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Sol LeWitt
A Life of Ideas
LARY BLOOM

Book cover of Lary Bloom’s Sol LeWitt: A Life of Ideas
THANK YOU to the following donors from 2/6/2019 to 4/5/2019

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Rabbi Bellows for their 50 anniversary
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Bellows and in memory of Harvey
Hoberman
Shalom, Chaverim,

The next lifecycle event in my Whole Megillah series involves reaching the status of Bar and Bat Mitzvah. The term Bar or Bat Mitzvah (literally, “son” or “daughter” of the “commandment”) is a title given to all Jews upon reaching age 13 to signify that they are now prepared to take personal responsibility for their own religious actions and moral behavior through performing mitzvot (commandments). It is equivalent to reaching the age of legal majority. Although no ritual or service is necessary to establish this status, the Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebration, over the past few centuries, has emerged as a way for 13-year-olds to demonstrate commitment to Judaism. Before the congregation, family, and friends, the young person reads from the Torah (Five Books of Moses) and Hafṭarah (selection from the Books of the Prophets) and leads worship. In offering this privilege, the congregation says to its 13-year-olds: you are now participating adults in our religious community. Thus, Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebrations bear witness to the continuity of Judaism embodied in a new generation of committed Jews. Certainly the beginning of a young person’s transition from childhood to responsible Jewish adulthood is a time of celebration.

Bar Mitzvah

In the traditional Jewish world, there are several festive occasions in a boy’s life. The first is the eighth day after his birth, when he is introduced into the Covenant of Abraham through the ritual of brit milah, or circumcision. Another is when he is first initiated into Jewish study – a celebration that echoes our Consecration observance today. When a boy turns 13 years and one day old, he becomes a Bar Mitzvah, a “Son of the Commandment,” legally bound to fulfill the obligations of Jewish law and practice, and to a continuing commitment to Jewish learning.

By the rabbinic period of Jewish history (from 70 to 600 CE), the age of 13 was recognized as the age of maturity for a boy. Legally, these young men were considered adults – that is, they were responsible for themselves in a religious sense and could testify in a Jewish court of law. Interestingly, they were not yet allowed to make a contractual agreement involving real estate, since they were still considered to be inexperienced in the ways of life and business.

The Bar Mitzvah celebration dates back to the 13th century. Although customs recognizing a boy’s reaching this milestone varied from place to place, the responsibilities of Bar Mitzvah were always the same: a boy was considered to have reached the age of maturity; he accepted personal responsibility for the mitzvot, he was thereafter counted as part of a minyan, and he was looked upon as a full participant in the “community of Israel.”

Bat Mitzvah

The history of Bat Mitzvah is very different from that of Bar Mitzvah. By rabbinic times, a girl was considered to be legally responsible for herself at age 12.

Continued on page 4
or 12 ½ (depending upon which text you read), but girls did not have a celebration dedicated to recognizing this milestone. This absence of celebration is most likely because, according to traditional Jewish law, a woman is not obligated to fulfill *mitzvot* that have to be performed at a particular time of day, freeing her to fulfill her family responsibilities. Thus, women were not required to attend synagogue worship services, to pray three times a day, or to be counted in a *minyan*.

The idea of recognizing young women at the “age of commandment” was introduced in Europe in the 19th century, when some families honored their daughters on their twelfth birthday with a party and a festive meal. The first recorded *Bat Mitzvah* celebration involving a synagogue service occurred in the United States in 1921. The *Bat Mitzvah* was Judith Kaplan, the daughter of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, who founded the Reconstructionist movement in American Judaism. The importance given to becoming a *Bat Mitzvah* seems to have paralleled the development of Women’s Rights. In the earlier part of the 20th century, very few girls elected to celebrate becoming *Bat Mitzvah*, but with the advancement of feminism and the recognition of equal rights and opportunities for women, more and more girls choose this spiritual path. Today in Reform Judaism, in the spirit of equality, both girls and boys celebrate becoming *B’nai Mitzvah* at age 13.

