

# Kayruv



# קירוב

“Judaism for Today In a Warm and Caring Environment”

August 2020

Av/Elul 5780

## FROM THE RABBI



Dear Friends,

When life's little annoyances seem to take over your mood, especially during this COVID family closeness/confinement time, please take a moment and (re)read this:

I am thankful for the spouse who says, “It’s hot dogs tonight,” because s/he is home with me and not out with someone else.

I am thankful for the spouse who is on the sofa being a couch potato because s/he is home with me and not out at the bars.

I am thankful for the teenager who is complaining about cleaning his/her room because it means s/he is at home and not on the streets.

I am thankful for the taxes I pay because it means I am employed.

I am thankful for the mess to clean after a get-together because it means I have been surrounded by loved ones.

I am thankful for the clothes that fit a little too snugly because it means I have enough to eat.

I am thankful for the lawn that needs mowing, the gutters that need fixing, and the windows that need cleaning because it means I have a home.

I am thankful for my huge heating bill because it means I am warm.

I am thankful for the person near me who sings off key because it means I can hear.

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***Kayruv* means “Welcoming.”**



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I am thankful for the pile of laundry because it means I have clothes to wear.

I am thankful for all the complaining I hear about the government because it means we have freedom of speech.

I am thankful for weariness, the aches and pains at the end of the day because it means I am capable of working hard and living up to my potential.

I am thankful for this piece of wisdom because now I can take a deep cleansing breath and get on about the business of living.

Have a happy, healthy and COVID safe summer!  
Rabbi Rhonda Nebel

## **RABBI'S OFFICE HOURS**

Rabbi Nebel invites you to meet with her and will be available any day except Wednesday and Shabbat. Please feel free to call or stop by.

### **A Note About CBI's Food Drive**



Although our food donation program cannot continue during this period. As soon as we are able to come together at the synagogue, we will resume this program.

## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**



Dear Friends,

It seems like this past month has been a year. A lot has happened since our last Kayruv. We've witnessed the full cycle of what we know as "life." We've had to say goodbye to Alvin Goldman, and Julie Leventon's mother, Charlene Carstons. We've shared the *B'nai Mitzvahs* of Hannah Mandell, and Alex and Daniel Mazarakos.

Recently I tried to copy the Haftorah and enlarge it so I could read it. This simple task was a little beyond my ability. I began thinking if when I was 20, there were technological things I could handle that were a bit much for my parents. They were! The VCR! Sigh.....

I didn't really know Julie's mother. That said, I'm sure she was proud of Julie. Julie devoted herself to making her mother's last month's comfortable and loved. Julie still managed to attend Board meetings and services via Zoom and talk to friends. When our Visions group had no place to meet, it was Julie who opened her home to the meetings. Not only did we meet there, but she fed the group as well. Julie nourishes us all with her support and friendship.

Life often seems like one giant paradox. Here it is so darn hard to say goodbye to people whom we love, and we are able to see such wonderful and beautiful things about our B'nai Israel community! Before I mention a few of these I am constantly amazed and thankful how Pat Goldman has helped us all through this time. All one has to do is call Pat up to try and make her feel better, and she turns the tables. Somehow she finds something wonderful about what you did, and continues telling you how special it is and thoughtful of you. Her strength and character have been both a wonder and a gift for all of us.

The tributes to Alvin were so special. He touched many generations, and in many different capacities. I am just beginning to see how he created ripples in his "Pond of Life" that continue to

travel outward and will for a long time to come. There were so many “silver linings” visible during the *shiva* for Alvin. One can see the best of B’nai Israel. We have witnessed a great deal of generosity from our congregation. We saw a willingness to help each other. We had people volunteer to organize meals for the Goldman family. We had families prepare meals for them. We saw 45 - 50 participants “attending” the *shiva*. We have seen, during this time, people volunteering to help fix the Rabbi’s residence. People have volunteered to be on committees for this and other things as well. We have a special person who arranges our Zoom meetings and when thanked all he says is, “I live to serve!” That he does. We have people who set up chairs, and everything else for the *B’nai Mitzvahs*. We have people who volunteer to make phone calls to see how others in our congregation are doing.

