



המרכז היהודי ד'פורסט הילס

# Message

FOREST HILLS JEWISH CENTER

January-February 2025 /Tevet-Sh'vat-Adar 5785 / Vol. LXXX No. 3

*Save the Date*

## FHJC Annual Journal Dinner Dance

Honoring

Ira Beer

Elizabeth Caudle & Matthew Ziegelbaum

and Community Service Award recipient Glenn Pepper

March 1, 2025



### SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE

**January 10-11, 2025**

**Rabbi Gerald C. Skolnik**

Join Rabbi Skolnik as he presents a series of discussions focusing on the differences between the written and the oral Torah as well as on the stories of Sarah and Hagar and Jacob and Esau.

Rabbi Skolnik will be speaking at Shabbat dinner on Friday night, January 10. He will speak from the pulpit at Shabbat morning services and will speak again following kiddush on Shabbat afternoon.

In addition to being Rabbi Emeritus of the Forest Hills Jewish Center, Rabbi Skolnik is a past president of the Rabbinical Assembly, president of the Zamir Choral Foundation, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Masorti and Masorti Olami Foundations. He is a past chairman of UJA-Federation Committee on AIDS and a member of its Board of Directors. Additionally, Rabbi Skolnik is the immediate past chair of the JWB's Chaplain's Council Plenum. He also serves on the Board of Governors of the New York Board of Rabbis.

Dinner following Kabbalat Shabbat, by RSVP only. Dessert followed by the first presentation is open to all. Rabbi Skolnik will speak during Shabbat morning services. The entire congregation is invited to a kiddush luncheon, followed by minha and Rabbi Skolnik's third presentation.

Shabbat Dinner Costs: \$36 per person age 11 and over, \$18 per child ages 3-10, Free for ages 2 and under. Deadline to reply is January 7.

**RSVP for dinner [here](#).**

# FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

## Rabbi Daniel Gruber

### Where the flowers bloom in winter

Dear FHJC family,

I departed from JFK and the finally barren trees as cold and rain set in on New York. When I landed at Ben-Gurion airport my first thought was, "it's good to be home". It was good to start my visit with family and friends in Rehovot, where I spent many summers of my youth, and it was good to be in much warmer weather. I enjoyed seeing colorful flowers in full bloom mid-December. In Jerusalem, where I participated in the annual convention of the Rabbinical Assembly, it was much colder, but I noticed the abundance of vibrant blossoms there as well. I was inspired to indulge my inner amateur photographer.

Over the week that followed I had the privilege to learn Torah with friends and colleagues, and also to meet with leaders from different drivers of Israel's future, and to bear witness firsthand to the aftermath of the atrocities of October 7th and how Israel has been reshaped since then.

One day of the convention was dedicated to traveling with our guides to Otef Aza, the Gaza Envelope. Less than a mile from Gaza, with the sounds of IDF gunfire and bombs in the background, we walked through Kfar Aza, one of the kibbutzim most devastated by the onslaught of Oct. 7th. The stories of individual families lost and children orphaned, paired with seeing the violence still etched into the buildings, left me breathless. A certain section of the kibbutz, where the young adults lived, was the scene of such unspeakable acts that no one can imagine living there again. All around the kibbutz, the highways, and really the entire country, one cannot escape the posters and signs, and items painted yellow to represent the sentiment to free the hostages above all else. It is ubiquitous. More than one presenter spoke of all of Israel as a country holding its breath, stuck in the moment of tragedy and trauma, waiting for October 8th to begin.



Though the war and its impact was still ongoing as I visited, evidence of the resilience of the Jewish people was plain and inspiring. Like the fruiting sabra cacti I passed, there is a hardiness that is enduring in an inhospitable environment, creating goodness and sweetness in a harsh reality. They are building in Kfar Aza. Volunteers are clearing rubble, and building new homes, while many of the residents of the kibbutz who have been displaced for fourteen months, have gone to nearby kibbutz Ruhama as a staging ground before returning home. The section no one will live in will likely become the kibbutz's official memorial. The efforts to rebuild after the devastation are greatly helped through donations from the Jewish community world-wide.

The will to create and to live with strength, joy, and passion, is at the core of the Israeli response to the tragedy and the war that our siblings across the sea have been living with for over a year. The grassroots memorial site created for the victims of the Nova festival in the Re'em forest, is composed of many posters telling of the individuals lost that day, each one with a positive quotation of that person's joyful approach to life. The memorial is centered around a Star of David made of ceramic anemones; a work of love turning love and memory into flowers in perpetual bloom.

