



אור חדש

New Light Congregation

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New Light News May-June 2022

Why a May-June Newsletter Edition?

You may be wondering why the May and June issues are combined. The Cohens will possibly be on the road for an extended trip. There will be no resources to create and send out a newsletter during that time, so you're getting a double issue.

A Word from the Rabbi

Now we return to ordinary time. From the moment the second day of Passover has begun at nightfall, we begin to count days. How could you do anything more ordinary than that? Actually, an essay I read this Passover says that ordinary time commences once the ceremonial matza is eaten as a fulfillment of the mitzvah to eat matza at the Seder (motzi matza). This is the climax of the ritual meal. Not the singing of "Adir Hu," nor the singing "Achad Mi Yoda'a." We break the matza in half, hide one piece we call the "afikomen" and the other piece, a fragile thing in itself, is the matza we point to and tell the story and then crunch down hard after we say the holy words "asher kidshanu b'mitzvotav vitzivanu al achilat matza," we are commanded in the eating of matza." That is the climax. We remember how our ancestors went out with this "bread of freedom." We remember that it was "the bread of our affliction" that we ate when we were slaves. From then on, the seder and time itself becomes ordinary. There is no build up in how we speak about exodus through questions, through dayenu, through storytelling, through the special declaration that "it is incumbent upon us to tell the exodus story as if we personally experienced it" and "even if we were all wise ... it would be incumbent on us to elaborate on sacred nature of the exodus narrative." After the meal, we return to the ordinary: we sing songs about angels, animals, the oneness of God, we invite Elijah in (who isn't even a part of the Exodus story), and we sing a truncated Hallel. The essayist says that we go from the obligatory part of the service to the optional part of the service. All parts in the second half are optional. Even eating matza as part of one's diet for the rest of the Passover week is optional. When free will follows the sacred time, we enter into ordinary time. Sure the rest of the week has the Hallel prayers and Torah readings but the finale of the Passover symphony is already past: when we ate the matza and remembered the paschal lamb sacrifice of ancient times.

Ordinary time has flavor but we have to work at it. We have to see time with new eyes. While I was walking to shul one day, I noticed that that the daffodil has six points (petals) with a trumpet coming out of its center! Wow! What better for us to herald Passover in nature by observing the Star of David with a trumpet in its center! There is a custom that we say a blessing on the first fruit tree that we see in bloom during Passover. We watch as the tulips push through the hard ground to show a rainbow of color. On the seventh day, we are so immersed in ordinary time that we don't even say "schehehyyanu" ("You gave us life and brought us to this day") for the final day as we do on the last day of Sukkot (Shmini Atzeret).

And then we begin to count. We count the Omer. And if you are lucky and you remember to count the Omer each evening, you say a special bracha with your counting but once you forget and miss one night, you cannot say the bracha anymore. Counting becomes even more ordinary. We say in Proverbs, “Teach us to count our days rightly, that we may obtain a wise heart.” Counting one by one is ordinary but counting 49 days or seven weeks is extra-ordinary.

I believe we need more ordinary time. Life has become too dramatic for me and for you in these past two years. Grieving for my mother and counting the days from her death is more than ordinary. A war wages in Europe and all of us are horrified. Our economy hangs in the balance. But the Jewish season is supposed to have a drop down effect, we watch the blossoming and the renewal of the earth and we immerse ourselves in mindfulness. The mindfulness comes about through watching with the head and the heart celebrates the ordinary, the mundane, and flourishing of the life God gave us. Look for it in the flower beds, in the trees, in wildlife, in the lakes and in the seas, in ourselves. Ordinarity never tasted so good.

Rabbi

Board Meetings

The May board meeting will be held on Monday, May 2, at 7:00 P.M.

The June board and congregational meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 7, at 7:00 P.M. Officers and board members will be chosen then.

Holiday Events and Services

Jewish Film Festival, April 28-May 8. See <https://jewishpgh.org/event/2022-jfilm-festival/> for information.

Yom HaZikaron, Tuesday-Wednesday, May 3-4. Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh will hold a virtual ceremony at 8:00 P.M. on May 3. Please see <https://jewishpgh.org/event/yom-hazikaron-2/> for more information and to register.

Yom Ha'atzmaut, Wednesday-Thursday, May 4-5. Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh will hold an in-person celebration, A Taste of Israel, on Sunday, May 15 at noon at Shenley Plaza in Oakland. Please see <https://jewishpgh.org/event/yom-haatzmaut-2/> for more information and to purchase tickets.

Lag Ba'omer, Wednesday-Thursday, May 18-19. Beth Shalom is holding an in-person concert at 6:00 P.M. in the ballroom. Please see <https://bethshalompgh.org/lag-baomer/> for information and to purchase tickets.

