



אור חדש

New Light Congregation

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New Light News January 2021

From the Rabbi

Dear Friends,

This month I want to cite the “Letter from the Birmingham Jail” written by Martin Luther King Jr. to his clergy colleagues across the nation. Note that these excerpts apply to rabbis as well. King inveighed against moderates of every religion in the U.S. who said the King’s demonstrations were “untimely” and that “only negotiation would bring about the end of segregation.” King struck back that inaction abetted evil among white racists. We would do well to review King’s remarks to devote our energy to understanding and healing the rift between blacks and Jews. Let’s start by tuning into Martin Luther King Day Celebration with our sister congregation the Rodman Street Baptist Church!

“16 April 1963

My Dear Fellow Clergymen:

...We have waited for more than 340 years for our constitutional and God given rights. The nations of Asia and Africa are moving with jetlike speed toward gaining political independence, but we still creep at horse and buggy pace toward gaining a cup of coffee at a lunch counter. Perhaps it is easy for those who have never felt the stinging darts of segregation to say, “Wait.” But when you have seen vicious mobs lynch your mothers and fathers at will and drown your sisters and brothers at whim; when you have seen hate filled policemen curse, kick and even kill your black brothers and sisters; when you see the vast majority of your twenty million Negro brothers smothering in an airtight cage of poverty in the midst of an affluent society; when you suddenly find your tongue twisted and your speech stammering as you seek to explain to your six year old daughter why she can’t go to the public amusement park that has just been advertised on television, and see tears welling up in her eyes when she is told that Funtown is closed to colored children, and see ominous clouds of inferiority beginning to form in her little mental sky, and see her beginning to distort her personality by developing an unconscious bitterness toward white people; when you have to concoct an answer for a five year old son who is asking: “Daddy, why do white people treat colored people so mean?”; when you take a cross county drive and find it necessary to sleep night after night in the uncomfortable corners of your automobile because no motel will accept you; when you are humiliated day in and day out by nagging signs reading “white” and “colored”; when your first name becomes “nigger,” your middle name becomes “boy” (however old you are) and your last name becomes “John,” and your wife and mother are never given the respected title “Mrs.”; when you are harried by day and haunted by night by the fact that you are a Negro, living constantly at tiptoe stance, never quite knowing what to expect next, and are plagued with inner fears and outer resentments; when you are forever fighting a degenerating sense of “nobodiness”--then you will understand why we find it difficult to wait. There comes a time when the cup of endurance runs over, and men are no longer willing to be plunged into the abyss of despair.

I hope, sirs, you can understand our legitimate and unavoidable impatience. You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court's decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, at first glance it may seem rather paradoxical for us consciously to break laws. One may well ask: "How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?" The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that "an unjust law is no law at all."

...I hope you are able to see the distinction I am trying to point out. In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law, as would the rabid segregationist. That would lead to anarchy. One who breaks an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law.

Of course, there is nothing new about this kind of civil disobedience. It was evidenced sublimely in the refusal of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to obey the laws of Nebuchadnezzar, on the ground that a higher moral law was at stake. It was practiced superbly by the early Christians, who were willing to face hungry lions and the excruciating pain of chopping blocks rather than submit to certain unjust laws of the Roman Empire. To a degree, academic freedom is a reality today because Socrates practiced civil disobedience. In our own nation, the Boston Tea Party represented a massive act of civil disobedience.

We should never forget that everything Adolf Hitler did in Germany was "legal" and everything the Hungarian freedom fighters did in Hungary was "illegal." It was "illegal" to aid and comfort a Jew in Hitler's Germany. Even so, I am sure that, had I lived in Germany at the time, I would have aided and comforted my Jewish brothers. If today I lived in a Communist country where certain principles dear to the Christian faith are suppressed, I would openly advocate disobeying that country's antireligious laws.

I must make two honest confessions to you, my Christian and Jewish brothers. First, I must confess that over the past few years I have been gravely disappointed with the white moderate. I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that the Negro's great stumbling block in his stride toward freedom is not the White Citizen's Council or the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate, who is more devoted to "order" than to justice; who prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice; who constantly says: "I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I cannot agree with your methods of direct action"; who paternalistically believes he can set the timetable for another man's freedom; who lives by a mythical concept of time and who constantly advises the Negro to wait for a "more convenient season." Shallow understanding from people of good will is more frustrating than absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will. Lukewarm acceptance is much more bewildering than outright rejection."

