



Protest in Ferguson, Missouri, over the murder of Michael Brown (2014). Photo by Brad Pector.

Revelation & Anti-Racism

by Rabbi Benjamin Barnett

This month we observe Shavuot. Originally a holiday celebrating first fruits, for the rabbis it became the day when Torah was received at Sinai, the moment of revelation. For us, it can be for revelation in the broadest sense of that word: A time of revealing what is hidden, a reminder that in our lives and our world there is always more waiting and needing to be revealed.

I remember the night of last Shavuot vividly. It was May 28, three days after George Floyd was murdered. The beginning of a new process of revelation, perhaps, in our country, as the dehumanizing and violent force that is structural racism was revealed to more of us more clearly than ever.

As we return to Shavuot once again, we might ask ourselves: Right now, within or around us, what needs to be revealed? What must we perceive more clearly?

The more I commit to the work of anti-racism, the more I realize that the revealing journey is a lifelong one. There will always be more for me to confront, within myself and in our society, as we work to dismantle white supremacy. And while there is so much that needs to be done out there, I realize increasingly how essential it is for us to do work right here. In other words, building and nurturing anti-racist communities is an essential component in co-creating a world free of racism.

Toward that end, please read the article on page 8 of this issue, “Anti-Racism and Belonging.” It offers background and an update from a small group of Tikkun Olam leaders and Jews of Color who have been engaged in conversation for several months. Being in dialogue with this group and with other Havu-

rah leaders and JOC has been deeply meaningful and moving for me, as we imagine together what it might look like to nurture a multi-racial community in which everyone belongs.

Havurah is already an amazing organization, with thoughtful, compassionate, and devoted leaders. And we have reached a moment in our society in which certain veils have been lifted and certain pathways opened which reveal to us obligations and possibilities that many of us were unaware of not long ago. For us to not travel those pathways right now within Havurah, while impacting our BIPOC members and families most directly, would be a profound loss for us all.

Because my sense is that, among those of us who are white, many more of us than ever feel a yearning to live in that world toward which these revelations point us, and that this yearning connects us to something essential to who we aspire to be as individuals and in community.

The revelation at Sinai was uncomfortable. At first the People turned and ran. But it was also loving, with the Divine voice resounding in myriad ways, unique to each person’s needs and capacities. And the revelation was collective, bringing us into genuine relationship with each other, through shared commitment to mutual care and responsibility. The work of anti-racism and belonging at Havurah can be all that as well. It can lead us, beyond revelation, to building a Mishkan, a sanctuary, in which we can each bring our authentic selves and be honored for the fullness of who we are.

*Right now, within or around us,
what needs to be revealed?
What must we perceive more clearly?*

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Hours of Operation

Monday – Thursday

10:00 am – 4:00 pm

Friday

10:00 am – 3:00 pm

The office will be closed until further notice. You can still reach staff during these hours.

June Hakol Submission Deadline

May 15

To find this form, go to havurahshalom.org/submit and click on the corresponding link.

Weekly Email Deadline

Every Tuesday at noon

To find this form, go to havurahshalom.org/submit and click on the corresponding link.

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Hakol is Havurah Shalom's monthly newsletter that is edited and designed by the Communications & Membership Coordinator. If you have any questions or comments please email him at brad@havurahshalom.org.

Book Group Discussion

Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History by Steven Zipperstein

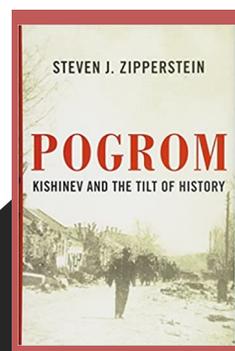
Tuesday, May 25, 7-8:30 pm

So shattering were the aftereffects of Kishinev, the rampage that broke out in late-Tsarist Russia in April 1903, that one historian remarked that it was “nothing less than a prototype for the Holocaust itself.” In three days of violence, 49 Jews were killed and 600 raped or wounded, while more than 1,000 Jewish owned houses and stores were ransacked and destroyed. Recounted in lurid detail by newspapers throughout the Western world, and covered sensationally by America’s Hearst press, the pre-Easter attacks seized the imagination of an international public, quickly becoming the prototype for what would become known as a “pogrom,” and providing the impetus for efforts as varied as The Protocols of the Elders of Zion and the NAACP. Using new evidence culled from Russia, Israel, and Europe, distinguished historian Steven J. Zipperstein’s wide-ranging book brings historical insight and clarity to a much-misunderstood

event that would do so much to transform twentieth-century Jewish life and beyond.

Steve Zipperstein is a professor (colleague of Joel Beinin) in Stanford’s History Department and was for many years the director of Stanford’s Program in Jewish Studies. He may be the most eminent historian of eastern European Jewry in the United States. With extraordinary scholarly energy, Zipperstein uncovers sources in Russian, Yiddish, and English that show not only why this bloody event ignited the Jewish imagination, its sense of embattlement in exile, but also why it had such lasting resonance internationally.

Discussion led by Joel Beinin.



[See the Book Group schedule here!](#)

What comes next for us human beings? Well, we'll get ourselves vaccinated, but will we be back or will something new replace us? As much as we say we are going to get on planes again, go to the movies and rock concerts, send the kids to school, how skittish will we feel? And how will months of bowing to rigorous public health recommendations against intermingling have an impact on our willingness to sit down with one another? The pandemic has peeled back a thin veneer of trust.

As Jews, will we go back to shul? Should we – if we're worried about either the more vulnerable among us, or the vaccine-hesitant?

In the Talmud, after the destruction of the Temple, the sages asked themselves similar questions, as the horizon looked bleak. Their spiritual paradigm was shattered, and they wondered about eating and drinking substances that until then they were commanded to share at the altar. Were they even permitted to eat bread or first fruits of the harvest? How were things supposed to work, going forward?

Some of the authorities focused on which foods they

would stop eating altogether. It was a lively discussion, except for the fact that what animated them was who could cut out more joy. To move in this direction would be like conceding to failure. There's a real danger that we can become so preoccupied with buttressing what we have left that we take our eyes off what comes tomorrow.

