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Capital Campaign: This Is Our House
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March & April 2019
24 Adar I – 25 Nissan 5779

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Kivvun Students Braving the Elements at Camp Jewell.
Shalom, Chaverim,

Most of you are aware that Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek is now engaged in a Capital Campaign. This bold, congregation-wide endeavor asks that we all contribute, to the best of our ability, to the capital needs of our congregation. This is, of course, a different kind of contribution than others that we may make to our congregation. It isn't for a particular program, or to a different kind of fund (all important in their own right). Rather, we are asking for generous gifts of tzedakah (righteous giving) which will enhance, repair, and rejuvenate our beautiful synagogue building.

Why is this distinction important? Why should we care about our physical space? I want to share three reasons why.

First, in Exodus 25:8, we read,

"And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them." In this moment of our story, the Israelites are wandering through the wilderness without any tangible way of feeling connected with God. God instructs the people to build a holy space — a sanctuary — so that God's presence may actually be present among them. Immediately, we may think to ourselves, "wait, isn't God everywhere?" Well, yes, but, as human beings, we also know that it is meaningful for us to have a space set aside where it feels that much easier to let go, to breathe, and to reach out to whatever concept of God we might have.

We happen to be extremely fortunate to be blessed with such a profoundly beautiful mikdash (holy space). Our building is stunningly beautiful, and many who enter our walls for the first time remark that they feel as if "they've come home." We feel tranquility, warmth, and community the moment we enter our very own mikdash. It is caused by both the brilliant design of the space, as well as by the holy and special people within.

Giving to our Capital Campaign ensures that our very own mikdash is standing strong as a holy space for all who wish to enter for many years to come.

Second, giving tzedakah to our physical building in this way is planting a seed for the future. You might happen to view this donation as a gamble — is CBSRZ really going to be around for so many years that we should put money into repairing and maintaining the building? Is this really a priority for me and my family? My answer to you is a resounding YES. Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek continues to be a congregation that brings together incredible people in learning, in cultural events, in social activities, in acts of social justice, and in meaningful spiritual encounters and experiences. More importantly, we truly care about each other. We have a vision for the future that is strong, caring, creative, and meaningful. As I stated during the High Holy Days, I believe that we sustain CBSRZ, "In order to come together as a Jewish community so that we can care for each other and the world." So please help us to plant seeds which will grow, blossom, and flourish into something bountiful for many generations of Jews to come.

Finally, our text (Exodus 25:2) is clear about who should give:

"You shall accept gifts for Me from every person whose heart so moves them"

We hope that you will give from your hearts, because something at CBSRZ touches your heart. We hope that those who are able to give generously will do so. And those who have differing or challenging financial situations are warmly invited to give at whatever level is comfortable. Just knowing that you have given to this Campaign will be edifying and meaningful for you. Allow your heart to move you to participate in a way which is significant. You'll know that, when you enter our building, you've played a key role in sustaining this special space for the future.

Of course, in the end, we are so much more than a building, but, just as God needs a space in which to dwell, so do the Jews and Jewish families of the lower Connecticut Valley. Having a holy space allows us to access sacred encounters with ourselves, with others, and with something greater than us all.

Please take part in our Capital Campaign. Please contribute to the repair and maintenance of our mikdash, our very sacred and special space, so that generations to come will be able to see how important this community was to us, and they'll be able to celebrate how important it continues to be to them.

L'shalom – In peace
What would happen if CBSRZ disappeared, simply vanished? No building, no grounds, no Music & More, no Torah Study, no sermons, no place for Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, no religious school, no place to mourn, rejoice, share community, and contemplate?

This is what raced through my mind when I received a call from CBSRZ President Brad Jubelirer. What triggered this troubling image were the questions he posed in the September Whole Megillah:

“What does CBSRZ mean so much to you and why would you want to preserve our Congregation and keep it running strong?”

Since I think in extreme terms, the natural conclusion is that the shul is facing serious fiscal challenges, and if we fail to react with strength, there is a risk that we will find ourselves in the same predicament as many other congregations: dues are inadequate to cover the costs of operating the synagogue. And they close.

Our needs are in front of our eyes: it is hard to not notice the physical deterioration of the roof because the evidence of leaks is obvious. Parts of the outside siding are peeling away. The panels that separate the sanctuary from the social hall are unwieldy and potentially hazardous. We have accessibility issues, security concerns, and gaps between the doors and floors. When you add it all up, there are projections that come to more than $1 million in accumulated expenditures that have not been made because there is no money for big capital improvements in reserves. The day of reckoning has been over 15 years in the making.

We all have knowledge of this situation but haven’t been able to address it, until now. The financial burden is being addressed by our Board of Directors. To that end, the details, priorities and costs have now been carefully outlined. The fact is we need to be proactive. Our dues structure does not provide funding or savings for these known and periodic repairs. So, in order to address our needs, we have to appeal directly to the generosity of our membership.

“Why does CBSRZ mean so much to you?”

