

# THE REPORTER

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BINGHAMTON, NEW YORK

## Federation opens Ukraine Emergency Fund

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton has opened a Ukraine Emergency Fund with monies going to the Jewish Federations of North America to help meet immediate needs in Ukraine and surround-



A Russian military strike on a TV tower in Kiev, Ukraine, on March 1. (Photo from Twitter via JNS)

ing countries. The fund will be open through Friday, April 15. There are two ways to donate: visit [www.jfgeb.org/](http://www.jfgeb.org/) and click on "Crisis in Ukraine." (This leads to the JFNA website, where donations may be made by credit card. For Binghamton to receive credit for a donation, click on "Network" under "Community" and then type in Binghamton in the space below.) Those preferring to write a check should make it out to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, write "Ukraine" on the memo line and mail the check to the Federation at 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

"Helping Ukraine through this crisis is of vital importance," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "I'm horrified by the invasion of that country and feel we need to help those in Ukraine and the refugees in surrounding areas. We held a peace vigil on March 9, but these

donations will have a practical, on-the-ground effect."

JFNA notes that the funds will be used to:

- ◆ Provide housing, clothing, medication, cash assistance, mental health services, security and transportation for refugees fleeing the war and those seeking to make *aliyah*.
- ◆ Ensure the secure evacuation of affected individuals from areas under immediate threat or where active hostilities are already taking place.
- ◆ Expedite the rapid *aliyah* of those individuals or families who wish to move to Israel and facilitate their absorption on arrival.
- ◆ Provide trauma-focused therapy and emotional first-aid training for those helping refugees outside of Ukraine, as well as mental health professionals treating patients inside of Ukraine. (See related article on page 11.)
- ◆ Support delegations of medical profes-



The Shaare Zedek Medical Center in Jerusalem received three Ukrainian victims of war for treatment on March 16, after they were airlifted to safety by Hatzolah Air. (Photo by Shaare Zedek)

sionals on the ground in Poland and Moldova to treat incoming refugees. See "Ukraine" on page 6

## Film Fest to hold virtual showing of "Here We Are"

By Reporter staff

The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest will hold a virtual showing of the film "Here We Are." Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, and Dr. Jennifer Gillis, professor of psychology at Binghamton University, who studies autism spectrum disorders, will moderate an online discussion. The event is free, but donations will be accepted.

People will be able to register for links to the film and discussion on the Federation website, [www.jfgeb.org/](http://www.jfgeb.org/). The film will be available for viewing from Wednesday-Sunday, April 6-10. The discussion will be held on Sunday, April 10, at 7 pm.

The film tells the story of Aharon, who has dedicated his life to raising his son Uri, who is autistic. Now that Uri is a young adult, Aharon must consider what is the next step in his son's life. After deciding Uri should live in a specialized home, Aharon plans to take his son there. But on the way, Aharon decides to run away with Uri. The question becomes, is Uri not ready to be separated from his father, or is his father the one who can't let go?

"Here We Are" is about a parent's love for his child," said Hubal. "It is a realistic



Shai Avivi and Noam Imber in a scene from "Here We Are." (Photo courtesy of Menemsha Films)

and heartwarming portrayal of the joy and challenges of raising a child with special needs. You will love this movie."

"Here We Are" won four Israeli Ophir

Awards, including Best Director – Nir Bergman, Best Actor – Shai Avivi, Best Supporting Actor – Noam Imber and Best Screenplay – Dana Idisis. It also won the Audience Awards at the New Hampshire Jewish Film Festival, Boston Israeli Film Festival, Atlanta Jewish Film Festival, Palm Beach Jewish Film Festival, Miami Jewish Film Festival, Pittsburgh Jewish Film Festival, San Diego Jewish Film Festival, Montreal Israeli Film Festival and Philadelphia Jewish film Festival. In a review in *The Guardian*, Leslie Felperin called the film "moving but unsentimental," and described it as a "a perfect example of how a cinematic story becomes paradoxically more universal by being very specific about people and places."



### Save the date

## Hillel Academy to hold Journal Brunch on May 22

Hillel Academy of Broome County will hold its annual Journal Brunch on Sunday, May 22, from 11 am-3 pm. The event will be held outdoors at Temple Israel. Diane Stento from Danielle House will be honored with the Theodore Sommer Community Service Award

and Brian Savitch will receive the A.M. Pierson Award.

"The N. Theodore Sommer award is given to someone who has contributed to the health and well-being of our community," said organizers of the event. "We are pleased this year to honor Diane

Stento from Danielle House. Danielle House provides shelter and emotional support for family members who are visiting seriously ill patients in Binghamton-area hospitals."

Organizers continued, "The A.M. Pierson Award is given to a person or

organization whose tireless work and dedication enriches the lives of our children, and we pleased to be able to honor Brian Savitch this year. We are also grateful to be given the opportunity to host this very special outdoor event at Temple Israel."

### Spotlight

## Wallenstein takes the stage solo

By Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Josh Wallenstein will appear in "Buyer and Cellar" by Jonathan Tolins at the Cider Mill Stage from April 7-10. The play was the winner of the 2014-2015 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Solo Show. For additional information about the performances, visit <https://cidermillstage.com/>.

Comedian, singer, teacher and now actor: That's the trajectory of Josh Wallenstein's career. His latest move is a first for him: he's doing a solo performance in "Buyer

and Cellar" by Jonathan Tolins at the Cider Mill Stage. As he noted in an e-mail interview, never before has he recited anyone else's words on stage.

"What I love about standup is that when people laugh, they're laughing at this thing that I created completely; from the writing to the delivery," he noted. "Whereas acting in a play, I'm delivering someone else's words.



Josh Wallenstein (Photo by Kate Murray)

When I first read the play, there were so many lines I came across that made me think, 'Man, I wish I'd written that!' Because there are ways that I'm very similar to the character in the play, Alex: we're a couple fabulous gays trying to make it in showbiz. However, we differ enough that it's still a challenge to embody someone else and make him not me. But that's part of what I love

about acting. I get to take on this whole new persona that is completely different from myself and my standup persona."

"Buyer and Cellar" has been described as a "one-man show about an actor who takes a job staffing a fake mall in Barbra Streisand's basement." That means the actor must play a variety of roles, including that of Streisand. "It's so fun to take on so many different roles," Wallenstein said. "It's crazy, though, because a huge part of theater See "Solo" on page 6

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## Opinion

# Opposing Putin is about more than sympathy for an underdog

By Jonathan S. Tobin

(JNS) – Americans are so polarized that even when almost everyone basically agrees about something, their instincts tell them to distrust it. That's what's happening in the discussion about Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. Virtually no one outside of the fever swamps of the far-right or far-left thinks that the invasion launched by Russia's authoritarian leader Vladimir Putin isn't an atrocity, let alone one that is defensible in any way.

Even those who expressed skepticism that the threats to Ukraine were anything that Americans should be concerned about have largely conceded that they were wrong. In the face of videos showing cities under siege, civilian casualties and millions of refugees fleeing for their lives in the wake of Russia's onslaught, there is only one possible response: sympathy and a desire to help. But despite that seeming consensus, there is no real agreement about the significance of these events or what the United States should do about them.

Everyone agrees that the Ukrainians need help. But sadly, it's far from clear that even a massive shipment of arms from the West or crippling sanctions on Russia will be sufficient to force an end to the fighting or restore Ukraine's territorial integrity even if a cease-fire is put in place. The Ukrainian request for the NATO alliance to impose a no-fly zone over Ukraine is a non-starter since that would make combat between Western and Russian forces a certainty. Starting a war between nuclear powers is likely to make things a lot worse for the Ukrainians – and the entire world.

Still, it's heartening to see that when faced with naked aggression by an authoritarian power against a weaker neighbor, the usual stark divides between Republicans and Democrats, and conservatives and liberals, have broken down. Hopefully, that will soon prompt the administration to stop pulling its punches on economic sanctions, as well as to take action to expand energy exploration and drilling so as to return to a position where Russian oil is no longer needed despite an ideological commitment to ending the use of fossil fuels, which has increased Putin's leverage.

It may well be hyperbole to say that Ukraine and its brave leader, President Volodymyr Zelensky, are the avatars of democracy. But the courage shown by him and his people as they have held their own against the Russians despite fearful odds has gained them the affection of a broad cross-section of Americans as well as international opinion.

It's also true that this tragedy might have been avoided had President Joe Biden not convinced Putin of his weakness by lifting the sanctions former President Donald Trump had imposed on the Russians' Nord Stream 2 gas pipeline to Europe, coupled with his disgraceful withdrawal last

summer from Afghanistan.

At the same time, the fact that some on the right, notably Fox News' Tucker Carlson, seemed to be willing to act as Putin apologists right up until the invasion also encouraged the Russian autocrat. They were under the delusion that concerns about Ukraine were a plot by war-mongering neoconservatives and that anything that Biden and the liberal media saw as bad must somehow not be so awful. That was wrong, even if the mainstream media's years of open bias on so many issues made it hard to believe anything they reported.

But further recriminations must be left to the historians. What matters most now is not why this debacle occurred. Rather, it's that no matter where you stand on the political spectrum, Putin's invasion has rallied American and international opinion behind the sound concept that aggressors should be resisted and punished.

To reassert this principle is not, however, a romantic notion or a way to relive past chapters of history. Ukraine is not a rerun of the Spanish Civil War that took place in the 1930s, which was widely, if often inappropriately, referred to as a rehearsal for World War II. Bad as he is, Putin isn't Adolf Hitler. Moreover, what is at stake in this struggle isn't so much the idea of preserving democracy as it is realizing that there is a new axis of rogue nations that needs to be stopped.

Ukraine is not a perfect democracy and, in the past, its nationalist movement has been associated with dark moments in world history that were particularly painful and bloody for the Jewish people. Still, its citizens deserve the right to self-determination and to not have foreign rule imposed on them. International support for them isn't merely justified; under the circumstances of unprovoked war, it is an imperative.

That is true even if it's being expressed in ways that reflect the profound lack of seriousness of many sectors of American society. Pouring out vodka with a Russian name – though manufactured in the United States – is the sort of empty gesture that led to renaming sauerkraut “victory cabbage” during the First World War to demonstrate hostility to Germany or to dub French fries “freedom fries” when France didn't support America during the 2003 invasion of Iraq. The fact that some arts organizations are now banning Russian artists for not denouncing Putin even if they denounce his war is equally pointless, unfair (since doing so would endanger their families and turn them into permanent exiles) and mere virtue-signaling.

More importantly, the laser-like focus on Russia and its aggression also misses the larger significance of the current state of international affairs.

What is often lost in the understandable outrage against Putin is that he is allied with China, which is supporting his aggression – an ominous portent for the people of Taiwan who live under a similar threat of invasion from Beijing. Equally important is that Russia is also aligned with Iran, and that Biden's dream of a new, even weaker nuclear deal with Tehran that will pose an existential threat to Israel, to Arab nations and to the West was made possible with Russian help.

The fact that Americans who are up in arms about Ukraine seem largely indifferent to the genocide China is carrying out in its western provinces against the Uyghurs doesn't mean that hostility to Putin is wrong. It just shows how poorly informed they are, and how myopic and wrong-headed their leaders have been.

Putin's authoritarian nationalism has nothing in common with the ideology of the Chinese Communist Party or the fanatical Shia Islamism that is the governing ideology of the Iranian theocracy. But all three share a desire to dominate the Western democracies and to impose a new age of reaction on the world. The more powerful these nations get – and China is on the brink of becoming a genuine superpower rival to the United States – the more dangerous the world becomes.

Seen in that light, the need to contain Putin's Russia and to do everything short of a nuclear war to roll back his aggression is clear.

Understanding this basic fact of international life is not to be confused with a crusade aimed at imposing democracy on nations and cultures that either don't want or can't handle it. Nor is it equivalent to a desire for America to act as the imperial policeman of the world.

The genius of the post-Second World War system of alliances was that it was based on the notion that collective security is not based on hostility to nationalism per se or a desire to impose a Pax Americana on the world. Instead, it was a way of understanding that foreign conflicts must sometimes be viewed in a broader context that requires America to act in defense of its interests and those of its democratic allies.

Americans should care about what's happening in Ukraine, and do what they can short of war to stop it and to aid those in need. But for the administration to demand the rollback of Russian aggression while at the same time seeking to enrich and empower an equally dangerous Iranian regime – and also failing to resist Chinese expansionism or its own crimes against humanity – is an appalling misjudgment and utterly unfettered from either morality or sound foreign-policy principles.

*Jonathan S. Tobin is editor-in-chief of JNS (Jewish News Syndicate). Follow him on Twitter at @jonathans\_tobin.*

## In My Own Words

### Hate crimes

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Most Jewish newspapers have been focusing on the current wave of antisemitic attacks on Jews. That coverage is extremely important since if we don't stand up for ourselves, who else is going to come to our aid? But we will never be truly safe in this country until everyone is safe, meaning all American citizens regardless of race, ethnicity or religion. Unfortunately, I've been so focused on new issues that I didn't realize one problem has continued and, in the past weeks, seems to have increased in number: attacks on Asian Americans.

