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Federation to host virtual tour of Auschwitz on Jan. 23

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will host a live virtual tour of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp on Sunday, January 23, at 9:30 am. The program is offered in partnership with the Center for Holocaust Education of the East Valley Jewish Community Center,



Part of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp. (Photo courtesy of the Center for Holocaust Education)

AZ. The tour of the death camp will include historical footage, aerial photographs, drone videos and testimonies of survivors. There is no cost for the tour due to a generous grant from the Victor and Esther Rozen Foundation. The tour is being sponsored by the Sisterhoods of Beth David Synagogue, Temple Concord and Temple Israel. Only 45 spots will be available. To register for the event, visit www.jfgb.org/. Due to the limited number of spots, those interested are asked to sign up only if they can definitely attend the tour.

"We hope the community will take advantage of this meaningful experience," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "This January marks the

76th anniversary of the liberation of the camp. Many of us will never have the opportunity to travel to Europe to visit in person and this tour is the next best way to understand the atrocities of that time. We are very grateful to our sponsors for supporting this Zoom tour."

Barbara Zelter took the tour earlier this year and called it a "memorable experience." She noted, "I had never visited Auschwitz in person, but taking this virtual tour brought to life all that I have read and seen in the media, newspapers and books. Thanks to Federation for offering this Zoom event to see part of our history that must never be forgotten. I encourage everyone to be part of the virtual tour."

The Auschwitz-Birkenau Concentration Camp was the largest of the German Nazi camps and extermination centers, consisting of more than 40 individual camps. More than one million men, women and children died there. Located in Poland, the killing center was open

between 1940-45. Estimates on the numbers of those killed are 960,000 Jews; 74,000 non-Jewish Poles; 21,000 Roma; 15,000 Soviet prisoners of war; and 10,000-15,000 other nationalities. (Figures are from the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.)



Federation announces new logo

Ever wonder where Campaign dollars given to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton go? Aside from allocating funds to local organizations such as the Jewish Community Center, *The Reporter* and Hillel Academy, the Federation sponsors programming throughout the year. In 2020, the Federation sponsored eight communitywide events. Ten communitywide events were held in 2021.

"A vital component of Federation is creating community," said Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation. "Coming together for a Hanukkah party, to commemorate Yom Hashoah, or to host young Jewish families for Shabbat in the park is what we love to do. Our program-

ming adds to the quality of life here in the Southern Tier. Even in the COVID era, we have managed to provide outstanding virtual programming, such as our conversation with former Ambassador Michael Oren and our upcoming webinar with the ADL. We are proud of the work we do and we want all of you to be proud, as well. Your precious Campaign dollars make it all possible."

She added, "Next time you read *The Reporter* or go to the Federation website, look for our new emblem that says 'Your Campaign Dollars at Work.' If you made a contribution to the Federation, you helped to make that event happen. Your dollars played a critical role in creating a more vibrant Jewish community right here in Binghamton."



Federation to hold ADL webinar on Jan. 27

By Reporter staff

The Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton will hold "The Rise in Antisemitism: Communitywide Webinar with the ADL," with Scott Richman, the director of the Anti-Defamation League's regional office covering New York and New Jersey, on Thursday, January 27, at 7 pm, on Zoom. There is no cost to attend. Rachel Coker, director of research advancement at Binghamton University, will moderate the discussion. To register for the event, visit www.jfgb.org/. To submit questions before the event, e-mail Shelley Hubal, executive director of the Federation, at director@jfgb.org.



The ADL describes its mission as "stop[ping] the defamation of the Jewish people, and... secur[ing] justice and fair treatment to all."

Richman's work includes handling incident response, anti-bias education, legislative initiatives, educational programs, fund-raising and leadership development – all designed to fight antisemitism and combat hate in all its forms. He speaks about these issues on his weekly national podcast called "From the Frontlines," which can be found at <https://soundcloud.com/scott-richman-2>. He has been called an experienced advocate dedicated to developing community partnerships

and initiatives that speak to the ADL's mission.

Before coming to the ADL, Richman worked for the American Jewish Committee as regional director for Westchester (NY) and Fairfield (CT) counties. Previous to that, he served for 10 years at the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee aiding the rebirth of Jewish life in the former Soviet Union, and three years as the founding director of Dor Chadash, a non-profit startup that engaged young professionals in the New York area.



Scott Richman (Photo courtesy of the Anti-Defamation League)

Coker, a former newspaper journalist, joined Binghamton University's staff in 2005. As director of research advancement, she edits an e-newsletter and a magazine dedicated to scholarly work on campus, and writes media releases on topics ranging from physics findings to faculty novels. She's also the speechwriter for the vice president for research and tweets about research, writing and more at [@atrmcoker](https://twitter.com/atrmcoker). Her news writing and publications have earned See "ADL" on page 5

Film Fest to hold virtual showing of "Neighbours" in February

By Reporter staff

The Jewish International Film Fest of Greater Binghamton will hold a virtual showing of the drama "Neighbours," a film by writer/director Mano Khalil. The film won the San Francisco Film Critics Jury Prize as best film at the San Francisco Jewish Film Festival 2021. A discussion of "Neighbours" will be moderated by Dr. Dina Danon, associate professor of Judaic studies and Middle East and North Africa studies



at Binghamton University.

People will be able to register on the Federation website, www.jfgb.org, and a link to the film will be sent out on Sunday night, February 6. The film will be streamed free for up to 50 computers and will be available for viewing for four days prior to the event. On Thursday, February 10, at 7 pm, Danon will facilitate the online video discussion of the film. The film takes place in a small village on the Syrian-Turkish border in



Sehed Khalil in a scene from "Neighbours." (Photo courtesy of Menemsha Films)

the early '80s and tells the story of Sero, a 6-year-old Kurdish boy, during his first year in Arab school. A new teacher in his school preaches anti-Zionism, which confuses Sero because of his connection to his longtime neighbors, a Jewish family. Critics have noted that "with a fine sense of humor and satire, the film tells of a childhood, which, between dictatorship and dark drama, also has its light moments."

Susan Hubal, chairwoman of the Film Fest Committee, said, "'Neighbours' is a See "Film" on page 4

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Movie minyan: 10 great Jewish-American films

BILL SIMONS

With winter bringing us inside again, this column recommends 10 great Jewish-American films available through a growing cadre of online platforms. International cinema, documentaries and television mini-series will receive separate treatment in future columns. The following movie minyan touts Jewish-American feature films.

◆ “Hester Street” (1975) reflects the 1881-1924 era when over two million East European Jews migrated to the U.S., and New York was the promised city. Shot in black and white with dialogue primarily in Yiddish, supplemented by English subtitles, “Hester Street” realistically captures the Lower East Side – crowded streets, fetid tenements, thwarted ambitions, and tension between Jewish traditions and American freedoms. Gitl, brilliantly played by Carol Kane, liberates herself from a philandering husband, remarries and creates a synthesis between her Jewish identity and the secular society.

◆ “The Jazz Singer” (1927), the first film to integrate sound into the storyline, dramatizes the ascent of the son of an immigrant cantor who rejects the holy chants of his father for secular American music. As Jackie Rabinowitz/Jack Robin, Al Jolson animates the passion and charismatic talent of the son. After years of estrangement, Jackie reconciles with his dying father and performs the *Kol Nidre* on Yom Kippur, even though it means cancelling the opening of a Broadway revue in which he and his beautiful Gentile girlfriend co-star.