"Rabbi Yehoshua said to them: To mourn excessively is impossible, for decrees are not issued that the majority of the community cannot abide." (Bava Batra 60b)

Audacious as it might seem, he turned things around, to the future; and by saying that the needs of the majority took priority, he opened a conversation. Someone needed to articulate a *heter* – a release, which can at times present more of a challenge than issuing prohibitions. So may we in Havurah be inspired to look around us at others like us who are drawing up plans, revving the engines. In stages, we can move from the safety of physical separation to hybrid models of davening and learning, to full reengagement with one another. Thankfully, we hail from the tradition of Rabbi Yehoshua – we have the spiritual imagination to begin doing that exciting work right now.

Courtyard Task Force Update

In January, an inter-committee task force was formed to explore livability and safety issues at the Havurah Shalom courtyard. Representatives from the garden, design, safety, and poverty/homelessness committees and staff serve on the task force. Havurah's Steering Committee recently received an update on the Task Force's intended actions.

It appears the courtyard is at times a place of respite for neighbors, some of whom are homeless, who appreciate the benches, garden, and cell phone charging opportunities provided. On the other hand, we have also seen evidence of visitors abusing the space with garbage, human waste, and needles sometimes strewn about. The Task Force began work to identify and recommend actions to improve the situation for all.

Early on, we reached out to the Portland Street Roots Ambassador Program to understand more about life on the streets and think about how we could better engage visitors in mutually respectful and accountable ways. Two key strategies emerged:

A sign will be placed at the entrance to the courtyard to better identify the significance of the space; here's the sign's text:

Welcome to Havurah Shalom

We are a religious community committed to spirituality, learning and social justice.

All who seek a peaceful space are welcome in our garden.

Please help us care for this courtyard by keeping it clean and beautiful.

To keep the courtyard clean and safe, we have enlisted the services of a courtyard steward to pick up trash and dispose of needles several times per week. We have retained a frequent visitor as a contractor who will be paid a stipend. The steward, whose first name is Joseph, will be provided with supplies and safety items needed to deal appropriately with trash and needles. No access to the inside of the building will be provided. Joseph will report to Rachel Pollak, the office and facilities manager, who is available to answer your questions about this

arrangement. We will continue to make use of an outside vendor for human waste cleanup. Joseph has visited the courtyard for over ten years. He finds peace here, often picks up trash without being asked, and loves the space. We are pleased to welcome him.

Other considerations:

- Better outdoor lighting will help keep the courtyard more safe and secure. The installation of new LED lights is work in progress and should be completed soon.
- Trash containers in the courtyard were discussed but ruled out for security purposes. Efforts are underway to secure a "sharps container" for safe disposals.
- We researched bathrooms and services in the immediate neighborhood, to provide visitors with possible options. We contacted Rosehaven, a day shelter (at First Immanuel Lutheran Church) with services for women and children, including bathrooms open on weekday mornings. Couch Park has 24-hour restrooms available for men or women.
- Trial Period: We plan to monitor progress over the summer and meet again after the High Holidays in the early fall to assess whether other actions are needed.
- Installation of a courtyard gate (which has been under consideration in the past). Given many complexities, we want to proceed with the other steps first.

This task force brought together a variety of stakeholders from within Havurah and was able to identify a variety of creative solutions together. The Geshar process envisions just this sort of cooperation between committees, bringing together many perspectives, experiences and types of expertise to solve problems. Thanks to all who have provided their considerate thought, time and effort to this project! Barbara Gundle & Megan Koler (Gardening Committee), Joan Peck & Marcia Suttenberg (Design Committee), Joel Bettridge (Safety Committee), Rachel Pollak (Staff), Steve Rudman (Poverty & Homelessness Committee).

High Holidays COVID 2.0 Planning Underway

As we enjoy the beautiful long days of spring, we have begun to plan for our High Holidays observance starting in late summer. It will be our second holiday cycle affected by the pandemic, hence COVID 2.0 in the title of this article. Last year, staff and volunteers worked tirelessly to safely and meaningfully gather our community in a fully online environment, and these efforts were fruitful. Your responses to our post-holidays survey indicated a high level of gratitude and satisfaction.

A year later, some things are different, and some are the same. So, what will our observance look like? While we long to resume our traditional large, in-person gathering at the Tiffany Center, the ambiguities and challenges of the pandemic and the slow process of achieving herd immunity have led us to decide it is not yet time to return to that service model. Havurah's four-member president's team joined staff, service and tech leaders and other members of the planning team to consider and arrive at this decision.

While we acknowledge the heartache, this decision may cause many people, we draw strength from the progress that has been achieved in the past year and we anticipate brighter days ahead. As we move forward in our planning and decision-making, our highest priority remains the sanctity of life, Pikuah Nefesh. Our Crisis Core Team, which includes public health, medical and legal professionals, will continue to guide Havurah policies during the pandemic.

Below are key points in our planning so far. Keep reading to find out how you can get involved. What we are keeping from last year:

- Accessible and secure online services
- Vibrant programming throughout the month of Elul
- Tech support
- Online and downloadable content, from music to prayer-books
- Machzor lending library
- Mini-drashot woven throughout services that amplify diverse voices of our community

- Tikkun Olam tabling, schmooze rooms, and more

Where we are looking to innovate:

- Bring service leaders together, safely, at Havurah, for an increased sense of togetherness and harmony
- Hire AV/sound professionals to reduce the burden on staff, volunteers, and service leaders and provide for consistent quality
- Increase small group, socially distanced outdoor activities during Elul and the High Holiday cycle
- Foster COVID-safe, small group shtetl (modest gathering spaces) for communal prayer
- Find ways to effectively engage and activate our youth through the season

Next month, we will identify the theme that will guide our community during the coming year. Please anticipate the announcement of this theme and consider writing a mini-drash this summer in response to it. What's a mini-drash? A drash is traditionally an interpretation of text. At Havurah, we invite you to offer a short reflection on our annual theme. These thoughtful, personal responses help us see and know each other better and to learn from one another. If you have a great idea for an annual theme, please send it to Adela Basayne at adela.basayne@havurahshalom.org.

