



CoM newsletter

CONGREGATION OF MOSES • Kalamazoo, Michigan

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April 2020 7 Nissan - 6 Iyar 5780

ONLINE PROGRAMMING

Update from Program Director, Sharon Kaufman



We are living in an unprecedented time. The Program Team had many exciting events planned for the coming months which are now on hold. Despite this, we have been hard at work creating online programming opportunities that will allow for us to connect, be social, learn and celebrate together.

If you are missing your weekly dose of wisdom from Rabbi Spivak, make sure you check out [“Stories with Rabbi Spivak”](#) on the CoM website. Each week, a new short video featuring Rabbi Spivak speaking on a variety of subjects will be uploaded.

There are currently two videos available to stream: “Anything Can Happen” and “Mi Shebeirach.” New videos are coming soon!

Second Cup Study Group is now online! Beginning on Wednesday, April 1st, Judah Ari-Gur will lead the group in studying topics from the Torah. A description and explanation of each topic will be followed by discussion. It is similar to the format of the monthly, in-person sessions. In order to participate, you will need the text of the Torah and [Zoom video conferencing](#). Each session will be no more than 30 minutes. To see the list of dates and to sign up, [click here!](#)

CoM Book Club is also moving online! TBI and CoM together are looking forward to reading *The Plot Against America* by Philip Roth in 2004. The novel is written from Roth’s point of view as a child and presents an alternative history where Charles Lindbergh becomes president in 1940, as anti-Semitism begins to infect America. It is also currently airing on HBO as a miniseries of the same name. The book club will meet on **Thursday, April 23rd at 7:00 pm on Zoom**. [Contact me if you want to attend.](#)

If you are looking for something a little more social, join us for **Havdalah Happy Hour every Saturday** night! Make your favorite drink and get online at 8:15 pm as we start with Happy Hour. Then at 8:45 pm, we’ll begin Havdalah. Feel free to stick around after Havdalah to chat some more! We will send out the Zoom invitation through the weekly email each week; please do not share the Zoom information publicly.

We are also working on bringing **family-friendly dance and exercise classes, scavenger hunts and bingo cards** that you’ll be able to use during your Passover seders, whatever they may look like, and during playtime outside as the weather gets nicer. **Coffee Talk with Rabbi Spivak will also be coming online** in the coming weeks and we will continue to share interesting programming from other Jewish organizations on our social media accounts.

These are hard times but they are in no way permanent. We look forward to seeing everyone again soon!

THE OVERSIGHT BOARD

always welcomes comments from CoM congregants and invites you to attend its regular meetings, held twice monthly.

Oversight Board

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The CoM newsletter is published monthly by the Congregation of Moses for the benefit of its members. **The deadline for submitting articles, photos and ads is the 18th of each month, for publication the following month.** Please send submissions to both the editor, at bulletin@congregationofmoses.org and assistant editor, at congofmosesbulletin@hotmail.com.

For now, access to the synagogue is limited to employees only.

If you have any needs, contact Shirley Mengel, who will be in the office 8:00 am-noon most weekdays.

Call Shirley at 269-342-5463 or via email at comofficemgr@gmail.com.

Thank you to our Purim revelers who contributed a total of **\$75 in donations** at the Megillah reading and Purim Shpiel on Monday night, March 10.

There are four mitzvot associated with Purim. One of these is Matanot L'evyonim. We revived this practice at CoM this year. In addition to hearing the reading of Megillat Esther; having a festive meal and mishloach manot (gift baskets), there is the mitzvah of giving two individual "gifts" to the poor. Megillat Esther tells us that after the Jews were saved from Haman's evil decree, the Jews agreed "to observe [the days of Purim] with...donations to the needy" (Esther 9:22).

The money was delivered to **Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes** where \$1=3 meals. Kol Hakavod to our generous members whose donations provided 225 meals!

In addition, our year-long collection of non-perishables is delivered to Loaves and Fishes on a regular basis. Approximately 36% of the food KLF distributes comes from community donations. Let's keep it going. These donations are more important than ever!

Shabbat candle lighting times

- April 3 7:53 p.m.
- April 10 8:01 p.m.
- April 17 8:09 p.m.
- April 24 8:17 p.m.



Bracha for candle lighting

*Ba-ruch a-tah A-do-nai Elo-hei-nu me-lech
ha-o-lam a-sher kid-shan-u be-mits-vo-tav
vi-tzi-van-u l'had-lik-ner shel Shabbat.*

Services

All services at Congregation of Moses have been cancelled for the immediate future.

You can livestream Shabbat services at the website of Park Avenue Synagogue in NYC, which livestreams both Friday night and Saturday morning services as well as a daily minyan. <https://pasyn.org/worship/livestream>

According to the Rabbinical Assembly, you can say Kaddish with a livestream if they have a physical minyan present at the origin (which they do).



Havdalah Happy Hour Online

Each week, beginning immediately

8:15 pm for Happy Hour

8:45 pm for Havdalah

We are all missing seeing our friends and celebrating Shabbat together, so tomorrow night we are kicking off our virtual communal celebration with Havdalah Happy Hour!

Join us at 8:15 pm over Zoom as we start with happy hour. Make your favorite drink, and feel free to share recipes! Then, at 8:45 pm, Earl Norman will lead us in the Havdalah ceremony. Stick around after Havdalah to chat some more!



Watch the weekly email for information on how to join the Zoom event. Please do not share the information publicly. You can also email Sharon Kaufman (programdirector@congregationofmoses.org) if you need the access information or any help getting to Havdalah Happy Hour.

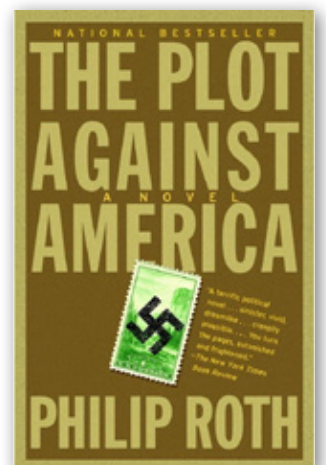
Joint Book Club with TBI

Thursday, April 23, 7:00 pm on Zoom

TBI and CoM look forward to our first joint book discussion in the coming months of *The Plot Against America*, a novel by Philip Roth written in 2004.