**B’nai Mitzvah at CBSRZ**

Religious studies begin long before this day. At Congregation Beth Shalom Rodfe Zedek, we treasure the opportunity to build a foundation which includes a love of Jewish learning. Throughout Kivyun, and in many different modalities, our students engage with the study of Hebrew and Jewish customs, holidays, and history. As the Bat/Bar Mitzvah day approaches, each student also learns Biblical chanting, extending his or her commitment to Jewish study, prayer, and acts of loving kindness for an organization in our larger community.

I know that you all join me in wishing hearty “Mazel Tovs” to all of our B’nai Mitzvah celebrants – many of whom are marking their new Jewish status in the months of May and June of this year. We are very proud of our students and of their enjoyment of Jewish life, as well as their considerations of lifelong Jewish learning. *L’shalom – In peace.*

**Rabbi Marci N. Bellows**

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**Tikkun Leil Shavuot: An Adult Learning Extravaganza!**

**Saturday night, June 8, 2019, 7:00-10:00 pm**

Everyone is warmly invited to a brand-new adult learning opportunity at CBSRZ, in celebration of the festival of Shavuot, which commemorates the receiving of Torah at Mt. Sinai.

After Havdalah and some schmoozing, you’ll have a chance to select three “electives” in your areas of interest.

Offerings include: text study, drum circle, Israeli dancing, guided visualization, creative midrash, gentle yoga, art, discussions about Israel, and more.

Stay tuned for ways to register for your electives in advance, as some will have space limitations.

You can also sit and chat with friends in our Beit Café coffee nook, which will be available all evening.

Our night will conclude with music, dancing, and dessert. Please contact Rabbi Bellows for more information, and we hope to see you there!
Celebrate Shavuot as you’ve never celebrated it before, with an evening of learning, singing, dancing, chanting, cooking, eating and more, a fitting way to commemorate the handing down of the Torah to the Jewish People. Just as the Torah itself is the Tree of Life, sustaining us with its branches reaching into every aspect of our existence, so our evening will have variegated programming exploring a wide variety of disciplines, mostly centered on the way Torah touches our lives.

We will gather at 7 pm on Saturday, June 8, Erev Shavuot, starting with Havdalah, followed by an introduction to the evening’s ‘fare’, the electives coming up, and the opportunity to choose which sessions you wish to attend. Then the fun begins.

There will be three elective periods (and a five-minute break between each) with a variety of offerings: text study, creative midrash (write your own), Israeli dancing, studio art, cooking, Israel today, drumming, yoga, chanting, choral singing, among others. Our course catalog, published online, will describe each of these offerings in detail so that people can sign up for the three they want. Some offerings will be limited in capacity, so signing up in advance is essential.

If you need to take a break from such intense learning, there will be a café where you can hang out with others, drink coffee and nosh, another quintessential Jewish tradition.

After the third session, there will be a final communal gathering where we come back together with an opportunity to share the things we learned and did, demonstrating the products of our creative sessions (dance/song/art/etc.), feasting on the desserts made during the culinary sessions as well as delicious concoctions brought in, and generally rejoicing—if we’re not all rejoiced out.

Shavuot marks the coming together of the Jewish People, as we all stood at Sinai together. You won’t want to miss the opportunity to come together and re-make our observance of this important holiday, making it relevant to our lives today, and creating time for everyone to leave their everyday lives behind them to come together, build the CBSRZ community and learn together within that community.

Please welcome the new Ritual and Celebrations Committee!

What is this committee you ask? The main work of the Ritual and Celebrations Committee is organizing and publicizing our traditional festival events and holidays. We cover everything from coming up with new and exciting themes for Shabbat and second Saturday services to organizing our Passover community dinner and Purim celebration. Most importantly, in conjunction with Rabbi Bellows and Cantor Belinda we make certain our beloved High Holidays are filled with spirituality and meaning for all. One thing all of our holidays have in common (with the exception of one or two) is food! We are always finding ways to provide plenty of delicious food to eat during the Jewish holidays as they would not feel complete without it! Breaking bread together is a part Jewish tradition that we can all agree is one of the things that helps us retain such a tight knit community. I think that is especially true for our community at CBSRZ. Come be a part of the magic that makes CBSRZ so special! The Ritual and Celebrations Committee is currently seeking new members to add to our dynamic team of fabulous individuals. Rit-C meets the first Thursday of the month in the evening. If you are interested in joining us, and we would really love you to join us, please email Tracy Kleinberg at tjkleinberg@gmail.com. I hope to hear from you soon!
In our synagogue, you didn’t hear him make speeches, or bring attention to his many accomplishments, though they were recognized and praised worldwide.