While there has always been discrimination against Asian Americans, physical violence against them increased after former President Donald Trump referred to the COVID virus as the “Chinese virus.” That tweet led to thousands of attacks on those whose ancestry was any country on the Asian continent. Rather than fighting the virus, which has killed 967,000 people in our country (as of this writing), these attackers chose to hurt fellow Americans. However, I

thought the attacks had grown less frequent because reports of attacks didn't appear on the news.

On a recent TV news ticker, though, I read that a 67-year-old Asian woman had been punched more than 125 times in the head and face, and stomped on seven times while being called an “Asian [word I cannot use in this paper].” I decided to do this research partly because of a conversation I had with someone recently who was distressed about a string of seven attacks on Asians. Checking out these incidents online led me to a CNN article that noted, “From March 19, 2020, to December 31, 2021, [there were] a total of 10,905 hate incidents against Asian American and Pacific Islander people.”

Why isn't more attention being paid to these attacks? It's partly due to the fact it's difficult to focus when there are so many different problems occurring in the U.S. and across the world. For example, the reason for the conversation I mentioned was what was occurring in Ukraine.

We wondered if it was possible for groups to focus on a wide variety of issues or were they better off focusing on a few immediate ones? I can understand the desire to help Ukraine. What is happening in that war is horrific. Even if the fighting were to stop today, it will take years, if not, decades, for the country to recover.

Yet, we can't ignore the discrimination and violence happening in our country. We need to stand by those being attacked and help them as best we can. Our political and religious leaders must let their followers know that this is *not* acceptable. That's *all* our leaders – those of all parties and all religious denominations.

Protecting everyone living in our country is *not and should never be* dependent on whether you are a Democrat, Republican or Independent. Condemning these attacks should not depend on which religious practice you support or refuse to support. Hate is simply not acceptable.



**Jewish Federation**  
OF GREATER BINGHAMTON

Suzanne Holwitt, President  
Shelley Hubal, Executive Director

607-724-2332 ~ www.jfgeb.org

**The Reporter Editorial Committee**

Rachel Coker, chairwoman  
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**HOW TO REACH THE REPORTER**

Mail ~ The Reporter, 500 Clubhouse Rd. Vestal, NY 13850

E-mail ~ TRReporter@aol.com

Phone ~ 607-724-2360 or 800-779-7896

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#### OPINIONS

The views expressed in editorials and opinion pieces are those of each author and not necessarily the views of the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton.

#### LETTERS

The Reporter welcomes letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. All letters must be signed and include a phone number; names may be withheld upon request.

#### ADS

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Executive Editor Rabbi Rachel Esserman

Layout Editor Diana Sochor

Advertising Charlie Pritchett

Bookkeeper Kathy Brown

Production Associate Julie Weber



**Proofreaders**  
Barbara Bank, Fran Ferentinos,  
Rebecca Goldstein Kahn, Merri Pell-Preus,  
Ilene Pinsker, Heidi Thirer

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www.thereporter.org

# TI to hold fund-raising “Klezmer Concert for Ukraine” on April 3

Temple Israel will hold a fund-raising “Klezmer Concert for Ukraine” on Sunday, April 3, at 1 pm, in the synagogue building. Klezmer Local 42, of Athens, GA, will perform. The concert will be held in person at Temple Israel and live-streamed. Attendance is free, but donations of any amount are encouraged in lieu of buying a ticket. Checks can be made out to Temple Israel with “Ukrainian Fund” noted in the memo field. The event will also include a bake sale with all proceeds going to the fund. The concert is sponsored by Temple Israel and made possible by the contributions of the Rozen Foundation and Klezmer Local 42, which will perform at no cost. For information on viewing the concert on Zoom, contact the synagogue office at titammy@stny.twebc.com.

Klezmer Local 42 features musicians Dan Horowitz on upright bass and vocals; Noel Beverly on mandolin and vocals; Bud Freeman on clarinet; Eddie Glikin on percussion and vocals; Philip Kohlen on accordion and vocals; and Gregory Sanders on drums. To learn more about the band, visit its website at [www.klezlocal42.com/](http://www.klezlocal42.com/).

“The world has been watching enthralled in varying degrees of distress at the war in Ukraine,” said concert organizers. “We have seen acts of bravery and strength from everyday citizens. Sitting in our relative comfort in the United States, we are blessed with the freedoms and relative safety of our lives. As Jews, we strive to help with



Klezmer Local 42

tikkun olam, to repair the world, and to provide our share of tzedakah, charity. Helping our fellow Jews and our fellow humans is woven into the fabric of being Jewish.

We at Temple Israel have been afforded an opportunity to provide an avenue for our community to come together to help show support for Ukraine and help raise some funds for Ukrainians. We invite you to join us for a wonderful event of klezmer music, food, a chance to help Ukraine, and maybe a chance to relieve some stress through some klezmer dancing.”

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Karen Hammer** on the death of

her mother,  
**Miriam Aronowitz**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Jerry Cohen** on the death of his

mother,  
**Lois Mae Cohen**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Dr. Charles Rubin** on the death of his wife,

**Paula Rubin**

The Jewish Community wishes to express its sympathy to **Andy Shuman** on the death of his mother,

**Marcia L. Shuman**

## TC/TI adult ed. on April 3 to focus on “Jerusalem’s Second Temple”

The Temple Concord/Temple Israel Adult Education Committee will hold an in-person brunch and lecture on Sunday, April 3, at Temple Concord. Binghamton University Professor Nathanael Andrade will speak about “Jerusalem’s Second Temple from a Historical Perspective.” The brunch will begin at 10 am. The lecture will begin at 10:30 am and be held in person at the synagogue and live-streamed on Zoom. The cost of the brunch is \$7 per person. Those interested in attending are asked to RSVP to the Temple Concord office at 723-7355 or [templeconcordaa@gmail.com](mailto:templeconcordaa@gmail.com) by Wednesday, March 30. To attend virtually, visit <https://bit.ly/3JizWdO>, meeting ID 783 628 8415 and passcode 413692.



Professor Nathanael Andrade (Photo courtesy of Nathanael Andrade)

Jerusalem is probably the holiest site in Judaism,” said organizers of the event. “Since its destruction by the Romans in 70 C.E., Jews have yearned and prayed for its rebuilding. The vast sanctuary complex was largely constructed by the dynasty of Herod, who reigned around 37-4 B.C.E., was a visually imposing feature of Jerusalem’s topography and has remained so to the present day. But how unique was it?”

Andrade has published on the Roman and later Roman Near East, along with other topics. His books include “Syrian Identity in the Greco-Roman World” (Cambridge University Press, 2013); “The Journey of Christianity to India in Late Antiquity: Networks and the Movement of Culture” (Cambridge University Press, 2018); and “Zenobia: Shooting Star of Palmyra” (Oxford University Press, 2018).

Based on a change in New York state’s COVID protocols, masks are not required for those attending in person. The wearing of masks, however, is recommended. For anyone who would like to wear a mask, but does not have one, free masks will be available in the temple office and lobby.

Andrade, who is a professor of ancient history, will explore the building of the Second Temple’s sanctuary in a broader context of monumental temple construction in the Roman Middle East. “The Second Temple site in

### OF NOTE

## Antoun

Roz Antoun, former director of Jewish Family Service and community volunteer, will speak at the Broome County Council of Churches’ 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Faith in Action Volunteers Lives of Commitment Awards Breakfast on Thursday, May 5. Antoun will share her insights on the value of community service.

For information about the breakfast, contact the Broome County Council of Churches at 724-9130 or mail@broomecouncil.net.

## TC to offer yellow candles for Yom Hashoah

With financial support from the Goldenberg Fund, Temple Concord will once again have yellow candles to light in commemoration of Yom Hashoah available in the building for pick-up. For the 13<sup>th</sup> year, the synagogue will join Jews throughout North America by participating in the Yom Hashoah Yellow Yahrzeit Candle Program™, a program sponsored by the Federation of Jewish Men’s Clubs in cooperation with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and the Men of Reform Judaism.

“We can send candles to you if you are out of the area or have someone bring it to you locally if you can’t come by,” said organizers of Temple Concord’s participation in the program. “Along with affording you the opportunity to light the candle in your home on Yom Hashoah, we are hoping you will consider giving tzedakah as a form of respect for those who did not survive the Holocaust.” To arrange for pick-up, contact the synagogue at 723-7355 or [templeconcordaa@gmail.com](mailto:templeconcordaa@gmail.com).

Funds from the program help offset the cost of the confirmation class’ participation in the Union for Reform Judaism L’Taken Political Action Seminars in Washington, DC, and other youth programs for Holocaust related education, prejudice reduction, social justice and advocacy purposes. The L’Taken Seminar includes an afternoon at the United States Holocaust Memorial. “The project strengthens our teens as informed, committed and active American Jews,” See “Candles” on page 5

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The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming **REPORTER** issues.

ISSUE	DEADLINE
April 8-21 .....	March 30
April 22-May 5 .....	April 13
May 6-19 .....	April 27
May 20-June 2.....	May 11

All deadlines for the year can be found at [www.thereporter.org/contact-us/faqs](http://www.thereporter.org/contact-us/faqs) under “Q: What Are the Deadlines for the Paper?”

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Off the Shelf

# Family and a financial dynasty

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

Once in a while, I receive a review copy and shake my head when I open it. “What was I thinking?” I ask myself when I open the book. In the latest case, not only was the novel almost 700 pages, but it was written in blank verse. But, since I did ask for a copy, I knew I had to at least try to read it and I’m so glad I did. Stefano Massini’s “The Lehman Trilogy” (HarperVia) is wild, clever and brilliant, but clearly not for all readers. However, for those open to its storytelling style, it will serve as a crazy, fascinating roller coaster ride.

Who would have thought a story about a financial dynasty would so grab my attention? It’s clear when Henry Lehman emigrated to the United States in 1844, he had no idea what his family would accomplish. When New York City didn’t offer enough opportunity, Henry moved to Alabama and opened a store. Joined by his two brothers, Emanuel and Meyer, the business expanded in unexpected ways. War, illness, marriage, social lives: nothing seemed to get in the way of the older generation’s desire to increase their dealings, even if that meant moving into unknown territory – for example, becoming brokers dealing in commodities before forming a bank, while still looking to be part of the next big financial trend.

The only thing as important as the business was siring sons who would serve as the next generation of owners and managers. Of course, not every son wanted to be part of the business, although none of them had a choice. Fortunately, some sons/grandsons had a real understanding of business and found ways to improve the family’s financial outlook. Others had to bend their nature to work in a financial world they found distasteful. A few escaped the confines of the bank, although not without paying a price, while others plotted how to expand their role in the company.

But there was one additional aspect of life that interested them, at least after the Civil War, when the Lehmans made New York City the home base of their business. The second generation wanted to be socially prominent, that is prominent according to which synagogue pews were assigned to them. To move forward a row or two took politics: making deals with some families, while offering a few quiet words to the rabbi when another family’s behavior doesn’t shine a good light on the Jewish community.

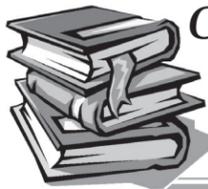
I’ve been deliberately vague about plot details because the joy of the novel is learning about the actions and reactions of the characters. The story does skip around a bit: a chapter will introduce a change – for example, a character has died – but it’s not until you read the whole chapter that you learn which one. Although the financial details were interesting, it was the interaction between the brothers/cousins/siblings that created the greatest tension; they often disagreed with each other, but it was their differences that helped expand the business because they each had something unique to offer.

The writing style – the blank verse with its short lines and use of repetition – builds tension and adds depth to the tale. For example, when noting that the Civil War had started, several verses open with the same line – “the first gunshot of the War of Secession” – a sound that created both similar and different reactions in the family and the country. While the patriotism shown in the South and the North are well described, the greatest insights are about what this means to the family business: “The South no longer sells cotton to the North. / The North no longer buys cotton from the South. / The Lehman office in Montgomery / closes its shutters: / draws its curtains, double locks. / The Lehman office at 119 Liberty Street / broken windows

/ sign set on fire / during the New York riots: / barricades / against the war / against the crisis / against the North / against the South / against the Union and Confederacy / against those who don’t pay / against those who don’t sell. / In the middle / between the two / squeezed / trapped / like a glass / the Lehman brothers.” There are also other marvelous uses of blank verse, including one chapter that features a surreal version of “King Kong,” another that portrays love as a sport learned from the movies and a third where a character relates his life to biblical stories.