I thought deeply about this question and it took a second to conclude that CBSRZ is my extended family. When I thought about my 62 years as a member, I realized that there are a lot of people that I am connected to that happen to be Jewish or married to a Jew. My focal point is CBSRZ. All of our significant life events were surrounded by the community that is in large part defined by CBSRZ. It is my spiritual home, and the people in it are important to me and our family.

“Why would you want to preserve our Congregation and keep it running strong?”

To preserve the Community for not just me and my family, but for all families now and in the future. I am not interested in legacy—that is, getting my name on something—but I am interested in sustainability. To that end, we have to live within our budget and have to budget those expenses that are not immediate but are going to happen over time.

Brad’s questions to the congregation forced me to pose a question to myself: So, now that I know we have a problem, what is my obligation and responsibility to help?

Boy, I kind of wanted to duck this question. But it is impossible to do so because you can’t bury your head in the sand and let the problem go for another year or two down the road. The problems won’t go away, they are only worsening. My feeling is that I inherited a place to worship and a place of community. People before me asked these same questions and responded with generosity, making our community possible. Now, I must do something to keep it all going for the next generation.

Two years ago, then CBSRZ President Stephen Davis approached me to support the beginning of this capital campaign. I felt the detail to the request was insufficient at that time, but I did not offer to help get the detail in order. I contracted a good deal of Jewish Guilt in declining the request. I had other priorities. When approached this year, I decided that I needed to do something other than say NO. So, I got a little involved to help get the information together in a way that can be communicated and understood by our membership. Although we haven’t put the final touches on it, the need is so strong that Doreen and I decided that we would forgo a five-year pledge and take some savings and give it to the campaign now.

This campaign is a big deal! The stakes are high, and this is one of those situations where the amount of money that is given by each of us will determine what kind of future we have as a congregation. When our community was young, we met in people’s houses until a synagogue could be afforded. Yes, we can exist without a building. But we need not revert to those days. Our future is bright, our community is strong and vibrant, and we have a unique building known far and wide for its beauty and inspiration.

Giving financially is always a challenge. There is never a good time and never enough money. However, this is the expense associated with supporting our community. Of course, we can take steps to better live within our means. But our remarkable building must be preserved. And to that end, we must pay the price to keep our home and community intact.

What are the alternatives? I really do not know. But, I can’t ignore our real needs. I did what I could do to help, but there is always more to give or do to make progress. We all have something important at stake here. So when you are called, please have an open mind about the realities we face.
and give what you can to preserve the beauty of our congregation and the strength of our community for today and for the next generation. You may recall the film produced a few years ago about our space. It was called “We Built This House” after the message on the walls of the synagogue as you enter. Now it is truly “we” who must step up. That is the responsibility of each of us who belong to CBSRZ, l’
V’dor.

SECRET SEDER

By Ellen Nodelman

On Sunday, April 7, at 3:00 pm, CBSRZ will be hosting a Secret Seder, the latest in the Adult Education Committee’s Noshing Our Way Through Jewish History series, replicating the seders held in secret. In countries where the Inquisition was arresting as heretics any “conversos,” or “anusim,” nominal converts to Christianity who practiced their Judaism behind closed doors hid that practice not only from outsiders but often within their own families. Now, centuries later, descend-

ants of conversos are discovering their Jewish heritage and finally making sense of some old, peculiar, family traditions, like lighting candles on Friday night and burying loved ones in one day.

While many of the converso families lost touch with Judaism, retaining only the vestiges of some mysterious family customs passed down through the generations, others continued to hold on to vital traditions, from nominal circumcision to burial practices to Passover observances. Among the latter is the Hamishi Seder, celebrated in some obscure corners of Southern Italy by descendants of Sicilian Jews who fled Spanish-ruled Sicily in 1492 after the expulsion order and by descendants of Sephardic Jews who found their way to Calabria.

Despite the poverty and isolation of the area which impeded the Inquisition, observing any vestige of Jewish practice was extremely dangerous. Sometimes sympathetic Christians would help their neighbors by allowing them to have a seder in their own, safe Christian home (albeit in as hidden a place as possible). Seder would be celebrated not on the first night, nor on the second but on the fifth – because the Inquisition and its informants would be on the lookout for the first two nights but would loosen their watch by the fifth.

We are going to tell the stories of those conversos and of their descendants and celebrate a Secret Seder much as they would have, preparing food for the Seder meal from recipes garnered from a variety of sources. Some have been handed down within converso families; others come from a cookbook on Spanish-Jewish cookery with recipes resurrected directly from records of the Inquisition, which, like the Nazis, kept meticulous records and compiled lists of ingredients and cooking to use as proof of the accused’s guilt.

Our seder foods will include matzoh and haroset from these recipes and will feature dishes made by conversos in sixteenth and seventeenth century Spain as well as ones from converso and Jewish communities in Italy and from other parts of the Sephardic diaspora. We will combine the stories of Crypto Jews and their descendants with elements of the traditional Sephardic seder and of the Secret Seder.

