



Agudas Achim Newsletter

September 2023

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

Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur Services – See schedule on page 4

PLEASE GOD, LISTEN!

Chevre,

At the High Holiday services I visualize, especially now, the congregation standing for the Ashamnu prayer.

That's the prayer when the Levins sing, word by word, all the elements of the confessional and we echo each word together as a congregation. The prayer is an acrostic. It lists all the confessions (Arrogance, Bigotry, Cynicism, etc.) alphabetically and it is as if one would move from A to Z through the English translation, but rather we do the prayer in Hebrew.

No one present has committed all of the offences mentioned. No one present has committed even a fraction of the offences, but the idea is that everyone is "covered" within the mantel of the congregation. No one has to confess alone. It's part of the group ethic of the Jewish people. Especially at the high holidays we help one another through not only the confessional, but through the attempt to renew our lives, to effect the changes we wanted to make last year but were unable, unwilling, or found the whole process too risky.

My friend Rabbi Kerry Olitzky, one of the former deans at our Hebrew Union College campus in New York recently wrote this poem to help we rabbis help our congregations prepare especially for the

Ashamnu, and to begin to heal ourselves, and return to our own highest self, and to return again to the Source. As you read its words think about all of us standing together--those in the congregation, and those participating at home through Zoom.

How does his poem relate to our lives?

PLEASE, GOD, LISTEN!

Please God listen to me. It's all I ask.

I know I may not always deserve it.

But I come before You,

having cleansed the broken pieces of my soul.

I struggle daily to repair what I have done wrong.

To redirect the course my life has taken over these past months.

The effort consumes me.

It's all that I can think about,

all that occupies my waking hours.

And just when my strength seems depleted,

I feel renewed for the process of repentance.

I long to be restored to wholeness.

I turn to you knowing that I can achieve it

only through my relationship

with You.

In some congregations the torah covers are changed from the colored mantels used during the year to the white mantels that are used for the High Holidays while all sing the responses to the Ashamnu. This represents a time of transformation. This ritual demonstrates the change that is possible at the High Holidays if we wish it, if we struggle for it, if we pray for the ability to get our lives closer to our highest ideals. However, in our congregation, Don Simkin and others will have already changed to our holiday white mantels so that when the Ark is open there is revealed the silver and white symbolizing the renewal possible during the Holy Days. For me, it always seems an astounding moment when the curtains are drawn back, and the white Torah covers – as if by a kind of magic – have suddenly appeared. As a congregation, individually and as a whole we greet this new sight and power.

For the last 3,000 years since King Solomon built the magnificent temple in Jerusalem Jews have gathered to gain strength from one another and to give strength to all who have stood together in worship.

We will hear the sounds of the shofar together, we will read torah together, we will observe the sacred Kol Nidre ritual together, we will say Yizkor for our loved ones lost, together, and we will conclude our services with the beautiful and uplifting N'eilah service ending with the long proclamation of the ram's horn and the rousing Havdalah ritual of song and light.

Whether in the sanctuary or on Zoom, we invite you to make the journey with us by sharing in the services for these High Holy Days.

Love,
Rabbi Fred Pomerantz

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

Please join us for High Holidays this year. Whether live or virtual, it is always a beautiful service at Congregation Agudas Achim. We have been fortunate to be able to maintain our open-door policy, so no tickets are needed, no seats are reserved, and no membership is required. The only reservation needed will be for the break-fast after Yom Kippur services. How do we do that? We are sincerely blessed with people who have been generous of their time and their donations. Will we always be able to? Certainly, if the generosity of both continues; one without the other is not enough. We hope you will consider us during our annual high holiday appeal so that Agudas Achim will be able to remain a presence for many years to come.

It's important to Rabbi Pomerantz, the Levins and the entire leadership that we do our best to get it right. With that in mind **we have upgraded the audio and visual systems so that the sound is better for those online and those in attendance.** (Thanks Steven Innerfield, Max Siegel and Ira and Julia Levin for your hard work on this)

As leaders of the congregation the board is always grateful for the foundation that was handed to us by the leaders of the Livingston Manor Jewish community. In addition to a small foundation of funds to sustain the congregation they provided us with a spirit that has been an undercurrent for nearly 40 years. As we develop and grow, honoring our history and maintaining that spirit continues to be at the core of every decision we make. Every member and every donation of time and money that helps us grow is sincerely appreciated. And for those that find themselves in need of that spirit at any time during the year, we are grateful that we can provide the opportunity. Thanks for being a part of Agudas Achim, 'a gathering of brothers and sisters'.