*Continued on next page*

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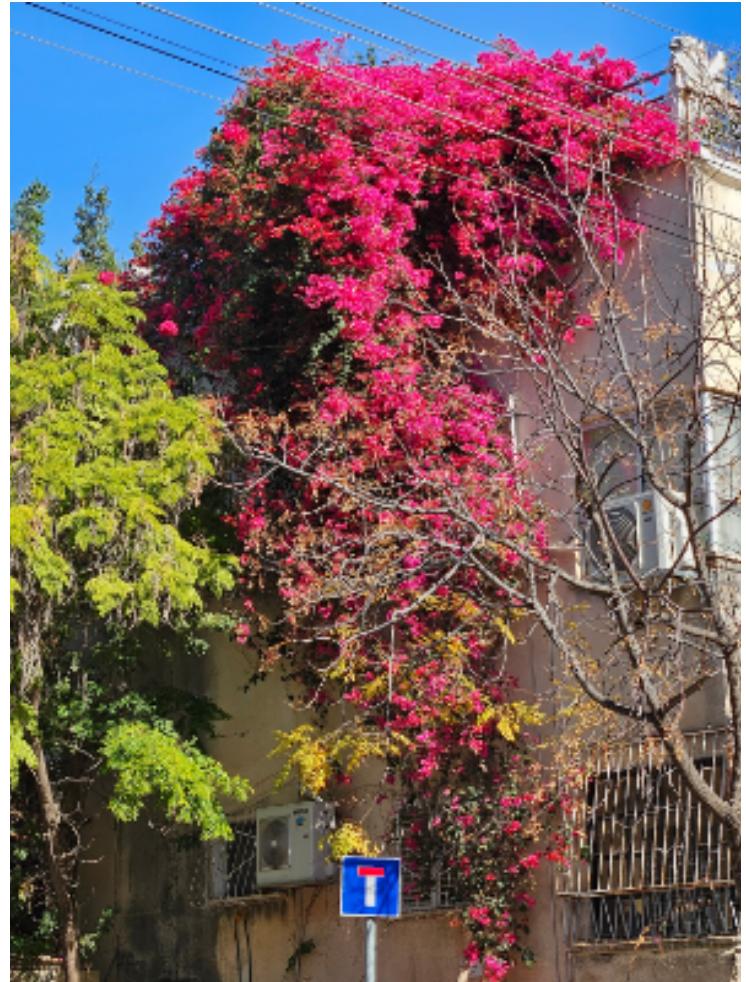
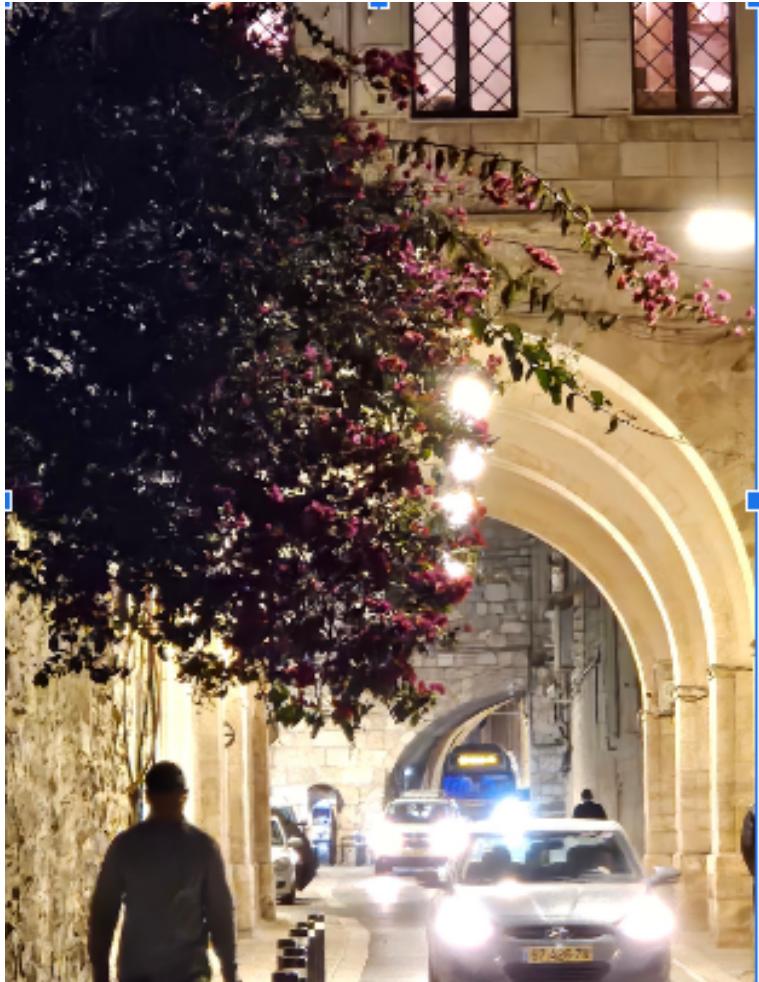
*From the Rabbi... continued from previous page*

The other “trip day” of the convention began at Muslala, an artist’s rooftop garden project overhauling sustainability in Jerusalem. There, we were addressed by members of the board of Karen Kayemet le’Yisrael (KKL) – the organization originally responsible for buying land in pre-state Israel and planting trees – and about the important work they now do with environmental sustainability in Israel, supporting displaced Israelis in the last year, and providing social programs and services, thanks to funding that comes through the World Zionist Organization (WZO). Leaders from Women of the Wall, LGBTQ groups, and more, shared about the crucial work they are doing to make sure Israel continues to grow, not just with skyscrapers in Jerusalem, but also in character as a democratic and pluralistic country.

The message of the importance of good leadership was emphasized that afternoon with a visit to the Knesset, and conversation with members of Israel’s parliament. The governing coalition has a radically different idea of what is good for Israel’s future than the majority of the world’s Jews, and in the context of the government, Jews like me have very little ability to dissuade the governing coalition from uprooting the good work that I had learned about just hours earlier.

In the next WZO election this March, billions of dollars in funding, as well as the leadership of KKL and other organizations that determine how the country functions, will be determined. For Israel to blossom into the dream we have for it, to be a place deserving of the strong and persistent Israelis and Jewish people through the integrity of its moral character and acceptance of Jews, and non-Jews, in all our forms and beliefs, we as American Jews must demonstrate love and resilience as well. The building happening in Israel needs the participation of all of the Jewish people, so that Israel can survive past this dark phase, and continue as *reishit tzemichat geulatainu* – the first flowering of our redemption.

