



# CoM newsletter

CONGREGATION OF MOSES • Kalamazoo, Michigan

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## Caring For Each Other Across Differences

**At the height of summer**, the observances of the Jewish calendar focus our attention on conflict, war and destruction. We have the 17th of Tammuz, which commemorates the breaching of the walls of Jerusalem in advance of the destruction of the Second Temple on Tisha B'Av. Three weeks later, we have the saddest day of the Jewish year, Tisha B'Av, which begins this year at sunset on Monday, August 12 and remembers the destruction of both Temples and other communal tragedies. The First Temple was destroyed because of several moral failings, including murder, and the Second Temple was said to be destroyed because of baseless or gratuitous hatred.

It strikes me that the lessons of Tisha B'Av are especially pertinent to our lives today. This year our observance will include reflection on the tragedies of our own time: the Holocaust and October 7. There are fissures and fractures in the social fabric of both American and Israeli society leading to rampant mistrust, and baseless and gratuitous hatred of "the other side." These divisions, among other factors, threaten to tear our society apart and may presage total civilizational collapse.

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, the former chief rabbi of the United Kingdom, has written about how these themes are explored in the Book of Deuteronomy which, not coincidentally, begins in tandem with Tisha B'Av. Deuteronomy 8:11-19 states:

*"Be careful that you do not forget ADONAI your God...Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud, and you will forget ADONAI your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery...You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me."...If you ever forget ANONAI your God...I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed."*

Sacks writes:

"What Moses was saying to the new generation was this: You thought that the forty years of wandering in the wilderness were the real challenge, and that once you conquer and settle the land, your problems will be over. The truth is that it is then that the real challenge will begin. It will be precisely when all your physical needs are met—when you have land and sovereignty and rich harvests and safe homes—that your spiritual trial will commence.

"The real challenge is not poverty but affluence, not insecurity but security, not slavery but freedom. Moses, for the first time in history, was hinting at a law of history...Moses was giving an account of the decline and fall of civilizations.

"Inequalities will grow. The rich will become self-indulgent. The poor will feel excluded. There will be social divisions, resentments and injustices. Society will no longer cohere. People will not feel bound to one another by a bond of collective responsibility. Individualism will prevail. Trust will decline. Social capital will wane.



Rabbi Shelley Goldman

### The Oversight Board

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

### Oversight Board Members

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#### Office hours: Mon, Wed, Thurs, Fri -

8:30 am – 12:30 pm

Tues, 11:00am – 3:00 pm

#### Building Manager Rich Wojtas

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#### Library Director Rachel Haus

*library@congregationofmoses.org*

### 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 the editor, at [bulletin@congregationofmoses.org](mailto:bulletin@congregationofmoses.org).**

"Only against this background can we understand the momentous project the book of Devarim is proposing: the creation of a society capable of defeating the normal laws of the growth-and-decline of civilizations. This is an astonishing idea.

"How is it to be done? By each person bearing and sharing responsibility for the society as a whole. By each knowing the history of his or her people. By each individual studying and understanding the laws that govern all. By teaching their children so that they too become literate and articulate in their identity."

Noted Russian-American Jewish trans/non-binary journalist, author and activist, Masha Gessen, has suggested that the most powerful role that synagogues and other religious institutions can play in this historical moment is to live the way we would like society as a whole to be. We can practice, in our small corner of the globe, what it means to care about each other across differences. We can model what healthy disagreements look like when all viewpoints are respected and expressed, and all parties remain in conversation despite their differences.

As we in the Congregation of Moses begin the process of reflecting on our last year together and looking forward to the months and years ahead, I pray that we take to heart the wisdom of the teachings of Tisha B'Av, the Book of Deuteronomy, and the words of Rabbi Sacks and Masha Gessen.

May we all merit another year of life and generativity in the messy projects of individual and communal reflection, democratic nation-building and all being members of the same community that we know and love. **The most important thing we can do right now, perhaps even the most radical, is to build communities of people who love each other, care about each other and who will be with each other for the long haul ahead.**

Happy August!

**Rabbi Goldman**



# Shabbat and Events Calendar

Friday, August 2	8:41 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, August 3	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services <b>with special kiddush to follow</b>	Torah: Numbers 32:1-22 Haftarah: I Kings 9:2-9
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Gary/Al
Tuesday, August 6	7:00 pm	RAC meeting	
Wednesday, August 7	7:00 pm	Mussar class	
Friday, August 9	8:32 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, August 10	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services	Torah: Deuteronomy 2:2-30 Haftarah: Isaiah 1:1-27
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Lee/Patty
Wednesday, August 14	7:00 pm	OvB meeting	
Friday, August 16	7:00 pm	Third Friday Shabbat Services at CoM	
Friday, August 16	8:22 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, August 17	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services	Torah: Deuteronomy 5:1-6:25 Haftarah: Isaiah 40:1-26
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Wilma, Brad, Emily
Sunday, August 18	7:00 pm	Movie night	
Tuesday, August 20	1:00 pm	Mahjong Tournament at CoM - Beginner instruction at 11:00 am	
Friday, August 23	8:12 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, August 24	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services/Torah Study	Torah: Deuteronomy 9:4-10:11 Haftarah: Isaiah 49:14-51:3
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Phil, Lee
Thursday, August 29	7:00 pm	Book Club at TBI	
Friday, August 30	8:00 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, August 31	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services	Torah: Deuteronomy 12:29-14:29 Haftarah: Isaiah 54:11-55:5
		Kiddush set up and clean up	David and ?

