



אור חדש

New Light Congregation

5915 Beacon Street, Pittsburgh PA 15217 • 412-421-1017 • info@newlightcongregation.org

New Light News June 2024

**BETH AND RABBI PERLMAN
CORDIALLY INVITE YOU
TO AN
ENGAGEMENT PARTY**



CELEBRATING



Yael PERLMAN

AND

MATTHEW SHAPIRO

HORS D'OEUVRES AND DESSERTS

WHEN: THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 5:00 P.M

WHERE: BETH SHALOM BALLROOM

RSVP: BY JUNE 6 TO BARBARA CAPLAN

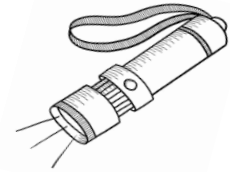
BARBARACAPLAN@COMCAST.NET

412-421-1017

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COUPLE, INCLUDING THEIR REGISTRY, SEE
[HTTPS://WWW.ZOLA.COM/WEDDING/YAELANDMATT2024](https://www.zola.com/wedding/yaelandmatt2024)

The Flashlight

Zionism is in trouble. I am not talking just about the trouble facing Israel these days. Much ink has been spilled that extols Israel or criticizes Israel. I am not worried about that. Israeli leadership and opposition to it has been part and parcel of Israeli life since its beginning. Israelis and Jews everywhere like a good argument. What worries me since October 7th is that the dream of Zionism has been under attack and is beginning to split the Jewish community, especially at home here in the U.S. Talking with my daughter after her return from college, I have learned that Jews on campus identify themselves as either Zionists or anti-Zionists. In other words, many Jews separate Zionism from their Jewishness, which is very troubling indeed. I remember the days when the consensus of American Jews were horrified by the slogan “Zionism is Racism” emanating from the U.N. in the 1970s. Now a banner was strung up over the entrance of a dormitory at Stanford that read “Zionism is Genocide.”



Many of these anti-Zionists believe that Zionism is the by-product of colonialism that was popular in the late 19th century including the United Kingdom that boasted that the “sun never sets on the British Empire.” Anti-Zionists believe that Israel needs to be dismantled in the way that South Africa or Caribbean Islands were given their independence in the last 50 years. Jews have been occupying Arab land they say. These Anti-Zionists don’t understand that Zionists have been dreaming about returning to the Jewish homeland for over 2,000 years and that Abraham was given a promise to receive the land and that land and its people would be a blessing to the nations. Zionism is much, much older than colonialism.

Especially troubling is the way Zionism is being understood in Israel. Since the Second Intifada, Israelis began to question whether Zionism was a dream worth pursuing. More than half population became indifferent to the plight of the Palestinian Arabs and elected Netanyahu who opposed a two state solution and served for 12 years as “Mr. Security.” At the same time, Israel saw the rise of a radical fringe group made up of West Bank settlers and religious fanatics who were able to secure 12 seats in the last election, skewing policy against Palestinians by promoting land grabs in the West Bank and terrorizing Arabs. An organization called Hilltop Youth have been sending teenagers to roads in the West Bank to harass Palestinian trucks hauling humanitarian aid to Gaza. Other villages have been attacked in the night by Jewish thugs. These Palestinians have received no police protection and calls for help have been unheeded. It is clear that Itamar Ben-Gvir, head of the Otzma Yehudi (that supports Meir Kahane type activities) and minister of national security has been turning a blind eye to these atrocities. Where is the Zionism of old that was a philosophy that promoted democracy, justice, and compassion?

Whether in the U.S. or Israel, Zionism has become fractured and there doesn’t seem to be an agreement on where the dream is headed. More than a hundred years

ago, Zionism was based on Jewish ideals from the tradition and a land that was envisioned was to be democratic with equal rights for all its citizens. There was a time a year ago when Israelis took to the streets waving Israeli flags and raised a conversation about judicial reform, a proud Zionist moment, because it stirred over half the country. Once October 7th came along, there was a brief solidarity that eventually slid into rancor: Zionists vs. Anti-Zionists in America; Israeli politicians without an end-game in Gaza (with ultra-Zionists on their side) vs. an angry Israeli electorate.