To water the seeds that have been sown, it is absolutely crucial to spend five minutes and five dollars to vote for MERCAZ in the upcoming World Zionist Congress Elections, March 10th-May 4th. The Conservative/Masorti movement in Israel is leading the fights for environmentalism, pluralism, egalitarianism, rebuilding in the south, and democracy itself. Without your vote, I predict many barren years in the future of the Jewish state. With your vote, despite the despair that crouches at the door, we will coax fresh flowers to bloom in Israel, even in winter.



# NOTES FROM THE HAZZAN

## Hazzan Randall Levin



Before sharing a few thoughts, I want to engage in a bit of Hakarat Hatov, acknowledgement of the good, and to thank all those in our community who helped to make the *Mysteries, Memories, and Miracles* concert such a success. We are all so very lucky to be in a community with such generosity, dedication, and talent. On a personal note, I was privileged to be able to collaborate in performing Jewish music with my peers, each of whom brought their own unique talents to our bimah, and to the pieces we performed as an ensemble. Our in-house talent also shined brightly, with the Nagilah choir, led by Heidi Nelson Rolnick, turning in a transcendent performance. The concert narration was likewise expertly provided by Ruth Baran-Gerold and Dorrie Berkowitz. It was a true gift to see our musical community come together so seamlessly as both performers and as audience members.

The concert happened to fall, unintentionally, on my mother's 10th yahrzeit. This seemed like an unbelievable coincidence, especially given the relationship my mother and I shared regarding music. As I related at the concert, when I cautiously explained to my parents that I wanted to abandon my business studies to become a professional singer and to study music, my mother, somewhat unexpectedly, told me, with tears of joy in her eyes, "Randy, I know this is the right decision for you. All the best people I have known in my life I have met through music." This has most certainly proved to be true for me as well. My mother, for her part, supported me fully in my pursuits both as a student and a young professional, attending my performances, and "alerting" me to connections and auditions of which (she thought) I might want to be aware.

But this narrative is lacking a bit of context. The story of my turning to a career in music (and ultimately the Cantorate) did not come out of thin air. It was not some cosmic accident. For just as my parents made sure my brothers and I participated in sports, and received a good education, my parents also made sure we were exposed to music. Beyond giving us music lessons as children, they also made sure we had a wide variety of musical experiences, often dragging us (sometimes literally) to one concert or another.

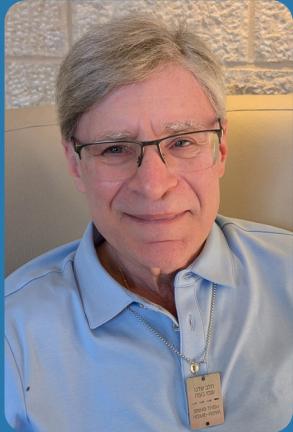
There is a reason people who are devoted to music are such kindred spirits. Those involved in music, be it as patrons or participants, tend to share some common aspirations: an appreciation of music as an essential and divine embodiment of our humanity, a willingness to be active listeners, and a desire to experience new voices and vocabulary. As parents and grandparents, we owe it to our children and grandchildren to foster these values. Through music, our children can improve their social skills, develop creativity, and express emotions. Musical experiences also have a profound impact on how we connect with our heritage and culture. How else will our children learn to appreciate our history and culture if we do not expose them to it? As our children mature into adulthood they will likely develop a natural inclination to share their heritage, to bring their own past into the present and to pass it forward into the future. This is especially important for Jews. Music (and song in particular) is arguably our most powerful cultural vehicle in transmitting our history and values. May we, in the coming secular new year, continue to commit ourselves to mindfully experiencing Judaism together, and to providing our children with an inheritance to pass along to their children as well.

Hazzan Randall Levin

# Coming Soon

**2025 World Wide Wrap  
Sunday, February 9, 2025**





## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Gary Kerzner**

### Have You Noticed?

"This place is hopping" – what a great description of the Forest Hills Jewish Center! If anyone thought that things would ease back and slow down after the High Holidays, they must have been very surprised at how the pace has picked up and our days are filled with activities, social events and fun. You can feel the energy coming from the Early Childhood Program and Religious School, as well as the Shir L'Shabbat, Kids Kong and PJ Shabbat programs. Just as exciting (if a bit calmer) was our first Daven & Dine, Rock 'N Roll Night, Scholastic Book Fair, multiple Adult Ed programs hosted by enthralling speakers, the Cantor's Concert and Chanukah party. And as the saying goes: HOLD ON FOLKS, THAT'S NOT ALL! We're just starting 2025 and there are a TON of things coming up to keep our members active, involved and enriched. January will see a wonderful Scholar-in-Residence program, with a very special guest (hint: you know and love him). February will be incredibly exciting, with Sisterhood Shabbat, the Dinner Dance, Coffee House, Purim Carnival and New Member Shabbat. Another Daven and Dine will be held in March, and more Adult Ed programming. We're planning a communal 2nd Seder in April along with programs for Yom HaShoah/Yom HaZikaron and the Yom HaAtzmaut Zimriyah. Pride Shabbat, in June, will truly be a source of pride for all.

Of the many great programs and events that we hold during the year, two are especially worth mentioning since they contribute so much to the warm and welcoming atmosphere that has attracted new families to FHJC: Daven and Dine, and Shabbat Kiddush. D&D is a multi-generational event that brings together families, singles and couples. The dinner that follows Kabbalat Shabbat services is a fabulous opportunity to reconnect with friends, sing together and enjoy great food. New members are welcomed and introduced to the FHJC community in a relaxed, informal setting.