The novel is told from the point of view of Philip Roth as a child growing up in Newark, New Jersey. It presents an alternative history whereby Charles Lindbergh, a member of the America First Party and known anti-Semite, defeats President Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1940 election.

The novel has been adapted for a new, currently aired HBO series by the same name. Watch for a discussion guide and details on how to join the discussion in the weekly email.



LEAD PRAYERS DURING HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

We love people who participate in services by leading prayers from the bima. Whether one prayer or a whole section of the service, we welcome and encourage such participation.



That's especially true for the High Holidays. Every year, several of our members lead part of the morning service for Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur. You can too!

Please let me know that you would like to lead a prayer or prayers on the High Holidays and I will provide you with the material and all the personal help you need to enjoy the experience of leading.

Let me hear from you.

Rabbi Harvey Spivak

342-5463, avocet68@aol.com

Learners Shabbat

“Jews read the Bible the way a person reads a love letter. When you read a love letter, you don’t just read it for content. You try and squeeze every last little bit of meaning out of it.” This is Harold Kushner’s observation about the relationship between Jews and Torah.

There’s a world of difference between skimming through a passage of the Bible and reading it word by word. A close, careful reading of a verse changes your understanding of it and makes it into a spiritual practice.

One of the best ways of making Torah reading a spiritual practice is by preparing to read it for the congregation on the bima. And Learners’ Shabbat is a great way for you, a beginner at reading Torah, to have an opportunity to participate in this sacred act, reading out of the Torah scroll.

May 30 is Learners’ Shabbat. With hope and prayer that this virus shut-down will be behind us by May 30, let’s have a group of people with limited or no Torah reading experience on the bima that morning.

You can do it! I’ll give you the materials and help you need to read a brief passage of the Torah on that Shabbat morning. Let me know that you’re ready to give it a try. Call the synagogue at 269-342-5463 or email me at avocet68@aol.com.

Rabbi Harvey Spivak



April Celebrations



The Congregation of Moses wishes **mazel tov and yom huledet sameach** to our members who are celebrating anniversaries and birthdays this month. If you would like to be included in our monthly recognition of birthdays and anniversaries, please contact Joanne Simon at 324-6054 or jhsimon@charter.net.

BIRTHDAYS

- 4/2 Braydon Snyder
- 4/3 Joshua Ellison
- 4/4 Sara Amy
- 4/8 Melissa Camhi
- 4/9 Paul Nimz
- 4/13 Christy Howard
- 4/13 Raffi Lando
- 4/15 Leonard Poger
- 4/16 Genia Angel
- 4/18 Gary Kushner has a special birthday! Mazel Tov!
- 4/20 Susan Katz Scheinker
- 4/22 Rachel Haus
- 4/23 Mike Tenenbaum
- 4/26 Al Rosenthal
- 4/27 Hy Tuchman
- 4/30 Talya Spivak



ANNIVERSARIES

- 4/1 Wendy and Mel Hyman
- 4/2 Renay and Marvin Berkowitz
- 4/4 Judith and Leonard Poger
- 4/18 Sandra and Brett Snyder
- 4/28 Alice and Steve Koss



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April 2020

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			1 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 5:00- 5:30 pm	2	3	4 Healing Service, 9:30am Postponed
5 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 4:30- 5:00 pm	6	7 OvB meeting, 7:00 pm	8 No R.S. - First Seder 	9 Synagogue office closed	10 Synagogue office closed for Passover 	11
12 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 4:30- 5:00 pm	13	14	15 No R.S. - Passover; Synagogue office closed 	16 Synagogue office closed	17	18
19 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 4:30- 5:00 pm; Bulletin deadline	20	21	22 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 5:00- 5:30 pm	23	24 Rabbi in Benton Harbor	25 Rabbi in Benton Harbor; Parents Night Out, 5:45 pm Postponed
26 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 4:30- 5:00 pm	27 The Ethical Life course, 1:00 pm or 7:00 pm Postponed	28 Annual Meeting Postponed	29 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 5:00- 5:30 pm	30		

May 2020

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					1	2
3 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 4:30-5:00 pm	4	5 OvB Meeting, 7:00 pm	6 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 5:00- 5:30 pm	7	8	9
10 No R.S.; Second Cup study group online, 4:30-5:00 pm	11	12	13 R.S. online; Second Cup study group online, 5:00- 5:30 pm	14 Coffee Talk , 11:00 am Moved online 	15	16
17 R.S. online - last day; Second Cup study group online, 4:30-5:00 pm	18 Bulletin Deadline, 8:00 pm	19	20 Second Cup study group online, 5:00- 5:30 pm	21	22 Rabbi in Benton Harbor	23 Rabbi in Benton Harbor
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

Yahrzeits

April 3, 4 (10 Nissan – 16 Nissan)

Isadore Friedman*	Mac Howard	Valentin Inselberg
Ruth Anne Lando*	Esther Schechter*	Aaron S. Schwartz*
Frank Szopo	Abe Zimmerman*	

April 10, 11 (17 Nissan – 23 Nissan)

Cy Beer*	Hannah Beilis	Nathan Boris*
Bella Camhi	Sidney Gubin*	Alfred Hadesman*
Hannah C. Hoffman*	Joseph Marks*	Belle Minsley
Molly Olinik Okun*	Rita Regina	Pauline Rosenthal*
Regina Brot Ruta*	Margot Salomon*	Rose Schanwald
Mildred Sternfield*		

April 17, 18 (24 Nissan – 30 Nissan)

Alan Cohen	Abraham Epstein*	Martin Fisher
Harrison Goldstein*	Sam Halpert*	Doris Ofsa Kohn
Jack Kushner*	Nathalie Morrison*	Trina Reingold*
Esther Slavin*	Kate Stein*	

April 24, 25 (1 Iyar – 7 Iyar)

Ann Boudrie Basile	Ann Block	Samuel Boris*
Celia Davidoff*	Harriet Edwards	Barbara Stein Fisher*
Morton Fisher*	Rose G. Fisher*	Ethel Haffenberg*
Rebecca Krefman	David Lando*	Joseph Schensul*
Jacob Seeder*	Dana Wardlaw	

** Denotes a memorial plaque in the synagogue*

Mishpacha

MAZEL TOV TO

Susan and Patrick Welbourne on their 50th wedding anniversary

SPEEDY RECOVERY WISHES TO

Maxine Berke

— Donations have been made to the following funds. —

GENERAL FUND

Mazel Tov to Susan and Patrick Welbourne on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Wishing Maxine Berke a speedy and complete recovery.

