

The Agudagram

March 2025 Volume 74, No. 6
Adar 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

March 7-Shabbat Zachor- Parshat Tetzaveh- 5:43pm candlelighting
March 9-Purim Fest 10-12:30 Friedman JCC
March 13- Fast of Esther- 5:56am- 7:50pm Megillah reading in evening
March 14- Purim- Shushan Purim- candlelighting 6:51pm
March 21- Shabbat Parah- Parshat Vayakhel- 6:59pm candlelighting
March 28- Parshat Pekudei- 7:06pm candlelighting

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.

that we are no longer the servants of Pharaoh. But, says the Talmud, even after the deliverance of Purim, Jews were still the servants of Achashverosh ([Megillah 14a](#)). Tragedy had been averted but there was no real change in the hazards of life in the Diaspora.

It seems to me therefore that the *simcha* we celebrate throughout the month of Adar is different from the normal joy we feel when something good and positive has happened to us or our people. That is *expressive* joy. The *simcha* of Adar, by contrast, is *therapeutic* joy.

Imagine what it is to be part of a people that had once heard the command issued against them: “to destroy, kill and annihilate all the Jews—young and old, women and children—on a single day” ([Est. 3:13](#)). We who live after the Holocaust, who have met survivors, heard their testimony, seen the photographs and documentaries and memorials, know the answer to that question. On Purim the Final Solution was averted. But it had been pronounced. Ever afterward, Jews knew their vulnerability. The very existence of Purim in [our historical memory](#) is traumatic.

The Jewish response to trauma is counterintuitive and extraordinary. You defeat fear by joy. You conquer terror by collective celebration. You prepare a festive meal, invite guests, give gifts to friends. While the story is being told, you make a rumbustious noise as if not only to blot out the memory of Amalek, but to make a joke out of the whole episode. You wear masks. You drink a little too much. You make a Purim spiel.

Precisely because the threat was so serious, you refuse to be serious – and in that refusal you are doing something very serious indeed. You are denying your enemies a victory. You are declaring that *you will not be intimidated*. As the date of the scheduled destruction approaches, you surround yourself with the single most effective antidote to fear: joy in life itself. As the three-sentence summary of Jewish history puts it: “They tried to destroy us. We survived. Let’s eat.” [Humour](#) is the Jewish way of defeating hate. What you can laugh at, you cannot be held captive by.

I learned this from a Holocaust survivor. Some years ago, I wrote a book, [Celebrating Life](#), to write my way out of the depression I fell into after the death of my father, *zichro livracha*. It was a cheer-you-up book, and it became a favourite of the Holocaust survivors. One of them, however, told me that a particular passage in the book was incorrect. Commenting on Roberto Begnini’s comedy about the Holocaust, *Life is Beautiful*, I had said that though I agreed with his thesis – a sense of humour keeps you sane – that was not enough in Auschwitz to keep you alive.

“On that, you are wrong,” the survivor said, and then told me his story. He had been in Auschwitz, and he soon realised that if he failed to keep his spirits up, he would die. So he made a pact with another young man, that they would both look out, each day, for some occurrence they found amusing. At the end of each day they would tell one another their

story and they would laugh together. “That sense of humour saved my life,” he said. I stood corrected. He was right.

That is what we do on Purim. The joy, the merrymaking, the food, the drink, the whole carnival atmosphere, are there to allow us to live with the risks of being a Jew – in the past, and tragically in the present also – without being terrified, traumatised or intimidated. It is the most counter-intuitive response to terror, and the most effective. Terrorists aim to terrify. To be a Jew is to refuse to be terrified.

Terror, hatred, violence – the dark forces that are currently ravaging country after country in the Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia – are always ultimately self-destructive. Those who practise them are always, as was Haman, hoisted on their own petard, destroyed by their very will to destruction. And yes, we as Jews must fight antisemitism, the demonisation of Israel, and the intimidation of Jewish students on campus.

But we must never let ourselves be intimidated – and the Jewish way to avoid this is *marbim be-simcha*, to increase our joy. The people that can know the full darkness of history and yet rejoice is a people whose spirit no power on earth can ever break. *Purim sameach*. Elaine and I wish you a Purim full of joy.

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 TO RUN IN THE NEXT AGUDAGRAM!



FEBRUARY DONATIONS RECEIVED

<u>Yahrzeit Memorial Fund</u>			<u>Agudas Israel Endowment Fund</u>
<i>From</i>	....	<i>In Memory of</i>	
Miriam Weidenfeld	....	Anna Moscovitz, mother	
Barry & Karen Chaskin	....	Bertha Gelb, aunt	Get well wishes to Helene Kline
Ilene & Bob Levin-Dando	....	David B Levin, father	Sherri Klemow Shevlin
Faye & Richard Bishop	....	Dr. David Wagner, friend	Faye & Richard Bishop
Faye & Richard Bishop	....	Harold Taub, friend of parents	
David Matlow	....	Jennie Maltow, mother	Agudas Israel Endowment
Jackie Matlow	....	Jennie Matlow, mother-in-law	Paula Sokolowski
Marion Klemow	....	Larry Klemow, husband	
Faye & Richard Bishop	....	Max Aronoff, classmate	
Ilene & Bob Levin-Dando	....	Rina Levin, mother	
Ron Feller	....	Ruth Feller, mother	
Richard Frumkin	....	Sandra Palermo, sister	

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 or call the shul office.

(Adar) March 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.