Many members of the CBSRZ family have joined in this effort to prepare food for the Secret Seder. Anyone who would like to lend a hand testing recipes and preparing food for the seder should get in touch with Ellen Nodelman (ellennodelman@gmail.com). We will be happy to send you a recipe or two!

We look forward to seeing everyone at the Secret Seder on April 7. Feel free to invite your friends to join us as well—a little return for the hospitality that neighbors showed the Conversos on those original Seder Hamishis. Please reserve your spot(s) on the CBSRZ website as soon as possible so we will know how much food to prepare.
Music & More's eleventh season kicks off with a special ukulele concert and workshop event, “Uke Can’t Play Ukes Without U”, presented by world renowned ukulele master Jumpin’ Jim Beloff and joined by his wife Leapin’ Liz. The ukulele fun is set for Sunday, March 24, 2019 starting with the workshop at 2:00pm for non-players and beginners, followed by the concert at 3:45pm featuring Jumpin’ Jim, his wife Leapin’ Liz, and a bass accompanist. Attendees with ukuleles will have the opportunity to join in on several songs during the concert. The workshop will last for approximately 90 minutes and with just a few simple chords and basic strumming patterns, you will be playing popular tunes and fun songs on the ukulele in no time. After the workshop there will be a short intermission followed by the concert.

Tickets are $30.00 for adults, $25.00 for CBSRZ members; children 16 years and under $15.00. Tickets can be purchased through the CBSRZ website at www.cbsrz/engage/events/music-more and or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/music.more.cbsrz/, where you can follow us for updates.

About the Ukulele Workshop
The workshop is open to anyone 8 years or older and no prior experience playing the ukulele is necessary. Jumpin’ Jim will be targeting those that are new or just beginning to play the ukulele, although even more experienced players are guaranteed to pick up useful tips and licks from the master. Workshop participants must bring their own ukulele, tuned, and in playable condition. If you don’t already have an instrument, Jim Beloff and the Music & More team have compiled some affordable recommendations at the event links above. Follow the event links as well for resources on how to tune and setup your ukulele so you will be ready to “jump in with Jim” that afternoon.

A little background on Jumpin’ Jim and Leapin’ Liz Beloff.
Finding a ukulele at the Pasadena Rose Bowl Flea Market in 1992 inspired Liz and Jim to start Flea Market Music, Inc., and to publish the popular Jumpin’ Jim’s series of ukulele songbooks. This series is sold worldwide and includes The Daily Ukulele: 365 Songs For Better Living and The Daily Ukulele: Leap Year Edition, two of the biggest and best-selling ukulele songbooks ever published. In addition to being an active songwriter Jim also published The Ukulele—A Visual History (Backbeat Books), and produced Legends of Ukulele, a CD compilation for Rhino Records and has made three how-to-play DVDs for Homespun. His 2014 two-CD set, Dreams I Left In Pockets, features 33 songs he wrote or co-wrote with uke legends Herb “Obta-san” Obta and Lyle Ritz.

In 1999, Jim composed and premiered “Uke Can’t Be Serious,” a concerto for solo ukulele and symphony orchestra. Since then the piece has been performed many times, most recently in 2016 with the Choate School orchestra in Germany and Austria and also with the Michigan Philharmonic. In 2017, Jim premiered a new work entitled “The Dovetale” commissioned and performed by the Wallingford (CT) Symphony Orchestra.

Liz Maihock Beloff, with a background in film and television graphics, designs the covers and art-directs all of FMM’s songbooks, CDs and DVDs. She is also a talented singer who, before teaming up with Jim, sang with a cappella groups in college and New York City. As performers, Liz and Jim have become known for their breezy, close harmonies on standards and Jim’s original songs. They perform together regularly throughout the USA, playing their family-made Fluke, Flea and Firefly ukuleles. They have also toured Japan, Australia and Canada and believe in their company’s motto, “Uke Can Change the World.”

For more information on Jim and Liz visit www.fleamarketmusic.com and on Facebook at facebook.com/jimbeloffmusic.
Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek
Congregational Passover Seder
Second Night of Passover – Saturday, April 20, 2019
Seder begins at 6:00 pm followed by dinner at approximately 7:00 pm.
CATERED BY OUR VERY OWN BOB & LINDA ZEMMEL AND ALFORNO RESTAURANT

MENU

Hard Boiled Egg and Salt Water
Chicken soup with Linda’s Matzoh Balls
Gefilte Fish with Two Horseradishes: Hot and Homemade Hotter
(mild also available)
Traditional Seder Plates

**Wine** BYOB
Ceremonial wine and juice will be provided. Please bring your own for dinner.

Braised Brisket Served With Its Pan Juices and Roasted Brussel Sprouts
Breast of Empire Chicken Stuffed with Wild Mushrooms
Fried Chicken Fingers a la Matzo Meal (FOR THE CHILDREN)
Roasted Seasonal Vegetables
Farfel Kugel
Arugula and Mesclun Salad with Vegetables
Grilled Asparagus and Grape Tomato Salad

Dessert
Linda’s Almond Macaroons
Assorted Coffees and Teas

Please join us as we come together to celebrate Passover – it’s always a delicious and spiritual experience. To add a personal touch to the celebration, we ask you to bring your family Seder plate (we’ll provide the ingredients). Rabbi Bellows will begin the service promptly at 6:00 pm.