## Mazel Tov!

Jenna and Richard Verne will host a kiddush luncheon following Shabbat services on Saturday, August 3rd to celebrate their daughter Naomi's marriage to Adam Dorstewitz on June 22nd.

Please join the community in wishing Naomi, Adam and the entire Verne family a Mazel Tov!



## Bracha (blessing) for Shabbat candle lighting

(The candles are lit before the blessing is recited.)

*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.*

Blessed are you, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the light of Shabbat.

# Care and Feeding of a New Rabbi

*Excerpted (and slightly paraphrased) from a piece of writing shared by Bruce Minsley, from his congregation in Florida. Thanks for sharing this, Bruce.*

"What can I do to help?" is one of the least helpful things we say to each other. Make specific suggestions of what you might do to help. Pay attention to the work your rabbi does, and if you are able, offer to make her load a little lighter.

There will be plenty of opportunities for your rabbi to make mistakes. Like Moses, she too is human. Be kind. Be understanding.

Some things will change, but we've weathered lots of changes over the years. The essence of our community will remain the same. Be flexible.

Most importantly, take note of the way the children of Israel behaved in the desert and do your best not to imitate them. The Torah tells the story of the 12 spies who Moses sent into the Promised Land. Be like the two spies who came back and enthusiastically supported Moses, trusting in the strength and resilience of their community. Don't be like the other ten naysayers—it was because of them that the people spent the next 38 years wandering aimlessly in the desert.

Remember to be careful with your criticism and generous with your praise and support. You have no idea how much it can mean.

Lastly, tell everyone you know how proud you are of this community and its rabbi. There is much in which we can all take pride.

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## MAZEL TOV!

Recently, a CoM Friday Shabbat service included a joyous event—a baby naming! Andrea Gold, her husband Ryan Versfeld and daughter Ariella, attended services with a large contingent of family members that included parents and siblings, in order to announce the Hebrew name of their son, Zackary.

The service was well attended by families of the community and included lots of singing and joyful welcoming of the Shabbat.

Andrea wrote: *"We loved having Zacky's baby naming with you all and can't thank you and the congregation enough for being so welcoming to us. It was a very special evening."*



# BAM!

# DOT!

# CRACK!



## Mahjong Tournament to Benefit The Friends Free Store

Tuesday, August 20 from 1:00 - 5:00 pm, at Congregation of Moses

Welcome Mahjong enthusiasts, to an exciting event that brings together the joy of Mahjong and the spirit of giving. Join us for the Mahjong Tournament, a special event dedicated to supporting the collaborative work of The Friends Free Store.

Don't miss out on this fantastic event where fun, strategy and community come together. Let's play Mahjong, win prizes and support The Friends Free Store in their mission to help new Americans settle in Kalamazoo.

Register to play at [jewishkalamazoo.org](http://jewishkalamazoo.org)

- Entrance fee of \$18/player includes vegetarian snacks and drinks and all proceeds will benefit The Friends Free Store, a community collaboration housed at Congregation of Moses.
- Cash prizes for first, second and third place winners, plus raffle with prizes!
- Players should bring the 2024 card.

Tournament sponsored by Temple B'nai Israel • Congregation of Moses



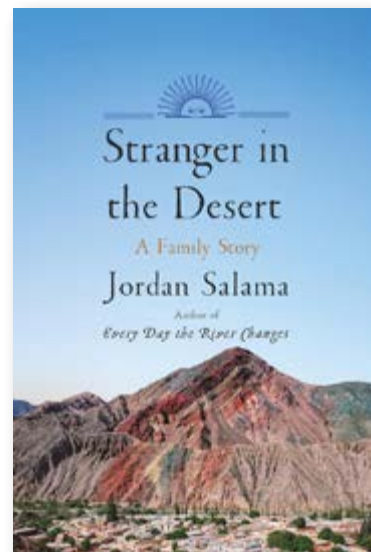
# TBI AND COM BOOK CLUB

The TBI/CoM Book Club will meet again on **August 29** at 7:00 pm at TBI to discuss *Stranger in the Desert: A Family Story* by Jordan Salama.

