

Agudas Israel Congregation
77 North Pine Street
Hazleton, PA 18201
570-455-2851

Officers:

Richard Kline, Ritual Leader
Debbie Walko, President
Marlene Leonard, Vice President
Richard Rockman, Secretary
Helene Kline, Treasurer
Richard Kline, Financial Officer



Shabbat Candlelighting

March 8- Parshat Va'Yakel- 5:45 pm candlelighting
March 10 Daylight Savings Time- Turn Clocks Forward
March 15- Parshat Pukudei- 6:53 pm candlelight
March 22- Parshat Va'Yikra- 7:01 pm candlelighting
March 29- Parshat Tzav- 7:08pm candlelighting
April 5- Parshat Shemini- 7:16pm candlelighting

WE WISH A BIG MAZEL TOV
to Lois Sugarman on the birth of her great-
granddaughter, and to Debbie & Russel Palmer
(Lois's daughter & son-in-law) the
grandparents!

Hebrew School is held on Sundays at the shul and on Zoom at 10am with Richard Kline.
Interested in learning to read Hebrew for yourself, children, or your family? Let us know and we
can set up fun and interactive Zoom lessons with Sara.

Five fascinating facts about the Jewish leap year

By Deborah Fineblum

Buckle your seatbelts; we're heading in.

1 Why was it necessary?

Passover in July and Rosh Hashanah in January? That's what could happen were it not for the ingenious invention of the Jewish leap year. That's because lunar calendars like this one work beautifully until the end of the year when the 12 lunar months will inevitably miss the solar year by an 11-day shortfall. It wouldn't take long for such a disparity to wreak havoc with the holidays; hence, the specter of a snow-covered Rosh Hashanah.

And the Torah makes it abundantly clear: Passover must be "in the month of springtime" (Deuteronomy 16:1) and Sukkot must fall at harvest time when "God will have blessed you in all your crops and in all your handiwork." (Deuteronomy 16:15).

But why do these holidays need to be timed in these ways?

Ours is an agricultural tradition, says Rabbi Rachel Ain, religious leader of the Sutton Place Synagogue in New York City. "So, on one level the pilgrimage holidays all reflect the agriculture cycle of the year."

But there's another layer of meaning here too, says Ain. "Just as spring is the coming out of the darkness of winter into the sunshine, Passover celebrates our people's sense of renewal, emerging from the darkness of slavery into the bright light of freedom."

2 Who can we thank?

Tradition has it that it was the great sage Hillel, head of the Sanhedrin from 320 to 385 C.E. who created the Jewish calendar through some pretty sophisticated mathematical and astronomical calculations. The result: A 19-year cycle with seven leap years to anchor the holidays in their rightful place.

In the far distant past, the Jewish people relied on nature to tell them when a leap year was needed. If the weather, the animals and the crops weren't yet acting "spring-like" and if the spring equinox didn't arrive before mid-way through the month of Nissan, then the judges of the Sanhedrin knew the leap year with its extra month would be needed to keep Passover in its rightful place. The extra month, Adar I, was added to the third, sixth, eighth, 11th, 14th, 17th and 19th years of the cycle.

"This is as relevant today as it was nearly 2,000 years ago," says Rabbi Morrie Wruble, a longtime Jerusalem-area Torah teacher. "And only two peoples have a lunar calendar: us and the Arabs." But unlike the Jewish calendar, the Arab one doesn't adjust the dates to keep holidays in place, "which is why Ramadan can be in the winter, fall, spring or summer," explains Wruble. "We

can't do that because we're guided by our Torah, which says Passover must come in the spring when we plant, and that things need to be growing during the time of Shavuot and harvested during Sukkot. Hillel realized that, if we stayed strictly lunar, things would soon get out of kilter, and he put in a system to fix that with the leap year."

3 How did they do it?

(Calling on math and physics buffs)

Here are the heavenly calculations: Since unlike the Gregorian, the Jewish calendar relies on three factors: the Earth's rotation (24 hours), the moon's revolution around the Earth (29½ days) and the Earth's revolution around the sun (365¼ days), by factoring them all in, Rav Hillel and friends came up with a 19-year cycle containing seven leap years of 13 months each.

