The Game of Pawns
Professor Ralph Nurnberger to deliver 2018 Middle East Update

LENOX – On Sunday, November 4, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presents “The Game of Pawns: Middle East Update 2018” with Dr. Ralph Nurnberger, Professor of International Relations, Georgetown University. This free program will take place at 7:30 p.m. at the Elaine P. Bernstein Theatre at Shakespeare & Company, 70 Semble Street in Lenox. All are welcome to attend.

What forces are shaping today’s Middle East? Professor of international relations and government affairs specialist Dr. Nurnberger will take us beyond the headlines on a journey through this most dangerous of global neighborhoods to better understand the multidimensional, multi-faceted players of the Middle East today.

Dr. Nurnberger, a Georgetown professor since 1975 who now teaches at Florida Atlantic University, is a widely acclaimed speaker who brings humor, current political insights, and historical background to his presentations. He has addressed a wide range of audiences on a variety of topics including overall American foreign policy, American policies in the Middle East, the history of the Middle East conflict, and current American political issues, including electoral analyses, political campaigns, and matters under congressional or presidential consideration.

His articles have appeared in the Washington Post, the Washington Times, Christian Science Monitor, Miami Herald, Los Angeles Times, Baltimore Sun, and numerous scholarly journals and magazines. He has also advised numerous congressional, senatorial, and presidential campaigns on foreign policy issues, especially those related to the Middle East. Additionally, he served for over eight years as a legislative liaison for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), which widely regarded as the finest foreign policy-oriented government relations organization in Washington DC.

Dr. Ralph Nurnberger

From the Old Maccabees to the New Maccabees
A new Jerusalem monument to Machal volunteers

Machal is a Hebrew acronym for “Volunteers from Outside of Israel,” representing the men and women who come to defend the Jewish people and help birth the State during its War of Independence from 1947-1949. Jerry Klingler, president of the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation, tells the stories of these brave volunteers and the recently-erected monument in Jerusalem honoring their service. Please see page 24 for more.

Life in Israel: An Inter-Religious Dialogue
Four panelists from the Afula-Gilboa region discuss their lives in Israel

PITTSFIELD – On Monday, November 12 at 10:45 a.m., join four Israeli residents from our partner community as they discuss religion and their personal perspectives on the intersection of secular Jewish, Muslim, and Modern Orthodox life in the Afula-Gilboa region of Israel. Dr. Ravid Pitaro, a former Southern New England Consortium (SNEC) Young Emissary and the head of the delegation, will moderate the panel.

Rabbi Uri Regev, a former Southern New England Consortium (SNEC) Young Emissary and the head of the delegation, will moderate the panel. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting with Community series.

We all know Israel is complex. Religious-secular, left-right, Israeli-Arab-Palestinian-Muslim-Christian-Jewish. Military service-national service-no service. All are significant issues Israelis debate on a daily basis, and some are also very important to Jewish communities worldwide.

Afula-Gilboa is unique, with 40 percent of the Gilboa population Israeli-Arab, as is 50 percent of the employment force in Afula. Local kibbutzim and Moshavim are largely secular communities, while in recent years many ultra and modern Orthodox families have been moving into the area. Residents of the region are thus specially-equipped to discuss how these issues impact their everyday lives.

Rabbi Uri Regev

Reparcing Divisions Within the Jewish World
Controversial activist and attorney Rabbi Uri Regev of Hiddush to speak at Hevreh and Temple Anshe Amunim

GREAT HARRINGTON & FITTSPIELD – In general, it is difficult to find too many voices condemning the good intentions underlying David Ben Gurion and Israel’s early leaders’ decision in 1949 to exempt the ultra-Orthodox from compulsory military service in the Israeli Defense Force (IDF).

The decision was made in the aftermath of the decimation of European Jewry in the Holocaust, and Ben Gurion worried that the scant remnants of that traditional culture would be lost to future generations of Jews. In any case, he believed that the ultra-Orthodox way of life would moderate on its own, subsumed by modernity generally and Zionism particularly. And so, in 1949, a cohort of 400 yeshiva students received this exemption, and they and their yeshivas were granted state-funded stipends to support the study of Torah and religious texts.

Far from fading away, of course, ultra-Orthodox communities rebounded demographically in the post-World War II era, and learned how to use the political parties representing their interests to wield power in Israel’s coalition government. As revealed in his archived correspondence, Ben Gurion himself would later regret his decision. The exclusion from conscription in the IDF remains effectively in place – while

RABBI URI REGEV, continued on page 10

IF YOU GO
Rabbi Regev will be in the Berkshires this October to share his ideas at two Shabbat-study events.

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, on Friday, October 26 at 6:15 p.m., part of Kabbalat Shabbat

Temple Anshe Amunim, on Friday, October 27 at 9:30 a.m., part of Torah Plus study

RABBI URI REGEV, continued on page 10

Shabbat-study events.

Ani at a public event

Menashe Zoubi

LIFE IN ISRAEL, continued on page 7
Letters to the Editor

Letters from Our Campers

This year, the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County provided camp scholarships for 47 local campers, allocating $851,000 in total. Studies have shown that Jewish camp experiences are among the leading predictors of ongoing Jewish engagement, and here are what some of our campers have to report about Summer 2018.

Learning how to lead through Tzofim
Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires and Jewish Women’s Foundation:
Thank you so much for the money towards me being able to go to Eisner Camp this year. This year at camp, we had so much fun. I loved seeing all my friends again. I have made such strong connections at Eisner and it is amazing being able to walk into camp on opening day and see all my close friends.

This year, I was in Bunk 23 with all of my closest friends. I was in Tzofim, which is the year before Glim. It was a lot of responsibility but we all learned how to be great leaders to lower camp. All of my counselors were fantastic and I had so much fun with them.

I had so much fun with all my activities this session. I was able to express my love for art in the drawing/painting classes and the amazing modern dance classes. In sport, I got to get all my energy out in archery and tennis. My favorite place at camp is in the Tzofim Beit Am, whether it was playing cards with friends or looking at the plaques with my best friend, Morgan.

Camp is such an amazing place for me and I am so thankful for the scholarship you gave to me so I can make all of these memories.

Sincerely,
Emma Adelson
Lee

He keeps coming back for the relationships
Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:
My name is Elliot Stern and I went to JCC Camp Kingswood. This camp is located in Bridgton, Maine, about an hour north of Portland. It is my fourth year going to this camp, and this year I stayed for five-and-a-half weeks. The reason I keep coming back to this camp is because of the relationships I have made with my friends. I just wanted to say how grateful I am to the people who donate to the Jewish Federation to make it possible for me to go to camp.

On Shabbats, we would have Friday and Saturday services. I liked services because the songs that we would sing would make me feel at home. After Friday night services, we would have a big dinner with great food! After that we would have this activity called “Ruach.” This is where we would sing and dance to camp songs. Overall, I had a great time at camp and wanted to thank you for making it possible for me to go.

Sincerely,
Elliot Stern
Pittsfield

Changed by camp, and she’s glad
Dear Jewish Federation,
Thank you for giving me the money I needed to go to camp this year. It was great to be around other Jewish kids and adults, as where I live, there are not many Jews. I really enjoyed my chugs and some of the activities – my favorite chugs included video, outdoor cooking, boating, and woodworking.

I feel that this experience has really changed me and I am glad that I went.

All the best,
Ellie Caine
Richmond

Havdallah had her undivided attention
Dear Jewish Federation,
Thank you for giving me money to help send me to Camp Ramah. I had an amazing two months there. I made so many close friends, and I learned a lot about Israel and my Judaism. The havdallah ceremony was one of my favorite parts of the camp.

Talia Caine
Richmond

Last-time camper cherished every moment
Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:
Thank you for helping me get to go to Camp Ramah. It awesome of you to do that. I like camp because it is fun and a nice place to be. It is nice when you see your friends you haven’t seen in a long time, and to have the new experiences. As it was my last year at camp, I cherished every moment. Once again thanks for everything that you did.

From
Cormac Duffy
Pittsfield

On the Bus with Etgar 36, Thanks to Federation
Dear Jewish Federation of the Berkshires:
Thank you for your very generous financial gift, without which I would not have had the opportunity to go on Etgar 36. My time traveling across the United States provided me with so many memories that I will hold on to forever. The fact that I shared all of those memories with other Jewish kids greatly enriches them.

Of the many places we visited and the people we met, I found the most impactful places to be the new Equal Justice Initiative Lynching Memorial in Montgomery, Alabama, and the Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, a nonprofit that aids ex-convicts in becoming productive members of society.

All along the way, we were introduced to many different types of people, often with viewpoints different from my own and most of the other kids on the trip. Throughout our journey across America, as the value of being able to speak and listen to the many different types of Americans was instilled in us, I learned that compromises are not feasible unless people are willing to first respectfully engage with those who have opposing viewpoints. Having learned this lesson, the most interesting speaker we met was a prominent anti-gay marriage advocate and climate change denier. I never would have thought that to be the case before embarking on this trip.

In addition to exploring many of the issues dominating modern American political discourse, we also witnessed many different types of Judaism within the United States. Every Friday night, we observed Shabbat with a congregation that observed Judaism in its own way, such as a Conservative synagogue in New York City and a gay and lesbian synagogue in Dallas. Etgar 36 broadened my understanding of American Judaism significantly.

Most importantly, I enjoyed every moment I was on Etgar 36. Thank you once again for giving me the opportunity to have this Jewish summer experience. It was an immensely fun and educational journey that I would recommend to anyone.

Sincerely,
Adam Cohen
Lanesborough

Adam Cohen is a senior at Mount Greylock Regional School. Etgar 36 is an independent, pluralistic, nonpartisan and nonprofit Jewish educational venture, a summer cross country journey for teens that since 2003 has had more than 18,000 participants.

Thanks from Our College-Bound Scholarship Winners

Dear Scholarship Committee:
I am writing to thank you for your remarkable generosity in providing me with a scholarship for college. Although I have not decided what I will major in yet, I believe that my next four years at Wesleyan University will prepare me to make meaningful contributions to the communities I inhabit for the rest of my life.

Your scholarship helps to make this possible.

Additionally, it is thanks to the example the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires has set in my life that I desire to enrich my communities.

Sincerely,
Miriam Pomerantz
Williamstown

Scholarship winners Miriam Pomerantz and Noah Hochfelder with Judith Cook, Federation’s scholarship chair, at our annual meeting last June

Dear Members of the Simkin/Schiller Scholarship Committee:
I would like to thank you all so, so much for naming me a recipient of this year’s award. The Federation has made too many impacts on my life to count — from enabling me to go to camp to sending me to be a collector of friendly, comforting, and supportive faces in South Street.

I am so grateful for the Federation’s help in making the Berkshire Jewish community my second home. The Federation with always have a special place in my heart.

Sincerely,
Noah Hochfelder
Pittsfield

Adam Cohen is a senior at Mount Greylock Regional School. Etgar 36 is an independent, pluralistic, nonpartisan and nonprofit Jewish educational venture, a summer cross country journey for teens that since 2003 has had more than 18,000 participants.
Rabbi Reflections

The Holy Days are Over! What Now? And If Not Now – When?"

By Rabbi Neal Borovitz

With the month of holy days of Tishri behind us, I believe the real challenge of beginning a new year starts now.

The Book of Genesis is a collection of stories about both the imperfections of human beings, and our potential for being God’s partner in the ongoing creation and perfection of the world. After all the promises and bargains we made with God and with each other, will you and I really change? Will our promises and bargains we made with God and with each other have any long lasting impact?

The Genesis narrative takes us through generations of human beings and, in particular, our Biblical ancestors who are constantly wrestling with their imperfections. I find stories such as Abraham’s fear-based offering up of Sarah as a concubine to Pharaoh in Genesis 12, immediately after receiving God’s promise to make of him a great nation, to be a great example of how real life circumstances often challenge our faith. Similarly, the lesson of the Akedah (binding of Isaac) ten chapters later raises for me the danger of blind faith fundamentalism, be it Jewish, Christian, or Muslim. When is the Biblical narrative a context within which we can find guidance toward better relationships with God and with our fellow human beings, and when is it being used as pretext for self-centered grasps for power?