Shabbat Kiddush is, undoubtedly, the best venue for new members and prospective members to meet us and appreciate all that FHJC has to offer. I've seen people linger at Kiddush for almost two hours, enjoying food & drink and having great conversation. Our members don't hesitate to introduce themselves when they spot a new face at Kiddush, and we love playing Jewish Geography. New members and prospective members who recently moved to Forest Hills tell me they are so happy to find such a warm, welcoming reception.

For the many reasons I've mentioned, come to FHJC for our meaningful services, for the social and educational events, to make new friends and to feel the warmth of our wonderful community.



# RELIGIOUS SCHOOL UPDATES

## Silvia Kogan



As we begin a new secular year, it's the perfect time to pause and look back. A new year is a blank canvas filled with possibilities giving us a chance to reflect on lessons from the past, and to set intentions for the months ahead. This transition offers a chance to celebrate growth, learn from challenges, and step into the future with purpose and hope.

After four months since the beginning of the school year, our Religious School students are thriving in a routine filled with learning, discovery, and friendship, while also embracing their pride in being Jewish. This sense of balance between academic growth, personal development, and cultural identity creates a nurturing environment where students can truly flourish.

One of our goals is to nurture learning and curiosity. A curious child is an active thriving learner, as curiosity opens doors to countless benefits in both education and personal growth. Curious children are naturally drawn to exploring topics, asking questions, and seeking deeper understanding.

Judaism and curiosity are deeply intertwined, as the Jewish tradition not only values the pursuit of knowledge but actively purposefully encourages questioning, exploration, and lifelong learning. Curiosity is seen as a gift and a pathway to wisdom, connection, and spiritual growth.

In a few weeks, we will read in Parsha Sh'mot the story of the encounter of Moshe with G-d at the burning bush. Moshe's immediate and spontaneous curiosity about the burning bush led to a profound divine revelation. In this parsha, Moshe's encounter with the miraculous bush, which burned without being

consumed, is portrayed as a moment of wonder that ignited his curiosity and set the stage for a defining event in Jewish history.

Jewish learning emphasizes asking questions. As the old saying goes, when a Jew is asked a question, they respond with... another question. The Talmud, a cornerstone of Jewish thought, is filled with debates and discussions, demonstrating that inquiry is central to understanding. Its study encourages Jews to continuously seek knowledge and explore sacred texts. At school we celebrate inquiry by creating spaces for children to ask questions without fear of judgment.

I believe that curiosity is the foundation of learning, and that every question—no matter how big or small—deserves to be explored. By creating spaces where children can voice their thoughts openly, we encourage them to embrace the process of learning, to challenge assumptions, and to dive deeper into understanding the world around them. In this way, we empower them to be critical thinkers, problem solvers, and lifelong learners, knowing that no question is too trivial and no idea is too bold to explore.

It is through curiosity that we continue to thrive as a people, learning from the past while shaping the future. My hope for 2025 is that we at FHJC are able to continue nourishing our children's curious spirit through programming, service work, conversations, and learning in and outside of the classroom. Please feel free to reach out with any ideas or suggestions for how to enhance and strengthen our Religious School in the new year.

A happy and healthy 2025! May we all hear good news!



## FHJC RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

### CHANUKIAH CONTEST



# NEWS FROM NURSERY SCHOOL

## Lynn Fisher



As we gather to celebrate the holiday season, the story of Chanukah offers us a reminder of the power of light. It teaches us that even the smallest flame can chase away the deepest darkness, and when shared, that light doesn't diminish—it grows, illuminating the world around us.

In a time when the world can often feel uncertain or challenging, the lesson of Chanukah is more relevant than ever. The Maccabees' victory wasn't just about strength; it was about faith, perseverance, and the belief that a small jar of oil could shine far beyond its expected capacity. This miracle of light reminds us that small acts of kindness, compassion, and love have the power to transform not only our lives but also the lives of those around us.

Our littlest learners remind us of these small but mighty flames. Even though they are little, our children possess the potential to brighten the world around them. They learn from us, absorbing the values and lessons we share, but they also teach us—through their curiosity, resilience, and joy—how to see the world with fresh eyes. They inspire us to keep our flames burning brightly, even when life feels challenging.

As we light the menorah each night, adding another candle with each passing day, it's an invitation to reflect on how we can bring more light into the world. The world needs more helpers—those who lend a hand, offer a smile, or share a kind word. Teaching our children to be these helpers is one of the greatest gifts we can give.

In our Early Childhood Program, we emphasize the importance of spreading light through acts of kindness and community. Whether it's sharing toys, helping a friend, or participating in a tzedakah project, our children learn that they can make a difference, no matter how small they are.

A single flame can light countless others, creating a glow that reaches far beyond its origin. This Chanukah let's commit to being the light in our homes, our schools, and our communities. Together, with our littlest learners, we can create a world that is warmer, brighter, and full of hope.

Wishing you and your families a joyful and light-filled Chanukah!

# KIDS KONGREGATION

For tots - seven year-olds and families.

Come Celebrate with Friends  
Singing, dancing, praying & story telling with  
Morah Riki.

Shabbat treats and grape juice for all!

11:00 AM-12:00 PM

January 4, February 8, March 1

## SHIR L'SHABBAT

Mindfulness, Stories, & Songs

### SATURDAYS

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
in the Little Synagogue

All families welcome!  
Looking forward to seeing  
you at our next meet-up.