L'Shana Tova

Judy Siegel, President
845-798-0783

HOLIDAYS 5784

YIZKOR

Yizkor means remember. The Yizkor service at Yom Kippur is an opportunity to honor those that have passed by giving *tzedakah* [charity] in their memory, on the theory that the good deeds of the survivors elevate the souls of the departed.

We will once again provide an opportunity to have the names of any of your loved ones who have passed scrolled on our zoom feed during Yizkor. Please send the names that you would like listed ASAP with a donation to :

Congregation Agudas Achim, PO Box 714, Livingston Manor, NY 12758

Suggested Yahrzeit Donation(s)

\$18 _____ \$36 _____ \$100 _____ \$180 _____ \$250 _____ \$360 _____ \$500 _____ \$750
_____ \$1000 _____ Other \$ _____

Names inscribed on the memorial boards in the sanctuary are read out loud during Yizkor

BREAK THE FAST WITH YOUR COMMUNITY!

- September 25th community break-fast is back! Bring your family, join old friends, make new ones. Plan on a great meal downstairs after Yom Kippur afternoon services.
- Please RSVP to Karen letting us know if you can bring a small dish to share at 845-706-7175 or msnaab@aol.com

IN HONOR OF ROSE BROWN

The kindest and most generous people are part of Agudas Achim. One of those people was Rose Brown who, sadly, passed away this year. In Rose's memory her husband Les Mattis has donated the funding to improve the sound system and zoom experience for all who attend services live or virtually. We are grateful to Les for thinking of us and to Rose for everything she gave to Agudas Achim. She will be missed.

UPCOMING SERVICES

***Services continue to be virtual throughout the year.**

FIRST FRIDAY SHABBAT SERVICE WILL BE DEFERRED TO SEPTEMBER 15

Rosh Hashanah Services

Friday, Sept 15	8:00 pm	Ere of Rosh Hashanah
Saturday, Sept 16	10:00 am	Rosh Hashanah Morning Services

Yom Kippur Services

Sunday, Sept 24	8:00 pm	Kol Nidre
Monday, Sept 25	10:00 am	Morning Services
	11:30 am	Yizkor (NOTE: This time is approximate)
	5:00 pm	Afternoon Service - Reading of Jonah
	5:30 pm	N'eilah
	Dusk	Community Break Fast

Friday, Oct 6 7:00 PM Gather In person at Agudas Achim or on zoom
7:30 PM Levins begin welcoming the Sabbath* live and via zoom*

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

DAFFODIL GARDEN/DOVE-DAFFODIL-DASH/COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECT

Commemorating Children's Lives Lost in Holocaust. Joining our communities through a garden, a walk, and the arts. For more information click here (<https://gofund.me/ac57266c>) for a gofundme page and a YouTube video.

Daffodil Planting: Thursday, October 12th and Friday, October 13th
3:00 pm -5:00 pm Creekside Park, Liberty

Dove-Daffodil-Dash Sunday, October 15th
Meet at noon, Start 12:30 Arthur's Acres Animal Sanctuary
89 Ahrens Rd., Parksville and concludes at Creekside Park, Liberty, NY.
You can email Hope at hopedoc1@gmail.com for more information

COMMUNITY BUILDING

We had so much fun at Craft Beer and *Spirituality* Havdalah (CBS Havdalah) at The Smoke Joint (Thanks Jennifer Grossman) *with some great music presented by Ira and Julia Levin and sampling of some of the best local beer and spirits we were able to embrace the (almost) end of Shabbat together. Keep on eye on the calendar for more community building events during the year and our CBS Havdalah next summer.*

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

Steven & Rabbi Tobi Innerfield 10/2

Marc & Susan Jaffe 10/2

Michael & Dayra Lederer 10/2

Happy Birthday

Neil Schwartz 9/19

Sheila Skolnik 9/24

Isaac A Galli 9/27

Mara Resnick 9/30

Lauren Katz 10/1

**2nd
Year!**

Havdalah Service

If you haven't been to Rabbi Tobí'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.