My teacher and friend, Rabbi Norman Cohen, is professor emeritus of midrash at Hebrew Union College Jewish Institute of Religion. He wrote a book 23 years ago titled Self-Struggle and Change: Family Conflict Stories in Genesis and Their Healing Insights for Our Lives. A generation after its publication, Rabbi Cohen’s book remains the best guide I know to understanding the challenges we each face in actualizing our High Holy Days promises, and realizing that we can live better, but still imperfect lives. As we begin again this month our journey through the Torah narrative, self-struggle and change can serve as wonderful tools for both personal and communal self-reflection. The title of Rabbi Cohen’s book itself points us in the direction of the interrelationship between our task of improving our personal lives and our responsibility for repairing the world.

Can we learn from the mistakes made by the protagonists of Genesis ways that each of us can live better lives? Can we acknowledge that the “other” can be transformed into a brother?

Rabbi Cohen’s focus, as his title implies, is upon family relationships. Sibling rivalry has been an eternal challenge. He not only traces the stories of conflict from the first human brothers, Cain and Abel, through the fraternal feuds of the Children of Israel, but points out for the reader the relevance of these tales for contemporary interpersonal relationships. Over the next two months, as we read a portion of this Genesis narrative each week, I hope you will join me in seeking to use these stories of conflict as mirrors on our own lives. How often do each of us and all of us, choose “one-upmanship” over real relationships? How can we learn from the mistakes made by the protagonists of Genesis ways that each of us can live better lives? Can we acknowledge that the “other” can be transformed into a brother? Can we, as Rabbi Cohen asks in each chapter of this challenging book, learn to live in peace with our neighbors?

Our communal name is Israel defined in Genesis 32 when Jacob, preparing to confront his brother Esau after more than two decades of exile, dreams a dream in which he wrestles with an “Ish,” a Hebrew term usually meaning “human being.” As dawn is about to break, this Ish demands that Jacob let go. Jacob – the quintessential dealmaker – demands that the Ish – whom he perceives as a messenger of God – must first bless him. The blessing he receives is a name change from Jacob to Israel, with an explanation that Jacob and his progeny who will bear his name are destined to “wrestle with the Divine and the Human and persevere in the struggle.”

In re-reading this holiest of holy I summer, I came to realize that the Genesis narrative challenges both We the People, and each of us as individuals, to understand that true change in individual lives, in the life of America, in the life of the Jewish People, and in the life of all humanity will require us to wrestle with each other and with God. The wrestling metaphor of Genesis speaks to me, as it does to Rabbi Cohen, in a profound manner. Wrestling is a “hands-on” close encounter. The difference between a “bear hug” and a “love hug” is in the intent. The sibling stories in Genesis are meant to be understood on both a personal familial level and as reflections of real life intergroup and international conflicts.

Years ago, in an anthology of Jewish stories compiled by Rabbi Jack Brenner for the UJA Rabbincic Cabinet, the following vignette was included:

A young observant Jew who had for the years since his bar mitzvah had religiously studied the weekly Torah portion, goes to his rabbi on the eve of Simchat Torah and asks, “Rabbi, for years I have gone through the cycle of Torah readings do I really have to go through them again this year?”

The rabbi answers: “This year, instead of just going through Torah, let the Torah, go through you.”

If the self-evaluation and reflection and promises of the month of Tishri are to be brought a little closer to realization for each of us – for America, for Israel (both the state and the people), and for the world – I invite everyone to seek ways to both go through the Torah and let the Torah go through you this year.

Rabbi Neal Borovitz is Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Emet of Temple Shalom in River Edge, NJ, and a member of the Berkshire Minyan and Hevreh of Southern Berkshire.

Letters to the Editor

A Reader’s Note About the August-October BJV

Dear Editor:

In addition to learning of achievements, life and loss, moving personal stories, some outstanding programs, and events in the community and the wider world, some items really resonated with me.

Reading of Barbara Cohen’s rabbinical ordination, I wish to congratulate her publicly on what seems now an inevitable journey. I clearly recall the first time, many years ago, when I was struck by her beautiful and soulful singing voice. And what’s not to enjoy about Carole Goodman Kaufman’s recipes and the fascinating stories in Genesis are meant to be understood on both a personal familial level and as reflections of real life intergroup and international conflicts.

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Check out our website!

www.jewishberkshires.org

Thank you volunteers Ellen Rosenblatt and the BJV delivery team, Michael Albert, Jeff Kramer, Roman Rozhenblum, and Ron Turbin

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Berkshire Jewish Voice welcomes signed letters on subjects of interest to the Jewish community. Letters are printed upon space availability. The BJV reserves the right to edit all letters for content, length, and style. The BJV does not print anonymous letters, insults, libels or defamatory statements. Published letters do not represent the views of the Federation, its board of directors, or the newspaper, but rather express the views of their authors. For verification purposes, please include full name, home address, and a day and evening telephone number. Send your letter to: Berkshire Jewish Voice, 196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201, or email: astern@jewishberkshires.org.
Current Affairs: Contemporary American and International Politics

On Thursday, October 18 and Thursday, November 15 at 10:45 a.m., join Professor Steven J. Rubin for “Current Affairs: Contemporary American and International Politics.” This course meets to discuss and explore current issues that influence our lives and society at large. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ Connecting With Community series.

Topics will be chosen by Professor Rubin in consultation with the class and in view of the issue’s relevance. Members will be encouraged to participate in discussions to express views and opinions in a supportive and informal atmosphere.

Steven J. Rubin is professor emeritus of international studies and former dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at Adelphi University, Garden City, N.Y. He is the author of numerous books and articles and frequently lectures both here and abroad on such topics as international anti-Semitism, Jewish history, popular culture, and literature. His radio play “Dem Bums: The Rise and Demise of the Brooklyn Dodgers” was broadcast live on National Public Radio in December 2017 and can be currently heard online.

Jewish Germany – Its History and Legacy

On Monday, October 15 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes Dr. David Levinson, a cultural anthropologist and son of a Holocaust survivor who will speak on the topic of “Jewish Germany – Its History and Legacy.” This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Says Dr. Levinson: “The purpose of the talk is two-fold. First, to provide a quick introduction to the long and complex history of Jewish communities in Germany, with an emphasis on the enduring trends that shaped Jewish life for over 1,800 years. Second, to discuss Jewish Germany’s contributions to Jewish life and the human experience in general, including commercial innovations, Yiddish, Reform Judaism, scientific discoveries, and cultural advances.”

For the last fifteen or so years, Dr. Levinson has been studying and writing about the not-totally-dissimilar topics of the Jewish experience in Germany and African American heritage in the Berkshires. His two new books are: Jewish Germany: An Enduring Presence from the Fourth to the Twenty-First Century and African American Community in Rural New England: W. E. B. Du Bois and His Boyhood Church.

Music as Midrash, with Rabbi Liz

On Thursday, October 25 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires hosts Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch of Temple Anshe Anzim for “Music as Midrash,” a musical exploration of Jewish themes. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

How does music deepen our understanding of Jewish text and prayer? Music can serve as midrash, a creative interpretation that adds to the depth of our understanding and connection to these texts, explains Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch, herself a guitarist and musician. She will teach about Jewish text through song, including live and recorded musical selections.

Now Accepting Applications for Camp Scholarships

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires is dedicated to making a Jewish summer camp experience affordable and accessible for every child. Tuition assistance is available through:

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires Camp Scholarship Fund
Dr. Arthur & Helen Milden Camp Scholarship Fund
Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County

APPLICATION DEADLINE: JANUARY 16

Download an application at jewisberkshires.org or pick one up at the Federation’s office, 196 South St., Pittsfield, MA.

Additional funding is available from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (hgf.org)

Check out our website!

www.jewishberkshires.org

INCLUDES A CALENDAR OF PROGRAMS AND EVENTS SPONSORED BY THE BERKSHIRE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Homebound or recovering from an illness or injury?

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Israel Update

Dr. Nurnberger was the first director of Builders for Peace, an organization established in 1983, with the encouragement of Vice President Al Gore, to encourage private-sector investment in the West Bank and Gaza. In this capacity, he dealt with international leaders including Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, then-Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, as well as American and international business and political leaders. He also spent two years as a senior fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), where he directed the Congressional relations program, ran a number of conferences, and co-authored and edited books dealing with Congressional leadership and the role of Congress in foreign policy.

He is a partner in a Washington, D.C. government relations firm, Nurnberger & Associates, which was founded in 1994.

The Jewish Federation of the Berkshires (thanks Shakespeare & Company for supporting this community program.)

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When

Date & Time: Thursday, October 18 and Thursday November 15 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).

Venue:

Knesset Israel

Sponsor:

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community

Jewish Germany – Its History and Legacy

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Connecting With Community Programs / Kosher Hot Lunch

Programs in the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ Connecting With Community series are free and start at 10:45 a.m. most Mondays and Thursdays at Knesset Israel (16 Colt Road, Pittsfield). Programs are followed by a kosher hot lunch. Lunch is a $2 suggested donation for adults over 60 years of age or $7 for all others. Advance reservations are required for lunch and can be made by calling (413) 442-2200 before 9 a.m. on the day of the program. Lunch alone is also served Tuesday.

Kness & Knowledge events take place each month on a Friday at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire (270 State Road, Great Barrington). Programs start at 10:45 a.m. and are now free – the buffet lunch that follows the presentation is 811 and must be reserved in advance by calling (413) 442-4360, ext. 10.

For further information on all programs, please call Nancy Maurice Rogers, program director, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 15. For lunch menus and a chronological list of all scheduled programs, please see page 22. Note that lunch menus are subject to change.

The Process of Aging, with Maggie Bittman

On Monday, October 8 and Monday, November 19 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presents “The Process of Aging” with therapist Maggie Bittman. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

This program will provide an opportunity to be part of a group dialogue, created and facilitated by Bittman, who will explain her outlook and approach, emphasizing that aging begins at birth. She will highlight how this is a lifelong process, and the ways people return to these existential truths at each stage of life with the added wisdom that comes with aging. Within this context, participants will discuss, share and offer support, as they explore these existential truths.

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
Venue: Knesset Israel
Date & Time: Monday, October 8 and Monday, November 19 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).

The Sunday Strummers Ukulele Ensemble!

On Monday, October 22 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires welcomes The Sunday Strummers Ukulele Ensemble, a group of avid ukulele players who have been having strumming, singing and performing together for several years. They will come together to fill the air with tunes from the 1930s to present day. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
Venue: Knesset Israel
Date & Time: Monday, October 22 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).

Your Federation Presents

Return Engagement – “The Bintel Brief”

On Thursday, October 11 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires presents A Bintel Brief, a staged reading of a play developed by Carol Rusoff that was originally staged at Knesset Israel in June. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, in Pittsfield, is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

In the early 1900s, Jews fled Eastern Europe oppression by the hundreds of thousands. Once on these shores, adapting to life in the Golden Land posed great challenges!

The Yiddish newspaper, Der Forverts, was the secular “bible” for these immigrants, and its editor, Abraham Cahan, became something of a “rebbe” to many who wrote in to the paper seeking advice on life in America. The Bintel Brief, A Selection of Sixty Years of letters from the Lower East Side to the Jewish Daily Forward is a book that records these letters to the editor, translated into English, and the advice he proffered. A cast of local volunteers and vocalists will share the poignant, tragic, bittersweet, and humorous experiences that motivated that “Letters to the Editor” column. Cast members include Lara Denmark, Herman Rutenberg, Ann Krawert, Amy Miller, Louise Pennay, Steve Rosenthal, and Alexandra Warshaw.

Don’t miss this second chance to see A Bintel Brief!