**September 26**, *When Angels Left the Old Country* by Sacha Lamb

**October 31**, *Racism of People Who Love You* by Samira Mehta

Contact [Cary Mannaberg](#) or [Patty Conlon](#) with questions.



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## New Policies For Donations at the Friends Free Store

The following is excerpted from a new security policy adopted by the Friends Free Store, developed to align with security policies at CoM.

"The Friends Free Store, housed at the Congregation of Moses, invites refugees new to Kalamazoo to shop in the free store (when accompanied by a caseworker) and donors from the greater Kalamazoo community to drop off merchandise, according to the following policies. Store volunteers have set store hours for shopping and donations: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday through Thursday, except on Jewish, state or federal holidays or when the building is closed (such as when all staff are on vacation).

"Donation drop-off should also be arranged by appointment, so that volunteers are present to help with the unloading. Congregation of Moses staff are not obliged to accept donations when store volunteers are not present."

To sum up, **donation drop-off should be arranged by appointment during a time period of 9:00 am to 3:00 pm, Monday through Thursday, except on holidays or when the building is closed. Drop-offs made without an appointment may not be accepted.**

Please call or text one of the following volunteers to make your appointment:

Janet Nykaza, 269-861-1531

Colleen VanSlambrouck, 269-341-0573

Cheryl Quebbeman, 269-615-5373

# Camp Keshet at Habonim Dror Camp Tavor: A Week of Adventure and Connection

From July 8-12, the Okun School's Camp Keshet took the bus to Camp Tavor in Three Rivers, MI, for an unforgettable week of fun and growth. As Habonim Dror Camp Tavor celebrates its 60th anniversary, the camp continues to be a vibrant hub of Jewish identity, social justice and connection to Israel.



Habonim Dror, meaning "The Builders of Freedom," is a Progressive Labor Zionist Youth movement dedicated to nurturing Jewish leaders who embody the principles of social justice, equality, peace and coexistence in both Israel and North America. At Camp Tavor, the Hebrew language comes alive, infusing daily life with rich cultural heritage and strengthening campers' Jewish identities.

Each morning, campers gathered at the Mitriya (pavilion/umbrella) for kibbud (snack), refueling after the journey to camp. With the Chof (beach) and Breicha (pool) beckoning, swimming became a daily highlight. The Chava (farm) and its friendly goats were a favorite destination, while the Beit-O (art house) buzzed with creativity as campers tie-dyed shirts and crafted stepping stones.

At Camp Tavor, campers don't just attend activities – they become part of a living, breathing community rooted in Hebrew, history and shared purpose.

A special thank you to Randy Lubratich for inviting us to spend the week at Camp Tavor and to Portage Public Schools bus drivers for getting us there safely!

## The Okun School Year 5785: The Year to Come

The Okun School year kicks off **Sunday, September 8th with an Open House from 9:30 am-11:30 am** at CoM. Parents can finish registration and the kids can check out the classrooms. **The first day of school for Pre-K through 7th grade will be Sunday, September 15th from 9:00 am-noon at CoM.**

The Okun School is offering a Madrichim program this year for students in grades 8-12. We don't have a schedule yet, but if your child wants to join, please have them contact Angie Saltzman, the Education Director.

Watch for the registration link in the upcoming weekly synagogue emails. If you have any questions, please contact Angie at [okcjsdirector@gmail.com](mailto:okcjsdirector@gmail.com) or call (269) 506-3305. Thanks!



# August 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 the office at 342-5463, or [comofficemgr@congregationofmoses.org](mailto:comofficemgr@congregationofmoses.org).

## August Birthdays

August 2	Michael Siegel
August 3	Lyla Savina
August 6	Sabrina Snyder
August 8	Amiel Kiley Goldman
August 8	Elizabeth Siegel
August 11	Patrick Welbourne
August 12	Amelia Schook
August 13	Shane Sarah Riley - Special birthday!
August 15	Lori Putman
August 20	Magnus Leidan Riley
August 24	Michelle Angel
August 28	Michael Weston
August 29	Olivia Scheinker



## August Anniversaries

August 4	Rabbi Shelley Goldman & Kieran Kiley
August 5	Judah & Pnina Ari-Gur
August 5	Jeffrey & Susan Scheinker
August 8	Michael & Cheryl Tenenbaum
August 11	Steve & Joyce Camhi
August 12	Lee Klingman & Emily Hoffman
August 17	Harvey & Diane Fogel
August 17	S. David & Jann Stulberg
August 22	Jeffrey & Rachel Haus
August 30	Rudy & Jill Ruterbusch





# Mishpacha

Donations have been made by the following individuals and families.

