



CoM newsletter

CONGREGATION OF MOSES • Kalamazoo, Michigan

January 2025

Volume 18 Issue 1
1 Tevet - 2 Shevat 5785

Give!

Over the past month I've had several conversations with different people about our responsibilities to each other in 2025. Congregants have been asking me the questions: How do we best take care of each other? How do we protect ourselves in this ever-evolving new reality?

I humbly submit that Jewish tradition and practice have a lot to teach us about surviving the hard times. It is a mitzvah, a commandment, to give tzedakah to others. We often translate the word mitzvah as "good deed" but the word, translated literally, means "commandment." It is a commandment from God, with roots in the Torah text itself, to give material support to other people. The literal meaning of tzedakah is "justice" not "charity," as it is often translated. One gives charity when one feels generous and decides to share, while one is commanded to give tzedakah no matter what.

When I was first thinking through the implications of giving tzedakah, I asked a lot of questions. Are poor people required to give tzedakah? Maybe they give less than the required 10% of their money? Friends and teachers advised me that while no one should impoverish themselves by giving tzedakah, there is dignity in giving to others even if you yourself do not have a lot of money, even if you yourself are supported by tzedakah.



Rabbi Shelley Goldman

My friend's Orthodox community in Israel advises that all of one's tzedakah, ten percent of one's income, should go to the synagogue to distribute to those in need. As someone who gives to causes both inside and outside the Jewish community, I asked my friend if his family actually gives ten percent to the synagogue? He responded no: we give eight percent to the synagogue and reserve two percent to give to other causes. These are not wealthy people and yet they give ten percent of their income! They give because it is commanded by God. They give because it is the right thing to do.

There is a Jewish story that helps move us towards this goal. God gives us what we've got and allows us to keep ninety percent of it for ourselves and our family. God gives us the honor and responsibility to pass along the ten percent. The money we have for tzadakah does not belong to us, it is merely in our care.

Now that we have established the responsibility to give tzedakah, the next question is where? Jewish tradition also speaks to this question. We are responsible first to our family, then to our community, then to humanitarian causes. For most of Jewish history, these concentric circles were understood as solely within the Jewish community: Our Jewish family, our local Jewish community, the Jewish poor elsewhere, especially in Israel.

We now include our Jewish and non-Jewish family in the first concentric circle. We now understand that we also have a responsibility to the non-Jewish poor in our community. We now give tzedakah to those in need all over the world, both Jews and non-Jews.

The Oversight Board

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

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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**.

In an article about this very subject, the past chair of American Jewish World Service, Don Abramson writes: "As it is, Americans give at most two-three percent of their income to charity and there is little evidence to suggest that Jews contribute a lot more than average Americans, irrespective of aspirational tithing standards." Given the reality that most of us are still reaching for the prescribed ten percent, he advises: "In addition to non-tzedakah communal obligations, one should give ten percent of discretionary income or one percent of net worth to tzedakah, whichever is greater."

You may be asking yourself why this is the subject of my January newsletter article, as opposed to the December article? It is precisely because most people think about giving in December that I'm writing about this now. To achieve our tzedakah giving goals we must work at it all year long.

This year I am starting a new custom of looking at my most recent tax return when contemplating how much my family can give and making a plan to distribute my giving across all twelve months of the year. It is much easier to give on an ongoing basis than to wait until December when such an amount might break the bank.

Larry Moses, the philanthropic adviser to the Wexner family, writes: "Tzedakah teaches us what is required to be fully human. Philanthropy teaches us what is possible in recognizing God's image in the world around us and in repairing that world."

May you go from strength to strength in this new year.

Rabbi Goldman



COM OFFICE HOURS

Monday through Friday, 8:30 am – 12:30 pm



BUILDING RENOVATIONS UNDERWAY

As many of you know, we have begun two major renovation projects to update our kosher kitchen and to increase security at all our entryways.

In terms of updates for progress, the kitchen has been painted and is being thoroughly cleaned, with new equipment being installed in January.