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
Venue: Knesset Israel
Date & Time: Thursday, October 11 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).

Do you have a story to tell about your relationship to YIDDISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE? Your story will be part of the Yiddish Book Center’s extensive online archive.

SPEND THE SUMMER OR YEAR IN ISRAEL

ISRAEL TRAVEL & STUDY GRANTS FOR YOUTH

The Michael Nathaniel Shute Endowment Fund provides grants to Berkshire area youth for formal educational travel or study in Israel.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Awards are made within 45 days of receiving the application. Additional funding is available through the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Download an application at www.jewishberkshires.org or pick one up at the Federation’s office 196 South Street, Pittsfield, MA (413) 442-4360, ext. 10

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Love Shouldn’t Hurt: Responding to Relational Violence in Our Community

On Monday, October 29 at 10:45 a.m., join Deborah Parkinson and Susan Gordon of the Elizabeth Freeman Center for “Love Shouldn’t Hurt,” an exploration of relational violence and the effect it has on our community. This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

In honor of Domestic Violence Awareness Month, members of Elizabeth Freeman Center will be speaking about relational violence—what it looks and feels like; how it affects us, our loved ones, and our community; what we can do to help prevent and respond to it; and what help and resources are available in Berkshire County.

Deborah Parkinson, the director of programs at Elizabeth Freeman Center, has 20-plus years experience in the sexual assault/domestic violence field. Deborah is a lifelong resident of Berkshire County and resides in Dalton. Susan Gordon is a board member at Elizabeth Freeman Center. She is an active member in the community and former owner of Bagels Too, which she ran for 30 years.

**IF YOU GO**
- **Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
- **Venue:** Knesset Israel
- **Date & Time:** Monday, October 29 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).

Taking Action for Animals

On Monday, November 5 at 10:45 a.m., join Susan Emerson Clapp of The Humane Society of the United States, who will talk about “Taking Action for Animals.” This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Susan Emerson Clapp will talk about how each one of us can make this a more humane world for animals. Topics will include:
- The role of The Humane Society of the United States in the fight for animals
- What are the greatest threats animals face today?
- How can each of us help?Finishing discussion of effective advocacy

Susan Emerson Clapp is a Berkshire resident who has been employed as a professional fundraiser since 1989. In 2011, she became the senior director of philanthropy for The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). Susan works with leadership, major donors, and key advocates to advance the organization’s work on behalf of animals at home and abroad.

HSUS and its affiliates provide hands-on care and services to more than 100,000 animals each year, and works to professionalize the field through education and training for local organizations. As the leading animal advocacy organization, HSUS seeks a humane world for people and animals alike. Since 1964, the HSUS has been driving transformational change in the U.S. and around the world by combating large-scale cruelties such as puppy mills, animal fighting, factory farming, seal slaughter, horse cruelty, captive hunts and the wildlife trade.

**IF YOU GO**
- **Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
- **Venue:** Knesset Israel
- **Date & Time:** Monday, November 5 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).

A Mystic’s Guide to Prayer

On Thursday, November 1 at 10:45 a.m., the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires hosts Williams College’s Jewish chaplain Rabbi Seth Wax for “A Mystic’s Guide to Prayer.” This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Federation’s Connecting With Community series.

Rabbi Wax says: “The Jewish prayer book is a resource that we use in services, but for the Jewish mystics, it is a handbook for unlocking the inner mysteries of the universe and for helping us to see the world and ourselves with a deeper consciousness. Yet most of us have never been exposed to this radical way of experiencing prayer.

“In this session, we’ll explore one mystic’s instructions for the traditional prayer for the body and learn the deep connections between ourselves and God.”

Rabbi Seth Wax is the Jewish chaplain at Williams College.

**IF YOU GO**
- **Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
- **Venue:** Knesset Israel
- **Date & Time:** Thursday, November 1 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).

Chair Yoga: Easy Yoga for Mobility and Peace of Mind

On Thursday, November 8 at 10:45 a.m., Linda Novick for “Chair Yoga: Easy Yoga for Flexibility, Mobility, and Peace of Mind.” This free program at Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road in Pittsfield is part of the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires’ Connecting With Community series.

Linda Novick says: “Chair Yoga is appropriate for people of all levels of mobility. It is a series of breathing and stretching exercises done in a chair, which increases mobility of the joints, flexibility, strength and stamina. Some of the exercises are performed standing behind the chair, while holding on. Participants will learn breathing techniques to enhance lung capacity, as well as easy stretches and yoga poses. Yoga is good for all bodies. Beginners are welcome.”

Linda Novick, MFA, is an author, teacher, artist, and professional level Kripalu Yoga teacher. She currently teaches yoga at Berkshire West Fitness Center and Kimball Farms, and all over the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Housing Authority.

She explains that her approach to yoga encourages everyone to listen and love their body. Her yoga classes encourage gentle stretching, proper breathing, strength and balance. She attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and has a BFA in art education, and has taught art for 50 years.

She’s been teaching yoga since 1997, and lately has been focusing on easy yoga for elders. She taught on staff at Kripalu Center for 7 years, and is now a regular presenter, offering programs that combine painting and yoga. She’s the author of the book, The Painted Path: Embodiment Spiritual Discovery through Yoga, Brush and Color.

**IF YOU GO**
- **Sponsor:** Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
- **Venue:** Knesset Israel
- **Date & Time:** Thursday, November 8 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).

For further information on all Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs, please call Nancy Maurice Rogers, Program Director, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 15.
“Interreligious Illiteracy” the Topic of October 19 Knosh & Knowledge

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Friday, October 19 at 10:45 a.m., Knosh & Knowledge welcomes Dr. Terry Schmitt, executive director of the Connecticut Council for Interreligious Understanding, who will talk about interfaith outreach and understanding in a presentation titled “Interreligious Illiteracy.”

This free Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire at 10:45 a.m. and will be followed by lunch, available for $11 (BNYP required).

Terry Schmitt is an ordained member of the United Church of Christ, and was the senior minister at Center Congregational Church in Manchester for eleven years. Prior to that, he was a project director at the Program for Non-Profit Organizations at Yale University, as well as interim minister as several Connecticut churches.

About his talk, Dr. Schmitt says: “I will talk about the problem of religious illiteracy, and about our seeming struggle to have open conversations around sensitive topics. The reality is that most people are religiously illiterate, starting with their own religion, but moving on to include lack of awareness and understanding about denominations and diversity within their own religion.

“This ignorance gets worse as one goes on to awareness of other religions. The problem with this illiteracy is twofold: religion is about ‘ultimate things,’ which means that one’s religious beliefs are important and central, and secondly, ignorance can quickly lead to mistrust, fear, and then hatred. Thus, seeking to address religious illiteracy is one crucial way to break down walls of misunderstanding and fear.

Dr. Schmitt will also talk about the Connecticut Council for Interreligious Understanding’s work.

Schmitt went to Yale University for his Ph.D. in Sociology, Eden Theological Seminary for his M.Div, and to Brown University for his A.B. His family and he have lived in West Hartford since 1996.

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
Date & Time: Friday, October 19 at 10:45 a.m.
Venue: Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington
Cost: Knosh & Knowledge programs are now free. Fresh buffet lunch is $11. Advance lunch reservations required for this event.
Email federation@jewishberkshires.org, or call (413) 442-4360, ext. 10
lunch reservations required for this event.
Cost: Fresh buffet lunch is $11.
Knosh & Knowledge programs are now free.

Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington
Date & Time:
Venue:
Sponsor:

IF YOU GO

Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires / Connecting With Community
Venue: Knesset Israel
Date & Time: Monday, November 12 at 10:45 a.m., followed by lunch (see page 22).
Your Federation Presents

From Sanctuary to Synagogue
Tracing the origins and development of our houses of worship at
November 9 Knosh & Knowledge

GREAT HARRINGTON –
On Friday, November 9 at 10:45 a.m., Knosh & Knowledge hosts Robert R. Stieglitz, professor emeritus at Rutgers University, for an illustrated presentation about the origin and development of that most Jewish institution—the synagogue—with special emphasis on its lesser known element of its decorative arts.

This free, Jewish Federation of the Berkshires program will take place at Hevreh of Southern Berkshire at 10:45 a.m., and will be followed by lunch, available for $11 (RSVP required).

Wrote Professor Stieglitz:

“Synagogue roots are traceable to the Biblical traditions of the Hebrew portable ‘sanctuary’ (miškan), also known as the Tabernacle, and the subsequent permanent stone ‘house’ (beit), or Temple (mikdash or bet hamikdash) constructed for the God of Israel. The synagogue (beit Knesset), on the other hand, is first attested in Hellenistic times (3rd-1st centuries BCE) in Alexandria, Egypt, whilst the Second Temple was standing in Jerusalem. Special attention will be given to the remarkable artistic motifs, both Jewish and pagan, unearthed in asserted ancient synagogues of Israel datable to Byzantine times (4th-7th centuries CE).

“I designed this talk,” he continues, “to try and answer three questions:
1. Where and when did the synagogue originate?
2. What decorative arts were used in ancient synagogues?
3. Why did the decorative arts cease?”

Robert R. Stieglitz is Emeritus Professor of Hebrew Studies and Ancient Mediterranean Civilizations at Rutgers University. Stieglitz has taught at universities and institutes in Greece and Israel, and has excavated for many years at several harbor sites in both countries. He conducted numerous surveys throughout the Mediterranean world, and was formerly curator of the National Maritime Museum, Haifa. He received his B.A. in Classics/Linguistics from the City College of New York, and has M.A. and Ph.D. in Mediterranean Studies from Brandeis University. Stieglitz is the recipient of numerous academic honors and awards and author of over 130 articles on the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean.

IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
Date & Time: Friday, November 9 at 10:45 a.m.
Venue: Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington
Cost: Knosh & Knowledge programs are now free. Fresh buffet lunch is $11. Advance lunch reservations required for this event.
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IF YOU GO
Sponsor: Jewish Federation of the Berkshires
Date & Time: Friday, November 9 at 10:45 a.m.
Venue: Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington
Cost: Knosh & Knowledge programs are now free. Fresh buffet lunch is $11. Advance lunch reservations required for this event.
Email federation@jewishberkshires.org, or call (413) 442-4360, ext. 10
The Jewish community of India, together with JDC, has responded to destructive floods in Kerala, providing food and clothing to hundreds of families hard-hit by the disaster. With a presence in India since 1950, JDC and its partners in the Jewish community provided the aid through the All-India Disaster Mitigation Institute, its longstanding partner, and will continue to raise funds and monitor needs for future support given the extent of the flooding, which has killed hundreds of people and displaced hundreds of thousands. A JDC team was dispatched to Kerala for the distribution of aid and to assess needs of survivors, including members of the Jewish community, impacted by the floods.

As news of the rains, flooding and landslides grew, JDC’s India team coordinated with the local Jewish community, which is made up of 4,500 people, and other NGO partners to devise a response to the devastation. JDC’s India team — which works today with the Indian Jewish community to care for its neediest, provide Jewish cultural and educational opportunities, and support vulnerable populations in distress, like the poor in urban slums — took a lead role in JDC’s responses to the Nepal earthquake and Indian Ocean tsunami.

“As we join with our neighbors in mourning the loss of life in Kerala, we are also acutely aware of the critical importance of the support we are providing to survivors facing an uncertain future,” said Elijah Jacob, executive director of JDC’s India office, and Dr. Nathan Aston, chair of the Indian Jewish community’s Indian Joint Trust in a joint statement. “Drawing from our previous experience responding to these kinds of disasters in India, and throughout the region, we are focused on meeting immediate needs, rebuilding more sustainably for future disasters, and upholding the Jewish value for life, especially in the face of such terrible loss.”