Wilma Kahn & Phil Horwich, Tamara & Earl Norman, Diane & Harvey Fogel

Beth & Stephen Grode, Shirley Wise, Pnina & Judah Ari-Gur, Cindy & Larry Beer

In loving memory of my brother, Bertram Stein.

In loving memory of my sister, Roberta Stein.

Bruce Stein

In loving memory of my mother, Pauline Rosenthal.

Al Rosenthal

In loving memory of my mother, Faye Hagerman.

Nan Goldenthal

BUILDING FUND

Mazel Tov to Susan and Patrick Welbourne on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Maxine & Neal Berke, Sallie & Ken Goodman, Valerie & Ken Eisenberg, the Ruterbusch family

Wishing Maxine Berke a speedy and complete recovery.

Neal Berke, the Ruterbusch family, Valerie & Ken Eisenberg, Sallie & Ken Goodman

Congratulations to Tema and Rob Lando on the birth of their granddaughter, Vivienne Lubella Rose Lando.

Get well wishes to Phil Horwich.

Carolyn & Brad Kennedy

In loving memory of David Weiss Sr.

Shirley Weiss & Family

MARVIN AND ROSALIE OKUN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

Mazel Tov to Susan and Patrick Welbourne on their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Wishing Maxine Berke a speedy and complete recovery.

The Fischell family, Judy & Lowell Seyburn

In loving memory of my mother, Eva Tuchman.

Hy Tuchman

HERMAN AND ROSE FISHER LIBRARY FUND

Mazel Tov to Susan and Patrick Welbourne on their 50th wedding anniversary.

Wishing Maxine Berke a speedy and complete recovery.

Marilyn & Art Feinberg

Mishpacha

JACK LEVENE CANTOR FUND

Mazel Tov to Susan and Patrick Welbourne on their 50th wedding anniversary.
Wishing Maxine Berke a speedy and complete recovery.

Rae Lee Howard

In loving memory of my mom, Betty Levene, and sister, Caryn Levene.

Lori Putman

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In loving memory of my aunt Erna Ernst.

Marjorie Gaynor

TIKKUN OLAM

Mazel Tov to Susan and Patrick Welbourne on their 50th wedding anniversary.
Wishing Maxine Berke a speedy and complete recovery.

Michelle & Alan Angel

Thank you CoM members for your contributions on the occasion of the birth of our granddaughter, Vivienne Lubella Rose (Ruth) Lando. We appreciated your kindness.

Todah Rabah, Tema & Rob Lando

JOYCE AND MORTON FISHER KITCHEN/KIDDUSH/ONEG FUND

In loving memory of my sweet mother, Laura Hoffman.

Joanne Simon

In loving memory of my dad, Daniel Rosenberg.

Ron Rosenberg

Your good wishes, support and friendship have been much appreciated as I heal from recent surgeries.
Hopefully this will be the last repair for a long while!

~ **Maxine Berke**

Heads up, High School Juniors!

If your parents are members of the Congregation of Moses, we invite you to apply for the Andrew Levene Scholarship.

If you would like an application, please call the synagogue office at 342-5463. Applications must be turned in to the synagogue office by July 22, 2020.



Daisy Dollars Are Back Again

Daisy Dollars will be available in the CoM office **from March 9-April 17.**

For every Daisy Dollar you purchase, CoM earns 25¢ or 25% of your purchase.

Please send your order in multiples of \$10 to the CoM office, with a check payable to CoM.

Thanks for your support of this effort!



PAUL F. DAVIDOFF

ATTORNEY AT LAW

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Director: Larry Beer, Ed.D.



NEWS FROM THE COLEF FUND

Matching Funds update

Last fall, the Colef Committee established a matching program to enable congregation members' donations to a select list of nonprofits to be matched dollar-for-dollar, up to a maximum of \$250 per family unit.

The first year was a remarkable success! There were 42 families participating and nearly \$9000 was donated.

Thanks to everyone who requested matches - we were thrilled to help support 13 local and international nonprofits in their important work. We are also grateful to auxiliary Colef team member Nan Goldenthal for her great effort in administering the matching donations.

Meals on Wheels

In its very first round of grants in 2018, the Colef Fund supported the Meals on Wheels program at Senior Services. In supporting this worthy organization even further, the "Colef Crew" was born, made up of CoM members and Jewish community volunteers. The group delivers meals every Friday morning under the direction of Valerie Eisenberg, a dedicated auxiliary Colef team member.

Each volunteer has committed to work once a month, with others stepping in when substitutes are needed.

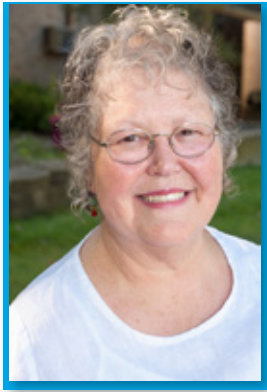
Colef Crew members have commented, *"I enjoy meeting the people we serve—they are so grateful for what we do."* *"We are helping to feed the community."* *"I leave feeling I have done something worthwhile."*

More help is needed, especially during these times of social distancing. The need is greater than ever. If you have just a few hours each month to give, [please contact Valerie Eisenberg \(vgeisenberg@gmail.com\)](mailto:vgeisenberg@gmail.com) to become a member of the Colef Crew. It's easy and enjoyable.

Huge thanks to all our volunteers: Cindy Beer, Patty Conlon, Judy Davis, Shannon Dion, Valerie Eisenberg, Nan Goldenthal, RaeLee Howard, Carolyn Kennedy, Pat Kirschner, Lee Klingman, Steve Koss, Tamara Norman, Charlie Ofstein, Laurel Ofstein, Gillian Thommes, Gerry Tregerman, Ralph Verne, Allison Weiner and Shirley Wise.



