



Agudas Achim Newsletter

November 2023

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

Friday 7:00 PM Gather In person at Agudas Achim or on zoom
November 3 7:30 PM Levins begin welcoming the Sabbath* live and via zoom*

Rabbi's Message

THE WAR IN ISRAEL

The slaughter, rape, burning, beheading, in the southern Israeli communities on October the 7th will be marked in Jewish history, forever.

Hundreds of years from now, if not more, the massacre will be remembered. Perhaps it will make its way into the prayerbook, as did the massacre at the tower of York, England, and the martyrdom of the 10 rabbis in ancient Israel by the Romans.

But for now, the images of the attacks as they play and replay on television, along with the testimonies of the families of the lost, create a funereal sense of gloom and loss.

Among Israelis, there is a mixture of loss and dread. Loss for those who were murdered, for the imagined superiority of Israel's vaunted intelligence community that watched over the country, for the legendary superiority of her military, that

totally missed the buildup and lethal ability of Hamas forces, and who were so slow in coming to the aid and protection of the residents of those kibbutzim on the Gaza border.

Moreover, along with the surreal mood and the mourning in practically every home (among those who lost family, or know of those who lost family) there is an anxiety regarding the real possibility of an expanded war along five fronts, with the possible addition of Iran entering battle directly instead of supporting surrogate forces to battle the Jewish state.

Many think that this latter would have already transpired were it not for the two carrier battle groups and the marine strike force that the U.S. has placed in the eastern mediterranean.

As I discussed on Rosh ha Shanah, we may be entering the beginning of the end of the State of Israel, as we know it. In an unprecedented poll conducted last week in Israel, 36-38% of Israelis

contacted said that they would like to leave the country if they could. These are flabbergasting numbers. Clearly something must be done. We want to support our brothers and sisters there, as well as the country itself, and its highest aspirations.

In addition, we have been distressed by the media coverage of the Hamas terror attack, the ongoing war in Israel/Gaza, and the responses to these events in the U.S. and around the world. From national and local newspapers to cable TV news to social media, it has been difficult to separate the facts from bias and even disinformation. History has revealed that the longer the conflict, and especially if there are Palestinian in a war not of Israel's making, world opinion begins to turn against Israel, fueled by media accounts against the Jewish state.

What can be done? What is the correct path forward? How can Israel be assisted? How can we buttress the reality of "Am Yisroel Chai" the People of Israel Lives?

Join us for our service and memorial gathering on Friday night, November 3rd as we gather to give and receive strength.

The atrocities of October 7th will, unhappily, sustain. What activity will this next week bring? Will Iran and her proxies enter an all-out terror war? Will the support of western allies continue to back Israel. What will be the price in Israel to destroy the terrorist entities?

Join us as we explore memory and hope. We will also reach out to ease the trauma of our people in the Holy Land, as we pray for ourselves as well.

Love, Rabbi Fred Pomerantz

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

A Jewish community serves different functions for different people. In times of peace and happiness it is nice to hear a familiar phrase, share a dish that brings back childhood memories or tell a story that you know another Jewish person will understand. Experiences like that are simple pleasures. Like comfort food. During times like these, having a Jewish community around you provides a different feeling of comradeship. The shared horror that generations of Jews have felt for thousands of years, during the inquisition, the pogroms, the holocaust. Most of us are too young to know how it felt to learn about the horrors of the holocaust. That pain must have been unbearable because this pain is real. Every time someone tells me of a family member that was a victim of the massacre my heart breaks a little more. In a very, very small way, knowing there is a Jewish community that shares the horrors as a Jewish person is helpful. It's not completely accurate to say that misery loves company but at least there is company in this grief.

To the Jewish community of Congregation Agudas Achim, I am very grateful and proud to be a part of this tribe. The building stands tall and the people that attend (live and virtually) will continue to stand tall and proud with it. We will hold each other in our hearts and will pray together for peace to come quickly and for the images that are seared in our brain to rest gently with prayers for the victims and their loved ones. Thank you for being a part of this community.

With prayers for Peace

Judy Siegel, President
845-798-0783

Zoom Etiquette
By Steve Innerfield

Now, that we are in our “Zoom-only” winter season of worship, here are a few guidelines to enhance everyone’s Erev Shabbat experience. It’s always a good idea to log on a few minutes early, because it’s hard to be in the right frame of mind if you are stressed about internet connections.

Also, we suggest:

- 1) Dress Appropriately (at least the parts of you that will be on camera): A reliable guideline is to dress for Zoom the same way you would dress to attend services in person.
- 2) Mute and Unmute Responsibly: Feel free to greet others before and after services but remember to mute yourself once Rabbi and the Levins get started.
- 3) Use the Chat responsibly: I will usually be monitoring the chat and that’s a great way to let me know if there are tech or audio problems. Another good use is to wish everyone well at the end of services. However, please avoid side conversations during the service, as they can be distracting.
- 4) Focus and Participate: Maintain your attentiveness throughout the service. Avoid multitasking, scrolling through social media, or engaging in other distractions. Make believe you are sitting in the Sanctuary and give Rabbi and the Levins your full focus.
- 5) Keep Your Camera On: Rabbi frequently speaks of the beauty of the “Zoom stained glass windows” of our congregation. If you are comfortable with it, please keep your camera on so we can see you. Being on-camera is by no means required, but we would rather see you than a blacked-out window.

