



# Agudas Achim Newsletter

## September 2022

E-mail: [agudasachim@hvc.rr.com](mailto:agudasachim@hvc.rr.com) or Telephone (845) 439-3600

### Save the date

We will be joining Rabbi Pomerantz for a very special online video presentation in lieu of our September first Friday Shabbat service. This will be available for you to access at your leisure on the Congregation Agudas Achim website <https://congregationagudasachim.org> or by clicking this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSCH2JI8aUs>

#### Rabbi's Message

"Prepare for the High Holydays!"

The Hebrew month called, ELUL, the thirty days before Rosh HaShanah, has historically been, in Jewish Life, a period of introspection and spiritual preparation for the possibility and life changing, life affirming power that "The Days of Awe," the ten days spanning Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur can afford each of us and each of our spiritual lives; for the year ahead. The prayer that asks in supplication, "Grant us a renewed heart, and renewed spirit," is not meant to be effective if we simply "show up" and open the Prayerbook, and say the words. Rather, as one of the authors of the last series of prayerbooks for our Reform Movement, I tell you that this prayer and the High Holyday services themselves, assume, are based on the fact, that each of us will take a personal inventory of our lives during the past year, and be aware of what we intended to do, of how we missed the mark we set for ourselves during the last High Holydays, of how we can yet bring our lives closer to what we yet want to be, and do, and become. We do this bit by bit, before services begin.

The Hebrew month of Elul is a time for spiritual "Homework," in our tradition.

Let me give you an everyday example:

We are a family immersed in music for many generations. (As is true for many who descended from the Levites of the ancient Temple in Jerusalem.) Aside from doing symphony, opera, and Broadway, playing in college marching bands is a family tradition and passion.

This year, it will be possible to see Jacob in the University of Pittsburgh Band on a Thursday night in September, and then see Jeremy in the Syracuse Band days later on Saturday night. (On an intrepid road trip)

However, at this writing, both boys are involved in an intensive pre semester practice period called band camp. Before each will wear the blue and gold, and orange and blue of their band uniforms for their opening games, they will go through intensive preparation with their fellow musicians, in a summer setting.

Ironically, the original Elul preparation for the High Holydays began two thousand years ago in the first century CE, when the rabbis who would write the Mishnah and Talmud, our post biblical literature, went away from Jerusalem and other settled towns, to Yavneh, a pastoral, retreat, not so much unlike BAND CAMP, to develop the meditations and prayers of self-search, much of which we use today in person and in the prayerbooks for The Ten Days of Awe. These gatherings were called Kallot, a name we use today for Jewish spiritual gatherings in rural settings or at the seaside. It's a time when we came away from the ordinary to prepare in self search of who we are, and what we are, and what we yet aspire to be. This month of Elul is preparation as surely as is Band Camp getting ready for the opening game.

Most of us can't go to retreats, like Kallot, and so, our self-reflection is personal and individual and private, this month before "The Days of Awe."

On the High Holydays we pray to be inscribed in the Book of Life. "Who shall live and who shall die?" From the unetanah tokef prayer doesn't speak as much about physical survival, as it does living fully as spiritual human beings in the time we are granted. Who are we? What are we? What do we want in the year ahead? What are we prepared to change to bring us closer to our ideal? What are we prepared to change? How are we called to change?

And, this is a time to quietly, personally, think about what we need to be in the year ahead. We needn't be stuck in old ways. Toward this end, I have prepared a program with The Levins, to assist us in this personal preparation for the "Days of Awe." (As we don't have Shabbat services in the month of Rosh HaShanah) It will be available in YouTube by the first Friday in September by going to:

<https://congregationagudasachim.org> to access at your leisure.

I so look forward to seeing each of you for the High Holydays, ahead. We feel the power of our ingathering, and of our prayerbook as we sit and stand, and read and sing our synagogue's service together. And, this is so as well for those of you who will be attending through zoom.