The hallmark of High Holidays at Havurah Shalom is the deep involvement of our community. Meaningful holidays arise from the work of many people coming together to offer ideas, discuss choices, and perform the thousands of individual tasks that are required to realize our visions. As we undertake this High Holidays planning effort, our intention is to be as transparent and inclusive as possible. We invite you to get involved and participate.

If you have questions, ideas, or even a program you want to provide during the month of Elul, please contact Sacha Reich at avodah@havurahshalom.org or Adela Basayne at adela.basayne@havurahshalom.org.

We want to hear from you!

Visiting the Graves of Other People's Fathers

by Bija Gutoff (Originally published in [RitualWell](#))

I cannot visit my father's grave because he doesn't have one.

He died in New York in the first crushing wave of the coronavirus pandemic, when every provider of care – doctors, nurses, ambulances, hospitals, morgues, funeral homes, crematories, cemeteries – was overwhelmed. Contrary to Jewish custom, his body was not watched over with loving vigilance by the chevra kadisha or buried within 24 hours in a plain wooden box. Instead, he lay for a week in the hospital basement before finally being transported to the funeral home. And then for a second awful week in a refrigerated truck before finally being cremated. As in war, these blunt and gruesome truths demand to be told. This is the way it was.

In my daily calls from Portland, Oregon, to the hospital

rabbi and funeral director in New York, as I tried to find out where he was and ensure he would be tended to, I served as the long-distance chevra kadisha. Asking, remembering, watching, waiting, spreading a soft veil of attention over his soul during its delayed passage.

Not only did the pandemic prevent me from being with my father at his deathbed, but it also precluded me, after he died, from finding comfort and support in the ancient ways Jews have kept the rituals of mourning. So, from the other side of the country, I have had to invent my own.

One of these was visiting the graves of other people's fathers. In the months after his death I began to take long walks through the several Jewish cemeteries located near my home. I read the inscriptions. You know right away when a man had

children because there it is, in pride of place: Beloved father. Remembered. Missed.

I come by to let these fathers know they are not alone. To pay respect that's partly intended for someone else. I imagine that word may get back to him. "You know," these long-gone Oregon fathers might say to mine in New York, "she came by here again today to see us, and she was thinking of you. We've come to recognize her, in her orange beret. She yours? We were glad for the visit."

I don't know. I just walk.

In this chaotic year I'm drawn to the settled stillness, here in the firm presence of lives completed. My father hated nothing more than talk of death, yet when I pressed him to share his wishes, he did tell me not to bury him in the ground. So maybe it's fitting that he's present here only as a ghost.

Many of the headstones bear names, dates, and messages in both Cyrillic and Hebrew scripts. These Russian Jews form a close-knit community even in death, their graves aligned in neat, well-maintained rows. I think of the risks my grandfather took, as a teenager, to flee the czar's army. Here I can almost smell the wine-rich brisket, the onions frying for kasha varnishkes. I remember visiting the graves of my father's parents in Queens, New York, as a little girl, awkwardly leaving a stone without knowing why.

Now I know why. Depositing that tiny weight on the crest of a headstone is a gift of gathered attention: You are remembered in this place and, in this moment so am I. I place stones on the graves of other people's fathers to remember not just them, and not just my own father, but myself.

The cemetery's ancient trees suffered massive damage during our last winter storm. Some were ripped in half, the bright gold of their heartwood exposed to air for the first time. On my walks I step over piles of limbs on the ground. Other branches, the broken but still-attached widow-makers, dangle dangerously from the trunks that once held them. I feel like that sometimes – broken, still attached, waiting for the next big wind to knock me to the ground. In the weeks after the storm, as cemetery workers clear the evidence of its destructive force, I think about the ways we put pain and memory into some kind of order. Not to dispose of it, but to make space for what comes next.

I have visited so many fathers here. I could be their daughter, or granddaughter, or great-granddaughter. Maybe their own grown girls are far away. I am someone else's daughter, but today I am here, and he is far away. So I will visit these fathers. I will read their names and dates, and imagine adding his:

My beloved father, I will remember you always.



Many folks may not have ever seen these wonderful shots of our last Adult B'nei Mitzvah Cohort. Photos taken by Jewel Mlnarik. Enjoy!



Discussions on Poverty

by Jenn Louis & Gloria Halper

Poverty & Homelessness
Committee

Our committee's third Poverty Discussion will be May 23rd, from 4-5pm in Zoom Room Bet. Our guest speaker is Havurah member Fran Weick. Fran has been the Director of Human Solutions' Resident Services Program since 2002. She has over 30 years' experience working with low-income families. As the Resident Services Director her focus is housing stability for low income households and for those who are moving from homelessness to permanent housing.

If you have a topic that you would like to suggest for our poverty discussions, please contact Gloria Halper.

The organizations listed below are those approved by our committee and the steering committee.

Lift UP chaired by Jenn Louis

A busy start of the year!

- Lift UP has been working with increased supplies as the new administration has allowed for larger budgets and ease of food pathways. This is allowing many who are food insecure to have better access to food.
- Lift UP is looking for additional volunteers, please contact Abby for volunteer information: abby@lifturbanportland.org
- Would you like to sponsor a low income building to ensure they have access to groceries?

Lift UP continues to supply food boxes to many low income buildings in NW and the downtown area. (Before Covid there were other programs such as cooking classes, and working with youth). Havurah member Ruth Feldman has been supporting the Lift Up food program in a NW building called The Vibrant!. If you are interested in working with her to continue that support or find out more about the partnership between Lift and those in low income buildings, please contact Ruth (she is in the Havurah directory). Also, more information here: <https://www.lifturbanportland.org/adopt-a-building1.html>.