January 11, 25,  
February 1, March 8



## ADULT EDUCATION

### Judy Gostl

### Azi Graeber

### David Snyder

Adult Education has had a successful start, offering several well-received programs and we're excited about the three additional Shabbaton at Home and at Shul events on this winter's schedule.

Our other ongoing groups continue to thrive as well. The History Readers Book Group, a small yet devoted group remains active and engaged. Their next book will be *Roads Taken: The Great Jewish Migrations to the New World and the Peddlers Who Forged the Way*, by Hasia Diner. They are working on clearing a date sometime in March. The Hebrew Literature Group continues to meet regularly with a dedicated following and their next session is January 23 at 5:00PM on Zoom.

The committee is also exploring a new program featuring documentaries. These screenings would include discussions on Jewish issues and values presented in the films. We hope to share updates about this initiative in the spring or summer.

#### Upcoming Winter Shabbaton Programs:

**Tuesday, January 28 at 8:00PM on Zoom:** Join media critic Nora Lee Mandel for a discussion: The Chosen TV series – Is It Good or Bad for the Jews? This drama explores the adult life of Jesus.

**On Shabbat, February 22, After Kiddush,** David Zipkowitz will present a deep dive into Ashrei, examining this prayer which is an essential part of our liturgy.

**On Tuesday, March 18 at 8:00PM on Zoom,** Azi Graeber will continue last year's Survey of Rabbinical Feuds and Controversies that was so well received.

**Looking ahead,** we're actively planning programs for April, May, and June. Several members are working on exciting new ideas, ensuring a diverse and engaging series of presentations for everyone.



## Debra Bochner, VP Education

Our schools are in full swing. As I walk around the building I see smiling faces, happy children and staff. There is lots and lots of learning in every classroom. It's fun asking the children questions and getting responses that show they are really absorbing what they are learning; from the Toddlers to the Hebrew High School.

The children had a wonderful time celebrating Hanukkah and beginning of winter before the holiday break. Staff and children were given candles, dreidels, gelt, the brachot and a recipe to take home.

This year we had the best Book Fair since pre-COVID. FHJC received 25% of the sales which will go directly to our Schools directors to use for their programs.

The children all picked wonderful books to read and take home. The children were so adorable picking out books with their teachers and volunteers we had. Thank you to all the volunteers on both days of the book fair.

The early love for reading produces life learners and life readers. Wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy 2025.

Debbie Bochner  
VP of Education



## MEN'S CLUB

### Peter Taub, Men's Club Presiding Officer, January-February

Men's Club has a busy couple of months planned. However, before jumping into our upcoming events, we have an update that was not quite ready by the deadline for the last issue of the Message: namely, that the Men's Club held its annual Barbecue in the Sukkah on October 4th. Over 50 people showed up and enjoyed a lovely meal in the Sukkah.

And now for upcoming fun: Men's Club will host a Family Havdalah Night on January 11th. On January 19th, Men's Club will host "For God and Country: Shmoozing with an Army Chaplain" with special guest speaker Rabbi (and Army Chaplain) Manes Kogan. The annual Coffee House will be held on Saturday night, February 8th: this event showcases amazing performances by many members of our congregation as well as all the coffee you can drink! The next morning, Sunday, February 9th will be the annual World Wide Wrap, chaired by Dan Korb. Whether you put on tefillin every day or have not yet engaged in this mitzvah, this event is fun and meaningful for all. Other Men's Club events in the planning stages are a Passover Food distribution Chesed project similar to our successful High Holiday food distribution and our annual Men's Club Shabbat.

If you are interested in joining Men's Club, renewing your membership or, if you are a paid-up member of the FHJC Men's Club and would like to become more involved in planning events, let us know at [MensClub@FHJC.org](mailto:MensClub@FHJC.org).



# Coffee House

presented by FHJC Men's Club

**SATURDAY EVENING, FEBRUARY 8, 2025 | 7:30 PM**

**Join us for an evening of fun as FHJC members  
perform songs, skits, and more!**

**Serving coffee, desserts, and snacks. BYOB**

**Advance paid reservations (by Tues Feb 4)**

\$20 Adult [13+]

\$10 Child

Family Maximum: \$50

**Click here to RSVP and for payment information**

For information contact Stephen Markowitz

[StephenMarkowitz15@gmail.com](mailto:StephenMarkowitz15@gmail.com) or 954-558-2400

**Tickets at the door**

\$25 Adult [13+]

\$10 Child

Family Maximum: \$65

## SISTERHOOD

### Rae Theise Kerzner, Presiding Officer, January-February



When this issue of the Message reaches you, we will already have celebrated Chanukah. Sisterhood's Kislev Blast (our monthly newsletter) featured our childhood memories of Chanukah. We had diverse experiences and shared commonalities – lighting the menorah, singing the blessings and eating latkes. This year, for the first time, our 4-year old grandson, Zeke, will be staying with us during Chanukah and we are looking forward to making it a very special time, cooking together, reading Chanukah stories, and of course, lighting the menorahs and retelling the story of Chanukah. He will have his very own menorah. What could be better than experiencing Chanukah through a child's eyes?

Our Sisterhood has been very busy this fall, and we have many plans for the coming months. In December, we had an extraordinarily successful collection for Transition Center, spearheaded by Diana Walcott and Minna Rivera. For the first time, attendees at the Chanukah Book Fair could purchase toys and books that would be given directly to Transition Center. Kudos to all our incredible volunteers and supporters of this very worthy cause.