We are grateful for our Board of Trustees, and for so many of you who work to support the Levins and me in sharing our worship with all. Each of you is a powerful part of our community. I want to share the blessing and beauty of our services with you. We trust that Covid levels shall not rise, and that we may gather in person to usher in this upcoming season of the soul.

Shanah Tovah  
Love  
Rabbi Fred Pomerantz

## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

The heart of the Catskill hotel season was July 15-August 15. After August 15 things would slow down before the final Labor Day push. Decades later when August 15 comes along, I automatically begin feeling like summer is over and I'm heading into the holiday season. Anyone that spent their summers at Catskill hotels remembers the tears of Labor Day weekend as we said our good byes knowing we could keep in touch but would never spend that kind of time together again and our hearts were a little broken. For those of us that lived on the property past Labor Day it meant walking through empty kitchen dining rooms and social halls filled with the ghosts of the summer, while we prepared to close up the property for the winter. Writing this I can feel the emptiness as the last guest pulled away on Labor Day Monday and I can hear the haunting quiet of the buildings.

Now, here we are. It's mid-August and I'm mentally preparing for Labor Day and the High Holidays with a tinge of sad that the summer season is ending. The thought of Labor Day has a different meaning for me as we prepare for the holidays and from the perspective of Agudas Achim, we have a lot to think about; we have not been open for the holidays since 2019. This is actually the first year that I will be acting as President during live High Holiday services and, since we will be offering the services on zoom as well as in person. It's all new. There are a number of professionals and volunteers that are already working very hard to provide a meaningful experience for everyone that joins us during the holidays...our virtual and physical doors are open to anyone. **We're planning a Yom Kippur break-fast** (see page 5.) Please come! We would love to start off the new year with you.

L' Shalom,  
Judy Siegel, President  
Jsiegel523@gmail.com  
845-798-0783

## SEPTEMBER SERVICE

Traditionally we have not held Shabbat services in September as we roll right into Rosh Hashanah. After August. However, this year Rosh Hashanah is late and that leaves us with a long gap between the August service and the next opportunity to meet. To fill that gap Rabbi Pomerantz and the Levins have created a special service that can be accessed any time. " To fill that gap Rabbi Pomerantz and the Levins have created a special service that can be accessed any time from our website at [congregationagudasachim.org](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSCH2Jl8aUs) or by clicking this link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gSCH2Jl8aUs>"

## Jewish Education News

We are currently in the Hebrew month of Elul, which corresponds approximately to the months of August and September. Jewishly, Elul is significant to us even though there are no Jewish holidays in Elul. You might ask, if there are no holiday, then why is it so significant? That is because Elul is a month of preparation as we get ready for the coming of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. There is both physical preparation, and spiritual preparation in Elul. Shofar blowers begin practicing the four different shofar sounds that we hear on the holiday, a very special moment for both young and old. Made from a ram's horn, blowing the shofar is not easy, and requires practice. Musicians who play trumpets often times find this easier to do than others. I am not one of those people and find blowing the shofar difficult. My sounds are not always clear, even with practicing. The shofar sounds are: Tekiah – one long blast; Shevarim - three medium blasts; Teruah – nine short blasts; Tekiah Gedolah – one extra-long blast. In some congregations, the shofar is blown at every morning service during Elul. The shofar blast calls out “Wake up, Wake up” as it is seen as an opportunity to awaken our soul and inspire a deeper connection to God. So, Elul is also a time of introspection. It is a time of reviewing the past year and trying to renew ourselves. We strive to become the best person we can be; bettering ourselves and our relationships with others, and with God. By the time we welcome Rosh Hashanah in on the evening of September 25th we are ready for the beginning of the High Holy Days. We say to each other, Shanah Tovah u'Metukah, a good and sweet New Year, and celebrate this by dipping apples into honey.