But without an advanced degree in mathematics or physics, you may not be able to predict when they will arrive (hint: The last one was three years ago). So, what's the only way to know if a certain year is destined to be a leap year? It's by knowing the year's place in the current 19-year Metonic cycle. Try dividing the number of the Jewish year in question by 19 and find the remainder. If that number is a 3, 6, 8, 11, 14, 17 or 0 (representing the 19th year), then you're looking at a leap year.

"Hillel and his friends were pretty good at math," says Mitchell Bogart, a New Haven, Conn.-based engineer and avowed physics buff.

"Nearly 2,000 years ago, they were sharp enough with their calculations to realize the Jewish calendar had to have a 19-year cycle to keep that 11-day difference at bay. It was the only way to stop the holidays from shifting more than a couple weeks here and there, nothing significant." All done without a calculator.

By the way, on a practical level, figuring out when an Adar Hebrew birthday or a yahrzeit or bar or bat mitzvah would fall in a leap year can get a bit complex and depends on when the birth or death occurred. You might want to check with your neighborhood rabbi on that one.

4 How is it like being a little bit pregnant?

Why exactly is the Jewish leap year called shanah me'uberet, literally "a pregnant year"? That's because it's simply fuller – and longer – than any other year.

Instead of the standard 365 days, the Jewish world is looking at anywhere from 383 to 385 days, depending on whether in a given year the months of Cheshvan (in the fall) and Kislev (at Chanukah time) each have 29 or 30 days. The upcoming year 5782, for instance, will have 384 days.

Among those most profoundly impacted by this "pregnant" year are the farmers in Israel who are keeping the Torah commandment of shmittah – stopping all cultivating to let their fields rest for a year as a Sabbath for the land. And though the mitzvah (only in effect in the Jewish

homeland) rolls around every seven years, this time it happens to fall on a leap year, prolonging the farmers' time away from working the land from the typical 12 months to 13.

But the good news is that although the leap extends the year in such ways, there is one process that remains unchanged: the nine months of pregnancy.

“That’s a good thing,” says Delia Lev Ari, a London native who’s expecting her fifth child and whose air conditioning is getting her through the toasty Israeli summer.

“The trust and letting go which is so much a part of pregnancy is easier for me knowing there is that double Adar joy to look forward to this spring,” says Lev Ari, whose work as the Israel representative for a birthing-pool company also puts her in touch with lots of other Israeli women who are expecting. “That extra Adar is waiting there for all of us this year,” she says.

5 What’s the leap year’s biggest blessing?

And, due to the nature of the month that gets added – an extra Adar – one thing the leap year is pregnant with is an extra helping of joy, blessing and mazal (“luck”) for the Jewish people. As the sages taught, “When Adar enters, we increase in joy.”

“We know that the 30 days of Adar are the happiest of the year for the Jewish people, so in a year when we double the number of Adar days to 60, we’re also bound to double our joy and our good fortune,” says Rabbi Yerachmiel Tilles, co-founder of the Ascent seminar center in Tzfat, Israel, and director of Kabbalaonline.org.

But does the Adar joy have the power to help reverse the sadness, the losses and the fear of the last year-and-a-half?

Absolutely, answers the rabbi. “As the Lubavitcher Rebbe taught us, in Jewish tradition when the good-to-bad ratio is 60-to-one or more, the good swallows up the bad. So the 60 days of happy-go-lucky Adar can ‘swallow up’ any unpleasant occurrences during that time period.”

And, adds Tilles: “As the official lucky month of the Jewish people, every cause of pain, sadness, discouragement or dejection, even pandemics, are nullified and sublimated by the transformative joy of a double Adar.”



As Israel continues to fight a war against Hamas, we must pray for timely and safe resolve and lasting peace.

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרוֹמָיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְעַל כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תְּבֵל וְאָמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

*Oseh shalom bim'romav. Hu ya'aseh shalomaleynu,
v'al kol Yisrael, v'al kol yoshvey teyveyl, v'imru: Amen!*

Psalms for reflection in these difficult times of uncertainty and loss.

May the one who makes peace in the heavens make peace upon us, all Israel, and all who dwell on earth.

Psalm 133. A song of ascents. Of David.

How good and how pleasant it is that brothers dwell together. Like fine oil on the head running down onto the beard, Aaron's beard running down over the collar of his robe; like the dew of Hermon that falls upon the mountains of Zion. There Adonai ordained blessing, everlasting life.

Psalm 23. A psalm of David.

