



אור חדש

New Light Congregation

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New Light News November 2020

A Word from the Rabbi

We live in Pittsburgh and it is Heshvan. In Heshvan, the days get shorter. You wake up it's dark; you get home it's dark. I love the brilliant color of the trees. Every day it changes. There are fewer colors each and every day. It was God's blessing to program trees to drop their leaves one tree at a time each and every day. After the joy and unity of the High Holidays, packed into the month of Tishri, we get Heshvan with no holidays but don't forget, we live in Pittsburgh. A Pittsburgh Heshvan is different than living anywhere else. I am gradually forgetting the trauma but I miss and yearn. I ache for what life used to be remembering the gladness of being in the presence of people who are no more. I am glad for organized Jewish life in this city who have brought together videos with the cello of Yo-yo Ma and the testimonies of synagogue members who knew them. These same professionals have drawn to our city Torah study from some of the best minds in the Jewish world. I felt Rabbi Reimer was talking directly to me! I only know him from his writings but his words were so comforting. His words were the best part of the commemoration (October 27). They were so precise and caring. Afterwards, I looked for a story in one of his books, "Jewish Insights on Death:"

In Jewish thought, death is not the only inevitable end of life; it is a constant companion and possibility within life. That is why you are never supposed to say, "I will see you tomorrow." For no one owns tomorrow. Instead one is supposed to say, "I will see you tomorrow *God willing*" or "I'll see you tomorrow but *that is not a promise.*" This is not a morbid way to live. On the contrary, the fact that life is fragile and precarious, the fact that each new day is a gift, and not an entitlement, makes it even more precious, more to be appreciated, more to be savored.

We cannot be dominated by the Pittsburgh Heshvan. One tragic day cannot define the whole of who you are. Still, we remember. This period in time has meaning for us. I don't know if spreading out the Torah study and the commemoration and unveilings is comforting for the pain or too much. Time will tell if we need to stir our emotions continually during Pittsburgh Heshvan. On other times of the year, we recall bitter times: we fast, we study, we light candles and listen to speeches. We remember that Pittsburgh Heshvan is also about the coming together as a community – even beyond the tears of the Jewish community. We shall never forget that. I loved to hear the testimonies of family members who are dedicating the rest of their lives to the kindness, commitment, Godliness that dwelled in the soul of their loved ones. The people of Israel lives!

Pittsburgh Heshvan is bitter pill for me to swallow and brings pain and guilt and torment. Most of all, I miss them so much.

In blessing,

Rabbi

November Presidents' Report

This report is written on Tuesday, October 27th, a day, to steal a phrase, that will live in infamy for the Pittsburgh Jewish Community. The three congregations housed together in the Tree of Life building, Tree of Life*Or L'Simcha, Dor Hadash and New Light, suffered eleven irreplaceable losses. With the death of Richard Gottfried, Daniel Stein and Melvin Wax, New Light lost our lay religious leaders. These men, under the leadership of our Rabbi, Jonathan Perlman, led our services; populated our choir; and managed our events. These men were the beating heart of our community linked by ritual.

This year, 2020, we began to walk on the long road to recovery: we made permanent our commitment to our new home in the Helfant Chapel of Beth Shalom; we found within our members the individuals to assist in continuing the rituals so fundamental to us all; and we began to identify concrete steps to commemorate those innocent lives needlessly torn from us.

The process of grieving never ends. It is custom to visit the graves of our loved ones at least once a year. On the **18th of Heshvan (November 5th) and the following weekend**, we will gather together in-person and on Zoom to remember, to reflect, and to honor the memory of Richard Gottfried, Daniel Stein and Melvin Wax.