JDC, Indian Jewish Community Provide Food, Clothing to Kerala Flood Survivors

Joint Response to Flooding Ongoing As Needs Emerge

JDC’s disaster relief programs are funded by special appeals of the Jewish Federations of North America and tens of thousands of individual donors to JDC. In the last year, JDC and its partners have responded to disasters and crises in Guatemala, Indonesia, Mexico, the Caribbean, Sri Lanka, and East Africa. JDC has continued its post-disaster development work in Nepal, Philippines, and Haiti. JDC also provides ongoing humanitarian aid to refugees in Europe and the Middle East.

JDC relief activities are coordinated with the U.S. Department of State, USAID, the Israeli government, interaction, and the United Nations, as well as local and international partners.

About JDC

JDC works in more than 70 countries and in Israel to alleviate hunger and hardship, rescue Jews in danger, create lasting connections to Jewish life, and provide immediate relief and long-term development support for victims of natural and man-made disasters. For more information, visit www.JDC.org. To support JDC’s disaster relief efforts, visit: http://www.jdc.org/disasters/.

Pajama Donations Will Keep Kids in Need Warm This Winter

As chilly weather returns to the Berkshires, the PJ Library Pajama Drive conducted by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires also returns to help the many children in our community who may lack the comfort of warm sleepwear. Last year’s effort collected more than 150 pairs of pajamas from individuals, groups, and local businesses and the push this year will be to build on that success. The pajama drive will be conducted from November 1 through December 7.

Donors can drop off brand new pajamas (sizes newborn to teen) at the following locations:

- Jewish Federation of the Berkshires, 196 South Street, Pittsfield
- Hevreh of Southern Berkshire, 270 State Road, Great Barrington
- Congregation Beth Israel, 53 Lois Street, North Adams

Donations will be received by the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families in Pittsfield, and will be distributed to local families during the holiday season.

PJ Library is a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and is funded locally by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires thanks to generous funding from local donors the Spitz Tuchman Family Fund and the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County.

The program provides free monthly books and music with Jewish content to children ages 6 months through 8 years of age.

For more information about PJ Library and the PJ Pajama Drive, contact Susan Frisch Lehrer at (413) 442-4360, ext. 14.
Israel’s population grew by 1,200 percent from 1948 to 2015, and the Orthodox excused from military service grew by 15,000 percent from 1966 to 2015. Approximately 8,500 males eligible to serve receive exemptions under the terms of Ben Gurion’s agreement, whereas for most members of Israel society, service in the IDF—Israel’s “melting pot” —remains central to their identities as citizens. It’s a fine balance on both sides. The disconnect is often bitterly resonated by secular Israelis, who wonder why they and their children are being put in harm’s way to defend the Jewish state, while also having to support (with tax revenues) the lifestyles of an ultra-Orthodox population that is indifferent or even hostile to them. Tensions over the draft issue have risen in the last 10 years as Israel’s Supreme Court and Knesset have made legal and legislative efforts to end the military exemptions of the ultra-Orthodox, while the government has struggled, often in the face of ultra-Orthodox opposition and fierce pushback by ultra-Orthodox political parties to implement meaningful change.

Yet military service is but one dimension of this ternary conflict. In 1947, Ben Gurion and the religious founders of the state realized they had agreed to a set of compromises that would create the institution of Israel’s Chief Rabbinate, which established courts overseeing marriage, divorces, and conversions, all of which operate under a strict Orthodox halakhic interpretation of Jewish law. While the controversies surrounding the military draft might seem particular to Israel, those arising from the Chief Rabbinate’s lock on religious matters affect the officially recognized status of Israel in all of who identify as Jewish worldwide.

Upsetting the outsized role exerted by those rabbinic courts in Jewish life has been the decades-long effort of Rabbi Reuven Bulka, an activist and attorney who is CEO of Hiddush — For Freedom of Religion and Belief in Israel, a non-governmental organization he founded in 2009. From its mission statement: “Hiddush believes that fully re-alizing the promise of religious freedom will strengthen Israel both as a democracy and as a Jewish state, and will bolster Jewish Peoplehood and Israel/Diaspora relationships.” Also from its mission statement: “The lack of religious freedom and equality impacts virtually all of the domestic issues — security, economic growth, access to quality health care and social services, and poverty.” It cites a study that holds: “Over 80% of Israeli Jews believe that the consequences of this religious/secular divide constitute the most serious domestic threat to Israel today.”

Rabbi Regev is quick to point out that the focus of Hiddush’s activism is in no way religious. “It is about the clash of religion and state,” he says, rather than any desire to reform aspects of Jewish practice in any of its diverse expressions. “We encourage an open-minded discussion of what Israel is about. Can Israel be both a holy and democratic country?” Rabbi Regev identifies the founding ideas of Israel, as espoused by Hiddush, as the declaration of independence, as follows: being open as a place of refuge for the world, personal liberty, and social and political equality for all with no distinction based on the basis of religion. “That is nothing like the Middle East,” he asserts, adding that owing to the haredi controls exercised by the Chief Rabbinate, Jews are the only group in Israel that does not enjoy unfettered religious freedom.

Rabbi Regev is a Tel Aviv native who grew up in a secular Jewish environment. The idea of Jewish pluralism was introduced to him on a 1967 trip to the United States organized under the auspices of the Reform Movement. “It was my first exposure to the full Jewish rainbow,” he remembers. “I was impressed by the notion of Jewishness as a rainbow, not a monochromatic position. What he realized about the Reform movement in Israel was that “it isn’t necessarily so.” He describes his rabbinic ordination through the Reform movement in the late 1970s, after studying law at Tel Aviv University. He served executive director of the Israel Religious Action Center (the political arm of the movement) and served in President and president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (the umbrella organization of the Progressive, Reform, Liberal, and Reconstructionist movements). He was also a founding member of B’Tselem, the Jerusalem-based nonprofit organization whose stated goals are to document human rights violations in the Israeli-occupied territories. As an attorney, Rabbi Regev has taken on the case of Rabbi Dov Haiyun, a Conservative rabbi in Haifa who was detained by authorities last July for performing a non-Orthodox wedding in Israel. His arrest created an international flap as Jewish institutions voiced their concerns over the government’s intervention on behalf of religious authorities. Rabbi Haiyun’s arrest generated another stone from among other recent controversies that have high-lighted the conspicuous lack of democracy in the Jewish community both in Israel and abroad, among them the split between the Jewish orthodoxy and the religious/secular dimension of governance in the wall movement and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s recent comments at the 2015 Jewish Federations of North America/JFNA General Assembly that suggested an openness to creating alternatives to the Chief Rabbinate and the state for conversion and life cycle events. Pledges for reform by both of the two major branches of the ultra-Orthodox political center.

His arrest created an international dimension to the Chief Rabbinate’s control over the ultra-Orthodox community. The Ultra-Orthodox are, in the main, inclined toward religious and social pluralism, and that the divisions created and/or augmented by rabbinic control of religious life in Israel (along with the political accommodations to the status quo made by politicians) have the “poten-tial to split the Jewish people at a time when a common front is as necessary as ever before.”

Regev is critical of the roadmap for reconciliation laid out by Israeli’s minister of education Naftali Bennett at the AJC Global Forum in June, and the Israeli government’s promotion of initiatives to bolster Jewish life in the Diaspora under the aegis of Mosaic United, a group that (at a cost of $60 million) has created outreach centers on 16 US college campuses. Mosaic United receives one-third of its funding from the Israeli government, one-third from private donors, and one-third from Hillel International and Orthodox groups Chabad and Aish HaTorah.

Owing to the Orthodox nature of Chabad and Olim, Regev perceives the Mosaic United program as “an affront rather than a benefit” to the Diaspora. Hiddush offers its own roadmap for reconciliation, whereas for most Israelis who can be swayed – namely centrists, and individuals who lean either moderately right or left of the political center.

To resolve the issue of ultra-Orthodox military ex-emption, Regev suggests that 1,400 exceptions be granted to top students of traditional Judaic study, as determined by standardized testing. The remainder of the ultra-Orthodox eligible to serve would have to perform military or civil service, or have their taxpayer-funded remuneration suspended.

For marriage, the Hid-dush plan would give couples the option of following one of two parallel paths, one secular and the other halakhic. Once a couple chooses a path, they would be obliged to follow its rules for marriage and divorce. Recently, Regev joined Rabbi Marc Angel, Orthodox founder and director of the Israel Institute for Jewish Ideas and Ideals, to create “Vision Statement: Israel as a Jewish Democratic State,” an 8-point treatise outlining a path toward achieving some of the religious freedom goals espoused by Hiddush. At this writing, 145 signatures from across the religious spectrum have signed it. The petition is at: http://rrei.org/petitions/vision-israel-jewish-democrat-ic-state/.

The issues that Hiddush addresses “are issues that have the potential of splitting the Jewish people.” Regev asserts, “We are dealing with very high stakes.”
freedom," they are mostly talking about a different set of issues than their American counterparts. American Jewish institutions have poured their energy into changes at the Western Wall and blocking restrictions on Jewish conversion. But Jewish Israelis mostly care about quotidian issues like public transit on Saturdays and government funding of yeshivas.

Those are some of the takeaways from an annual survey of attitudes toward Jewish Israelis on religion and state conducted by Hiddush, an Israeli organization that supports religious pluralism. The survey questioned 800 Jewish Israelis, with a margin of error of 3.5 percent.

"The overwhelming majority views negatively the government's policy on religion and state, opposes practically every aspect of any decision or any issue, whether it's a bill to draft for marriage or public transit on Shabbat," said Rabbi Uri Regev, the founder and CEO of Hiddush. "The public does want freedom, does oppose government decisions and policies. The public wants Diaspora Jewish involvement in promoting religious freedom." As it does every year, the survey found that Jewish Israelis care far more broadly on religious issues than their government. The government's religious policies are largely administered by the haredi Orthodox Chief Rabbinate, which only recognizes Orthodox rabbis, Orthodox weddings, Orthodox conversions, and Orthodox marriage certification. Israel bans nearly all Orthodox weddings, Orthodox only recognizes Orthodox rabbis, Orthodox Chief Rabbinate, which is a short play based on two true events. As Ann and Beth go through their recently deceased parents' belongings, a 25-year-old secret is revealed, one that could change their lives forever. The Grass and the Flower is a one-act play that explores the idea of religious pluralism and freedom, "an element of Jewish thought you can find in young people." And while only 22 percent of Israelis identify as religious or haredi — and 13 percent self-identify as Conservative or Reform — a greater part of the population favors more traditional religious tendencies. Nearly half of Jewish Israelis observe Shabbat partially or fully. The survey does have some good news for fans of Israel's religious status quo. On issue after issue — from conversion to marriage to kosher certification — younger respondents favored more traditionalist policies than their elders. While more than 80 percent of respondents over age 50 support separation of religion and state in Israel, for example, only 42 percent of those under 25 do. Regev said part of this divide is due to high haredi birth rates. But he said it’s also due to “an element of the mainstream you can find in young people.”

The survey found that most Jewish Israelis are more likely to vote for a political party if it supports increasing religious freedom. Whether or not they vote on religious issues, Jewish Israelis say they want Diaspora Jewry’s help in advancing religious pluralism. Two-thirds expressed support for Diaspora groups “working to strengthen religious freedom and pluralism in Israel.” That includes 65 percent of those who voted for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the 2015 election. Netanyahu froze a compromise last year — backed by American Jewish groups — that would have expanded a non-Orthodox prayer plaza at the Western Wall. The Western Wall has been the top religious policy priority for American Jewish groups over the past several years, but it doesn’t register with non-haredi Jewish Israelis. They told Hiddush that their most important religious issues were, in order: reducing government funding of Orthodox yeshivas, instituting civil marriage and allowing public transit on Shabbat. Some Jewish groups have also pushed for civil marriage, but have not spoken out significantly on the other two issues.

