

# The Agudagram

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February 2025 Volume 74, No. 5  
Shevat 5785

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

February 7- Shabbat Shirah- Parashat Beshalach- 5:09pm candlelighting

February 13- Tu B'Shevat

February 14- Parashat Yitro- HEAR THE TEN COMMANDMENTS!!!!-  
5:17pm candlelighting

February 21- Parashat Mishpatim- 5:26pm candlelighting

February 28- Parashat Terumah- 5:34pm candlelighting

*Cantor Ramon Tasat is offering classes on Jewish Logistics including how to use the siddur and proper procedures while davening. If you are interested, please let Christina know. The classes will be on Zoom completing with an in-person service and dinner to practice what we've learned.*

*If you know anyone looking for employment as a building maintenance person, the shul is looking. Please reach out to Christina or Debbie with any leads or questions.*

**FROM RABBI LORD JONATHAN SACKS**  
**Tu BiShvat for the Young (and Young at Heart!)**

**Top Ten Tu BiShvat Facts**

1. Tu BiShvat is a date (not the type you can eat, though that is connected!)
2. Tu BiShvat is called Rosh HaShanah (for trees) in the Mishnah.
3. Bet Shammai taught that the date of the new year for trees should be on the first day of Shvat (which would have meant the festival was called Alef BiShvat!).
4. Tu BiShvat is not mentioned in the Torah, but only in the Talmud.
5. The original purpose of Tu BiShvat was a tax deadline (for tithing) and only later was it developed into a festival to celebrate trees, and, eventually, the environment.
6. The almond tree is the first to blossom in Israel, around the time of Tu BiShvat, and this is considered a very early sign of the oncoming spring.
7. It is a Torah law that you are not allowed to cut down a fruit-bearing tree.
8. The Talmud describes a beautiful custom where a tree is planted when a baby is born (a cedar tree for a baby boy and a pine tree for a baby girl), and when the baby grows up and gets married, the tree's wood is used for the chupah (Gitten 57a).
9. There is a custom to eat extra fruit on Tu BiShvat, especially fruit from the Land of Israel, and some have the custom to eat a type of fruit they have not eaten that season (and then make the blessing Shehecheyanu).
10. The famous kabbalist teacher, Rabbi Isaac Luria (the Arizal) had the custom to eat 15 different varieties of fruit on Tu BiShvat.

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**It Once Happened on Tu BiShvat...**

The following story is inspired by the book "*The Giving Tree*" by Shel Silverstein. It has been adapted to reflect our current world.

Once there was a tree, and she loved a little boy. And every day the boy would come and play in her leaves, and climb her trunk and swing from her branches, and eat from her apples. And they would play hide-and-seeK. And when he was tired he would sleep in her shade. The boy loved the tree very much, and the tree was happy. But time went by. And the boy grew older. And the boy was given his first smartphone. And the boy loved to play games with his friends on his phone and his tablet and his video game



console. Every day he would go to school excited to talk to his friends about the games, and every day he would rush home to play the games again. And the tree was often alone.

One day they closed the schools, and they closed the offices, and they closed the shops, because of a dangerous virus. But he still had his smartphone, and his tablet, and his video game console. And the tree was still alone.

But the longer he had to stay at home (and the longer he had to attend school online) the more restless he became.

Until one day, out of the corner of his eye, he caught a glimpse of his old friend the tree through his window (which was just behind his computer screen). The tree had never looked more inviting or beautiful to him, and he ran to

sit in her shade and play amongst her leaves and eat her apples.

And he promised never to forget the tree again. And the tree was happy.

Please consider a donation to JNF's Tree Campaign; you can choose how many trees to plant in Israel and get a beautiful certificate showing your donation. This is also a wonderful way to memorialize a loved one, celebrate a simcha, or just to help beautify Israel!

You can do so by going to [jnf.org](http://jnf.org).