Instead, those of you who have been members of CBSRZ for many years may remember Sol LeWitt as a quiet and humble presence. And others, more recent to our congregation, may at least recognize that our collective home, the light-filled structure in which we gather to worship, celebrate, teach and mourn, is the product of his imagination and his homage to the wooden synagogues of Eastern Europe, most of which were destroyed in the Nazi era.

But now, with the publication of the first biography of this master of conceptual art, written by our own Lary Bloom for Wesleyan University Press, you can discover for yourself the impact and legacy of this giant of the art world.

In *Sol LeWitt: A Life of Ideas*, you’ll discover how he overcame obstacles from his earliest days in Connecticut, details about his life in Chester with his wife Carol and two daughters, Sofia and Eva, pressed the revolutionary thesis that for the artist the brain is more important than the hand, aided thousands of young people in a field dominated by men, and stood up for causes in which he deeply believed (sometimes giving up huge corporate commissions).

Among the early praise for the book, which was 11 years in the making:

“A remarkable narrative filled with history, biography, art criticism, gossip, behind-the-scenes chatter, and insight. Lary Bloom presents a LeWitt that most of us have never seen before: private, irreverent, passionate, generous, and deeply self-aware.” —Bryan Wolf, professor emeritus, art and art history, Stanford University

“With his crisp lines and rigorous geometries, Sol LeWitt can seem like the most impersonal of great 20th century artists. Somehow, Lary Bloom’s biography manages to humanize the man, with tireless research, rich anecdotes and a playful sense of humor throughout.” —Scott Timberg, author of *Culture Crash: The Killing of the Creative Class*

And on June 2, our usual Books and Bagels format will be altered a bit to bring nourishment both in history and cuisine. Our own Kevin Conley, former arts editor of *Town & Country* magazine, and former staff editor for the *New Yorker*, will interview Lary and take questions from the audience. Our usual array of bagels will be augmented by a variety of foods prepared by members of our congregation and the Chester community. And once again thanks are due to the tireless and often unsung efforts of Ellen Nodelman and the Adult Education Committee, organizers of this event.

*So come celebrate Sol*
Sol Lewitt, Painting for the Doors of the Ark of CBSRZ.
Celebrated landscape artist Gabriella Ducharme captivating art exhibition opens Sunday, May 12 with a reception from 3:00pm to 5:00 pm and runs through July. Whether it’s the shore of Rhode Island or quaint cafes, gardens or charming houses along the Florida coast, Gabriella’s (Gabby’s) artistry invites you to become a part of the scene. Gabby is known for her artistic views and her ability to create a play of light and shadow in her paintings. A professional landscape and pet portrait artist for over thirty years, Gabby is dedicated to connecting people emotionally through her paintings.

Gabby notes: “My passion is my art. I love creating works of art that depict the unique beauty of fascinating locations that allow viewers to imagine themselves being there. In my art, I hope to inspire the viewer to become a part of my experience.”

Gabby is a former owner of two art galleries in Jensen Beach, Florida where she built up international clientele. She has primarily been commissioned by people wanting to capture their memories or experiences of a meaningful place. She is very proud of the fact that her paintings have been had notoriety. Her painting Moon Over 11 Maple Street is owned by Celine Dion. One painting The Three Amigos has been featured on the set of the TV series, Beverly Hills 90210. She is under contract with Gango Editions in Portland, Oregon, who has sold her paintings worldwide. Her work has also been purchased and showcased in various hospitals, veterinary clinics, and corporations in both Connecticut and Florida.

Gabby comments about her early impressions, “My first memories of visual art are when I was sitting with a pencil in my hand putting in all the shading in comic strips and drawing clothes for my paper dolls. Since then I have been fascinated by the play of light and shadows in any given scene. The relationship between color and light is what interests me and sparks my creative energy. I see the beauty of the Universe in everything around me.”

