingly endless darkness, both events feature discussions with leaders of organizations working towards a shared Israeli/Palestinian society. Building a truly shared society is more crucial than ever, as the threat of intercommunal violence looms large in mixed communities, workplaces, and other shared spaces.

On Sunday, February 18 at 2 pm, our very own Lee Gordon will be speaking about Hand in Hand: Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel. As many of you

Israel/Palestine Committee

know, Hand in Hand is a group of bilingual integrated schools for Arab and Jewish children that Lee co-founded in 1998.

And we are so fortunate for this extra treat: He will be joined by Emmanuel Auerbach, a Hand in Hand student from kindergarten through twelfth grade, now living in New York and visiting Portland. Starting out as one school with fifty students, Hand in Hand has grown to six campuses with two thousand Arab and Jewish students, fostering inclusion and equality.

In the midst of the Hamas attacks and subsequent war in Gaza, Hand in Hand has continued its important work building Jewish-Arab partnership and shared society in Israel. Says Lee, "Hand in Hand is a model

of what Israel *can* and *should* look like." We are privileged to have the opportunity to ask questions of Lee and Emmanuel and to learn of the particular challenges at this time of crisis.

On Wednesday, February 21 at 7 to 8:30 pm, there will be conversation with Jimmy Taber of the Israel-based Abraham Initiatives about the state of Jewish-Arab relations in Israel. The Abraham Initiatives is an important Israeli organization doing vital work. At this time of terrible darkness, their work on co-existence and advocacy for Palestinian-Israelis radiates some much-needed light. The Abraham Initiatives is working to build a shared society. Its advocacy has fostered ground-breaking initiatives that has Israeli citizens reaching across the deepest divisions to create a future of coexistence, cooperation and understanding. There is a \$10 fee for this event. Tickets available [here](#).



Hand in Hand students visited Havurah Shalom back in 2018 for Kabbalat Shabbat.

HAVURAH SHALOM

Havurah Music Jams Continue: Second Mondays!

Come play together in community! Bring your enthusiasm and your instrument! **The next jam—"Roll Into Light February Music Jam"—is Monday, February 12 from 7 pm to 8:30 pm at Havurah Shalom in the Pardes classroom.** The jams will continue monthly on the second Monday of the month. Song sheets will be provided and include a mix of country, folk, Jewish folk, liturgical, and popular music. Bring your instrument, your voice and your enthusiasm! [RSVP](#) for the February 12 and other scheduled second-Monday jam sessions.

Weekly Torah Study: Another Special Multi-synagogue Session on Feb. 17

9 am to 10 am, Saturday, February 17 — Havurah Shalom and Zoom Room Bet

An in-depth look at the weekly parsha; no prior knowledge or study is necessary. This is a wide-open discussion of the weekly parsha. All viewpoints are welcome as we try to draw lessons from the Torah. On Saturday, February 17, the usual weekly Torah study will be supplemented by a joint, multi-synagogue Torah study led by Havurah's Emily Simon. Members of Havurah will be joined by members of Emek Shalom in Ashland. We may even have some folks joining us from other parts of the country and maybe the world. These combined Torah study events have always been informative and a good way to build the Jewish community. Join us!

Leading Saturday Services

7 pm to 8:30 pm, Tuesdays, February 20 to March 12 — Havurah Shalom

Come to sing; learn to lead! This four-week class with Ken Lerner will teach the Shabbat morning music of the Birchot HaShachar (morning blessings) and P'sukei D'zimra (verses of praise). Hebrew reading is helpful but not essential. [RSVP](#)

HCAT Book Group: Bring Your Own Climate Book Event

5:30 pm, Monday, March 4 — Zoom Room Dalet

The HCAT Book group will be meeting in a one-time Bring Your Own Climate Book format. This will be a group for each person to have a little time to share out something relevant to climate protection that we have read. We will meet in Zoom Room Dalet. All are welcome to join.

Understanding October 7, 2023

Thursday, March 14 (7 pm to 8:30 pm), Sunday, March 17 (3 pm to 4:30 pm), and Thursday, April 2 (7 pm to 8:30 pm) — Havurah Shalom

This will be a three-session class, **Understanding October 7, 2023**, taught by Joel Beinin and Rabbi Benjamin in person at Havurah Shalom. More information coming soon to the [Havurah calendar/RSVP page](#) for this class.

March Mishegoss Postponed: *New Date TBD*

March Mishegoss, an event intended to be part one in a series of events dedicated to strengthening Havurah, must unfortunately be postponed to a later date (to be determined). We will be back with updates as soon as possible. We appreciate your understanding, and thank you to all those who have dedicated time and energy to this event. We look forward to regrouping in the near future.

HAVURAH COMMUNITY

Holding Our Differences of Opinion with Kindness and Compassion

By Shelley Sobel, Debbi Nadell, and Adela Basayne

We are writing this as members who have each served as president of Havurah in the past and who continue to work in leadership roles to support the congregation. We are proud to be part of such a unique community where, regardless of background, so many have found a welcoming Jewish home. The effort to be inclusive extends not just to personal and family situations but also to positions on many political and social issues.