◆ “Funny Girl” (1968), a rousing musical, announces Barbra Streisand’s film debut. She wows audiences with her singing, comic/dramatic acting and charisma. Funny Girl Streisand depicts, with embellishment, the real-life story of Fanny Brice’s rise to stardom. Like Streisand, Brice was a popular Jewish singer, comedienne and actress with an unconventional beauty, complicated love life, driving ambition and New York attitude. Streisand, with transcendent emotion and incredible “pipes,” makes “Sadie, Sadie,” “My Man” and other songs showstoppers. “Funny Girl” demonstrates that a Jewish woman can be brash, quirky, funny, intelligent, professionally successful, romantically appealing – and proud of her ethnic identity.

◆ “Once Upon a Time in America” (1984) is the ultimate Jewish gangster movie, borrowing details from real mobsters while creating fictive episodes. The film traces the rise of a group of Jewish delinquents from

early mischief on the Lower East Side to powerful positions in organized crime during Prohibition. Through bootlegging and labor racketeering, a quartet of cunning and ruthless Jewish friends acquire illicit wealth before their fall. A serious and tragic meditation on the dark side of the American Dream, the movie spans decades in its rumination on loyalty, ambition, violence, guilt, betrayal and loss.

◆ “The Chosen” (1981), based on Chaim Potok’s classic novel of the same name, begins with a ballgame on an asphalt diamond in Brooklyn. The star batter on the Hasidic squad, Danny Saunders, hates the largely assimilated players on the opposing Modern Orthodox team, particularly pitcher Reuven Malter. From Danny’s bat, a ferocious line drive smashes into Reuven’s face, nearly blinding him, providing the genesis of a sacred friendship defined by divergent journeys. World War II, the Holocaust and the struggle for Israeli independence provide background. Maximilian Schell and Rod Steiger deliver towering performances as the antagonistic fathers of the boys.

◆ “The Pawnbroker” (1965) depicts the lingering devastation wrought by the Holocaust. The Shoah visited anguish upon survivors, as well as their intimates. In “The Pawnbroker,” director Sidney Lumet and lead actor Rod Steiger portray Holocaust survivor Sol Nazerman as emotionally dead, haunted by concentration camp memories. Stark black-and-white images communicate the bleakness of Nazerman’s soul. A refugee in postwar New York, he plies the pawnbroker’s shoddy trade. Nazerman eschews compassion until at film’s end – during a pawnshop robbery – his young Puerto Rican assistant takes a fatal bullet meant for him.

◆ “Avalon” (1990) is part of the quartet of movies inspired by director Barry Levinson’s Jewish-Baltimore roots. Over four generations, from early 20th-century immigration to 1950s suburbia, the Krichinskys evolve from a large, supportive, extended family to small, fragmented, nuclear units. Assimilation, geographic dispersal and socio-economic differences undermine familial cohesion. For decades, Sam Krichinsky (Armin Mueller-Stahl) impressed on his descendants the sense of wonder and possibility he felt upon arrival in America. At film’s end, an aged Sam suffers from dementia and is devoid of memory. A remnant survives, however. As the film concludes, Sam’s adult grandson Jules recites the

elegiac Krichinsky genesis tale to his own young son.

◆ “Exodus” (1960) is an epic drama concerning displaced refugees, Zionist opposition to the British Mandate and the Israeli War of Independence. “Exodus” is not an American film defined by content, major characters or location shooting. However, it is an American film in terms of authorship of its literary source (novelist Leon Uris), screenwriter (blacklist survivor Dalton Trumbo), producer/director (émigré Otto Preminger), Hollywood casting (paced by leading man Paul Newman) and a dominant U.S. theater audience. Unequivocally pro-Israel in its ideology, “Exodus” depicts epochal history, diplomatic intrigue, the heroic battle for a Jewish homeland and taut performances.

◆ “Dirty Dancing” (1987) is the quintessential film about the now lost summer world of Jewish resorts. Jewish families escaped the heat of metropolitan New York City in comfortable accommodations nestled atop hilltops in the Catskills. The Borscht Belt featured banquet-style meals, pools and sports, nightclub entertainment and informal matchmaking. In “Dirty Dancing,” Frances “Baby” Houseman, an 18-year-old Jewish beauty (Jennifer Grey), accompanying her family on their annual Catskill vacation, falls in love with a charismatic, Gentile dance instructor much to her protective parents’ discomfiture. Love ultimately prevails, buttressed by rousing music and exuberant dance.

◆ “Crimes and Misdemeanors” (1989) confronts questions of guilt and responsibility within a Jewish milieu. Allegations of pedophilia against Woody Allen, the movie’s auteur, heighten moral ambiguity. A successful and respected Jewish ophthalmologist, Judah Rosenthal (Martin Landau), arranges for the murder of his former mistress when she threatens to reveal their affair and thus deconstruct his marriage and reputation. Temporarily tormented by guilt, Rosenthal seeks solace in Jewish teachings and discussion with a rabbi/patient, who literally and symbolically goes blind. By film’s end, Rosenthal sheds the burdens of conscience and regains his composure in a bleak, indifferent universe.

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.

Opinion

In My Own Words

Do Americans really want democracy?

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN, EXECUTIVE EDITOR

Democracy: a form of government in which people choose leaders by voting. (Merriam-Webster)

Imagine a football game where the losing team decides it was robbed because someone rigged the game and then sent its fans to storm the National Football League’s headquarters. Imagine if an owner declared that he could decide the results of any game because he really knew who won and could change the rules to make it happen. Imagine the end of football as we know it. In fact, imagine the end of all sporting events because there’s no point in playing a game where people make up their own rules as they go along.

I realize this example has some of you shaking your heads with exasperation. “I can see that her football example is supposed to represent the January 6 attack on the Congress,” you’re thinking, “but how does that relate to whether Americans still want a democratic government?”

Well, both football and democracy only work if the people involved accept the rules/laws governing them. That also means accepting the outcome of the game or election, even if you don’t like the results. In the past, people who

refused to accept their team’s loss were called sore losers, and that was *not* considered a good thing. After an election, a politician would at some point admit he/she lost and let democracy take its course. That no longer seems to be true for far too many people.

There is an anti-democracy movement spreading across the United States. Those pushing this movement are hoping their party will become the dominant one. The laws they are passing seek to limit people’s ability to vote, especially for those they think won’t vote for their party. Some are looking to allow elected officials to overturn an election for no reason other than they don’t like the results. What they are doing is undermining the very fabric of our country.

What are some examples of these laws? Legislators in Arizona are debating a bill that would allow the legislature to revoke election certification, meaning that they could vote to ignore the will of the people of their state. Legislators in Georgia have passed a bill that allows them to remove election officials with whom they disagree. The Wisconsin legislature is looking to take control of the election process,

meaning that its members could decide which presidential candidate will be backed by their state’s electors in the Electoral College vote. And these are only a few of the anti-democracy laws being passed. They don’t include the ones across the country that reduce the number of polling places, particularly in minority areas, because they don’t believe that population will vote for their party.

