



Celebrating Light in the Darkness

By Marni Vyn, Board Chair

December is here, and, for many of us, 2020 can't end soon enough. But before we say goodbye to this challenging year, we can look forward to celebrating the holiday of Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights.



Marni Vyn

In a normal year, we think of Hanukkah as a fun time with friends and family when we give gifts, light the menorah, and eat latkes and “sufganiyot” (jelly donuts). But this year we will need to social distance from friends and family due to a global pandemic that feels neverending.

We can look to Hanukkah's inspirational themes for strength and hope. Hanukkah is about:

- The triumph over powerlessness and fear
- Perseverance, resilience, and strength during challenges
- The search for light and goodness in dark times
- Celebrating what we have and giving generously to others

During this time of COVID – a darkness we are experiencing on a global scale – Hanukkah invites us to recognize and celebrate the light and find resilience during difficult times.

Hanukkah celebrates the miracle of the oil lasting eight days. But the miracle is also that the Jewish people have lasted for two millennia. Throughout the centuries, we have faced incredible obstacles and still maintained the light of the Jewish People. We have shown an ability to persevere by caring for one another.

As a friend of the Jewish Federation, you are critical to our success. Your support is truly needed now in a way we've never before experienced, and I thank you for being beacons of light in our community.

As we say goodbye to 2020, I encourage you to give generously to JFGR's annual campaign and help us reach our goal of \$500,000. Your gift may qualify for a match and go twice as far – details about the matching grants can be found on page 2.

Wishing you light during Hanukkah and always,

Marni Vyn
Board Chair

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Our Mission:

Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids unites the local Jewish community to sustain and strengthen Jews locally, in Israel, and around the world.

This mission is accomplished by providing services to the community and through fundraising and allocation efforts.

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GOAL: \$500,000.00
225 Donors
\$407,000

*We're thrilled to have 25 new gifts
from community members.
Thank you to all who have participated.*

Chad Zagel

The Jewish Federation is here for our community, Israel and the world. Please make a difference and support Campaign 2020. Every gift is meaningful and can positively change the life of a person or family in need. Todah Rabah, Thank You!

Remember, any amount you increase – and any NEW pledges – will be matched by a generous grant from the Louis and Helen Padnos Foundation. And, if you are under 50 years of age, it will ALSO be matched by a generous grant from the Hy and Greta Berkowitz Foundation. A special thank you to Peg and Mort Finkelstein for matching the first \$5,000 raised in Campaign 2020.

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I'd like to support my community and make a gift to Campaign 2020!

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The Two Stories of Hanukkah

By Rabbi David Krishef

The real story of Hanukkah comes from the Book of Maccabees, the only source for the events as they happened.

The Syrians, ruled by King Antiochus, tried to force the Jews to worship the Greek Gods. He forbade them, under penalty of death, to keep the Sabbath or celebrate any Jewish holidays, circumcise their sons, or keep any other traditions of Judaism. He desecrated the Temple by placing statues of Greek gods in it, and ordered the people to bring sacrifices of pigs. King Antiochus sent inspectors to every town to make sure that the people carried out his instructions. The inspectors burned Torah scrolls and put to death anyone who violated the King's orders.

In the small town of Modi'in, a priest names Mattityahu and his four sons refused to obey the King's orders. They fled to the hills, and called for others to join them in fighting the Syrians. When Mattityahu died, the rebellion continued under the leadership of his son Judah, who had been given the name Maccabee, a Hebrew word meaning "hammer," because of his strength. Although Judah Maccabee and his followers were poorly equipped and outnumbered, they defeated the Syrian armies, recaptured all of Jerusalem, and cleaned and rededicated the Temple with feasting and great joy.

When Solomon dedicated his Temple, he did so during the eight day Sukkot festival. The Maccabees, who had been unable to celebrate Sukkot that year because the Temple had been desecrated and they were in the midst of their rebellion, chose to rededicate the Temple with an eight day festival modeled after Solomon's dedication. But that's not the story we learned in religious school! Where's the miracle of the oil? 600 years later, the Talmud explains the eight days of Hanukkah with the story of a single container of ritually pure oil which miraculously burned for eight days and nights until new oil could be pressed to keep the menorah burning.

The Sages of the Talmud wanted to refocus our attention away from a military victory and towards the realization that the victory depended on God. They wanted us to see Hanukkah as a celebration of miracles and light, rather than as a celebration of the might of an army. The truth is that the Jewish victory over the Syrians was due to the military genius and

persistence of the Maccabees and their followers. And the truth is that in the middle of the winter, during the darkest of times, we remind ourselves that we can light a candle, do a mitzvah, and bring light and the miracle of God's sustaining presence into the world. The core mitzvah of Hanukkah is to place the *Hanukkiyah* in a window or doorway so it is visible outside the home, thus publicizing the miracle. December is Jewish pride month. We have a mitzvah to share our story with pride. What is one thing you can do this month, in addition to lighting the *Hanukkiyah*, to show public pride in your Jewish identity?



Rabbi David Krishef

David J.B. Krishef is in his 27th year as rabbi of Congregation Ahavas Israel, and blogs at EmbodiedTorah.com. He also writes the popular "Ethics and Religion Talk" column for therapidian.com and the Grand Rapids Press. He is a proud Minnesotan, married to Marisa, a proud Wisconsinite, who have raised three proud Michiganders (Zach, Sol, and Harry) and one Michigoose (Sarah).

"I want to provide a festive Chanukah meal for EVERYONE in the Jewish Community." -Jim Siegel

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6 reasons to give on GIVING TUESDAY

by Nicole Katzman, Executive Director



Nicole Katzman

According to GIVINGTUESDAY.ORG, Giving Tuesday was created in 2012 as a simple idea: a day when people are encouraged to do good. Over the past eight years, it has grown into a global movement that inspires hundreds of millions of people to give, collaborate and celebrate generosity.

This year, more than ever, Giving Tuesday is important to the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids because it can help support our community during these unprecedented times.

Here are six reasons why you should participate in Giving Tuesday, on December 1, 2020 and consider donating.

- 1. Giving Tuesday is a global movement.** Giving Tuesday started in the United States but is now a worldwide movement. Last year people in 145 countries participated.
- 2. You can pledge to give money monthly.** If you give \$18 for the month, that breaks down to \$4.50 a week. Most people spend that much on a cup of coffee at their local coffee shop. If you give up buying one cup of coffee a week, and give that money to the Federation, you will be

donating \$216 for the year. It is easy to set up a monthly gift on your credit or debit card and helps us to know that we can count on your gift each month.