Gabby was runner-up and received an Honorable Mention from Artists Magazine for her painting Rose Farm. In addition, her work has been featured in the publication Forum and in the Art Scene in Port St. Lucie, Florida. She was a member of the juried exhibition at the New Britain Museum of American Art. Gabby studied with artist Leslie Stokes as well as the renowned artist Morgan Samuel Price and is represented by Art Gambo, Port Salerno, Florida. Gabby is rediscovering her love of Plein Air Painting.

Gabby has exhibited at the Lyme Art Association, Essex Art Center, South- ington Arts Council, and in the Marlborough Art Center.

Gabriella Ducharme’s Moments in Time art exhibition at the CBSRZ Art Gallery is open to the public for viewing Monday through Friday, 10:00am to 3:00pm, 55 E. Kings Highway, Chester, CT. For more information visit www.cbsrz.org/engage/events/art-exhibits or call the CBSRZ office at 860-526-8920.
FRIDAY MAY 3, 2019
6:30 PM POTLUCK DINNER  7:30 PM SHABBAT SERVICES

JACOB’S CAVE AT MACHPELAH -
GUIDELINES FROM GENESIS FOR LIVING AND DYING

An investigation of the Jacob’s deathbed drama in Genesis. We shall discover the wisdom Torah provides for dealing consciously with end-of-life issues and see how our Biblical ancestors understood the connection between this world and the world beyond

SATURDAY MAY 4, 2019
9:00 AM “HOLY SCROLLERS” TEXT STUDY

Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night:
Moses’ Death in Torah and Midrash

Descriptions of Moses’ response to his imminent death in Torah and Midrash, indicates he did not “go gentle into that good night” but did “rage, rage against the dying of the light”. We shall see how Moses went through the stages of dying, depicted by Dr. Kubler-Ross, eventually accepting his own death with spiritual wisdom and equanimity.

11:00 AM BRUNCH & LEARN

Afterlife Journey of the Soul in Jewish Mysticism

Today many are unaware of Jewish wisdom on life after death. This presentation explores Judaism’s afterlife teachings, particularly in Jewish mysticism, and the practical relevance of these teachings in dealing with the human encounter with death.

7:30 PM HAVDALAH

Jewish Ghost Stories: Mysterious Tales of Ancestors,
Wandering Spirits and Reincarnating Souls

Through the story-telling traditions of Jewish folk religion we shall enter the invisible worlds populated by ghosts, lost souls, haunting spirits, dybbukim, and heavenly angelic guides. This is a family-friendly program (10 years and older).

Reb Simcha Raphael, Ph.D. is Founding Director of DA’AT INSTITUTE for Death Awareness, Advocacy and Training, Adjunct Professor in the Department of Religion and Theology of LaSalle University, and works as a psychotherapist and spiritual director in Philadelphia. Ordained by Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi as a Rabbinic Pastor, he a member of the Rabbis Without Borders Network, and author of numerous publications including the classic study Jewish Views of the Afterlife.
CBSRZ will be welcoming Simcha Raphael to Chester for the weekend of May 3 and 4, when he comes as the 2019 Kutnick Visiting Scholar, with a program on Judaism and the Mysteries of Life, Death and the World Beyond. Author of *Jewish Views of the Afterlife*, Dr. Raphael combines the vantage points of two traditions, given his background in Jewish mysticism and Kabbalah, and his doctorate in Psychology. In his approach he focuses on the ways in which people can respond in healthy and functional ways to the various dimensions of end-of-life issues. His goal: to help individuals and congregations find ways of responding to death and bereavement that are grounded in both Jewish spiritual wisdom and contemporary understanding.

Over the course of the weekend, from Friday night on, he will be taking a variety of approaches to this fascinating, but difficult, subject: presenting a dvar Torah on themes related to what we learn from Torah in dealing with grief and loss; teaching texts on Jewish views of the afterlife with practical implications for helping people in their lives; presenting a Saturday evening of havdalah and "Jewish ghost stories" as a family program. There will be something of interest for everyone, young and old alike.