*Top from left: Meals on Wheels volunteers Ralph Verne and Steve Koss.
Middle from left: Cindy Beer and Shirley Wise.
Bottom: Steve Koss delivering lunch to an appreciative client.*



OKCJS Goes Online!

The Wednesday before Gov. Whitmer closed the schools, we began following the guidelines that the CDC was recommending for schools. The teachers and I gathered the students around the bathroom sinks for a very important test. Students had to demonstrate to me (an RN) that they knew how to wash their hands properly. It was fun singing Yom Huledet Sameach (twice) crowded into the bathroom with our children but the responsibility of keeping the children safe during a pandemic weighed heavily on my heart.

I knew that the schools would eventually be closed as the number of COVID-19 cases increased in Michigan. I also knew it would be important for our children to stay connected with their Jewish community. Earlier that week when other Jewish educators around the country began meeting online to share their knowledge and experience about online education, I joined in and attended several webinars about online education. I learned so much from these generous educators! By the time of the governor's closing order, I was relieved that our children would be safer in their own homes and I was ready to start moving our school online. Only one week had passed since I had started thinking about taking our school online.

The Sunday after school closings were announced, the teachers and I spent the usual school hours to meet online using an app called Zoom. I am always impressed by our teaching team and they each impressed me again! Every teacher enthusiastically agreed to take on the task of developing an online school. Everyone shared their ideas and knowledge and worked hard to move our existing curriculum online. Small groups of teachers met together to practice their lessons with each other and to learn new teaching techniques. We learned how to use things like screen share, breakout rooms, online flashcards and such. There was a lot of excitement at this opportunity to stretch and grow and at the same time help our children.



We held our first online session just one week after we taught our children how to wash their hands properly and just ten days after I had started thinking about us teaching online. My head is still spinning

at how fast things changed! During this whirlwind of change our students had missed only one day of school.

That first Wednesday, the children were thrilled to see each other and to see their teachers. Everyone appeared hungry to be together. We kept to our usual schedule and taught the same lessons we would have taught in person. It seemed to me that the students learned at least as much as they do in our traditional setting, maybe more. They were also quick to learn all the silly things they could do with the online app such as changing their name to something silly or turning their video upside down or sideways or spinning it around.



At the end of that first day of school, we held an assembly and the students were asked to share their opinions about their first day of online school. Here is what they said: “This is fun!” “We learned just like we usually do.” “I liked seeing my friends’ bedrooms.” “We played fun games.” “I liked seeing everyone’s pets.” “We saw a video.” In answer to the question, “Who is wearing pajamas?” many hands were raised followed by blushing and more giggles.

After the children left, the teachers evaluated what had just happened and were satisfied with the learning that had occurred. They felt the students were more focused.

They identified things to do differently the next time and everyone was glad that we made the decision to create an online learning experience for our children.

The following Sunday we had all grades K-10. We kept to our usual schedule and had Judaism and Hebrew classes, music with Miss Naomi and library with Miss Rachel. Ariel Berman joined us and read stories to the younger children. Some classes had “Show and Tell” with items from their home.

We worked hard to bring the familiar routines of our school into our children’s homes. I think we succeeded and we are learning things that we can use when we are together again in our synagogues. What we are learning will make us better teachers in the future.

We have all worked very hard to make this happen. Many long hours and lots of bravery to try new things have gone into this effort. I feel like one of the jugglers that I used to watch on “The Ed Sullivan Show” many decades ago, juggling china plates in the air. I would hold my breath hoping that none of their plates would drop to the floor and break. I think we kept all of our plates in the air. Whew! Breathe.

I am so grateful to work with our wonderful teaching team and these amazing children and as always, thank you for the honor of teaching our children.

Nora Chaus

Director, MROKCS

COVID-19: Emergency Measures at Hadassah Hospital

Tuesday, March 17, 2020

Over the past few days, many in our Hadassah family have reached out to see how they can help, proud to know that in our names, Hadassah is doing all we can to bring compassion and healing during a time of extreme uncertainty. We are so lucky to be blessed with our strong, caring Hadassah community. Ensuring the safety of our families, our communities and our world is the long-held mission of our organization.

For this reason, as the world struggles to control the spread of COVID-19, we are so proud of the leadership role that our Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem has taken and the contributions it is making to the health of the people of Israel. As we have already shared with you, Hadassah was chosen by the Government of Israel as one of select few hospitals to treat coronavirus patients and, only this week, has been asked to dramatically expand its services. This trust is a testament to the value that we add to the health system of Israel. Hadassah Ein Kerem has prepared two areas in the Round Building for patients who test positive for coronavirus, as reported to us by our Director General:

“The main area is located on the 5th floor, which was already in process of demolition in advance of the new renovations of the Round Building. The area is locked, and entry is allowed only by authorized medical staff. The department is staffed by a skeletal team of nurses, as well as a physician, as required. The medical team is protected from head-to-toe and is doing exceptional work. The second area is for patients who are in critical condition and is located on the 8th floor, where the old Cardiac Intensive Care Unit was situated. Here, too, the area is hermetically sealed so that no one can inadvertently enter.”



Although we hope and pray that our facilities and expertise will not need to accommodate a continuous influx of patients coming to Ein Kerem, we expect that Hadassah will have to treat additional cases. We ask you now, as someone who deeply cares about the fate of Israel and all its people — Jews, Arabs, Druse, Muslims and Christians — more than ever before, to help us ensure that our medical teams have everything they need to continue to treat all who walk through our doors.

Please be as generous as you can with your special gift. Your contribution will help our top-tier clinical teams continue to perform heroic deeds and help HMO meet increased demand during this period of crisis. Your generosity is much needed and deeply appreciated.

Please stay strong and take care of yourselves and your loved ones. Thank you again!

With Pride, Passion and Purpose,

Rhoda Smolow
Hadassah National President

The April Hadassah book club meeting has been cancelled. In an effort to keep its members safe and practice social distancing, our Greater Detroit Hadassah office has asked that we do not have any face-to-face meetings.