Although the novel uses characters who belonged to the real-life Lehman family, it’s clearly a work of fiction. However, the fact it uses the Lehman name has created problems. When doing a web search to discover if Massini was Jewish (he’s not; he’s a Roman Catholic with an affinity for Judaism), I saw articles about a play based on the novel that was performed in London and New York City. Some writers saw “classic antisemitic tropes” since this is a story about Jewish bankers who focus so exclusively on finance. I have not seen or read the play so I can’t compare the two. However, that was not my feeling while reading the novel. Yes, they were smart capitalists; yes, their financial dynasty was important to most of them. But what I saw were interesting characters, rather than caricatures. And their Judaism, at least in the novel, seemed essential to them, especially in the early generations.

For me, “The Lehman Trilogy” was a powerful, masterwork that uses an intriguing style to portray not only its characters, but the world as they understood it, even if readers will sometimes disagree with those interpretations. However, as for who would love this book as much as I did, that I can’t say. Maybe dip a toe into its blank verse and see what happens.



Off the Shelf

# Discovering the “why” in biblical stories

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

When we seriously study stories from the biblical books of Genesis and Exodus, we are often left with questions. Why did the characters act that way? Wasn’t there any better way for God to have handled that problem? Is there something we’re missing? The ancient rabbis asked many of the same questions because the details not specifically included in the stories are often the most interesting. Rabbi David Fohrman asks and attempts to answer these questions in “The Beast That Crouches at the Door: Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and Beyond” and “The Exodus You Almost Passed Over” (both published by Aleph Beta Press/Maggid Books). Both books offer discussions that will intrigue and challenge readers.

Fohrman’s style is a casual one. He speaks directly to readers and leads them step by step through his thought process. This makes his work easy to read, even for those unfamiliar with the biblical text. In order to better understand these stories, he asks readers to imagine they don’t know the ending. Readers then view the action from the characters’ perspectives as they experience their lives in real time (since they can’t look ahead to find out what happens next). Fohrman also suggests that readers first read the text *without* the benefit of commentary to see what the words actually say and what is missing. In addition, he offers careful reading of the Hebrew, showing how English translations don’t always capture important nuances that can change one’s view of the text. Even when I disagreed with his interpretations, I found them fascinating and they often inspired me to come to my own new understanding.

This is the best type of *chavruta* study; you don’t have to agree with your study partner in order to expand your appreciation of the text.

Fohrman’s detailed and intricate analysis of the stories makes it difficult to summarize his thoughts, but some general details are possible. In “The Beast,” he discusses how Adam and Eve’s removal from the Garden of Eden and Cain’s murder of Abel serve as part one and part two of the story of the Tree of Knowledge. Both stories focus on what separates us from the animal kingdom. When Fohrman discusses the snake as first portrayed in the Garden of Eden story, he notes its similarity to Adam and Eve: “The snake so closely resembles a human that he forces us to ask: What, in the end, makes him a snake and not a human? This question hits close to home, because it is really a question about us and the nature of our humanity. Bottom line: What makes *us* human and not a snake? If you walk, talk and are smart, are you then a person? Or can you still be a snake?”

A careful look at the text notes something interesting about the connection between animals and God: for the snake, the voice of God is internal. God speaks to animals through their natural desires. Yet, something different occurs for humans, who not only have an internal voice (our desires), but hear an external voice, God’s instructions and commandments. The snake encouraged Eve to listen to her internal voice rather than the spoken word of God. For not following God’s command, she and Adam were punished.

Fohrman also notes something interesting about Cain

and Abel’s offerings to God. The text never actually says which offering was objectively the best. What it does say is that Cain offered “average produce,” while Abel brought the best of his flock. God’s reaction was not about who brought the best offering, but, rather, about something more important. Fohrman notes, “Abel brought the best he could; Cain didn’t. Each brother is compared not to the other, but to himself. What he *did* is compared to *what he could have done*.” He then shows how the story is connected to that of the Garden of Eden, including the fact that both Adam and Cain ask God similar questions, they both hide from God, they both will now have difficulty farming and they both are exiled. In addition, the stories portray the inner desires humans feel and must control. For Eve and Adam, this meant their desire to eat from the forbidden tree; for Cain, it meant controlling his jealousy and passion.

Fohrman asks similar questions in his study of the Exodus that almost didn’t happen. He wonders why God didn’t just magically release the Israelites from Egypt. If that had occurred, the plagues and the destruction of the Egyptian army at the Sea of Reeds would not have had to happen. Fohrman believes that the Exodus that did occur was not God’s first plan and carefully shows how that was actually God’s Plan C because the better, more peaceful plans – Plans A and B – did not happen due to Pharaoh’s inability to admit there was a power mightier than his own. That made it necessary for God to defeat the gods the Egyptians worshiped. Fohrman sees each plague as a strike against a specific Egyptian God. For example, the Nile turning to blood was a strike against the river God, the frogs against the amphibian God, insects against the insect God, etc. And God’s ability to turn off the plagues or have them start at a particular time showed just how powerful God is.

Fohrman shows just how differently the Exodus could have taken place when he discusses the Joseph story, particularly Joseph’s relationship to Pharaoh (the one who was Joseph’s patron), who not only allowed Joseph to bury Jacob in Canaan, but sent so many members of the Egyptian court with him that the people of Canaan noted their presence. Pharaoh’s chariots and army acted as an honor guard for Jacob and his sons, but lost their lives at the Sea of Reeds when they tried to return the Israelites to slavery. Fohrman also shows other connections between the two stories, including the fact that the route that Joseph took to bury Jacob is the same one God commanded the Israelites use during the Exodus.

This review can’t do justice to the intricacies Fohrman explores in each of these texts. While readers may quibble with his interpretations, his discussions are stimulating and thought provoking. In fact, it was when I disagreed with him most that I arrived at my own new way of viewing the text. But I would never have discovered those new interpretations without having read these works first. Anyone interested in biblical study may find themselves delighted by the challenges “The Beast” and “The Exodus” offer.

## Quick Reference Guide to Planned Giving

Use this planned giving quick reference guide to help determine the best strategy for achieving your philanthropic and financial goals.

For further information or assistance, please contact Shelley Hubal at 724-2332 or [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org)

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Reducing taxable income



Jewish Federation  
OF GREATER BINGHAMTON

# Federation held family event at the JCC



Sixty people attended the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's "March into Spring Family Get-Together" on March 6 at the Jewish Community Center playground. Shown are some of those who attended.



At right: Those attending the "March into Spring Family Get-Together" had the opportunity to talk and get to know each other during the event.

## Film Fest's offerings discussed



L-r: Rabbi Benny Kellman and Josh Hubal performed during the event.



Some of those attending danced to the music offered during the program.



The Binghamton Jewish Film Fest held a virtual showing of the films "White Right" and "Masel Tov Cocktail." Thirty-seven people signed up to view the films. Stephen A. Lisman (top row, far left), distinguished teaching professor emeritus in psychology at Binghamton University, moderated a Zoom discussion about the films on March 3. Fifteen computers tuned into the discussion.



The children took turns interacting with the therapy dogs from the Therapy Dogs 607 group.



Rose Shea, director of Jewish Family Service, and Eleanor Kellman enjoyed one of the projects offered at the event.

## Candles.....Continued from page 3

organizers said. "It is our hope to continue the Yellow Candle Project annually and to provide our collective support to keep the memory of the six million alive."

Organizers noted, "It's been more than 75 years since Nazi concentration camps were liberated, and the Holocaust that claimed six million Jewish lives came to an end. As the years pass, the memories of those who fell victim to the ultimate hate crime must not diminish. That's why we are encouraging everyone in the community to light a yellow *yahrzeit* candle on the night

of Wednesday, April 27, the eve of Yom Hashoah. When families and individuals light a yellow candle, it increases awareness of the Holocaust and perpetuates our commitment to our people and an end to mass murder and genocide."

Organizers added, "Yom Hashoah candles are a highly visible symbol for keeping the flame alive. Their color recalls the badges Jews were forced to wear in Nazi-occupied Europe, but their flame inspires hope that we can yet make our world a tolerant place to live."

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Published by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton

*Annual Campaign 2022*

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# “The Kominsky Method”: Izzy’s son and Jewish legacy

BILL SIMONS

A few years ago, I decided to take an economy-class tour of Hollywood. The spiel of a seasoned gentleman, commanding a vintage van with its top removed, intrigued me. A threadbare sportscoat covered his lean frame. Light makeup appeared to burnish his once handsome face.

“I don’t know your name, but I recognize you from TV and movies. You were a character actor,” said I.

Looking intently at me, he responded, “I was something more than a character actor.” He beckoned for me to ride shotgun with him in the front seat.

The guide’s stories, some true, others that should have been, were wonderful. He was my introduction to the world of onetime aspirants who came to Hollywood to pursue a fame and fortune that proved elusive, but remained on site, now venerable bit players, tour guides, maître d’s, hotel front-desk clerks and acting coaches. That is the world of “The Kominsky Method.”

Created, produced and often written by iconic showrunner Chuck Lorre, “The Kominsky Method” is a three-season (2018-2021), 22-episode, critically and popularly acclaimed Netflix dramedy, starring Academy Award winner Michael Douglas as an acting teacher in contemporary Los Angeles. In his mid-70s, thrice married and divorced, and Jewish, Douglas’ Sandy Kominsky never got the breaks to rise above the ranks of journeyman actor, but he is a respected teacher of the craft. Set within a milieu that is Jewish more in ambience than content, “The Kominsky Method” riffs on the compulsion to perform, the indignities of age and the atoning gifts of friendship, love and humor.

The series opens with a dramatic monologue by teacher Sandy Kominsky to his class of neophyte performers on the attributes and responsibilities of the performer. The actor, enjoins Kominsky, is like God. Both bring forth a creation that they invest with life, attend to nuanced flaws and virtues, love and nurture their progeny, and then let it go. With an unacknowledged appropriation from the Konstantin “Stanislavski System,” that is “The Kominsky Method.”

Remarkably, a high school actor, Izzy Demsky, expressed much the same thing in his 1934 Amsterdam, NY, year-book: “The show is over and the players have done their parts well. The actors leave the auditorium to blaze their paths toward a more worldly stage. The last door bangs shut and the sound echoes through the thick darkness of the schoolhouse.” Years later, Izzy took on the role of Kirk Douglas, father to Sandy’s creator, Michael Douglas.

At the core of “The Kominsky Method” is the warm relationship between Sandy and his agent and best friend of nearly 50 years, Norman Newland, played by the great Alan Arkin. Sandy and Norman kibbitz, bicker, laugh, complain and support one another. The comedic shtick

scores, but the show unflinchingly addresses life’s late innings. Three deaths, those of Norman’s wife, Sandy’s former wife and Norman, frame “The Kominsky Method.” In addition, Sandy twice confronts cancer, experiences incontinence and impotence, and faces serious threats from the IRS over unpaid taxes.

Despite travail, Sandy finds compensations as age challenges body and mind. Honesty and wisdom bloom late. To grieve loss may burnish the best memories – and grow appreciation and acceptance of the past and the circumscribed future. Sandy’s gratitude for his students deepens.

And there are unexpected victories. Sandy builds a loving relationship with Mindy, the daughter he had long neglected, and reconciles with his first wife, Dr. Roz Volander, shortly before her death. Volander is memorably played by Kathleen Turner. Given their real-life past as co-stars in 1980s blockbuster romantic-comedies, their personal feelings off-screen that long ago had them on the cusp of an affair, and Turner’s battles with rheumatoid arthritis and addiction, the Sandy/Michael-Roz/Kathleen scenes had special tenderness and poignance. The series ends with director Barry Levinson, playing himself, casting Sandy in the lead of a remake of the classic film “The Old Man and the Sea,” winning the septuagenarian Kominsky an Academy Award.

What makes “The Kominsky Method” relevant to Jewish life and culture? The main characters – Sandy Kominsky, his best friend (Norman Newlander), his new son-in-law (Martin Schneider) and Norman’s daughter (Phoebe) – are Jewish as are the actors who portray them: Douglas, Arkin, Paul Reiser and Lisa Edelstein, respectively. The Jews in Kominsky’s world are secular, assimilated and minimally observant. Only a funeral and *shiva* directly depict Jewish tradition. However, the sensibility, conversation and especially the humor conveys a strong Jewish resonance.

Despite their diversity, most Jewish comics have trafficked in adversity, mockery, irony and laughter as a mechanism of emotional self-defense. The humor in the “The Kominsky Method” is a shield against disappointment and death.