- 3. It's an easy way to give back to your community.** JFGR makes it simple to make a donation. Call the office, send a check by mail, or give online. <https://jewishgrandrapids.org/campaign>
- 4. You can convince others to donate.** By talking about charitable giving with friends, family or on social media, you can help persuade others to contribute. This will begin a chain reaction of positivity and kindness in our community.
- 5. This year in particular is important.** Like most nonprofit organizations, JFGR has felt the impact of COVID. Your generosity will assist many individuals and families who are struggling during these difficult times.
- 6. You can make a difference.** Just one gift can help people in Grand Rapids, Israel and around the world. We need your support to help maintain our strong and vibrant Jewish community.

For more information on GIVING TUESDAY or if you'd like to make a donation, contact Nicole Katzman, Executive Director at nicole@jfgr.org

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Ask Julianna

by Julianna Schrier, Community Connector

Shalom! Here is a question I received this past month from a community member:

As the holidays are rapidly approaching, right along with higher COVID numbers, I'm concerned about not seeing my family this year. Typically, we have gatherings during the holiday season, but that is not an option this year, and I am trying to come up with socially-distant ways to still spend time with my family. Do you have any suggestions?

Answer from Julianna: This is a serious problem that we are all faced with this holiday season and not an easy one to tackle. No doubt it is challenging being away from family and friends especially with Thanksgiving and Hanukkah right around the corner. But for safety reasons, social distancing is the best option. Although we won't be able to attend holiday parties or gather in person, there are many ways to connect with your family during this time. Here are a few suggestions:

1. Turn Zoom into a social event. By now, I am sure most of us are tired of having to communicate mostly via Zoom, or other similar programs, but why not take advantage and make it a social occasion? During the first lockdown in March, my family would get on Zoom about once a week, chat for a few minutes, and play Yahtzee. It's easy to play over the internet, because all you need are five dice and a copy of the score sheet. Maybe Yahtzee isn't your family's thing, but finding something that can be

done over video chat is a great way to connect and have fun.

2. Pick up the phone and talk! Have a conversation and catch up with family members and friends. This is a great way to connect and show someone you care.
3. Send snail mail! Write letters to your family members, or just send a pretty card to let them know you're thinking of them. If you have kids, let them get involved as well! There is nothing more meaningful than a handwritten note or drawing that fits easily into an envelope. It's an easy and relatively inexpensive way to connect with the people you miss.
4. Deliver things in person. If you live close to your family but are unable to see them, that doesn't mean you can't still do something special for them. Put together a care package with holiday-related items like warm Hanukkah socks, gelt and dreidels. Cozy items are appreciated during the cold weather. If you live far away, send this by mail, it's a great way to show you care.

If you have any additional information or thoughts on this topic, please reach out and keep sending me your questions at julianna@jfgr.org or call (616) 942-5553 ext. 206. I look forward to hearing from you soon. Stay tuned for Ask Julianna in January 2021!



Julianna Schrier

Community Pen Pal Program



Would you like to have a pen pal? The Federation wants to bring people in the community together through letter writing. If you are interested in sending or receiving a letter, contact:

julianna@jfgr.org or call the Federation at (616) 942-5553. This is a unique way to connect with people and show them that you care. This program is open to all ages! We hope you participate and make a new friend.



The Upside of Loss

by Linda Pestka, JFGR Board Member & Steve Pestka

As many of you already know, the Ahavas Israel Cemetery was vandalized and some of the tombstones were defaced. Two of the stones that were defaced were our maternal grandparents Max and Goldie Bergman's. When we were notified what happened, Linda decided to go out to the cemetery and view what had occurred. Our grandparents tombstones as well as other tombstones had been defaced with political lettering and a slogan. Linda was overtaken by sadness and sorrow that damage like that had occurred. She described that it was surreal but an ever present reminder that as Jews we are often up against discrimination and crimes for no apparent reason.

Our grandparents were good, honest, respected and generous. Unfortunately, Max died before we were born and Goldie died when we were young children but the stories of their good deeds remain. Max left Poland to find a better life for his family for better opportunities. It was necessary to leave Poland without his family due to quotas.

It was five long years until our grandmother and their children were able to be reunited because the naturalization laws changed during this time frame. They raised their children to take on the values of their adopted homeland to work hard and remain generous to their families who were still in Poland.

Never would we have imagined that many decades later acts like this would happen to them and others in their final resting place.

We need to protect those we hold dear and demonstrate values that teach respect, compassion, kindness as well as education of the history of discrimination.

A special thank you to the enormous outpouring from the community of Grand Rapids Jews and non Jews who expressed sadness, outrage, and disbelief that this wrong doing had occurred. There were so many

offers from individuals and groups who wanted to assist in cleaning up the damage. The response from the community has been heartwarming and hopefully will lead to positive change.

Linda Pestka is a JFGR Board member. She and her brother Steve Pestka work together at H & H Management & Development, Grand Rapids.

They are both committed and dedicated to Holocaust education in our community and world.



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Hanukkah Happenings and More

Marisa Krishef, Director of Programming

We are in for the treat of two amazing Chanukah concerts this month!

- JFGR, Ahavas Israel, and Temple Emanuel are excited to present an intimate musical evening with Cantor Randy Herman on Wednesday, December 9, at 7:00 pm. He will perform a solo piano and voice concert with special Hanukkah surprises! Cantor Herman will feature original Jewish and secular songs and share his thoughts and stories from his life as a musician and educator. Cantor Herman grew up in Grand Rapids and studied to be a cantor at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He is the son of Bluma and the late Don Herman. He currently serves as Hazzan of Chizuk Amuno Congregation in Pikesville, MD.

- PJ Library, a program of the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids presents: ShirLaLa Rockin' Hanukkah concert with musician Shira Kline! Shira is making a special children's program (birth-age 12) just for our Western Michigan Jewish community. Join us on Sunday, December 13, at 5:00 pm for this magical Hanukkah concert that adults will love as well!