Zionism is a quasi-religious philosophy has always been part of what it means to me to be a Jew. I was raised on it. I visited Israel many, many times. I do believe that what happened on October 7th was horrific, but I do believe that October 8th was the time to act in the Zionist tradition and not just act in a belligerent way seeking revenge. The time for seeking revenge is over. We need to return to the moral direction set by Zionism and seek a peaceful solution. We have been here before. It is ungodly to allow 120 hostages to suffer persecution in Hamas prisons. That is not the Zionist way. It is ungodly to obstruct humanitarian aid to getting to innocent Palestinians who are suffering as Hamas' human shields. That is not the Zionist way. We need to have a conversation that creates a big tent for Zionists and Anti-Zionists. It is time we stopped talking in one another's silos. It is time to take up the Zionist dream of the Bible that the Messiah will come only if we act as beacon to the nations of the world.

Rabbi P.

Shavuot Services

Shavuot begins on Tuesday evening, June 11. New Light services will be held Wednesday and Thursday, June 12 and 13, at 9:45 AM in Helfant Chapel and Zoom. Use the same Zoom connection as for Shabbat. Yizkor will be observed on the second day, Thursday, June 13.

Tikkun Leil Shavuot

A Night of Jewish Learning • Free • Tuesday, June 11, 10:00 PM - 1:00 AM • JCC
Cheesecake and Coffee • No Registration Necessary

Join your Pittsburgh community in person for a night of learning with well-known local rabbis and thinkers. Both Rabbi Perlman and Beth Kisseleff will be teaching sessions.

For more information, including the detailed schedule, see <https://jewishpgh.org/occasion/tikkun/>



June 2024 Presidents' Report

It is customary to provide a brief status report of the Congregation during the June Annual Meeting. As Janet and I will be traveling abroad and may be unable to attend, this is that report:

In 2016 New Light Congregation was facing imminent bankruptcy. Our sole asset was our long-time home on Beechwood Blvd – and it required renovations well beyond our financial capacity. We had operated at a loss for so many years that our coffers were dry.

In 2017, we took a leap – that we could stay together as a family without a building of our own. The hope was that by selling our building we could acquire sufficient assets to continue into the future. And maybe we could turn our yearly loss into a profit! The building sale netted \$575,000 which was invested with the Federation.

Our initial move was into the Tree of Life building. Now, we have a long-term lease in the beautiful Helfant Chapel at Beth Shalom. Much of the monies received after October 27, 2018 went to honor and remember our lost members: Richard Gottfried, Dan Stein and Mel Wax with a Memorial Monument and Chapel and at our cemetery in Shaler Township.

Eight years later we are still financially strong. In fact, stronger! From zero cash in the bank in 2017, we now have almost \$800,000 in investments and cash. While we expected in 2017 that we would need to dip into the building sale proceeds each year, in fact, we have not.

We still operate at a loss.

We are grateful for the continued leadership of Rabbi Jonathan Perlman and the fact that we routinely have a strong minyan every Shabbat morning. Our many well attended Adult Education classes led by the Rabbi have covered myriad topics of Jewish ethics and religious thought. Partially due to the pandemic, however, Friday night attendance has suffered. As attendance at Beth Shalom's Friday night services has also declined, we began in April of this year holding a joint service. Between our two congregations we now have a minyan every Friday.

On the other hand, our membership has declined since 2017, primarily due to death and a few members moving out of the area. We have gained some new members, but not nearly enough to offset the decline.

As we look to the future, we face some daunting challenges. We are not alone regarding declining membership. Membership at almost all the local non-orthodox congregations in Pittsburgh is down. Ritual observance – the reason for belonging to a Congregation – is declining. And because of the Israel-Hamas War, there is a resurgence of anti-Semitic and anti-Zionist acts throughout the area and the nation. Thankfully, only a few of these acts have occurred in the Pittsburgh region. We are hostage to events over which we have no control or input.

We are family. We have stayed together and will continue to stay together celebrating our Jewish heritage and life cycle events. We will continue as we have always done and look to the future to show us the way.

