

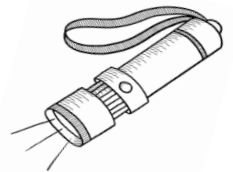


אור חדש

New Light Congregation

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

New Light News June 2025



Dear Friends,

Our class has been reading books of the Bible that are connected to the holidays. They are included under the rubric of Megillot. Esther is not the only “megillah” in the Bible. The other “megillot” include the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, and Ecclesiastes. We are starting Ruth the first Wednesday in June (June 4th) at 6:00 PM in the Lehman conference room at the synagogue. You are welcome to join us. Bring your Bible and allow yourself to open up to eternal truths that are connected to specific holidays of the year. Ruth is connected to Shavuot. It is the story of a convert to Judaism who bravely accompanies her mother-in-law to Bethlehem after her Jewish husband died outside of the land of Israel.

Right now in class we shine the flashlight in a verse by verse analysis of the Song of Songs, an extended poem about the value of intimacy and erotic love. Actually Song of Songs reads like so many poems woven together featuring a woman’s voice, a man’s voice, and a chorus of “maidens of Jerusalem” who follow the woman about answering questions. We don’t get the woman’s name until the very last chapter where she is called “Shulamit.” The man is only called “Beloved” or “Dod” in Hebrew. One of my takeaways from this eight chapter megillah is that the poet celebrates the sensual nature of the body -- from its fleshy magnitude to its desires (fulfilled and unfulfilled) to its graphic representation of lovemaking. How the Song of Songs ever made it into the Bible which is mostly about morality and spiritual growth is a mystery. One can say at its most literal interpretation is that the Song of Songs endorses intimacy with the person we come to love. Shulamit spends a great deal of time seeking out her Beloved and asking the women of Jerusalem to help her find him. It is a hide and seek game.

How often is our primary relationship playful as the young people described in Song of Songs? How often do we attend to the needs of the other and say to ourselves “I am my Beloved’s and my Beloved is mine”? How often does our Beloved enter into our fantasy? How often do we exult our loved one over all the women and men in the world? That person is simply the best. There is an egalitarian nature of the poet’s words to demonstrate that lovemaking must be initiated by both man and woman. Love is playful and fun.

Members of our class were quite surprised by the erotic and open nature of the language found in the Song of Songs. It is read by Sefardim and some Hassidic groups every Friday night possibly to stimulate their obligation to make love every erev Shabbat.

Please join us as we enter into Ruth. The class is also offered on Zoom.

Be well,
Rabbi P.

June Presidents' Report

On Sunday, June 8th, at 10:30 AM in Helfant Chapel, the New Light Congregation Annual Congregational Meeting will be held. Two issues will be discussed: By-Law changes and dues. We need to adjust our Board to reflect the current membership count; hence, the need to modify the By-Laws. The second issue, dues, occurs every year. How do we ensure our solvency into the future?

Please attend this important meeting – in person or via Zoom.

During May, Stephen and Janet toured Egypt. It was safe (surprisingly), fun and very educational. It is very hot in Egypt in May: 118 degrees! Besides seeing the pyramids and tombs of the Pharaohs, we learned some interesting facts: there were never any slaves in Egypt – people willingly worked on the massive stone burial chambers, pyramids and statutes. Hmmm. And there are tantalizing similarities between Judaism and the Egyptian religion as practiced by one particular Pharaoh (Akhenaten or Amenhotep IV) who ruled during the 1300's BCE and introduced an early form of monotheism. His reign was short-lived as was his attempt at changing the traditional Egyptian religious pantheon of gods and goddesses. Scholars have been trying unsuccessfully for almost 200 years to tie the story told in the Torah to this Pharaoh. Origin stories are important and perhaps someday archeological evidence may be found. But until then: we were slaves in Egypt!

On Thursday, June 5th, from 5:30-7:30 PM at the JCC in room 202, the Memorialization Workgroup has invited our Congregation to participate in an in-person dialogue concerning the texts to be used in the Memorial Garden honoring our holy martyrs lost on 10.27.18. They will share a little bit about what they have been considering for wording as people enter the memorial, and some Jewish texts that they are considering as guiding their vision for visitors as they walk out. Then they will ask for your perspective on these texts, and how to leave an imprint on the hearts of visitors. We encourage you to attend. It is important to attend to help determine how Mel, Rich and Dan will be remembered. A Zoom meeting for those unable to attend in person will be held on Wednesday, June 18th at 7 PM. (Zoom link to be sent by the 10.27 Healing partnership)

Barbara Caplan
Stephen Cohen
Co-Presidents for Life

June Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the congregation is on Sunday, June 8th at 10:30 AM in Helfant Chapel and Zoom, using the same Zoom connection for Shabbat.

The regular monthly board meeting will be held immediately after the annual meeting.

Shavuot

New Light will hold Shavuot services on Monday and Tuesday, June 2nd and 3rd, 9:45 AM in Helfant Chapel and Zoom. Rabbi and Beth Perlman will host a luncheon following services on June 3rd in honor of their anniversary.

Tikkun Leil will be held on June 1st at the JCC from 10:00 PM til 1:00 AM on June 2nd. For details please see <https://jewishpgh.org/occasion/tikkun/>

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 Barbara Caplan.
- 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

5915 Beacon Street

412-421-1017

www.newlightcongregation.org

Rabbi

Co-President/Social VP/Yahrzeits

Co-President/Cemetery/Website

Membership

Sisterhood

Treasurer/Men's Club

Religious Committee

Corresponding Secretary/Calendar

Jonathan Perlman

Barbara Caplan

Stephen Cohen

Debbi Salvin

Sharyn Stein

Harold Caplan

Eric Cohen, Bruce Hyde

Janet Cohen

rabbi@newlightcongregation.org

barbaracaplan@comcast.net

info@newlightcongregation.org

dgsalvin@pobox.com

haroldcaplan@comcast.net

janet@newlightcongregation.org



New Light Calendar June 2025

Sivan – Tamuz 5785

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Erev Shavuot 8:26p Candle lighting Tikkun Leil, 10:00 PM	2 Shavuot I 9:33p Candle lighting Services, 9:45 AM	3 Shavuot II 9:33p Havdalah (48 min) Services, 9:45 AM	4 5 Megillot, 6:00 PM	5 Memorialization Workgroup Meeting, 5:30 PM, JCC	6 8:29p Candle lighting Services, 6:00 PM	7 Parshas Nasso 9:36p Havdalah (48 min) Services, 9:45 AM
8 Annual Meeting, 10:30 AM	9	10	11 5 Megillot, 6:00 PM	12	13 8:33p Candle lighting Services, 6:00 PM	14 Parshas Beha'aloscha 9:39p Havdalah (48 min) Services, 9:45 AM
15	16	17 5 Megillot, 6:00 PM Memorialization Workgroup Meeting, 7:00 PM Zoom only	18 5 Megillot, 6:00 PM Memorialization Workgroup Meeting, 7:00 PM Zoom only	19	20 8:35p Candle lighting Services, 6:00 PM	21 Parshas Sh'lach 9:42p Havdalah (48 min) Services, 9:45 AM
22	23	24 5 Megillot, 6:00 PM	25 5 Megillot, 6:00 PM	26	27 8:36p Candle lighting Services, 6:00 PM	28 Parshas Korach 9:42p Havdalah (48 min) Services, 9:45 AM
29	30					