Prior to both of these virtual concerts, you will receive a link in your email that day to begin the programs. The time listed is their "debut" time but you may click on the links and watch the concerts anytime you'd like to after that. Please note that the ShirLaLa Rockin' Chanukah concert

will only be available until February 13, 2021. Even if you are sick of sitting in front of the computer which many of us are by now, or you think your children won't "sit" for a concert, I encourage you to turn on these concerts and let the beautiful Jewish music fill your home as you get things done around the house and prepare for Chanukah! No sitting required, get up and dance and get in your steps in a fun and creative way! Check out Shira Kline's YouTube channel for a taste of her performances!



Marisa Krishef

- In celebration of Chanukah, JFGR, Ahavas Israel, and Temple Emanuel will be conducting a Chanukah Scavenge and Celebrate! Rabbi Schadick will be your host on Tuesday, December 15 at 4:45 p.m. as you meet him on Zoom and hunt for various items in your home! Children of all ages are welcome to "STAY IN" and look for a list of holiday items in their home. Sneaker wearing is encouraged as all participants will be asked to find what is on the Rabbi's list as quickly as possible. Lots of prizes to be won by everyone who locates the requested items and shows them to the Master of the Hunt (AKA the Rabbi.) Make sure to have a menorah and 7 candles ready to light. At 5:15pm, across West Michigan, we will light candles together and begin the 6th day of the holiday. Get ready to search and have some fun!

- Please mark your calendars for these two events sponsored by JFGR, Ahavas Israel, and Temple Emanuel in January: Jewish Community Virtual Bingo! Date and details to follow!

Also, plan to enjoy our Jewish Community Tu B'Shvat Seder on Wednesday evening, January 27, 2021. The Seder will be available to watch that night and for several weeks after the Tu B'shvat holiday.

- Jewish Movie News: Can't get enough of Jewish movies? Eagerly awaiting our Jewish Film Festival in the Spring 2021 and need some Jewish films to tide you over? I'd like to inform you about ChaiFlicks, a Jewish movie streaming service. ChaiFlicks offers the latest in Jewish movies, documentaries, and shorts from all over the world. They charge an annual fee of \$66.00 for a full year of movies or \$5.99 per month. They also offer a free 14 day trial before you start your subscription. New movies are offered every month. To access ChaiFlicks, go to www.ChaiFlicks.com. A one month or yearly subscription can make a great Chanukah gift for a loved one or for yourself as well! Wishing you all a very Happy Chanukah and a joyous New Year 2021!

A TU B'SHEVAT SEDER IN YOUR HOME

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MORE DETAILS WILL FOLLOW IN THE
JANUARY SHOFAR.



Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids, Congregation Ahavas Israel and Temple Emanuel

*are proud to present,
an intimate **virtual** musical evening with*

Cantor Randy Herman

He will perform a solo piano & voice concert with special Hanukkah surprises!

Wednesday, December 9, 2020 at 7:00 pm

Cantor Herman will feature original Jewish and secular songs and share his thoughts and stories from his life as a musician and educator. A link to this exciting performance will be sent to your email on December 9, 2020 at 7pm. For more information contact Nicole Katzman, Executive Director at nicole@jfg.org



Descended from performing vaudevillian grandparents on one side, and off-the-boat Eastern European orthodox Jews on the other, Cantor Randy Herman seemed destined to integrate the worlds of musical performance and Judaism. He was raised in Grand Rapids, MI, where he attended Breton Downs, Manhattan, and Woodcliff Elementary Schools, East Grand Rapids Junior High and High Schools, and as a teen was involved in the community theater scene (he also performed several times at Festival downtown). He later attended the University of Michigan, majoring in theater and psychology. After working briefly as a musician in Paris, and as an actor on the East Coast, Cantor Herman settled in Chicago, where he cofounded the critically acclaimed Theater Oobleck, an avant-garde theater troupe. As a pianist, singer and songwriter, he has performed throughout the U.S. and abroad in nightclubs and festivals, at private events and on live radio, and has worked extensively as a studio musician. His own recordings received college and commercial radio play, and reviews in major publications.

Cantor Herman spent a year of study in Jerusalem, where he attended the Conservative Yeshiva and sang in the Great Synagogue choir, and received cantorial investiture and a Masters of Sacred Music from the Jewish Theological Seminary in NYC in 2008. He has been a featured concert performer in synagogues & venues throughout the U.S. and abroad, and as guest cantor has led services at the famed Chor Shul (Choral Synagogue) in Vilnius, Lithuania, and at the Great Synagogue of Stockholm. From 2008-2016, Cantor Herman served full time at Bet Torah in Mt. Kisco (Northern Westchester), NY, where he also completed a CD of original songs, "Moving Through Time." He is married to his soulmate Nicole, they have an amazing two-year-old daughter and are expecting another baby in the spring.



Weathering the Storm

by Yehudit Newman

I have known 3 centenarians in my life. Two of them I had the privilege to meet in Grand Rapids after they had already turned 100, June Horowitz and Lillian Klein, both inspiring women, and the third was my mother, Dorothy Katz Newman. These three women were born in 1913, the year of Freshwater Fury, an inland hurricane that devastated the Great Lakes.

‘The White Hurricane’, a blizzard with hurricane force winds blew through the Great Lakes from November 6th through November 11, 1913. 19 ships were lost, another 19 stranded and over 250 lives were lost. My

grandmother, Jenny, must have experienced this storm 8 months pregnant on the south side of Chicago. A little more than a month later she went into labor as she walked to her nephew’s Bar Mitzvah party. My mother would tell the story (I told you before this was another story) her mother would stop to sit on the stoop of another house as she had another labor pain and my grandfather, always helpful, would say (in Yiddish), “you ate too much, it’s indigestion.” Bubbie arrived at the party, went into the bedroom and my mother was born. I once met the cousin whose Bar Mitzvah it had been and he said he had been upset that she had, ‘stole his thunder’.

Think of it! Women could not vote when these three women were born, what an amazing century they witnessed. I take strength from knowing that if they could all weather the storm, so can we.

Deet is the Art teacher at United Jewish School. She studied occupational therapy at Eastern Michigan University and live in Berrien Springs, Michigan.



Yehudit Newman



Allan, Charles and Yehudit Newman with Dorothy on her 100th birthday.



Get ready to search and have some fun.

Temple Emanuel, Congregation Ahavas Israel and JFGR

present

Scavenge and Celebrate

Fun begins at 4:45 PM on Tuesday, December 15

The entire Jewish community of Grand Rapids is invited to join Rabbi Schadick of Temple Emanuel for a special Hanukkah Scavenger Hunt.

