

## ***New Light News April, 2018***

### **A Word from the Rabbi**

#### *The Pittsburgh Miracle of Rosh Hodesh Nissan*

A great miracle happened here. You may not have attended this past month's Magevet concert (pictures below), a two hour a cappella concert with students from Yale University (my alma mater) with lots of fressing before and during courtesy of Bob Wasserman (Food for Thought) and our volunteers. Beyond the miracle of the sweet voices singing favorite Jewish songs and Israeli songs, there was another miracle: the miracle of four synagogues collaborating in six weeks to pull off a handsomely attended 300+ person event in the hallowed hall of the Pavillion Ballroom at TOL\*OLS. With imaginative, intuitive creativity, a committee of volunteers and rabbis came together from New Light, Dor Hadash, Tree of Life, and Beth Shalom to manage the details of the event: the promotion, the food, the hosting of the students, and the set up. We are comfortable dwelling in our own separate silos and we are intimidated by bigger synagogues and the purported professionalism and programming skills of other places. In our Magavet planning, we were all equals. Each person was assigned a role. I convened the group. We respected one another's talents and voiced our strong feelings about our direction. Imagine putting four synagogues in a room with "their own way of doing things" and see how the miracle of Nissan turned out in the end product. They loved it!

We have heard the term metropolitan synagogue bandied about and the Magevet Concert was our first attempt to make it work. With the space of a synagogue that once had a much large membership, Tree of Life has cultivated this idea of combining three synagogues and trying out events like Magavet to see who shows up. Wow were we ever surprised! "Metropolitan" suggests urban-like as in cultural landmarks and facilities that make up a downtown or an Oakland. Strolling around, there is much to sample and once in a while the town square hosts an event under the big tent. With our partners, we are going to attempt to do just that a few times a year. Jewish Pittsburgh responded and they want more.

I prefer to think of individual shuls as tribes. In ancient times, the tribes had their individual characters and backgrounds. They each had a role to play in greater Israel. During the big moments of the year, like Passover or Yom Kippur, they were able to see beyond their differences, put their jealousies aside and look towards the Beit Hamikdash (Temple) which was located between the area of Judah and Benjamin and operated by the kohanim (priests), the ancient clergy. We say: "How pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together." I say: "how joyous to be together" because we are reminded about unity with the greater whole, Klal Yisrael. Whatever our differences in our individual silos, how miraculous it is to cross borders and enjoy beautiful music together.

Happy Passover,

Rabbi



## How to prepare for Passover - Some Tough Questions Answered by the Rabbi

1. **Chametz** is any food product made from wheat, barley, rye, oats or spelt that has come into contact with water and been allowed to ferment and “rise.” In practice, just about anything made from these grains—other than Passover matzah, which is carefully controlled to avoid leavening—is to be considered Chametz. This includes flour (even before it is mixed with water), cake, cookies, pasta, breads, and items that have Chametz as an ingredient, like malt. The Torah prohibits the ownership of Chametz, the eating of Chametz and benefiting from Chametz (such as keeping an animal fed). We embark on an “operation zero Chametz” to rid our homes of all edible Chametz. The main purpose of cleaning and searching for Chametz is to remove any Chametz that one may come to inadvertently eat or derive benefit from during Passover. This obligation of getting rid of Chametz does not extend to inedible Chametz or tiny crumbs or particles of Chametz that are soiled or spoiled. The hunt for Chametz concludes the evening before Passover (14th Nissan). In the morning of the 14th, we say a formula of nullification to declare of all remaining and unseen Chametz null and void.

2. **Kosher l’Pesach Food.** Packaged foods are certified “kosher for Passover” and have a small “p” next to the heksher of kosher trademark. Many foods without this trademark include Chametz as an admixture. One must be very careful and rely on the appropriate heksher. Vegetables and fruits, meats and fish are generally kosher for Passover. Ashkenazim do not eat kitniot or beans, peas, corn, and legumes because of their similarity to Chametz (they puff up when boiled). (Conservative Jews may now eat kitniot during Pesach.)

3. **Selling of Chametz.** The Torah teaches: "No leaven shall be seen of yours, and no leavening shall be seen of yours throughout all of your borders."

Ridding one's home of all Chametz or leavened foods during Passover is not simple. Most of us have pantries and freezers which are full of items which are not kosher for Passover. In addition, eliminating all Chametz would also include thoroughly scouring every utensil, pan and pot which were used together with Chametz items, to rid them of Chametz residue.

The rabbis conceived a halachic device whereby all Chametz foods are stored in a closet or room (or more than one), which are then closed and sealed for the duration of the eight days of the holiday. On the morning before Passover the Chametz is sold, and the areas wherein they are stored are rented, to a non-Jew. In this manner, the Chametz no longer belongs to us, until the end of Passover when the Chametz is bought back from the non-Jew.