Tikkun Leil Shavuot, Saturday-Sunday, June 4-5. Jewish Federation of Pittsburgh will hold an evening of learning at the JCC from 10:00 P.M. Saturday through 1:00 A.M. Sunday. Vaccinations are required, no registration is necessary, and there will be cheesecake. See <https://jewishpgh.org/tikkun/> for more information.

Shavuot, Sunday-Monday, June 5-6. New Light services in-person and on zoom, 9:45 A.M. Yizkor on June 6.

May 2022 Presidents' Report

MEMORIALIZATION WORKING GROUP

We are pleased to announce that the New Light Board voted unanimously to accept the Memorandum of Understanding negotiated by the Memorialization Working Group (MWG) governing the official Memorial to 10.27.18. The MOU is to be signed by the new parent organization of TOL*OLS, called T of L, Inc. (TOLI) and Maggie Feinstein, as the 'incorporator' of the new 501c3 that will be formed as the successor organization to the MWG. TOLI will now be comprised of four parts: the congregation, the Holocaust Center, a museum and the Memorial.

While there are many uncertainties, the Board is convinced that TOLI offered the best and most efficient avenue for creating a lasting memorial. Thanks to the efforts of the Tree of Life Congregation a world-class architect has been retained for the overall design of the structure and the memorial; and a robust and comprehensive national and international fund raising effort has been created.

It takes a long time to build a world-class replacement structure. The Board of Tree of Life*Or L'Simcha are to be commended for their perseverance and foresight in putting together a comprehensive package.

When the MWG first began addressing the purpose of the Memorial, the members identified three goals:

- Remember and honor the victims;
- Remember that this was the worst anti-semitic attack on a Jewish religious site in U.S. history; and
- Create programs to educate and help eradicate anti-semitism.

After discussion, the third goal was dropped by the MWG because it was felt to be beyond the ability of the members to implement. Creating TOLI allows for the achievement of that goal. While there are many museums dedicated to the study of the Holocaust, it should be noted that there is no museum in the U.S. or the world dedicated to displaying the history and impact of anti-semitism. Only by exposing the past can we educate the public about the horrors and falsehoods ascribed to anti-semitism and seek to eradicate it once and for all.

We support and commend the creation of TOLI and call on the community to help create a lasting memorial to the victims and to their efforts to eradicate anti-semitism here and throughout the world.

TORAH BREASTPLATES

We would like to purchase four Torah breastplates to identify the use of four of our Torahs (we have five): Sefer Rishon, Sefer Sheni, Maftir and Shabbat. We propose the back be inscribed: *In Memory of Daniel Stein, Richard Gottfried and Melvin Wax* (and in Hebrew:) *May their Memory Forever be a Blessing*. Contributions to support the purchase are welcome.



May Birthdays

Marvin Feldman
Rachelle Grobstein
Fay Neft
Aryeh Sherman

May Anniversaries

Carol & Marvin Feldman
Jenny & Steve Swerdlow
Gerry & Dr. George Tessler
Brenda & Barry Werber

June Birthdays

Gertrude Adams
Faye Bleiberg
Robert Daniels
Philip Fehl
Joel Reisz
Sharyn Stein

June Anniveraries

Barbara & Thomas Kleyman
Beverly & Jason Manne
Ann & Jacob Notovitz
Beth & Rabbi Perlman
Roselle & Carl Solomon

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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New Light Congregation June 2022 2 Sivan 5782 - 1 Tammuz 5782

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 6 SIVAN Shavuot - Day 1 Services, 9:45 AM	6 7 SIVAN Shavuot - Day 2 Services, 9:45 AM with Yizkor	7 8 SIVAN Board Congregational Meeting, 7:00 P.M.	1 2 SIVAN	2 3 SIVAN	3 4 SIVAN 8:26 Services, 7:00 PM	4 5 SIVAN Bamidbar Services, 9:45 AM
12 13 SIVAN	13 14 SIVAN	14 15 SIVAN	15 16 SIVAN	16 17 SIVAN	17 18 SIVAN 8:33 Services, 7:00 PM	18 19 SIVAN Beha'aloscha Services, 9:45 AM
19 20 SIVAN	20 21 SIVAN	21 22 SIVAN	22 23 SIVAN	23 24 SIVAN	24 25 SIVAN 8:34 Services, 7:00 PM	25 26 SIVAN Shelach Services, 9:45 AM
26 27 SIVAN	27 28 SIVAN	28 29 SIVAN	29 30 SIVAN Rosh Chodesh Tammuz - Day 1	30 1 TAMMUZ Rosh Chodesh Tammuz - Day 2		

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