Diane Fogel, Hadassah President

From Darkness to Light

The Story of Morris Kirsch, Holocaust Survivor

by Sarah Kirsch

Life is a journey and this is the journey of my father, Morris Kirsch. Morris was born in Rachowa, Poland on March 28, 1913. Rachowa was a small town with a close community where about twenty percent of the residents were Jews. Everyone knew each other well.

Morris was the third-born to his parents, Zadic and Sarah. He had three brothers, Isaac, Naftoli and Herschel and three sisters, Tova, Rachael and Masha. The family was Orthodox, spoke Yiddish and Polish, joyfully celebrated Shabbats and holidays with aunts, uncles, cousins and friends. Every Shabbat they gave to charity even though they were very poor and had little to eat. Morris' favorite holiday was Passover. Morris remembered the time his mother had to sell her gold necklace in order to buy special food for Passover.

Morris attended a cheder, a religious school. One day on the way to cheder, seven-year-old Morris saw a religious man with payos and a beard being beaten to death in the street by a group of Polish youth, reflective of the tremendous anger increasingly voiced against the Jews in Poland. Morris felt deeply saddened and frightened by what he saw, as he knew Jews who were taken away in pogroms and were never to be seen again. At age 13, he had a simple Bar Mitzvah.

The family all lived and worked in one room, which was both a home and a tailor shop. Bread and potatoes were luxuries. Zadic would collect sewing at a clothing factory to work on at home. He made and sold clothes to the local farmers, who in turn sold them at the marketplace. Zadic would go to the countryside and trade clothing for food with the local peasants, as food was often their currency.

Morris enjoyed his work in the tailor shop, especially since it served as a meeting place for the people of the town. He joined the tailor's union and went to the Sunday afternoon picnics, at the cost of five cents for the train ride.

In 1939, Morris and his family, except his brother Isaac, moved to Lodz. Lodz was a large city near Warsaw with a population of 100,000 Jews. In Lodz, Morris again worked in a tailor shop, with this one exporting clothes to China. Isaac remained in Rachowa to keep working in the Kirsch's tailor shop and the family never saw him again. Meanwhile, his sister Tova married and had two children.

When Morris turned 14, he left home, sleeping in rail stations in and around Warsaw. He had little food to eat and work was hard to find, so he returned to Lodz.

In 1939, World War II had begun. A panic struck the people of Lodz and tens of thousands left for Warsaw. Still in Lodz, Morris witnessed a rabbi being tortured by Germans, who cut off his beard and payos, an unimaginable indignity.



YIVO Digital Archive on Jewish Life in Poland

Morris again felt afraid for himself, his family and the Jews in Lodz. On September 3, 1939, Morris left Lodz for Warsaw with only apples to eat. Many were leaving Lodz, traveling on foot, bus and horse cart. The five-day journey was difficult for all.

In Warsaw, Morris dug trenches and built barricades from overturned street cars, to prepare for the Germans and defend Warsaw. He slept in cellars and ate in public kitchens, sponsored by the Warsaw Jewish community until the food ran out. Morris had to feed himself, which was nearly impossible. He once ate meat from a dead horse on the street. When Warsaw surrendered to the Nazis, Morris felt he had no choice except to return to Lodz.

Between October 1939 and May 1940 life was difficult in Lodz. There was no food or work, and the German authorities required Jews to work for free. In 1940, the Germans established the ghetto in Lodz. Every Jewish family was given 24 hours to move into the ghetto and approximately 250,000 Jews were swiftly moved there.

A hopeless life began. In the ghetto, everyone worked for the established Judenrat, in a group or units. No one was allowed to work for themselves. Jews were guarded by other Jews called Kapos. Jews who worked got a small food ration and ID, and those who did not work were deported to labor camps or concentration camps. The Kapos often withheld food as punishment and everyone was hungry. Jews were shot and thrown in ditches if they tried to leave the ghetto.



YIVO Digital Archive on Jewish Life in Poland

Morris was cut off from the world, with no radio or newspapers to learn what was happening. He worked in a tailor shop, making uniforms for the German army. His parents also sewed, and his sister made straw shoes. One day the Germans took away his brother's youngest daughter. Soldiers would throw babies in the streets if the mothers did not surrender their children.

In 1943, Morris' family was sent away. He did not know where they were sent, he did not get to say goodbye and he never saw them again. He was now completely on his own. The Lodz ghetto dwindled from starvation, disease and deportation and in 1944 the Germans liquidated the ghetto.

Morris was deported to a labor camp. He spent time in both Chenslochove and Skarzshishk, where he worked in an ammunition factory. The workers slept in barricades on wooden bunks with no covers, heat or sanitation.

In January of 1945, along with thousands of inmates, Morris was moved by train to Buchenwald concentration camp during mid-winter, wearing prison pajamas and without food. Morris nearly froze to death. The inmates at Buchenwald had to work without shoes or warm clothing and received little food. Many died of starvation or froze to death when they were ordered to stand outside in extremely cold weather for roll call.

In April, the Germans led thousands of prisoners on a death march, Morris among them. The prisoners walked without rest for three weeks, from Buchenwald to Dachau concentration camp. It rained heavily and there was no food or clean water to drink on the long march. Prisoners died from exposure or were randomly shot by the Nazi guards if they showed signs of weakness.

Morris himself was near collapse and in his mind close to giving up, when suddenly an old man dressed in a German uniform came out of the woods to inform him, “there are only four miles left to march.” The news gave Morris renewed strength and he carefully passed the word on to the others. Although Morris never saw the man again, he believed he was an angel. On April 26, 1945, the prisoners arrived at Dachau, just two hours before the Americans liberated it.

Weighing just 98 pounds, Morris was very weak and ill. He spent May and June recovering. He learned his parents were killed in Auschwitz and the rest of the family might have been with them. Morris was never able to locate any members of his family.

Morris questioned his faith in GOD. “How could GOD let such a thing happen? Where is GOD?” Morris was sent to a displaced persons camp, Feldefink, where he worked in a tailor shop and met a survivor, Bronia Bergman, who cleaned the shop. They were married in December 1945.