As with his creation Sandy Kominsky, actor Michael Douglas’ Jewishness is not traditional. When his Jewish father Kirk Douglas, then a Naval officer and aspiring actor, and his Anglican mother Dianna Dill, an actress and model, married, the rabbi who performed the ceremony induced the young couple to sign a pledge to raise their children Jewish. That did not happen. Michael was 6 at the time of his parents’ 1951 divorce, and Dianna, the custodial parent, did not provide religious training. Michael’s adult reconciliation with his father provided a trajectory that led him, by middle age, to identify as a Reform Jew, strong Zionist and outspoken critic of antisemitism. As for not meeting the religious criteria for Judaism, Michael retorts, “While some Jews believe that not having a Jewish mother makes me not Jewish, I have learned the hard way that those who hate do not make such fine distinctions.” Michael’s younger son, Dylan, studied Hebrew, wears a Star of David, and was bar mitzvahed in Jerusalem. With the participation of then Israel Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Douglas received the Genesis Prize, a two-million-dollar award, that he donated to organizations devoted to strengthening Jewish identity in the Diaspora.

Douglas’ Sandy Kominsky ultimately learns and shares a lesson. Grief will come. Surely, grief will come, but never lose an opportunity to celebrate. Laugh and live as long as you can as well as you can. *L’chaim*.

*Bill Simons is a professor emeritus at SUNY Oneonta where he continues to teach courses in American history. He is also the co-director of The Cooperstown Symposium on Baseball and American Culture and served as a speaker for the New York Council on the Humanities.*

## Ukraine..... Continued from page 1

In an e-mail dated March 13, Edward Finkel, the regional director who serves JFNA Network communities, including the Binghamton Federation, noted, “In less than three weeks, the Jewish Federations of North America has raised some \$25 million for Ukrainian relief efforts. That money has already been allocated by JFNA’s special Allocations Committee to Ukrainian relief efforts being undertaken by the Jewish Agency for Israel, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and World ORT, as well as United Hatzalah, Hillel International, Nefesh B’Nefesh, HIAS, Israel Trauma Coalition, Hadassah Medical Organization, Chabad and Shma Yisrael.”

He added, “At the end of last week, JFNA CEO Eric Fingerhut accompanied Ukrainian refugees on a flight

from Warsaw to Israel as they began a new life in their new homes. At the same time, Federation leaders met at the U.S. Capitol to ask members of Congress to support extraordinary aid to Ukraine and to open the doors of the country to immigrants seeking safety and freedom. A JFNA Solidarity Mission to the Poland/Ukraine border leaving today [March 13] will meet with refugees, governmental leaders and our global partners on the ground who are providing tremendous humanitarian aid.”

### NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

#### Israeli Air Force to join eight countries in Greek air drill

The Israeli Air Force will join eight other air forces for an extensive annual air drill in the coming days held in Greece, according to a report by Greek Reporter on March 21. The drill, which will begin March 28 and last until April 8, will see the IAF join the U.S. Air Force, as well as Hellenic [Greek], Canadian, Italian, Cypriot, Slovenian and Austrian air forces. “Egypt, Albania, Austria, North Macedonia, the United Kingdom, India, Kuwait, Croatia, Morocco and Saudi Arabia will be sending observers to the drill,” said the report. “According to the Hellenic Air Force, the drill is meant to simulate a variety of scenarios, including evading attacks from surface-to-air missiles, strikes on land-based targets, search and rescue, and protecting or attacking an airborne target,” according to Greek Reporter. Dozens of aircraft from each country are scheduled to take part with the drill focused along the Greek coastline and over the Mediterranean Sea.



Israel prepared a field hospital at Sheba Medical Center on March 5 that was to be transported to Ukraine. (Photo by Sheba Medical Center)



International Fellowship of Christians and Jews President Yael Eckstein met new Ukrainian immigrants on February 21. The aliyah flight from war-torn Ukraine was brought to Israel through the joint efforts of the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, Israel’s Immigration and Absorption Ministry and the Jewish Agency for Israel. (Photo by the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews)

## Solo..... Continued from page 1

is playing off other characters. Sometimes one character cuts off another, sometimes they talk over each other, etc. When you’re the one playing all of them, you have to learn to cut yourself off, which is interesting.”

He noted that “the most difficult part is making sure that each character is distinct: making sure that each character has their own unique mannerisms and inflections. Luckily, early in the play, Alex makes it clear that he does not impersonate Barbra, and when he recreates their conversations, he says, ‘I will just be her, and you can fill in the rest.’ This takes a little bit of the pressure off ‘impersonating’ her and being the Barbra that people are familiar with. Additionally, the play is all about exposing the Barbra that people aren’t familiar with (even if it’s a fictional depiction). A peek behind the curtain that not many have gotten, which gives a little more freedom to play with her character a bit. It’s been fun playing her. She’s such a dynamic character, and the juxtaposition between her who has it all and Alex who lives in a studio apartment has been fun to play.”

Wallenstein feels that inhabiting another persona has given him a chance to stretch his acting muscles. It helps that he’s never seen a full performance of the play. “It’s probably for the best, because I’m sure if I were to see the

entire thing, my instinct would be to mimic what other actors are doing with the role,” he noted. “So just seeing the clips [of the play], I have a frame of reference for what the various characters can be, and then I get to run with it and make it my own. I have to keep in mind that there’s no one right way to play each role. I can play things bigger or smaller than others have played the role, because we all interpret the writing differently.”

He did jokingly note one way he was different from other Jewish gay men. “I didn’t know much about Barbra Streisand prior to working on this play,” he said. “I know, a gay Jew who doesn’t follow Barbra. No real reason why, I just didn’t grow up watching or listening to her. She wasn’t on my radar. I think that’s one of the ways I relate to the character, Alex. At one point, he describes not being much of a ‘Barbra queen’ before getting the job in her basement. That’s definitely me. I’m making up for lost time now!”

At the moment, Wallenstein has no future acting commitments, but he is open to the possibility. “I haven’t planned on doing more acting,” he said. “I’m sure doing this play will make me catch the acting bug again. Especially acting with other people! That will be refreshing after doing this one solo.”

**STAY UP TO DATE!**

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# Federation held community peace vigil for Ukraine

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, in conjunction with the Broome County Council of Churches, held a vigil for peace in support of Ukraine at the Jewish Community Center on March 9. Ten clergy members from the Broome County area participated.

“Since the start of the war in Ukraine, many people have been feeling a sense of helplessness,” said Shelley Hubal,

executive director of the Federation. “We wanted to bring community members of all faiths together to share resources on how you can support the people of Ukraine, and to pray for a peaceful resolution to the conflict.”

Hubal added, “For me, it was important to be together and remind one another that the love that unites us is far greater than hate that divides us.”

## Jewish online resources

By Reporter staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering educational and recreational online resources. Below is a sampling of those. *The Reporter* will publish additional listings as they become available.

◆ The Museum at Eldridge Street will hold the virtual program “The Four Sons: Exploring the Haggadah through Art” on Wednesday, March 30, at 7 pm. Rabbi Aviad Bodner, will review tens of pictures from various *haggadot* from the last 400 years to see how the sons were portrayed. For more information or to register, visit [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-four-sons-exploring-the-haggadah-through-art-tickets-250248880137?aff=odeimcmalchimp&mc\\_cid=4d20aa06ec&mc\\_eid=b1c53698a8](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-four-sons-exploring-the-haggadah-through-art-tickets-250248880137?aff=odeimcmalchimp&mc_cid=4d20aa06ec&mc_eid=b1c53698a8).

◆ “Stories from the Fringe,” a play presented by The Braid and HUC-JIR, will be held on Wednesday, April 6, at 7:30 pm virtually or in person. For more information or to register, visit <http://huc.edu/register-stories-fringe-presented-braid-and-huc-jir>.

◆ Ritualwell will hold several virtual classes: “Citizen of the World: Amplifying Your Voice Through Poetry” on Monday, April 4, 11 and 25, from 7-8:30 pm, \$108 for three sessions ([www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/560464](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/560464)); the free class “Sacred Vessel: A Creative Cleansing for Passover” on Thursday, April 7, from noon-1:30 pm, ([www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/560565](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/560565)); “Emerging from our Inner Mitzrayim: A Journey toward Creative Freedom” on Thursdays, April 21 and 28 and May 5 and 12, from noon-1:30 pm, \$144 for four sessions ([www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/560574](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/560574)); and the free class “Begin with Story: A Dip into the Fictive Imagination” on Thursday, Apr 28, from noon-1:30 pm ([www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/560564](http://www.tickettailor.com/events/ritualwell/560564)).

◆ The Museum of Jewish Heritage – A Living Memorial to the Holocaust will hold the virtual program “A Righteous Woman: Doña Gracia Mendes Nasi” on Thursday, March 31, at 5 pm. The program will look at the life of Beatrice Nasi (Doña Gracia), who was forced to convert to Christianity and was one of the richest women in the world in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. She helped Jews escape Portugal and later reclaimed her Judaism. For more information or to register, visit <https://mjhnyc.org/events/a-righteous-woman-dona-gracia-mendes-nasi/>.

◆ Maven will hold several virtual classes: “Is Shame Jewish?” with Jewish Theological Seminary librarian and Professor David Kraemer on Wednesdays, April 20 and 27, from 5-6 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/is-shame-jewish>); “Jewish and American Law: The Relationship Between Law and Ethics” on Fridays, April 29 and May 6, 13 and 20, from 12:30-2 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/jewish-american-law-the-relationship-between-law-ethics>); “Weekly Seminars with Top Israeli Artists and Curators” on Tuesdays, April 26 and May 3 and 10, from 10-11:30 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/weekly-seminars-with-top-israeli-artists-and-curators3>); and “Talmud and Midrash” on Tuesdays, April 12, 19 and 26, and May 3, 10, 17, 24 and 31, and June 7 (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/talmud-and-midrash>). There is a charge for these classes.

◆ The Jewish Heritage Alliance will hold “The Golden Age of Sefarad and the Abraham Accords” on Sunday, March 27, from 1-2:30 pm. The event will celebrate “the growing rapprochement between

Israel and Arab countries taking place today, with the medieval Golden Age of Spain, highlighting the timeless benefits of peaceful tolerance and coexistence between Jews, Muslims and Christians.” For more information or to register, visit <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-golden-age-of-sefarad-and-the-abraham-accords-tickets-292366324547?aff=erelexpmlt>.

◆ The American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee will hold “Re-evaluating the Role of American Jewry During the Shoah” on Tuesday, April 26, noon-1:30 pm, with Dr. Jonathan Sarna. There is a cost of \$10 to attend. For more information or to register, visit <https://payments.jdc.org/give/386040#!/donation/checkout>.

◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will hold the virtual talk “Pièce de Résistance” about French Resistance during World War II on Wednesday, April 6, from 7-8:45 pm. The talk will include a virtual tour of Paris and a discussion of places connected to the French Resistance movement. For more information or to register, visit [www.nycjewishstours.org/event-log/piece-de-resistance](http://www.nycjewishstours.org/event-log/piece-de-resistance).

◆ Congregation Rodeph Shalom in Philadelphia will hold “Facing Antisemitism: A Conversation with Dara Horn” in-person and virtually on Wednesday, March 30, at 7 pm. There is a suggested \$10 donation for non-members. To register, visit [www.tfaforms.com/4965813](http://www.tfaforms.com/4965813).

◆ The Jewish Book Council will hold the virtual program “Virtual Unpacking the Book: Lisa Barr and James McAuley: Art, Assimilation, and Reclaiming a Stolen Legacy” on Monday, April 11, from 7-8 pm. The authors will talk about Jewish art that was stolen during the Holocaust and the attempts to reclaim the art after the war. For more information or to register, visit <https://www.jewishbookcouncil.org/events/virtual-unpacking-the-book-lisa-barr-and-james-mcauley-art-assimilation>.

◆ JBL is offering free large-print haggadahs. The form to request one can be found at [www.jbilibrary.org/2013-large-print-haggadah/haggadah\\_form.php](http://www.jbilibrary.org/2013-large-print-haggadah/haggadah_form.php).

◆ The Temple Emanu-El Streicker Center will hold the in-person and virtual event “Who By Fire: Leonard Cohen in the Sinai” on Monday, April 4, at 6 pm, featuring author Matti Friedman in conversation with Abigail Pogrebin. For more information or to register, visit [www.emanuelnyc.org/event/streicker-center-matti-friedman/](http://www.emanuelnyc.org/event/streicker-center-matti-friedman/).

◆ The Jewish Council for Public Affairs will hold a virtual conference looking at the questions “What Does It Mean to Be Free?” and “Why is this Time Different Than All Other Times?” on Monday, April 11, beginning at 11 am. The last session will be held at 8 pm. For more information or to register, visit <https://jcpa2022.org/>.

◆ Maven will hold several classes this spring: “Talmud and Midrash” on eight Tuesdays from April 12-June 7, from 3-4:30 pm, at a cost of \$280 (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/talmud-and-midrash>); “Is Shame Jewish?” on Wednesdays, April 20 and 27, from 5-6 pm, at a cost of \$42 (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/is-shame-jewish>); and “Weekly Seminars with Top Israeli Artists and Curators” on Tuesdays, April 26, and May 3 and 10, from 10-11:30 pm (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/weekly-seminars-with-top-israeli-artists-and-curators3>).