But two-thirds of Jewish Israelis support separation of religion and state, representing an increase of 10 percentage points since 2012. Seventy percent back government recognition of all forms of marriage, including civil marriage — an increase from 53 percent in 2009. Sixty-six percent support the three major denominations of Judaism — Orthodox, Conservative and Reform — enjoying equal status in Israel. Nearly half support recognition of all forms of Jewish conversion, while an additional 28 percent support a liberalization of current conversion regulations. More than 70 percent want increased public transit on Shabbat. The survey found that most Jewish Israelis are far more likely to vote on religious issues, prioritizing security and economic concerns. Even so, the survey found that most Jewish Israelis are more likely to vote for a political party if it supports increasing religious freedom. Wouldn’t it be nice if all of these issues were put to a vote? On Sunday, November 11 at 4 p.m. Congregation Ahavath Sholom welcomes Lynn and Eliza Wood, specialists in historic land research and genealogy, a mother and daughter team who are founders of Dwelling in the Past. A South Egremont firm specializing in the research of historical homes. The duo will offer a presentation of some of their intriguing local findings.

Lynn H. Wood, title abstractor, and Elizabeth L. Wood, genealogical researcher, share a love for historic research. Through investigating old Berkshire records and employing their 58 years of combined research experience, Lynn and Beth are now bringing forward newly-found, fact-based Berkshire stories of people, places, and happenings.

Each story has been in some way unique and surprising. As they will explain, history is often painted in grand strokes, on canvases of monumental size. The aim at Dwelling in the Past is to bring history, in all its vivid colors, to a more human scale. By investigating the historic homes of Berkshire County, Lynn and Beth offer an opportunity to glimpse the city's past, and varied hues of residents' lives.

Born in Pittsfield, Lynn grew up in the town of Otis when it had a population of 450 people. Her father owned a general store, a great place to get to know neighbors. Lynn is the editor of the book A Gift from the Past.

Dwelling in the Past

A talk about historic land research and genealogy

GREAT BARRINGTON – Ever wonder what your house has been up to? On Sunday, November 11 at 4 p.m. Congregation Ahavath Sholom welcomes Lynn and Eliza Wood, specialists in historic land research and genealogy, a mother and daughter team who are founders of Dwelling in the Past.

Pittsfield, N. Adams & Lee

The Berkshires

Barbara K. Greenfeld

New Home? Second Home? Retirement Home?

The Berkshires

The Berkshires

Nellie E. Haskell's history of Otis. She served the town of Egremont at different times as town clerk, selectmen's secretary and planning board chair. In 2015, she worked with Beth and many others to produce Egremont's July 1865 Civil War Basket Picnic. Lynn and her husband, Bill, live in Egremont, in Bill's great-grandparents' home. They are parents of two children and grandparents of five. Currently, Lynn chairs the St. James Community Housing Corporation in Great Barrington and serves on the Egremont Meeting House Committee. Beth lives and works in Alexandria, Virginia. She and her husband, David Berman, have raised five children and various cats. In addition to her work, Beth is an assistant historian for the Mayflower Society of Virginia. Congregation Ahavath Sholom is at 15 North Street in Great Barrington. For more information: www.ahavathsholom.org or (413) 528-4197.

The Concert – Reading of a New Play by Linda Josephs

GREAT BARRINGTON – On Sunday, October 28 at 4 p.m. Congregation Ahavath Sholom will present a free staged reading of The Concert, a play by Linda Josephs. Featured actors will be Deann Halligan and Paul Ryan. As Ann and Beth go through their recently deceased parents’ belongings, a 25-year-old secret is revealed, one that could change their lives forever. The Concert is a short play based on two true stories.

Following the reading of the play, there will be a talkback with the actors and director/playwright.
Summer Concert a Fundraising Success

More than 350 community members came together to hear Sam Glaser at the Federation’s annual benefit concert on August 5. Together we raised more than $10,000 to benefit the Jewish Agency’s Victims of Terror Fund. A special thank you to concert co-chairs, Norman Michaels and Judith Cook, as well as to the many underwriters and attendees for their support of this very special community event.
Fun in the Summertime with Berkshire PJ Families

PJ Library families from across the Berkshires came together this summer to celebrate the season and the Jewish holidays that fell early in the calendar this year.

Everyone had a grand time at our Family Shabbat at the Lake (Lake Mansfield in Great Barrington) on August 10, with youngsters and their parents gathering to sing songs, share blessings, and read our PJ Library book *Koala Challah*, led by Sarah Aroeste Blaumgard. All enjoyed a craft activity, supper, swimming, and playing on the swings.

More photos on page 14.
More Fun in the Summertime with Berkshire PJ Families

The fun resumed just before the High Holy Days, with apple picking for Rosh Hashanah at Lakeview Orchards in Lanesborough and Windy Hill Farm in Great Barrington on September 16. A meaningful time was had by all!

PJ Library, a program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation, is funded locally by the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires thanks to generous funding from local donors the Spitz Tuchman Family Fund and the Jewish Women’s Foundation of Berkshire County. The program provides free monthly books and music with Jewish content to children ages 6 months through 8 years of age.
The Maimonides Society of the Berkshires hosted health care professionals and interested guests at its fifth annual meeting on August 12. Attendees heard Rabbi Leonard A. Sharzer, MD, speak on the theme of “Decision Making at the End of Life,” and networked over bagels and lox at this well-attended event at the Marriott Courtyard in Lenox.

“Rabbi Sharzer blended medical aspects with religious and social perspective,” reports Maimonides Society of the Berkshires chairperson Dr. Stuart Masters. “It was an excellent talk that we all found both stimulating and thought provoking.”

“Dr. Sharzer’s different perspectives were important to consider,” says Federation Development Officer Leslie Kozupsky. “I felt fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in this meeting with other members of the Berkshire Jewish community.”

Stuart and Leslie invite all Jewish medical professionals in the Berkshires to participate in future events. For more information on the Maimonides Society of the Berkshires, please contact Leslie at lkozupsky@jewishberkshires.org.

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**Mazel Tov to...**

- Federation’s own stately kitchen boss Cindy Bell-Deane and husband David on the birth of their first grandchild, Miriam.
- Lawrence Klein, who was named Assistant Head of School for Institutional Advancement and General Counsel at Darrow School.
- Alba and Bob Tutenauer on their 60th wedding anniversary.
- Mister G (Ben Gundersheimer) on the release of his ninth album for families, Fireflies. And best wishes to Ben’s parents. Karen and Werner, on their move from the Berkshires to Sarasota.
- Judy Seaman on her first grandchild, Noa Laget, daughter of Michal and Nico Laget of Virginia.
- Bea Selig on her 95th birthday.
- Ella Novik on celebrating her bat mitzvah at Hevreh.
- Ethan Pratt on celebrating his bar mitzvah at Hevreh.
- Roz and Ed Kolodny on their 60th wedding anniversary.
- Richard and Claudia Kirsch on the marriage of their daughter, Lindsay, to Geoffrey Katz.
- Shelley and Marty Rolf on the birth of their first granddaughter, Lulu.
- Bob Nason on his retirement as Lee’s town manager.
- Simon Warren and Blair Gross on their marriage.
- Sid and Lisa Freund on the birth of their grandchild.
- Rachel and David Eidex on the bat mitzvah of their daughter, Dora.
- Harold and Gretchen Hastings on the birth of their granddaughter, Ellery Morse Buckley Hastings.
- Joyce and Steve Pyenson on their 50th wedding anniversary.
- Michael Geller on his 80th birthday.
- Steve and Helice Picheny on the birth of their grandson, Miles William Dufour, born Tuesday, September 11. Parents are Ariel Picheny Dufour and Jeffrey Dufour.
- Noah Hochfelder on receiving the 2018 Daniel Pearl Berkshire Scholarship Award.
- Amy Lindner-Lesser on the recent marriage of her daughter Maya to Scott Connell.
- Wendy Rabinowitz on her successful summer exhibition at the Artful Mind Gallery in Lenox, which will be on view through October.
- Noah Hochfelder on receiving the 2018 Daniel Pearl Berkshire Scholarship Award.
- Amy Lindner-Lesser on the recent marriage of her daughter Maya to Scott Connell.
- Wendy Rabinowitz on her successful summer exhibition at the Artful Mind Gallery in Lenox, which will be on view through October.
- “VESSEL OF LIGHT: Sarah, Queen of Light,” a mixed media assemblage by Wendy Rabinowitz.
Anti-Semitism in America: Past vs. Present
Lecture and discussion with Kenneth S. Stern

NORTH ADAMS – How does anti-Semitism in America in the past compare to its presence in our country today? How does an historical perspective help us assess the seriousness of the current situation? Do we need new strategies to combat anti-Semitism’s recent manifestations in America?

On Monday, October 15, at 7:30 p.m., Congregation Beth Israel, in partnership with Williams College, hosts Kenneth S. Stern, a speaker qualified to consider questions such as these, having dedicated his life’s work to combating hate.

Stern recently served as director of the Division on Anti-Semitism and Extremism at the American Jewish Committee, where he worked for 25 years. A lawyer and award-winning author, he has written extensively on anti-Semitism and helped establish courses and programs on the study of hate. He has taught Jewish Studies and Human Rights courses at Bard College. Currently, he serves as executive director of the Justus & Karin Rosenberg Foundation, whose mission is to combat the growing problems of anti-Semitism, hatred, and the demonization of Israel, particularly as they impact U.S. colleges and universities.

This event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. Congregation Beth Israel is at 53 Lois Street, North Adams.

For further information contact Jack Hockridge, office: chs@bethisrael.org; phone: (413) 663-5630.

Mysticism, MoCA, and Mincha

NORTH ADAMS – On Saturday, November 3 at 3 p.m., join Congregation Beth Israel for a Shabbat afternoon journey through texts, artwork, and prayer at MASS MoCA.

Meet at Tunnel City Coffee MASS MoCA for tea and coffee before Mass MoCA for text study (jointly led by Rabbi Seth Wax and Rabbi Rachel Barrenblat) that will explore texts relating to Jewish mysticism, creation, Jacob’s ladder, and angels in Jewish tradition.

Then walk together to the Asseln Kiefer exhibit and spend some time with works that draw on those themes. Close with a short and sweet mincha afternoon service, after which all are welcome to explore the galleries.

No experience in art history, art critique, or Jewish mystical texts necessary. Bring your curiosity (and playfulness) and a desire to explore art and life.

Those who don’t spend money on Shabbat will have an opportunity to pre-pay as needed. Please RSVP to rabbiharenblat@gmail.com by October 31.

Co-presented by Congregation Beth Israel and Williams College Jewish Association, with gratitude to MASS MoCA.

“Making Shabbat Work,” with Hhevreh’s Rabbi Hirsch

GREAT BARRINGTON – Rabbi Neil P.G. Hirsch of Hhevreh of Southern Berkshire will lead a five-session course on “Making Shabbat Work,” exploring the meaning of the Sabbath in the Jewish tradition and in our contemporary lifestyles.

Sessions will be held at 6:15 p.m. on Sundays, October 21 and 28, November 4 and 18, and December 2. Cost for the course is $50.

This course will explore the traditions given us in Shabbat. An incredible, 52-weeks-a-year holiday that is built to help us live our best lives. But, like many rituals, it can be hard to figure out how to make Shabbat fit into our busy schedules. How are we to schedule time to rest?

This course will explore the intentionality behind Shabbat and the rituals that make the holiday special for you and family. Participants will study and reflect on different voices from our tradition that all speak to how we can make Shabbat work for us, studying classic biblical and rabbinic texts, Abraham Joshua Heschel’s The Sabbath, and books from the secular self, such as Bored & Brilliant by Manoush Zomorod and Off the Clock by Laura Vanderkam.

Sign up by contacting the Hhevreh office during regular office hours at (413) 528-6378.
Becoming a Soulful Parent

New parent group facilitated by Hevreh’s Rabbi Gordon

GREAT BARRINGTON – Starting in October, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire’s Rabbi Jodie Gordon will facilitate a parenting group on “Becoming a Soulful Parent.” The group will meet on Sundays at 10:30 a.m. through November.