Please send your reservation and payment to the synagogue office by Friday April 12th. (55 East Kings Highway, Chester CT 06412). You may also register online via the CBSRZ.org website, call (860-526-8920) or email (office@cborz.org) your reservation with payment to follow. You must have a reservation in order to attend. **If you wish to sit with another family, we suggest you arrive no later than 5:30 to get seats together.**

Name(s) ___________________________________________ Phone Number ____________

Member Adults ______ x $36 = ________ Non-Member Adults _______ x $45 = ________

Member Kids (5 - 12) ______ x $10= ________ Non-Member Kids (5 - 12) _______ x $18 = ________

Member Kids (under 5) ____ free Non-Member Kids (under 5) ____ free

We would like to donate $_______ towards the purchase of a meal for someone who cannot afford to come to our Seder.
Sculpture Show Invites Coming Together
by Tom Soboleski

“When our souls get heavy with life’s burdens, art has the potential to soothe and solace. That theme is explored in an exhibit of new works by nationally renowned sculptor Gilbert Boro at the Main Street Gallery. Coming Together, a show highlighting works born out of Mr. Boro’s loss of his wife, kicked off with a standing room only opening reception on Sunday, February 3. The exhibit is a prequel to the unveiling of the synagogue’s planned “Meditation Garden,” planned to open in 2020.

The “Meditation Garden” will feature a large-scale sculpture loaned from Mr. Boro’s Studio 80 Sculpture Grounds in Old Lyme, CT, a park-like setting developed by Mr. Boro and his wife Emily. The original model of the loaned garden sculpture will be donated to CBSRZ.

The show has special significance for Mr. Boro because the synagogue is the repository of a Memorial Light celebrating the memory of his wife of 48 years, Emily Seward Boro. A period of sadness and depression that followed her passing in 2013 acted as a catalyst, Boro says, fueling new creativity culminating in his “Musical Master Works” and “What’s Knot to Like” series. Works of aluminum, steel, and copper from these series, plus a few larger pieces are on public display for the first time.

Boro credits his interaction with CBSRZ’s designer, the celebrated artist Sol LeWitt, for firing his creative imagination at a young age. “I found LeWitt’s extensive range of artistic expression extremely stimulating,” Boro says. “He inspired me and challenged me to broaden my vision, which resulted in applying my art education to the creation of architecture. Having my sculptures exhibited here has special meaning for me.”

Photography by Christina Goldberg is also part of the show. Goldberg’s captivating images give viewers a unique insight to Boro’s sculptures by zooming in for intimate inspection of the joints and details. They are printed on thin sheets of aluminum using a dye sublimation process.

“This exhibit is rather novel,” says the gallery’s curator, Linda Pinn, “in that to a large degree the works to be exhibited will be scale models of the work that Gil anticipates placing in the garden.” The “Meditation Garden” will draw on the therapeutic power of nature and inspiring capacity of art. Art’s power to stimulate and transform our thoughts and beliefs makes the garden a potential balm to soothe our minds and spirits. She adds: “Combining the two in a meditation garden,” is an idea that “goes beyond any specific artist or garden. Bringing art and nature together to create a peaceful, contemplative environment where people can walk, relax, and be calm,” will be a respite to escape, recharge, and heal.

The Coming Together exhibit will be on display until April 30. The artist has generously agreed to donate a portion of all work sold to the synagogue. Visitors are welcome Monday–Friday, 10 AM–3 PM, and Sunday mornings when school is in session.

Tom Soboleski is a freelance writer who focuses on topics of human interest, art, culture and history. His articles appear in local and regional magazines and many of them are posted on his website, www.tomsobo.com. He resides in Ivoryton, CT.
Gil Boros,
*ATR II*, polished steel.

Gil Boros, *Knot Details*
Join actor and photographer Gili Getz at CBSRZ for his deeply personal performance on Israel — how to keep the conversation civil and the mind open.

SUNDAY, MARCH 3, 2019 | 4:00PM

Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek
55 E. Kings Hwy. | Chester, CT 06412

Light refreshments will be served

Please RSVP to jasmine@jstreet.org or call the CBSRZ office at 860-526-8920

Leslie Bulion Returns to CBSRZ
Birds, Bugs, Books & Bagels,
Entrancing Adults and Little Ones Alike.

Birders, young and old, and lovers of leafy creatures – Leslie Bulion, one of CBSRZ’s favorite authors of children’s books, will be coming to back to us for Books & Bagels on Sunday, April 28.

