

New Light News April 2019

A Word from the Rabbi

Dear Friends,

Spring is in the air! You know what that means for us. Our attention turns to paring down our hametz (breaded foods). It seems so onerous. Purim was all about joy and eating hametz-dig hamantaschen and drinking wine. Passover is so sparse with its flat, crumbly matzah and tastes of haroset and eggs and horseradish. At least we can serve brisket, but there is a lot of preparation and complaining year after year.

I am not saying that Pesach is not a fun holiday. It is. I associate it with family, singing, and good conversation. We have managed to create a dining room symposium where children are asking questions and adults pursue deeper truths about slavery and freedom. The experience becomes rich every year. The table may be populated by different people. Some have passed on; others live too far away; and thank God – there are new little people who are singing the “four questions” in high falsetto voices. Passover is definitely the holiday where you put “your whole self in” like the Festival of Sukkot where we perform the mitzvah by putting our “whole self” in a temporary shack built for God and the holiday.

I will be in Jerusalem this year with my extended family. My daughter Yael is studying at a women’s seminary there for the year. I will miss our singing of Hallel in shul and chanting the Song of the Sea in the Torah. I wonder what New Light families will do at their seders this year. Before I leave for Israel on April 16th, I will certainly make myself available to those who need some coaching in leading a seder. Please call me to make an appointment. In my absence, we have procured the services of Rabbis Mark Goodman and Howie Stein to lead services.

Remember that halachically it is all about removing the hametz (not eating of it or benefiting from it) and eating the matzah on first and second nights of the holiday. Make sure you have the appropriate symbolic foods. I think Murray Avenue Kosher can help with that, especially with a bone for the seder plate. In terms of timetable, remember to:

1. Do Bidikat Hametz (Search for Hametz) at 10 PM Thursday, April 18th by planting 10 crumbs or piece of noodles around the kitchen.
2. Do Biur Hametz (Burn Hametz) by 10 AM Friday, April 19th. You can put the hametz that was found in a paper bag and burn it in your grill.
3. Friday, April 19th is a fast day for first born sons. Check out the service at Beth Shalom at 7:30 A.M. –the siyyum bechorim—where after studying the end of a tractate of Talmud, you will exempt yourself from the fast.
4. Second day (April 21st) and the seventh day(April 26th) of Yom Tov will be held in conjunction with Beth Shalom at 9:15 AM. The eighth day (April 27th) will be held in the Halpern Chapel with Yizkor Services.
5. Don’t forget the pillows for the chairs, the saltwater for the dipping, small seder plates at everyone’s place. Get creative with the karpas – you are allowed to eat more than one sprig of parsley. You can set out a whole tray of vegetables! This cuts down on the chatter of “I’m hungry!” or “When do we eat?”

We have a lot to be grateful for this year. Remember this when you say the “shecheyanu” (God who gives us life, sustains us, and brings us to this day) after kiddush. I am especially thankful for our New Light family. I want to thank Barbara and Harold and, of course, the “Not ready for prime time Shpiel players” in bringing “Mr. Rogers goes to Shushan” to life. What a great idea to invite as our guests those who sustained us and prayed for us this year from outside the Jewish community. Let’s keep building bridges.

A Zissen Pesach,

Rabbi

PS. Remember to complete the “sale of hametz” form included in your newsletter and drop it off at Beth Shalom or email your name and address at perlmanrav@gmail.com by 10:00 A.M. on April 14th.

Presidents’ Report

It was incredible. Almost 100 members and guests from the Shadyside Presbyterian Church, Rodman Street Baptist Church, the Hindu-Jain Alliance, the Islamic Center of Pittsburgh and First Responders joined our Purim celebration. Best of all was the play written by and starred our own Rabbi Perlman, his wife Beth, Barry Werber (who lost page 9), Carol Black and Sonja Reis, with accompaniment by Julie Harris. The play was a Purim riff on Mr. Rogers’ Neighborhood and the audience roared!!

A special thank goes to Beth for the initial suggestion and for requesting the special Purim Shalach Manos bags given to all guests, and to Barbara and Harold for baking all the hamantaschen.