The American ideal of free elections for all its citizens is one of the wonders of the world. The fact that, for more than 230 years, our presidents have been elected by our citizens, rather than by overthrow of the previous government, brings tears to my eyes. Think of what that means. Really pause for a moment and think about how amazing and wonderful that is. Even when a president was impeached and removed from the White House, *no blood* was shed. What a remarkable accomplishment! We may not always be able to live up to our ideals, but it is that idea of freedom that brings people from all over the world to our shores. What a horrible thing to watch our democracy die. And if the laws before some state legislatures pass, we may be heading that way.



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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.

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JLI to offer "Meditation from Sinai"

Rivkah Slonim will offer "Meditation from Sinai," a new six-session course by the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, exploring the nature of Jewish meditation and the benefits it can bring to one's daily life. The class will be held for five consecutive Mondays, starting January 31; it will be offered at 7 pm and again at 8:45 pm.

The course is scheduled to be offered over Zoom; a decision will be made closer to the class date if the 7 pm class might be in person and on Zoom. Sign-in information will be provided upon enrollment. Interested students should contact Chabad at 797-0015 or rshea@Chabadofbinghamton.com, or visit www.myJLI.com for registration and for other course-related information. The course fee, which includes the text book, is \$79 per person and \$140 per couple.

"Participants in the course will discover what Jewish meditation is, the pivotal role it plays in Jewish tradition and the fundamental ideas it is based on," said organizers of the course. "The course will teach crucial life tools that can help people respond effectively to negative thoughts and emotions, recognize the value of each new moment, and find purpose and spirituality even in life's most mundane tasks."

"Not many people think of meditation as a Jewish thing," said Slonim, "when in reality, Judaism has a rich and authentic tradition of meditation practices that, when implemented, can truly transform one's life for the better."

"Meditation from Sinai is a revolutionary, empowering offering that unveils Jewish meditation and mindful awareness as the bedrock for a meaningful life," asserts

Slonim. "This course synthesizes extensive research from both the spiritual community and psychological research, forging a practical path to fully realizing life's potentials."

The course is designed to appeal to people at all levels of knowledge, including those without any prior experience or background in Jewish learning. All JLI courses are open to the public, and attendees need not be affiliated with a particular synagogue, temple, or other house of worship.

JLI, the adult education branch of Chabad-Lubavitch, offers programs in more than 1,600 international locations in the U.S., Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Panama, Russia, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and Venezuela. More than 400,000 students have attended JLI classes since we were founded in 1998.

TC members raising funds to help Afghan refugees

Since August, several members of Temple Concord have been working with members of other area congregations to assist a local Afghan family seeking Humanitarian Parole for their relatives in Afghanistan. The effort has resulted in sponsorships for 137 individuals, with another 44 people awaiting sponsors. Funds raised to date have been used to cover the application fees.

Since there is no longer an American Embassy in Afghanistan, these 137 individuals will need to travel to other countries to get vetted before they can travel to the United States. There are only six people at the Department of Homeland Security processing the applications, so it may be a long time before these family members can be welcomed into the U.S.

There is also a need to resettle 35,000 Afghan asylum-seekers who currently remain housed on military bases in the U.S. These Afghans assisted the U.S. military as translators, contractors, etc., along with their immediate families. National resettlement assistance programs can handle only half this volume. In response, they have developed a model

called "Sponsor Circles" that will enable small networks of people within a community to welcome individual families, with support from the national organizations.

After many hours of attending webinars, Zoom meetings and talking to local organizations such as the American Civic Association, the group from Temple Concord is in the process of forming a Sponsor Circle with HIAS (Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society) as its umbrella organization and will soon be submitting an application to welcome an Afghan family into Broome County. In order to get approved as a Sponsor Circle, the group needs to raise funds to help support the family for the initial 90 days. The money raised will help with rent, utilities, food, etc.

Anyone who would like to make a monetary donation should send a check to Temple Concord, earmarked for the Afghan Refugee Project, to the synagogue at 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, NY 13905. Anyone with questions should contact Phyllis Weinstein at 607-727-8305 or pweinste@stny.rr.com, or Nancy Dorfman at 607-760-2282 or ndorfma1@gmail.com.

TC to offer class on history of women rabbis

Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell, spiritual leader of Temple Concord, will teach "Scouts, Trailblazers, Pathfinders, Explorers: A History of Women Rabbis" on Thursdays, January 6, 13 and 20 and February 3, at 7 pm in the Temple Concord library and on Zoom. The four-session adult education series will spotlight a few of the significant women from the 1500s to the early modern period who held quasi-rabbinic status in their communities; compare and contrast the ordinations of Rabbis Sally J. Priesand and Regina Jonas (who are normally considered the first women rabbis); explore the challenges faced by the first generation of women in the rabbinate; and reflect on how women's leadership has changed the rabbinate and the Jewish community as a whole.

"The year 2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Sally J. Priesand, the first woman publicly

ordained as a rabbi," said organizers of the class. "Yet, her groundbreaking ordination, which opened the door for subsequent generations of women, was preceded by the impactful lives of other, lesser-known female scholars and community leaders."

To view the class on Zoom, visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83161633898?pwd=d0VZcmllTFkNGhIK3I5cU-ZaYVYzd09>, meeting ID 831 6163 3898 and passcode 243055. Those who are attending in person are asked to wear a mask and practice social distancing.

Priesand will speak to the local community on Zoom on Sunday morning, February 13. For more information about that event, see future issues of *The Reporter*.

This adult education series was created by Rabbi Lisa Levenberg for the Women's Rabbinic Network in honor of the 50th anniversary of women in the rabbinate.

Esserman to do annual TC Sisterhood book talk on Jan. 30

Rabbi Rachel Esserman will discuss three books at the annual Temple Concord Sisterhood book talk on Sunday, January 30, at 11 am, at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Dr., Binghamton, and on Zoom. The event is open to the public. Those interested in attending are asked to make a reservation, whether coming in person or joining via Zoom, by contacting Phyllis Kellenberger at pweinste@stny.rr.com or 727-8305 by Wednesday, January 26. There is no charge for the program. The Zoom link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3897224889?pwd=c1haTFczd0pTT1pRbjFCdTFEelRhdz09>, meeting



Rabbi Rachel Esserman

ID 389 722 4889 and passcode 230720; or by phone at 1-646-558-8656, meeting ID 389 722 4889 and passcode 230720. This information will also be e-mailed the week of the program.

During her talk, Esserman will review "The Slaughterman's Daughter" by Yaniv Iczkovits, "Nirvana is Here" by Aaron Hamburger and "Come and Hear: What I Saw in My Seven-and-a-Half-Year Journey through the Talmud" by Adam Kirsch.

"I am again looking forward to one of my favorite events of the year," Esserman said. "I've See "Talk" on page 8

Bar/Bat photos needed

Can we have your mug? Kids mugging for the camera and formal photos, that is. For *The Reporter's* annual Bar/Bat Mitzvah issue (coming January 28), we need photos of all teens who became bar/bat mitzvah during the calendar year of 2021. We are looking for one of the teen by him/her/themselves, as well as a photo of the celebration with family and friends.

Please e-mail these photos with identification, including name, date and place of the bar/bat mitzvah ceremony, by Tuesday, January 18. Photos can be e-mailed, in TIF or JPG format, to TReporter@aol.com; please note in the subject line that a bar/bat photo for *The Reporter* is attached and include the necessary information in the message.



DEADLINES

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

ISSUE	DEADLINE
January 14-January 27	January 5
January 28-February 10	January 19
February 11-24	February 2
February 25-March 10	February 16

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Jewish Federation
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Moving any time soon? Or just leaving town for a few months?