The LORD is my shepherd; I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me to water in places of repose; He renews my life; He guides me in right paths as befits His name. Though I walk through a valley of deepest darkness, I fear no harm, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff—they comfort me. You spread a table for me in full view of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; my drink is abundant. Only goodness and steadfast love shall pursue me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD for many long years.

GET WELL WISHES ARE EXPRESSED TO: BRUCE MILLER,
JIM LEONARD, LEANNE TRATTNER, SHIRLEY BRENNER, &
BONNIE YANUSKIEWICZ.

SHOULD ANYONE HAVE ANY NEWS TO SHARE WITH THE
AIC FAMILY, PLEASE EMAIL IT TO
AGUDASISRAELHAZLETON@GMAIL.COM TO RUN IN THE
NEXT AGUDAGRAM!



Sheila is residing at St. Luke's Pavilion if anyone would like to visit her or send her a card. You may find her at:

Sheila Moyer
c/o St. Luke's Pavilion
1000 Stacie Dr. Room 320 A
Hazleton, PA 18701

FEBRUARY DONATIONS RECEIVED

Yahrzeit Memorial Fund		Endowment Fund
	-	-
<u>Donation Received From</u>	....	<u>In Memory of</u>
Bruce & Kate Miller	....	Beatrice Miller, mother
Annie, Florence & Isaac Witkowski	....	Ben Singer, uncle
Florence Dmitrovsky	....	Ben Singer, uncle
Marilyn & Steven Bergstein	....	Bernard Bergstein, husband
Martin Cohn	....	Betty Bohard, mother-in-law
Esther Karpe	....	Daniel Freedman, son
Bob & Ilene Levin-Dando	....	David B. Levin, father
Harriet & Jay Harowitz	....	David Sugarman, brother-in-law
Eric Sugarman	....	David Sugarman, father
Lois Sugarman	....	David Sugarman, husband
Carol Silver	....	Douglas Silver, husband
Miriam Weidenfeld	....	Dov Weidenfeld, husband
Barbara Wagner & David Stern	....	Dr. David Wagner, father
Richard & Faye Bishop	....	Dr. David Wagner, friend
Janet L. Keich	....	Dr. Leo Blumberg, uncle
Herma Jaye Aiken	....	Edward Gildenberg, grandfather
Tama Lee Barsky	....	Ethel Koplin, mother
Richard & Faye Bishop	....	Grace Klemow, aunt
Phyllis Cohen Deitch	....	Irving Cohen, father
Sherri Klemow Shevlin	....	Jacob Klemow, father
Jackie Matlow	....	Jeffrey Bloch, nephew
Jackie Matlow	....	Jennie Matlow, mother-in-law
Martin Cohn	....	Levi Bohard, father-in-law
Robert and Estelle Harris	....	Marilyn Harris, mother
Carlos Buchbinder	....	Marta Buchbinder, grandmother
Herma Jaye Aiken	....	Mildred Gilden Jaye, mother
Mr & Mrs Howard Narrow, Rhona Narrow	....	Morris Narrow, grandfather
Michele & James Banker	....	Phyllis Sukenik Putter, sister
Ronald & Nancy Feller	....	Ruth Feller, mother
Robert Palermo	....	Sandra Palermo, mother
Richard Frumkin	....	Sandra Palermo, sister
Esther Karpe	....	Yale Schwartz, brother

We greatly appreciate donations for yahrzeits, life events, and other celebrations! They truly keep the shul running and show how strong our congregation is.

If you'd like information about donating, please email us at agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com or call the shul.

March (Adar I/II) Yahrzeits

May the memory of the righteous endure as a blessing.

The yahrzeit plaque lights are on in the sanctuary in memory of our departed loved ones.

*Numbers before each name correspond to the Hebrew date of their passing. The date after each name is the secular day of the yahrzeit. Yahrzeit candles should be lit the evening before this date burning through the day of their passing. Kaddish should be said the evening before and the day of the date of passing.