This was also the first time we used the required Beth Shalom caterer for dinner. How was the food? Please send your thoughts to Barbara.

The Independent Committee of the Federation issued its report. We received \$100,000 to augment our operating funds.

We had several meetings with the Parks Conservancy (see article attached) about planting trees in memory of the victims. While it was initially thought that a planting might occur in the spring, it proved too difficult to arrange. We are now looking at a fall planting.

A group of parents and students from Parkland are visiting Pittsburgh the first weekend of April. Many of the events are closed, but there may still be slots available for the Sunday panel discussion when you get this newsletter. If you would like to attend please contact Janet Cohen.

We met with the leadership of the Islamic center of Pittsburgh to see how we can help them following the (another) mass shooting in New Zealand. Both the Federation and TOLOLS started fund raising campaigns for the New Zealand victims. We, instead, reached out directly to the Center to see what help they need. The result was a LaunchGood.com campaign sponsored by New Light, Dor Hadash and TOLOLS specifically to help meet the security needs of the mosque. The mosque has large windows on both sides and no security at the front door.

To donate to this fund go to https://www.launchgood.com/project/worship_without_fear#!/.

TOLOLS recently hired an Interim Executive Director, Bill O’Rourke. In addition, they hired the accounting firm BDO to conduct an audit of all donations received. No timetable has been announced as to when the audit will be completed.

We have not yet been provided any updates following the focus group meetings in late February.

Barbara Caplan & Stephen Cohen, Co-Presidents

April Meetings

- Congregational and Board Meeting, Monday, April 8th, 7:00 P.M. at Beth Shalom.
- Sisterhood Meeting, Sunday, April 11th, 11:00 A.M., Forward Shady Apartments

Congregational Meeting

In accordance with the New Light Congregation Constitution and Bylaws, Article IV, Section 2, a Congregational Meeting shall be held on Monday, April 8th at 7:00 P.M., in preparation for the June 2nd annual meeting. The regular board meeting will follow. Motions placed at the April 8th 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 2019-2020 calendar year.
2. New Business

The Nominating Committee will propose the following slate:

Co-Presidents	Barbara L. Caplan, Stephen R. 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, one vacancy for a two year term and one vacancy for a one year term. Proposed new board members are:

Ethel Kubitz
Fay Neft
Ann Notovitz
Reva Simon
Merle Blumenfeld
Deborah Rosen

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

Moses in the Midrash: How the Rabbis Read the Torah

We have just one class in April – the 9th at 7:30 P.M. in the Lehman Board Room, second floor, Beth Shalom.

2 for Seder

2 for Seder was founded by Marnie Fienberg, in memory of her mother-in-law Joyce Fienberg, and encourages Jewish families to welcome two non-Jews into their seder to experience first-hand the most celebrated Jewish holiday of the year in America. Opening the seder to newcomers can dispel myths that breed misunderstanding, and directly fight biased attitudes. More information can be found at <https://2forseder.org/>

Schedule for Passover Services

Passover begins with the first seder on Friday, April 19th. There are no Friday night services that evening. The rest of the schedule:

- Saturday, Day 1, New Light Services in Helfant Chapel, 9:45 A.M. Services conducted by Rabbi Mark Goodman
- Sunday, Day 2, joint services with Beth Shalom, 9:15 A.M. in the ballroom.
- Friday, Day 7, joint services with Beth Shalom, 9:15 A.M. in the ballroom.
- Friday, Day 7, no New Light services, Beth Shalom's evening service is at 6:00 P.M. in Helfant Chapel
- Saturday, Day 8, New Light Services in Helfant Chapel, 9:45 A.M. Includes Yizkor. Services conducted by Rabbi Howie Stein.

Adopt-a-Shabbat

We need Haftarah readers! Please contact Rabbi Perlman to for more information and to discuss options. If you remember (or need some brushing up on) your own Haftarah or want to learn a new one, pick a date and adopt a Haftarah reading for Shabbat. Rabbi Perlman will work with you to make it happen.