On **Wednesday evening, November 4th (the 18th of Heshvan) at 6:30 PM in Helfant Chapel and on Zoom** we will hold a special Yahrzeit Service and unveil a new Memorial Board. Use the Shabbat Zoom ID. If you need the ID contact janet@newlightcongregation.org. If you want to attend in person please register at <https://newlightcongregation.org/registration-for-new-light-commemoration-events/>

On **Thursday morning, November 5th at 8:00 AM in Helfant Chapel and on Zoom**, we will hold a joint three-congregation Minyan led by Rabbi Myers, Rabbi Perlman and Rabbi Dyen. To register for in person attendance or to receive the Zoom connection info, go to <https://newlightcongregation.org/events/joint-three-congregation-minyan-registration/>

On **Sunday morning, November 8th at 11:00 AM at the New Light Cemetery and on Zoom**, we will unveil a Memorial Monument (donated by John Dioguardi of Rome Monuments) and plant a pear tree (a “Survivor Tree” donated by the 911 Memorial and Museum) at our cemetery. In addition, we will take a tour of the new Chapel being constructed at the cemetery. We expect construction to be completed towards the end of November. Use the Shabbat Zoom ID. If you want to attend in person please register at <https://newlightcongregation.org/registration-for-new-light-commemoration-events/>



Please join us for all three services.

On **Thursday, November 12th at 7 PM**, please join us (on Zoom) for a discussion of the new book edited by Beth Kissileff and Eric Lidji “Bound in the Bond of Life” to be moderated by Jim Busis, CEO and Publisher of the Pittsburgh Jewish Chronicle. The book can be purchased at a substantial discount on our website. Use the discount “**member**” to obtain the reduced price. The book will be available for pickup.

Register and purchase at <https://newlightcongregation.org/events/bound-in-the-bond-of-life/>

We have begun the long and never-ending process of healing; creating those physical spaces needed to allow our members to remember and reflect – in spirit and in action - on those we have lost. May their souls be bound up in the bond of life.

Board Meeting

The November Board Meeting is Sunday, November 1st at 10:30 AM on Zoom. Use the same Zoom connection as for Shabbat services.

Shabbat Services Reminder

We continue with the hybrid model of holding services in person in Helfant Chapel and via Zoom. Use the same connection for all Helfant services. You **MUST REGISTER** with Janet each week you plan to attend in person. Pandemic restrictions are still in place: masks must be worn, a distance of at least 6' maintained, do not attend if you or a member of your household is ill or if you suspect you have been exposed to Covid. If you need the Zoom ID please contact janet@newlightcongregation.org

Enjoy Books

Please contact Sharyn Stein at 412.512.5231 or sshop47@aol.com if you would like to purchase an Enjoy Book.

Joyce Fienberg Book Group

The next book group meeting will be on Wednesday, December 2nd at 7:30 PM, location TBD. The book is "The Choice: Embrace the Impossible," by Dr. Edith Eva Eger.

November Birthdays

Judy Blumenfeld
Barbara Caplan
Hugh Casper
Marilyn Kramer
Yetta Speiser
Jenni Swerdlow

Reminders

- To purchase Memorial Plaques, Simcha Tree Leaves or Stones contact Ileen Portnoy 412-683-7985
- To purchase bricks for our "Garden of Freedom" 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

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www.newlightcongregation.org

Rabbi	Jonathan Perlman	412-904-3601	Simcha Tree &	Ileen Portnoy	412-683-7985
Co-President/Social VP/ & Yahrzeit	Barbara Caplan	412-521-4332	Memorial Plaques		
Co-President	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999	Cemetery	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999
Membership	Debbi Salvin	724-444-6324	Religious Committee	Carl Solomon	412-421-2165
Sisterhood	Sharyn Stein	412-521-5231	Recording Secretary	Ileen Portnoy	412-683-7985
Men's Club	Harold Caplan	412-521-4332	Corresponding Secretary	Janet Cohen	412-512-0949
Onegs	Hugh Casper	412-421-7619	Calendar	Janet Cohen	412-512-0949
Treasurer	Harold Caplan	412-521-4332	Yahrzeits	Barbara Caplan	412-521-4332
			Website	Stephen Cohen	412-421-3999