Yours for a warm January,
Rabbi

Presidents' Report

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way. . . .” – Charles Dickens, *A Tale of two Cities*

We bid a not-so-fond farewell to the year 2020. The year started on a high note, with our very successful *Magevet* concert in February; and, perhaps, ends on another (potentially) high note with the distribution of a vaccine to stop the spread of COVID-19. If news reports are to be believed, many of our congregants will be in the second cohort to be vaccinated. Cannot happen soon enough!

With the help of technology, we have gathered weekly throughout the year. Sometimes in person; but, more often, in little boxes on our laptops and desktop computers. While we have all grown to love (or hate) Zoom, it has kept our community together in prayer and learning.

Happy New Year to All!!

Updates:

New Light Cemetery Chapel: Construction continues. It is anticipated that construction should be completed by the beginning of February, 2021. Partially due to COVID-19, there have been significant delays in obtaining some of the material needed.

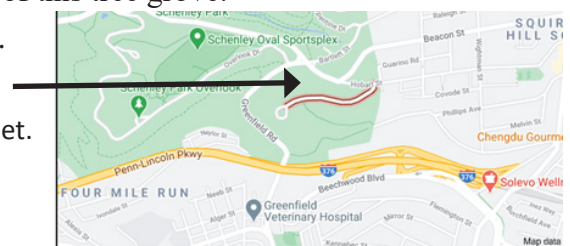
Memorial of Trees Project: As you may recall, the New Light Board voted to endorse this project in March, 2019. In November, the Family Group (which includes most, but not all of the families of the deceased victims), under the auspices of the **10.27 Healing Partnership**, met with the City and Parks Conservancy about the project. The Family Group has reached the following consensus (from an email from Maggie Feinstein dated 12/16/2020):

- The families feel committed to being able to plant the 11 trees that were donated in one location.
- The very gracious effort made by the original donation as well as the Parks Conservancy to get the 11 trees in the memorial tree program was appreciated and there is a strong desire among the families to show this gratitude through moving the project forward.
- The families would like these trees to be planted somewhere that is accessible to the road, not a main thoroughfare, where there can be added enhancements to distinguish the space. Ideally, the families prefer a location where the trees can provide canopy needed ecologically by the city/conservancy.
- Given the choice of three locations (two in Frick Park and one in Schenley Park), there was unanimous preference among the families who decided to weigh in for the site in Schenley Park by Prospect Drive. (see below)
- The participating families also unanimously agreed to just move ahead with the 11 trees and a bench, and that possible “enhancements” could be added in the future after further conversations among all stakeholders. The original drawings that the city shared with this group sparked some interest around an outside space for remembrance and the location chosen does leave room for this to continue to be part of this tree grove.

If you have questions, please reach out to Barbara or Steve.

Prospect Drive.

Trees to be placed close to Hobart Street.



Rabbi Perlman to Receive Honorary Degree

On Sunday, January 31 at 1:00 P.M., Rabbi Perlman will receive a Doctor of Divinity Degree from The Jewish Theological Seminary in honor of his 25 years of membership in the rabbinate. In a message from Michele Carlin, Directory of Special Events, JTS:

“In recognition of this momentous occasion, we are inviting members of your congregation to show their appreciation for your many years of service by making a donation to JTS in your honor. We thought you may want to share this with your family and friends who admire the many years of service and would want to acknowledge your accomplishments in this meaningful way. The names of all donors will be recognized during the virtual ceremony.”

More information can be found at <https://inspired.jtsa.edu/rabbinic-convocation>, where you can register for the free event and can make a donation.

January Board Meeting

The next board meeting is Sunday, January 3rd at 10:30 A.M. Use the same Zoom connection as for Shabbat.

Shabbat Services

Services will be online only until conditions are safer.

Contact janet@newlightcongregation.org for the Zoom connection.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration

We will honor Dr. King, along with Rodman Street Missionary Baptist Church, on Sunday, January 17th at 7:00 P.M. with a program on Zoom. Details will be sent soon.

Joyce Fienberg Book Club

Date: Wednesday January 27th, 2020, 7:30 P.M.

Location: Zoom (Link to be sent later)

“The Color of Love: A Story of a Mixed-Race Jewish Girl” by Marra B. Gad

January Birthdays

Larry Kanterman
Judy Pearlman
Beth Perlman
Debbie Salvin
Carl Solomon

January Anniversaries

Michelle & Joel Reisz



Save the Date: February 6 - New Light Congregation & Sing A New Light Present

THE CHORAL TORAH: 5 BOOKS IN 4 PARTS

Featuring Composer, Pianist and Music Educator, Josh Ehrlich; Leilah Rosen; and The Four Hermeneutics, the brothers & sisters music quartet.