Homeless Relief Initiative, run by Havurah member and our Lift Up chair Jenn Louis is going great. All basic needs have been supplied to 40-50 people, 2-4 times weekly. These items include a fresh meal, homemade treats, sandwiches, soup, non-perishable foods, toiletries, batteries, tents, sleeping bags, flashlights, clothes and more. Donations are needed, more information here: <https://www.jennlouis.com/food-for-the-homeless>



Interfaith Alliance on Poverty chaired by Steve Rudman and Gloria Halper

Come to the monthly first Thursday meetings! The next one is May 6, 12-1:30pm – Presentation About Reparations Another way to see what's happening is the [monthly newsletter](#). You can also join one of their three action teams: Advocacy, Transition to Stability, Poverty Awareness/Communication. The IAP also has an upcoming event for member congregations: [Nicholas Kristof Speaking on His Book Tightrope](#), June 7, 7pm on Zoom. And [here is Housing Bond news 2020-2021 from the Alliance's website](#).



Portland Homeless Family Solutions (PHFS) chaired by Gloria Halper

Volunteer Orientations: Wednesday, May 5, 12-1pm or 5:30-6:30pm; Monday, May 10, 5:30-6:30pm
During COVID, PHFS is welcoming new Meal Providers and Grounds Crew volunteers. Orientations and trainings by Zoom. For info/questions/RSVP, contact the PHFS Volunteer Coordinator, TC Schumacher: tc@pdxhfs.org.

With an hour's orientation and a training, anyone can join Havurah's monthly dinner meal preparing and delivery program that has been ongoing for years. Contact Havurah member Len Shapiro via the [Havurah Member Directory](#).

Interested in more? Looking for committee work? Tikkun Olam speak to you? Contact Havurah Poverty and Homelessness Committee chairs: Gloria Halper, Steve Rudman, or Jenn Louis via the [Havurah Member Directory](#).



Why the Future of Agriculture Craves Regeneration

by Michael Perman

As I march into my 60's, I have decided to renew my intrigue and devotion to ecological regeneration that began in my childhood, supported by a new phase of learning and connection to community. I have chosen to become a Kiss the Ground Advocate and focus on the wealth of insights this organization has to offer.

As a ten year-old growing up near the shores of Lake Michigan in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin I enjoyed Dutch Elm Trees forming graceful canopies over our quiet avenues. In 1968, I was 10 years old in Whitefish Bay, Wisconsin, where we lived near the shore of Lake Michigan, where my father Morris was head of Jewish education at Temple Emanuel, and where Dutch Elm Trees formed graceful canopies over the quiet avenues. Beautiful, until beetles bore into the bark, spreading aggressive fungus, killing the trees. Beautiful, until the town fogged the streets with DDT, with us trapped our home, doors and windows taped. Beautiful, until thousands of birds and critters littered the street dead or sick from poison.

Those events affected me, inspired me and my participation in the world's first Earth Day in April 1970 with Milwaukee Wisconsin as the epicenter. That summer, I attended University of Wisconsin Ecology Camp and learned about the science of ecosystems. Then "life happened", raising a family, growing a career and my environmental action energy laid dormant, save for the corporate sustainability efforts working

at Levi's and Gap Inc. and as a sustainable strategy consultant for other brands.

Now, I am delighted to be part of the Havurah Synagogue Climate Action Team and ready to get my hands back into the earth. As I write this, I am nearing completion of the 8-module Kiss The Ground (KTG) Advocates Training protocol which requires around 200 course hours. The KTG learning experience includes lectures and interviews with industry leaders, a curated list of readings and resources, and exclusive access to a Kiss the Ground slideshow to use in future presentations.

The KTG training course provides stunning facts, dispels cloudy myths and inspires hope in the economic feasibility of regenerative agriculture.

Among the stunning facts? The average American farmer loses 4 tons of topsoil per acre per year, causing rainwater to not just run off, but carry with it the 3 pounds of pesticide per person per year to rivers that become polluted with silt and chemicals. On the bright side, I've learned that regenerative farming reduces the amount of water and chemicals used, thus reducing the cost to farmers, while increasing crop yields and increasing profit.

Among the dispelled myths? It is not true that all cows are bad. With a managed grazing plan, animals kick up soil allowing moisture and plants to emerge, while dropping beneficial doodies. "It's not the cow, it's the how"

as the Kiss the Ground program emphasizes.

There's a strong connection between regenerative farming and Judaism. The first volume of the Mishnah is called Zeraim meaning Seeds. Being the first (tractate), is it possible the authors believed that agriculture was one of the first activities related to ethical standards?

A common aspect of these guidelines is Peah, which entails leaving a corner of your field for those less fortunate. Few of us have a corner field to offer these days. However, we do have a corner of our time and energy that we can devote to ensure farming is carried out with a sense of *mi shebeirach*: renewal of body, renewal of spirit, renewal of our land.

In the book *Ecology and The Jewish Spirit*, David Gedzelman writes about the Ukrainian Jew, A.D. Gordon, whom with no experience in agriculture, sets out at age 48 to become a farmer in Israel. Contrary to common assumptions, Gordon believed that people belonged to the land, rather than the land belonging to people, and called for an agricultural revolution.

I don't feel that we need a revolution for success. I am jazzed about becoming a KTG Advocate because it opens a door to action beyond just believing. I can walk before running. My energy can eclipse my scientific acumen. Yet, I am learning. If you are interested in learning with me, please reach out: michael@cestwhat.org or visit my website at www.cestwhat.org.

Nicholas Kristof Speaking on His Book *Tightrope*

June 7, 7pm online (reservation available soon - stay tuned for details)

Havurah is invited through our membership with The Interfaith Alliance on Poverty to hear Nicholas Kristof, sharing from his book *Tightrope*. Be prepared to be inspired, educated, and moved to engage from this session: "Conversation and questions on poverty. What are our moral imperatives?" [More details here.](#)

Maria & Carlos: Spring Update & Fundraising

by the Sanctuary Committee

With the coming of spring and the increase in vaccinations, things are feeling more hopeful these days – as they are for Maria and Carlos, Guatemalan asylum seekers being sponsored by Havurah and living with a family in our congregation.