Author of many beloved books for both middle schoolers and little children, Leslie has just published Superlative Birds, a book that will appeal to grownups as well as children. Using her usual combination of fun-filled verse and solid scientific fact, Leslie introduces her readers to the wonderful world of birds, from the tiniest bee hummingbird to the speediest peregrine falcon. Find out which has the loudest voice…which builds the biggest nest…which has the most feathers…and which characteristics all birds share.

Leslie will share her book first with bird-loving adults at the usual 9:30 session of Books & Bagels, then have a special Kids Books & Bagels session with the children from CBSRZ’s Kivvun, at 10:30. For the children, she will bring in a second book, published last year, Leaf Litter Creatures, a humorous poetic tour through the leaf litter layer and introduction to the billions of tiny critters that live there. This will be the chance for the children to meet some of the denizens of the “brown food web,” the ecosystem of busy recyclers who engineer and enrich soil so green plants can thrive – not just through the book but through live specimens that Leslie will bring in for children to examine for real.

Books will be available for sale (and autographing) at both adult and children’s sessions. So come, and bring your kids and your friends and your friends’ kids.

WOW Shabbat: Honoring 30 Years of Women of the Wall
Saturday, March 9, 10:30 am Shabbat Morning Service

Women of the Wall's central mission is to attain social and legal recognition of our right, as women, to wear prayer shawls, pray, and read from the Torah, collectively and aloud, at the Western Wall. They gather each month, on Rosh Chodesh (the beginning of the new Hebrew month), to pray at the Western Wall, and they have been subjected to arrests, attacks, and violence, just for wanting to pray as equals in that holy space.

It will be especially meaningful to pray together as women and men that morning, especially if those of us who are comfortable in Tallitot will wear them (and if you have a WOW tallit, please bring it!). We at CBSRZ may take for granted our ability to sing out loud, to wear prayer garb which we find meaningful, and to read from the Torah as equals. Let’s honor those who fight for those same rights throughout Israel.
Kivvun Korner
Photos from Camp Jewell

Photos by Rabbi Bellows
Bat Mitzvah of Erin Brennan
11/10/18

What was your Torah portion?
Genesis Parashat Toldot

What was it about and what did you learn from it?
My Torah portion, Parashat Toldot, is about two twin brothers, Esau and Jacob. Esau came out first, just a few seconds before Jacob, giving him the birthright, and Jacob came out right after holding onto Esau’s heel. Esau liked the outdoors more, as he liked to hunt, but Jacob liked to stay indoors more. Isaac, their dad, favored Esau, and Rebecca, their mom, favored Jacob. One day when Jacob was cooking a stew, Esau came in from hunting, and asked Jacob to give him the stew because he was starving. Jacob then said that Esau could have the stew if he gave Jacob his birthright, and so that’s what Esau did, he sold Jacob his birthright in a split second, without thinking of the consequences.

A birthright is something that used to be given to the older child, in this case Esau, which would grant them all of their families money and property when they were to get older.

What was your mitzvah project and why was it important to you?
I raised $900 for JDRF (Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation) by joining my friend Emily’s team for the JDRF One Walk at Six Flags New England.

It was important to me because my good friend has Type One Diabetes and it felt good that I helped raise funds for her team.

I raised the most on the team thanks to generous donations from family, friends and members of this congregation.

What advice do you have for other students who are getting ready for their bar/bat mitzvah?
Practice a lot!

What school do you go to, what do you like to do for fun?
JW Middle School. I like to play soccer, ski, read and draw.

Happy Birthday! Yom Huledet Sameach!

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PICTURE GALLERY

Celebration of Tu B’Shevat.
Coming Together
Art Opening of
Sculpture by
Gil Boro

Standing room only for art opening

Linda Pinn introduces the artist.

Artist before large steel sculpture
For nearly sixty years, the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism has been the hub of Jewish social justice in Washington DC. Today, we are working to mobilize our 900 congregations and 1.5 million members across North America in order to bring about a world of wholeness, justice and compassion.

In my role at the RAC, I have the opportunity to work closely with the leaders of our Movement to provide training and support to help congregations bring social justice closer to the center of congregational life. The Reform Movement has a long and rich history with the fight for civil rights. Parts of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 were drafted in the conference room of the Religious Action Center. The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr and other leaders of the civil rights movement frequently used the RAC building as their Washington office. And when you look at photos of the great leaders of the civil rights movement, you’ll often see Jews arm in arm with those leading communities of color in their struggle for freedom and protection under the law.

The fight for civil rights in the 1950s and 60s resonated with a Jewish community that had just witnessed a genocide in Europe and was experiencing intense anti-Semitism in the United States. White supremacy defined all Jews as “the other” along with all communities of color. Inspired by our sacred responsibility to pursue justice, Jews stepped up in powerful ways to take action alongside those leading the charge in securing civil rights and achieving the liberation of people of color. These were efforts to liberate all oppressed people, because as Martin Luther King, Jr said, “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.”

