

# Kayruv



# קירוב

“Judaism for Today In a Warm and Caring Environment”

July/August 2019

Tammuz/Av 5779

## FROM THE RABBI



Dear Friends,

September is an interesting month, as it is usually close to the Hebrew month of *Elul* or the Hebrew month of *Tishrei*. As the weather begins cooling down, and summer begins taking leave,

leaves begin falling on the ground and our thoughts begin turning inward.

This is the season for *Teshuvah*, Returning. This Return is not merely a u-turn, not just “getting back onto the straight path.” This Return is the Return to our core values, to our spiritual home.

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**Kayruv means “Welcoming.”**

Jews have several spiritual homes to which we return: family, community, history, culture, Torah. All of these parts of our lives have shaped, in one way or another, how we express who we are today.

The High Holidays are a call to come home. One of the many things we celebrate on Rosh Hashanah is the Creation of the world. Another one is the creation of the First Human Being, *Adam HaRishon*. We remember that all humans are created in the image of the Holy One.

Among Jewish educators, how to teach that value – *betzelem Elohim* - is a very important question, precisely because we know – or, better said, our history teaches us – that horrible, unspeakably terrible things have happened several times when we ourselves were painted with one brush, or when we painted other groups within our own people with one.

If we are frank and candid about what we see in the world, we will admit that this tendency is found inside every community – the tendency of seeing the Other as an anonymous, amorphous, and therefore, dangerous entity. In faith communities, this can become complicated by how leaders read certain passages of sacred texts.



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A colleague of mine, rabbi Gerald Zelizer, pointed out that, "It's not true that Islam was also "hijacked" by the 9/11 hijackers.

It's not true that the "Price Tag" thugs, who vandalized and torched mosques and other institutions in Israel, misrepresented Judaism.

It's not true that prominent Christian preachers in the United States who justified slavery by quoting the New Testament misquoted that Scripture.

It is true that the sacred texts of Islam, Christianity and Judaism are double-edged, conveying contradictory messages.

One edge cuts to hate, exclusion, insularity and violence. The other edge flows to love, pluralism, universality and acts of kindness. Which edge prevails depends on who reads which passage, when it is read and how it is interpreted."<sup>1</sup>

His piece at NJ.com goes on to show troubling pieces of sacred texts for all monotheistic faiths, and makes the case that no religion is exempt from religious violence – even Buddhism.

Becoming a better person, our tradition wants us to realize, takes conscious effort. It takes embarking in a process – a process that begins with asking each person you have hurt or wronged in the past year for forgiveness. Becoming a better person begins by admitting that you are not perfect, and that you did not act in a good way towards someone else.<sup>2</sup>

And I think that becoming better people – Jewish people, Muslim people, Christian people, and so on, also begs that we don't look away and pretend that our traditions are perfect.

We need to admit that in ALL traditions there are voices that impel violence towards the Other – and we need to admit that those voices are not helpful or good today – even if they were needed in the past.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.nj.com/opinion/2016/09/nj\\_rabbi\\_we\\_must\\_ignore\\_the\\_destructive\\_teachings.html](https://www.nj.com/opinion/2016/09/nj_rabbi_we_must_ignore_the_destructive_teachings.html)

<sup>2</sup> That person, of course, can also be yourself – especially if you engaged in self-destructive actions or habits in the past and want to change this.

Nowadays, living in a globalized world, we see so many other ways of being human. Some of us will feel insecure in their identities precisely because of that and give into the fear of the Other. And fear begets violence.

Those insecure in their own identities are prone to eliminate (or expel) the Other instead of learning about the Other, of knowing the Other, of admitting that the Other is part of our world as well. Precisely because of that we need to make sure that the voices of compassion and coexistence are heard loud and clear in every tradition.

*Olam Chesed yibaneh* – the world will be built using compassion<sup>3</sup> – is a favorite verse in our tradition, used to show how the world's very existence depends on compassionate actions on our part. That same psalm, Psalm 89, includes a verse we will say out loud during the Musaf Amidah as part of the "Shofarot" verses: *Ashrey haAm yodei Truah* – happy is the people that know the *truah* sound.<sup>4</sup>

What is it to hear the sound of the *truah*? It is the call to renew our allegiance to the voices of compassion and community-building in our sacred texts. There is the harsh truth of violent voices in this world in all traditions, and knowing how to respond with the voices of compassion from those same traditions is, eventually, what will keep the world existing.