December's program about Magen David Adom, "Saving Israeli Lives," was inspiring and informative. Sam Konig, the Northeast Regional Director of Strategic Philanthropy spoke about Magen David's programs and Dr. Edward Bennett, who volunteered for MDA immediately after October 7th, shared his experiences with us. We

also saw a video about MDA's Milk Bank for premature babies. And you thought Magen David Adom was just about ambulances!

In November, our Daytime Readers discussed "The Familiar" by Leigh Bardugo. They will read "The Frozen River" by Ariel Lawhon on January 9th.

On January 14th, Sisterhood will sponsor a Zoom presentation with Camille Eskell, an award-winning mixed media Sephardic artist. Then on January 22nd, we will join our BQLI (Brooklyn Queens Long Island) regional sisters for a Zoom talk, "Save a Life: Jewish Views on Organ Donation."

Sisterhood Shabbat will take place on February 1st, when we read Parashat Bo. Our Sisterhood women, joined by FHJC teens and not-yet-members, will lead the entire service, laying Torah, chanting Haftorah and giving the d'var Torah. It will be a memorable service, followed by a delicious Kiddush luncheon for the entire congregation, sponsored by Sisterhood.

We are planning a Hamantashen Baking program on February 23rd and are working on a museum tour and a tour of Carnegie Hall. Our Yoga classes, led by Lorain Wankoff, continues on Monday nights on Zoom and Pilates continues on Friday mornings in person, led by Dana Trakhtenberg.

Please join us. We always welcome new members. If you have any questions, you can reach out to our Presidium on any Shabbat morning – Debra Weil, Judy Gostl, Laurie Lax and myself, Rae Kerzner.



**FHJC  
BIKUR  
CHOLIM**

Bikur Cholim is very busy making phone calls, visiting some members in hospitals and rehabs, emailing and sending cards. If you feel someone needs to get a call from me or our clergy or a committee member let me know.

Debbie Bochner, Committee Chair [Debbiebochner@gmail.com](mailto:Debbiebochner@gmail.com)

If you would like to have someone on the misheberach list please call Laurie Worthman in the Center office 718-263-7000

## HEBREW LITERATURE GROUP

### Mitchell Frank

The Hebrew Literature Group had its second meeting of the year 5785 on November 21st. We meet next on January 23rd, when we will continue our year-long theme, Israeli poetry post October 7th. The writing that we're reading together is deeply moving, and also rich in content, providing plenty to explore and discuss. It's a new generation of Israeli poets, and they are so accomplished. Join us and discover this writing with us!

The Hebrew Literature Group meets via Zoom (the Zoom link will appear on listserv notices). Texts are read in Hebrew with English translation and discussion is in English.

Join us!

Mitchell Frank



EVERYTHING IS

**50%  
OFF**

**OHR-LI JUDAICA**



**OHR-LI JUDAICA**

To purchase, or for any questions, contact:  
Debbie Bochner: [debbiebochner@gmail.com](mailto:debbiebochner@gmail.com)

## OPEN GYM

SHABBAT AFTERNOONS FUN  
IN THE FHJC GYM

**TODDLERS TO 5TH GRADE**

1:00-4:00 PM

**6TH GRADE AND UP**

4:00-6:00 PM

Please note that this is not a drop off event. All children must be accompanied by a caregiver at all times.



## PARSHAT HASHAVUAH

**STUDY THE WEEKLY TORAH PORTION  
WITH RABBI GRABER**

Every Monday after minyan at 7:50pm  
In Person & Zoom

# Acknowledgements

## PULPIT FUND

**Dan Berman, Kramer Levin** – in honor of **Debbie Gregor, Carl Koerner & Romi Narov**

**Dorothy Mahlab** – in honor of **Gail Port** being chosen as Kallat Bereshit

**Dorothy Mahlab** – in honor of **Stephen Markowitz** being chosen as Chattan Torah

The following contributions were made in honor of Norman's Gursen's 90th Birthday:

**Tikva, Zahava, Hanna & Dorothy Mahlab**

**Pauline Clements**, in honor of "a true friend and a real mensch"

**Jaci Flug & David Kronenberg**

The following contributions were made in honor of the 40th wedding anniversary of **Judy & Matt Beizer**:

**Jaci Flug & David Kronenberg**

**Rebekah & Norman Fassler**

**Lorain & Warren Wankoff**

**Monica & Ezra Lagnado** – in gratitude to **Rae Kerzner** for honors received

**Pauline Clements** – in memory of her beloved brother, **Dr. Sidney Baigel** (yahrzeit)

**Pauline Clements** – in memory of her beloved husband, **Roy Clements** (yahrzeit)

The following contributions were made in memory of **Temma & Al Kingsley**:

**Dorothy Mahlab**

**Hanna Mahlab**

**Tikva Mahlab**

**Zahava Mahlab**

**Tikva, Zahava, Hanna & Dorothy Mahlab** – in memory of their beloved parents **Dr. Edward & Suzette Mahlab, z'l**

**Teri & Steven Goffner** – in memory of **Temma Kingsley**

**Monica, Ezra, Caroline & Evelyn Lagnado** – in memory of **Jenny Friedlich**

## PULPIT FUND

In memory of **Temma and Al Kingsley**, in gratitude for the comfort and support provided by the entire FHJC community from **Bonni, Mark, Jack and Noah Kingsley**.