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Save the Date Annual Meeting

**– June 13 7:00 PM –**

It's that time of year again, when we come together for our annual meeting to take a look at this past year and see where we are headed for next year as a Congregation. The official notice with agenda will follow.
Bat Mitzvah of Becca Rosenblum-Jones

When is your bat mitzvah?
June 15, 2019

My Torah Portion is Numbers Parashat Nasso. It is about a man bringing a woman to the Rabbi because he thinks she’s cheating. The Rabbi gives her a potion of muddy water to drink and if her body gets fat she is guilty if she stays the same she is innocent. A woman could not bring a man to a Rabbi to question his faithfulness. I have learned that women do not have an equal share in life. I learned that magic has been around forever.

My mitzvah project is helping at special Olympics gymnastics program. It meets once a week in Guilford. The kids have the opportunity to compete in the winter games. I coached them there this past February. This is important to me because I love gymnastics and I want everyone to have the same opportunities as I do.

Advice for other kids is don’t stress yourself to do things you won’t be able to fit in in time. It will make extra stress for you and you will resent the process.

I attend Haddam Killingworth Middle School. For fun I like to do gymnastics, watch dance moms, hang out with my friends and pet my puppies.
Bar Mitzvah of Ben Mercier

When is your bar mitzvah?
May 18, 2019

What is your Torah portion?
My Torah portion is Emor which is about the laws concerning the priests. The priests have to be perfect humans to make a sacrifice. It says no man who is blind or lame can make a sacrifice to God. I do not agree that people need to be perfect to pray to God. I don’t really understand it because no one is perfect.

What is your mitzvah project and why is it important to you?
I am trying to raise money for the Special Olympics for my mitzvah project. I love to play sports. The Special Olympics is important to me because I believe everyone should be able to play sports. The Special Olympics helps people with mental disabilities compete in sports. This organization shows that people with disabilities can do anything that other people can do.

What advice do you have for students who are getting ready for their bar/bat mitzvah?
Prepare to the best of your ability. The date creeps up on you.

What school do you go to?
Haddam Killingworth Middle School.

What do you like to do for fun?
I love to play basketball.

Bat Mitzvah of Danielle Williams

When is your bar/bat mitzvah?
My bat mitzvah is on June 8th, 2019

What is your Torah portion?
My Torah Portion is B’midbar.

What is your Torah portion about?
My Torah portion is about when G-d told Moses to make the Levites in charge of the Tabernacle of the pact, its furnishing as well as everything else that pertains to it. They were to be in charge of carrying the Tabernacle and all of its furnishings, tend it, camp around it, take the tabernacle down when it is to set out and put it up when it needs to be pitched, and any outsider should be put to death. They are essentially the guards of the Tabernacle of the Pact.

What have you learned from your Torah Portion?
Something that I learned from my Torah portion is sometimes in life you do not get to choose on your own. In this case G-d instructs the Levites to be in charge of the Tabernacle in some cases that would be considered an honor, but it also has its challenges. This is a role that the Levites were born into, they did not have a choice.

This past summer I moved because my Dad is in the military, and just as the Levites I did not have a choice. Although moving did have its challenges, just like the Levites had with the responsibility of guarding the Tabernacle, I have also learned that it has its good sides like making new friends and creating new experiences. Sometimes the most challenging events in our lives can be the most rewarding and bring the most joy.

What is your mitzvah project and why is it important to you?
My bat mitzvah project is helping the Denali Foundation and volunteering at ‘Run the Gauntlet’ an obstacle race that raises money to help get kids outdoors. Kids will have the chance to enjoy an amazing camp experience who otherwise may not be able to afford it. I connect to this charity because I have a camp that is extremely important to me and it is always an amazing experience. Camp has provided me with so many good memories and I want other kids to experience something similar.

What advice do you have for students who are getting ready for their bar/bat mitzvah?
Some advice that I have for anyone who is getting ready for a bar or bat mitzvah would be to not stress about it because everything will come together!

What school do you go to?
I go to East Lyme Middle School.

What do you like to do for fun?
I really enjoy doing sports and hanging out with my friends and family.

Happy Birthday! Yom Huledet Sameach!

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PICTURE GALLERY

Music & More presents "Uke Can't Play Ukes Without U" Workshop & Concert

Linda Rigoni teams up with some Haddam Ukeladies

Jumpin' Jim Beloff and his wife Leapin' Liz onstage in concert

Norm Rutty (left) assists instructor Jim Beloff get folks in tune
Adult Ed and Social Action Committees: Syrian Benefit Dinner for IRIS (Integrated Refugee Immigrant Services). CBSRZ was joined by members of the local community.