What I am trying to say, is that we have a special congregation and, “Life is a lot better, when you go through it together.” Thank you!

We could sure use some help from people who might be able to revitalize our website. If you would like to join our Website committee please contact Lori Chefec, or let us know at [cbi193clap@gmail.com](mailto:cbi193clap@gmail.com). If you would like to help on the Membership Committee, there is a spot or two available for your help. Again, please call Barbara Levitt, or let us know at [cbi193clap@gmail.com](mailto:cbi193clap@gmail.com).

I know so many of you do wonderful volunteer work for our congregation and other groups. Let me remind you of **Project Pam**, (Project Pride). I think it would be lovely if you could dedicate your volunteer work to either of the Lampells who did so much for B’nai Israel, or to someone for whom you wish to show special love and recognition. If you would dedicate whatever work you are doing, or take on a new volunteer activity in their honor for a period of a month that would be very special.

It would be wonderful to remember the legacy of people like Pam and Shalom Lampell, who put so much of their life into making B’nai Israel what it is today. I am sure that you also have others near and dear to your heart that you would like to recognize in this way. Every month you might choose another person you wish to recognize.

Look for our **Schmooze and Booze** via Zoom to reappear. We have been so busy surviving, and now we should focus on the thriving.

Be well and stay healthy!  
Glen

## AUGUST EVENTS

### August 29<sup>th</sup> David Hirsch Celebrates becoming *Bar Mitzvah*

Join us in wishing a hearty *Mazel Tov* to Vanessa and Peter Hirsch on son David become CBI’s newest *Bar Mitzvah*.



## ON BEING A JEW

Judaism means to me praying to a higher power called G-d, which is most powerful. This is shown through the readings of the Torah on *Shabbat*. I like keeping the tradition of reading Torah because there are lessons to be learned from the *Midrashim* and Torah teaching. Although there is no recent evidence of G-d, I still have faith and pray to the one who delivered the Torah at Mount Sinai. Prayer in synagogue is a tradition that I enjoy and like to hear familiar and new melodies and songs of the prayers. Of course, I like *Shabbat* kiddushes very much and enjoy the delicious food. My favorite foods are smoked salmon and desserts. During *Shabbat* kiddush, I get to

see my friends and we can talk and play outside when the weather is nice.

I like Jewish traditions and there are so many traditions I want to learn more about and fully understand why they are performed. For example, why does the Rabbi make a slice on top of the *challah* before saying *Ha'Motzi*?

With prayer comes faith, which gives you more confidence, or it can help you be more confident. I feel I have more faith and confidence because I believe in G-d, and that will help me get through life's difficult times. Faith can help people find hope when they feel overwhelmed by problems. Hope gives people the feeling that when bad things happen, they can or will get better soon. Jewish traditions help give me faith and hope for a better future. For example, I hope I could be motivated to get my summer work for school done, or more importantly to do something significant with my life. Hope is contagious, in a good way, and can spread to other people just like a smile or nice words.

As I said before, I am interested in the *Midrashim*. When I think, read or hear the stories I wonder if they are eyewitness accounts. But if they are, why does all the credit go to the author and not G-d or angels. And, if it is an eyewitness account then I want to know how much is true and how much is a story. For example, when the Midrash speaks of G-d using an outstretched arm to free the Jews from Egypt did the plagues really happen or could there be an explanation of what happened that made people believe it happened.

David Hirsch

## MEET OUR NEW RABBI

This is the second installment of the interview Glen had with Rabbi Nebel.

**Editors Note:** A correction - In our first installment, Rabbi Nebel's papa fought Johnny Dundee, not Charley Dundee.

**Glen.** Danbury is actually a pretty good area to find a job. It's possible.

**Rabbi.** Good! My brother came to New York six years ago because of me. If I could get him out here, I would love to, except that he just took a new job at Stony Brook University Hospital so he isn't going anywhere right now.