Sneaker wearing is encouraged as all participants will be asked to find what is on the Rabbi’s list as quickly as possible.

Lots of prizes to be won by everyone who locates the requested items and shows them to the Master of the Hunt (AKA the Rabbi).

Make sure to have a menorah and 7 candles ready to light.

At 5:15 PM, across West Michigan, we will light candles together and begin the 6th day of the holiday.



Children of all ages are welcome to “STAY IN” and look for a list of holiday items in their home.





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Financial Focus

Consider These Year-end Financial Moves

By Chad Zagel, CFP®, AAMS®, JFGR Board Member



Chad Zagel
JFGR Board Member

We're nearing the end of 2020 – and for many of us, it will be a relief to turn the calendar page on this challenging year. However, we've still got a few weeks left, which means you have time to make some year-end financial moves that may work in your favor.

Here are a few suggestions:

- **Add to your IRA.** For the 2020 tax year, you can put in up to \$6,000 to your traditional or Roth IRA, or \$7,000 if you're 50 or older. If you haven't reached this limit, consider adding some money. You actually have until April 15, 2021, to contribute to your IRA for 2020, but the sooner you put the money in, the quicker it can go to work for you. Plus, if you have to pay taxes in April, you'll be less likely to contribute to your IRA then.
- **Make an extra 401(k) payment.** If it's allowed by your employer, put in a little extra to your 401(k) or similar retirement plan. And if your salary goes up next year, increase your regular contributions.
- **See your tax advisor.** It's possible that you could improve your tax situation by making some investment-related moves. For example, if you sold some investments whose value has increased, you could incur capital gains taxes. To offset these gains, you could sell other investments that have lost value, assuming these investments are no longer essential to your financial strategy. Your tax advisor can evaluate this type of move, along with others, to determine those that may be appropriate for your situation.
- **Review your investment mix.** As you consider your portfolio, think about the events of these past 12 months and how you responded to them. When COVID-19 hit early in the year, and the financial markets plunged, did you find yourself worrying constantly about the losses you were taking, even though they were just on "paper"

at that point? Did you even sell investments to "cut your losses" without waiting for a market recovery? If so, you might want to consult with a financial professional to determine if your investment mix is still appropriate for your goals and risk tolerance, or if you need to make some changes.

- **Evaluate your need for retirement plan withdrawals.** If you are 72 or older, you must start taking withdrawals – technically called required minimum distributions, or RMDs – from your traditional IRA and your 401(k) or similar retirement plan. Typically, you must take these RMDs by December 31 every year. However, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Stimulus (CARES) Act suspended, or waived, all RMDs due in 2020. If you're in this age group, but you don't need the money, you can let your retirement accounts continue growing on a tax-deferred basis.
- **Think about the future.** Are you saving enough for your children's college education? Are you still on track toward the retirement lifestyle you've envisioned? Or have your retirement plans changed as a result of the pandemic? All of these issues can affect your investment strategies, so you'll want to think carefully about what decisions you may need to make.

Looking back – and ahead – can help you make the moves to end 2020 on a positive note and start 2021 on the right foot.

Chad Zagel, CFP®, AAMS®, is a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones, a University of Michigan graduate, and in his free time, Chad enjoys spending time with his family and volunteering.

Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors are not estate planners and cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your estate-planning attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.



Hanukkah Book Recommendations

by Kris Siegel



Kris Siegel

Interview with Nicole Katzman, author of *Nathan Blows Out the Hanukkah Candles*

Did you know that the Executive Director of the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids, Nicole Katzman, also wrote a lovely children's book called *Nathan Blows Out the Hanukkah Candles*? I interviewed this creative genius to find out more...

Kris: Why did you write *Nathan Blows Out the Hanukkah Candles*?

Nicole: The book is based on a true story. When my son Nathan was a young child he could not differentiate between Shabbat, birthday or Hanukkah candles. In Nathan's frame of reference, all candles are meant to be blown out. We were celebrating Hanukkah with some friends and Nathan impulsively blew out the candles in the menorah. My friends were shocked by his behavior. After seeing their response to my son, I felt it was critical to educate people about autism spectrum disorders. It is important that neuro-typical people have empathy and understanding towards those who are different.

Kris: What do you want readers to learn from the story?

Nicole: The take-away from the story is that Jewish traditions are important to follow, however they can be adapted to fit the needs of the participants who are observing. It is important that children of all levels of ability are able to participate in holiday celebrations. Those with challenges should feel comfortable and celebrate in a way that makes them feel special and loved unconditionally.

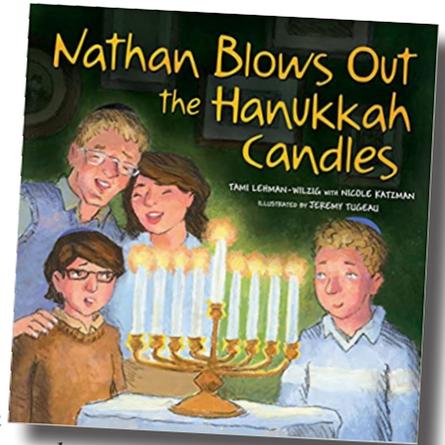
*I am proud to share that in December of 2017, *Nathan Blows Out the Hanukkah Candles* was selected by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) as the book of the month. "The book teaches about bias and prejudice, promotes respect for diversity, encourages social action and reinforces themes addressed in education programs of A World of Difference Institute."*

<https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/book-of-the-month-nathan-blows-out-hanukkah-candles.pdf>

Kris: It's so cool that you wrote a book and had it published! Would you walk us through the publishing process?

Nicole: The Nathan book was not an easy book to publish as it deals with difficult subject matter and content. There were many revisions and edits to the initial story. The original script was rejected by three publishers. Rather than

give up, I took a chance and sent it off to the Harold Grinspoon Foundation in Western, MA. I received a call that the PJ Library book selection committee loved the story. They had contacted Kar-Ben Publishers and a year later, the first order of 10,000 copies was distributed to children all over the world.



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Kris: The illustrations in Nathan Blows Out the Hanukkah Candles are wonderful. Did you get to choose the illustrator? Did you get any input about the design of the book? (Size, font, etc.)