****NOTE** ADAR I AND ADAR II ARE
BOTH OBSERVED IN A SINGLE ADAR
IN A NON-LEAP YEAR.**

Adar I

2 Bertha Casuto 3/2
2 Sam Goldberg 3/2
2 Ben Singer 3/2
2 Douglas Silver 3/2
2 Esther Snyder 3/2
3 David Sugarman 3/3
3 Maurice Williams 3/3
4 Ethel Koplin 3/4
4 Hannah Brown 3/4
4 Marilyn Harris 3/4
4 Gretl Schwabe 3/4
7 William Chercass 3/7
7 Morton Cohn 3/7
8 Morris Chenetz 3/8
9 Reuben Zimet 3/9
10 Martha Buchbinder
3/10
10 Henry H. Cohn 3/10
12 Grace Klemow 3/12
12 David Kaminoff 3/12

12 Bernie Staffin 3/12
14 Harry Brenner 3/14
15 Bernard Bergstein 3/15
15 Rebecca Chaskin 3/15
15 Beatrice Miller 3/15
15 Murray Spiegel 3/15
16 Lillian Frumkin 3/16
17 Jeffrey Bloch 3/17
17 Goldie Kaplan 3/17
17 Isadore Schwartz 3/17
18 Jacob Narrow 3/18
19 Esther Smulyan 3/19
19 Joseph Spector 3/19
19 Sadie Shaiman 3/19
20 Stella Kauffman 3/20
20 Dov Weidenfeld 3/20
21 Sidney Jacob Scharf
3/21
21 Bradford Stuart Kline
3/21
21 Sol Rockman 3/21
21 Ruth Albright 3/21
22 Max Burkat 3/22
22 Goldie Lande 3/22

22 Lillian Cohn 3/22
23 May Chercass 3/23
23 Florence Kashnitz 3/23
24 Frank Bowman 3/24
26 Martin Blau 3/26
27 Milton Ziff 3/27
27 Edward Kanner 3/27
28 Bessie Kanel 3/28
29 Bella Aronoff 3/29

Adar II

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

**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

AIC AND COMMUNITY NEWS

Join us for an upcoming Zoom class presented by
Cantor Ramón Tasat & Agudas Israel Sisterhood

“Jewish Rhythm & Shabbat”



Monday evenings on ZOOM | March 10 - 17 - 24 - 31

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy”

In this **4 week ZOOM class, open to all**, we will learn about the **weekly rhythms of Shabbat**, with a focus on the **blessings and procedures for worship** including **major piyyutim** (religious poems), the blessings that preceded and follow the **torah reading**, when to open/ close the **Aron hakodesh** (Ark), as well as the at **home blessings and practices of Shabbat**.

Following the Zoom class, we will have a special Shabbat weekend experience with Cantor Ramón at AIC to practice what we learned including a fantastic Shabbat dinner catered by Around the Table Kosher Catering, Kingston. Cantor Ramón with his amazing musical talents and guitar skills will include lots of music throughout!

**RSVP for the COURSE by March 7th with the AIC office
at 570-455-2851 or agudasisraelhazleton@gmail.com**

The Zoom course is FREE to attend



Join us as we gather to share in the beauty of Shabbat!

Friday, March 7, 2025 at Friedman JCC
Services: 5:30p.m. Dinner 6:30 p.m:
\$25 per person, \$12 Children 6yr-13yr,
Children 5 and under FREE

Everyone is welcome to participate in this special evening of services and a traditional Shabbat dinner.

At 5:30 PM you are invited to attend one of two services:

- Congregation Ohav Zedek Orthodox Shabbat service
- Temple Israel & Temple B'nai B'rith combined musically enhanced minyan.

**All food under supervision of Vaad of Luzerne County.

In partnership, we are proud to host this 28th annual Shabbat across America and Canada uniting with hundreds of locations throughout North America to celebrate this meaningful tradition.

In these dark and difficult times for Jews everywhere, come share in the light and joy of a communal Shabbat!

RSVP to dinner by Monday March 3, 2025. Scroll down for online payments.

NOTES: If paying by check (payable to Friedman JCC), or cash, please be sure to call or email Barbara Sugarman to RSVP at 570-824-4646 or b.sugarman@nepajca.org.

Must send or drop off checks/cash payments to Friedman JCC, 613 SJ Strauss Lane, Kingston, PA 18704, ATTN: Barbara Sugarman PRIOR TO SUNDOWN on March 7, 2025. Financial assistance available upon request.

MARCH PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Shalom to all,

It feels so good that SPRING is upon us after trudging through the cold and icy winter. We look forward to gathering together for upcoming holidays, services and pre-high holiday educational classes led by Cantor Ramón Tasat. Please check your emails and notifications for these upcoming dates and times. These classes will be on Zoom and will also be recorded for you to view afterwards.

By now, you should have received the beautiful 2025 Calendars from Christina. We thank all who have supported us by contributing and placing ads. Thanks to Christina for her time and efforts in producing a beautiful calendar.

Sara has listed information for Purim celebrations, Shabbat Across America and other activities that are taking place in Wilkes Barre and in Kingston. Please RSVP if you are interested in attending the activities and Zoom classes led by Cantor Ramón. We are also planning Passover activities as well.

I'm glad to announce that Helene Kline is back at home after progressing in a rehab facility. Prayers to her for a full recovery.

Wishing all a happy Purim and warmer days ahead.

Sincerely,