Morris and Bronia were moved to Ansbach, another camp, where they got official displaced persons status. They lived with a Nazi family that was required to take them in. In September 1946, their first child Sarah (Cerka) was born.

The Kirsch family came from Germany to Kalamazoo in 1950, with the sponsorship of CoM. Morris had a tailor shop in downtown Kalamazoo for many years. It was a meeting place for all, just like his father’s shop in Poland had been.

Morris was an optimistic, kind, quiet man who made the most of every day. He felt sad his children and grandchildren would never know their relatives who perished in the Holocaust. Morris hoped the lessons and tales from the Holocaust would never be forgotten.

He died on March 22, 2002 in an assisted living center, surrounded by his family. Bronia (Bernice) died at home, many years before Morris.

Author’s notes:

In May 1950, my father Morris, my mother Bernice and I traveled twelve days by boat in rough seas to Ellis Island, N.Y. We then traveled by train to Kalamazoo, where the Congregation of Moses sponsored us to come to the United States.

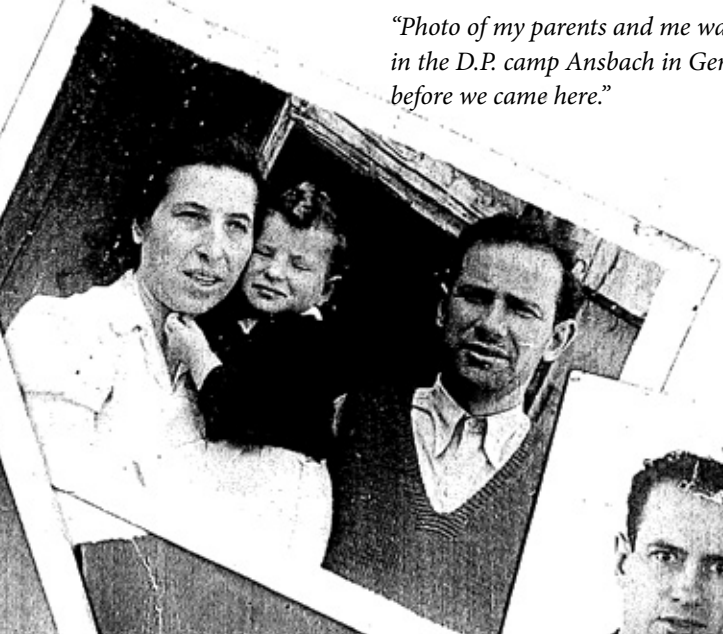
Faye Okun, a leader of CoM’s community at that time, warmly greeted us as we got off the train and gave me a doll. We stayed downtown at the Capital Hotel owned by Andy Levene, a local Jewish businessman. In the weeks that we were there, Andy and his wife Frieda visited us regularly.

CoM moved us into a apartment and assisted during that first year in our new home. The Jewish community was a blessing and brought a sense of relief to my parents.

See next page for family photos.

Sarah's family photos

"Photo of my parents and me was taken in the D.P. camp Ansbach in Germany, before we came here."



"A document photo of my dad in 1945 at the end of the war."



"My parents together shortly after they met in Germany."



"My dad and me in a photo taken at CoM when my dad was in his 80s."

The Ethical Life: Jewish Values in an Age of Choice

From political and financial scandals to rapid progress in biomedical sciences and technology, the complex issues of modern society are, at their core, issues of ethical and moral concern.

Now, more than ever, we require a solid understanding of how Jewish ethics can inform our discussions and decisions about the critical questions of the day. Judaism has a long history of wrestling with moral questions, responding to them in a way that considers all sides of an issue.

The Ethical Life: Jewish Values in an Age of Choice from the Jewish Theological Seminary will be presented by Rabbi Spivak throughout the year. There are many topics in the series but these are the next two sessions to be presented:

Ethical Dimensions of Food Production

Do we have to choose between having abundant food and causing environmental damage?

Improved farming techniques and increased international trade have made food more abundant and less expensive. This has allowed more people to have adequate diets and has offered us an enormous variety of food. At the same time, current trends in food production are exerting pressure on the environment and increasing the danger of soil degradation, pollution, loss of biodiversity and animal cruelty.

As consumers, we exert influence on production in the ways we buy, transport, prepare and consume food. In this discussion, we will explore how Jewish teachings can provide insight into how to make ethical choices about food. Dr. David Craemer, Professor of Talmud and Director of the Library at the Jewish Theological Seminary, presents new insights into a Jewish ethical approach to food.

We will look at original sources in the Bible, Maimonides and the Talmud and see if we can apply their teachings to our own lives and community.

Ethics of End of Life Care

How do we make end-of-life decisions for ourselves and for those who are not competent to decide for themselves? What do we do when a patient's wishes conflict with other ethical considerations? What does Judaism have to say about these modern ethical questions?



March and April sessions were postponed. The series will continue, however, and dates will be announced at a later time. Thank you!

Get ready, it's coming!

Camp Keshet 2020

Led by two Israeli counselors sharing their love of Israel and Judaism

Week One AND Week Three: at Congregation of Moses

Mon, June 15 - Fri, June 19 AND

Mon, June 29 - Fri, July 3

9:30 am - 2:00 pm each day

- Learn about Israel and our Jewish heritage
- Lunch and snacks provided
- Field trip, crafts, outdoor activities, cooking, music, dancing

Week Two: At Camp Tavor in Three Rivers

Open to all children ages 4-12 years old

- Monday through Friday day camp programming
- Friday - Sunday Weekend Shabbat overnight camp experience for older campers

Day camp at Tavor, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, Mon, June 22 - Fri, June 26

Campers will be bussed from Kalamazoo to Camp Tavor. Kosher meals and snacks provided by Camp Tavor. Campers will be able to take full advantage of Camp Tavor's facility which includes a pool, lake, arts and crafts center, sports fields, low ropes course and music recording room.

Shabbat Overnight Weekend at Tavor, Fri, June 26 - Sun, June 28

Campers will depart for Camp Tavor at 8:00 am Friday morning. Older campers will spend Friday and Saturday night at Camp Tavor. Parents will pick their children up from Camp Tavor at 11:00 am on Sunday. Camp Keshet campers will fully experience a Shabbat at camp and a trial overnight camp experience.