"Becoming a Soulful Parent" is a course that invites small groups of parents embracing their daily parenting struggles and rewards through the context of Jewish wisdom and community," says Rabbi Gordon. "The course allows parents to take the time out of their hectic lives to reflect honestly about the challenges and joys of parenting.

The course provides participants with:
• New insights into their role model
• Deeper awareness of their parenting and of their children
• Appreciation for their spouse’s different parenting style
• A community of friends and co-travelers in the journey of parenting

For more information, please contact Rabbi Gordon at jgordon@hevreh.org

More Family Activities at Hevreh

Tot Shabbat
Monthly at 9 a.m., next session October 13. Start Saturdays with joyful Shabbat singing, movement, storytelling and more! Rabbi Gordon, Rabbi Neil Hirsh and student cantor Shani Cohen (and their special pals, Shufly the Sloth and Barak y Raccoon) look forward to sharing Shabbat together with you and your family. As always, Hevreh welcome inter-faith families, GLBTQ families, nursing moms, babies and siblings of all ages, grandparent- and special people, new members, first timers, neighbors, and friends.

Tiny Talmidim
Monthly, Sundays at 9:15 a.m., next session Sunday, October 14. Join us for Circle Round for Storytelling at Hevreh, a special live edition of WBUR’s popular children’s storytelling podcast, Circle Round. Arts and Co-founder Terri Melcher is thrilled to help bring two Circle Round stories to life on stage: “The Prince in the Mirror,” a classic Yiddish tale that serves up a pungent lesson about humility, and “Onions and Garlic,” a Yiddish folk-tale that explores the importance of ingenuity. Help bring two Circle Round stories to life on stage: “The Prince in the Mirror,” a classic Yiddish tale that serves up a pungent lesson about humility, and “Onions and Garlic,” a Yiddish folk-tale that explores the importance of ingenuity.

Shimelonis and Rebecca Sheir, Circle Round takes folktales from around the world and adapts them into action-packed radio plays replete with original music, spectacular sound effects, and notable voices from the stage and screen.

Special Kabbalat Shabbat Celebrations at Hevreh

GREAT BARRINGTON – This autumn, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire hosts several special Kabbalat Shabbat celebrations.

On Friday, October 19 at 6:15 p.m., join Rabbi Neil Hirsh and Rabbi Jodie Gordon for a special celebratory Shabbat to welcome the newest Hevreh members. On Friday, October 26 at 6:15 p.m., Hevreh welcomes Rabbi Uri Regev of Hiddush (see cover story). The rabbi writes: "[Rabbi Regev] is a passionate advocate for pluralism, and a profound teacher of Torah. Hevreh had the benefit of learning with him during our last congregational trip to Israel, and we look forward to welcoming him to our community."

On Friday, November 2 at 6:15 p.m., all are welcome to a Community Shabbat sponsored by the Harold Grinnon Foundation, featuring a catered dinner and special abbreviated Shabbat service. Community Shabbat is free and open to the entire Hevreh community with advance RSVP. As always, Hevreh welcomes inter-faith families, GLBTQ families, nursing moms, babies and siblings of all ages, grandparent- and special people, new members, first timers, neighbors, and friends.

Circle Round for Storytelling at Hevreh

GREAT BARRINGTON – This November, Hevreh of Southern Berkshire presents a special live edition of WBJU’s popular children’s storytelling podcast, Circle Round.

The date and time of this event were not available at press time. Please contact Hevreh at (413) 528-6378 for full details.

Created and produced by West Stockbridge husband-and-wife team Eric Sheir and Rebecca Sheir, Circle Round takes folktales from around the world and adapts them into action-packed radio plays replete with original music, spectacular sound effects, and notable voices from the stage and screen.

Whether you’re 3… or 103… this celebration of traditional storytelling is an event the entire family will enjoy. And bonus – this performance will feature the talents of Hevreh congregants! They invite those interested to audition and help bring two Circle Round stories to life on stage:
• “Onions and Garlic,” a Yiddish folk-tale that serves up a pungent lesson about humility, and
• “The Prince in the Mirror,” a classic Israeli story about the magical gifts that help a world-traveling princess make a very important decision.

Circle Round for Storytelling at Hevreh

NORTH ADAMS – All are invited to join in as Congregation Beth Israel (CBI) celebrates its 120th anniversary with a gala event on Saturday, October 20, at 5:30 p.m.

CBI, originally House of Israel, began with the purchase of land in North Adams on May 26, 1893. Today’s membership includes some one-hundred family, single and seasonal memberships and an active Hebrew School twenty years. The celebration is today led by Rabbi Rachel Barrenblat with services also conducted by others, including Rabbi Pam Wax, former head rabbi of CBI.

On the gala evening, cocktails will be available from a cash bar, along with many silent auction items in a silent auction to benefit the education of CBI’s Hebrew School students and learners of all ages. Donors include MASS MoCA, the Clark Art Institute, Williamstown Theatre Festival, Images Cinema, and local restaurants, artists, artisans and more from the talented and generous CBI community and beyond.

A brief havdalah ceremony will be followed by a celebratory dinner, accompanied by entertainment by renowned guest artist Paul Green and his “Two Worlds” band. Tickets can be purchased by check made out to Congregation Beth Israel or by credit card. Ticket prices are $85 (Supporter) or $125 (Benefactor), with a limited number of partially underwritten tickets available through the generosity of the Melcher Family Fund. Call the synagogue to find out about ticket availability.

For further information on all Jewish Federation of the Berkshires programs, please call Nancy Maurice Rogers, Program Director, at (413) 442-4360, ext. 15.
Working to Keep Holocaust Memories and Truths Alive

KI lunch and learn with Susan Kadar on Memories and Truths Alive

PITTSFIELD — Susan Kadar, mother of Judith K. Weiner, the director of the Knesset Israel Education and Family Together programs, is also a full-time grandmother, an enthusiastic and committed volunteer for Jewish causes, and a semi-retired management consultant.

As a child of a Holocaust survivor, she feels passionate about the need to keep the memories and truths of that historical period alive. She has been working with the Sydney (Australia) Jewish Museum interpreting and translating documents from Hungarian to English. Through these old letters, postcards, diaries, and official documents, the victims and the survivors speak to us and to generations to come.

At the Lunch and Learn program on Saturday, October 27, following the Shabbat Service, Susan Kadar will share the stories of some of the people she has had the privilege to know personally from their memorabilia. In particular, she will talk about the diary of Ida Benko, a survivor of Bergen Bezeros and her journey back to her homeland, Hungary, and then to Sydney where she lived a successful and happy life.

Please reserve for lunch by calling (413) 445-4872, ext. 10.

Shabbat Mindfulness

Connecting Torah, guided meditations, and light yoga at TAA

PITTSFIELD — Rabbi Liz P.G. Hirsch of Temple Anshe Amunim will be offering a meditation and light yoga group at Temple Anshe Amunim beginning Saturday, October 20 at 9 a.m.

The five-week Shabbat meditation group will be inspired by each week’s Torah portion and participants are welcome to stay and join the ever-popular Torah Plus study group that will immediately follow. Rabbi Liz will lead the guided meditation and light yoga for all ages and abilities – no prior experience necessary.

Rabbi Liz brings significant experience with mindfulness and meditation, particularly in a Jewish context. She participated in a three-year training cohort of the Institute for Jewish Spirituality, the premier Jewish mindfulness organization. In the Boston area, she was a co-founder of Shira Yoga, a monthly Shabbat morning yoga minyan. She has led yoga and meditation under trees, in synagogues, at office buildings, and through online platforms.

Rabbi Liz particularly enjoys weaving Jewish texts and concepts into her meditation practice. She says, “I had a yoga practice for many years when I realized that shavasana, the final five minutes of most yoga practices, which is spent in complete stillness and silence, was the hardest part for me! While I was mes- sing and focused on holding different yoga positions, my mind had something to hold on to. Developing a meditation practice and learning to guide meditation myself has helped me become more calm, focused, and connected to my breath.”

The group will meet for 30 minutes starting at 9 a.m. every Saturday from October 20 through November 17. No prior experience or athletic clothing is necessary to participate. Members, guests, and non-members of Temple Anshe Amunim are all invited to join.

Jewish Values and Trans Inclusivity

Co-founders of Bayit: Your Jewish Home to speak at three local congregations

Jewish perspectives on human rights, gender identity, and sexual orientation are more visible in the media today than ever before. How do Jewish texts deal with individuals whose sexuality is not as clear cut as that of Adam and Eve?

Specifically, what do Jewish texts say about trans inclusivity? Can the values we hold, as Americans and Jews, regarding human rights and individual dignity be reconciled with the wide spectrum of gender identity and sexual orientation in our society? The answer is “Yes,” according to Rabbi Mike Moskowitz.

Rabbi Moskowitz is scholar-in-residence for Queer and Trans Jewish Studies at Congrega- tion Beit Simchat Torah in New York City. He also co-founded, with Rabbi Rachel Barenblat of Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams, an organization called Bayit: Your Jewish Home.

In three different Berkshire venues in mid-October over two days of discussion, study, and insight, both rabbis will be addressing these questions and encouraging attendance of the wider Berkshire community. The upcoming statewide ballot issue on transgender equality will also be examined.

The study sessions are:• October 17, 7:30 p.m. at Congregation Beth Israel, 50 Lois Street, North Adams. (413) 663-5830.
• October 18, noon at Williams College Jewish Religious Center, 24 Stierson Court, William- stown.
• October 18, 7:30 p.m. Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield. (413) 445-4872.

Torah discussion and study will take place in each of these above sessions. Co-sponsored by Congregation Beth Israel, Knesset Israel, the Williams College Jewish Association, Keshet, and Congregation Beit Simchat Torah.

Rabbi Mike Moskowitz

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat

Jewish Values

Like us on Facebook:
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Traveling with Jewish Taste

Summer in the 49th state – Mincha/Maariv ‘round midnight, Shacharit at 3 a.m., and compete opportunities in abundance

By Carol Goodman Kaufman

In Michael Chabon’s award-winning novel, The Yiddish Policemen’s Union, the author imagines a Yiddish-speaking safe haven for Jews following the collapse of the reborn State of Israel in 1948. That this refuge is in Sitka, Alaska makes for a fascinating look at the themes of exile and redemption. And, since Joel and I recently returned from an eye-opening trip to Alaska, I’ve been thinking about the parallels between Alaska’s indigenous peoples and the Jews. Both Jews and Native Alaskans have histories that reach back into antiquity, and family lore and traditional rites are handed down from generation to generation. But both groups have had their lands taken from them, both have experienced discrimination by majority populations, and both have been persecuted, brutalized, and banished to reservations, ghettos, or concentration camps. The Jews, of course, were the victims of a strategically planned genocide.

In Alaska, we saw exhibits, presentations, and ceremonies aimed at acknowledging the wrongs done to the natives by a succession of hunters and miners. In Hoonah, a tiny village of 734 permanent residents tucked into an idyllic bay, we saw one of these ceremonies in preparation. I happened upon a woman sewing dozens of white buttons onto a large piece of black woolen fabric. She called it a healing blanket and, when I asked its purpose, she directed me to two men outdoors. They were both carving totem poles for an upcoming ritual service to commemorate the peace made between their tribe and the National Park Service. The totem poles tell the history of the tribe, its achievements, its struggles with the Park Service, and the ultimate reconciliation.

And, of course, Jews and Native Alaskans have their traditional foods. Before grocery stores came to the state, Alaska Natives knew that during the very short summer they had to gather all the food necessary to sustain themselves during the long, dark winter months. Some they stored in the permafrost (becoming less and less an option with climate change); some they preserved by smoking. Some they preserved by smoking. Some they chopped. Some they canned. Some they stored in the permafrost (becoming less and less an option with climate change); some they preserved by smoking. Some they canned. Some they stored in the permafrost (becoming less and less an option with climate change); some they preserved by smoking. Some they canned. Some they stored in the permafrost (becoming less and less an option with climate change); some they preserved by smoking. Some they canned.