Seventeen-year-old Carlos, a high school junior, has enrolled in the dual language program at Beaverton High School, where a few of his classes are in Spanish (a great fit for him). He's now attending classes in person, and as a talented artist, he's excited to take a ceramics course.

Maria recently received her work permit, which means she can seek employment. She is eager to work and begin supporting herself and Carlos, as well as sending some money to family members left behind in Guatemala.

However, it's especially challenging to find work now, and with limited, improving English, Maria will need support. That's why we're asking for a few volunteers to join our team of "employment navigators." Do you have experience, connec-

tions, or talents that could help a recent immigrant find a job? Please contact Deborah Kallen via the [Havurah Member Directory](#) to join the team supporting Maria.

Maria and Carlos will also be transitioning into their own home this summer. Members of the Sanctuary Committee are exploring rental possibilities, with the goal of the family moving into an apartment by August. (Once housing has been established, we will reach out to our members for donations of furniture and household supplies.)

Finally, everyone on the Sanctuary Committee would like to thank the over 80 families who responded to our fundraising letter last month. Our goal was to raise \$18,000 to help Maria and Carlos transition from living with a Havurah family to being on their own. Together you have contributed over \$20,000. We are grateful and heartened by your generosity.

If you are able and have not yet had an opportunity, please consider contributing to our fundraiser by [clicking here](#).

Anti-Racism & Belonging

Thank you for taking the time to read this update on initial conversations about how our community can begin to invest in becoming an anti-racist community. Havurah Shalom strives to be a multi-ethnic, multi-racial, multi-cultural Jewish community that is welcoming to all. However, based on the experiences of some of our members, it is clear that not all members experience Havurah as a welcoming place. Indeed, some members have reported negative interactions ranging from indifference and invisibility to active hostility.

This past year has focused a spotlight on the plague that is structural racism and the damage it causes in our communities. Rabbi Benjamin has spent time engaging with members who identify as BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color). One step coming out of Rabbi Benjamin's initial conversations was the monthly meet-up where BIPOC Havurah members meet informally to build community, share experiences, and provide support to one another as Jews of Color. He also asked a few BIPOC members to consider joining him and Tikkun Olam leads Bob Brown (current) and Chris Coughlin (former) in discussion on next steps. Michael Anderson-Nathe and Karen St. Clair agreed to join exploratory conversations. Those five individuals have been meeting since November to discuss how Havurah might approach internal anti-racism work. They have met with the president's group and with Steering to share some initial ideas. Steering has expressed support for this work to be placed in the Hadracha Cluster and you will see a funding request in the proposed budget for several projects as the

work is launched within the congregation in the coming year.

This work can be transformational for our community and for each of us. It is work that can strengthen our community and benefit us, individually and collectively. Each of us has a role to play in this effort, and there will be many opportunities to engage. We hope the community approves funding to bring on a consultant to help design and conduct an information gathering process with Havurah members to develop initial strategies and tactics for moving this work forward. This will include gathering community input and opportunities for community feedback on next steps. BIPOC members will have the opportunity to explore community building, leadership development and healing opportunities, and we plan to provide training and leadership development opportunities in anti-racism.

We also know there is a strong desire among Havurah members for us to engage in external racial justice work as a community. Havurah can and should support this work to include internal anti-racism work and external racial justice work. Conversations about the external focused work are connected but separate from this specific project.

We hope you agree that now is the time to address issues of belonging within Havurah Shalom so that we can align our practices and beliefs with our stated values. You will continue to see more information about this effort and ways you can engage in Hakol, Hineinu, and other communications. In the meantime, if you have questions, please reach out to Bob Brown or Chris Coughlin.

Want to Join a Tikkun Olam Committee?

You can join a committee by emailing Bob Brown, the Tikkun Olam chair, via the [Havurah Member Directory](#).

Grappling with White Supremacy/Nationalism as Jews

Members of the Countering White Nationalism cohort (CWN) offered an 8 week course this Winter, “Grappling with White Nationalism and White Supremacy as Jews” that attracted fifteen Havurahniks. Since none of the conveners were experts in this subject, each class was structured, with the goal of eliciting conversation and debate around important themes and questions arising from the racial and political turmoil of the past year:

- Dilemmas of Jewishness
- Dilemmas of Whiteness
- Dilemmas of/for Jews of Color
- What is the difference between white nationalism and white supremacy?
- What is white nationalism? What actions can we take to counter white nationalism?

In this process, we read academic and nonfiction essays, and listened to several TED talks and lectures. We established four hevrutah that met every other week to build relationships and discuss the readings for the next session. The entire group met every other week to discuss the topic of the week and hear from the hevrutah groups about their discussion sessions.

Class evaluations suggest that we met our goals and we hope to offer this class again next fall. Contact Sue Danielson via the [Havurah Member Directory](#) for more information and engagement opportunities about this topic. What people said about the workshop:

- “Finding the class interesting and thought provoking. Some questions I have never asked myself.”
- “I am already using these terms (white nationalism and white supremacy) more in conversations with folks.”

Israel/Palestine Committee Activities

by Elinor Gollay

The Havurah Israel/Palestine Committee was formed to promote discussions of Israel/Palestine that will further our understanding of the history of the land and its peoples, the different cultures of the peoples currently residing there and pertinent issues confronting Israel/Palestine today. We are guided by the values of justice, the dignity and equal worth of all human life, and respect for the ecological capacity of the land. Our overriding goal is to have Havurah members engage with the complicated issues of Israel and Palestine and enable open, respectful, and meaningful discussions. The committee’s first programming is a series of members-only discussions about 3 films. All are well made, powerful, will deepen viewers understanding of the I/P situation, raise many issues and can lead to meaningful discussions regardless of your level of knowledge or your point of view on the issues. Each film discussion stands on its own so you can attend the third even if you missed the others. We selected films that are available through several streaming services. Kanopy is free through the Multnomah County Library. If we get a positive response, we will host more in the future.