Nicole: Kar-Ben publisher selected the illustrator and decided on the images to accompany the text. I think they did an excellent job with the images and depicted the Katzman family very well. My children and husband were all pleased when we received our copy of the book. Now that my kids are grown up, they get a kick out of seeing themselves in illustrated form.

An excellent read-aloud, I encourage you to check out *Nathan Blows Out the Hanukkah Candles*, as well as a few other favorites:

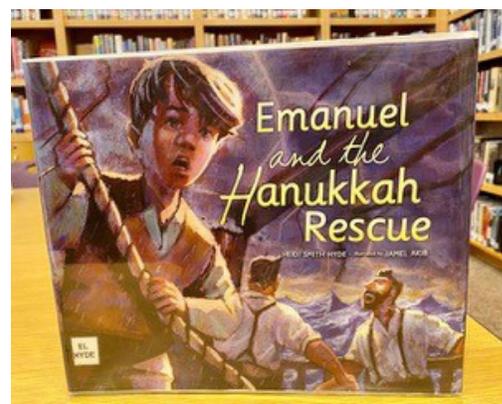
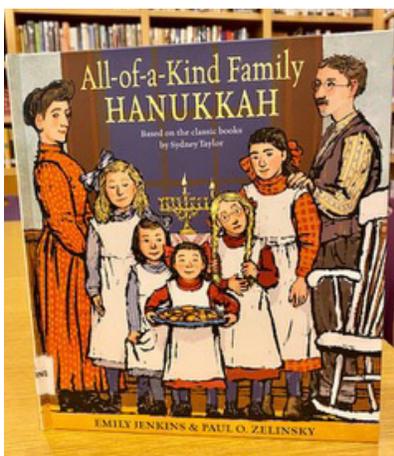
- ***Daddy Christmas, Hanukkah Mama***, by Selina Alko. Offers a great example of a family respecting and celebrating each other's traditions.
- ***All-of-a-Kind Family Hanukkah***, by Emily Jenkins and Paul O. Zelinsky. Finally! An A-O-A-K-F picture book! Gorgeously illustrated, full of family warmth and joy, just like the famous chapter books by Sydney Taylor. This is a wonderful read-aloud.
- ***Latke, The Lucky Dog***, by Ellen Fischer. A mischievous dog named Latke is thrilled to be rescued by a loving (and very understanding) family at Hanukkah.
- ***Hanukkah Bear***, by Eric Kimmel. Bubba Brayna was

97 years old and did not hear or see as well as she used to, but every year she made latkes for the whole village. When a hungry bear drops in, she mistakes him for the Rabbi and hilarity ensues.

- ***Little Red Ruthie: A Hanukkah Tale***, by Gloria Koster. If you like Little Red Riding Hood, you'll love Little Red Ruthie, who cleverly outsmarts the wolf!
- ***Emanuel and the Hanukkah Rescue***, by Heidi Smith Hyde. Thrilling story of a young stowaway on a whaling ship caught in a gale, and the Hanukkah lights that guide the ship to safety. The illustrations add so much to this story. Picture books aren't just for little kids. This one is appropriate for middle to upper elementary.
- ***Hanukkah at Valley Forge***, by Stephen Krensky. In 1777, General George Washington came upon a Jewish soldier lighting candles for Hanukkah. The soldier told the General the story of Hanukkah, which gave Washington hope at a dark time during the Revolutionary War. As with the above book, this one is perfect for middle and upper elementary.

Happy Hanukkah! Get cozy with good (Jewish) books!

Kris Siegel is the Librarian at Temple Emanuel. Even at her very advanced age, she loves reading beautiful picture books.



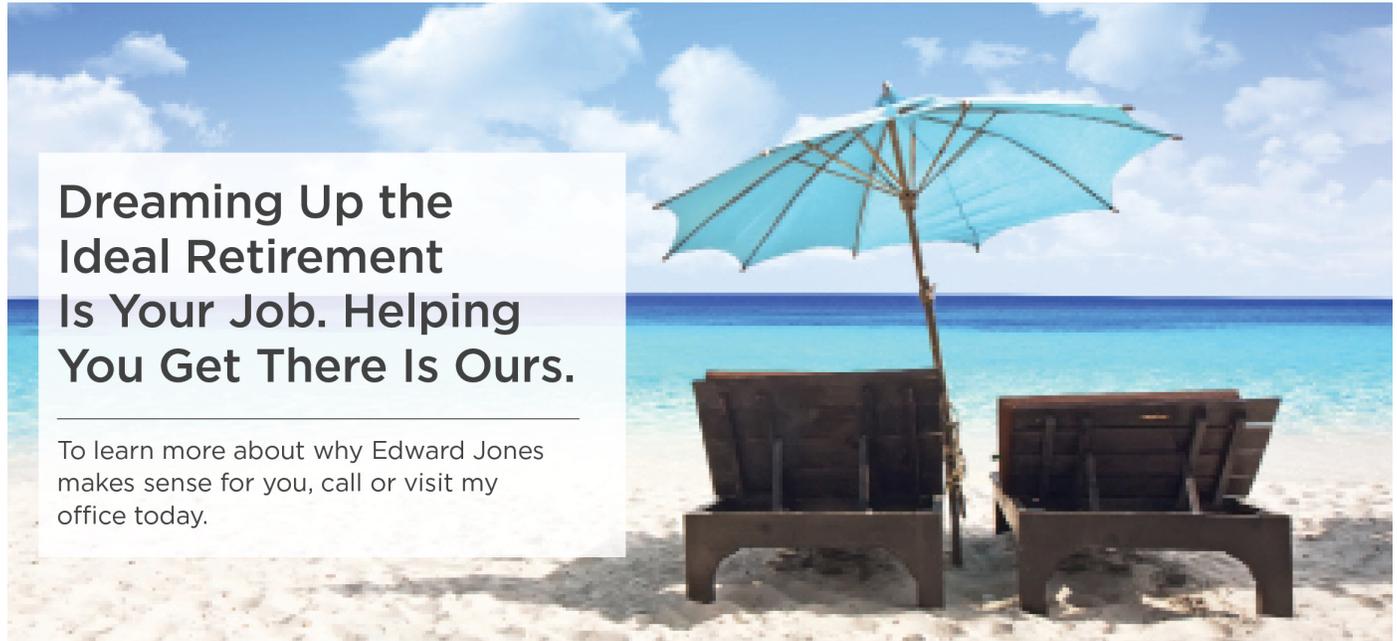


BLACKBIRD EAST

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Please join us at our 1st Annual Hanukkah Holiday Hop Shop from Sat. Dec. 5th thru Thurs. Dec., 10th, 2020. We will feature a select & limited curated Hanukkah inventory in addition to our standard offerings. Blackbird East will be donating 15% of all sales to the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids

Blackbird East 2166 Wealthy St. EGR MI 49506 www.blackbirdeast.com.



