



Agudas Achim Newsletter

June 2022

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

Save the date

June 3, 2022

7:00 PM Gather

Levin's begin welcoming the Sabbath

7:30 PM Live Services begin

June 4, 2022

Bar Mitzvah of Harlan Kuckleman

Rabbi's Message

"Israel"

Chevre

1. Solidarity

Last Sunday an estimated 40,000 marchers many with Israeli blue and white flags, moving up Manhattan's Fifth Avenue, participated in the Salute to Israel Parade with the theme, "Together Again." Because of Covid, it was the first such gathering of the annual parade in three years.

Congregations and organizations from all across the Jewish spectrum showed their support for Israel, in this challenging time for our Jewish State. For the first time in the parade's history, Christian marching groups joined the procession. There was even a Moslem contingent in the parade.

Colorful floats, Spirited bands, politicians from across the political spectrum, cabinet officials from Israel, marched behind the banners proclaiming unity and solidarity. As always, as I've seen in the years that I led a congregational contingent in the parade usually held on the first Sunday in June, (this year, it was moved up because of Shavuot) the most powerful component is always the tens of thousands of Jewish students waiving American and Israeli flags, from congregational and private schools throughout the area, singing Hebrew songs as they marched together up the parade route, often dressed in coordinating colors.

Over the years I've taught that Judaism is not

simply a faith, it's also a Peoplehood. It's also an ethical system, and a call to repair the suffering and inequity in the world, without standing idly as silent spectators. Amid all this, in our own time, is the need to support and to uphold the existence of the Jewish State.

You've heard me say that it doesn't mean that we have support or uphold any particular political party in power, or to support its policies. However, we must, each of us, do what we can to support the State of Israel and her people. Regardless of the false claims of our detractors, we have both an historical, and moral claim to our "Old-New Land."

Beyond this, Israel has existed as a sanctuary for Jews enduring hardship in any foreign land. Had the British occupiers not curtailed Jewish immigration into Palestine (when we were also called Palestinians) in the 1930's and 40's, and before, millions of our People might have been saved from the Holocaust. Israel must continue as a haven for Jews everywhere, who might require it as a refuge.

The Jewish school children in the parade waving flags and singing songs, are guarantors of this process for the years to come.

2. Shavuot

From the first day of Passover Jews count the days of the Omer, and on the fiftieth day is the holiday of Shavuot, the time celebrating the

giving and receiving of Torah. Whether an individual believes that the Torah was given to the People by God through Moses at Mount Sinai, or one sees Sinai as a metaphor, and that the Torah was given progressively over time through God intoxicated teachers, or if one understands the supreme value of Torah without being certain how it was derived, but knows that we are called to extend its teachings by the choices we make, and the way that we live, Shevuot celebrates matan torah, Hebrew for giving and receiving of Torah. Shavuot is the first Saturday night and Sunday in June.

There is a tradition of serving dairy foods on Shavuot, as it was taught that Torah has been? Is as mother's milk to the Jewish People. (Foods and recipes are on line) There is further a tradition of reading the Ten Commandments as the Torah Portion on the Holyday. The essence of Torah is decent and respectful living.

The Israelites wandered forty years in the wilderness from Sinai until the Promised Land. They had to absorb Torah and grow up a new generation. It's been 4,000 years since Sinai, some say, and we still are absorbing and learning how to do Torah.

Shavuot, in the Bible was a time to give thanks for the grain harvest, and to give thanks for Torah.

Let us pause for our own thanksgiving for the Book and for the Land, and for the blessings we receive, and can become.

Love
Rabbi Fred Pomerantz

Congratulations to all of our high school and college grads! We wish you all the very best as you begin your next exciting chapter!

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

We did it!!!! The doors of Congregation Agudas Achim opened for live services in May with the Bat Mitzvah of Sasha Freeman. This is notable on many levels;

First, it was wonderful to be inside the sanctuary, to see each other and share in the service together as a family. I love our zoom shabbats but nothing can compare to the experience of praying together surrounded by the walls of history and feeding off the energy of the congregation. Thank you, Ira and Julia, for bringing your live music to the room and to Rabbi Pomerantz for working with us to impart your knowledge, your experience and your rabbinical wisdom. And, of course, thank you to Tobi Innerfield who worked with the Bat Mitzvah family, with the Rabbi and with all parties needed to execute a bat mitzvah live and via zoom with such grace that the seamless result seemed like it had been accomplished many times before.