As we believe is true of most members of Havurah, we are profoundly disturbed about the horrific events of October 7th and the continuing aftermath. While this is a disheartening time for many American Jews, we are sad to see how this has played out in our own community.

The Havurah we cherish and want to be part of is kind enough and compassionate enough to hold differences in opinions. The Havurah we strive to create shows respect for a multitude of views about complicated issues, and respect for those who hold a different view than ours. We all should feel safe expressing

our concerns, and not feel that our place in the community is diminished no matter how we see these issues.

In our desire to be heard, we also need to take time to hear the other side. We all need to acknowledge the merit of all points of view and not let our disagreements cloud over the joy we feel being in community together.

As the Rabbis taught in Pirke Avot, "Let your neighbor's dignity be as precious as your own." We know we can do better. We hope you will join us.



Sarah Stein told stories at our recent Hanukkah Celebration at Havurah Shalom.

HAVURAH COMMUNITY

My Own Private Israel

By David Lewis

Like many of us, I grew up thinking of Israel as a magical place. A place where Jews, so recently downtrodden victims of the worst humanity was capable of, now stood tall and proud, as Jews, building a new land. I pored over Robert Capa's pictures, moved by tanned, powerful men and women making the desert bloom, and later, inventing everything from drip irrigation to the cell phone.

Many years later, from 2006 to 2010, I had a number of chances to go there and teach week-long classes for my employer at the time. I was stunned by so much about the place. The companies where I taught were often run by women, and it seemed like equality of the sexes was real there (and in high-tech startups, I think it probably was). The first company where I taught offered me a job, and if I had not had a family I would have accepted

on the spot. What really floored me was the feeling, which I had never experienced, that who I was as a Jew was normal. If I wore a kippah to work, it didn't mean I was Orthodox or making a statement to anyone; some people wore one and some didn't, and no one made any comments. Doing so was what I had always wanted it to be but never articulated to myself: just a personal reminder of who I was and the standards of behavior I wanted to hold myself to. And the people, male and female, were so beautiful, confidently sexy in a way that was completely integrated into the whole person, not separated out to be packaged and sold (something I tied to the complete absence of sexually-based advertising). A place where family and community were not just words, but woven into the fabric of everyday life. I fell in love with the place, and the friends I made there. I still feel that way.

So it was very hard, when I took my first class at Havurah from our own Joel Beinin, to find that a lot of

what I grew up being told was at best not the whole picture. Many of us remember the famous picture of the Chalutzim, strong and sunburnt, with their shovels turning sand dunes into Tel Aviv. But behind the camera, out of the picture, was the thriving, hundreds-of-years-old, Arab port city of Jaffa, a city of which Ben-Gurion said, "If it went to hell, I would not be among those to mourn its loss." When I read his war diaries, I was shocked to see how clear he was that building the Jewish state they wanted would mean pushing the Arabs out, and that his was the dominant strain of thought.

I just held fast to the idea that, if Shlaimah was ever to come to that place, it couldn't begin by denying the historical reality of what had happened there, to both peoples. And that Ben-Gurion and his successors were wrong, that what I loved did not depend on erasing the people with whom we shared the land. I still feel that way too.

Reminder: Upcoming Sabbatical for Deborah Eisenbach-Budner

From the Havurah Presidents' Team:

Our Education Director, Deborah Eisenbach-Budner, will take part two of a well-deserved sabbatical beginning February 26, 2024. She returns on June 30, 2024. During this time, the wide-ranging demands of her position will be picked up by everyone, from our great staff to lay leaders, to Shabbat School Co-chairs and other congregants.

If you have questions, please reach out to Deborah before 'the last minute.' Her last day will be February 25.

Replenish well, Deborah!

Psychological Trauma of the Israel/Gaza War

By Dale Norma Oller

The complex psychological trauma of the Israel/Gaza War exists within a culture of conflict. From a psychological trauma-informed lens, I hope to take a deeper dive into the different terms and concepts used in talking about trauma, with a particular focus on how children experience this war. Discovery of the brutality and gender-based violence of the terrorist Hamas attack is traumatizing all of us. The Israeli psyche has been shattered by the horrific massacre of October 7th. At the same time, daily accounts of the number of Palestinian children killed and maimed, as well as photos of rubble in which these children lie, is also traumatizing all of us. The Palestinian civilians of Gaza (and the West Bank and East Jerusalem) have paid a high price for decades of the chronic trauma of indignity, oppression, and lack of rights and freedoms. World organizations are identifying Gaza as the most dangerous place for children. Finally, Diaspora Jews are polarized and, from this, experience a new kind of trauma.

Trauma can be acute, chronic, complex, or historical/generational. Trauma can result in resilience and allow a person to respond with exquisite adaptation to chaos, threats and abuse. Serious stress responses

are tolerable if buffered by support. October 7th was an *acute trauma* event. There will be no going back to before October 7th for the people of Israel/Palestine or the Diaspora. The impact of acute trauma is on the brain (fight/flight/freeze in the survival region), on relationships (seeking a sense of safety and trust) and on communities (rallying in support, craving a sense of belonging and susceptibility to misinformation, disinformation and blatant lies).