**Glen.** Your daughter Samara told me he has a girlfriend.

**Rabbi.** Yes, he does. A nice Jewish girl born in Ukraine.

**Rabbi.** She would be a good person to bring in for a speaker when the pandemic is over, she won't go out right now.

**Glen.** Tell me about some of your childhood friends.

**Rabbi.** I still have my best friend from seventh grade on. I have a best friend from college. I have two best friends from Rabbinical school. I have a best friend from New London. I have a group of BFFs from Hauppauge. My mother calls me a collector of people. I just collect people along the way, I keep friends. I've learned whom to keep in the circle and whom not to. I'm pretty easy to get along with. I just accrue people. LOL!

**Glen.** What were some of your early interests?

**Rabbi.** My husband and I were prize winning disco dancers back in the day! We won a lot of contests. We had no official training, but we used to give lessons. We were on TV. Back then, we were quite a dance couple.

**Glen.** What was your favorite disco song?

**Rabbi.** The songs we used to dance to "Once, Twice, Three Times a Lady" by Lionel Ritchie, "Take That To The Bank" by Shalimar.. My favorite disco songs are "Star Love" by Cheryl Lynn and "Instant Replay" by Dan Hartman.

**Glen.** Let's go back to your elementary school years. What were your interests outside of school?

**Rabbi.** I was a Girl Scout all the way through to First Class. Today they call it Gold Award. We did not have extracurricular activities like today. I had Hebrew School after school too. It was just scouting and hanging around the street with the kids. That was the thing we did. Tree houses, and

fort houses, hopscotch. I did all the kinds of things that kids would do back in the day out on the street. I walked to school. I was six, my brother five, and we walked to school. You could do that back then.

**Glen.** What was your favorite subject? Who was your favorite teacher in elementary school?

**Rabbi.** Elementary school? I would say my favorite teachers were my third grade teacher, Miss Brown. She became Mrs. Cashion, and my 5th grade teacher Mrs. Backus. I loved them.

**Glen.** Why did you love them?

**Rabbi.** I don't remember why, but I still feel warm when I think of them. Come junior high and high school there was a lot more to do after school, especially in Stoughton. I was one of the good students, one of the brainiac kids. Also I fit in with all the other groups, because I was athletic. I was also into drama, student council, and I was on the swim and track team. Oh yes, I was also in the Honor Society. My friends were across the board. My interests were like that too. I was pretty social. I was very involved in the United Synagogue Youth group, USY, starting in the 5th grade when we moved to Stoughton. And Hebrew school there three days a week and once a week in high school was big for me. I tutored in the Hebrew school after *Bat Mitzvah*. So most of my afternoons were full.

**Glen.** You played sports. What was your favorite?

**Rabbi.** Swimming. I was a swim instructor from the time I was 13 at day camps. I became a C.I.T. Counselor at 13. At 16, I was assistant waterfront director. At 17, I was running camp swim programs until I was 30. I started with the swim team in high school with my 9th grade English teacher as coach and I started with the track team with that same teacher coaching. She was awesome. I used to be a miler, until I fell. Because I was short they thought I'd be a great sprinter. I fell, messed up my knees and that was the end of running. So then I threw the shotput and the discus on the team.

**Glen.** Let's go to your middle school years. Those can often be difficult for girls.

**Rabbi.** Yes they can, but I can only remember good times. Scouting, and camping in the summer. Hanging with friends, and riding bikes was really big growing up. You don't want to know the naughty things we did when we were riding our bikes!

**Glen.** Wait a minute. Maybe I do.

**Rabbi.** I'm not giving out any information about sitting in the woods and smoking cigarettes! There was a group of us that every day would hang out. We didn't hang out in front of the TV. We were outside. I would walk in the woods, we were out all day. In junior high I started drama. I got into

directing - I loved that. There was also Hebrew school, and USY. I was pretty active.