In every gallery and museum we visited, I saw photos, paintings, sculpture, and video documenting the vitally-important task of catching and preserving food. One particular photograph at the Morris Thompson Cultural Center in Fairbanks (a must-see) depicted an elderly woman teaching her grandchildren how to smoke salmon. Passing down the tradition much as we pass down recipes for rugelach and brisket. While Alaska is covered in ice and snow for much of the year, the state does have a summer — short, to be sure, but with very long sunlit days, making for prolific gardens and farms. (For example, on July 1, the sun rose in Fairbanks at 1:32 a.m. and set at 12:25 a.m.) Cabbages reach the size of basketballs on stelarossa. Sunflowers stretch to the eaves.

And, like every growing thing, the state itself is enormous. Denali National Park is the size of New Hampshire. Hubbard Glacier is almost one-and-a-half times the size of Berkshire County. And Alaskans love to tell you that if you were to cut the state in half, Texas would be only the third largest state.

Among other things Alaska does large is berries. Bushes of many varieties of wild berries blanket the country: blueberries, cranberries, raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, currants, crowberries, and even salmon roe look-a-like salmonberries. Jars of preserves line the shelves of every gift shop; cobblers, pies, and tarts are on every menu; and every breakfast buffet features fruit salads chock full of the colorful gems. In fact, berry bushes are so prevalent that we were rewarded even on casual walks with raspberries and salmonberries, ours for the picking — giant, like everything else in the state, and absolutely delicious.

## Mixed Berry Crisp

Because it calls for coconut oil instead of butter, this dessert is the perfect ending to a meat meal. It will serve 6 to 8, depending on your family’s friss-ability. It can also be easily doubled.

### Ingredients:

- 1/3 cup granulated sugar
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 6 cups mixed berries of your choice
- 1/3 cup sliced almonds
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 6 T. coconut oil

Preheat oven to 375°F. and coat a 2-quart shallow baking dish with vegetable spray.

In a bowl stir together sugar and flour.

Add blueberries to sugar mixture, tossing well, and spread mixture in baking dish.

Make topping:

- 1/3 cup sliced almonds
- 1/4 cup baking flour
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 6 T. coconut oil

Add almonds and toss well. Squeeze handfuls of topping together and coarsely crumble in chunks over filling.

Bake until crisp and bubbling, about 40 minutes. Serve warm.

Carol Goodman Kaufman is a psychologist and author with a passion for travel and food. She is currently at work on a food history/cookbook, tracing the paths that some of our favorite foods have taken from their origins to appear on dinner plates and in cultural rites and artifacts around the world. She invites readers to read her blog at carolgoodmankaufman.com and to follow her on Twitter @goodmankaufman.
Shirley Vornik, 83, and her husband, Herbert, died in August 2018 at New Paltz, NY. Shirley Vornik, born on March 25, 1935, in Stockbridge, MA, was a graduate of Syracuse University, Class of 1949. After her graduation, she worked with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society in Chicago, her experience as a certified public accountant. Under his leadership, the firm grew to become one of the premier immigration and naturalization service providers in the country. The federal agency is now U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Born in Philadelphia, Mr. Orlow, who founded the Orlow Law Firm in 1965, limited his practice to immigration and citizenship issues. He had an extensive list of referral cases, according to the law firm. Both of his parents, Abram Orlow and Lena Orlow Ginsberg, were accomplished lawyers in Philadelphia. Their law firm, Orlow & Orlow PC, was founded in 1928. Both served as president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Shirley was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother. Shirley was an accomplished artist around the world. She was a lover of ancient board games from around the world.

Shirley and Herbert married in 1959 and have four children: Robert D. Cohan, and his son and four grandchildren; David Kronenberg, and his wife Christian Cohan, and his son and four grandchildren.

Shirley was a devoted philanthropist. She was a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Under his leadership, the law firm was one of the premier immigration and naturalization service providers in the country. The federal agency is now U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Herbert was also a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Their impressive list of accomplishments included the founding of the Orlow Law Firm in 1965. Mr. Orlow limited his practice to immigration and citizenship issues. He had an extensive list of referral cases, according to the law firm. Both of his parents, Abram Orlow and Lena Orlow Ginsberg, were accomplished lawyers in Philadelphia. Their law firm, Orlow & Orlow PC, was founded in 1928. Both served as president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Berkshire Jewish Voice • jewishberkshires.org October 8 to November 18, 2018

Herbert was a CPA and former president and chairman of the board of the University of Connecticut, Class of 1949. He also served as a CPA and as a graduate student at Syracuse University, Class of 1949.

August 27, after courageously passing away on Monday, August 23, of cardiac arrest in Wilmington, NC; Beth Cohan, and her husband Christian Overbeck, and her son and four grandchildren; and Debby. Her eight grandchildren and great-grandchildren will carry on her name and her passion for helping others live better lives.

Her memory will be cherished by her husband, Al, and her children and grandchildren. She will be dearly missed by her father, brother, and sister-in-law, along with her nieces and nephews.

Herbert and Shirley were a couple of a uniquely loving and tender marriage. They will be dearly missed by her brother, sister, and in-laws, along with her nieces and nephews.

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Herbert and Shirley were a couple of a uniquely loving and tender marriage. They will be dearly missed by her brother, sister, and in-laws, along with her nieces and nephews.
Robert Crumb’s comic book _midrash_ on a foundational Jewish story

By Albert Stern / EVJ Editor

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** This is a version of a _Dour Torah_ delivered on Rosh Hashanah at Kneset Israel six years ago, published now because after _Dour Torah_’s promised campaign/Berkshire summer/High Holy Day papers, our lader of stories is rather bare. It is a reflection on the binding of Isaac story that appears in Parshat Be’er锡vah for the first time on October 27.

Published in 2009, this comic fantastic book titled _The Book of Genesis_, illustrated by Robert Crumb, was a compilation of one comic book artists who started his career in the 1960s to the mid-1970s, mainly dealing in the more rebellious, counterculture characters like Mr. Natural and Fritz the Cat.

Robert Crumb is you and me, the first born of a Jew in a Baptist family, a yank who was “baptized” in Judaism by the dean of biblical transla- tors, Robert Alter. It is a fantastic comic book

“All 50 chapters!” trumpets the first panel. “Nothing left out!” The dust jacket adds a warning appropriate for any edition of the Torah: “Adult supervision recommended for minors.”

No matter how you come to the Torah, the great symbolic dream-item for the father-son bond and the clinical home agency designer, it is a good idea for you and me, Crumb draws at least one portrait of every personage named in Genesis, no matter how minor, and so if you ever craved an image of Esau’s wife Rhoda, or Isaac’s. It is a process of elimination, and over millennia, the scene has lost none of its viscerally powerful to decide to have us face up to the real story for ourselves. The first Patient story in the Torah is not addressed to God, but rather spoken to his wife, Sarah. It is a story of early marriage, the still childless couple has fled to escape the famine that is ravaging the promised land of abundance that their divine-promised multitude of offspring will inherit. Does Abram assure Sarai to trust in God to bring them through the trial? So he tells his beautiful wife to pretend she is his sister so that Pharaoh will not kill him, indeed, so many things that may go “well” for him because of her desirability. In a proper con- text, his request is devastating – in the comic book Genesis.

The daughter of Louis and Reba Tishman took precedence by her brother, Nathan. The eldest of Pittsfield for 60 years, she was an avid reader, listener to share her opinion about current events or the many periods by reading and cultural activities she enjoyed in the Berkshires. Proud of her roots in Brooklyn, NY, she was a graduate of James Madison High School and earned bach- elor’s degrees from Brooklyn College.

A teacher of French in the Tisch High School year, she was also an active and longtime member of Pittsfield College, alumna of Active Jewish Women Voters and B’nai Brith Women.

A funeral service was held on Wednesday, September 12 at Knesset Israel with Rabbi Gabriel, Maya, Sasha, and Ori. Services were conducted with the community in the years to come.

Yom Kippur War. That visit transformed them into lifetime actives in the community. After Herter’s death, Shirley continued this work on behalf of Israel, participated in missions to Israel and found their place in important leadership positions in the Jewish community in the years to come. In 2003, she received the honor of a Life Membership in the Women’s Board at the South Broward Jewish Feder- ation. She was a great lady, always warm with heart with a great sense of humor and the kindest of dispositions. She loved her brothers, friends with great compassion. 

In 2003, she was honored with the Lifetime Award from the South Broward Federation. She was a true Woman of Valor but most of all, Shirley loved and cher- ished her family. Family was everything to her. She is so proud of her children and their spouses. She adored her grandchildren, each of whom she saw graduated from college and happily married. She is not lamenting and forever missed by her eight great-grandchil- dren, two of whom she lived to see enrolled in college. She was so fortunate to have these blessings, appreciate them, and share them every day in spirit with her beloved Her- bert.

Shirley is survived by her three children, Ellen (Larry) Elkind, Sherry (Wendy) Kravitz, Marlene (Michael) Olin; six grandchildren, Mark (Jona- than) Kravitz,update, Rachel (Ken) Levy; and eight great-grandchildren, update.

She had two brothers, Murray and Max Olson, who served in the North Atlan- tic, returned with little notice to serve in the North Atlant- ic, returned with little notice to serve in the North Atlantic. She had three children, Steven, El- len and, Marlene. The family moved to South Florida in 1958 where Herbert and Shir- ley raised their children, saw the three children marry and have their own chil- dren. They were married for 37 years until Herbert’s untimely passing in 1981.

Herbert and Shirley shared a passion for the Jewish community and the survival of Israel. They were founding members of the Torah Congregation where Shirley has been a congregant for many years. They visited Israel for the first time during the

Yom Kippur War. That visit transformed them into lifetime actives in the community. After Herter’s death, Shirley continued this work on behalf of Israel, participated in missions to Israel and found their place in important leadership positions in the Jewish community in the years to come. In 2003, she received the honor of a Life Membership in the Women’s Board at the South Broward Jewish Feder- ation. She was a great lady, always warm with heart with a great sense of humor and the kindest of dispositions. She loved her brothers, friends with great compassion. 

In 2003, she was honored with the Lifetime Award from the South Broward Federation. She was a true Woman of Valor but most of all, Shirley loved and cher- ished her family. Family was everything to her. She is so proud of her children and their spouses. She adored her grandchildren, each of whom she saw graduated from college and happily married. She is not lamenting and forever missed by her eight great-grandchil- dren, two of whom she lived to see enrolled in college. She was so fortunate to have these blessings, appreciate them, and share them every day in spirit with her beloved Her- bert.

Shirley is survived by her three children, Ellen (Larry) Elkind, Sherry (Wendy) Kravitz, Marlene (Michael) Olin; six grandchildren, Mark (Jona- than) Kravitz, update, Rachel (Ken) Levy; and eight great-grandchildren, update.

She had two brothers, Murray and Max Olson, who served in the North Atlan- ic, returned with little notice to serve in the North Atlantic. She had three children, Steven, El- len and, Marlene. The family moved to South Florida in 1958 where Herbert and Shir- ley raised their children, saw the three children marry and have their own chil- dren. They were married for 37 years until Herbert’s untimely passing in 1981.

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Connecting with Community
Nourish Your Body, Mind, and Soul!

Enjoy an educational program followed by a delicious kosher hot lunch!
Programs take place Mondays and Thursdays at 10:45 a.m. Lunch is served Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays at noon.

Advanced reservations are required to attend lunch.
Please call (413) 442-2200 no later than 9 am on the day you would like to attend.
Open to the public. All are welcome! Knesset Israel, 16 Colt Road, Pittsfield, MA.

Adults 60 and over: $2 suggested donation
Adults under 60: $7 per person
Program only is free!

When making a reservation please inform us if a person in your party has a food allergy.
The Federation’s kosher hat lunch program is offered in collaboration with Elder Services of Berkshire County.