Will Kneerim of IRIS introduces Issa and Aminah Alsaleh, Manager and Chef.

A feast for Shabbat across America. Thanks to Ed and Linda Finn and the Shabbatini makers.
Ellen Nodelman tells the history of the expulsion of Sephardic Jews from Spain and Portugal and the stories of those then forced to convert and hide their Jewish heritage.

Rabbi Bellows lights memorial candle to honor the *anusim*, or "forced ones".

Juan Carlos Lopez and Evelyn Foster, both of Sephardic descent, light the menorahs.

Following the Sephardic tradition, Rabbi Bellows spills drops of wine representing the ten plagues into a bucket. Izzi Greenberg is pictured emptying it into a symbolic "garden" near the door and reciting in a loud whisper "May this go to all of our enemies and haters. May they create no suffering for us or for themselves. Amen"
Lori Jubelirer’s parents (foreground left) and Audrey Klein (foreground right) sample appetizers.

Linda Rigono, Jody Wintsch, and Evelyn Foster playfully “whip” each other with green onions as a reminder of our days as slaves in Egypt.

Readers Eva Cohen (with her parents, Jeff Cohen and Izzie Greenberg), Michele Kleiman (with Jo-Ann Price on her right) and Amalia Shaltiel telling the stories of contemporary Jews who discovered their hidden Sephardic roots.

Josie and Merito Elmoznino closely following the service.
The guest speakers at the forum were Michael Song, the father of Ethan Song, who was killed when a gun not secured by a neighbor discharged accidentally, and Dom Basile, an executive committee member of Connecticut Citizens Defense League (CCDL), which works with the National Rifle Association on legislation in Connecticut. Rabbi Marci Bellows provided Jewish context for understanding and advocating on the issue, and Andy Schatz, chair of the SAC, moderated the discussion. Special thanks to Jody Wintsch for helping organize the forum.

About 40 people attended the forum, split evenly between gun control advocates and strident gun activists who are active leaders of CCDL.

Throughout the discussion, Mr. Song and Mr. Basile remarked at how often they agreed – on the need for gun safety and responsible gun ownership – and ended up shaking hands and agreeing to work together on some issues. Discussion among the two groups of attendees after the forum found agreement on even more issues.

Following the forum, the board of directors of CBSRZ authorized Rabbi Bellows and Schatz to submit public hearing testimony in CBSRZ’s support of the bills on safe storage of guns in houses and vehicles under the synagogue policy on issue advocacy adopted in September 2017 (see the November/December 2017 issue of The Whole Megillah). The testimony, which stressed the importance, and Jewish tradition, of respectful discussion of difficult issues, is available online at https://www.cga.ct.gov/2019/juddata/tmy/2019HB-07223-R000311-Bellows,%20Marci,%20Rabbi-Congregat%20%20Beth%20%20Shalom-TMY.PDF.

Izzi Greenberg
To Be New CBSRZ Social Action Chair

Effective July 1, Izzi Greenberg will take over as chair the Social Action Committee at CBSRZ, as Andy Schatz steps down after seven years as chair.

Greenberg, who lives in Middletown with her husband, Jeffrey Cohen, and their daughters Sadie and Eva, has chaired and managed non-profit organizations and is currently Executive Director of the Middlesex Coalition for Social Action.
Children, an economic and racial justice group that works to improve outcomes for children in Middletown and Middlesex County.

“This is a great development for social action and CBSRZ,” said Schatz. “I’ve worked with Izzi for years on community issues in Middlesex County, and she brings not only commitment but successful leadership of nonprofits. She knows how to be an effective force for social justice and will help CBSRZ progress with our efforts in that direction.”

On May 19-21, Greenberg and Schatz will attend the Consultation on Conscience, Reform Judaism’s biennial conference on social justice, in Washington, D.C., along with Rabbi Marci Bellows, CBSRZ President Brad Jubilirer and several other CBSRZ members. CBSRZ became one of the first 100 “Brit Olam” (“covenant with our world”) congregations two years ago and is looking to expand its work on social justice initiatives, including by identifying an area of major commitment over the next few years.