Barbara and Stephen
Co-Presidents

Annual Meeting, Sunday, June 2, 10:30 AM

New Light's annual meeting will be held on Sunday, June 2, 10:30 AM, in Helfant Chapel and on Zoom. Use the same Zoom connection as for Shabbat. The regular monthly board meeting will follow immediately afterwards.

The annual meeting agenda includes establishing the dues for 2024-25 and approving the slate of officers and board (unchanged from the current year).

The proposed officers are:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Co-Presidents | Barbara Caplan, Stephen Cohen |
| • Social VP/Yahrzeits | Barbara Caplan |
| • Cemetery/Website | Stephen Cohen |
| • Financial Secretary | Carl Solomon |
| • Membership | Debbi Salvin |
| • Sisterhood | Sharyn Stein |
| • Treasurer | Harold Caplan |
| • Men's Club | Harold Caplan |
| • Simcha Tree/Plaques | Ileen Portnoy |
| • Religious Committee | Eric Cohen, Bruce Hyde |
| • Recording Secretary | Karen Coburn |
| • Corresponding Secretary | Janet Cohen |
| • Calendar | Janet Cohen |

The proposed board members are:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Carol Black | Ileen Portnoy |
| Judy Blumenfeld | Debbie Rosen |
| Hugh Casper | Debi Salvin |
| Karen Coburn | Rachelle Sands |
| Janet Cohen | Karen Shapiro |
| Bruce Hyde | Aryeh Sherman |
| Marilyn Kaufman | Eileen Snider |
| Ethel Kubitz | Carl Solomon |
| Shari Kubitz | Sharyn Stein |
| Ann Notovitz | Arthur Weinrach |
| Jake Notovitz | Barry Werber |

Why We Do What We Do

After the June 2 board meeting Rabbi Perlman will conduct another "Why We Do What We Do" class. Submit your questions to janet@newlightcongregation.org. If you plan to attend in person notify barbaracaplan@comcast.net so she can plan food. Topics will include:

- When Will the Messiah Come
- Survey of Branches in American Judaism

Men's Club

If you have not already done so please make your donation for the Yom Hashoa candles that were recently distributed to everyone.

June Birthdays

Faye Bleiberg
Robert Daniels
Philip Fehl
Joel Reisz
Sharyn Stein

June Anniversaries

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.
- To purchase bricks for our "Garden of Freedom" contact Barbara Caplan.
- To purchase Giant Eagle gift cards contact Karen Coburn.
- For information on our cemetery contact Stephen Cohen.

NEW LIGHT CONGREGATION

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Co-President/Social VP/Yahrzeits
Co-President/Cemetery/Website
Membership
Sisterhood
Treasurer/Men's Club
Simcha Tree/Plaques
Religious Committee
Recording Secretary
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Jonathan Perlman
Barbara Caplan
Stephen Cohen
Debbi Salvin
Sharyn Stein
Harold Caplan
Ileen Portnoy
Eric Cohen, Bruce Hyde
Karen Coburn
Janet Cohen

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ileenportnoy@gmail.com
janet@newlightcongregation.org

New Light Calendar June 2024 24 Iyar 5784 - 24 Sivan 5784

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						24 IYAR
2 Annual Meeting, Board Meeting, WDDWWD, 10:30 AM	3 26 IYAR	4 27 IYAR	5 28 IYAR Yom Yerushalayim	6 29 IYAR	7 1 SIVAN	8 2 SIVAN
9 3 SIVAN	10 4 SIVAN	11 5 SIVAN 8:30 Tikkun Leil, JCC, 10:00 PM	12 6 SIVAN Shavuot - Day 1 Services, 9:45 AM	13 7 SIVAN Shavuot - Day 2 Services, 9:45 AM Engagement Celebration, 5:00 PM	14 8 SIVAN 8:32 Services, 6:00 PM	15 9 SIVAN Nasso Services, 9:45 AM
16 10 SIVAN	17 11 SIVAN	18 12 SIVAN	19 13 SIVAN	20 14 SIVAN	21 15 SIVAN	22 16 SIVAN
23 17 SIVAN	24 18 SIVAN	25 19 SIVAN	26 20 SIVAN	27 21 SIVAN	28 22 SIVAN	29 23 SIVAN
30 24 SIVAN						