We were able to congregate safely with new coded entry locks, push bars at the exits. Thank you, Irving Kaplan, for installing these at the front and the back of the building and for your guidance. Additional safety measures have been installed and upgraded as well. Thank you, Don Simkin, for helping to accomplish that. We now have wi-fi throughout the building, computers to zoom our hybrid services and a screen that will continue to zoom our rabbinical leadership when our Rabbi can't attend in person.

The other very notable component to our opening is the bat mitzvah and her family were from Texas. Sasha's aunt and uncle have a home in Livingston Manor and they joined Agudas Achim during the pandemic. Their son Harlan will have his Bar Mitzvah with us in June. Because the education was online, our Education Director Tobi Innerfield and our Bar Mitzvah prep educator Richie Chiger were able to work with Harlan's cousin Sasha in Texas as well. Now, Sasha and her family from Dallas Texas are members and are forever a part of the history of Congregation Agudas Achim. Though many things will change over the course of her life she should find comfort that Agudas Achim has been a part of the Sullivan County community for nearly 100 years and

we plan to be here for many decades to come. In the 21st century with hybrid services, having congregants from around the country is a strong part of our future and our growth.

Sasha's cousin Harlan will have his Bar Mitzvah service on Saturday, June 4th. Please join us as we celebrate that accomplishment and welcome the Kuckelman family to Agudas Achim.

Do you want to help us preserve this 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.

L' Shalom,

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

Congratulations to Brad & Samantha

It is with great joy that Michele and Chip announce the engagement of their son, Brad Hemmer, to Samantha August! We could not be more excited and wish them all the very best as they plan their future together.

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.

Mazel Tov to Alex M. Schwalb

Our loving Mazel Tov to Alex M. Schwalb on his graduation on May 27, 2022 from Cornell University/Charles H. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management with a concentration in Business Strategy. We wish him the brightest of futures as he begins this new journey.

Love,

Dad, Mom, Jessica, Grandma Karen and Poppa Alan Blocker

HOPEful INFORMATION

Hope Blecher is a new member of our Sullivan County and Agudas Achim community. Her blogs are always insightful and we appreciate that she shares them with us! Click here for this month's article "The power of the seeds of Hadassah" or find the article at: <https://blogs.timesofisrael.com/the-power-of-the-seeds-of-hadassah/>

Jewish Education News

During the first weekend in June, corresponding to the 6th of Sivan, we celebrate the holiday of Shavuot. It is this day that the Torah was given by God to the Israelites on Mount Sinai more than 3,300 years ago. Shavuot which means “weeks”, which marks the end of the 7-week period between Passover when the Israelites left Egypt, and Shavuot. It is a mitzvah to count each of 49 days, known as Sifirat HaOmer, and is a period of introspection, as we prepare ourselves to receive the Torah. A custom arose among Ashkenazic Jews to read from the Book of Ruth on Shavuot. Ruth’s conversion to Judaism is analogous to our voluntary acceptance of the Torah and God’s covenant on Sinai. Ruth says to her mother-in-law Naomi, “Your people shall be my people, and your God shall be my God.” The Book of Ruth ends with the genealogy from Ruth down to King David.

We read in Midrash, that the journey Moses took to reach the top of Mount Sinai was not easy. The climb itself took many days. Moses needed to walk slowly, taking care as to where he placed each step. However, when Moses finally got to the top of Sinai there were great rewards awaiting him; God’s Torah. Often this too is true along the pathway of our own Jewish development. Ask any young person as he/ she prepares for their own Bar/ Bat Mitzvah. This is not easy. The preparation, learning the Torah and Haftarah portions, learning to chant, writing a d’var Torah all take many months, and that is after the students have spent several years in school. Yet the rewards of all their effort are great; their becoming a Bar/ Bat Mitzvah, as they present themselves as adults, in front of our Jewish community. This spring we opened our Temple for in-person services for the first time since it closed in December 2019, with a Bat Mitzvah in the beginning of May, and an upcoming Bar Mitzvah the first weekend of June, Shavuot weekend. Jewish learning and Jewish growth, however, do not end at a Bar or Bat Mitzvah. There are many opportunities available if we are willing to make an effort, and here too the rewards are great. Judaism values our continued personal growth. Each time we read the Torah we have new insights, often as a result of what we have been learning. Each Shabbat service Rabbi Pomerantz speaks to us and teaches us about a holiday or other Jewish topics. The Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) has a weekly podcast called “10 Minutes of Torah”, with insights on the weeks’ Torah portion. The URJ website, My Jewish Learning, Aish.com, PJ Library, and many other Jewish sites, have resources for children and adults alike.