As we prepare for the beginning of the New Year, we are also preparing for the beginning of the new school year. Hebrew School classes will be on Wednesday afternoons beginning at 5 pm. (Please note the change, Wednesdays, not Tuesdays as was previously mentioned.) Morah Mindy is excited to welcome our students to the beginning of our new school year, with the sounds of the shofar, and sweetness of apple dipped into honey. We use videos, games, music and art to teach about Jewish holidays, Israel, Hebrew and much more. Please call or email me to learn more. Since our school is virtual, our students do not need to live in or adjacent to Livingston Manor. There will be several in-person programs scheduled throughout the year, so although the school is primarily virtual, students will get the opportunity to be with each other.

Shanah Tovah u'Metukah

Wishing you all a Good and Sweet New Year

Tobi Innerfield, Director of Education

## Video presentation in lieu of our September first Friday Shabbat service

**We are very much looking forward to preparing for our High Holy Days together during this month of Elul. We will be joining Rabbi Pomerantz for a very special online video presentation in lieu of our September first Friday Shabbat service. This will be available for you to access at your leisure on the Congregation Agudas Achim website after September 1st.**  
**<https://congregationagudasachim.org>**

**We continue to focus on our High Holy Days planning with Rabbi Fred for a meaningful and joyous Rosh Hashanah service. May your reflections for the Days of Awe be fruitful and sweet!**

**Ira and Julia (The Levins)**

Happy Anniversary

Mike & Wendy Uretsky 9/10  
Steven & Tobi Innerfield 10/2  
Marc & Susan Jaffe 10/2  
Michael & Dayra Lederer 10/2  
Joshua & Marta Pomerantz 10/9  
Randy & Eileen Katz 10/16

Happy Birthday

Neil Schwartz 9/19  
Sheila Skolnik 9/24  
Isaac A Galli 9/27  
Mara Resnick, 9/30  
Lauren Katz 10/1  
Joe Rivera 10/6  
Teddy Jaffe 10/8  
Kenneth Schmitt 10/9  
Richard Schwalb 10/12  
Rosa Kleinman 10/13  
Diane Foster 10/19  
Jonathan Resnick 10/20  
Steven Innerfield 10/26

**SERVICES**

\*Due to ongoing covid concerns the decision regarding live attendance of Rabbi Pomerantz and our Cantorial Duo will remain fluid.

**September** - Rabbi Pomerantz and The Levins will be creating a short service that will be available on YouTube.

**Rosh Hashanah Services**

**Sunday, September**

25 Erev Rosh Hashanah 8:00 pm

**Monday**

September 26 Rosh Hashanah Morning Services 10:30 am

**Yom Kippur Services**

**Tuesday**

October 4th 8:00 pm, Kol Nidre and Erev Yom Kippur

**Wednesday, October 5th**

10:30 am Yom Kippur Morning Service

4:30 pm Afternoon Services (Reading of Jonah)

5:00 pm Yizkor

5:45 pm N'ielh (closing the gates)

## HIGH HOLIDAY APPEAL

Many people work hard at Agudas Achim to keep the costs down but it's hard. As you know...everything is just more expensive. You'll be receiving a high holiday appeal letter in the next few weeks—please be generous. There are fewer and fewer congregations that can hang on and we want to be one of them. Keep your eye out or, if you could, send a donation today. You can donate to [cfos.org](http://cfos.org) and type Congregation Agudas Achim in the search board to make a custom donation or send a check to PO Box 714, Livingston Manor, NY 12758

## YIZKOR

Yizkor means 'may G-D remember'. In this prayer, we implore G-d to remember the souls of our relatives and friends that have passed on. In honor of their memory, we will be reading the names that are listed on the walls of the synagogue during the yizkor service. If you would like the name of a loved one listed on the screen during the virtual service, please send their name(s) to [virtualshabbat@gmail.org](mailto:virtualshabbat@gmail.org) before September 8<sup>th</sup>. You can send a donation (for each name listed) to PO Box 714, Livingston Manor, NY 12758 or make a donation from our website at [congregationagudasachim.org](http://congregationagudasachim.org).