Adar I

21 Sidney Jacob Scharf 3/1
21 Bradford Stuart Kline 3/1
21 Sol Rockman 3/1
21 Ruth Albright 3/1
22 Max Burkat 3/2
22 Goldie Lande 3/2
22 Lillian Cohn 3/2

23 May Chercass 3/3
23 Florence Kashnitz 3/3
24 Frank Bowman 3/4
26 Martin Blau 3/6
27 Milton Ziff 3/7
27 Edward Kanner 3/7
28 Bessie Kanel 3/8
29 Bella Aronoff 3/9

Adar II

1 Abraham Starker 3/11
2 Shayna Sukenik 3/12
2 Benjamin Rabinowitz 3/12
9 John Miller 3/19
10 Charles Schlesinger 3/20
11 Lillian Kline 3/21
13 Louis Druian 3/23
15 Isaac Singer 3/25
17 Robert Gildenberg 3/27
20 Minnie Small 3/30
21 Gertrude Wagner 3/31
21 Jeanette Mason 3/31

****NOTE** ADAR I AND ADAR II ARE BOTH OBSERVED IN ADAR IN A NON-LEAP YEAR. AS THIS IS A LEAP YEAR, THEY ARE CELEBRATED SEPARATELY. ADDING A LEAP MONTH TO THE JEWISH LUNAR CALENDAR KEEPS THE SEASONS IN THE MONTHS THEY ARE ASSOCIATED WITH. ADAR II IS THE "REGULAR" ADAR FEATURING PURIM!**

PLEASE REMEMBER THE MITZVAH OF GIVING TZEDUKAH TO YOUR SHUL OR THE SHUL OF YOUR LOVED ONE WHO HAS PASSED, ON THE OCCASION OF THEIR YAHRZEIT IN THEIR MEMORY.

REFLECTION WHICH MAY BE READ WHEN LIGHTING A
Yahrzeit Candle for your loved one:

“I light this candle to bring peace to the soul of _____ (insert Jewish name) ben/bat (son of/daughter of) _____ (insert father’s Jewish name).”

The human soul is a light from God. May it be your will that the soul of (*insert name*) enjoy eternal life, along with the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, and the rest of the righteous that are in Gan Eden. Amen.

Neir Adonai Nishmat Adam. Yehi Ratzon Milfanecha, Adonai Eloheinu Veilohi Avoteinu, Shetehei Nishmat (insert name) Tzerurah betzeror hachayim, im nishmot Avraham Yitzchak ve'Ya'akov, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel VeLeah. Tehi Menutchatah kavod, Selah

Estate Planning?

Call the AIC office to reserve your cemetery plot(s) for you and your beloved family. Active planning helps family tend to your afterlife needs and their mourning with less stress.

Consider joining the Cemetery Committee to help our members and congregation with this lasting legacy.

AIC NEWS/ EVENTS



1. We welcome new members, Janice Schoem and Richard Koller to our congregation! Most of you know Richard from when he lived here years ago and from his continued attendance at our High Holiday services. We are glad to have him back as an official member. Janice comes to us from New Jersey just recently joining our community. We are so glad to welcome them both!
2. Friends from the Hazleton Police Dept asked if we could get the word out on donating prom dresses and seeing if any young ladies need any dresses for this year’s prom.

PROM DRESS DRIVE

Hazleton City Police Department is now accepting lightly used prom dresses. These dresses will be donated for local Hazleton School District ladies looking to attend prom but might not have the means to get a dress. We are looking for all shapes and size dresses. Please help us make prom dreams come true.



You can drop off dresses at 780 North Church Street, Monday through Friday, 8am to 4pm. Until March 25th.

If you are interested in receiving a dress, please contact Ptlm. Surkin at (570)459-4940 ext. 216, or email at jsurkin@hazletonpd.org.

3. Hamantashen baking in Midrasha at the JCC March 17 at 9am.
 4. Purim Klezmer Concert and Megillah reading at the Friedman JCC March 23 at 6:30.
 5. Midrasha Purim Carnival March 24 10 am for all kids big and small at Temple B'nai B'rith.
 6. Traditional Purim Meal with a Persian Theme hosted by Ohav Zedek with a kosher caterer March 24 at 5pm. \$18 per adult, \$10 per child. Contact Sara for details- 5702390626
7. JCC Leisure Lunch- Tuesday, March 26 at Tom's Kitchen at noon. Contact Christina to RSVP by March 24.
8. Zoom Class on "The Song of Songs" with Cantor Ramón Tasat
Song of Songs class will be 4 weeks, Fridays at noon March 29- April 5-12-19. \$20 for the class.
Contact the AIC office if interested
- The Song of Songs is considered one of the five megillot (scrolls) read on major festivals. It is chanted during Pesach/Passover. It is also sung as an introduction to the Shabbat evening since the Sabbath serves as a renewal of loving vows between God and the Jewish People.