Whether you're moving across town or across the country, please let *The Reporter* know so you can stay up to date on community news and quickly receive the paper at your new (or temporary) address!

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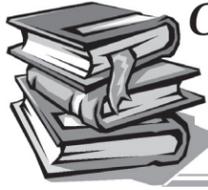


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ISSUE DATE	AD DEADLINE
FEBRUARY 11	FEBRUARY 3



Off the Shelf

A community before and after disaster

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

On October 27, 2018, during Shabbat morning services, the worst mass killing of American Jews took place in the Tree of Life Synagogue in the Squirrel Hill section of Pittsburgh. Eleven people died in the shooting by a white supremacist who objected to a program organized by one of the three Jewish groups that met in the building. Yet, it's not the murderer who concerns Mark Oppenheimer in "Squirrel Hill: The Tree of Life Synagogue Shooting and the Soul of a Neighborhood" (Alfred A. Knopf). Nor does he focus on those who died because much has already been written about them. What Oppenheimer wants to explore is the reaction of others in the community: "I was curious to know how people dealt with the aftermath of mass violence. When the cameras and the police tape were gone, what stayed behind?"

Oppenheimer's interest is partly personal: his family has connections to Squirrel Hill. But what really interests him is the community itself. The author calls it "the oldest, most stable, most internally diverse Jewish neighborhood in the United States... Whereas many Jewish cities lost their Jewish population to white flight after World War II, the Jewish population of Pittsburgh never relocated en masse, and half of it still lives in Squirrel Hill or the immediately adjacent East End neighborhoods." Oppenheimer's map of the area shows six synagogue buildings and a Jewish Community Center. When the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh needed more space for the community day school and Jewish Family Service, it chose to remain in the area, rather than moving outside the city. Although Jews do not make up a majority of Squirrel Hill's population, they've made a commitment to remain.

Several chapters focus on the people who felt a need to do something after the murders. For example, Oppenheimer writes about the group of teenagers who regularly met at the Starbucks in Squirrel Hill and organized a gathering that took place the Saturday night of the shooting. There

is Greg Zanis, the founder and sole member of Crosses for Losses, who travels across the country putting up memorial crosses for those who died a violent death. For the Tree of Life Synagogue, he placed a Star of David over the crosses – one for each person who was killed. Eric Lidji became one of the archivists who collected material left behind by visitors at the synagogue, and faced deciding what artifacts should be kept permanently and which could be discarded.

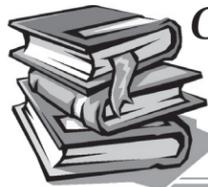
Other chapters focus on various symbols that were designed as a response to the murders, the funerals of those who were killed, what the synagogue looked like after the attack, decisions about what should happen to the building and the controversy about what occurred during the memorial on the first anniversary of the attack (where one rabbi spoke about gun control, even though no one was supposed to mention anything political). Oppenheimer writes dispassionately about President Donald Trump's visit to Pittsburgh and those who protested against it. He manages to balance those who thought Trump shouldn't have showed up unless he was willing to denounce white supremacy and those who believed it was important to have the president acknowledge what occurred. Oppenheimer also tells of the reaction of some Black students at the local high school, who wondered why the same kind of attention is not paid to the murders of Black members of the community.

One of the most affecting symbols of America's support of the Jewish community was a headline that appeared on the front page of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*: it featured the first four words of the Mourner's *Kaddish* in Hebrew. Ironically, it ended the career of the paper's editor, David Shribman, a Jewish man married to a Christian woman. The family belonged to a synagogue, but also celebrated Christian holidays. While there were no complaints about the headline, John Block, the publisher of the paper, had not been consulted beforehand, which is a usual courtesy

offered with potentially controversial page one headlines. He also disliked the fact that Shribman had written a column about what happened that appeared in *The New York Times* a day after the shooting. Shribman had been scheduled to retire the next year, but the date was quickly moved up. Oppenheimer writes that the two men will not discuss what occurred, but it seems clear the headline was part of the reason Shribman was forced out earlier than planned. Plus, Shribman has gone on record as saying, "I didn't show [the headline] to anyone for fear there would be pressure to kill it."

What is sad is that all the attention shined on the Jewish community has not resulted in more people becoming involved in the Tree of Life Synagogue or in the New Light Congregation, which also met in the building. Oppenheimer notes that even the large amount of money raised can not resolve their problems: "Money is not going to bring new members to Tree of Life or young people to New Light. What members of Dor Hadash [the third group that met in the building] wanted, more than anything, were some new gun-control laws in Pennsylvania, and they were no closer on that front." He also notes that the money received by the families of those whose relatives died in the attack in no way compensates them for the losses they suffered.

"Squirrel Hill" tries to be a historical and a sociological look at the Squirrel Hill Jewish community, in addition to being a psychological study of those affected by the Tree of Life shooting. It manages to find a balance between the two approaches, in addition to being well written and easy to read. Parts will strike readers as particularly poignant, yet those moments will probably differ depending on what questions readers are asking. But, while Oppenheimer can offer no firm answers about the future of Jewish Squirrel Hill, he does give readers a better understanding of what occurred on October 27, 2018, and why people reacted as they did in its aftermath.



Off the Shelf

Love, family and finding your *bashert*

RABBI RACHEL ESSERMAN

When I was growing up and my mother would talk about marriage, she would use the phrase "every pot has its lid." That's similar to the concept of *bashert*, that there is a person meant just for you. But how do you determine that? And what if the person you think is your *bashert* is someone your family opposes? Or how do you choose between two people, both of whom may feel like your *bashert*? These questions underlie two recent novels: "How To Find What You're Not Looking For" by Veera Hiranandani (Kokila), which is aimed at tween audiences, and "Where It All Lands" by Jennie Wexler (Wednesday Books), which is directed at teenagers.

The plot of "How To Find What You're Not Looking For" hinges on two elements: 1) in 1967, when the novel takes place, the Supreme Court ruling *Loving v. Virginia* struck down state laws that forbid interracial marriages, and 2) 12-year-old Ariel Goldberg's family is Jewish. While her parents aren't particularly observant, they do expect their two daughters, Ariel and her older sister Leah, to attend college and then marry someone Jewish. They know that it's not easy living in a small town with few Jews, but that's where Ariel's father's dream of having his own bakery came true. However, problems arise when Leah falls in love with Raj, whose family came to the U.S. from India. When Leah leaves home to be with Raj, her parents disown her.

The story, which is told through Ariel's eyes, shows

how difficult it is for her to understand why her family has broken apart. Ariel also desperately misses her sister: Leah always helped her with her homework, particularly writing, since the physical act of putting pen to paper has always been difficult. Ariel's new teacher believes she has a disability that can be corrected, but her mother resists having her labeled as disabled for fear she'll be placed in a different class. Plus, something is happening with the bakery, but Ariel's parents refuse to confide in her.

"How To Find What You're Not Looking For" is written in the second person singular, which is unusual and took a few chapters to get used to. However, Ariel's path of discovery – about her family and herself – made for interesting reading. The novel also introduces readers to a time when social customs were undergoing rapid change. The novel's resolution felt convincing, although it may not satisfy everyone.