This year we held Hebrew School classes by zoom, where students learned, connected with one another and grew Jewishly. We would like to thank Morah Mindy Knaster for teaching our students each week with a creative, interactive, and engaging program. Thank you to Richie Chiger for working with our B’nai Mitzvah students. As this year winds down, we should reflect on all that we have learned and how much we have grown. It may not have been easy, which is why it is so valuable. May we always continue to learn and grow, until we reach the age of Moses, 120.

Have a wonderful and rejuvenating summer.

Shalom u’Verachah ~ Peace and Blessings

Tobi Innerfield, Director of Education

Happy Anniversary

Jerry & Monica Frey 6/2
Steven & Diane Fishman 6/5
Eli & Belle Shaff 6/9
Amy Lavine & Ilene Samath 6/13
Bruce & Karen Ellsweig 6/16
Dan & Linda Berkowicz 6/18
William & Sherry Silver 6/18
Lewis & Sheila Skolnick 6/19
Simon & Natasha Hirschhorn 6./25
Jerrold & Vivian Ehrlich 6/27
Richard & Jackie Chiger 6/28
Joe & Shelley Siegel-Watson 6/28
Ed & Anne Ehrenberg 6/29
Bob & Lynne Freedman 6/30

Happy Birthday

Monica Frey 6/1
Ilene Samath 6/1
Wendy Uretsky 6/2
William Silver 6/4
Avril Brenig 6/5
Greta Salzberg 6/5
Aaron Schmitt 6/5
Shelley Siegel-Watson 6/8
Don Simkin 6/8
Joseph F. Galli 6/13
Eileen Katz 6/17
Danielle Strassman 6/20
Ethan Mandelbaum 6/24
Sherry Strassman 6/24
Ryan Katz 6/26
Dr. Paul Salzberg 6/27



Our June 4th Bar Mitzvah: Harlan Kuckelman

Harlan Kuckelman is 13 years old and lives in Brooklyn, with his father, Sol, and mother, Linda, and his sister, Wren (9yrs old), and brother, Niels (7 yrs old). Harlan is finishing up his 8th grade and final year at the Hannah Senesh Community Day School in Brooklyn. Next year, he will be attending high school at Brooklyn Friends.

He enjoys playing Warhammer, tennis, basketball and is in a youth acting ensemble called Tada! in the NY City. He is looking forward to his Bar Mitzvah in June at Agudas Achim and celebrating with friends and family.

CONGREGATIONAL UPDATES

- We're reaching out...we will have a table at the June 11th Trout Parade so that we can introduce Congregation Agudas Achim to the community. If you would like to join us and be part of the outreach, drop us a note at virtualshabbat@gmail.com
- Sprucing up; Put it on your calendar...we'll be having a garden work bee on June 12th at 1:00 PM. Bring some gardening gloves and tools and join the fun!
- We'll be hosting a table at the Livingston Manor Trout Parade

UPCOMING SHABBAT SERVICES

June 3, 2022

Gather at 7:00 PM

7:30 PM Services

Levins begin welcoming the Sabbath*

LIVE SERVICES beginning at 7:30 PM

A zoom link will be provided for anyone that prefers not to attend in person. HINT: it is the same every month

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

June 4, 2022

Bar Mitzvah of Harlan Kuckleman

July 1, 2022

Gather at 7:00 PM

7:30 PM Services

Levins begin welcoming the Sabbath

LIVE SERVICES beginning at 7:30 PM

A zoom link will be provided for anyone that cannot or

Prefers not to attend in person. HINT: it is the same every month

August 5, 2022

Gather at 7:00 PM

7:30 PM Services

Levins begin welcoming the Sabbath

LIVE SERVICES beginning at 7:30 PM

A zoom link will be provided for anyone that cannot or

Prefers not to attend in person. HINT: it is the same every month

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:

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) and click donate now

MEMBERSHIP

Thank you to those of you that have become members or maintained your membership this year. We have a number of new members and most members have renewed. Every one of you is valued and treasured.

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.