Jubilirer commented: “I am extremely grateful for the superb leadership Andy has provided in making Social Action such a vibrant part of CBSRZ life, and I am very excited that he is able to pass the torch to Izzi, who possesses such insightful, resourceful, and passionate skills .... the perfect person who can help our Congregation take the future steps toward community stewardship as a Brit Olam Congregation.”

Greenberg noted: “The world needs much repair, and I’m excited to follow in Andy’s footsteps and work with the passionate members of the Social Action Committee to do our small part.”

Greenberg and Schatz said they look forward to working closely over the next few months, with the Social Action Committee, for a smooth transition.

**Syrian Dinner**

On March 9, over 80 people attended a fundraiser for Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS) sponsored jointly by the Social Action Committee and Adult Education Committee. Attendees sampled food cooked by Syrian refugee (and catering company owner) Aminah Alsaleh and heard from Aminah and her husband, Issa, as well as from Will Kneerim, IRIS Director of Employment and Education, about the real-life plight of Syrian refugees and the efforts of IRIS to assist. For information about Aminah’s catering service, please visit https://aminahscuisine.wixsite.com/catering. For further information about IRIS, please go to www.irisct.org. See page 15 for more photos. Thanks to Linda Rigono, a key member of both SAC and AEC for organizing the event.

**Anti-Semitism Discussion Continues at Meeting on May 12**

The Social Action Committee will meet at 10:30am to noon on May 12 to continue discussion of a major social justice initiative related to anti-Semitism and racial justice. Please come be part of the discussion even if you have not been involved with previous social action activities.

Following the racist-inspired massacre at the Squirrel Hill (Pittsburgh) synagogue in October, Rabbi Marci Bellows has called two synagogue-wide discussions of anti-Semitism and our individual and collective responses. Over the past year, SAC has also been discussing a large unifying project on which to focus social justice activities. The issue that has surfaced repeatedly is the connection between racial justice and anti-Semitism.

“We have a unique opportunity to address successfully both anti-Semitism and racial justice more generally – and the connection between them,” noted Andy Schatz, social action chair. “Our social action work has always been premised on the notion, long ago recognized by Maimonides, that our work in tikkun olam, helping God repair the world, can indirectly help eliminate anti-Semitism. Now, that also ties in directly with the response to attacks on racial justice that we have seen in recent years.”

The SAC meeting on May 12 will be at CBSRZ and is open to all.
During the initial capital campaign to build our lovely synagogue, I received an unexpectedly large tax refund. My husband and I decided to add it to our previous donation, thinking that this investment would be the best one we could make with the money. We were right. Since then, our kids have had their b’nai mitzvahs, confirmations, and graduated and we have enjoyed many wonderful events and programs.

Unfortunately, we have not been able to be active members of the congregation for the last five years. Between taking care of my family and my husband’s Lyme disease and short-term and long-term disability, newer members of the congregation would not recognize us. But this doesn’t mean that the congregation has stopped supporting us, even if we are not physically present. We watch streaming services when my husband is not strong enough to go to services. We get phone calls and cards for events that happen in our lives. We know that we may be sitting shiva in the near future and are comforted knowing that we have a rabbi, Chesed committee, and a building in which we can observe all of our life cycles.

Our congregation is lucky to have so many talented and dedicated members who volunteer long hours to help provide such a vibrant, secure, and supporting place to worship. We will all benefit from their hard work and our donations. I strongly urge those members who might not feel as connected to the congregation as they wish to support the Capital Campaign for Our Second Century. I look forward to worshipping together in a sound, secure and beautiful building.

Karen Cheyney
Yahrzeits
Nissan 26, 5779 to Iyar 26, 5779


Yahrzeits
Iyar 27, 5779 to Sivan 27, 5779


...Our Chesed Committee is here to help.

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...
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<td>4 5:45pm Abbreviated Service and Shabbat At-Home Dinners</td>
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<td>11:00 am CBSRZ Cemetery Dedication Ceremony at Fountain Hill</td>
<td>11:00 am The Prophets (Library)</td>
<td>4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Books &amp; Bagels author Lary Bloom’s “So I’d Write: A Life of Ideas”</td>
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