Note: The youngest children will only participate in the day camp part of the program while older children will take part in both the day camp and Shabbat Overnight part of the program. The week at Tavor will give kids a taste of sleep-away camp in a very safe and positive way, with their Camp Keshet friends. Children will gain the self-confidence and enthusiasm necessary to attend Jewish sleep-away camp in the future.

Mon, June 15th - Fri, June 19th – at Congregation of Moses

Mon, June 22nd - Fri, June 26th – at Camp Tavor

Mon, June 29th - Fri, July 3rd – at Congregation of Moses

\$175 per week or \$460 for all three weeks

Registration due by May 15th

Please contact Beth Grode at beth.grode@yahoo.com to register.



Jews Must Demand An End to Genocide

I recently returned from leading a study tour to Rwanda. This was part of a course I am co-teaching with a colleague, where we explore how our disciplines – Political Science and Psychology – approach questions around genocide and reconciliation. We took our students to Rwanda, because over just 100 days in 1994, nearly a million Rwandan Tutsis were killed by their Hutu friends, neighbors and relatives. The genocide was actively planned by politicians and assisted by Catholic clergy. And all of this was done along the lines of an entirely invented identity. Before colonization, “Hutu” and “Tutsi” were no more than socioeconomic classes, between which individuals could easily move as their circumstances changed.

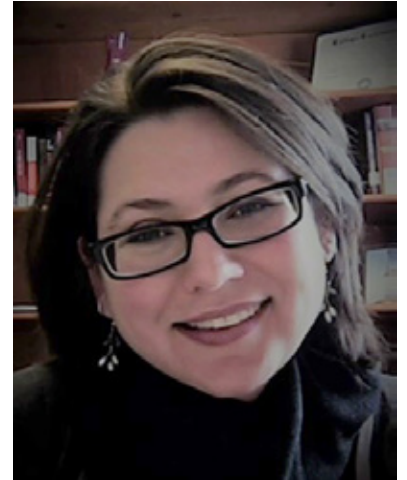
My teaching and research involves an awful lot of reading and talking about war, massacres, torture and yes, genocide. I’m not a monster: it’s hard to do this work, but I view it as the most consequential of questions we can try to understand. I have the tools to cope with reading about humanity’s dark side for weeks on end, and I’m also used to it, as well as the range of emotions I usually experience.

But what I found in Rwanda surprised me in two ways. First, we were there to spend time on the ground speaking with Rwandans and learning first-hand about the genocide and its aftermath. As Jews, genocide is something we’re unfortunately familiar with. But I didn’t really expect to feel such a deep sense of kinship with Rwandan survivors. You know how you talk to Jews about the Holocaust in a way that’s fundamentally different than you speak to non-Jews about it? Well, it was like Rwandan survivors were Jews. We started conversations from a more honest place, born out of that familiarity. A place of “you know what this is like.”

Those who know me well know that it takes me a few decades to really be emotionally vulnerable with someone. But the real surprise, even more than that shared kinship, was what it engendered: an immediate honesty about deep family trauma, but with total strangers. I found myself telling a survivor who had been sexually assaulted and then buried alive as a young teen during the genocide about my grandmother’s entire family being wiped out in their Ukrainian village. And it felt totally natural to talk and cry together with this complete stranger.

In addition to focusing on genocide, we also explored Rwanda’s attempts at reconciliation. Many Rwandans we spoke with emphasized visions of forgiveness and reconciliation that relate closely to the Jewish conceptions we discuss around the High Holidays. One survivor, the sole survivor from his family, said that he couldn’t move on because when he went back to his village, no one would look him in the eyes and ask him for forgiveness. Another man contemptuously described the Pope’s “apology,” in which he said he had “asked God for forgiveness;” this survivor angrily demanded when the Church would ask the Rwandan people for forgiveness for its clergy’s role in assisting perpetrators. In short, Rwandans understand that only humans – not God – can forgive other humans for the wrongs done to them.

Second, I found myself reflecting a lot on the different post-genocide paths that the Rwandan and Jewish peoples have followed. Around 80% of Holocaust survivors emigrated to Israel or the U.S.; only a few thousand returned to their former homes. But in 1994, Rwandan Hutu perpetrators and Tutsi survivors lived in the same country; indeed, they were often in the same neighborhoods. This meant that Rwandan rebuilding required some sort of post-conflict reconciliation. Rwandans had to wrestle with the reality that they simply could not prosecute or avenge themselves on millions of perpetrators if they were going to have lives and a country moving forward.



Shanna Kirschner Hodgson

This meant pursuing some Western-style trials, some traditional justice in the form of gacaca courts (a method of transitional justice designed to promote communal healing and rebuilding), and a lot of forgiving – or at least tacitly agreeing to let the past go.

Many appear to have genuinely forgiven. Some say it was what they did for their own process of moving on and had nothing to do with the perpetrators. We visited one of the many “reconciliation villages” where perpetrators and survivors live together. Individuals spoke of how they had spent years coming to terms with what their neighbors had done – and perpetrators, too, wrestled with seeing themselves as fundamentally different people who had done terrible things.

I’m still trying to wrap my head around all this. How does it translate to my own daily life, where I sometimes struggle to forgive and move past wrongs that are so very much smaller than the murders of my spouse, parents, children, siblings. And how would we, as Jews, have responded if Nazis had come to us to ask forgiveness? Could we have lived side-by-side? Would we have served as godparents to their children, would they have attended our weddings? Of course, these things probably did happen by the 1950s and 1960s, occasionally, but it doesn’t seem like it was the norm in Europe. In Rwanda, though, survivors were told that in order for the country to rebuild, they had to forgive perpetrators. Their “sacrifice” is acknowledged, but I still wrestle with how this is really possible, and how it translates to reconciliation in much lower-stakes disputes.

What can we take away from all this? I’m no rabbinical scholar, but I found it fascinating how viscerally Rwandan notions of forgiveness mirrored the Jewish conception: before any reconciliation can begin, we have to acknowledge we’ve done wrong, and we have to do so to the person we’ve actually wronged. Apologizing to God is no good if we’ve wronged another person. Second, maybe we have to find a way to move on from what’s been done to us. Sometimes this requires us to sacrifice our desire for vengeance. We can be angry still. We can grieve. But sometimes the task of rebuilding lives means that we may have to work with those who’ve hurt us.