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A Recipe for Hanukkah Cookies



Evan Rossio

Cookies

- 1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter or solid vegetable shortening, room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 1/2 teaspoons grated lemon peel
- 1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt



Icing

- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 2 tablespoons (or more) milk
- 1 1/2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 3 to 4 drops blue food coloring

For cookies:

Using electric mixer, cream butter and sugar in large bowl until light. Beat in egg, lemon juice, lemon peel and vanilla. Mix flour, baking powder and salt in small bowl. Add to butter mixture and stir until well combined. Divide dough into 3 pieces. Flatten each into disk. Wrap each in plastic and chill 2 hours or overnight.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Roll out 1 dough piece on lightly floured surface to thickness of 1/8 inch. Using Hanukkah cookie cutters dipped into flour, cut out cookies. Transfer to ungreased cookie sheets, spacing evenly. Gather scraps, re-roll and cut out additional cookies, chilling dough if necessary. Bake until cookie edges are golden, about 10 minutes. Transfer cookies to racks and cool. Repeat rolling, cutting and baking with remaining dough pieces in batches.

For icing:

Place sugar in bowl. Stir in 2 tablespoons milk and lemon juice. Add more milk if icing is too thick to pipe. Transfer half of icing to another bowl. Mix food coloring into half of icing. Spoon plain and colored icings into separate pastry bags fitted with small round tips or into parchment cones. Pipe icings decoratively onto cookies. Let stand until icing sets, about 2 hours. (Can be made 1 week ahead. Store cookies in single layers in airtight containers.)

Evan D. Rossio is an attorney from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Married to wife and successful Realtor Julie for 32+ years, they have two children; son Jordan and daughter Emily. Evan's love for cooking began 30 years ago, when he discovered it was good stress relief after a day at work. He now splits his time between an estate planning practice and the occasional cooking gig. If not in the kitchen, he can be found in front of the TV cheering for his beloved Ohio State Buckeyes or perusing his vast cookbook collection.

- SAVE THE DATE -

VIRTUAL BINGO

sponsored by JFGR, Ahavas Israel and Temple Emanuel

Sunday, January 3rd

More details coming soon!!!





Beit Sefer B'yahad United Jewish School

1715 Fulton St E | Grand Rapids MI 49503
616.459.5976

What's New in the United Jewish School!

After 6 Sundays of in-person instruction, as of November 15, the school directors and UJS board chairs decided to take the school program virtual through December, hoping to come back in person on January 10. Mid-November's rising rate of COVID-19 in Kent Country, alarming positive rate for COVID testing, and rising absentee rate of our students contributed to this decision, along with numerous conversations with medical professionals. We believe it is the best decision for our families and our teachers.

Many of our families signed up for the UJS program this year in part because they wanted an in-person learning experience for their children. It is our desire to return to in-person learning as soon as we can do so safely. However, knowing that it would be likely that we'd make this move to virtual at some point this year, we purchased a new Hebrew and Judaic curriculum that was designed for online teaching. We have talked to the teachers about the online tools available to them and encouraged them to avail themselves of other professional teacher training as well. We are confident that our teaching staff will manage the transition online.

We urge all of our families and members of both congregations to take appropriate precautions (wear masks!) this fall and winter to curb the spread of the pandemic.

Warmly,
Rabbis Schadick and Krishef
RabbiS@UnitedJewishSchool.org and
RabbiK@UnitedJewishSchool.org

CHABAD OF WESTERN MICHIGAN

CHABAD OF WESTERN MICHIGAN

WEBSITE: WWW.CHABADWM.COM | FACEBOOK & INSTAGRAM: @CHABADWM | PHONE: 616-957-0770 | EMAIL: CHABADWESTERNMICHIGAN@GMAIL.COM

All events are subject to change. Please stay safe and reach out if there is anything we can do for you.

CHECK FACEBOOK @CHABADWM FOR VIRTUAL ZOOM LINKS AND PASSWORDS OR TEXT RIVKA AT 616.206.9654!

VIRTUAL CHANUKAH EXPERIENCE

Join us for Chanukah Menorah Lighting and activities **EVERY NIGHT OF CHANUKAH AT 5:30PM**

(Friday, December 11th at 4:00 pm & Saturday, December 12th 7:30 pm)

Zoom Meeting ID: **921 5730 1229** | Passcode: **888**

To order your activity pack and for more information please contact us.

DAILY MENORAH LIGHTING DOWNTOWN | CALDER PLAZA
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10TH • 5:00PM

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11TH • 3:00PM

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12TH • 7:00PM

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13TH (Grand Menorah Lighting!) • 5:00PM

MONDAY, DECEMBER 14TH – THURSDAY DECEMBER 17TH
• 5:00PM

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK LIVE @CHABADWM

MENORAH AT WOODLAND MALL

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10TH - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20TH

CHANUKAH CAR PARADE & GRAND MENORAH LIGHTING!!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13TH 2020

4:15PM - PARADE STARTS at Chabad 2615 Michigan street

5:00PM - Grand Menorah Lighting at the Calder Plaza

Come celebrate the 4th night of Chanukah together!

Lively Chanukah Music | Sufganiot (donuts) | exciting entertainment | and more!!

Sign up to be a part of the Grand Chanukah Car Parade and to order your own Chanukah decorations at ChabadWM.com/PARADE

Following COVID-19 guidelines.

VIRTUAL CHANUKAH STORY TIME

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 16TH 2020 • 4:00PM

Get into the spirit of Chanukah! Join us for a fun filled story hour. We will hear some Chanukah stories & sing some Chanukah songs!

Zoom Meeting ID: 992 1322 3739 | Passcode: 613

JUDAISM UNBOXED

Are you looking for that perfect Chanukah gift for your children, grandchildren or friends?!

We have the perfect unique Chanukah experience, delivered straight to your door. The Judaism UnBoxed Chanukah Box has everything you need for a unique Chanukah baking experience fully loaded with recipes, pre-measured ingredients, kitchen utensils and aprons, meaningful learning opportunities and lots of glowing Chanukah surprises!