The I/P Committee is discussing future activities including an opportunity for Havurah members to interact with students, parents, teachers, and administrator of Hand-in-Hand in Israel. [Hand-in-Hand](#) is an NGO that operates seven integrated and bilingual schools in Israel that serve Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel, now with over 2,000 students. Our own Lee Gordon is a co-founder and Executive Director. We urge everyone to answer the Havurah survey to indicate your interests regarding Israel/Palestine so we can plan accordingly.

Our next film:

In Between (Bar Behar), with Zoom discussion

Sunday, May 23, 7-8:30 pm

(available on Prime Video & Kanopy)

In Between, a 2016 Israeli-French film about three Palestinian Israel women sharing an apartment in Tel Aviv, depicts their

struggles as shaped by living in relatively liberal Tel Aviv, the more conservative Arab society of their birth, the inequality of Israeli society, and their desire to free themselves.

[Watch the trailer here](#)

[Read the film description here](#)

Previously Watched:

The Wanted 18

The first film we discussed on March 21, was *The Wanted 18*. Although the opportunity to discuss the film has passed, we still highly recommend watching it because it provides insight into the first Intifada, non-violent resistance to Israeli occupation of the West Bank, and the Israeli responses. *The Wanted 18*, is available on Kanopy; Apple TV; You Tube; VUDU.

[Watch the trailer here](#)

[Read the film description here](#)

The Gatekeepers, with Zoom discussion

(available on Prime Video, VUDU, Apple TV)

The Gatekeepers is a 2012 internationally co-produced documentary film by the director Dror Moreh that tells the story of the Israeli internal security service, Shin Bet from the perspective of six of its former heads. The film combines in-depth interviews, archival footage, and computer animation to recount the role that the group played in Israel's security from the Six-Day War to the present. The film was nominated for Best Documentary Feature at the 85th Academy Awards.

[Watch the trailer here](#)

[Read the film description here](#)

Bikkur Holim One Year Later

by Fran Berg & Tivona Reith, co-chairs of Bikkur Holim Committee

Providing contact and comfort in difficult times and exploring how to do more

*There is a cry deeper than all sound
whose serrated edges cut the heart
as we break open to the place inside,
which is unbreakable and whole,
while learning to sing.*

- poet Rashani as cited in *Sacred Therapy* by Estelle Frankel

Last spring 2020, a new Havurah Shalom committee was being developed for visiting the sick (*bikkur holim*) and comforting the mourner (*nichum aveylum*). Launching just as COVID was emerging here in Oregon, the Bikkur Holim (BkH) Committee immediately faced the challenge of how to provide emotional support to the ill and grieving in a time of pandemic.

This article summarizes this past year's activities and needs for going forward. If you have an interest in helping vision the future of the BkH Committee, join us on Thursday, May 20, at 7pm. [RSVP here](#).

Support Provided

Here are some of the ways in which the BkH Committee provided support to our Havurah community this past year:

- **Training:** In March 2020, a three-week class was offered, focusing on how we visit those who are ill, be a comforting presence to mourners, and serve as a "listening heart." A core committee consisting of some class attendees was established in early summer 2020.
- **Crisis Calling:** In response to COVID emergence and Rabbi Benjamin's desire to make phone contact with every congregant for both outreach and risk/need assessment, a "crisis calling" project was put in place in March 2020. A calling team was recruited primarily from within the class attendees. The team made direct phone contact over a two-week period with 325 Havurah families. In February 2021, similar crisis outreach was done on a smaller scale, when committee members contacted approximately 40 elderly congregants and/or those living alone for a wellness check during an ice storm power outage.
- **Grief Support:** Condolence cards were sent out to Havurah congregants who had experienced the death of a family member. In addition, online drop-in grief support group sessions were offered bi-weekly from July-September leading up to and during the High Holy Days, and again in November and December during the winter holidays. These peer-support sessions were facilitated collaboratively by experienced members of both the Bikkur Holim and Ma'avar Committees.
- **Pastoral Care Backup Support:** An important role envisioned for the Bikkur Holim Committee is as backup support for the pastoral care Rabbi Benjamin provides our community. To that end, weekly check-in calls took place between the Rabbi and committee leadership about emer-

gent congregant needs. And in collaboration with the Lots of Helping Hands Committee, meals and other logistical support were provided as needed.

- **Healing Service:** An on-line healing service held on February 13, 2021 was well-attended and received positive feedback.

Going Forward

One of the key purposes of a Bikkur Holim program is to visit ill congregants in hospitals, rehab centers, or at home. COVID, of course, restricted such in-person contact. In addition, this first year also revealed communication and coordination challenges for supporting a congregation the size of Havurah Shalom.

Recently, the Bikkur Holim committee co-chairs met with experienced Havurah organizational leaders (including Shelley Sobel and Avodah Cluster Lead Sacha Reich) to review the committee's first year and lessons learned. The following goals and ideas emerged from these meetings:

- **Expand personalized card outreach** to include get-well cards as well as condolence cards, consult with office staff on using ShulCloud and other resources to facilitate this process, and involve more people in writing and sending the cards.
- **Explore options for learning about and responding to congregant needs** that takes into account the size and decentralized nature of the Havurah Shalom community, as well as the need for confidentiality, privacy and sensitivity. The possibility of participation by the Neighborhood groups has been mentioned as one example.
- **Provide on-going community education** about visiting the ill and comforting the mourner, to encourage all members to be engaged with these *mitzvot*.
- **Provide year-round bereavement support** options through continued collaboration between the Ma'avar and BkH Committees.
- **Provide a regular schedule of healing services**, with a cadre of planners and facilitators.

Larger ideas surfaced that would benefit from collaboration among a number of Havurah committees:

- Disaster response planning, to include disaster spiritual care.
- A more formalized system for providing shiva minyan support.
- A website portal where congregants could request *mishbeirach* healing prayers and/or calls/visits.