## Condolences to Patrick Welbourne on the loss of his wife, Susan

*Gary Adelman, Michelle & Alan Angel, Pnina & Judah Ari-Gur, Cindy & Larry Beer, Maxine & Neal Berke, Judy Davis & Al Rosenthal, Valerie Eisenberg, The Fischell Family, Diane & Harvey Fogel, Emily Freed & Brad Hershbein, Sallie & Ken Goodman, Rabbi Shelley Goldman & Kieran Kiley, Beth & Stephen Grode, Wilma Kahn & Phil Horwich, Diane & Bruce Minsley, The Ruterbusch Family, Judy & Lowell Seyburn, Joanne Simon, Shirley Wise*

## Condolences

Condolences to Patrick Welbourne on the loss of his wife, Susan, *Robyn Levene*

Condolences to the family of Jenna Howard, *Joshua & Pamela Weiner*

## In Memory

In loving memory of my father, Louis Loeser, *Marjorie Gaynor*

In loving memory of my father, Meyer Lebowitz, *Leonard Lebowitz*

In loving memory of my mother, Recia Deutsch, *Michelle Angel*

In loving memory of my niece, Jenna Howard, *Robyn Levene*

In loving memory of my mother, Gertrude Braufman Stein, *Bruce Stein*

In fond memory of Susan Welbourne, *Pat & Richard Kirschner*

## Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to the Verne family on the marriage of Naomi to Adam Dorstewitz, *Pat & Richard Kirschner*

## **All donations go to one of our special funds:**

General Fund • Building Fund • Herman & Rose Fisher Library Fund • Rabbi's Discretionary Fund  
Joyce & Morton Fisher Kitchen/Oneg/Kiddush Fund • Honor & Memorial Fund • Levene Cantor Fund  
Marvin & Rosalie Okun Fund • Harry B. Sofen Learning Center Fund

# Todah Rabah!

Thank you to all who donated in honor of my special birthday. I hope to see you all soon!

~ **Sallie Goodman**

# Yahrzeits

## August 3-9 (Tammuz 28-Av 5)

Cecile Cohen*	Freda Kaufman*	Captain Myron Seeder*
Martin Ginsberg*	Bernice Kirsch*	Donald Thall
Mary Goldsmith*	Howard Miller	Nancy Thommes
Jehiel Israelson*	Sarah Rozanoff*	Jonathan David Tregerman*

## August 10-16 (Av 6-12)

Sidney Buchsbaum	Lois G. Gerber*	Mildred Lerman
Stacey Cane	Joseph Hadesman*	Simon Okun*
Sara Finkelstein	Ida Halpert*	Harriet Rosenbaum*
Joanne Freed	Marcia Kalb*	Shirley S. Seyburn*
Sidney Friedman*	Winifred Koss*	Leonora Wachtel*

## August 17-23 (Av 13-19)

Natalie Aaronson	Doris Gotthelf*	Esther Marshall*
Sol Axelrod*	Betty Graff*	Louis Pollens
Sophie Barkman	Samuel Hoffman	Rose Rose*
Leon B. Friedman	Ruth Harriet Kaplan*	Phineas Rosenbaum*
Elliot Gluck*	Ruth Katz*	Nelson Schupan*

## August 24-30 (Av 20-26)

Wilbur Aaronson	Jack A. Fisher*	Leon Okun*
Mary Bennison*	Anna Friedman*	Ethel Roodin*
Max Besbris*	Harris Handlesman*	Ephraim Rose*
Herb Cane	Harold Karlin*	Nettie Schwartz*
Irving W. Cushner*	Milton Kirschner*	Peggy Schwartz*
Milton Feinberg*	Lianne Lando*	Richard Star
Molly Feinberg	Anna Marks*	Sylvia A. Weinstein*

## August 31-September 6 (Av 27-Elul 3)

Aaron J. Bennison*	Bertha Rothschild*	Ilan Stenesh
Marion Raskin Grant	Sol Schpok*	Esther Tigay Weiner*
Morris Haffenberg*	Gertrude Seeder*	Sadie Zimmerman*
Lester M. Richman	Harry B. Sofen*	

\*Denotes a memorial plaque in the synagogue

## Yahrzeits Now Online

Now you can find all yahrzeits listed on the CoM website for the current week, as well as the entire year. The list is also searchable by name. Find your yahrzeit name and date anytime by visiting this page:

[congregationofmoses.org/yahrzeits](http://congregationofmoses.org/yahrzeits)

# RAIN GARDEN UPDATE

The CoM rain garden is flourishing with Michigan native plants and is loved by all kinds of pollinators! Here are a few photos from this season. More plants and shrubs will be added this fall and in successive years but the garden is doing its job in helping hold and filter rainwater from the parking lot and roof, and providing vital food for pollinators.

*A monarch sips nectar from Wild Quinine (left) and Monarda (right).*



*Left: Milkweed and grasses help soak up the excess rainwater.*

*Right: Bees also enjoy Monarda, commonly called Bee Balm.*



*Left: Rainwater on the west end of the lawn provides a nice swimming pond for visitors.*