In that same Psalm, the verse before reads: "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne, compassion and truth go before You."<sup>5</sup> Justice and truth form the pair that balances out compassion and righteousness (*tzedek*) – striving to know how to balance compassion and truth is the hallmark of our season of *Teshuvah*, of Return.

May this month of *Elul* mark a time of building bridges of compassion towards the Other and towards ourselves, may it be a time of returning to the values of being *menschen* may we strive to become better.

Warmly,  
Rabbi Nelly Altenburger

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<sup>3</sup> Psalms 89:3

<sup>4</sup> Psalms 89:16

<sup>5</sup> Psalms 89:15

## FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

At this time, I come as close as possible to believing in G-d. No, it is not because I'm finally sitting to write my first Kayruv article, it is because I have once again witnessed the miracle of birth.

My grandson was "hatched" July 18, 2019. When you are in the hospital and you see so many pregnant mothers give birth, and basically all go through the same schedules of day 1, day 2, etc., you just can't imagine such a production line without a very talented, brilliant creator! That would be G-d! And, when in the waiting rooms, you see one family after another, sharing their joy, their congratulations, and their love, one realizes that we all have so much in common.

In the hospital it is easy to see the "team effort." The doctors, nurses, aides, kitchen staff, custodians, all contributing a helpful role for a shared cause. It is beautiful to behold and a model to the world. Everyone plays an important part, with kindness, smiles, and concern for each other. It is a model "United Nations." Literally, as next door there was a Muslim celebration service, and one could find families of every ethnicity in the waiting rooms, all being supported with the same dedication, kindness, and caring.

As a footnote, I started by saying this brings me as close as possible to believing in G-d, but every day I still wonder about G-d as I think of the Holocaust.

If you missed the Schmooze and Booze on July 9, this is some of what you missed. It was a share and care hour, with each person sharing about someone special to them who played a big part in their life.

Julie Leventon shared about Louis Russo, aged 101, a war veteran. This person made her feel special, and from him she learned about herself, helping others, and helping to make people happier. He reminded Julie of all the good she was doing.

Charlie Cahn talked of Pat and Alvin Goldman. They have mentored and inspired many generations. They both still want to take care of everyone. Though they face many challenges, they are still there for all.

One more story. Harry Gittlitz, spoke of his grandfather, who came to this country by himself at the age of seven. He spoke only Yiddish. Qualities that Harry learned from his grandfather included self-sufficiency, and the ability to fix many things himself. I enjoyed the story where his grandfather who had a beach house, in order to earn money, charged five cents a person to wash the sand off their feet.

There were inspiring wondrous stories from over twenty people, and I could fill a book from that evening.

Don't miss the next Schmooze and Booze on August 13, from 7 – 8:30 p.m. At B'nai Israel.

On August 16, there will be a *Kabalat Shabbat*. This will be like no other *Kabalat Shabbat*, but will feature a Game Night, "You Be The Judge"! Don't miss it! 7:00 P.M.

Have you heard, we have line dancing coming! This will be fun for all ages!

On July 28, there will be a FOOD DRIVE outside the Stop & Shop on Lake Avenue Extension.

Hopefully, that will have been a big success by the time you read this. Food collected will benefit the Daily Bread Food Pantry, and the Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen.

Remember our motto this year, "Ask not what your synagogue can do for you, rather ask what you can do for your synagogue!"