While readers see the world through Ariel's eyes in Hiranandani's work, Wexler offers the perspectives of three characters in her intriguing "Where It All Lands." Stevie Rosenstein, who is Jewish, is tired of being the new girl in town. Her father, a football coach, moves the family every year or two when he is hired by a different team. The one thing that remains the same is her love of music: she plays the trumpet and is hoping to major in music in college. On her first day at her latest school, she meets Drew Mason and Shane Murphy,

who have been best friends for years. Both young men are attracted to Stevie, something that could potentially ruin their friendship. They decide to solve the problem of who will ask Stevie out by their tried and true method: they toss a coin. But that simple solution causes enormous problems as they realize their feelings for Stevie are deeper than expected.

What makes this novel different from other teen romance novels is that it's really two stories in one: in the first section, Drew wins the coin toss, and in the second, Shane does. What happens next is both different and the same, but in an incredibly satisfying way. Reliving the story in the second version will get under readers' skins because they'll want to see if the novel's very dramatic opening remains the same. The third section switches between the two stories and was extremely moving. What might have just been a gimmick ends up showing how true love shines, even when circumstances surrounding it change.

Film Continued from page 1

gritty film combining a raw environment and cruelty with warmth, love and pathos. It is based on the filmmaker's own history when he was a small, precocious child and rings sad, but true." The Jewish Film Review called the film "funny and emotionally uplifting. 'Neighbours' is an important humanistic work and a stunning achievement."

Danon's research at Binghamton University "focuses on the eastern Sephardi Diaspora during modern times and draws heavily on previously unexplored Ladino language archival material. [She] is particularly interested in social history and how its tools help revise prevailing scholarship not only on the Sephardi world, but on Jewish modernity as a whole." Her book, "The Jews of Ottoman Izmir: A Modern History," was published in 2020.

NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Special need volunteers join IDF Military Intelligence Directorate

Fourteen special needs Israel Defense Forces volunteers received Military Intelligence Directorate berets on Dec. 23 during a swearing in ceremony. The ceremony, which occurred at Camp Moshe Dayan at Gllilot, north of Tel Aviv, was led by Col. N., the commander of the Telem Unit in Military Intelligence, which is receiving the volunteers. Telem is responsible for infrastructure, logistics and for moving Military Intelligence to its new campus in the Negev region of southern Israel. According to the IDF, all of the volunteers are pupils from a single Petah Tikva school, and are due to become part of Telem's routine activities.

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

If Your Goal is to:

Make a quick and easy gift

Avoid tax on capital gains

Defer a gift until after your death

Receive guaranteed fixed income that is partially tax-free

Avoid the two-fold taxation on IRA or other employee benefit plans

Make a large gift with little cost to you

Reduce taxable income from IRA Required Minimum Distributions

Then You Can:

Simply write a check now or use a credit card

Contribute long-term appreciated stock or other securities

Put a bequest in your will (gifts of cash or a share or the residue of your estate)

Create a charitable gift annuity

Name a charity as the beneficiary of the remainder of the retirement assets after your lifetime

Contribute a life insurance policy you no longer need or purchase a new one and designate a charity as the owner

Make a qualified charitable donation directly from your IRA (after age 70½)

Your Benefits May Include:

An income tax deduction and immediate charitable impact

A charitable deduction plus no capital gains tax

Exemption from federal estate tax on donations

Current and future savings on income taxes plus fixed stable payments

Tax relief to your family on inherited assets

Current and possible future income tax deductions

Reducing taxable income



Jewish Federation
OF GREATER BINGHAMTON

Federation 2021: the year in review

By Reporter staff

Although the COVID pandemic affected all Jewish organizations in the area, the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton was still able to hold 10 events during 2021. Federation Executive Director Shelley Hubal noted after several virtual events during the winter, the Federation did hold a few in-person gatherings before the pandemic numbers increased again. However, the planned Super Sunday brunch and film were cancelled, and the proposed lunch and learn became a virtual lecture. "We still held an amazing number of events," Hubal said. "Our community was eager to gather, whether online or in person. We have plans for upcoming events that I'm very excited about. I'm also proud of this community for showing so much spirit, even during these difficult times."



Federation events for 2021 included:

- ◆ A virtual showing of the Israeli romantic-comedy "Born in Jerusalem and Still Alive" directed by Yossi Atia and David Ofek. A discussion about the film was held on January 31 and was moderated by

Stephen A. Lisman, Ph.D., distinguished teaching professor emeritus, Department of Psychology, Binghamton University.

- ◆ A virtual showing of the short documentary "Space Torah" on March 4. The showing was followed by a discussion moderated by its executive producer, Rachel Raz.

- ◆ A virtual tour of the "Notorious RBG: The Life and Times of Ruth Bader Ginsburg" exhibit from the Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage in Cleveland on April 1.

The 60-minute private tour included narrated exploration of key objects and artifacts, followed by a docent-led question-and-answer period.

- ◆ A virtual community Yom Hashoah program on April 8, which included a live Zoom session with Holocaust survivor Rachel Malmed Epstein, readings by local rabbis and a short introduction from an Israeli dignitary. The event also featured a documentary about Epstein.

- ◆ A Shavuot drive-in on May 16 in the Temple Israel parking lot, which included free ice cream, music and a food drive. Rabbis Geoffrey Brown and Barbara Goldman-Wartell offered prayers on the spirit of Shavuot. Josh Hubal, Rabbi Benny Kellman, Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu, Steve Gilbert and Eileen Miller were among those performing.

- ◆ A Tot Shabbat in the Park on June 11 in Arnold Park in Vestal. The event included Shabbat snacks of grape juice and challah. Rabbi Benny Kellman and Josh Hubal performed children's Shabbat songs. There was also a reading from a book published



More than 40 people attended the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's pre-Shavuot gathering on May 16 in the Temple Israel parking lot.

by Kalanot Books, a Jewish publishing house located in Susquehanna, PA.

- ◆ An event for young families on July 15 at Stair Park in Vestal. The event was for children of all ages and included activities and snacks.

- ◆ The annual memorial service at the Holocaust Memorial Monument in the Temple Israel Cemetery on September 12. The service was led by area rabbis. The monument was one of the first memorial stones in the United States to acknowledge the Holocaust.

- ◆ A virtual lecture about "The Chinese

Jews of Kaifeng," an online exhibit sponsored by a grant of the Friends of the UW Libraries at the University of Washington Seattle, on October 1. Rabbi Anson H. Laytner, president of the Sino-Judaic Institute and editor of its journal Points East, spoke about the exhibit.

- ◆ A community Hanukkah celebration hosted with the Jewish Community Center on November 30. The event included an outdoor torch lighting ceremony, a community Hanukkah video and kosher pre-packaged doughnuts.



Teens held torches at the community Hanukkah party on November 30. The event was co-sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton and the Jewish Community Center.



An event for young families took place on July 15 at Stair Park in Vestal.



A crowd of almost 30 people gathered at the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton's Holocaust memorial event on September 12.



A Tot Shabbat was held on June 11 in Arnold Park in Vestal.

ADL Continued from page 1

recognition from SUNY CUAD and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. She is a past president of the University Research Magazine Association and immediate past president of Temple Concord. She also has served as adjunct instructor of journalism at BU and at SUNY Broome Community College. In addition, she is the chairwoman of *The Reporter* Editorial Committee.