We also know that, for many of us, our whiteness allows us to move through the world with a relative comfort not afforded to people of color; the fight for racial justice and civil rights feels like it is slowly slipping out of the realm of the responsibility of white Jews, because once people who looked like me achieve whiteness, institutionalized racism stopped affecting those people in the ways that it used to.

But it is incumbent upon white Jews, who make up the majority of the American Jewish community, to recognize their privilege and use it to be better allies in the fight for racial justice and civil rights more broadly. At the same time, we must also commit to doing this work within the Jewish community, which means listening to and centering the voices and experiences of Jews of color.
As we think about this position we are in, I’m proud to celebrate the new energy the Reform Movement has found around advocacy and action. I’m thrilled to see that your congregation has a delegation attending the 2019 Consultation on Conscience. The Consultation is an opportunity to deepen connections within congregations and across the Reform Movement, build tangible organizing and advocacy skills, and make your mark on the federal as well as state landscape. This is an amazing opportunity for your congregation to attend training and engage more deeply in the Reform Movement’s social justice priorities.

We have seen an inspiring uptick in involvement from Reform Jewish communities across North America around issues relating to immigration, transgender rights, racial justice, and more. In June 2018, the RAC launched its first ever Civic Engagement Campaign. This nonpartisan campaign offered three main avenues through which Reform Jewish communities could be involved: voter engagement, candidate engagement, and ballot initiatives. Reform Jews from nearly 1,000 communities in 43 states participated in the campaign, and together we engaged over 158,000 Americans in the democratic process. These numbers are truly inspiring, and this was the work of your Movement.

Communities who had never engaged in the RAC’s work before utilized our resources to ensure their community members were civically involved leading up to and during the 2018 midterm election, and it showed. We proudly celebrate the work of Reform Jews who contributed to ballot initiative victories in Florida, to restore voting rights to 1.4 million citizens; in Massachusetts, to protect transgender rights; in Washington State, to establish new gun violence prevention measures; and in California, to secure affordable housing. These are measurable outcomes of a tremendous amount of work from the Reform Movement, much of which was led by partner organizations working with those most impacted by these policies.

The U.S. 2018 Midterm Election was historic in many ways. We saw more women, minority, and Jewish candidates than ever before run for office, and now we can celebrate the diversity of our newly elected Congress. Having diverse voices in leadership matters. Representation matters, because the more representative our lawmaking body is, the more reflective of reality are the laws that come out of it.

But what does that mean moving forward? What is the future of democracy in the United States, even with these victories I just recalled? We’re living in a time when people weaponize the differences between communities and demonize “the other.” We are watching the systems that should be protecting people instead being used against the most vulnerable people among us.

Last year, I was a Legislative Assistant at the RAC, and I was working on issues relating to immigration, an issue that’s becoming more divisive as time passes. Almost a year ago, the Department of Commerce announced that it would be adding a question about citizenship to the 2020 Census. At a time when America’s immigrant communities feel increasingly threatened, the effects of this decision are not hard to foresee. Census response rates from immigrant communities will be suppressed, undermining the Census’s integrity overall. Just this week, a New York-based judge ruled to block the addition of this question to the census, a case that will likely be argued in higher courts. The Census is an important means of apportioning political representation, determining the allocation of federal dollars to public services, and is vital to understanding characteristics of the American people. Without the integrity of the very mechanism that shapes representation in our democracy, what do we have?

We are also seeing racial disparities in access to the ballot box. The implications of the Supreme Court’s Shelby v. Holder decision in 2013, which struck down parts of the Voting Rights Act, has disproportionately impacted communities of color. Prior to the 2018 midterm election in Georgia, 53,000 voters, 70% of whom are black, were purged from the voting rolls. This is just one example of how communities of color are being denied the right to participate in our democracy.

One of the most heartbreaking challenges facing the United States is its broken criminal justice system. Today, over two million people are being held in local, state and federal jails and prisons, the highest incarcerated population in total number of any country in the world. The criminal justice system displays deep and troublesome racial disparities. Around the country, African Americans are more likely to be arrested, convicted, and incarcerated for drug crimes, despite evidence that white and black Americans use and sell drugs at roughly the same rates. On average, one in every three black men born today will serve some time in prison, as compared to one in every 17 white men.

Unfortunately, the litany of disparities and inequities in representation and treatment along lines of race is long, emphasizing the idea that the liberation of all people is in our sacred responsibility. To be an ally means to risk something in order to be in solidarity with more vulnerable people than ourselves.

Continued on page 18
In this week’s Torah portion, B’shalach, the Israelites arrive at the Red Sea with Pharaoh’s army close at their heels. The people were scared, outnumbered and trapped. They were at a dead end. With an army behind them and an ocean ahead, God told Moses that the people should continue on, something seemingly impossible. It took a bold leader and a courageous act of faith to move forward.

There’s a teaching that explains that not Moses, but Nachshon, a young Israelite, trusted God and took the first step forward into the sea. And then, he took a second step, and a third. The Israelites behind him did not follow as Nachshon walked out deeper and deeper into the water. The sea came up to his knees, his waist, his chest, and it wasn’t until the water was up to his head that the sea parted, uncovering the earth at the bottom of the sea, a dry strip of land that would allow for the liberation of the Israelites.