What’s for Lunch?

OCTOBER
Tuesday, 9...............Brisket leftovers**, chef’s choice of potatoes, asparagus cuts n tips, salad, Challah, grapes, and tea.
Thursday, 11...........10:45 a.m., “A Bintel Brief: A Staged Reading.” Lunch: Tuna noodle casserole, tomato juice, rolls, ice cream and cookies, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Tuesday, 16............Veal stew**, chef’s choice of juice, noodles, Italian bread, pears and tea.
Thursday, 18...........10:45 a.m., “Current Affairs,” with Professor Emeritus Steven J. Rubin. Lunch: Roasted vegetable pizza, cream of mushroom soup, broccoli, peaches, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Monday, 22..............10:45 a.m., The Sunday Strummers Ukulele Ensemble. Lunch: Beef stew**, noodles, salad, potato bread, tropical fruit salad, and tea.
Tuesday, 23..........Roasted chicken**, noodle soup, broccoli, multi-grain bread, applesauce, and tea.
Thursday, 25...........10:45 a.m., “Music as Midrash.” Lunch: Macaroni and cheese, stewed tomatoes, salad, whole wheat bread, raspberry pillow cookies, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Tuesday, 30...........Turkey piccata**, lentil soup, asparagus cuts n tips, rice pilaf, Challah, parve cookies, and tea.

Tuesday, 8..............10:45 a.m., “A Mystic’s Guide to Prayer,” with Rabbi Seth Wax, Jewish Chaplain at Williams College. Lunch: Fresh fish**, mushroom soup, noodle kugel, mixed vegetables, oat bread, pudding, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Tuesday, 6.............Chicken fajitas**, yellow rice, flour tortilla, parve cookies, and tea.
Thursday, 1............10:45 a.m., “A Mystic’s Guide to Prayer,” with Rabbi Seth Wax, Jewish Chaplain at Williams College. Lunch: Fresh fish**, mushroom soup, noodle kugel, mixed vegetables, oat bread, pudding, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Tuesday, 6.............Chicken fajitas**, yellow rice, flour tortilla, parve cookies, and tea.

NOVEMBER
Tuesday, 6.............Chicken fajitas**, yellow rice, flour tortilla, parve cookies, and tea.

Monday, 12..............10:45 a.m., “This is Life in Israel: An Inter-religious Dialogue.” Lunch: Northern Indian lamb meatballs**, rice, mixed vegetables, naan, tropical fruit salad, and tea.
Tuesday, 13.............Spaghetti and “sausage” sauce**, salad, mixed vegetables, Italian bread, parve cookies, and tea.
Thursday, 15...........10:45 a.m., “Current Affairs,” with Professor Emeritus Steven J. Rubin. Lunch: Vegetable lasagna, salad, beets, garlic bread, grapes, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Tuesday, 20.............Grilled cheese and tuna, minestrone soup, mixed vegetables, whole wheat bread, pudding, coffee, tea, and milk for coffee.
Monday, 26.............Program to be Announced. Lunch: Beef chili**, salad, brown rice, oat bread, pears, and tea.
bushcer directed me to the newly-opened Israeli embassy. A secretary at the embassy wrote an address on an slip of paper and handed it to me sliced in a bare room near the Arc de Triomphe questioned me, then sent me to three different Jewish physicians for a physical examination. A few days later, I was flown to Tel Aviv and then to Tel Aviv with two other American volunteers, Frank Perlmutter, and Jack Shulman, of the (Jack Shulman was killed in the flight to Jerusalem.) Both Frank and Jack were veterans of World War II and had been trained by the British officer, Orde Wingate. While the drama around this comment stands as the story, but says a lot. When Isaac calls to his father, Abraham’s first word to him is also “Hineni” I detect a hint of irony in Abraham’s answer with God in order to make a point something about the human condition that will be certain how God expects us to respond. Abraham never states what he will do. I am. When Isaac calls to his father, Abraham’s first word to him is also “Hineni” I detect a hint of irony in Abraham’s answering his son with the same word he used to respond to God, as if he is making a bitter inside joke about his predicament. In a psychologically astute touch, Rob- ert Crumb draws Abraham at this moment as grim, and yet slightly bemused. When Isaac asks about the whereabouts of his father, Abraham remains silent – the creature to be sacrificed. Abraham continues, “God will see to the sheep for the offering, my son.” As we saw from Abraham’s first and last words, trusted reckoning in God is not what Abraham is about, and so there is some- thing deeply discordant about these words, particularly given their narrative importance – this common word is the only dialogue between Abra- ham and his son in the Book of Genesis. We have a message – is it about the importance of faith in God, or something else about the role of faith in our relationship with God? Finally, when the Lord’s messenger calls Abraham’s name to stop the proceedings, the patriarch again spits out that pivotal word, “Hineni” – the last word in the Torah that Al Capp made. With that word, I propose that Abraham is attempting to im- part something about his human condition to a supernat- ural being that he worries may

R. CRUMB’S GENESIS, continued from page 24

have sacrificed Isaac had the Almighty intervened. There are several hints in the text that he would not have done so – a subtle literary touch of binding Isaac can be read as theater of cruelty performed so that God might recognize the repulsiveness of what has been asked. I think there is enough in the text to at least float the possibility that Abraham was once engaged in brinkmanship with God in order to make a point something about the human beings alone possess, about the human condition that will be certain how God expects us to respond. Abraham never states what he will do. I am. When Isaac calls to his father, Abraham’s first word to him is also “Hineni” I detect a hint of irony in Abraham’s answering his son with the same word he used to respond to God, as if he is making a bitter inside joke about his predicament. In a psychologically astute touch, Rob- ert Crumb draws Abraham at this moment as grim, and yet slightly bemused. When Isaac asks about the whereabouts of his father, Abraham remains silent – the creature to be sacrificed. Abraham continues, “God will see to the sheep for the offering, my son.” As we saw from Abraham’s first and last words, trusted reckoning in God is not what Abraham is about, and so there is some- thing deeply discordant about these words, particularly given their narrative importance – this common word is the only dialogue between Abra- ham and his son in the Book of Genesis. We have a message – is it about the importance of faith in God, or something else about the role of faith in our relationship with God? Finally, when the Lord’s messenger calls Abraham’s name to stop the proceedings, the patriarch again spits out that pivotal word, “Hineni” – the last word in the Torah that Al Capp made. With that word, I propose that Abraham is attempting to im- part something about his human condition to a supernat- ural being that he worries may

R. CRUMB’S GENESIS, continued from page 24
From the Old Maccabees to the New Maccabees—“A Wrong Made Right”

By Jerry Klinger / Special to the BJV

Every year there are fewer and fewer of them. The “they” are Machal, a Hebrew acronym for “Volunteers from Outside of Israel.” They came to defend the Jewish people and help birth the State during its War of Independence, 1947-1949. They came from 56 countries. There were fewer than 5,000 of them out of 2,000,000 Jews who had served in World War II Allied armies. Years later, Yitzhak Rabin poignantly said about them: “You came when we needed you most, during those dark and uncertain days in our War of Independence. You gave us not only your experience, but your lives as well. The People of Israel and the State of Israel will never forget.”

For the most part, Israel did forget them.

The thinning ranks of those who had made the crucial difference between birth and death for Israel became resigned to their future, a fading into the darkening mist, part of a forgotten past. Their unique sacrifice officially ignored, not even a special citation exists in IDF archives recognizing what they had done. Their passing is even more complete than the cold relocation of the fallen, iconic armored concrete trucks that had once rested where they fell along the defile lifeline road to Jerusalem.

A few years ago, I went to the Israel Air Force Museum in Beersheba. A young docent, really a young female soldier doing her national service at the museum because her English was good, showed me around. Aircraft equipment was everywhere, interpretation almost nowhere. I asked her about Machal. She never heard of them. I told her that 95 percent of the Air Force during the War of Independence were Machal, 21 percent of that number were Christians. Her eyes stared at my headlights and she turned off her translator.

The motto of my historic society, the Jewish American Society for Historic Preservation, is “Shaping the future by Remembering the Past.” Allied with the American Veterans of Israel Legacy Corporation and World Machal, and with strong support from the City of Jerusa-alem, on December 17, 2017, we forever visibly changed the impossible into possible, once again, the impossible became real.

The memorial, designed by noted sculptor Sam Philippe, a 5th-generation Jerusalemite, is 10-foot long and 8-foot high, shaped as a large Jerusalem foundation rock. The acronym ‘Machal’ is boldly displayed on the face under an Avia War of Independence aircraft reaching for the sky to defend Israel. On the right side is a British Cromwell tank, one of only three tanks in the entire IDF arsenal at the time. On the left side is an Aleph Bet ship, which were manned largely by American volunteers who risked their citizenships, their futures in British prisons, and their lives, to bring desperate, stateless Holocaust survivors to Israel.

Who were the men and women of Machal?

The vast majority came with military and specialty skills. Many had been actively recruited by pre-Israel representatives who sought any and all types of medical and technical skills. Some had been opened by pre-Israel recruiters. Ten days after arriving in Israel he was thrown into battle driving a homemade half-track as part of the famed, largely English-speaking, 79th Airborne. Ralph Lowenstein was 18-years-old, an idealist from Virginia. He told his parents he was leaving Columbia University for a summer in England. Ralph found his way to England, became a Machal volunteer, and was shipped to Israel. Some volunteers came for mercenary reasons, promised pay that may or may not have been paid. Some came for religious reasons, especially Christian volunteers. Most brought active World War II combat skills and one brought a skill no one today would think was vital the ability to drive a stick shift. “The 79th spearheaded the major battle of the end of October 1948 that cleared the entire north central Galilee of Syrian, Lebanese and Iraqi troops,” Lowenstein said.

“Neither my parents, two brothers, nor anyone else had any idea that I was contemplating such a mission,” Ralph crossed to France in August and began searching for a way to enlist.

“The only French I knew was ‘Julif’ the word for Jew. There were two listings in the phone book beginning with that word. The first was a kosher butcher shop. The second was a kosher butcher shop. The Machal, continued on page 23

R. CRUMB’S GENESIS, continued from page 23

not fully understand it: in the end, all a human being is able to apprehend with certainty is just that — “here I am” — and its corollary, “someday I won’t be.” By being so laconic, by acting so inscrutably, by retaining a secret — was he really going to use that knife? — Abraham is perhaps conveying to God the insecurity evoked in the human psyche, the insecurity evoked by a universe that mortal men cannot control or fully understand. Abraham is giving God an “oy gevalt” moment of his own. And thus the covenant can be renewed even if God and Abraham will no longer be on speaking terms in the aftermath.

Comic books work in an interesting way. In one illustrated panel, we see Batman ordering the Joker to halt. In the next panel, we see Batman at the end of a throwing motion, and a batarang ricocheting off the Joker’s forehead. We understand that Batman reached into his utility belt and took out a weapon, and then threw it across the room to brain the Joker.

But where does the “action” take place? It takes place not between the two static illustrated panels, but rather in the blank space between them — which is to say, in our imaginations. Which is also to say, the action unfolds a little differently for each one of us.

I find that’s also how the Torah works. We approach Torah on its terms, and find it speaks to us as flawed, anxious, and yet persistently hopeful human beings — but not necessarily through the words that have been painstakingly pre-served over thousands of years. The Torah speaks to us with words, but also with silences, and so it requires the flaws, anxieties, hopes, and imagination that we bring to those silences from generation to generation. It is necessarily incomplete — it not only needs us, but it needs us on our terms.

Torah is the ancient words of the Akedah story that we will soon read together. Torah is also a middle-aged man in the Berkshires, who, after pondering the Akedah, wakes up with a start from a nightmare in which his beloved son disappears on a train. And Torah is the quiet moment that follows in which that man takes stock of all he fears and all he cherishes and, with more than a touch of wariness, feels incredibly blessed.