Imagine your child(ren)'s excitement as they make and bake their own Chanukah treats while creating lasting meaningful memories together as family. It is the gift that keeps on giving.

To order your Chanukah Box or subscription please visit: ChabadWM.com/JUDAISMUNBOXED. Use our special coupon code to save: CHABADWM

CKids Club/Mini Chefs Upcoming Events: (For Jewish boys & girls, Ages 5-11)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 22ND | TUESDAY, JANUARY 19TH | TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH

Mini Chefs is a unique culinary experience that gives your children the opportunity to cook, bake and decorate fabulous Jewish themed foods and enjoy their own handmade creations. Experience the joy of Kosher Cooking! RSVP to receive recipe and zoom information.

TIME: 5:00-6:00 PM

Virtual Mini Chefs via Zoom | To RSVP to Rivka at 616.206.9654 or rivkahweingarten@gmail.com

JTEXT ~ JEWISH TRIVIA for Teens!

EVERY MONDAY & THURSDAY AT 7:00PM.

Be the 7th to answer correctly and win a **\$20 AMAZON GIFT CARD** straight to your phone!

Are you a Jewish teen in grades 6-12 that lives in West Michigan and would like to join?! Text "CTEENGR" to 616-207-1218 to be let in on the fun!

CTeen Junior Upcoming Events: (Grades 6TH-8TH)

Enrich your Jewish Pride & Explore Judaism while giving back to the Community. RSVP to receive zoom information.



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13TH • 2:00PM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17TH • 4:00PM

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST • 4:00PM

CTeen Grand Rapids Upcoming Events:

The place for ALL Jewish high school teens!

Part of the Fastest Growing Teen Network in the World!

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13TH • 2:00PM

SUNDAY, JANUARY 17TH • 1:00PM

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21ST • 1:00PM

JEWISH WOMEN'S CIRCLE Upcoming Events:

MONDAY, JANUARY 11TH: Writing Workshop - Explore the power of the written word and rediscover yourself in the process.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH: Paint Night - Reveal your inner artist and create a canv masterpiece.

The Jewish Women's Circle is an ever growing group of Jewish Women from the Grand Rapids area who come together to learn, laugh, socialize and connect. Join us!

Email Nechamy at Nechamy8@gmail.com for more information and to RSVP.

JLI CLASSES - "JOURNEY OF THE SOUL"

Who hasn't wondered what happens when we die? We know what happens to the body. But what happens to the soul at birth and again at death?

- Is there really a "better" place after this one? - Do our loved ones continue to connect with us? - Can I relate to an afterlife if I'm not spiritual?

At once practical and powerful, reflective and relatable, Journey of the Soul teaches a Jewish perspective on life that begins before birth and lasts well after a person's passing.

It's a journey we all take, and it's yours to explore this winter.

SIX WEDNESDAY EVENINGS: 7:30-9:00PM | BEGINNING ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 3RD 2021

Fee: \$99 (textbook included) | \$180 Sponsor

For more Info or to register please contact Rabbi Mordechai at 269.903.2770 or Rabbihaller@chabadwestmichigan.com

WEEKLY VIRTUAL TORAH & TEA

For the connection we all need right now.

A Torah Study for ladies with Nechamy.

MONDAY EVENINGS ON ZOOM AT 8:00PM

Meeting ID: 966 6623 3600 Password: jwc

JEWISH TRIVIA GAME FOR ADULTS IN WESTERN MICHIGAN!!

It's fun, it's quick, it will stimulate your mind- and best part is?

YOU ARE COMPETING TOGETHER WITH OUR COMMUNITY AND FRIENDS!

The 7th player to answer correctly will win a FREE bottle of Kosher wine delivered straight to your doorstep!

Every **SUNDAY & WEDNESDAY AT 7:00PM SHARP** you will receive a TRIVIA question via text message!

Reply with the number you think is correct. The 7th participant to answer correctly wins!

It is amazing watching our community unite together to play, connect, and learn.

To Join: text "CHABADWM" to 616-207-1218!

GAN YILADIM PRESCHOOL – KINDERGARTEN

Gan Yiladim is a licensed preschool for Jewish children ages 2-5 open to the entire Jewish community, regardless of background or affiliation.

Gan Yiladim has been serving the Grand Rapids and nearby Jewish communities, offering a joyful and enriching educational experience to our students while fostering a love for their Jewish heritage.

Gan Yiladim takes the best of both worlds – secular and Judaic – and blends them into a program that is at once rich, fulfilling, and stimulating.

The Gan believes in nurturing children with the SPICES of life - focusing on their Social, Physical, Intellectual, Creative, Emotional and Spiritual development.

Our students are given tools to find expression in art, music, dance and drama. Through teamwork and friendship-building, the children learn skills for life as they explore and play in a loving and nurturing environment, guided by experienced and dedicated staff.

For more information or to schedule a tour call Sarah at 616.375.9404



AHAVAS ISRAEL BOOK GROUP

Our next book discussion will be Wednesday, February 17 - *A Rabbi's Daughter*, by Avigail Graetz

A Rabbi's Daughter is a semi-autobiographical novel about three generations of strong women, even though the title points to the importance of the patriarch, the Rabbi. Avigail Graetz draws inspiration from her own upbringing, as a rabbi's daughter in Israel, to tell the story of Elisheva and the relationships with the women in her life.

This family novel, written in first person, travels through time from 1999 when Elisheva's grandmother is on her deathbed to 1993 when Elisheva is still an adolescent. Her mother was away when she and her father, a Conservative rabbi, found themselves hosting a strange American woman that entered their home. This visit changed their lives and only now, as the grandmother is departing the world, Elisheva has the courage to face her story and the legacy of motherhood she received.

The author was awarded both the PARDES Fellowship at the National Library of Israel and the Jewish National Fund-Hebrew Literature Prize (2012) for this book, her debut novel.



Celebrate Chanukah With Us

We invite our entire membership to join us for Shabbat Services infused with festive holiday music and lots of spirit on Friday, December 11 at 6:00 PM. This will be the Second night of Chanukah and we encourage everyone to have a menorah nearby with candles in place and ready to light.