We must not just say “Never Again,” we must demand it.

And finally, the Rwandan genocide could have easily been prevented had the world cared to intervene. There is plenty of evidence that hundreds of thousands of lives could have been saved, at virtually no cost to U.S. and European interests. When I visit a killing site where 50,000 were slaughtered overnight and I stare at the skulls of babies who were hacked with machetes and then buried in mass graves, I am filled with so much rage. Their killers are an obvious target. But the rest of us, who stood aside and watched? We are also complicit in their deaths, because we couldn’t be bothered to demand intervention. I felt a deep solidarity with Rwandans, as a Jew, because we also were being killed across Europe while Allied leaders argued that it would be a waste of munitions to help.

This year is the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII and the Holocaust. If we really mean “Never Again,” then we have a special responsibility not to simply ignore headlines from Yemen, Syria, Myanmar and everywhere else that humans are suffering. We must not just say “Never Again,” we must demand it.

About the author: *Shanna Kirschner Hodgson is an Associate Professor of Political Science at Allegheny College in Meadville, Pa.*

Fisher Library

To Fisher Library Patrons and all those who love Jewish media

We are a small but devoted community. From the moment our synagogue closed its doors in response to the Coronavirus pandemic, those involved with Fisher Library were searching for ways to make social distancing a little less onerous.

We developed a plan to launch the Mobile Fisher Library where you would search the [Fisher Library online catalog](#) for books/movies/CDs, [email your requests to the library director](#) and then either pick up and re-turn disinfected items outside CoM doors or have volunteers drive to your homes and leave items outside doors. No contact would be involved, and you could still enjoy a Jewish book or movie.

But in light of Gov. Whitmer's stay-at-home order, such a plan is unfeasible and inadvisable. Currently, our best tool to fight the spread of this highly contagious virus is to limit travel to purchasing essentials such as food and medicine.

So here is a list of clickable e-resources with extensive Jewish content that we hope will fill the gap. Stay safe and healthy.

BOOKS:

[Kalamazoo Public Library](#)

[Portage District Library](#)

[Internet Archive](#)

[Kar-Ben Publishing](#)

[Jewish Book Council](#)

PERIODICALS (a small sampling):

[Moment Magazine](#)

[Detroit Jewish News](#)

[Commentary Magazine](#)

[Hadassah Magazine](#)

[Jewish Currents](#)

[Jerusalem Post](#)



the earth
laughs
in flowers

~ Emerson

**Spring is just around the corner!
Get Wenke Bucks and get busy
in the garden!**

Get everything you need for this year's garden by purchasing "Wenke Bucks" from the Congregation of Moses.

Buy in increments of \$10, and use them anytime before June 30 at Wenke Greenhouses on Sprinkle Rd and Market St.

Flowers. Vegetables. Tools. Supplies. Decor.

The Congregation will make \$2.00 on each \$10.00 you purchase.

To buy your Wenke Bucks, contact Shirley Mengel in the CoM office, at 342-5463 or by email at comofficemgr@gmail.com

SPRING

Caring Connection

Caring Connection—compassionate volunteers for the Congregation of Moses family. **Caring Connection is a network of volunteers who would like to support our CoM members in times of need, whether during an acute crisis or a need for ongoing support.**

The people on the list below, all part of **Caring Connection**, welcome your call. They have agreed to make their names and contact information available so that you can choose to connect with the person you feel most comfortable talking to.

Call, email or text (all numbers are cell phones unless otherwise indicated)

Rabbi Harvey Spivak 269-342-5463 office, 269-998-0659, avocet68@aol.com

Judah Ari-Gur 269-598-9609, jarigur@gmail.com

Rae Lee Howard 269-217-2833, 269-544-2894 home, rhoward@ihdist.com

Maxine Berke 978-761-8212, maxineberke@gmail.com

Jill Ruterbusch 269-779-5455, the4rudys@att.net

Cindy Beer 269-341-1033, cinbeer@gmail.com

Shirley Wise 269-330-3103, goldensmw@sbcglobal.net

Charlie Ofstein 269-330-1866, ofsteinc@gmail.com

Larry Beer 269-324-0777 home, lbbkzoo@aol.com

Sherry Deems 912-220-4873, sedeems@gmail.com

Joyce Camhi 269-267-4253 home, joyce.camhi@gmail.com

Pat Kirschner 269-385-8999 home, rjkirschner99@gmail.com



Gift Cards are Always Useful

Buy gift cards in the office from 7:30 to 11:30 am or call and we can mail them to you. The Congregation of Moses can earn from 2-15% of your total purchase price. Many more brands are available. Thank you!



Box Tops for Education

Look for these on products from Reynolds, Green Giant, Annie's, General Mills cereals, Nature Valley, Mott's, Land O'Lakes, Go-Gurt, Yoplait, Ziploc, Hefty, Betty Crocker, Cascadian Farms, Kleenex, Scott's, Old El Paso, Progresso, Lysol, Fiber One and Larabar.

The Marvin and Rosalie Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School earns money by collecting these. Please watch for them and bring them to the office. Thank you!



DIRECT YOUR DOLLARS



We've collected more than \$100,000 worth of receipts and our goal of \$150,000 is in sight. Thank you to all who have made this possible and please continue to drop off your receipts in the envelope located outside the CoM office.

Please do not cut off the any part of the receipt. The total in the "Direct your Dollars" portion of the receipt must be present. Notice that there is no "Direct Your Dollars" amount when you purchase prescriptions only or an item under \$1, like bananas.

You can help even more by buying D&W gift cards and other scrip for our continuing fundraiser. Thanks!

Thinking of booking a trip with Delta, Southwest or their partners? Please ask Shirley Mengel to order Delta or Southwest gift cards through the ShopWithScrip program. It only takes a few days for the cards to arrive and they are easy to use.

When you check out online, there is a prompt to use gift cards. All you need to do is enter the gift card number. You can use up to three cards per purchase.

Southwest