**Glen.** What plays were you in?

**Rabbi.** I was a backstage person more than an on stage person. In high school I was a lighting specialist. I used to do the lights. I was in the cage. (stage vernacular) I would do the lights for most shows. I was on stage for a few things. You will come to know that I'm not a big egotistical person, I don't need the spotlight. I like to see things happen, to give the push and have things take off. I don't need the limelight. I don't have an ego that needs to be stroked.

**Glen.** I don't know if you know that I did maybe 50 musicals in my time of teaching. Sometimes I think of doing a musical in the synagogue or the Jewish community.

**Rabbi.** I love doing plays and things, that would be fun! A Purim musical! I've got some scripts! That would be fun.

**Glen.** Did you have a favorite teacher in Jr. High?

**Rabbi.** In high school, I would say my 9th grade advanced bio science teacher, Mr. Sarno, who later became principal and superintendent. I loved him dearly. He was from Revere and knew about being a *shabbos goy*. He was Italian. We had a tight relationship. Because of him I was able to get that job teaching in the high school when I needed it. There was a year I was substitute teaching and then got my own class. It was because of him.

**Glen.** It is pretty amazing. I just interviewed Hannah who is having a *bat mitzvah* soon. You have so much in common. She likes to go biking, into the forests and take walks. She does so many similar activities and goes to the beach every day.

**Rabbi.** Beaches are important to me. I know there's a lake nearby. I would probably get into the car and drive to the nearest ocean when I have free time.

**Glen.** You mentioned who was the biggest influence in your life. Can you go back to that and elaborate please.

**Rabbi.** I don't know if there was one person who was the biggest influence. I would say that the rabbi I grew up with helped me along my path. By the time my senior year in high school came around I had major chunks of time. Instead of just sitting in study hall, I asked if I could create my own independent study with my rabbi in preparation for one day becoming a rabbi. As women weren't allowed to be Conservative rabbis at the time, there was only the possibility for a woman to be a rabbi in the Reform and Reconstructionist movements. Three mornings a week I would go to my synagogue. I went to the library and the rabbi had

a curriculum for me. I was doing independent study and checking in with him. Then I went to B.U. and was a Judaic studies major, and a psychology major. I had two distinct majors. I grew up with Rabbi Oler, and literally he lived just four houses away. I used to babysit the kids. I knew the family well. He had me read "Judaism As A Civilization" by Mordecai Kaplan. It is the Reconstructionist manifesto. Rabbi Oler was thinking that was where I would end up. I wasn't Reform, and the Conservative movement was not having women at all. That was 1976. After I read this book, (and it wasn't a small book) I told Rabbi Oler this is not for me. It didn't have G-d. G-d was taken out of the picture. Reconstruction Judaism was a response to the Holocaust. It re-created Judaism for those who survived. It was too hard to answer how G-d could allow this to happen, so it was easier to take G-d out. This book made me realize for sure that I was not a Reconstructionist, I was going to have to wait until the Conservative movement would be ordaining women.

**Glen.** Being in the Conservative movement now, how do you justify G-d and the holocaust?

**Rabbi.** That's a different question for a different time. There's a long answer for a short question. I was able to use that time to figure out where I stood, and I told him I was going to have to wait. The program at JTS was a PhD in ministry. This was a program for women who wanted to become rabbis when they weren't accepting women. That's what I was looking towards, four years of B.U. and then going to the Seminary and getting into that Doctoral program. I did the four years, and then I was accepted to the Seminary. In 1982 I was accepted into the Masters program in Judaics, working towards the PhD. While I was there the PhD program was taken off the books. They allowed women into the Rabbinical program to become rabbis in 1984! So I never had to do the doctor minister program. No-one ever did it.

**Glen.** Let's take a step back. In high school, did you go to a Jewish high school?

**Rabbi.** Public high school, but we also had a once a week Hebrew program at the temple.

**Glen.** Did you have a *Bat Mitzvah* as we think of *Bat Mitzvahs* today?

**Rabbi.** Friday night service was all we could do. And a pizza party at my house, a spaghetti party. It was fun. We played spin the bottle and made out in the basement. That's what we did back in the day. Only the boys had the big Saturday Bar Mitzvah service and fancy hall affair. The girls had the Friday night service and Saturday night party in the house. That's the way it was back in the early 70's.