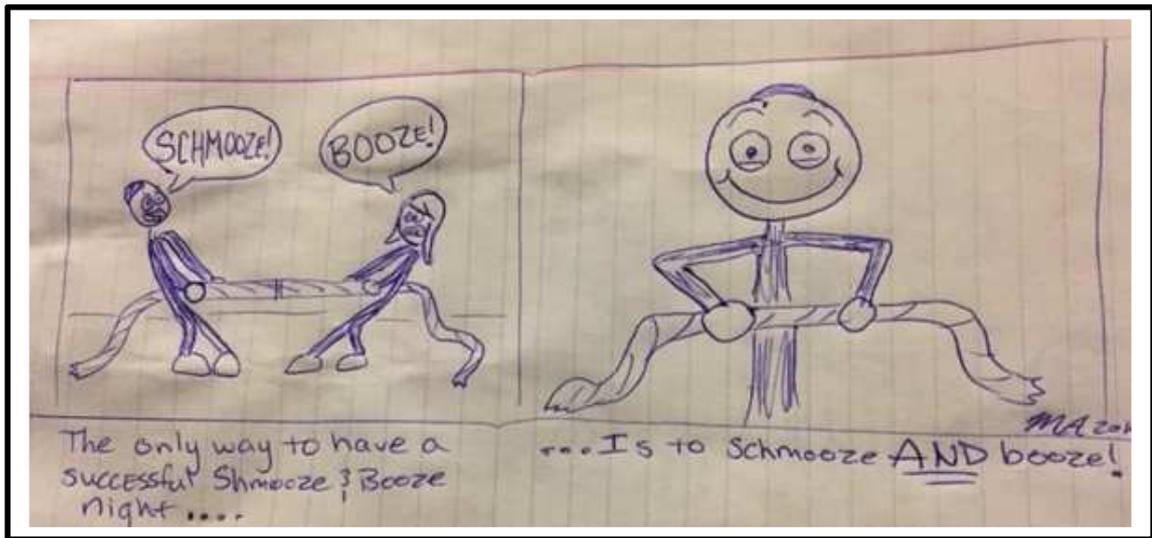
P.S. I hear no one reads messages from the Kayruv. Let's find out! If you see me, say the "secret code", "peanuts", and that will tell me you read this!

Regards,  
Glen Lebetkin

**LOOKING AHEAD**

**OUR NEXT SCHMOOZE & BOOZE  
AUGUST 13<sup>TH</sup> FROM 7:00 – 8:30 P.M.**

If you missed our first Schmooze & Booze join us for a great time for this one. (See Glen's article for a peek into the first Schmooze & Booze.)



**August 16, 2019: *Kabalat Shabbat* Unique Format  
A Game Night – “You Be The Judge!” Fun for All!**

## GOOD TIMES WE SHARED

Our Saturday Kiddush management team has recently begun a habit of “themeing” the table by making visual representations of references in the week’s portion. Balak was July 20<sup>th</sup>’s portion which included two things: Num. 24:5, “*Mah tovu...*”, “How lovely are your dwellings, Jacob” and the talking donkey of Balaam.

Three of our young members who attended an ad hoc summer kiddush camp created works of art for these references; a Lego sculpture of the tents of Israel in the desert, and a cake-based likeness of a donkey piñata. We congratulate and thank Michaela, Elliott and Nathaniel Altenburger for jobs well done. Both pieces were worthy of a placement at the Louvre, but we took down the tents and ate the donkey.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

### LAUNDRY LOVE

What began with one needy man some sixteen years ago, has now expanded to 325 Laundry Love initiatives across America. Eight Danbury area churches and three synagogues have come together to establish the program in Danbury.

Briefly, the project concept is that, for homeless and otherwise needy people, having clean clothes to wear could open up life-altering possibilities for them.

CBI is a member of this coalition of religious communities. Our members can participate in this project either financially or through volunteering their time, or both.

Soon we will be emailing you a copy of a presentation that Fran Kimball made at a recent Shabbat service. It will give you more details about the program and how you can be a part in helping needy members of our community.

Please help.

Susan Tritter

### **Donations for CBI's Year Long Food Drive**



Our ongoing food donation program continues to be a success. Don't stop now! There are people in our Danbury community that need our help. This is a monthly donation program. Please bring a little something whenever you can.

 Cut this out and put on your fridge so you have all the upcoming

## B'NAI ISRAEL CALENDAR



**July 28, 2019: FOOD DRIVE 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.**

\*Stop & Shop on Mill Plain Road, across from Westconn

\*Hand out papers as customers enter the store listing the needed food items for **The Daily Bread Food Pantry, and Dorothy Day Soup Kitchen.**

\*Sign up for a 2-hour time slot, 9:00 – 11:00 A.M., 11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M., 1:00 – 3:00 P.M.

\*Reply to office to sign up.



**August 13, 2019: Schmooze and Booze Night, 7:00 – 8:30 P.M. at B'nai Israel ~ Topic to be announced!**



**August 16, 2019: Kabbalat Shabbat – Unique Format**

A Game Night – “You Be The Judge!” Fun for All!