This is an opportunity to remember beloved family members and members of the community by sharing their name and also by giving tzedakah (charity) in their memory. By giving charity, we are performing a positive physical deed in this world, something that the departed can no longer do.

## COMMUNITY BREAK-FAST

We will be live (and virtual) for the High Holidays and are planning a different version of our community break-fast after Yom Kippur. Please join us for dinner downstairs where Bernie's Holiday Restaurant will cater a light dairy meal. The cost per person is \$18 (Agudas Achim is picking up the balance) Because we need to commit to them you will need to **MAKE A RESERVATION**. Seating is limited to 40 so please make sure you reserve early. You can reach out to Lynn Skolnick at [Lynnskolnick@gmail.com](mailto:Lynnskolnick@gmail.com) to make your reservation. **DON'T DELAY**

## HOPE(ful) INFORMATION

Thanks to Hope Blecher for sharing her writing with the Times of Israel, and us. You can read her most recent blog at <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/author/hope-blecher-ed-d/>

## HELP US PRESERVE OUR HISTORY!!!!

Do you have a story to share now? Some knowledge or memories of these and other Livingston Manor families? Please send me an email and share your piece(s) of history. Send the request on to family and friends. Be a part of preserving our history for the future.

## WANT TO BE INVOLVED?

Are you interested in becoming involved in the direction of Agudas Achim? We really don't ask too much of your time but anything you want to give will be appreciated. Just let us know! Send me an email or text or write to [virtualshabbat@gmail.com](mailto:virtualshabbat@gmail.com) We would love to hear from you.

## DAFFODIL PROJECT

Please join us at the schul at 2:00 PM on September 11 to participate in this wonderful Project;

*The Daffodil Project aspires to build a worldwide Living Holocaust Memorial by planting 1.5 million Daffodils in memory of the children who perished in the Holocaust and in support for children suffering in humanitarian crises in the world today.*

We'll be preparing the soil on September 10<sup>th</sup> and planting on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Please email Judy Siegel ([jsiegel523@gmail.com](mailto:jsiegel523@gmail.com)) or Hope Blecher ([hopedoc1@gmail.com](mailto:hopedoc1@gmail.com)) for more information or to offer your help.

### COVID PROTOCOLS

Covid concerns change regularly and the necessary protocols need to change with them. While not required, we ask that those attending services in person be considerate of those that have health concerns and be vaccinated.

We will require that everyone wear a mask during services. **NOTE:** Due to ongoing covid concerns the decision regarding live attendance of Rabbi Pomerantz and our Cantorial Duo will remain fluid.

## DONATIONS

Our in-person contact (and thus our fundraising efforts) is limited. Our philosophy has always been to maintain low dues and keep an open-door policy so that anyone can join us in person when available or now virtually. But that philosophy depends on generous donations from people like you. Please consider donating to Congregation Agudas Achim ... no amount is too large or too small! You can donate and designate it to one of the following:

Security  
Building fund  
Cemetery fund  
Endowment fund  
Mailing costs  
Mitzvah fund  
Tzedakah fund

or consider making a donation in honor or memory of a friend, a loved one or someone you care about with a lasting memorial donation by purchasing an honorary:

Chair \$36  
Rosh Hashanah Prayer Book \$36  
Yom Kippur Prayer Book \$36

### BEST WAY TO DONATE:

By Check: mail to PO Box 714, Livingston Manor, NY 12758

By Credit Card website ([congregationagudasachim.org](http://congregationagudasachim.org)) and click donate now

HONOR OR MEMORIALIZE  
SOMEONE YOU LOVE



The generosity of Drs. Bonnie Katz &  
Carl Tishler and the Jewish Federation of  
Columbus, OH make this donation possible

Donated by

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Several Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Siddur bookplates are still available for dedication for \$36 each.  
Send your dedication and donation to Agudas Achim  
PO Box 714, Livingston Manor, NY 12758.

**Thanks to all who have dedicated windows. All our new windows  
have been honored.**