Incidentally you need to sell the Chametz which may be in any properties you own or rent. This would also include your office or business premises. If you have a home on the beach or in the mountains, whether you use it or not, you still need to sell the Chametz that is within it, too. Please see the “Sale of Chametz” guide or speak to the rabbi for more information.

4. **Two Marors on the Table?** Many have the custom of using both horseradish and romaine lettuce to fulfill the obligation to consume maror (bitter herbs) on Passover night.

The sages of the Mishnah list five vegetables which may be used for maror. Unfortunately, it is difficult to be certain as to the identity of these five vegetables mentioned in the Mishna by their ancient Hebrew names. Two of them, however, we have a clear tradition regarding their identity: horseradish and lettuce.

The Talmud says that of the five species mentioned in the Mishna, the preferred one for use is the lettuce -- which is surprising, considering that it is not bitter. The reason for this is its symbolism. If lettuce isn't harvested, its stem hardens and becomes very bitter. i.e. it starts off sweet, and its end is bitter. This is a perfect metaphor for our ancestors' slavery in Egypt. Originally they were enticed to work with promises of full wages, and they were sweet-talked into joining the work campaign; their patriotism to the Egyptian homeland was invoked. Eventually, however, this led to full-fledged bitter enslavement.

Nevertheless, many have the custom of having horseradish as well, apparently this stems from a desire to consume actual "bitter" herbs, to recall the great pain that the Jewish nation endured for the duration of their slavery.

5. **The Haggadah.** All haggadahs are different. In many homes, the standard has become the Maxwell House Haggadah. Each religious movement publishes their own Haggadah and then some! Many old commentaries have been translated and published to understand a particular commentary's take on the haggadah. It is okay to add songs and your own commentary to the haggadah. You can also skip sections if the old material is holding you back. The essential features of the seder meal is telling the story and eating the symbolic foods. Don't forget about finding the afikoman!

6. **Arrangement of the Seder Plate** (Ka'arah) includes most of the ingredients that go into the making of the Seder. Its three matzahs and the six other items are arranged in a formation dictated by their mystical significance and relationship vis-a-vis each other.

Here's how you set it up:

On top of a large plate, tray or cloth place three whole matzahs, one on top of the other. It's best to use round, hand-baked shmurah matzah. Cover the matzahs with a cloth or tray. On top, position the following six items in a counter-clockwise position:

- 1) "Zeroa" - a roasted chicken bone with most of the meat removed. This will represent the Passover offering. It will not be eaten.
- 2) "Beitzah" - a hard-boiled egg, representing the festival offering.
- 3) "Maror" - grated horseradish (just the horseradish -- not the red stuff that has vinegar and beets added) and/or romaine lettuce, for use as the "bitter herbs."
- 4) "Charoset" - a paste made of apples, pears, nuts and wine. We'll be dipping the bitter herbs in this.
- 5) "Karpas" - a bit of vegetable, such an onion or potato.
- 6) "Chazeret" -- more bitter herbs, for use in the matzah-maror sandwich.

We'll also need a wine cup or goblet for each participant, and plenty of wine (four cups each), and a dish of salt water (in which to dip the Karpas).

A Zissen and Healthy Pesach to you and your families!

## Important Passover Dates and Times

March 29 - Search for Chametz, 10:00 PM

March 30 - Siyyum Bechorim, Exemption from the Fast for  
First Born Study, following 7:30 AM Service

March 30 – Biur Chametz, (burn Chametz) by 10:00 AM

March 30 - First Seder

March 31 - First Day of Passover – Services 10:00 AM

March 31 – Second Seder

April 1 - Second Day of Passover – Services 9:45 AM

April 6 - Seventh Day of Passover - Services 9:45 AM – with Tree of Life

April 6 – Kabbalat Shabbat – Services 7:30 PM

April 7 - Eighth Day of Passover/Yizkor – Services 9:45 AM



## Maot Hinnen

It is customary to donate money to help those who are poor and unable to purchase food during Passover. Please contact Rabbi Perlman if you wish to do so.

## Form for the Selling of Chametz

**Note: Please contact Rabbi Perlman by Thursday, March 29, 10:00 AM if you wish to authorize the sale of your Chametz.**

If possible, all Chametz – food not acceptable during Pesach (Passover), or materials containing such unacceptable food –should be destroyed or given away before the holiday begins. Should this be impossible, the Chametz may be stored in such a way that we are sure not to use it during the holiday and its actual ownership is transferred to a non-Jew until the holiday ends.

Please complete the form below and return to Rabbi Perlman. Remember to call him no later than **Thursday, March 29, by 10:00 AM.**

I, the undersigned, fully empower and permit Rabbi Perlman to act in my behalf to sell all Chametz possessed by me – knowingly or unknowingly – as defined by Torah and rabbinic law, and to lease all places wherein Chametz owned may be found. This transaction will be in effect for the duration of Pesach, which this year begins with sundown of (date) March 30, 2018 and runs through (date) April 7, 2018

And to this I hereby affix my signature on this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, in the year \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



## Change in Shabbat Morning Service Time

After testing a new time, the Religious Committee has decided to revert to a 9:45 AM service time start, effective, April 1.