We invite your thoughts and ideas for going forward. Again, please join us and other Bikkur Holim Committee members for a **Bikkur Holim Visioning Meeting on May 20, 2021, 7pm**. All are welcome. [RSVP here](#).

Tributes

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

May 8

Noah Karoli
Child of Tim & Julia

May 15

Noah Malmon
Child of Rachel & Daniel

May 29

Rose Bobowick Veneklas
Child of Michelle & Chuck

Please join us in celebration and welcome them to our community. Mazel tov!

Condolences

Lawrence Rice Kaplan, brother of Roberta Kaplan and uncle of Joshua, passed away this past month.

General Contributions

Linda and Gene Appel, in memory of Dick Mastbrook, whose life was a blessing to all of us.

Adela Basayne and Nick Iliinsky, in memory of Henry Sherman Basayne. May his soul be bound up with All That Is.

High Holidays Contributions

Douglas Miller, in memory of Mort Miller.

Adult Education Fund

Marni Glick, in memory of my parents, Edward and Florence Glick.

Educator's Discretionary Fund

Doug Miller, in memory of Ellen Meyer.

Tikkun Olam Fund

Janice and Mark Kettler, in memory of Dick Mastbrook, a shining light, full of warmth and generosity. May his memory be a blessing.

Havurah Endowment Fund

Arleen Slive, with thanks to all of the generous members who donated in Dick Mastbrook's

name, helped me through this challenging time, or both. I hope to return to volunteering soon.

Jeannie and Samuel Teitelman, in memory of John M. Gevurtz, MD, a loving husband, father, grandfather, uncle and friend. John was kind, humble, and caring. John will be sorely missed.

Rabbi Discretionary Fund

Kahn Rosenblum Family, in honor of Rabbi Benjamin for his loving kindness and dedication to each member of Havurah and the Portland Community.

Roberta Schmalz, in memory of my dear mother, Lilly Evans.

Susan and Jeff Mckie, in memory of John Gevurtz.

Stefanie Hausman and David Frost, in loving memory of my parents, Helene Hausman Brottman and Donald Hausman.

Harriet and Richard Steinberg, in memory of Pearl Steinberg.

Gratitude by the Steering Committee

Our gratitude continues to every member and staff who contribute to Havurah in so many unique and diverse ways. What follows are just some examples of those contributions.

To Shelley Sobel, Eve Berry and Debbi Nadell for organizing our virtual Seder matching! To our hosts Alanna Hein and Evan King, Julie Walcer, Oran Kosansky and Julie Hastings, Andrine de la Rocha, Diane Chaplin and Howard Patterson. In addition, to the 80ish Havurahinks who participated in those four virtual Seders. We are a creative and generous group!

Gratitude's to Catherine Trevison and Judy Berek for their contributions to the Department of Homeland Security grant project. Thank you for the outstanding research and grant writing!

Also, special recognition to David Lewis for stepping in at the last minute to cover Zoom hosting for a recent shiva minyan.

To Sarah Shine for your organizing of families in the B'nei Mitzvah cohort and the impact your leadership made on many families and their connection to Havurah and other families!

To Eve Berry and Galit Reilly for

their efforts to create a Middle School/High School Committee and to those families who have stepped up!

To our community members who formed the Anti-Racism and Belonging Group that is working on how we make sure Havurah is a welcoming community for all Jews and an anti-racist organization. Stay tuned for more details of what this will look like.

To the creative Welcoming Committee for continuing to think of new ways to welcome and connect with members even during COVID.

Thank you to the newly formed History Committee for rejuvenating the committee to document Havurah's history.

Gratitude to the Courtyard Task Force which is a combined effort between Staff, Security, Gardening, Design, Poverty and Homelessness Committee to address how to keep our courtyard safe and welcoming for all. Thank you for collaborating with each other to brainstorm how to address this issue and for being thoughtful in your response.

To the members who are supporting Carlos and Maria in many critical aspects of their lives from helping Maria

with her work permit, housing, skill building, to those who are helping Carlos utilize his art to go on greeting cards to sell and helping him figure out how to get to school. This work is inspiring and meeting vital needs for them. And to all those who donated the fundraising effort. We have raised more than \$20,000 so far!

To the staff who made SharePoint folders for B'nei Mitzvah families including calendar, cohort contact information, tutor list and more!

Thank you to David Fuks, Bija Gutoff, and Buff Neretin for joining the High Holidays planning efforts.

Thank you to those who reached out to share these gratitudes! If you are interested to learn more about all that is happening at Havurah you can always review our [Cluster Reports on our website](#).

And to all those many, many tasks that were not mentioned, thank you! We are a community because of each of you and your participation however, that may look. If there is something you would like to have mentioned please connect with Julia Lager-Mesulam at lagermes@gmail.com to be included next month.