◆ The New School will hold “Elaine Black Yoneda: Jewish Immigration, Labor Activism, and Japanese American Exclusion and Incarceration,” featuring Rachel Schreiber See “Online” on page 11



Members of the Jewish community attended the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's vigil for peace in support of Ukraine, which was held on March 9. L-r: Eileen Miller, secretary of the Federation's Board of Directors; Sima Auerbach, former executive director of the Federation; Howard Warner, immediate past president of the Federation; Neil Auerbach; and Gerald Hubal.



Rabbi Geoffrey Brown, spiritual leader of Temple Israel, spoke at the vigil.



Rabbi Zev Silber, spiritual leader of Beth David Synagogue, spoke at the vigil.



Reverend Dr. Joseph Sellepack, executive director of the Broome County Council of Churches, spoke at the vigil.



Reverend Douglas Taylor, spiritual leader of the Unitarian Universalist Church, spoke at the vigil.

### NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

#### Poll: Americans becoming less pro-Israel, more pro-Palestinian

While Americans continue to favor the Israelis over the Palestinians, 55 percent now sympathize with Israelis and 26 percent with the Palestinians, according to a new Gallup poll. That percentage of Americans who side with the Palestinians represents a new high. The slight dip in support for Israelis and the increase for the Palestinians is based on a 2022 survey conducted from Feb. 1-17. The poll also found that 77 percent of Republicans sympathize more with Israelis while only 13 percent with the Palestinians. Among independents, 54 percent side with Israelis and 26 percent with Palestinians. And with Democrats, 40 percent favor the Israelis and 38 percent the Palestinians. Still, the favorability of the Jewish state itself remains high, according to the poll, with 71 percent of U.S. adults saying they have a favorable view of Israel while 27 percent have a favorable opinion of the Palestinian Authority. The 71 percent viewing Israel favorably today matches the average since 2013, while the 27 percent favorable to the Palestinian Authority exceeds the 22 percent in that period and continues the upward trend seen in this sentiment over the past decade.

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For further information or assistance,  
please contact Shelley Hubal at  
724-2332 or [director@jfgb.org](mailto:director@jfgb.org)



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OF GREATER BINGHAMTON

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Passover Seder

# PREPARE FOR PASSOVER

## TC to hold community seder in person and live-streamed on April 15

Temple Concord will host a first night Passover seder open to the community on Friday, April 15, at 6 pm, at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton. The seder will also be broadcast on Zoom at bit.ly/3KNWQua, meeting ID 846 2998 5712 and passcode 387880. Paid reservations

are due by Friday, April 1, and may be made by contacting the Temple Concord office at 723-7355 or Templeconcordaa@stny.rr.com.

Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell will lead the seder rituals. The kosher-style Passover meal will be catered by Rent

A Chef Michael Sackett. Traditional seder foods will be served. The cost is \$40 per person whether in-person meal or carry-out meal, and \$18 per child. Children 2 and under are free. Minimum reservations are needed by April 1 to have the in-person seder. Carryout meals will

include a haggadah, but not all ceremonial food or seder plate items.

For financial assistance to attend the seder, contact Goldman-Wartell at 723-7355, or Jewish Family Service or the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton at 724-2332.

## Chabad to hold in-person community seder, deliver "Seders in a Box" and offer *shmura* matzah

### In-person community seder

Chabad Center will hold a Passover seder open to the general community on the first night of the holiday, Friday, April 15. Festivities will begin with services at 7:30 pm followed by the seder. The services and the seder will be held at the Chabad Center, 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal. There is no charge for the seder, but donations to help defray the cost are appreciated and can be sent to Chabad before or after the holiday. For more information and seder reservations, write aslonim@Jewishbu.com or call the Chabad office at 797-0015.

The seder will include all of the traditional observances, a full-course dinner, handmade *shmura* matzah and mystical

insights. The haggadah will be read in both Hebrew and English with participation from those present, and the many customs and traditions of the seder will be explained.

"Our seder is open to anyone who wants to attend a traditional seder – no previous knowledge or level of observance is required," explained Rabbi Aaron Slonim, executive director of Chabad. "Be prepared to be welcomed – just are you are – as part of the family."

"We will be serving a full course, traditional holiday dinner, but I do urge participants to have a bite to eat earlier in the evening to tide them over the ceremonial, opening portion of the seder which precedes

dinner," added Rivky Slonim.

### "Seder in a Box"

For those who are unable to attend and would like to celebrate the holiday traditions, Chabad will make available a "Seder in a Box." Interested parties are asked to e-mail aslonim@Jewishbu.com or call the Chabad office at 797-0015 to reserve their box, or a box for a friend or loved one, as soon as possible. The "Seder in a Box" contains matzah, grape juice, a holiday dinner (for one or two) and the ceremonial items necessary for a seder. A haggadah will be included, as well. The subsidized cost of the "Seder in a Box" is \$36 or \$54, depending on number of meals included.

Community members who wish to assist in the effort can help with delivery, can underwrite a box or two, and/or can help with the cooking of the food and packaging of the boxes.

To offer assistance, contact the Slonims at 797-0015. Checks earmarked for this purpose may be sent to Chabad, 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

### *Shmura* matzah

Handmade *shmura* matzah will be available for purchase through the Chabad Center for \$19 a pound or three matzahs for \$10 as long as the supply lasts. Interested parties are urged to place their orders as soon as possible. To order *shmura* matzah, call the Chabad Center at 797-0015.

## Pesach 2022: The holiday of our (impending) freedom

### By Ethel G. Hofman

(JNS)—We are seeing the light at the end of the tunnel. With coronavirus vaccinations ramping up throughout the country, this may be the last Jewish holiday we spend in our small bubbles, restricted from extended family and friends. It's apropos that this happens to be the holiday of our freedom. In recent memory, it's perhaps never been as relevant as it is this year.

This year, the eight-day holiday begins the night of Friday, April 15, and lasts through the evening of Saturday, April 23.

There's an ever-expanding variety of kosher-for-Passover ingredients to use with the seder menu reflecting a diversity of tastes, diets and cultures. Even in my limited shopping sprees, I found confectioners' sugar (the Passover variety is combined with potato starch instead of corn starch) on store shelves, along with mushroom "pasta," family-sized items like broccoli kugel, spelt matzah, gluten-free items galore and an exciting variety of spices, including Mexican Chili.

The dishes below are steeped in tradition. Rich, spiced charoset is made up of a variety of herbs and dried fruits from Morocco. For this holiday, I'll make two varieties; the traditional apple-nut kind and Sephardic charoset such as the Moroccan recipe here. All dried fruits should be soft. To soften, pour hot water over top, steep for an hour and then drain. If you have leftovers, store them in the fridge for a delicious spread on matzah. Sweet Potato Kugel with a whisper of nutmeg is a change from the white-potato version. In the European shtetls, white potatoes were plentiful and cheap; who could have imagined any other variety? Sweet

and Tangy Slow-Baked Salmon sparkles with shawarma, just one of the lively kosher-for-Passover spices from Pereg spices, all available online.

Legumes such as peas, beans and lentils have long been part of the Sephardic Passover meals – not so for Ashkenazim. But an international group of rabbis within the Conservative movement has ruled that it is, in fact, OK to add rice, beans, corn and other so-called legumes. That said, Sephardic Bean and Mushroom Stew will please everyone (not just the vegetarians among us). And for a stunning dessert, I pulled out my mother's recipe from a time when kosher-for-Passover ingredients were few and simple. Matzah, olive oil and matzah meal were mailed to our Shetland home from the late Michael Morrison's Deli in Glasgow. Recipes may be doubled as needed.

### Moroccan Charoset (*pareve*)

Makes about 2½ cups

Cook's tips:

◆ An adaptable recipe. Other nuts or dried fruits may be used, such as pecans, almonds, dark raisins, dried pears, prunes and any preserves, like apricot.

◆ Chop to desired consistency; there's no right or wrong, only your preference.

- 2 cups walnuts
- ¾ cup golden raisins
- 8 pitted dates
- 10 dried apricots, halved
- 5 dried black figs
- ¼ cup cherry preserves
- 1 Tbsp. grated ginger root
- 1 Tbsp. shredded mint leaves, packed
- ½ tsp. fresh ground pepper
- About ¼ cup sweet Passover wine
- Sesame seeds (optional)

Place all ingredients except the wine and sesame seeds in the food processor bowl. Process to chop.

Add just enough wine to process into a coarse paste. Transfer to a bowl. Cover and refrigerate. Before serving, sprinkle with sesame seeds (optional).

Keeps up to a week, refrigerated.

### Sweet and Tangy Slow-Baked Salmon (*pareve*)

Serves 2

Cook's tips:

◆ If you're scared of undercooking, use a meat thermometer. Insert into the



*Sweet and Tangy Slow-Baked Salmon (Photo by the fish. The Pixabay)*

safe internal

temperature for fish is 145°F.

◆ To slice onion, wafer-thin, use a mandolin. You can purchase an inexpensive online.

◆ Slow baking yields perfect succulent salmon.

◆ Shawarma is an "all in one" mixture of cumin, coriander, turmeric and allspice.

- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup hot water
- 2 Tbsp. white vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ½ small red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp. raisins
- 1 tsp. shawarma
- 2 pieces salmon fillet, 6-8 ounces each
- Preheat oven to 300°F.

In a small saucepan, combine all ingredients except the salmon. Heat over low heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Cool slightly.

Place the salmon in a baking dish large enough so that the salmon is about half-inch apart. Pour the cooled liquid mixture over. Baste before placing in a preheated oven.

Cover and bake for 20 minutes, or until flakes are opaque when separated with a knife.

Serve hot or at room temperature.

### Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms (*pareve*)

Serves 4

Cook's tips:

◆ Any finely ground nuts, such as pecans or walnuts, may be substituted for almonds.

◆ Rinse mushrooms under cold water, then pat dry with paper towels. Don't clean until ready to cook or they'll become slimy.

4 medium Portobello mushrooms, cleaned

- ¼ cup ground almonds
- 1 scallion, trimmed and finely chopped
- ¼ cup snipped parsley, tightly packed
- 2 Tbsp. finely chopped red bell pepper
- ½ tsp. minced garlic
- ½ tsp. ground coriander
- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 Tbsp. sesame seeds
- Salt and fresh ground pepper to taste
- Preheat oven to 375°F.

Spray a baking sheet with nonstick vegetable spray.

Remove mushroom stems. Chop finely and place in a bowl. Add the almonds, scallions, parsley, red bell pepper, garlic, coriander and 1 tablespoon olive oil. Stir to mix.

Place mushrooms on the prepared baking sheet. Spoon stuffing into mushroom caps, dividing equally. Flatten down with the back of a spoon. Drizzle with remaining olive oil.

Bake in a preheated oven for 15 minutes. Sprinkle with sesame seeds, and bake 5 minutes longer or until stuffing is golden-brown. Serve hot or warm.

Note: Stuffing may be prepared ahead of time and mushrooms stuffed just before cooking.

### Sephardic Bean and Mushroom Stew (*pareve*)

Serves 4

Cook's tips:

◆ Cremini mushrooms are simply the brown version of the common white mushroom.

◆ May use frozen cut green beans.

◆ Any soft canned white beans may be substituted for butter beans.

- ◆ Add more vegetable broth, if needed.
- 1 Tbsp. oil
- 1 lb. cremini mushrooms, quartered
- 1 small onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tsp. bottled minced garlic
- ½ tsp. each, rosemary and tarragon
- 1½ cups vegetable broth
- ¼ cup dry white kosher-for-Passover wine
- 1 (14½ oz.) can diced tomatoes, undrained

See "Pesach" on page 12

## JFS Accepting Passover Donations

Jewish Family Service will once again be collecting funds to help members of the community celebrate Passover. These donations will be distributed to more than 16 local Jewish families who are experiencing extreme financial difficulties. In order to assure a timely distribution of these gifts, please be sure your contribution reaches our offices by April 7, 2022.

Thank you for your support of your neighbors in need. Please mail or bring your donation to Jewish Family Service, 500 Clubhouse Road, Vestal, NY 13850. Contact Rose Shea, JFS Director, at 724-2332, ext. 339, with any questions.





# PREPARE FOR PASSOVER

## BD Sisterhood to sponsor Passover workshop on March 30

Beth David Sisterhood will once again sponsor its annual Passover workshop. The workshop will take place on Wednesday, March 30, at 7 pm, on Zoom. Rabbi Zev Silber, the spiritual leader of Beth David Synagogue, will lead the workshop, which is open to the community. The Zoom link will be sent to everyone who receives e-mail from Beth David Sisterhood or Silber's weekly updates. Others who wish to receive the link should contact the Beth David Synagogue at office at 722-1793 or bethdavid@stny.rr.com, or Silber at rabbisilber@stny.rr.com.