**Glen.** Friend-wise, was there a big influence in high school? Did you have one special friend?

**Rabbi.** My best friend was not Jewish. She was born Catholic and then became a born-again Christian. I love Mary, Mary is my oldest and dearest friend. There was also my cousin Melissa, and we were like a trio.

**Glen.** There was never really a question that you would go to a college near where you lived?

**Rabbi.** I came from the city. I went to Boston University. I had a full scholarship there. My brother went to Northeastern, and my sister went to Brandeis.

**Glen.** How about your best friends in college?

**Rabbi.** My friend Mary didn't finish college right away. She got married had kids and her life went down a different path. Once I moved to New York we didn't see each other every day but we stayed close. My closest friend from college who is still a bestie is Hilary. You will surely meet her. She lives in Westchester.

## SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

☆ **Shabbat, 18 Av, August 8, Ekev:** Moshe enjoins the Israelites to remember that their future depends on their actions. *Haftarah:* Isa.49:14-51:3

☆ **Shabbat, 25 Av, August 15, Re'ah:** 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. 54:11-55:5

☆ **Shabbat, 2 Elul, August 22, Shofetim:** Moshe instructs us to set up just courts to rule our society. "Justice justice shall you pursue." *Haftarah:* Isa. 51:12-52:12

☆ **Shabbat, 9 Elul, August 29, Ki tetse:** An array of civil and domestic laws for the Israelites to follow upon coming into their land. *Haftarah:* Isa. 54:1-10

☆ **Shabbat, 16 Elul, September 5, Ki tavo:** Come and discuss blessings and curses in Jewish thought. *Haftarah:* Isa. 60:1-22

☆ **Shabbat, 23 Elul, September 12, Nitzavim-Vayeilekh:** Choose life! How do we do that? *Haftarah:* Isaiah 61:10-63:9

## CANDLE LIGHTING

August 14, 2020	7:36 PM
August 21, 2020	7:26 PM
September 4, 2020	7:06 PM
September 11, 2020	6:55 PM

## YAHARZEITS

### 22 Av, August 12, 2020

(Minna Fuchs) Richard Fuchs

### 23 Av, August 13, 2020

Aryeh Leib Kerstein (Michael Kerstein)

Howard Rothstein (Shari Lynn Kochman)

### 26 Av, August 16, 2020

Julius Gittlitz (Harry Gittlitz)

### 28 Av, August 18, 2020

Harry Robinson (Barbara Levitt)

Dr. Ralph Alpher (Harriet Lebetkin)

### 30 Av, August 20, 2020

A. Paul Tritter (Henry Tritter)

### 4 Elul, August 24, 2020

Robert Salm (Joyce Shenker)

## THANKS! THANKS!

### For the General Fund

☆ Barbara Weisblatt in memory of Julie Leventon's mother Charlene Carstons

☆ Caryn & Joe Golden in memory of their dear friend, Alvin Goldman

☆ Susan & Henry Tritter in memory of Alvin Goldman and Charlene Carstons

☆ Susan & Ken Osnoss in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Libby Kasimer in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Lois & Michael Stein in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Rochelle Schneider in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Gail Friedman in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Marian Wise in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Mark Fishman, Prof. Alan Stein and Mark Trencher in memory of Alvin Goldman and in recognition and appreciation for his many years of Israel activism.

☆ Debbie & Bob Feinson in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Sala & Allan Brooks in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Karen & Paul Feldman in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Robert Williams in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Ruth Fenster in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Paul & Sandra Gold in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Margaret & Jack Fung in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Phyllis & Jerald Steinberg in memory of Alvin Goldman

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☆ Carol S. Mitchell in memory of Alvin Goldman

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☆ Jodi & Jerry Green in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Bruce Green in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ The Karchovs in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ Susan & Ben Frank in memory of Alvin Goldman

☆ The Tallmans in memory of Alvin Goldman