Zoom is a wonderful tool to bring us all together even when the building is closed for the winter season. Starting next month, we will be offering “Zoom Tech Tips” to help you control the Zoom windows. If there is anything in particular you want to learn about, please let us know.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Friday May 10	Live (and virtual) Services in Synagogue
Saturday June 8	Livingston Manor Trout Parade

Craft Beer and ‘*Spirit*’uality Havdalah

Saturday June 15	3:30-5:00
Saturday July 20	3:30-5:00
Saturday August 17	3:30 -5:00

UPCOMING SERVICES

Email virtualshabbat@gmail.com for zoom link. HINT: It's the same every month

Friday, November 3 7:00 PM Social Time with your beverage of choice
7:30 PM Services
Post services zoom gathering with Levins and congregants attending

Friday, December 1 7:00 PM Social Time with your beverage of choice
7:30 PM Services
Post services zoom gathering with Levins and congregants attending

Friday, January 5 7:00 PM Social Time with your beverage of choice
7:30 PM Services
Post services zoom gathering with Levins and congregants attending

"We look forward to coming together online and leading everyone in song on November 3rd for Shabbat Service! Our services begin at 7:30 and afterwards, we will share songs to lift and strengthen each other during our virtual Oneg. Shalom!" Ira and Julia / The Levins

Thank you for your donation

Sharon Bobbins
Marc & Joanna Brody
Columbus Jewish Foundation
Erica Sher Hart
Mindy & Fred Hirsh
Khotin Izeman Family Fund
Dr. Carl Tishler & Bonnie Katz
Marta & Joshua Pomerantz
Kathie Sachs
Judith Schwartzstein
Robert Vermes & Joan Hoffenberg
Joel & Julie Wexler

YOUR PATIENCE IS SO APPRECIATED

We are, mostly, volunteers and there are many of us doing our best to get it all right—the life event notifications, the dues notices, the acknowledgements, the zoom services the Onegs and much more. Your patience is appreciated when we miss. Many of you let us know gently, some not so much. Just keep in mind that a lot of effort goes into making it right. We appreciate your gentle understanding.

HELP PRESERVE YOUR STORY AS PART OF OUR HISTORY!!!!

Do you have a story to share now? Some photos of the synagogue or people that attended Agudas Achim. 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 We would love to hear from you.

Happy Anniversary

Jerry Burd & Patrice Held 11/20
Alan & Karen Blocker 11/22
Steve & Suzanne White 11/25

Happy Birthday

Matt Strassman 11/3
Ronald Elinoff 11/3
Jonell Watson 11/4
Eva Heisler 11/8
Bob Freedman 11/9
Steve Grossman 11/11
Joshua Pomerantz 11/18
Bonnie L. Katz 11/21
Debra Fuchs-Nadeau 11/25
Miranda Yoli 11/27

**2nd
Year!**

Havdalah Service

If you haven't been to Rabbi Tobi's Zoom Havdalah,
you don't know what you are missing. Warm, spiritual, welcoming and musical.
What a wonderful way to spend 15 minutes.

Havdalah is the Jewish ceremony held at the end of Shabbat.
Join us and be part of our growing Zoom community.

Save the date!

Saturday, November 18th @ 7 pm

Use this Zoom Link to come into the Havdalah.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71950737639?pwd=yDFMo4a1KYbcnHNgZSr1BUQRmrU621.1>

Meeting ID: 719 5073 7639 Passcode: OveXyi

By phone: 1-646-931-3860



Or use this abbreviated link: <http://bit.ly/3XWsL2I> or this QR Code:

(Note: This is a unique Zoom link and is NOT the link that we use for Shabbat services.)

To heighten your personal Havdalah experience, you may choose to have sweet-smelling spices with you....cinnamon, cloves, or allspice. Some people will take an orange and stick whole cloves into it.

LEADERSHIP BOARD

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Jewish Education News

When my son was in High School, he spent a semester in his Jr. year in the Eisendrath International Exchange program in Israel. He took all his required American High School classes, math, science and so on, but also had classes in Hebrew, Jewish History and so much more. He saw where events in the Torah happened. He saw that young people his age went onto to serve in Israel's military, the IDF, Israel Defense Forces. It was at that point that he decided he wanted a military career when he returned to New York. After High School graduation, he entered the Air Force ROTC. Ultimately, my son chose a different path to serve our country as a Police Officer. However, he, like those in Israel, and generations before him understood the necessity to safeguard our home. On Veteran's Day we honor the brave veterans who served in the US military. We express our deepest gratitude to the courageous men and women who have selflessly given of themselves to duty to our nation. Serving in the military to protect your country and community is an ancient practice. During Biblical times, this was true as well. In the book of Numbers Moses is instructed by God to "take a census of the whole Israelite community...recording them from the age of twenty years up, all those in Israel where are able to bear arms." Each person contributed to the safety of the community as a personal commitment with a spiritual connection.

In modern day Israel, for both the young men and women beginning at the age of 18 there is a compulsory military service at least 2 years in the IDF. The IDF is entrusted with safeguarding our homeland and echoes the unity and responsibility we saw in the biblical census. We have not only a physical connection to the land of Israel, but a spiritual one as well. Israel is our ancient homeland as given to us by God.

So today, my heart is heavy as I think of all those young Israeli reservists who have been called up by the IDF. As I write this article those IDF soldiers are massed on the border, and who knows what will have happened by the time you read this. We pray for their safety, even as we pray for guidance in finding an end to the senseless cycle of violence that has plagued the Middle East for so many years.

We are treading a careful line in our school. Our students know that Israel is at war, but we don't talk about the details of it. Instead, we talk about Israel as our homeland. We learn about our biblical ties to Israel, and the history of our people. We learn that we are one people, in Israel, the US and all over the world. We sing Am Yisrael Chai, and Oseh Shalom.

As we commemorate Veterans Day and we also keep our IDF soldiers in our minds and hearts, especially at this time. We thank them for their service and pray for their safety and well-being.

Shalom u'Verachot ~Peace and Blessings,
Rabbi Tobi Innerfield
Director of Education