"As always, Rabbi Silber will try to answer any questions you have about your Passover preparations," said organizers of the event. "Questions that might require research should be sent to Rabbi Silber in advance. After your questions have been answered, Rabbi Silber will discuss our third favorite part of the seder (assuming our first favorite is the meal and the second is the four cups of wine): the songs we sing at the end of the haggadah (assuming everyone is still awake!). Best known, of course, is 'Chad Gadya.' What is its origins? Why do we sing

it and the other songs? What are the deeper meanings? Join us and find out."

Organizers added, "This will also be a great opportunity to share information with your friends about new items available this year for Passover, the great recipe you recently discovered, or any other Passover tips or shortcuts that might be interesting to your fellow Sisterhood members. We hope you will join with Beth David Sisterhood and friends for this informative evening."

## On the Jewish food scene Passover without the food – ceremonial or otherwise

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

A group of friends and I gather for an off-night seder each year. We usually hold it on a Sunday afternoon so people can attend family seders on the first nights of the holiday, and those of us still working don't have to worry about a late night. Sometimes, the best day is actually before or after the actual holiday. That makes it easier to prepare food for the potluck that's part of the gathering; one year when it took place after Passover, my mom brought a pizza.

The first year of the pandemic (in 2020), the seder was cancelled. We did a Zoom call for our Rosh Hashanah that year, but the person who organizes the gatherings was concerned about doing a Zoom Passover gathering last year (2021). One important reason was that we wouldn't be able to share the ceremonial foods over the computer. Even though our potluck meal might not pass everyone's definition of kosher for Passover, the ceremonial food has always been an important part of the event.

I said, "Let me think about it" and searched for a way to create a new type of Passover gathering. Was there a way to replace food, which not only important as a symbol in Judaism, but in cultures around the world? Would it be possible to find readings that would work? After all, if food is a symbol, couldn't those readings stand in its place?

I managed to put together a group of readings, including a wonderful one that represented the four cups of wine. It helped that people were searching for creative ways that spoke to the difficulty of celebrating the holiday during a pandemic. The readings I found acknowledged that "this night, day and year were different from other nights, days and years." We decided to go ahead with the Zoom "seder" and the message I received afterward was that it was more moving than most people expected. I can only take credit for finding those wonderful readings, none of which I wrote.

My friend has asked about doing an in-person seder

this year, something that worked well for the small Rosh Hashanah gathering we held last fall. I said yes, but he's waiting until closer to the date to send out an e-mail because no one knows if a new variation of the COVID surge will appear. The e-mail will also include a request that only those who have been vaccinated attend.

But one thing is clear: as important and wonderful as food for the seder is, its true meaning is our liberation from slavery. We don't need bitter herbs to appreciate how bitter life can be and we don't need salt water to remind us of the tears we've shed. As for the sweet taste of charoset, the love of those we cherish can take the place of what is my favorite seder food.

Perhaps this year, we will be liberated from the plague of COVID. If not, we can still find meaning in this holiday season. We just need to be open and appreciate the blessings we do have. Wishing you a joyous Passover.

# PASSOVER

2022 *Greetings*

**Style A • \$57**  
Actual Size: 3.22" x 2.958"

*Wishing you and your family peace, health and happiness this Pesach*

Your Name(s)

**HAPPY PASSOVER**  
**חַדְגָּדְיָא**

*Next year may we all be free!*

Your Name(s)

**Style C • \$20**  
Actual Size: 1.5278" x 1.975"

**PASSOVER 2022 Greetings**

**April 8 (Deadline: March 31)**  
Personal Greetings and Health Care Greetings

Passover is traditionally a time for sharing with family, friends and strangers. While your seder table may not be large enough to fit all these people, you can share the warmth of this holiday with the entire local Jewish community by placing a Passover greeting in *The Reporter*. You may choose from the designs, messages and sizes shown here - more are available. You may also choose your own message, as long as it fits into the space of the greeting you select. (Custom designs available upon request.) The price of the small greeting is \$20 (styles C, D & E), the medium one is \$38 (style B), the next size is \$57 (style A) and the largest one (style F) is \$76. To ensure that your greeting is published, simply fill out the form below and choose a design that you would like to accompany your greeting, or contact Charlie Pritchett 1-800-779-7896, ext. 244; cell 607-725-4110; or e-mail [advertising@thereporter.org](mailto:advertising@thereporter.org). Checks can be made payable to *The Reporter* and sent to: *The Reporter*, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

**PASSOVER 2022 Greetings**

**April 8 (Deadline: March 31)**  
Personal Greetings and Health Care Greetings

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Greeting Style \_\_\_\_\_

Message \_\_\_\_\_

How you would like it signed \_\_\_\_\_

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**Passover Blessings**

Your Name(s)

**Style B • \$38** Actual Size: 3.22" x 1.975"

*May you and your family have a joyous Pesach*

Your Name(s)

**Style D • \$20**  
Actual Size: 1.5278" x 1.975"

*May your Passover seder be joyous!*

Your Name(s)

**Style E • \$20**  
Actual Size: 1.5278" x 1.975"

**HAPPY PASSOVER**

Your name(s)

**Style F • \$76**  
Actual Size: 3.2222" x 3.95"

**March 31 DEADLINE**

Checks can be made payable to *The Reporter*, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850.

➔ Visit us on the web at [www.thereporter.org](http://www.thereporter.org)



## Weekly Parasha

Shemini, Leviticus 9:1-11:47

## The personal *ketoret* (incense) of Nadav and Avihu

RABBI MOSHE SHMARYAHU, HEAD OF JUDAIC STUDIES, HILLEL ACADEMY

This week's *parasha* is *parashat* Shemini. The word Shemini refers to the number eight, which marks the eighth day of the dedication of the *Mishkan*. For seven days, Moshe taught Aharon and his sons the work of the *Mishkan* (tabernacle). Moses explained to the priests the sanctity of the tabernacle and the vessels, and transferred to them the responsibility for operating the tabernacle, so that on the eighth day, they actually performed the dedication

of the tabernacle. During the end of the dedication, there was a severe accident that caused the death of Nadav and Avihu, the sons of Aaron. The Torah and commentators have explained what their sin was, and why they deserved to die in this joy and celebration.

I want to discuss one aspect of what happened before the disaster related to the matter of incense (*ketoret* in Hebrew), which is mentioned in our *parasha*. In chapter 10, verse

one, it is written, "And Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, each took his pan, put fire in them, and placed incense upon it, and they brought before the Lord." Then the Torah goes on to say, "And fire went forth from before the Lord and consumed them, and they died before the Lord."

Why did the sons of Aaron suddenly die? What happened? The Torah lists a number of reasons why the sons See "*Ketoret*" on page 11

## Congregational Notes

### Temple Israel

Orientation: Conservative  
Rabbi: Geoffrey Brown  
Address: 4737 Deerfield Pl., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 723-7461 and 231-3746  
Office hours: Mon.-Thurs., 8:30 am-3:30 pm; Fri., 8 am-3 pm  
E-mail: titammy@stny.twcbc.com  
Website: www.templeisraelvestal.org

Service schedule: Tues., 5:30 pm; Fri., 5:30 pm; Sat., 9:30 am  
On Fridays and Tuesdays at 5:30 pm, services will be led by Rabbi Geoffrey Brown via Zoom and in person (masks are required).

On Saturday, March 26, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Leviticus 9:1-11:47 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 36:16-38. At 8 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Wednesday, March 30, there will be Torah study from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

On Saturday, April 2, at 9:30 am, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Leviticus 12:1-13:59 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 45:16-46:18. At 8:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

On Tuesday, April 5, at 7 pm, there will be an Executive Board meeting on Zoom.

On Wednesday, April 6, there will be Torah study from 4-5 pm on Zoom.

### Penn-York Jewish Community

President-Treasurer-Secretary: Harvey Chernosky, 570-265-3869  
B'nai B'rith: William H. Seigel Lodge  
Purpose: To promote Jewish identity through religious, cultural, educational and social activities in the Southern Tier of New York and the Northern Tier of Pennsylvania, including Waverly, NY; Sayre, Athens and Towanda, PA, and surrounding communities.

### Congregation Tikkun v'Or

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Address: PO Box 3981, Ithaca, NY 14852; 2550 Triphammer Rd. (corner of Triphammer and Burdick Hill), Lansing, NY  
Phone: 607-256-1471

Website: www.tikkunvor.org  
E-mail: info@tikkunvor.org  
Presidents: Nomi Talmi and Shawn Murphy  
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman, rabbishifrah@tikkunvor.org  
Education Director/Administrative Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky  
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin  
Services: All services currently on Zoom. E-mail info@tikkunvor.org for the times and links. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday from 8:30-9:30 am. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat and other special services at least once a month. Call for the weekly schedule.  
Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for second through seventh grade classes meet on Sunday mornings. Sixth and seventh grades also meet on Wednesday afternoons. Family programs for kindergarten and first grade held monthly.  
Adult Education: Offered regularly throughout the year. Check the website for details.

### Temple Brith Sholom

Affiliation: Unaffiliated  
Address: P.O. Box 572, 117 Madison St., Cortland, NY 13045  
Phone: 607-756-7181  
President: Carol Levine, 315-696-5744  
Cemetery Committee: 315-696-5744  
Website: templebrithsholomcortland.org  
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/Temple-Brith-Sholom-114006981962930/  
Service leaders: Lay leadership  
Shabbat services: Either Friday evening at 7:30 pm or Saturday at 10 am from Rosh Hashanah to Shavuot. Holiday services are also held. Check the Facebook page or weekly e-mail for upcoming services. Contact the president to get on the e-mail list.

Religious School: Students are educated on an individual basis. Temple Brith Sholom is a small equalitarian congregation serving the greater Cortland community. Congregants span the gamut of observance and services are largely dependent on the service leader. The Friday night siddur is "Likrat Shabbat," while the Saturday morning siddur is "Gates of Prayer." The community extends a warm welcome to the Jewish student population of SUNY Cortland, as well as the residents of local adult residences.

Services and programs are held by Zoom on the first and second Fridays of the month.

### Synagogues limit face-to-face gatherings

For specific information regarding services (including online services), meetings and classes at any of the area synagogues, contact them by phone or e-mail.

### Beth David Synagogue

Affiliation: Orthodox Union  
Rabbi: Zev Silber  
Address: 39 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Phone: 722-1793, Rabbi's Office: 722-7514, Fax: 722-7121  
Office hours: Mon. closed; Tues. 10 am-1 pm; Wed. closed; Thurs. 9 am-1 pm; Fri. 10 am-1 pm  
Beth David e-mail address: bethdavid@stny.rr.com  
Rabbi's e-mail: rabbisilber@stny.rr.com  
Website: www.bethdavid.org  
Facebook: www.facebook.com/bethdavidbinghamton

### Rohr Chabad Center

Affiliation: Chabad-Lubavitch  
Rabbi Aaron and Rivkah Slonim, Directors  
E-mail: aslonim@binghamton.edu  
rslonim@chabadofbinghamton.com  
Address: 420 Murray Hill Rd., Vestal, NY 13850  
Phone: 797-0015, Fax: 797-0095  
Website: www.Chabadofbinghamton.com  
Rabbi Zalman and Rochel Chein, Education  
E-mail: zchein@Jewishbu.com, rchein@Jewishbu.com  
Rabbi Levi and Hadasa Slonim, Downtown and Development  
Chabad Downtown Center: 60 Henry St., Binghamton  
E-mail: lslonim@Jewishbu.com, hslonim@Jewishbu.com  
Rabbi Yisroel and Goldie Ohana, Programming  
E-mail: yohana@Jewishbu.com, gohana@Jewishbu.com  
Regular service times: Daily 7:30 am, Friday evening 6 pm, Shabbat morning 9:30 am, Maariv and Havdalah one hour after candle-lighting time, Sundays 9:30 am.

To join the mailing list, for up-to-date information on adult education offerings or to arrange for a private tutorial, for details concerning the Judaica shop and resource center, or for assistance through the Piaker Free Loan Society or Raff Maasim Tovim Foundation, call Chabad's office at 797-0015.

Chabad will be holding pre-Shabbat virtual programs. For more information, visit www.JewishBU.com/S2020Partnership.

### Temple Beth El of Oneonta

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Amelia F. Wolf  
Address: 83 Chestnut St., Oneonta, NY 13820  
Mailing address: P.O. Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820  
Phone: 607-432-5522  
E-mail: TBEOneonta@gmail.com  
Regular service times: Contact the temple for days of services and times.

Religious School/Education: Religious School, for grades kindergarten through bar/bat mitzvah, meets Sunday mornings. For the schedule of services, classes and events, contact the temple.

Friday night services will be held on April 1; May 6 and Saturday morning, May 7; and June 3.