A Ring of Trees Will Be Planted in Israel  
As A Tribute To

**Lisa Smith**

Thank You for Your Continued Support  
Planted With Love By  
The Smith & Miller Families

*Community  
Tu B'Shevat Seder*

*Feb 9, 2025  
11 am-1pm*



In collaboration, our Midrasha Hebrew School along with Friedman JCC and JCC Men's Club, invite everyone—individuals, families, students, and kids—to a special Tu B'Shevat Seder.

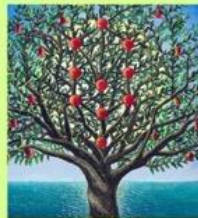
Everyone is welcome! Come celebrate this beautiful holiday with us and enjoy a day filled with meaningful rituals, fun activities, and a sense of community.

RSVP to Barbara Sugarman  
at Friedman JCC

570-824-4646

or [b.sugarman@nepajca.org](mailto:b.sugarman@nepajca.org)

Join us **Friday Feb 14th** for a  
*Tu B'Shevat Seder*  
at Beth Israel Temple at 7:30pm



The 15th of Shvat is the official "birthday" for trees in Israel. At this point, the days are getting longer, the strength of the cold lessens and the sap of the trees starts to rise, restarting growth. Join us to reconnect with nature's abundance, affirming our faith that spring will come again.

The evening will consist of a Tu B'shevat seder led by Rabbi Yossi, a shortened shabbat service, followed by oneg potluck.

For the pot-luck - please **vegetarian dishes only**.

All are welcome to contribute to the oneg, but it is not required.

Please RSVP to Carl Frankel (570 454-2982; [csf1eptd.net](mailto:csf1eptd.net)) BY TUESDAY, FEB. 11. If you are bringing a dish, please let Carl know.

## 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.**

GET WELL WISHES ARE EXPRESSED TO: CAROL SILVER, JANET KEICH, LEANNE TRATTNER, SHIRLEY BRENNER, BONNIE YANUSKIEWICZ, & SARA FRIEDMAN.

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



## JANUARY DONATIONS RECEIVED

### Yahrzeit Memorial Fund

### Endowment Fund

From	In Memory of	
Miriam Weidenfeld ....	Anna Moskowitz, mother	<p><i>In honor of Jacob Benjamin Galler's Bar Mitzvah on 3/22/25 Leonard &amp; Ann Louise Brenner</i></p> <p><i>In Memory of Louis Druian Sheila Jo May</i></p>
Richard Kline ....	Bernard Kline, father	
Kaplan & Yanuskiewicz families ....	Dorothee Kaplan, mother	
Richard Rockman ....	Henry Rockman, father	
Nathan & Laura Katz ....	Howard Koller, uncle	
Marvin & Thelma Chercass ....	Jean Syken, mother	
Laura & Curt Wright ....	Lawrence Klemow, father	
Beryl Brown ....	Lillian Brown, mother	
Edward Geller ....	Rebecca Jaffe, aunt of Shayna	
Miriam Weidenfeld ....	Rivkah Weidenfeld, mother-in-law	
Jeffrey & Joyce Cutler ....	Samuel Cutler, father	
Barry & Karen Chaskin ....	William Chaskin, uncle	



(Shevat) February 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 the evening before and the day of the date of passing.

SHEVAT

1 Henry Klapper 1/30  
1 Anna Moskowitz 1/30  
3 Florence Mitchneck 2/1  
3 Barbara Marcus Kolton 2/1  
3 Edward Albright 2/1  
4 Benjamin Dubinsky 2/2  
4 Jacob Samuel Levin 2/2  
6 Rebecca Sherman 2/4  
7 David Gundling 2/5  
7 Jess Kashnitz 2/5  
8 Esther Perkins 2/6  
9 Reba Klemow 2/7  
10 Bernard Cohen 2/8  
11 David B. Levin 2/9  
11 Abraham Perkins 2/9  
11 Paul Spiegel 2/9  
15 Morris Cohn 2/13  
15 Sylvia Director 2/13  
15 Ruth Feller 2/13  
15 Lazur Rabinowitz 2/13  
16 Phyllis Putter 2/14  
16 Isadore Kaufman 2/14  
17 Gussie Rutenberg 2/15