Nachshon’s actions epitomize what it means to be an ally. He put his body on the line. He took a risk and physically put himself before the others in his community who were not in a position to do so. This act of altruism paved the way for the Jewish peoples’ liberation from Egypt.

One year ago, yesterday, hundreds of Jewish leaders participated in an act of civil disobedience in Washington DC to demand immediate passage of the Dream Act, legislation to protect hundreds of thousands of immigrant youth from deportation, many to countries they’ve never called home. This act of protest meant Jews putting their bodies on the line, because the immigrant youth we were in solidarity with were unable to do so without loss of their legal status and inevitable deportation.

When the administration put an end to the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, or DACA, in September 2017, the Reform Movement responded in full force. This meant declaring immigrant justice a priority and staffing a campaign committed to defending immigrants from deportation and advocating on the local, state and federal levels for fair and just immigration policy. The American Jewish community recognized that our place as allies to the immigrant community meant using creative ways to demonstrate our solidarity. It meant sitting in a Senate office building to demand that Congress take action to protect immigrant youth from deportation until being forcibly removed by the police. It meant demonstrating to our immigrant neighbors that we, as a Jewish people, would not be moved in the face of adversity and would not stand for immoral immigration policy in the United States.

On that day last January, hundreds of immigrant youth lined the upper level of the rotunda and looked down to see Jews of diverse ages, races, genders, and abilities putting their bodies on the line. On that day, the Jewish community took a risk by being in the way and demanding justice when the immigrant community simply couldn’t.

As Nachshon demonstrated, the power of using the body to be an advocate can be a powerful thing, and as the Reform Movement is continuously learning what it means to be a good partner, we are constantly evaluating our position in order to be better allies for non-Jewish communities seeking justice, and for those within the Jewish community that are often forgotten or marginalized.

Tonight, we celebrate the pursuit of justice and the people who put their own bodies on the line every day to demand more just systems for a more just world. We reflect on the memories of the civil rights leaders who came before us, and we re-engage and take steps forward as individuals and in community to pursue justice in the ways that we can. As we move forward together in community, we must bring our full selves, every special component of our identities, all of the nuance and complexities of who we are, and all of the passion we carry for creating a better world. Together we will move towards that better world with the intention of using our unique position and minds creatively to protect and secure justice and peace for all of our sacred partner communities and each person observing this Shabbat.

Thank you all for bringing your whole selves here tonight to demonstrate your resilience. May you all continue forward with new energy as we seek a world of justice together. Shabbat shalom.
TO THOSE OF YOU NEW TO CBSRZ,
PARKVILLE IS A SCHOOL WITH ABOUT 525
STUDENTS IN GRADES PRE K THROUGH GRADE
5. MANY ARE IMMIGRANTS OR CHILDREN OF
IMMIGRANTS. I HAVE TWO CUTE LITTLE GIRLS
IN ONE OF MY READING GROUPS (GRADE 2)
WHO SPEAK PORTUGUESE TO EACH OTHER.

WE WERE ABLE TO GIVE THE SCHOOL MANY
UNIFORMS, WHICH WERE RECEIVED WITH
MUCH JOY AND APPRECIATION! WE ALSO
PROVIDED WARM COATS AND JACKETS FOR
MANY OF THE STUDENTS. JUST TODAY, I
PICKED UP A BOX OF BRAND NEW HATS
(TAGS STILL ON) AND JACKETS.

TO THOSE OF YOU NEW TO CBSRZ,
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PICKED UP A BOX OF BRAND NEW HATS
(TAGS STILL ON) AND JACKETS.
Please continue to deliver clothes to the boxes at the left as you enter the school (kivvn) wing at CBSRZ.

In appreciation,
Sandy Herzog
Social Action Committee
Sandherz2003@yahoo.com

**Book Club with York Women's Prison To Start Soon**

The Social Action Committee has received approval from York Correctional Institution for our proposed book club. Approximately six women from CBSRZ (or friends) and six women prisoners at York will meet monthly to read and discuss books selected jointly and learn about each other. York also approved a CBSRZ proposal for our choir to meet and sing with the women of York.

Last summer, a new and separate program was started within York called W.O.R.T.H. (Women Overcoming Recidivism Through Hard Work). The program has its own building, which houses 18 mentees ages 18 to 25 as well as 6 mentors over the age of 26. York (and we) hope that by giving these young women more resources and attention, they will be able to succeed when they are released. A similar program for men has been very successful.

The 6 book club members from CBSRZ are in the process of applying for a 2-hour volunteer orientation class, a requirement for working inside the prison. They are also thinking about possible ideas to suggest when they finally get together as a book club.