### Temple Beth-El of Ithaca

Affiliation: United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism  
Rabbi: Rachel Safman  
Rabbi Emeritus: Scott L. Glass  
Address: 402 North Tioga St. (the corner of Court and Tioga streets), Ithaca, NY 14850-4292  
Phone: 273-5775  
E-mail: rabbi-safman@tbeithaca.org and secretary@tbeithaca.org  
Website: www.tbeithaca.org

Presidents: David Weiner and Linda Aigen  
Sisterhood President: Gail Zussman  
Director of Education: Rabbi Suzanne Brody  
Services: Fri. 8 pm; Sat. 10 am, unless otherwise announced. Weekday morning minyan 7:30 am (9 am on Sun. and legal holidays). Religious School/Education: September-May: Classes meet on Sunday, 9 am-12:30 pm and Wednesday, 3:45-5:45 pm. The Midrashah (eighth grade and high school) classes will meet at times designated by their respective teachers.  
Adult Ed.: Numerous weekly courses, several semester-long courses and a variety of mini-courses and lectures are offered throughout the year. Call the temple office for more details.

For upcoming services and events on Zoom, visit www.tinyurl.com/HappeningAtTBE.

Friday, March 25, light candles before ..... 7:03 pm  
Saturday, March 26, Shabbat ends ..... 8:05 pm  
Friday, April 1, light candles before ..... 7:11 pm  
Saturday, April 2, Shabbat ends ..... 8:13 pm  
Friday, April 8, light candles before ..... 7:19 pm  
Saturday, April 9, Shabbat ends ..... 8:21 pm

### Temple Concord

Affiliation: Union for Reform Judaism  
Rabbi: Barbara Goldman-Wartell  
Address: 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905  
Office hours: Tues.-Fri., 10 am-2 pm  
Phone: 723-7355  
Fax: 723-0785  
Office e-mail: TempleConcordbinghamton@gmail.com  
Website: www.templeconcord.com  
Regular service times: Fri., 7:30 pm; Sat., 10:35 am, when religious school is in session.  
Hebrew school: Hebrew school meets at 4:15 pm and 5:15 pm on Tues. and Thurs. during the school year unless otherwise noted.

Some services and programs are online only.  
Friday, March 25: at 7:30 pm, Shabbat service led by Rabbi Goldman-Wartell. To attend in person, all must show proof of COVID-19 vaccinations. Masks are not required, but are recommended. Join via Zoom at https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330; or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday, March 26: Shabbat school at 9 am; Torah study at 9:15 am on Zoom at https://bit.ly/3CVxM14, meeting ID 8829808 7579 and passcode 676707; Shabbat family service at 10:30 am; and "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm on Zoom at https://bit.ly/3zd0atv, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Friday, April 1: at 5 pm, First Friday featuring Planet Smith, a progressive indy blues-boogie song writing duo, featuring Bob Alan Bricks and Donnie Wilkins.

Friday, April 1: at 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Anne Bussard and Robin Hazen. Proof of vaccination is required to attend. Masks are not required, but are recommended. Join on Zoom at https://bit.ly/3hRmW2Y, meeting ID 869 9699 8146 and passcode 826330; or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday, April 2: Shabbat school at 9 am; Torah study with Rabbi Rachel Esserman at 9:15 am on Zoom at https://bit.ly/3CVxM14, meeting ID 882 9808 7579 and passcode 676707; and Shabbat family service at 10:30 am; and "Havdalah with a Bonus" at 7 pm on Zoom at https://bit.ly/3zd0atv, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Sunday, April 3: from 10 am-2 pm, Sisterhood Rummage Sale.

Sunday, April 3: Temple Concord/Temple Israel Adult Education program on "Jerusalem's Second Temple from a Historical Perspective" with Binghamton University Professor Nathanael Andrade. For more information, see the article on page 3.

Wednesday, April 6: at 10:30 am, Temple Concord Book Club; at 6:30 pm, Sisterhood schmooze; and at 7 pm, Sisterhood board meeting.

### Norwich Jewish Center

Orientation: Inclusive  
Rabbi: David Regenspan  
Address: 72 South Broad St., Norwich, NY 13815  
Contact: Guilia Greenberg, 336-1523  
Purpose: To maintain a Jewish identity and meet the needs of the Jewish community in the area.  
Adult Ed.: Saturday morning study is held at 10 am. Call for more information and to confirm.

### Kol Haverim

Affiliation: Society for Humanistic Judaism  
Address: P.O. Box 4972, Ithaca, NY 14852-4972  
Phone: 607-277-3345, E-mail: info@kolhaverim.net  
Website: www.kolhaverim.net  
Chairwoman: Abby Cohn  
Kol Haverim: The Finger Lakes Community for Humanistic Judaism, is an Ithaca-based organization that brings people together to explore and celebrate Jewish identity, history, culture and ethics within a secular, humanistic framework. KH is part of an international movement for Secular Humanistic Judaism and is affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism, a national association with over 30 member communities and congregations around the country. Established in the spring of 1999, it offers celebrations of Jewish holidays, monthly Shabbat pot-lucks, adult education, a twice-monthly Cultural School for children, and a bar and bat mitzvah program. KH welcomes all individuals and families, including those from mixed religious backgrounds, who wish to strengthen the Jewish experience in their lives and provide their children with a Jewish identity and experience.

# Mending the broken spirits of Ukrainian refugees

By Abigail Klein Leichman

(Israel21c via JNS) – Reut Shifman-Tsoref, aka Zaza the Dream Doctor, saw a Ukrainian woman trying to lull her month-old child to sleep in a shelter packed with other refugees. Red nose in place, Zaza approached and looked the mother in the eye with a silent request for permission as she gently touched the baby’s leg.

Maintaining eye contact, Zaza continued stroking the infant until the mother felt safe. They don’t speak the same language, but they didn’t need to exchange a single word.

“Slowly the mom took her hands off and let me take the baby,” said Zaza. “I sang him songs that my grandmother taught me. I got him to sleep and then I started massaging the mother’s leg, too, to help her relax.”

Zaza was one of four Dream Doctors accompanying a week-long Israeli medical mission that aided more than 2,000 refugees in seven shelters in Kishinev, Moldova, and at the Moldova-Ukraine border crossing. There are now three teams on the ground.

Some 350,000 Ukrainian refugees – mainly women and children – have poured into Moldova since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on February 24. Their present situation is nightmarish and their future uncertain.

Dream Doctors Zaza, Zoya, Vitaly and Gad have tried to bring smiles to the faces of these weary, frightened displaced Ukrainians. But therapeutic clowning is not just fun and games. It’s a serious, innovative approach to trauma intervention. “People think we only joke with patients, but a lot of times they don’t need us to make them laugh. They need us to see them, to calm them,” said Zaza, who works at Jerusalem’s Shaare Zedek Medical Center.

The next day when Zaza encountered the same mother with her newborn and her older children, they immediately ran over to her. “Again I took the baby and got him to sleep. Holding him gave both his mother and me a moment of calm

in the storm – it works both ways. It was such a difficult scene there, and a new baby symbolizes life and hope,” she said.

“Our work here is to alleviate the worry and fear, if only for a few minutes. Those moments of joy bring back hope and sanity in this otherwise chaotic time,” explained Tsour Shriqui, CEO of Dream Doctors. “In freezing temperatures, many Ukrainians are arriving without gloves and other warm items of clothing, with babies in their arms and nowhere to go. For a mother, watching her child laugh and play infuses the strength to push further for a better life.”

Dream Doctors are an integral part of medical teams in 34 hospitals across Israel. They also have extensive experience working in humanitarian relief missions worldwide, said Shriqui. Their aid in foreign countries is often in collaboration with the Israel Defense Forces, and this time in collaboration with Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Center and charitable foundations including Lema’anam: Physicians for Holocaust Survivors. The organization has traveled to disaster zones in Nepal, Haiti, Uganda, Ethiopia and Chad, among others, according to Shriqui.

“Dream Doctors were also in Houston after Hurricane Irma, Pittsburgh after the 2018 synagogue shooting, and in the Bahamas following the major earthquake in 2019. In 2018, Israel’s Foreign Ministry sponsored a unique training opportunity for Dream Doctors to coach a team of Yazidis from Iraq – a group that was severely victimized by [Islamic State] – in the art of medical clowning,” he said.

Some of the Dream Doctors in Moldova speak Ukrainian; Zaza does not. But 14 years with the organization have made her a master of nonverbal communication. “Not speaking the language protects me a little, because I can’t hear the terrible stories,” she said. “I work just with my body and my mind.”

Many of the refugees were forced to leave husbands, sons and brothers in the war zone and travel for many

hours, or even days. “They are in emotional distress. But they don’t want pity – they want encouragement that they are strong and will be fine,” said Zaza.

Despite her professional experience, however, Zaza said it nearly broke her to encounter elderly Ukrainians in the refugee shelters, among them Holocaust survivors. In a poem she wrote in Hebrew on her Facebook page, Zaza described how she was reduced to tears seeing these elderly refugees “packing the rest of their lives in a suitcase, sitting and waiting for the next instruction. In their eyes there is pain and doom.”

In this heart-wrenching place, she says, “We all work together as a team and support each other. “We try to give the refugees a small moment of calm and respite, to release endorphins, even to allow them to laugh.”

For more information, visit [www.jgive.com/new/en/ils/donation-targets/71847?fbclid=IwAR3Bs6ANhFe\\_n8TY2y4Et-VLm0qnDInmnNxc\\_eDPLXrMiTe-dRePtF7oX\\_E](http://www.jgive.com/new/en/ils/donation-targets/71847?fbclid=IwAR3Bs6ANhFe_n8TY2y4Et-VLm0qnDInmnNxc_eDPLXrMiTe-dRePtF7oX_E).

This article was first published by Israel21c.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

### Singapore to open embassy in Israel

Singapore is set to open an embassy in Israel some 53 years after the two countries established diplomatic relations, it was announced on March 21. The proclamation was made during a meeting in Jerusalem between Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid and his Singaporean counterpart, Vivian Balakrishnan. Israel’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement that the embassy in Tel Aviv will be a focal point and “support Singapore companies seeking to expand their collaboration with potential Israeli partners.”

# Siblings of children with disabilities may have greater empathy, new study finds

By JNS staff

(JNS) – Having a child with a disability or a developmental delay is often a stressful experience for a family – for parents and siblings alike. Siblings, especially, may be exposed to greater stress and challenges.

Less research, however, has been done about the positive effects of growing up with a sibling with disabilities. A new study published in *Child Development*, led by Hebrew University of Jerusalem developmental psychology expert Professor Ariel Knafo-Noam and Anat Perry, examines how growing up as a sibling of a child with disabilities

may nurture empathy.

It’s one of the first studies to examine the possible positive effects of growing up with a sibling with a disability.

“Our findings indicate that siblings of children with disabilities may have greater cognitive empathy – that is, an understanding of others’ thoughts and feelings – which is important as cognitive empathy is key for social skills,” said Yonat Rum, a postdoctoral researcher at Hebrew University and the University of Cambridge.

Researchers examined data from the Longitudinal Israeli Study of Twins, which included 1,657 families of

twins born in 2004 and 2005. Of these, 63 families were identified where one of the twins has a disability and the other is typically developing. The typically developing twin siblings of children with disabilities were then compared to 404 typically developing twin siblings from the rest of the sample, on measures of cognitive and emotional empathy and pro-sociality, completed when all children were 11 years old.

Participating children were administered a self-report questionnaire to assess their cognitive and emotional empathy, and a computerized task designed to assess pro-social behavior. Further, the participating children’s parents completed a questionnaire to assess their children’s pro-social behaviors.

The data showed that typically developing children who had a twin with a disability scored higher in self-reported cognitive empathy than did typically developing children who did not have a twin with special needs. Contrary to predictions, no differences were found in emotional empathy and pro-sociality.

“These positive effects might be due to the specific ‘advantage’ of cognitive empathy to better understand their sibling with disabilities and to support the sibling relationship,” said Knafo-Noam.

The authors acknowledged the preliminary nature of the findings and called for further research in the field.

## Ketoret . . . . . Continued from page 10

of Aaron died: that they used foreign fire, that they were drunk, that they were not married, that they despised Moses and Aaron, and that they had not consulted with each other before the sacrifice.

I would like to bring another possible reason for this disaster. I have not yet found a reference to it (although there may be) and that is the matter of the secret of incense – *ketoret*. Before that, let’s find out what *ketoret* really is and what is its secret.

The rabbis of the Talmud expanded the description of the recipe of incense from four components of the Torah to 11 components: (1) steak, (2) stonechat, (3) galbanum, (4) frankincense, (5) moore, (6) cassia, (7) spikenard, (8) saffron, (9) costus, (10) romantic peel and (11) cinnamon.

According to the Talmud, the Abtinas family during the Second Temple period were responsible for preparing the incense. They knew the types of incense and knew what their weighty ratio was to the incense itself. Moses gave these details to Aaron the priest, who gave them to his son, Elazar, and from there the secret of preparation was passed on in secret to only one priestly family in each generation.