Fall/ Winter Schedule

Save the dates!

Saturday, Sept. 9th @ 8 pm

Saturday, Oct. 21st @ 8 pm

Saturday, Nov. 18th @ 7 pm

Saturday, Dec. 16th @ 7 pm

Saturday, Jan. 20th @ 7 pm

Saturday, Feb. 17th @ 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.

We look forward to your joining us on Zoom!

RSVP not required!

Congregation Agudas Achim Livingston Manor, NY 12748
845-439-3600

Jewish Education News

Music is a powerful medium. Hearing music can transport you across the years, across continents, from where you are right at this moment to a place and time far away. Music in this sense has a mystical, almost magical quality. There are some songs that take me back to my childhood. The Eagles' Hotel California will immediately transport me to High School, hanging out with my girlfriends. When I hear that song, I can see all their faces clearly, I can see what we were wearing, and what we were doing. One time I was in the car with my father as he was driving, the radio was playing in the background while we talked. Suddenly he said, "Shhh, shhh, God is singing." My 8-year-old mind was confused, "Is God on the radio? Does God sing?" Now, whenever I hear Frank Sinatra singing, I am 8 years old again, sitting in that old station wagon with my dad.

Jewish music has a different essence. In Judaism, song is prayer, and they are linked with one another. Think about the songs that you hear during the Friday erev Shabbat services. The music and songs are woven together within the service to create an enhanced spiritual experience not only for each of us individually, but for the congregational community as well. When we sing with one another the atmosphere of the temple changes and we are spiritually elevated. The song Oseh Shalom is not just about peace, we are praying for peace, acknowledging God as the creator of peace. As Shabbat ends, when I am leading Havdalah, I sing Shavuah Tov, which literally means "A Good Week". I am praying that the week ahead be one of goodness and peace for me, my family and all of us.

Jewishly, some of the most moving and powerful melodies are those of the High Holidays. These days are sacred and holy; and the solemn, reflective music of the High Holidays heightens our experience, as our hearts turn inward to reflection and outward to God. Can you imagine being in temple all morning without music? The Hasidic Rabbis of the 18th century reveled in the sounds of song, which they believed elevated our spirit and our soul, and bringing us closer to God. Music is an important part of divine service. At this season, upon hearing the words, "Aveinu Malkeinu", the melody starts playing over and over in my head. "Aveinu Malkeinu, Aveinu Malkeinu, chonanu vaaneinu ki ein banu maasim". Suddenly, there I am, simultaneously a child again, in that little shul listening to the Rabbi's deep baritone chant, the sounds swirling around my head, and also in our beautiful synagogue surrounded by the stained-glass windows, hearing the Levins chanting the melody of Aveinu Malkeinu. The melodies and music of these High Holy Days transport us to a sacred place and time.

However, Jewish music does more than that. Music becomes the tool that connects the words of prayer to our minds, and our being. We read in the Babylonian Talmud Megillah 32a, "...one who studies Torah through song demonstrates that he is fond of his learning. Furthermore, the tune helps him remember what he has learned." The Rabbis are telling us that song is an essential part of how we should teach prayer and Torah to our students. Yes, our Hebrew School students learn how to read Hebrew, but they also learn the chant that goes with the prayers, so when they are adults, they will not forget it. The prayer will be part of who they are.

Our Zoom Hebrew School will be held Wednesdays, which will begin after Yom Kippur. Morah Mindy is looking forward to another wonderful year with the students of Congregation Agudas Achim. Using multiple modalities, including song, stories, art and videos, we teach Torah, holidays, Israel, Hebrew and more.

If you know of a family who is looking for Hebrew School for their child, please let me know. We are looking to grow our school. Since our school is held on Zoom, children do not have to live near Livingston Manor.

Shanah Tovah u'Metukah

Wishing you all a Good and Sweet New Year,

Rabbi Tobi Innerfield

Director of Education