February 6th 7:00 P.M.

Havdalah Followed By A Lecture and Concert

ABOUT THE CHORAL TORAH: 5 BOOKS IN 4 PARTS

At heart, the Torah is a piece of music. Its words are notated in ornate calligraphy like an ancient score and transmitted by cantillation. What's more, we are commanded in the final chapters of Deuteronomy to "Write for yourselves this song; teach it to the children of Israel and place it in their mouths:"

מהיפב המיש לארשי ינב תא הדמלו **תאזה הרישה** תא מכל ובתכ

In this session, we'll dig deep into our oldest text in search of new music. We'll play with words and dissect sounds, encountering singable consonants, Gregorian modes and the stories at the core of our heritage. Guided by Josh Ehrlich, composer of The Choral Torah: 5 Books in 4 Parts, we'll take a magic-school-bus-style ride through the Bible, complete with musical detours presented by the dynamic and aptly-named all-sibling quartet, The Four Hermeneutics. Prepare to experience the five books like never before — in four parts!

For more information about The Choral Torah see <https://youtu.be/MLyIDjP8xmk>

ABOUT JOSH EHRlich

Hailed by Deke Sharon as "dynamic, bold, and audacious," Josh Ehrlich is a composer, lyricist, arranger, accompanist, music director and music educator in New York City. With a BA in linguistics from Yale (where he music directed the Society of Orpheus and Bacchus) and an MA in composition from Rutgers, Josh now music directs and orchestrates for the musical theater productions, bands, and choirs at Camp Ramah in the Berkshires and The Leffell High School. He also music directs Hallelu, assistant directs Kol Ram, sings regularly with Pella, Kol Zimra, Simcha Singers and Shalom Singers, accompanies services for Sha'ar Communities, and plays keyboards in the '90s rock band Uncle Jesse. Josh has written several hundred musical theater orchestrations and a cappella arrangements for ensembles all over the New York area including Voices of Gotham and the entire Imbible series (A Spirited History of Drinking, Christmas Carol Cocktails, and Rum and Pirates) and is thrilled to have made his off-broadway composing debut with The Imbible: Day Drinking. Between 2018-2019, he composed The Choral Torah: 5 Books in 4 Parts, a collection of fifty-four eclectic a cappella compositions — one for each week of the Jewish year — which reanimate our most ancient and venerated text through fresh four-part harmony. He since founded The Choral Torah Collective, an ensemble of gifted Judaeo-musical educators eager to share this music and the lessons built into it on biblical and musical literacy. Finally, starting in September 2020, Josh has been studying to become a cantor at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America.

Jewish Federation Scholarship Service

Applications for need-based college scholarships for the 2021-2022 school year are available from the Jewish Scholarship Service (JSS) of the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh. This program is administered by Jewish Family and Community Services. The funds are made available through the generosity of families who have established endowments through the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, Jewish Community Center, National Council of Jewish Women, Jewish Women International of Pittsburgh (formerly B'nai B'rith Women), The Pittsburgh Foundation, and Rodef Shalom Congregation.

All scholarships are distributed on the basis of demonstrated financial need. Depending on the scholarship fund, other factors such as academic achievement, field of study, school attending, and Jewish and general community involvement will also be considered. In addition, the applicant must be Jewish, reside in Allegheny, Westmoreland, Beaver, Butler or Washington County for at least two years, and need financial assistance to attend an accredited institution of higher education as either an undergraduate or graduate student.

The 2021-2022 JSS online application is available at jfcspgh.org/scholarships.

All applications are due February 12, 2021.

First-time applicants must be interviewed. All applications should be submitted as early as possible to ensure processing.

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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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

New Light Congregation January 2021 17 Teves 5781 - 18 Shevat 5781

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3 ▲ Board Meeting, 10:30 AM	4	5	6	7	8 ▲ 4:51 Services, 7:00 PM	9 ▲ Shemos Services, 9:45 AM
10	11	12	13	14 ▲ Rosh Chodesh Shevat	15 ▲ 4:59 Services, 7:00 PM	16 ▲ Va'eira Services, 9:45 AM
17 ▲ MLK Program, 7:00 PM	18 ▲ Martin Luther King Day	19	20	21	22 ▲ 5:07 Services, 7:00 PM	23 ▲ Bo Services, 9:45 AM
24	25	26	27	28 ▲ Tu B'Shvat	29 ▲ 5:15 Services, 7:00 PM	30 ▲ Beshalach Services, 9:45 AM
31						