There is a strict prohibition on making similar incense, and whoever does so will be bound by the laws of heaven. In fact, today no one can identify nor knows how to make such incense. Here the question arises: Where did Moses learn the act of incense? For this we need again the Talmud that tells us that when Moses ascended to heaven to receive the Torah, the angels did not agree that God should give the Torah to Moses and bring it down to earth. Moses convinced the angels why people – not the angels – need the Torah. When the angels heard the wisdom of Moses, they became his friends. Every angel – including the angel of death – gave Moses a gift and the gift was the secret of incense *ketoret*. The angel of death said to Moses an incorrect use of “this incense” can cause death, while proper use can cause salvation from death.

During the wanderings of the children of Israel in the wilderness, the incense was part of two tragic events. The first in our *parasha* was when Nadav and Avihu, the sons of Aharon, entered the tabernacle and sacrificed incense

without the explicit command of Moshe Rabbeinu; as punishment for this they died by fire that came down from heaven.

The second time this happened in the Korach affair. In the Korach affair, after he and group of people complained about the leadership of Moses and Aaron, Moses offered them to pass the incense test, and again they were unworthy to use the incense. Fire came out of God and burned them all to death.

We, therefore, see that experience has shown that when an incense is sacrificed without an explicit injunction, and without permission, it brings a fatal disaster.

But shortly afterward the Torah tells us of an event in which incense again plays a very significant role. Immediately after the Korach affair, 250 people who used incense were punished, after which the children of Israel complained and directly blamed Aaron and Moses for their deaths. God became angry at their words and sent a plague that began to kill them. The Torah describes the event: “Moses said to Aaron, ‘Take the censer and put fire from the altar top into it and put incense (*ketoret*). Then take it quickly to the congregation and atone for them, for wrath has gone forth from the Lord, and the plague has begun.’ And Aaron took [it], just as Moses had said, and he ran into the midst of the assembly, and behold, the plague had begun among the people. He placed the incense on it and atoned for the people. And he stood between the dead and the living, and the plague ceased.” Here in the latter case, we come to know that with proper authorized use, incense can save from plague and death.

In the Holy Zohar, there is a story about a city where a plague broke out, but when Rabbi Acha sent sages to read the incense in the four corners of the city, the plague stopped.

The Talmud says that Nadav and Avihu were greater than Moses and Aaron, were enthusiastic about the wonderful event, and out of spontaneity of joy used incense and gave it fire without an explicit command of Moses. This mistake cost them their lives. “The hidden things belong to the Lord, our God, but the revealed things apply to us and to our children forever: that we must fulfill all the words of this Torah.”

## Online . . . . . Continued from page 7

on Thursday, April 7, at 5:30 pm. The event will be in-person and live streamed. For more information or to register, visit <https://event.newschooledu.com/TNHxEBY>.

For additional resources, see previous issues of The Reporter on its website, [www.thereportergroup.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309?](http://www.thereportergroup.org/streams/miscellaneous-features/miscellaneous-features/tag/80309?)

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**NEWS IN BRIEF**

From JNS.org

**Israeli Navy joins four naval fleets for Med. Sea exercise**

The Israeli Navy joined four other fleets to take part in the “Noble Dina” sea drill held in the eastern Mediterranean, Israel Hayom reported on March 21. “Amid heightened tensions in Ukraine between Russia and the West, and with NATO in particular, Israel considered withdrawing from the exercise to avoid being perceived as taking a non-neutral stance in the conflict. After a discussion on the matter, however, [Israel Defense Forces] Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Aviv Kochavi decided to participate as planned,” said the report. As in previous years, Israeli missile ships, a submarine and other vessels are taking part in the exercise, which will go on for the duration of the week. In last year’s exercise, the added participation of Cyprus and France meant that five countries with fleets in the Mediterranean took part in the “Noble Dina” exercise, held 150 nautical miles southwest off Cyprus, with the Israel Navy playing a major part in terms of command and planning. Rear Adm. Eyal Harel, head of Operations in the Israel Navy, said last year the large-scale exercise saw the navy implement “capabilities in underwater warfare, search-and-rescue, convoy escort and surface combat. These exercises are of paramount importance in strengthening the Navy’s connection with foreign fleets who share common interests.”

**Israeli Knesset members make first official visit to Indonesia**

Israeli Knesset members Avi Dichter and Nira Shpak were in Indonesia on March 21 to attend the Inter-Parliamentary Union conference. This is the first time Israeli MKs have visited the country, with which Israel has no diplomatic relations. Israeli flags were on display in Nusa Dua, Bali, alongside those of another 196 countries, including Arab countries, who were also in attendance. Dichter (Likud) was elected deputy chairman of the IPU’s High-Level Advisory Group on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism, which he joined only five months ago. “We smashed another glass ceiling,” said Dichter in a statement on March 21. “We are forging ties with many delegations, including Arab countries. It is increasingly easier for us to convey Israeli messages, also on political and security issues.”

**Bennett makes surprise visit to Egypt for trilateral summit with UAE, Egyptian leaders**

Israeli Prime Minister Naftali Bennett was on an unannounced visit to Egypt on March 21 to meet with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and United Arab Emirates Crown Prince Mohammed bin Zayed al-Nahyan. Plans for the summit were finalized over the last several days as part of an effort to forge a coalition, with U.S. support, of countries, including Egypt, the Gulf states and Turkey, to stand together against Iran, *Haaretz* reported. Additionally, it was reported that Israel is interested in convincing the UAE and Saudi Arabia to boost their oil production to offset Russian oil. Israel is also interested in helping assist Egypt in finding alternative sources of wheat amid the Russia-Ukraine conflict. An Egyptian official told *Haaretz* that the three leaders would focus their talks on Iran, Syria and Ukraine. Prior to arriving in Egypt, al-Nahyan met with Syrian President Bashar Assad in Abu Dhabi last week, which drew U.S. condemnation. Bennett and el-Sisi met in September in the Sinai resort city of Sharm el-Sheikh, which was the first formal public meeting between the leaders of Egypt and Israel in a decade. Despite having formal relations for decades, ties between the two neighbors have largely remained cold. However, with the institution of the Abraham Accords, coupled with ongoing regional threats such as Iran and terrorism, there appears to be a renewed push towards the warming of ties. The week of March 18, the two countries announced the opening of a new direct flight route between the countries.

**Polio found in sewage samples in Tiberias**

Remnants of poliovirus were discovered in sewage samples in Tiberias, adding to the

growing list of hot spots in the country, Israel’s Ministry of Health said in a statement. A 4-year-old girl from Jerusalem tested positive for the virus earlier in March, marking the country’s first case in more than 30 years. Since then, another child has tested positive and five others, suspected of carrying the virus, are being tested. In all of the above cases, the children were not vaccinated against polio. The week of March 18, the Health Ministry said it thought it had found early traces polio in two other cities – Beit Shemesh and Modi’in Ilit – via its sewage-surveillance program, but on March 20, it said that those samples turned out to be negative. “We are not talking about rampant polio,” head of public health services Dr. Sharon Alroy-Preis stressed in a briefing shortly after the discovery of the first case of the virus. “This is polio from the weakened live vaccine that changed over time.” Nevertheless, the Health Ministry has been conducting a mass vaccination drive in Jerusalem. In the last two weeks, 12,412 children have been vaccinated as part of that drive, including 560 on March 20 alone, and the ministry is calling on all parents to make sure that their children are vaccinated according to the routine vaccination schedule.

**Nasrallah denies sending fighters to Ukraine to battle alongside Russia**

The head of Lebanon’s Hezbollah terrorist group has denied reports that the group is sending fighters to Ukraine to battle alongside Russian forces, according to Reuters. “No one from Hezbollah, neither a fighter nor an expert, went to this arena or any of the arenas of these wars,” said Nasrallah, according to the report. Russian state media reported the weekend of March 13 that recruitment offices had been opened across Syria, and that many Syrian soldiers and militia fighters had already volunteered. According to the report, the two countries have an agreement allowing active-duty Syrian soldiers to fight in Ukraine. At a meeting of Russia’s Security Council on March 11, Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu told President Vladimir Putin that there were 16,000 volunteers “from the Middle East” prepared to join Russian forces in eastern Ukraine, according to Reuters.

**Israel is No. 9 on World Happiness Report**

Israel is the ninth happiest place in the world to live, according to this year’s World Happiness Report. The 158-page listing for 2022 was published on March 18. Israel is two spots higher than last year and five spots higher than in 2020, when it was ranked at No. 14. Finland came in first for the fifth year in a row, followed by Denmark, Iceland, Switzerland and the Netherlands. New Zealand was on the heels of Israel at No. 10. Afghanistan placed last at No. 146. The report largely focuses on the countries’ management of the coronavirus pandemic and citizens’ trust in their government and other institutions throughout the crisis. “COVID-19 has also demonstrated the crucial importance of trust for human well-being,” noted the report. “Deaths from COVID-19 during 2020 and 2021 have been markedly lower in those countries with higher trust in public institutions and where inequality is lower.”

**Pesach. . . . . Continued from page 8**

1½ cups cut green beans  
1 cup canned butter beans, drained  
Salt and fresh ground pepper to taste  
Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add mushrooms, onion and garlic. Cover; cook until onions and mushrooms are soft.

Stir often. Add the rosemary and tarragon, vegetable broth, wine and tomatoes. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to simmer. Cook, partially covered, 10 minutes. Stir in the green beans. Cook for 10 minutes longer. Beans should be crunchy.

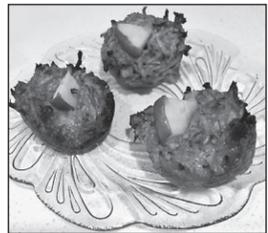
In a small bowl, mash the butter beans coarsely. Stir into mushroom mixture. Heat through and serve.

**Sweet Potato Kugel With Glazed Pears (pareve)**

Makes 6-8 muffins

Cook’s tips:

◆ Combine white potatoes and sweet potatoes, instead of all sweet potatoes.  
◆ Grate potatoes on the grater attachment of a food processor.  
◆ May bake in a 1-quart ovenproof casserole.  
1 (8-10 oz.) sweet potato, peeled and grated  
1/3 cup unsweetened applesauce  
3 eggs, beaten  
3 Tbsp. sugar  
3 Tbsp. margarine, melted  
1/4 cup matzah meal  
1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg  
1 Tbsp. apricot or marmalade jam, melted  
2 thin slices pear, cored, unpeeled, cut in thirds  
Preheat oven to 350°F.  
Spray 6 to 8 muffin tins with nonstick baking spray.  
In a large bowl, combine all ingredients, except the jam and pears.  
Transfer to prepared muffin tins. Bake in preheated oven for 30 minutes.  
While muffins are baking, place the pear pieces in a small bowl. Pour the melted jam over and toss to mix. Insert one piece of pear into each muffin.  
Bake for 10 minutes more until firm and nicely browned. May be frozen.



Sweet Potato Kugel with Glazed Pears (Photo by Ethel G. Hofman)

**Brandied Fruit Parfait (pareve)**

Makes 4

Cook’s tips:

◆ Serve in demitasse cups or wine glasses, just the right size.  
◆ Any soft fruit such as diced peaches or strawberries (Photo by Ethel G. Hofman) may be substituted for raspberries.  
◆ No blender? Process in a food processor.  
◆ When whisking the egg mixture, make sure to whisk the sides of the pan where the mixture gets hot faster. Do not allow to boil.  
◆ Whipped topping should be chilled before using.



Brandied Fruit Parfait (Photo by Ethel G. Hofman)

2 eggs  
1/2 cup sugar  
1 tsp. orange zest  
1/4 cup brandy, divided  
Tiny pinch each ground nutmeg and cloves  
3 Tbsp. margarine, melted  
2 Tbsp. fresh raspberries  
1/2 cup nondairy whipped topping, whipped  
Ground nutmeg to garnish (optional)

In a blender, place the eggs, sugar, orange zest, 2 tablespoons brandy, nutmeg and cloves. Blend at high speed for 10 to 15 seconds.  
With the motor running, through the opening in the cover, pour in the melted margarine in a slow steady stream. Transfer to a small saucepan.  
Whisk constantly over medium-high heat until beginning to thicken, 3 to 4 minutes. Do not boil.  
Remove from heat and pour into a bowl. Chill.  
In a cup or small bowl, pour the remaining brandy over raspberries. Mash coarsely with a fork.  
To assemble, spoon raspberry mixture equally into the bottom of 4 demitasse cups or wine glasses.  
Fold the whipped topping into the chilled egg mixture. Spoon over raspberries. Top with a dusting of nutmeg.

*Ethel G. Hofman is a syndicated American Jewish food and travel columnist, author and culinary consultant.*

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