The initial six women from CBSRZ will include Karen Evans, Adele Saykin, Johanna Schaefer, Erica Udolf, Marilyn White-Gottfried, and one friend from outside CBSRZ. If additional women from CBSRZ (or friends) and York indicate interest, additional book clubs could form, so if you are interested, please contact Irigono@sbcglobal.net.

**SAC to Discuss Anti-Semitism, Immigration, Racial Justice March 3 and May 12**

The Social Action Committee has been trying to identify a major project to focus on anti-Semitism, but in the aftermath of the massacre in Pittsburgh last fall, we may have a unique opportunity to engage our non-Jewish colleagues in directly addressing the issue of anti-Semitism in our community. SAC has tried for several years to identify a large social action project that would generate more participation throughout CBSRZ, through the “Listening Campaign” and the book discussion sessions. The issues of immigration and racial justice that have been highlighted since the 2016 election have provided further opportunity to address basic issue of “the other” that is the essence of anti-Semitism as well.

In a sense, we hope all of our social action activities have a positive impact in addressing anti-Semitism, but in the aftermath of the massacre in Pittsburgh last fall, we may have a unique opportunity to engage our non-Jewish colleagues in directly addressing the issue of anti-Semitism in our community. SAC has tried for several years to identify a large social action project that would generate more participation throughout CBSRZ, through the “Listening Campaign” and the book discussion sessions. The issues of immigration and racial justice that have been highlighted since the 2016 election have provided further opportunity to address basic issue of “the other” that is the essence of anti-Semitism as well.

In between these meetings, on March 10, CBSRZ will engage in a second synagogue-wide discussion of “Anti-Semitism – Our Response” after an initial discussion session in January. We hope the SAC meetings will allow us to further some of the discussions in social action activities.

**LARGE DELEGATION FROM CBSRZ TO CONSULTATION ON CONSCIENCE**

Six members of CBSRZ have joined our delegation to the Consultation on Conscience, Reform Judaism’s biennial social justice conference May 19–21 in Washington, D.C. Rabbi Marci Bellows, Izzi Greenberg, Brad Jubelirer (CBSRZ President), Jo-Ann Price, Michael Price and Andy Schatz have already signed up, which would double our three-person delegation in 2017, and others are invited to join us. The conference is sponsored by the Religious Action Center to empower the Reform Jewish Movement to community and political engagement at both the national and state levels. The final day of the conference includes advocacy at Capitol Hill with members’ senators and representatives. Past speakers at the conferences have included elected officials, activists, journalists, diplomats and other community leaders.

Rabbi Bellows, who will lead the CBSRZ delegation once again, commented: “We Jews have millennia of teachings which implore us to care for the stranger, to love our neighbors, and to repair the brokenness in our world. I am thrilled that CBSRZ is once again sending a delegation of congregants to the Religious Action Center’s Consultation on Conscience. The Consultation provides us with an inspiring moral and ethical path, grounded in our tradition, which helps us continue to work for justice and peace in our community and throughout the country. We will have the privilege of hearing from and learning from many national leaders and political leaders from both sides of the aisle. The three-day event concludes with memorable visits to the Capitol to advocate for Reform Jewish values with our own legislators.”

Further details about the Consultation on Conscience can be found at https://rac.org/consultation-conscience-2019. CBSRZ members should contact andy@andrewschatz.com with any questions or if they would like to join the delegation. The Social Action Committee budget includes some funds to help cover costs of attendance.
Memorial Plaques
Adar I 24, 5779 to Adar-II 24, 5779

Memorial Plaques
Adar-II 25, 5779 to Nissan 25, 5779

Yahrzeits
Adar I 24, 5779 to Adar-II 24, 5779

Yahrzeits
Adar-II 25, 5779 to Nissan 25, 5779

Condolences are extended to:

Please remember to inform either Beth Brewer or Shelley Sprague, co-chairs of the Chesed Committee, if you or someone you know is ill, in need of help, or has experienced a death in the family.

...Our Chesed Committee is here to help.
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**APRIL 2019**

25 ADAR II - 25 NISAN, 5779

**SUNDAY**

**MONDAY**

**TUESDAY**

**WEDNESDAY**

**THURSDAY**

**FRIDAY**

**SATURDAY**
The Whole Megillah
may be viewed
in color on the web at
www.cbsrz.org

Many thanks to these recent Oneg sponsors:

Social Action Committee
Liz & Ray Archambault
Alan & Beth Laites

Brad & Lori Jubelirer
Izzi Greenberg & Jeff Cohen

Mama Loshen  By Marilyn Kalet

Kashe, mishmash, hekdish
Mess
A shtik naches
A little joy

Lang leben zolt ir
May you live long

Gezunt vi a ferd
Healthy as a horse

Vos iz der tachlis?
What's the purpose

Proof Columbus was Jewish—kept telling the crew "No running on deck."

— From Haikus for Jews by David M. Bader

(David M. Bader is a writer in New York City, a pursuit that raises the eternal question, From this he makes a living? He is not even distantly related to Ruth Bader Ginsburg, though he insists on referring to her as "Aunt Ruth")