"It's important to come together to discuss antisemitism and how we can best respond to it, whether we're encountering it online, at our children's schools or elsewhere in our community," Coker said. "Antisemitism casts a shadow over Jewish life in America. The presence of police officers at our synagogues during the High Holy Days is a perfect illustration. We operate against a background of fear even at times when we should be able to engage in prayer and peaceful reflection. I respect the Anti-Defamation League as a source of expertise and data when it comes to antisemitism in the United States, and I

look forward to the insights that may be revealed during this webinar."

Ben Kasper, who is second vice president of the Executive Committee of Temple Israel's Board of Trustees and a member of *The Reporter* Editorial Committee, noted that "Jewish tradition commands us to 'welcome the stranger.' Did our support of refugees contribute to the antisemitic violence at Charlottesville, VA, or the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pennsylvania? Why has there been a spike in antisemitism in the past few years and what can we do to address the threat to our community? The ADL has recorded and studied attacks on our Jewish community, and has developed strategies to address this growing act of violence."

"I'm so pleased that the Federation is able to bring Scott Richman and the ADL to our community to talk about these important issues," Hubal said. "Education is part of the Federation's mission, and the issues Scott will discuss will speak directly to many members of our community. Please join us for what will be a fascinating discussion."

Annual Campaign 2022

MAKE YOUR PLEDGE EARLY!

Your gift is more important than ever. Do a Mitzvah! Please pledge early.

You can make your pledge 3 ways:

- 1) Visit the Federation website at www.jfjb.org and click on "make a pledge."
- 2) E-mail Federation Executive Director Shelley Hubal at director@jfjb.org with "pledge" in the subject line.
- 3) Fill out the form in this ad and mail it to the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton, 500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850

Mail this form to:

**Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton,
500 Clubhouse Rd., Vestal, NY 13850**

Name: _____
 Street Address: _____
 City: _____
 State: _____
 Zip Code: _____
 Phone number: _____
 Amount of pledge: _____



Visit us on the web at www.thereporter.org



Weekly Parasha

Vaera, Exodus 6:2-9:35

Interpersonal tips from Aaron

RABBI LEVI Y. SLONIM, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND CO-DIRECTOR OF CHABAD DOWNTOWN, ROHR CHABAD CENTER FOR JEWISH STUDENT LIFE AT BINGHAMTON UNIVERSITY

The self-help shelves at bookstores are filled with endless titles on best practices for effective communication, discipline and overall interpersonal skills. As Jews, we have known that some of the most effective and powerful tips can be found in our very own timeless words of God: the Torah.

In this week's portion, as Moses and Aaron are pleading with Pharaoh to "let the people go," following Aaron

casting his staff and it turning into a serpent as God had commanded them, he summons the wise men and the magicians, and necromancers of Egypt. The verse reads, "They also did likewise with their magic. Each one of them cast down his staff, and they became serpents, but Aaron's staff swallowed their staffs." (Exodus 7:11-12)

The Rebbe taught that the interaction of Aaron with the magicians and necromancers of Egypt showcases important

lessons for our interpersonal exchanges. There are two important components:

◆ First, be an "Aaron." In Jewish history and theology, Aaron the high priest – and all priests (his descendants), in fact – represent ultimate love and acceptance of all. It is a pre-requisite for serving in the holy Temple and blessing the Jewish people. The fundamental ingredient needed in See "Tips" on page 7

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, January 1, Shacharit services will be held at 9:30 am via Zoom and in-person (masks are required). The Torah portion is Exodus 6:2-9:35 and the haftarah is Ezekiel 28:25-29:31. At 5:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

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

On Saturday, January 8, 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 Exodus 10:1-13:16 and the haftarah is Jeremiah 46:13-28. At 5:30 pm, there will be Havdalah services via Zoom.

There will be an Executive Board meeting on Tuesday, January 4, at 7 pm, on Zoom.

There will be a Ritual Committee meeting on Wednesday, January 12, at 10 am, on Zoom.

On Wednesday, January 12, there will be Torah study from 4-5 pm on Zoom only.

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.

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.

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 January 14; February 4; March 4; 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, December 31, light candles before 4:24 pm
Saturday, January 1, Shabbat ends 5:25 pm
Friday, January 7, light candles before 4:30 pm
Saturday, January 8, Shabbat ends 5:32 pm
Friday, January 14, light candles before 4:38 pm
Saturday, January 15, Shabbat ends 5:40 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, December 31: at 7:30 pm, Shabbat services with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell. All are welcome to come in person wearing a mask and physically distancing. There will be a New Year's toast following services. Join via Zoom at https://bit.ly/37UQSpK, meeting ID 829 9450 3102 and passcode 708450, or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday, January 1: There will be no Shabbat school or service, and no Torah study. At 7 pm, "Havdalah with a Bonus" will be held on Zoom at https://bit.ly/3zd0atv, meeting ID 897 4179 1260 and passcode 408279.

Sunday, January 2: 10 am-2 pm, Sisterhood's Rummage Sale: Buy one pair of shoes, children's clothing, underwear, housewares or books, get one free. New-to-you items are arriving daily. Shoppers should use the Oak Street door and wear a mask.

Wednesday, January 5: at 10:30 am, Temple Concord Morning Book Club will discuss "Exile Music," a novel by Jennifer Steil, in the Temple Concord library and on Zoom. In person participation is limited to 18; reservations to merrypell.preus@gmail.com are required.

Wednesday, January 5: at 6:30 pm, Sisterhood schmooze and at 7 pm, Sisterhood board meeting.

Thursday, January 6: at 7 pm "A History of Women Rabbis" (also on Thursdays, January 13 and 20 and February 3, at 7 pm) in the Temple Concord library and on Zoom. (For more information, see the article on page 3.)

Friday, January 7: from 5-7:30 pm, First Friday at the Kilmer Mansion with the music of Planet Smith, along with the works of artists from the Fine Arts Society of the Southern Tier. Shabbat services at 7:30 pm with Rabbi Barbara Goldman-Wartell (online only) via Zoom at https://bit.ly/37UQSpK, meeting ID 829 9450 3102 and passcode 708450, or on the Temple Concord Facebook page.

Saturday, January 8: Shabbat school at 9 am, Torah study at 9:15 am, 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.

Tuesday, January 11: at 6:30 pm, Executive Board meeting and at 7:30 pm, General 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.

Congregation Tikun 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: Denice Cassaro and Nomi Talmi
Rabbi: Shifrah Tobacman
Education Director/Admin. Coordinator: Naomi Wilensky
Bnai Mitzvah Coordinator: Michael Margolin
Services: Fridays at 7:30 pm unless otherwise notes. Contemplative morning services every Tuesday. Saturday mornings, Gan Shabbat, and other special services at least once a month Call for the weekly schedule.
Jewish Learning Experiences (JLE) for kindergarten through seventh grade meets on Sunday mornings. Sixth and Seventh grade also meets on Wednesday afternoons.
Adult Education: Available throughout the year. Check the website or call the office for details.

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.