18 Kurt Adler 2/16  
18 Hanna Sarah Cohn 2/16  
18 David Klapper 2/16  
18 Libby Eklind 2/16  
19 Shirley Berg 2/17  
19 Sarah Siegel 2/17  
20 Jennie Matlow 2/18  
21 Max Aronoff 2/19  
21 Harold A. Taub 2/19  
21 Isaac Weisman 2/19  
23 Edward Gildenberg 2/21  
23 Mildred Gildenberg Jaye 2/21  
24 Rose Davidowitz 2/22  
25 Jacob Klemow 2/23  
25 Sandra Palermo 2/23  
26 Viola Levine 2/24  
26 Morris Narrow 2/24  
27 Abe Aronoff 2/25  
27 Harry Bohorad 2/25  
28 Irving Cohen 2/26  
29 Dr. David Wagner 2/27

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 Veilohei Avoteinu, Shetehei Nishmat (insert name) Tzerurah betzeror hachayim, im nishmot Avraham Yitzchak ve'Ya'akov, Sarah, Rivkah, Rachel VeLeah. Tehi Menutchatah kavod, Selah*

thank you!

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](mailto:agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com) or call the shul.



2025 calendars have been mailed! Please check your mailboxes! If you'd like a calendar and did not order one, please let us know.

Please note our apologies for the omission of an ad from the children of Gerald L. Cohn, Cindy Cohn Hierbaum, and Shelley Cohn Schmidt that is included as an insert page. Also, please find on the next page Bruce and Kate Miller's ad that was mistakenly omitted from the

calendar. We send our deepest apologies.

The Purim Carnival in Wilkes-Barre will take place Sunday, March 9 at 10am at the Friedman JCC in Kingston. Expect lots of fun, costumes, singing, games, and food! More details to follow.



Passover is quickly approaching! Kosher for Passover food will be available at Price Chopper Edwardsville, Wegman's, Kingston Kosher, and Yeshiva Co-op in Scranton. Please note, the Co-op has moved across the street from Bakery Delite located at 1135 Capouse Ave. Looking for more options? Check out House of Kosher in Philadelphia!

*In Loving Memory of*

Irving Miller

Beatrice Miller

Cecelia Miller

Thelma Figlin

Isaac Figlin





## FEBRUARY PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Shalom to all,

As we saw recently with the wildfires in California, plane crashes in D.C. and Philadelphia, life is so fragile. Everything can change *instantaneously*.

The only prayer written by Moses, Psalm 90:12 says, “Teach us to realize the brevity of life, so that we may grow in wisdom.” This Psalm addresses how fragile life is, and what we can do about it. But as human beings we see that life can be totally unpredictable. However, the flip side to this is portrayed in the resilience showed by the thirteen hostages that have recently been released after being held captive for over 15 months. We pray for the release of the remaining hostages and for their safety and well-being after all that they have endured.

Christina is in the process of making arrangements for Cantor Ramón Tasat’s classes in order to prepare and enlighten us in prayer for the 2025 high holiday services. Please respond to Christina so we can move forward with Cantor Ramón.

I recently went to view the ice carving display at Damenti’s Restaurant, which was sponsored by the Hazleton Art League. Carl Frankel was volunteering his time and together we enjoyed a nice cold evening. This year’s theme displays the 12 signs of the zodiac. It is interesting to see the correlation between Judaism and the study of the zodiac. If you are interested in seeing the sculptures, they will be there for at least a month and a half. Attached is a picture of Carl and me.



Stay warm and think Spring!

Sincerely,

*Debbie Walker*