## KIDDUSH FUND

The following contributions were made in honor of the 40th wedding anniversary of **Judy & Matt Beizer**:

**Judy & David Zipkowitz**

**Roz Okun**

**Laurie Lax & Eric Kober**

**Monica Lagnado** – in gratitude to **Judy Beizer** for honors received

**Illene & Warren Rubin & Family** – in honor of **Norman Gursen's** 90th birthday

**Anne & Howard Recht** – in honor of **Stephen Markowitz** being chosen Chattan Torah

**Ezra Lagnado** – in gratitude to **Norman Gursen** for honors received

**Ezra Lagnado** – in gratitude to **Rae Kerzner** for honors received

**Dorothy Mahlab** – in honor of the love & support of her sisters

**Eric Kober** – in gratitude to **Judy Beizer** for honors received

## YOUTH ACTIVITIES

**Dorothy Mahlab** – in honor of the love and support of her sisters

**Pauline & Mark Raphael** – in honor of the 40th anniversary of **Judy & Matt Beizer**

**Nancy & Richard Chase** – in honor of the 40th anniversary of **Judy & Matt Beizer**

**Dorothy Mahlab** – in gratitude to **Judy Beizer** for her kindness

**Hanna Mahlab** – in gratitude for the love and support of her sisters

**Zahava Mahlab** – in gratitude for the love and support of her sisters

**Tikva Mahlab** – in gratitude for the love and support of her sisters

**Aliza Altman** – in honor of **Ilana Altman**

**Aliza Altman** – in memory of **William Altman**

**Pauline & Mark Raphael** – in memory of **Doug Weiner's** father, **Maier Weiner**



*Mazel Tov,  
Bar Mitzvah*

**Benjamin Parness  
Bar Mitzvah  
January 25, 2025**

Benjy is an 8th grade student at Wagner Middle School in Manhattan and lives in Jackson Heights. He has been at FHJC since first grade. He loves to sing and will be performing in his school musical this year in a lead role. He is also very sports oriented, running on the track team for two years and playing volleyball every summer. Benjy plays the violin and has composed numerous songs over the years. He loves all things Star Wars and Marvel. For his mitzvah project, he is volunteering and raising money for people who need food at Broadway Community, Food Bank of New York, and Citymeals on Wheels.

# thank you

## KIDDUSH SPONSORSHIPS

Thank you to the following individuals for sponsoring a congregational Shabbat Kiddush in November and December.

**November 9: Bar Mitzvah of Henry Greenbaum:** Kiddush sponsored by Leah Spilke Greenbaum and David Greenbaum

**November 16: Kiddush honoring Judy & Matt Beizer:** Kiddush sponsored by Dina, Moshe, and Jonah Kook; Cara, David, and Charlie Beizer.

**December 7: Simcha Kiddush.** Kiddush sponsored by:

Bonnie Dassa	Penny Steinitz
Ellen Elowitz	Meir Toshav
Jeff Gottlieb	Juliet Vogel
Alan Kirschner	Larry Warmflash
Fran Spiro	Judy Zipkowitz

## Life Cycles Mazal Tov

### מזל טוב

...to those in our Center family who are celebrating a simcha:

Lisa Lazerson & Mike Abrams on the marriage of their daughter Allison Abrams to Sarah Abrams-Mousseau

Francie & Stephen Teitelbaum on the birth of their grandson

Mindy & Mark Weinblatt on the birth of their grandson

Ellen Elowitz on the marriage of her grandson, Jake Elowitz to Racheli Amrani

Rachel Reiner and Eric Parness on the bar mitzvah of their son, Benjamin

## Hamakom Y'nahem

### המקום ינוח

...may God grant comfort and consolation to those who have lost a loved one.

to Michael Rosen on the loss of his father, Morris Rosen  
to Doug Weiner on the loss of his father, Maier Weiner

May their memory be for a blessing.

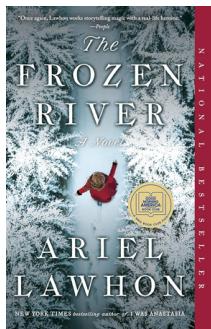
## December 21: Kiddush in honor of Norman Gursen.

Kiddush sponsored by:

Sharon, David & Gabe Ades  
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Ilana Altman  
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Nancy & David Lerner  
Tikva, Zahava, Hanna &  
Dorothy Mahlab  
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Miriam Weintraub  
Deborah Ball Witlin & Andrew Witlin  
Laurie & Roy Worthman  
Elizabeth Caudle  
& Matthew Ziegelbaum  
Judy & David Zipkowitz



## Sisterhood Daytime Readers

THE FROZEN RIVER

by Ariel Lawhon

THURSDAY, JANUARY 9,  
1:00PM

Based on the diary of Martha Ballard, a midwife in colonial-era Maine, The Frozen River is a thrilling and tender story about a remarkable woman whose legacy remains nearly forgotten. This book weaves together a murder investigation with a deep dive into Martha's life as a midwife, wife, and mother, offering a fresh perspective on early American life.

[Click here to access the Zoom link.](#)

## ONGOING EVENTS

**Monday nights at 6:25 PM - 7:15 PM:** Restorative Yoga with Lorain.

Email Lorain to confirm and for details at [LLSW@aol.com](mailto:LLSW@aol.com).

**Monday at 7:50PM:** Parasha Study with Rabbi Gruber

**Tuesdays @ 12:20PM; Thursdays @ 7:50PM.** Foundations of Jewish Prayer with Hazzan Levin.

**Wednesdays at 8:00PM:** The FHJC Watch Party - We are watching "Only Murders in the Building" Season Four (4)

**Friday morning — Pilates:** 9:30 mat class (bring your own mat); 10:40 chair class. Both sessions meet in the Heller Family Ballroom.

See the FHJC [Calendar](#) for links to these events.