- ◆ Ritualwell will hold several classes in January: “Modern-day Psalms” on Tuesday, January 11, from noon-1:30 pm (free standalone session); “The Soul’s Transit: 24 Hours of Neshama” on Thursday, January 6, from 7-8:30 pm (free standalone session); “Holy Conversation: The Kavanot of the Shabbat Amidah” on Thursdays, January 20 and 27, February 3, 10, 17 and 24, from 7-8:30 pm (\$216 for six-session immersion); and “Writing the Revelatory Poem” on Tuesdays, January 25 and February 1, 8 and 15 from noon-1:30 pm (\$144 for four-session immersion). For more information or to register, visit www.ritualwell.org/learn.
- ◆ The Yavilah McCoy of Dimensions Educational Consulting and the Institute for Jewish Spirituality will hold a four-part virtual course “Cycles of Rest, Release, and Liberation: Antiracism and Shemitah as Spiritual Practice” on Wednesdays, January 12, February 16, March 30 and May 11, from 6-8 pm. Sessions will be recorded and are open to all. Participants may join at any time. Optional caucus group sessions based on individuals’ racial identities will also be available. Participation in a caucus group is not required to attend the other sessions. For more information or to register, visit www.jewishspirituality.org/cycles-of-rest-release-and-liberation-antiracism-and-shemitah-as-spiritual-practice/.
- ◆ The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research will hold several free virtual lectures in January: “How Should We Think About Freedom?” on Wednesday, January 5, at 1 pm, with Timothy Snyder, the Richard C. Levin Professor of History at Yale University and a permanent fellow at the Institute for Human Sciences in Vienna (<https://yivo.org/WP2022-Keynote>); “The Other Side: Law, Education,

- Ideology and Normalizing the Criminal” on Wednesday, January 12, at 1 pm, with Jonathan Brent, the executive director of the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City (<https://yivo.org/The-Other-Side>); and “From the Vilna Ghetto to Nuremberg: Memoir and Testimony” on Thursday, January 27, at 1 pm, with Justin Cammy, who is a professor of Jewish studies and world literatures at Smith College (<https://yivo.org/Vilna-to-Nuremberg>).
- ◆ The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will hold the virtual lecture “New York, The Greatest Jewish City in the World: Part 3” on Tuesday, January 4, from 7-8:30 pm. One need not have attended the other two lectures to attend this one. The lecture “examines the incredible diversity of New York’s Jewish community including its ethnic and religious sub-cultures, its secular and religious institutions, and the culinary and commercial offerings of its multiple Jewish neighborhoods.” For more information or to register, visit www.nycjewishtours.org/event-log/nyc-greatest-jewish-city-part-3.
- ◆ The Jewish Museum and Film at Lincoln Center will present the 31st annual New York Jewish Film Festival in person and virtually from January 12-25. For more information, visit www.filmlinc.org/festivals/new-york-jewish-film-festival/.
- ◆ The Milken Archive Oral History Project, which can be found at <https://milken.aviaryplatform.com/collections/1159>, features interviews with composers, cantors, musicians, actors and scholars speaking about the development of Jewish musical traditions in America. Topics include the development of the cantorate over the course of the 20th century, the history of early American Yiddish theater and the world of Jewish art music.
- ◆ Valley Beit Midrash will hold a virtual event presentation by Rabbi Avi Strausberg “From Flood to Rainbow” on Monday, January 31, from 3-4 pm. The cost to attend is \$18. The lecture will “revisit the flood story with a new

midrash imagining what it was like for the dove and raven to leave the ark and begin anew.” For more information or to register, visit www.valleybeitmidrash.org/event/from-flood-to-rainbow/.

- ◆ Maven will hold two programs in January: “Chosen By Choice: Nellie Bowles and Bari Weiss on Living Jewishly” on Thursday, January 13, from 1-1:45 pm, for which there is no cost to attend (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/chosen-by-choice-nellie-bowles--bari-weiss-on-living-jewishly>); and “Ethics, Activism and Judaism: Text Study” with Rabbi Shmuly Yanklowitz on Tuesday, January 19, from 7-8 pm. For more information, visit <https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/ethics-activism-and-judaism-text-study>. See “Resources” on page 8

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our interactions with each other is true non-judgmental love and embrace of each person as they are. When approaching someone to “tell them off,” we might ask ourselves, “Are you just letting out steam, or are your words of rebuke rooted in genuine love and care for them?”

- ◆ Second, when you do approach them from a place of love, you still need to be “staff”-like; devoid of emotion that can cause and create all sorts of challenges. Just as Aaron’s staff retracted from its serpent state back to the default rod, so, too, when rebuking the other it needs to be from an objective place of doing what needs to be done, completely devoid of anger; the heat and venom of a serpent have no place in this exchange.

In this way, it’s not personal; it’s about what needs to get done. When we get out of the way – even our own way – we can get things done right and, with God’s help, continue to have wholesome, peaceful and meaningful relationships with our family, friends and beyond!

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NEWS IN BRIEF

From JNS.org

Israel to train social media influencers on combatting online antisemitism, anti-Zionism

Israel's Foreign Ministry launched a new campaign to train a group of Israeli social media influencers on how to respond to anti-Zionism and antisemitism online. The young influencers, who have a combined following of 30 million, will also learn how to combat comments delegitimizing Israel on TikTok, Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. The campaign launched the week of Dec. 27 with an event in Jerusalem attended by all the influencers who will be participating, including TikTok star Alex Korotaev, model Orin Julie, singer Stephane Legar and content creator Or Elkayam Zuti. "I am happy that Israeli content creators have joined the effort to improve Israel's image in the world and will cooperate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to become Israel's ambassadors on social networks," Idan Roll, Israel's deputy minister of foreign affairs and the organizer of the campaign, tweeted on Dec. 24. "With their natural talent for telling a story on the networks and with the training of the ministry, they will be an important part of the war on Israel's delegitimization in the world." Elkayam reportedly told Ynet that he joined the campaign because of the online abuse he faced during Israel's "Oper-

Talk Continued from page 3

made sure to include a nonfiction work this year again by request. Each work is very different and I look forward to reading them. I've had 'The Slaughterman's Daughter' on my shelf for most of the year and was debating reading it, but decided I would save it for this review. I was a big fan of Aaron Hamburger's works and was delighted to learn he finally had a new novel out. As for 'Come and Hear,' I thought it sounded like a great way to introduce people to the Talmud. "The Slaughterman's Daughter," winner of the 2021 Wingate Literary Prize, has been described as "a family drama into far-reaching comedy of errors that will pit the Czar's army against the Russian secret police and threaten the very foundations of the Russian Empire. It is a rollicking and unforgettable work of fiction." "Nirvana is Here" is the winner of a Bronze Medal, Foreword Reviews 2019 Indie Award for Best LGBTQ+ Fiction. The book was called "a wonder of a book" by novelist Lauren Grodstein ("Our Short History"): "As a Jewish Gen-Xer, the novel reminded me exactly of who I once was – and all that I still want to be.... a brilliant accomplishment."