(Continued on page 5)


TEMPLE EMANUEL (Cont'd From Pg. 17)

Following services post a picture of your family's menorah ablaze on our Facebook page. And throughout the holiday let us stay connected with pictures of families celebrating via Facebook.

Scavenge and Celebrate

The entire Jewish community is invited to join our Rabbi for a special Virtual Chanukah Scavenger Hunt. Children of all ages are welcome to "STAY IN" and look for a list of holiday items in their home.

Sneaker wearing is encouraged as all participants will be asked to find what is on the Rabbi's list as quickly as possible. Lots of prizes to be won by everyone who locates the requested items and shows them to the Master of the Hunt (AKA Rabbi Schadick). The fun begins at 4:45 PM on Tuesday, December 15. Make sure to have a menorah and 7 candles ready to light. At 5:15 PM, across West Michigan, we will light candles together and begin the 6th day of the holiday.

Join Zoom Meeting: Contact Cat for more information.

Get ready to search and have some fun.

Drive-Thru for Chicken Soup with Matzo Balls

Our Rabbi is heading into the kitchen again. He will be cooking up lots of soup for our members to take home and enjoy on Sunday, January 17. What is better than some homemade soup on a cold winter day? We have you covered. Simply contact Cat in the Temple office by Thursday, January 14 and place your order.

The soup will need to be heated up at your home. All you have to do is RSVP and let us know how many people in your house would like a bowl. The soup will be available for pick up at the

side door of our kitchen between 11:30 AM and 1:00 PM. There is NO cost for this homemade soup, but donations to the Temple General Fund would be most welcome.

Workout with the Rabbi

How about joining Rabbi Schadick at one of his favorite local gyms on the afternoon of Sunday, January 17? The Rabbi is looking for 18 members, from 10 years of age or older, for a FUNCTIONAL FITNESS EXPERIENCE at FRICTION, 3390 Broadmoor Ave SE, from 2:00 to 3:00 PM.

Co-Owner Bobby Armock will instruct the group in a variety of heart-pumping exercises. The gym is small and Temple members will be the only ones in the building. Temperatures will be taken and health questions will need to be answered upon entry.

MASKS are required.

FRICTION is opening exclusively for Temple on this date. 18 is the maximum number of people that can participate. 15 is the minimum number of people that are needed to allow us to offer this program with FRICTION. **RSVP to the Temple office on or before Wednesday, January 13.**

The cost is \$15. RSVP is a MUST. First Come/First Serve! All participants will be required to fill out a liability form in advance of the work out date. Because we are working with FRICTION, and we need to guarantee them 15 people, those who sign up and either cancel or do not show up for the workout will still be responsible for the \$15. If payment is made in advance of the program and the requisite number of participants is not reached payments will be gladly returned.

Sign up today and get ready to sweat.



Stephanie Hurwitz Realtor[®]

stephanie.hurwitz@gmail.com

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Stephanie's clients know that they are her top priority. She has lived in Ada and East Grand Rapids over the past 27 years and is your local expert willing to share her knowledge and expertise about the Greater Grand Rapids area. Her professionalism, attention to detail, and pride in her work ensures each client receives the height of service. Stephanie prides herself on being efficient, knowledgeable, and responsible while going above and beyond any expectations her clients have. She was selected as one of *Grand Rapids Magazine's* **REAL ESTATE ALL STARS** for 2019 which recognizes the top 5% of real estate agents in the greater Grand Rapids area. Stephanie helps both buyers and sellers achieve their real estate goals and specializes in everything from modest living spaces to luxury homes.

Call Stephanie today and let her help you make your real estate goals a reality.



Thank you for supporting the Grand Rapids Jewish Community

JFGR General Endowment/L'Dor Vador Fund

In honor of Federation

Ami Kann, Beachwood, Ohio
Brenten Byrd, Springdale, AR

Julian and Judith Joseph Endowment Fund

Louis & Louise Weiner Fund

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In memory of Bill Marfink
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Leven Family Endowment Fund

David & Susan Samrick Youth Scholarship Fund

Lois and Sheldon Kahn Health Help Fund

Donna G. Boorstein Memorial Fund

Sam and Jane Kravitz Social Services Fund

Fox Family Fund

Life cycle times, both happy and sad, are traditional times to make donations to Jewish causes. You can make a donation of \$10 or more to the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids in honor or in memory of members of our community.

We then will acknowledge that donation with a card to that individual or family. This is a wonderful way to send your good wishes and be able to fulfill the mitzvah of tzedakah.

Please be sure to indicate what the occasion is and who is to receive the card. Please specify which of the following funds you would like your donation to be credited to:

Woman of Valor Fund To honor the women in our lives who have made a difference personally, locally or nationally.

Federation General Endowment/L'Dor Vador Fund To help ensure the continued work of the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids for now and the future.

Julian and Judith Joseph Fund To provide for local programming and events through the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids.

David and Susan Samrick Youth Scholarship Fund To provide scholarships to Jewish sleep away camps and experiences.

Charles and Maxine Shapiro Fund To help ensure long-term aid to Israel and Jews around the world.

Louis and Louise Weiner Fund To help ensure local programming for seniors in the Grand Rapids Jewish community.

Jerry and Judy Subar Fund To help ensure funding for overseas Jewish communities' needs.

Leven Family Fund To establish and provide Jewish facilities, and support for cooperative programming among the congregations that support Jewish education for our youth.

Sam and Jane Kravitz Social Services Fund To support Jewish social services in Grand Rapids.

Donna G. Boorstein Memorial Fund To help ensure funding for Jewish arts, culture and history in Greater Grand Rapids.

Lois and Sheldon Kahn Health Help Fund To support health services for Jewish community members not covered by other financial resources.

Fox Family Fund To provide educational and cultural programming for our Jewish community.

Make a tribute gift to
Thank, Honor, Memorialize
friends and loved ones.

JFGR Endowment Fund Donation Form

Donation from: Name _____

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Donor City/St/Zip _____

In memory of _____

Send card to: Name _____

Notes: _____

Send card to address _____

Send your donation and this form to:

Send card to City/St/Zip _____

2727 Michigan NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49506

The Shofar

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December 15, 2020

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The Shofar is delivered to nearly 700 subscribers, 12 times a year. Space is limited. Place your ad today! Contact Nicole at 616.942.5553 or Nicole@jfgr.org

**Warmest Wishes for a
Happy Hanukkah
and a Happy New Year**