 **Kehilat Yeladim**

A new Shabbat program for children ages 8 to 12

Join Morah Marcy Mirkin for an hour of prayer, singing, and activities.

Saturdays - 11 am to 12 pm

- November 9th
- December 14th
- February 8th
- March 15th
- April 5th
- May 3rd

Save the dates!

For more information contact [rsoffice@fhjc.org](mailto:rsoffice@fhjc.org)



MDA ambulance dedication held at FHJC on Sunday, 11/10/24.

# Thank You

תודה רבה

## 2024—5785 KOL NIDRE APPEAL TODAH RABAH LISTINGS

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT OF THE KOL NIDRE CAMPAIGN 5785

We wish to express our deepest appreciation to everyone who contributed so generously to our 2024-5785 Kol Nidre Campaign. A number of donors have chosen to remain anonymous and we have done our best to respect those requests. If your name is not here and should be here, please let us know. We will correct any mistakes and publish a notice of correction in the next Message.

Even if your name is not here, it's not too late. We'll be happy to say *todah rabah*—thank you in the next Message.

The responsibility of ensuring the viability of our shul for future generations now falls upon us. We hope that every member of our shul will join us in this important mission so we can reach our goal of 100% participation.

*Gary Kerzner, President and the members of the Executive Board:*

*Debra Bochner, Mitchell Frank, Howard Pollack, Zach Wichter, Preston Forman, and Suzanne Vick*

#### Pillar

Meir & Jill Toshav

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Take Me to the Water

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# Kol Nidre Continued

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## Award Winning Early Childhood Program

Our educational methods encourage children to become confident, independent, responsible, and creative thinkers, as well as help them develop interpersonal skills that support the productive years of learning that lie ahead.

### TODDLER PROGRAM

Through our rich Judaic curriculum, children participate in exploratory activities that use all their senses to experience their world through a play-based environment. They will begin to develop communication, social, physical and problem-solving skills.

Early Drop-Off and Late Pick-Up Options Available

Children in our Toddler/3K programs have priority in our 3K/Pre-K for all programs.

Early Childhood Registration is soon upon us for the 2025-2026 School Year

Watch for Summer Program 2025 Registration!

Please contact Lynn Fisher at  
(718) 263-7000 ext. 220 or [nursery@fhjc.org](mailto:nursery@fhjc.org)  
Catch the Early Bird Specials!  
[www.fhjc.org/early-childhood](http://www.fhjc.org/early-childhood)

FREE

DOE approved secular curricula.

Optional morning Judaic enrichment classes.

3-K  
FOR  
ALL

PRE-K  
FOR  
ALL

Our Summer Programs for 2, 3, and 4 year olds offer the opportunity for fun, friendships, and exploration.





# Havdallah & Movie Night

Let's welcome a new week together

Join us for a night of family fun and dinner

**Saturday, Jan 11th at 5:15pm**

- Movie: Inside Out 2
- Board games
- Bumper pool, ping-pong, foosball
- Chicken fingers, fries & snacks
- \$5 per family
- For more info contact Heather Cook at [hcook12@hotmail.com](mailto:hcook12@hotmail.com)

**RSVP by 1/7**  
[RSVP and pay here](#)

Co-sponsored by FHJC School Board & Men's Club



## Men's Club Breakfast For God & Country: Shmoozing with an Army Chaplain Rabbi Manes Kogan

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 19,  
10:30AM**

Rabbi Kogan is the rabbi at the Hillcrest Jewish Center and concurrently serves as an Army chaplain one weekend a month.

He will be speaking about his role as a US Army chaplain.

Costs for breakfast are \$10 per person. All are welcome, but you must register by Wednesday, January 15.

[Click Here](#)

Any questions? Contact Carl Schrag at [eugene.schrag@gmail.com](mailto:eugene.schrag@gmail.com)

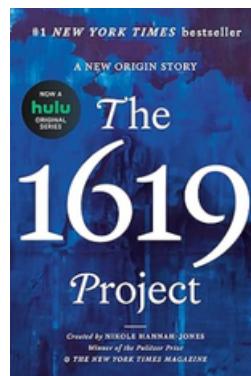


### Sisterhood presents CAMILLE ESKELL: AN ARTIST AND HER WORK

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 8:00PM

Camille Eskell's current series, The Fez as Storyteller, features mixed-media sculptures and two-dimensional works that explore the legacy of patriarchal systems and gendered traditions passed down through generations. Drawing on her cultural heritage, Eskell integrates Middle Eastern, Sephardic, and South Asian influences, using fez caps, digital imagery, and mixed media to examine themes of female empowerment and restriction. The series merges her interests in art, history, costume, and psychology.

[Click here to RSVP and receive the Zoom link.](#)



## FHJC's The 1619 Project Book Discussion Group

BEGINNING WEDNESDAY,  
JANUARY 22, 8:00PM  
on Zoom

Join FHJC's Project 1619 Discussion group. This program, sponsored by USCJ, is designed to deepen our understanding of systemic oppression and racism, and to do so in a supportive environment.

Throughout this series of six monthly sessions, we aim to foster thoughtful discussions that inspire personal growth, allyship, and long-lasting, community-wide change.

[Click here by January 15 to register and receive the pre-read materials.](#)

Contact Caty Koatz or Zach Wichter with any questions.

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## WE WON'T STOP UNTIL THEY'RE ALL BACK

#BringThemHomeNow

Looking for the  
Calendar?  
Please visit the FHJC  
website for  
[www.FHJC.org](http://www.FHJC.org)

8

15

11

18

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