**August 25, 2019: First Line Dance – Tentative Date**



**September 8, 2019: Line Dance (tentative alternate date to August 25)**



**September 10, 2019: Schmooze and Booze Night, 7:00 – 8:30 P.M. at B'nai Israel (Topic to be announced)**

**October 2019: Holidays – Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simhat Torah**



**November 12, 2019: Veteran's Day Celebration at B'nai Israel - Time to be announced**



**December 10, 2019: Schmooze and Booze Night (Topic to be announced) 7:00 – 8:30 P.M.**



**January 12, 2020: Talent Show ~ Time to be announced**

Sign up to participate – Reply to Office

## SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

☆ **Shabbat, 24 Tammuz, July 27, Pinehas:** In the fortieth year a census is taken of the Israelites and Joshua is appointed as Moshe's successor.

*Haftarah:* Jeremiah 1:2-2:3

☆ **Shabbat, 2 Av, August 3, Mattot-Mas'ei:** The final portions of Bamidbar, the route of our wandering is recounted.

*Haftarah:* Jeremiah 2:4-28; 3:4

☆ **Shabbat, 9 Av, August 10, Devarim:** Ready to enter the land of Milk and Honey, Moshe addresses the Israelites and reviews their history with them as warning.

*Haftarah:* Isaiah 1:1-27

☆ **Shabbat, 16 Av, August 17, Va'et'hanan:** Still addressing the Israelites, Moshe regrets that he will not be entering the land with them. In this *parsha* Moshe repeats the Ten Commandments, as well as addressing us with the words of the *Sh'ma*.

*Haftarah:* Isaiah 40:1-26

☆ **Shabbat, 23 Av, August 24, Ekev:** Moshe enjoins the Israelites to remember that their future depends on their actions.

*Haftarah:* Isaiah 49:14-51:3

☆ **Shabbat, 30 Av, Re'eh:** Moshe teaches us the economics of *tzedakah* (charity and welfare) which are the responsibilities of the people of Israel as they create a society in their own land.

*Haftarah:* Isa. 66:1-24, 23

☆ **Shabbat, 7 Elul, September 7, Shoftim:** Moshe

instructs us to set up just courts to rule our society. "Justice justice shall you pursue."

*Haftarah:* Isaiah 51:12-52:12

☆ **Shabbat, 14 Elul, September 14 Ki Tetze:** An array of civil and domestic laws for the Israelites to follow upon coming into their land.

*Haftarah:* Isaiah 54:1-10 +54:11-55:5

☆ **Shabbat, 21 Elul, September 21, Ki Tavo:**

Come and discuss blessings and curses in Jewish thought. *Haftarah:* Isaiah 60:1-22

### For Their Generous Kiddush

☆ The Kimballs in honor of their children and grandchildren

☆ The CBI Board in honor of Victor Namer

☆ The Goldmans in honor of their parent

## THANKS! THANKS!

### For the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

☆ The Wise family in memory of Douglas Wise

## CANDLE LIGHTING

July 26, 2019:	7:59 PM
August 2, 2019:	7:52 PM
August 9, 2019:	7:43 PM
August 16, 2019:	7:34 PM
August 23, 2019:	7:24 PM
August 30, 2019:	7:13 PM
September 6, 2019:	7:01 PM
September 13, 2019:	6:50 PM
September 20, 2019:	6:38 PM

## YAHARZEITS

### 21 Tammuz, July 24, 2019

Kay Robinson (Barbara Levitt)

### 23 Tammuz, July 26, 2019

Etta W. Tritter (Henry Tritter)

### 24 Tammuz, July 27, 2019

Jerome Zimmerman (Shoshannah Zimmerman)

### 26 Tammuz, July 29, 2019

Celia Schorr (Heather K. Mazarakos)

### 4 Av, August 5, 2019

Sally Rudick (Grace Rudick)

### 8 Av, August 9, 2019

Bernard Breeman (Barbie Steinberg)

### 14 Av, August 15, 2019

Shalom Lampell (Ilana Lampell)

### 21 Av, August 22, 2019

Bessie Bank (Alex Bank)

Alfred P. Poll (Susan Osness)

### 23 Av, August 24, 2019

Aryeh Leib Kerstein (Michael Kerstein)

Howard Rothstein (Shari Lynn Kochman)

### 28 Av, August 29, 2019

Harry Robinson (Barbara Levitt)

Dr. Ralph Alpher (Harriet Lebetkin)

Sol Harry Kaplan (Donna Goodstein)

### 30 Av, August 31, 2019

A. Paul Tritter (Henry Tritter)

### 4 Elul, September 4, 2019

Robert Salm (Joyce Shenker)