Sunday Minyans

The location schedule is still evolving. As of now, we are scheduled to be at New Light (at Beth Shalom) on April 7 and with TOLOLS (at Rodef) on April 14 and 28. The current plan is to continue Sunday morning minyans over the summer. Please participate.

JNF Breakfast for Israel

The Jewish National Fund Breakfast for Israel will feature Ethan Zion, inspirational speaker and winner of Survivor: Africa, on April 3rd at 9:00 A.M. at Rodef Shalom. Doors open at 7:30 A.M. Register at https://secure.jnf.org/site/Ticketing;jsessionid=00000000.app241a?view=Tickets&id=36250&utm_source=LOC_Event&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=PABreakfastForIsrael&NONCE_TOKEN=FE30D30881364605E00ABB31E6BD870E

Squirrel Hill AARP Meeting

Sq. Hill AARP will hold their next meeting on Wednesday, April 17th at 1:00 P.M. in the Falk Library, 2nd floor at Rodef Shalom Synagogue. The nominating committee will present nominations for the 2019-20 chapter operating year and the floor will be open for additional nominations. Voting will take place during the chapter's May meeting with installation at the Annual June luncheon. Following the business meeting, Lisa Epps, Pittsburgh Fire Inspector /Fire Prevention Officer will speak on basic fire safety. Barbara M. Morello, Supervisor/CERT Instructor of Pittsburgh Department of Public Safety, will discuss Creating a 72 Hour Kit, and the importance of a family emergency and communication plans. At the conclusion, refreshment will be served.

First Responders Thank You Concert

On February 27th the Jewish Community of Pittsburgh came together to thank our First Responders at a concert featuring Joe Grushecky and the House Rockers, Scott Blasey of the Clarks, and hosted by Jim Kren. It was great to see all the smiling faces and to have an opportunity to meet and thank those who bravely risked their lives for us.



The Tree of Life Weeping

On Friday, March 8th, Rabbi Me'irah Iliinsky of San Francisco presented her painting "The Tree of Life Weeping" to JFCS with copies to each of the three congregations and to the Pittsburgh Police. The tree is filled with eight pomegranates, one for each of the men murdered, and three flowers, one for each of the women murdered, "because what they did in their lives remains on the Tree of Life." The Lion of Judah, which is traditionally an image of strength, is depicted hugging the tree and weeping. Leaves that have fallen off the tree contain the names of the deceased, and leaves hanging near the base of the tree are inscribed with the names of people who were injured. More information about the visit can be read at

<https://jewishchronicle.timesofisrael.com/weeping-tree-of-life-painting-brings-comfort-to-victims/>.

The painting is currently in the New Light office at Beth Shalom – we hope, with Beth Shalom's permission, to soon hang it in the lobby.



Yom Hashoa Reminder

Remember to light your Yom Hashoa candle on Wednesday night, May 1. Get your check for your candle to the Men's Club. This year a portion of the proceeds will go to the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh.

Yom Ha'atzmuat

Celebrate Israel's 71st Independence Day with a free concert with Israeli musician David Broza on Thursday, May 23rd from 4:30 P.M. to 9:00 P.M. at the Schenley Plaza. This is a free event sponsored by the Jewish Federation. For more information and to register, see <https://jewishpgh.org/event/david-broza/>.

Purim 2019

On March 21st New Light was joined by the First Responders, Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church, Shadyside Presbyterian Church, the Hindu-Jain Alliance, and the Islamic Center of Oakland for a Megillah reading, seudah and spiel. We heard lots of noise wiping out the name of you-know-who, and lots of laughter during the play, Mr. Rogers Goes to Shushan, starring Rabbi and Beth Perlman, Carol Black, Berry Werber and Sonja Reis, with Julie Harris on percussion and horn.



Joyce Fienberg Book Club

The Lost Girls of Paris: A Novel by Pam Jenoff is a remarkable story of friendship and courage centered around three women and a ring of female secret agents during World War II.

Monday, May 6, 2019. 7:30 P.M. Location TBA

Please RSVP to sisterhood@tolols.org.