## April Meetings

- Congregational and Board Meeting, Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup>, 10:30 AM
- Sisterhood Meeting, Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 AM

## Congregational Meeting

In accordance with the New Light Congregation Constitution and Bylaws, Article IV, Section 2, a Congregational Meeting shall be held on Sunday, April 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 AM, in preparation for the June 3<sup>rd</sup> annual meeting. The regular board meeting will follow. Motions placed at the April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting will be the only ones considered at the annual June meeting. Only members in good standing are allowed to vote at the annual meeting.

### *Agenda for the Congregational Meeting*

1. Nomination of Officers and Board Members for the 2018-2019 calendar year.
2. New Business

The Nominating Committee will propose the following slate:

Co-Presidents	Barbara L. Caplan, Stephen Cohen
Administrative Assistant	Marilyn Honigsberg
Membership VP	Debbi Salvin
Social VP	Barbara L. Caplan
Treasurer	Harold Caplan
Financial VP	Carl Solomon
Recording Secretary	Ileen Portnoy
Corresponding Secretary	Janet Cohen

### Board Member Vacancies:

There are five vacancies for a three year term. Proposed new board members are:

Judy Blumenfeld  
Louise Hunt  
Harvey Issenberg  
Rachelle Sands  
Eileen Snider

Other nominations for officers and board members will be taken from the floor.

## Yom Hashoah

Yom Hashoah is April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Remember to light your candle the evening before, April 11<sup>th</sup>.

## Elijah and Elisha

Our study of Elijah and Elisha continues on April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM.

## Movie Night

Our next movie - **Ray** - is on Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM. *We have been negligent in letting Dan/Sharyn know if we are coming, so **please RSVP to 412-521-5231** if you plan to attend.* People who were at the March showing have already paid. There will be speakers for the movie. See the attached flyer.

## Trip to Flight 93 National Memorial

The Men's Club is presenting a trip to the Flight 93 National Memorial, Shanksville, PA, on Sunday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. See the enclosed flyer for details.

## Hold the Date!

On Sunday, June 10, New Light Congregation will join Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church for an in-depth tour of the Hill District in Pittsburgh. Stay tuned for more information in future newsletters.

### April Birthdays

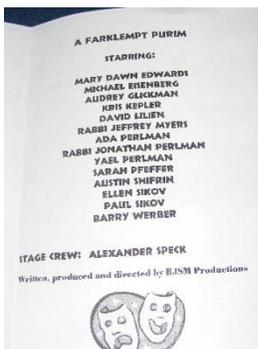
Carol Berkman  
Arnold Epstein  
Barbara Epstein  
Ann Gordon  
Charles Honigsberg  
Saul Kaufman  
Karen Coburn  
Ileen Portnoy  
Honey Sapir  
Jerry Sapir  
Eileen Snider

### April Anniversaries

Barbara and Arnold Epstein  
Eileen and Myron Snider

## Purim

On February 28 New Light and TOLOLS held a joint, joyous Purim celebration, including the Not Ready for Purim Time Players' production of "A Farklemt Purim."



## Reminders

- To purchase Memorial Plaques, Simcha Tree Leaves or Stones contact Ileen Portnoy 412-683-7985
- To sponsor an Oneg in honor of that special person/event or for no reason at all call Hugh Casper 412-421-7619
- To sponsor a Sunday morning breakfast contact Dan Stein 412-521-5231
- To purchase bricks for our "Garden of Freedom" or sponsor a Kiddush luncheon contact Barbara Caplan 412-521-4332
- To purchase Giant Eagle gift cards contact Marilyn Honigsberg at 412-521-7174
- For information on our cemetery contact Myron Snider at 412-235-7085

## NEW LIGHT CONGREGATION

5898 Wilkins Avenue

412-421-1017

[www.newlightcongregation.org](http://www.newlightcongregation.org)

Rabbi	Jonathan Perlman	412-904-3601
Co-President/Social VP	Barbara Caplan	412-521-4332
Co-President	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999
Administrative Assistant	Marilyn Honigsberg	412-521-7174
Membership	Debbi Salvin	724-444-6324
Sisterhood	Sharyn Stein	412-521-5231
Men's Club	Dan Stein	412-521-5231
Simcha Tree & Memorial Plaques	Ileen Portnoy	412-683-7985
Treasurer	Harold Caplan	412-521-4332
Onegs	Hugh Casper	412-421-7619
Cemetery	Myron Snider	412-235-7085
	Gerald Sapir	412-782-1882
Religious	Richard Gottfried	412-367-7384
Corresponding	Janet Cohen	412-512-0949
Calendar	Janet Cohen	412-512-0949
Yahrzeits	Barbara Caplan	412-521-4332
Website	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999