"Come and Hear: What I Saw in My Seven-and-a-Half-Year Journey Through the Talmud" has been described as "a kind of travel writing – a report on what [the author] saw during his seven-and-a-half-year journey through the Talmud. For readers

who want to travel the same path, there is no better guide." Esserman is the executive editor and book reviewer for The Reporter Group. Her editorials and reviews have won awards from the American Jewish Press Association and the Syracuse Press Club. This year, she won four awards for her book reviews: first place and honorable mention in the American Jewish Press Club's Simon Rockower Awards Book Review category, and first and second place in the Syracuse Press Club's Critique category. She also serves at the Jewish chaplain for Broome Developmental Disabilities Service Office. Her work has been published in "The Women's Torah Commentary" and "The Women's Haftarah Commentary," both by Jewish Lights Publishing. She also has had a book of poetry, "I Stand By The River," published by Keshet Press of Temple Concord. A Reconstructionist rabbi who says her first love is teaching, she sees her position at *The Reporter* as an opportunity to educate the public about Judaism. Esserman also is a freelance rabbi who does lifecycle events, hospital visits, chaplaincy; and has been rabbi-on-call when needed by local Reform and Conservative synagogues. Her education includes a B.A. in sociology from the University of Pennsylvania, and rabbinic ordination and an M.A. in Hebrew letters from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, Wyncote, PA.

ation Guardian of the Walls" in the Gaza Strip in May. He said, "During the operation, I was under constant attacks on my social media accounts after making a video defending Israel on TikTok, which received over half a million views." Korotaev noted that as a teen who has "hundreds of thousands of followers that other young people watch on a daily basis," he feels an obligation to speak up on behalf of his followers and for Israel.

Jewish leaders condemn United Nations open-ended investigation into "war crimes" by Israel

Jewish leaders in the United States are outraged at a recent vote by the United Nations General Assembly to fund an open-ended Commission of Inquiry (or COI) into alleged war crimes perpetrated by Israel during the May 2021 conflict with Palestinian terror groups in the Gaza Strip. In a news release on Dec. 27, the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations called the move appalling as the commission does not mention the actions of the Hamas terrorist organization, which intentionally shot more than 4,000 rockets at civilians within Israel in May and has never opened an open-ended Commission of Inquiry on any other nation in its history. "We vehemently oppose this one-sided farce of a probe, which again demonstrates the clear anti-Israel bias in the U.N. body. Israel is the only member state in the history of the U.N. to be singled out for taking defensive military action to ensure the security of its civilian population," the release stated. "Indeed, throughout the history of U.N. actions, no other investigation received authorization to spend unlimited resources without an explicit mandate. The unprecedented UNGA vote presupposes wrongdoing, while unfairly challenging Israel's right to self-defense in accordance with international law." The funding for the COI was approved on Dec. 23 by the UNGA with the support of 125 member nations, while the United States, Israel and six other nations voted against it, and 34 – including some traditional allies of Israel – abstained from the vote. "We are grateful for the support of the Biden Administration, Hungary, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, and Papua New Guinea who joined with Israel to vote against this discriminatory commission," the Conference's statement read. "We are also disappointed that the key Western allies of Australia, Austria, Canada, Brazil and Germany chose to abstain, rather than to oppose this immoral and destructive measure."

Eizenstat reappointed special advisor for Holocaust issues at State Department

The U.S. State Department announced on Dec. 27 that political veteran, Amb. Stuart Eizenstat was appointed to serve as special advisor on Holocaust issues to U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken. According to a news release, the position would have Eizenstat, 78, offer policy advice on contemporary Holocaust-related matters, working in coordination with the special envoy for Holocaust issues, Ellen Germain, in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and with the Office of International Claims and Investment Disputes in the office of the Legal Advisor.

NY banks urged to waive transfer, processing fees for Holocaust reparation payments

The New York State Department of Financial Services has asked state-chartered financial institutions to waive wire transfer and processing fees for recipients of Holocaust reparations if they do not already do so. "These fees impose a significant burden on elderly Holocaust survivors, victims and heirs who often rely on these payments to meet their everyday needs," Acting Superintendent Adrienne Harris said in a press release on Dec. 22. "Waiving these fees sends a powerful message on the willingness of New York's financial community to have a meaningful impact on the lives of the people they serve." The department estimated that over 20,000 Holocaust survivors currently live in the New York City metro area. The Holocaust survivors and their heirs are charged between \$15 and \$40 per transaction on each compensation payment. The department created in 1997 the Holocaust Claims Processing Office to "help Holocaust victims and their heirs recover assets deposited in banks; unpaid proceeds of insurance policies issued by European insurers; and artworks that were lost, looted or sold under duress." The HCPO has received claims from 46 states and 40 countries to date, and has helped secure "over \$182 million in offers for bank, insurance, and other losses." The office has also assisted in settlements involving 179 cultural objects.

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- 11, from 1-2 pm, with a fee of \$21 (<https://maven.aju.edu/events-classes/program/ethics-activism-and-judaism-text-study-with-rabbi-shmuly-yanklowitz>).
 - ◆ The Center for Jewish History will present the virtual program "Endpapers: A Family Story of Books, War, Escape, and Home," featuring author Alexander Wolff on Thursday, January 20, at 6:30 pm. "Endpapers" tells the story of Wolff's grandfather, publisher Kurt Wolff, and his father, Niko, who fought in the Wehrmacht during World War II before coming to America. For more information or to register, visit <https://programs.cjh.org/event/endpapers-2022-01-20>.
 - ◆ The Jewish Theological Seminary will offer two online courses for teenagers: "Gender and Human Nature" on Thursdays, January 20 and 27, and February 3, 10, 17 and 24, from 7:30-8:45 pm; and "The Origins of Human Difference" on Tuesdays, January 18 and 25 and February 1, 8, 15 and 22, from 6:30-7:45 pm. For more information or to register, visit www.jtsa.edu/event/online-learning-for-teens-winter-2022/.
 - ◆ The Jewish Theological Seminary will offer several courses this winter: "Jumpstart Your Biblical Hebrew" on Mondays, January 24 and 31, February 7, 14 and 28, March 7, 14, 21 and 28 and April 4, from noon-1:15 pm (www.jtsa.edu/event/jumpstart-your-biblical-hebrew); "Jews and the Left: A History" on Mondays, February 7, 14, 21 and 28, and March 7, 14 and 21, and April 4, from 7:30-8:45 pm (www.jtsa.edu/event/online-course-jews-and-the-left-a-history); and "Passover Journeys – From the Torah to Your Seder" on Tuesdays, February 22 and March 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29, from 7-8:30 pm (www.jtsa.edu/event/passover-journeys-from-the-torah-to-your-seder).
 - ◆ The Jewish Arts Collaborative will hold the free virtual event "The Sephardic Roots of Israeli Cuisine" on Wednesday, January 26, at 2 pm. Chef Hélène Jawhara Piñer will cook recipes from her book "Sephardic: Cooking the History. Recipes of the Jews of Spain and the Diaspora, from the 13th Century to Today" and talk with Forward National and Food Editor Rob Eshman. For more information or to register, visit <https://jartsboston.org/event/the-sephardic-roots-of-israeli-cuisine/>.
 - ◆ Hadar was a new podcast for children ages 6 or older, and families called "Torah Time." Rabbi Miriam-Simma Walfish and her daughter, Adira, talk about the Torah portion. For more information, visit www.hadar.org/torah-collection/torah-time.
 - ◆ Judaism Your Way will hold a virtual "Tu B'Shevat Seder" led by Amy Atkins and Dan Yolles on Sunday, January 16, from 5-6:30 pm. There is no cost to attend. The event hopes to help "participants will come away with an understanding of Tu B'shevat from a historical perspective and its modern interpretations including the climate crisis." For more information or to register, visit www.judaismyourway.org/tu-bshevat/.
 - ◆ The latest edition of the Hillel College Guide Magazine is now available. To request a copy, visit <https://hillel.tfaforms.net/139>.
- For additional resources, see previous issues of *The Reporter* on its website, www.thereportergroup.org.

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