Pained by loneliness? Exhilarated by the arrival of the Spring? Have you ever fallen in Love? This book is for you. Can't wait to discuss it together.



9. Pesach Seder with Cantor Ramon, "Our heart is imprisoned in Gaza"...DATE TBD

Join Us at the Table!

Join us at Agudas Israel for an evening together as we celebrate the Jewish emancipation from Slavery to Freedom. We will portrait the heroes of the terrible Shabbat of October 7, 2023 and remember the hatufim, the 136 Israeli hostages taken captive by Hamas in Gaza since.



MARCH PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear members and friends,

Since it is my birthday week, I decided to share about 63 years ago, when I was born into the best Street in Hazleton. We were very fortunate to have wonderful neighbors and grew up on Harding Street. A dead-end street consisting of 12 houses located on the terrace. One of my earliest memories was of a huge snowstorm and my father, Myron Brenner, and across-the-street neighbor, Al Rosen, shoveling and plowing out everyone on the entire street. They then went door to door, asking if anyone needed anything. Then they drove in my dad's four-wheel drive truck to the grocery store. The neighborhood kids would all be outside making snow tunnels and snowman. We had the best sleigh ride area going down Cranberry Avenue to Wilson Street.

Another memory of Al Rosen, and later memories to include his wife, Phyllis, and Harding Street was the big crabapple tree in their center of their driveway. When we first learned to ride bicycles we would ride around that special tree squishing the crabapples. We continued this practice before venturing onward to Pollywog Dam and all over the Terrace and Heights areas. I remember playing with baseball cards outside and then we used to use them as spokes in our bicycles wheels so it would make very cool noises.

We also had a great basketball court at the end of Harding Street, which we all gathered at. We also had Jeffrey Rosen and Christopher Zayhay showing old time movies at their houses. Great memories of Harding Street, if others have memories, please share them and maybe we can incorporate them into a Harding Street book. Another item that I still have in my

basement is a pool table that Al Rosen gave to us. My children learned how to shoot pool. It's probably as old as I am and it's still in good use. We also had a great treehouse close by that we hung out in during junior high school, which had the best shag carpeting from Klemow's furniture store. Those were the days!!!

I recall walking to and from the Synagogue for the high holidays with the entire Harding Street and Terrace crew conversing with families of Al & David Rosen, Harold Klemow, Marty Cohn, (Beth Israel Temple member families of Zoltan Elfer and Thomas Holloman) Chercass, Victor Schwartz, Jerry Cohn, Abrams, Cohn, Aaron Deitch, Simon Franklin, Blecker, Frumkin, Figlin, Arnold Sukenik, Simon Klemow, Koller/Director, Frumkin, Starker, Manny Klemow, Goldberg, Harold Refowich, Greif and Chaskin. We then met up with Wilson Circle families, Bobby Klemow, Max Berman, Collins, Coffina and our former Rabbis' and we would parade down the big Hazleton General Hospital hill together. We would then meet up with the Berg and Baum families along the way. If I left anyone out, I apologize and please refresh my memory.

I also have fond memories of Agudas Israel Synagogue and the Jewish Community Center (JCC). We had Hebrew & Sunday School and Junior Congregation at the Shul. We would eat Sunday delicatessen's from Spicky's and Spic and Span after Sunday School. Then we spent the entire day bowling, playing basketball, and doing arts and crafts at JCC. What's also ironic and unknown to me at that time, was that my husband, Larry Walko used to play basketball at the JCC and at the Pine Street playground along with going to Bessie Glickman's store.

I am writing about these fond memories of our community and of Al Rosen, May His Memory Be A Blessing. Although Al moved from Hazleton, he never forgot us at Agudas Israel, and we thank he and his family for their generous contribution to keep our Synagogue moving forward. Al worked endless hours helping with our financial situation and was always there ushering and trying to keep the sound down during high holidays. Al also was a past President and served us well in all endeavors. I have been blessed with knowing the Rosen family and having them in our community from Al and Phyllis to their three sons Jeffrey, Nathan, and Steven.

.With all this nostalgia, I would also like to make note of a wonderful present matter by welcoming two new members our board voted to approve. We officially welcome Richard Koller and Janice Schoem to our Agudas Israel family. Please give them a warm welcome! Thank you all for walking down memory lane with me!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debbie Walko".