Chronic trauma on the other hand, is ongoing experiences, such as racism, systemic injustice, oppression, dehumanization, demonizing, marginalizing and continuous displacement. Palestinians in the occupied territories have all experienced chronic trauma. *Complex trauma* is a type of trauma which results from chronic trauma plus acute episodic trauma exposure. *Historic/generational trauma* accumulates psychological pain across lifespans and generations. Both indigenous peoples of the Land of Israel/Palestine have experienced extensive historic/generational trauma.

Well-known psychiatrist and author Bessel van der Kolk specializes in the psychology and treatment of trauma. In an in-depth article in *Foreign Affairs*, van der Kolk and co-author Jessica Stern weigh in on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They explain that terrorists see themselves as victims, and “hurt people hurt peo-

ple.” They observe that “[t]errorism is psychological warfare, and so it requires a psychologically informed response.” Its goal is to force the enemy to overreact, win sympathy and radicalize the next generation. Israel also sees itself as (and is) a victim in this war. The state’s response has been righteous rage and drunken revenge, desiring retribution. Both are vying for global sympathy. These experts in the psychology of trauma call for a moral case for ceasefire and ask for an understanding of the psychology of trauma. Jessica Stern was told twenty years ago by Ismail Abu Shanab, a founder of Hamas, “If Israel ramps up its fight against Hamas, it will only energize Hamas and other Palestinian terrorist groups and risk drawing Hezbollah, the Lebanese militant group, or even Iran into the conflict.” Historian Rashid Khalidi and journalist Peter Beinart also weigh in with opinions in this comprehensive article (which I highly [recommend](#)). Naming injustices and finding empathy and compassion are better alternatives to fighting with this level of bilateral hatred.

...

To read the rest of Dale Oller’s Hakol contribution, [please click here](#).

Gratitudes to Havurahniks!

By Loree Devery,
Immediate Past President

As we all know, there are many crises, issues and problems in our country and world to worry about. Yet, there are also countless items to be thankful for. Let's recognize some of the members in our community whom we are thankful for.

Many thanks to **Beka Feathers** for contributing to the Sanctuary Committee and the MACG Core Team. Beka has an amazing ability to synthesize and communicate ideas clearly, which enables action.

So much appreciation for **Julie Walcer**, who has helped shepherd and facilitate the jam and singalong programming at Havurah, including getting us set up with Google Groups for related affinity groups.

Gratitude to **Margie Rosenthal** for her consultation and contributions to the Jam group leadership team.

Gratitude to the leaders of the Jam and Singalong initiatives for stepping up to provide structure and

Steering Committee

context for more music at Havurah!!! **Sharon Klin, Nancy Chesler, Joel Shipper, Ken Lerner, Nancy Rosenbloom, Julie Hastings, Miriam Reshotko, Shelley Sobel, and Sally Hersh.**

Thank you to **Elinor Gollay, Lee Gordon, Program Staff, Oren Kosansky**, and others for organizing and facilitating *Panim el Panim* events which give us opportunities to express our feelings and listen to each other.

Thanks to **David Kertzner** and **Alexis Baghdadi** for helping us move forward in the process of possibly hiring a program coordinator for the next phase of the Havurah capital campaign.

Thanks to all members participating in the creation of Havurah's Brit

Kavod.

Gratitude to **Bill Kwitman, Julia Lager-Mesulam, and Herman Asarnow**, who agreed to take the lead on organizing Shavuot on behalf of the Hadracha cluster.

Appreciation to the **Leadership Development Committee** for organizing and facilitating the annual Leadership Retreat. We all appreciate that we are back to holding these retreats in person and able to have face-to-face conversations with old and new friends.

Belated but heartfelt thanks to **Sarah Stein** for her fabulous story telling at the Chanukah party.

And to the many Havurahniks not mentioned here who regularly or occasionally volunteer your time and skills to our community, *thank you!* We value your participation and contributions, and we couldn't do it without you.

If there is someone you would like mentioned, please email me, [Loree Devery](mailto:LoreeDevery@gmail.com).



HAVURAH SHALOM

Tributes

General Contributions

Mike and Dorothy Don, in honor of Carol and Sy Chestler.

Adult Education Fund

Dale Oller, in honor of Shirley Jaffe Oller.

Spiritual Life Fund

Stefanie Hausman and David Frost, in memory of Donald Hausman, father of Stefanie Hausman. May his memory be a blessing.

Refugee and Immigrant Fund

Laine and Joel Schipper, in memory of Stacy Marger, sister of Jenn Louis.

Robbin and Jan DeWeese, in memory my mother, Babs Isaacson, at her yartzheit.

Sheryl Horwitz, in memory of my father, Irving Horwitz.

Youth Activities Fund

Adela Basayne and Nick Iliinsky, in memory of my mother, Eleanor Babat.

Havurah Endowment Fund

Leah and Will Dawkins, in memory of Jacob Hyman.

Rabbi Discretionary Fund

Betsy Fogelman Tighe, in memory of my mother, Sissy Bershad, and father, Alvin Fogelman, on the occasion of their yartzeits.

Anonymous, in honor of Rabbi Benjamin for his ever-present kindness and generous spirit.