May 2021

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>25 <i>Iyyar 13</i></p> <p>28th Day Omer 10:00am Long Range Plan Focus Group 10:00am Garden Committee Spring Work Party 10:00am Jewish Genealogy 4:00pm HCAT Film Discussion: Kiss the Ground 7:00pm Israel/Palestine Film Discussion</p>	<p>26 <i>Iyyar 14</i></p> <p>Pesach Sheni 29th Day Omer 7:00pm Long Range Plan Focus Group</p>	<p>27 <i>Iyyar 15</i></p> <p>30th Day Omer 12:00pm Jewish Mindfulness & Meditation 7:00pm Book Group: Just Mercy, by Bryan Stevenson</p>	<p>28 <i>Iyyar 16</i></p> <p>31st Day Omer 8:30am Morning Minyan 7:00pm Begin with Aleph</p>	<p>29 <i>Iyyar 17</i></p> <p>32nd Day Omer 4:00pm Sacred Action: Spiritual Practice for Pursuing Justice 4:30pm Ale Rookies Happy Hour 7:00pm Beginning Conversational Hebrew</p>	<p>30 <i>Iyyar 18</i></p> <p>Lag B'Omer 33rd Day Omer Reconstructing Judaism Shabbaton 7:58pm Candle Lighting</p>	<p>1 <i>Iyyar 19</i></p> <p>34th Day Omer Emor Reconstructing Judaism Shabbaton 3:00pm Shabbat School 9:07pm Havdalah</p>
<p>2 <i>Iyyar 20</i></p> <p>35th Day Omer 6:00pm 3rd Annual Fair Flight Virtual Bond Fundraiser</p>	<p>3 <i>Iyyar 21</i></p> <p>36th Day Omer</p>	<p>4 <i>Iyyar 22</i></p> <p>37th Day Omer 12:00pm Jewish Mindfulness & Meditation 7:00pm BIPOC Community Meet-Up</p>	<p>5 <i>Iyyar 23</i></p> <p>38th Day Omer Birthday (English) of Brad Fector 8:30am Morning Minyan 7:00pm Begin with Aleph</p>	<p>6 <i>Iyyar 24</i></p> <p>39th Day Omer 12:00pm Interfaith Alliance on Poverty's Monthly Meeting 4:00pm Sacred Action: Spiritual Practice for Pursuing Justice 7:00pm Beginning Conversational Hebrew</p>	<p>7 <i>Iyyar 25</i></p> <p>40th Day Omer 7:00pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service 8:07pm Candle Lighting</p>	<p>8 <i>Iyyar 26</i></p> <p>Shabbat Mivvarchim 41st Day Omer Behar-Bechukotai 10:00am Bar Mitzvah of Noah Karoli 9-16pm Havdalah</p>
<p>9 <i>Iyyar 27</i></p> <p>42nd Day Omer Admin:Mother's Day</p>	<p>10 <i>Iyyar 28</i></p> <p>Yom Yerushalayim 43rd Day Omer</p>	<p>11 <i>Iyyar 29</i></p> <p>44th Day Omer 12:00pm Jewish Mindfulness & Meditation 6:30pm Steering Meeting</p>	<p>12 <i>Sivan 1</i></p> <p>Rosh Chodesh Sivan 45th Day Omer 8:30am Morning Minyan 7:00pm Begin with Aleph</p>	<p>13 <i>Sivan 2</i></p> <p>46th Day Omer 4:00pm Sacred Action: Spiritual Practice for Pursuing Justice 7:00pm Beginning Conversational Hebrew 7:00pm New & Prospective Member Welcome Tea</p>	<p>14 <i>Sivan 3</i></p> <p>47th Day Omer Hakol Deadline 7:00pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service 8-15pm Candle Lighting</p>	<p>15 <i>Sivan 4</i></p> <p>48th Day Omer Bamidbar 10:00am Bar Mitzvah of Noah Malmon 3:00pm Shabbat School 5:00pm Community Havdalah 9-25pm Havdalah</p>
<p>16 <i>Sivan 5</i></p> <p>Erev Shavuot 49th Day Omer 6:00pm Tikun Leyl Shavuot 8-18pm Candle Lighting</p>	<p>17 <i>Sivan 6</i></p> <p>Shavuot - 1st Day Office Closed for First Day of Shavuot 8-11am Morning Minyan Yizkor 9-19pm Candle Lighting</p>	<p>18 <i>Sivan 7</i></p> <p>Shavuot Yizkor 12:00pm Jewish Mindfulness & Meditation 9-28pm Havdalah</p>	<p>19 <i>Sivan 8</i></p> <p>7:00pm Adult Bnei Mitzvah</p>	<p>20 <i>Sivan 9</i></p> <p>4:00pm Sacred Action: Spiritual Practice for Pursuing Justice 7:00pm Beginning Conversational Hebrew 7:00pm Bikkur Holim Visioning Meeting</p>	<p>21 <i>Sivan 10</i></p> <p>7:00pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service 8-23pm Candle Lighting</p>	<p>22 <i>Sivan 11</i></p> <p>Nasso 10:00am Community Minyan 3:00pm Shabbat School Summit 9-32pm Havdalah</p>
<p>23 <i>Sivan 12</i></p> <p>4:00pm Discussion on Poverty 7:00pm Israel/Palestine Film Discussion</p>	<p>24 <i>Sivan 13</i></p>	<p>25 <i>Sivan 14</i></p> <p>12:00pm Jewish Mindfulness & Meditation 7:00pm Book Group: Pogrom: Kishinev and the Tilt of History by Steven Zipperstein</p>	<p>26 <i>Sivan 15</i></p> <p>8:30am Morning Minyan 12:00pm Conflict and Sexuality in Yiddish Poetry 7:00pm Cemetery Workshop</p>	<p>27 <i>Sivan 16</i></p> <p>4:00pm Sacred Action: Spiritual Practice for Pursuing Justice 4:30pm Ale Rookies Happy Hour 7:00pm Beginning Conversational Hebrew</p>	<p>28 <i>Sivan 17</i></p> <p>7:00pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service 8-31pm Candle Lighting</p>	<p>29 <i>Sivan 18</i></p> <p>Beha'alotcha 10:00am Bat Mitzvah of Rose Bobowick Venelase 9-39pm Havdalah</p>
<p>30 <i>Sivan 19</i></p>	<p>31 <i>Sivan 20</i></p> <p>Admin:Memorial Day Office Closed for Memorial Day</p>	<p>1 <i>Sivan 21</i></p> <p>12:00pm Jewish Mindfulness & Meditation 7:00pm Drash Workshop 7:00pm BIPOC Community Meet-Up</p>	<p>2 <i>Sivan 22</i></p> <p>8:30am Morning Minyan 12:00pm Conflict and Sexuality in Yiddish Poetry</p>	<p>3 <i>Sivan 23</i></p> <p>4:00pm Sacred Action: Spiritual Practice for Pursuing Justice 7:00pm Beginning Conversational Hebrew</p>	<p>4 <i>Sivan 24</i></p> <p>7:00pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service 8-37pm Candle Lighting</p>	<p>5 <i>Sivan 25</i></p> <p>Shabbat Mivvarchim Shlach 10:00am Text and Torah: Shlach 9-45pm Havdalah</p>