Hard to Recycle Event

The annual hard-to-recycle event will held this spring at the Pittsburgh Mills mall on May 11 from 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Residents can recycle items such as televisions, computer monitors and other electronics either for free or for a small fee depending on the item. More information about the event, held by the Pennsylvania Resources Council, can be found at <http://prc.org/programs/collection-events/>

April Birthdays

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

April Anniversaries

Marilyn & Charles Honigsberg
Honey & Jerry Sapir

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 at 412-421-7619
- 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 Stephen Cohen at 412-421-3999

NEW LIGHT CONGREGATION

5915 Beacon Street

412-421-1017

www.newlightcongregation.org

Rabbi	Jonathan Perlman	412-904-3601
Co-President/Social VP/ & Yizkor	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	Harold Caplan	412-521-4332
Onegs	Hugh Casper	412-421-7619
Simcha Tree & Memorial Plaques	Ileen Portnoy	412-683-7985
Treasurer	Harold Caplan	412-521-4332
Cemetery	Myron Snider	412-235-7085
	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999
Religious	Carl Solomon	412-421-2165
Corresponding	Janet Cohen	412-512-0949
Calendar	Janet Cohen	412-512-0949
Yahrzeits	Barbara Caplan	412-521-4332
Website	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999

Form for the Selling of Chametz

Note: Please contact Rabbi Perlman by Sunday, April 14, 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 **Sunday, April 14, 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 April 19 and runs through April 27, 2019

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

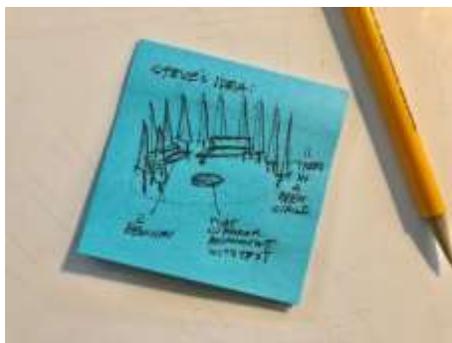


Tree Memorial Proposal

The Federation's Independent Committee proposed the creation of a Memorial/Commemoration Committee in its report issued early in February. The Federation is just starting to explore how to set up this Committee. Meanwhile, there are efforts by other entities at creating memorials. In November, a suggestion was made that one way to honor the victims was to plant trees. Two different City agencies took up the idea.

Wightman Park: Under the auspices of Councilwoman Erika Strassburger, significant money has been raised to refurbish Wightman Park (across from the former Wightman School on Solway Street). In late January, Ms. Strassburger reached out to New Light for our thoughts on including eleven large trees and a bench with a plaque as a memorial.

Parks Conservancy: In mid-February, the Parks Conservancy reached out to all three congregations, also about planting eleven large oak trees with a single bench in Frick Park. The initial proposal (Figure #1) was to plant eleven large oak trees on the path at lower Frick (blue-slide) Park. A proposed planting date in the spring was suggested.



New Light suggested to both the Councilwoman and the Parks Conservancy instead, that a grove of smaller trees, around a bench or two with some type of memorial (see Figure #2) might be more appropriate. We also suggested that, like Sandy Hook which built 26 parklets named after each victim, that planting eleven (nine?) groves in different parks throughout the City be considered. Due to these suggestions, planting is now being delayed until the Fall.

As New Light owns no property in Squirrel Hill a memorial in a public place seemed appropriate. And if there are to be two groves in Squirrel Hill, why not eleven (or nine?) throughout the City, one for each victim/family?

The Parks Conservancy and City are investigating alternative places in Frick and other parks for a smaller, more intimate memorials. A more suitable location is by Beechwood Blvd in upper Frick Park. Plus, because of City regulations, there is a question as to whether a memorial (as opposed to a bench) would be permitted.

There are, of course, many other questions regarding design, tree selection, an endowment for long term maintenance, etc.

We are proceeding slowly as the whole question of a memorial, I am sure, is difficult for our congregants and the community. But the need to keep you informed and get your input before too many decisions are made seemed paramount.