The operations security subcommittee has been collaborating with Special-Lite and other vendors to replace all of our exterior doors, as well as the sanctuary doors with modern, high-security versions including bullet- and shatter-resistant glass. All the doors except for those in the lobby sanctuary and the main entrance have been completed; the last two sets of doors should be completed in January.

Projects of this magnitude could not be accomplished without the generosity of many people. The Oversight Board wants to thank Martha and Henry Upjohn of Special-Lite for giving us a special deal on the door installation, Carolyn Kennedy for writing two successful grants to the Okun Foundation, and the following members and donors. It's not too late to contribute! Please contact office manager Kristil Semrau (269-342-5463, comofficemgr@congregationofmoses.org) if you'd like to make a gift. **Thank you.**

New contributions received (noted in red):

Valerie Eisenberg

Phil Horwich and Wilma Kahn

Morris Rose Auto Parts (the grandsons of Larry and Sandy Rose)

Gary Adelman

Sara Amy

Alan and Michelle Angel

Judah and Pnina Ari-Gur

Benjamin Avner and Elissa Cahn

Cindy and Larry Beer

Maxine and Neal Berke

Marv and Renee Berkowitz

Joel and Leslie Bez

David and Robin Bowman

Alan Cohen

Denise Davidoff

Judy and Paul Davidoff

Sherri Deems

Keri and Sherril Dettloff

Nancy Jane Diamond

Ken and Marian Fisher

Emily Freed and Brad Hershbein

Marjorie Gaynor

Nan Goldenthal

Ken and Sallie Goodman

Jeff and Rachel Haus

Betty and Joe Hirschfield

Emily Hoffman and Lee Klingman

Al Rosenthal and Judy Davis-Rosenthal

Lowell and Judy Seyburn

Joanne Simon

Rae Lee Howard

Carolyn and Brad Kennedy

Emily Kimmel-Kurtz

Pat and Rich Kirschner

Alice and Steve Koss

Mara Koss-Weston and Michael Weston

Gary and Tamis Kushner

Rob and Tema Lando

Robyn Levene

Dennis and Linda Means

Paul Nimz

Judy and Leonard Poger

Sandy Rose

Arlen and Kim Rubin

Marc and Jeanne Schupan

Paul and Sharon Schwartz

Bruce Stein and Christy Chuang Stein

Adam and Rebecca Strauss

David and Jann Stulberg

Dean and Gillan Thommes

Gerry and Lee Tregerman

Susan Vizoskie

Josh and Pam Weiner

Services and Events Calendar

Wednesday, January 1		CoM building closed	
Thursday, January 2		CoM reopens - new office hours Monday - Friday, 8:30-12:30 pm	
Friday, January 3	5:05 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, January 4	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services at CoM	Torah: Genesis 46:28-47:27 Maf: Genesis 47:25-27 Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:15-28
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Ellison/Kennedy
Tuesday, January 7	7:00 pm	Book Club meeting at TBI (rescheduled from December 28)	
Wednesday, January 8	4:30 pm	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, January 8	7:00 pm	Mussar class	
Friday, January 10	5:12 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, January 11	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services at CoM	Torah: Genesis 49:27-50:26 Maf: Genesis 50:23-25 Haftarah: I Kings 2:1-12
Saturday, January 11	11:30 am	Family Services/Tot Shabbat at CoM	
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Ruterbusch/Hoffman & Klingman
Sunday, January 12	9:00 am	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, January 15	Noon	Lunch & Learn on Zoom, "Ease & Presence in a Climate-Changing World"	
Wednesday, January 15	4:30 pm	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, January 15	7:00 pm	Oversight Board Meeting	
Friday, January 17	5:20 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Friday, January 17	7:00 pm	Kabbalat Shabbat	
Saturday, January 18	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services at CoM	Torah: Exodus 4:18-6:1 Maf: Exodus 5:22-6:1 Haftarah: Isaiah 27:6-28; 29:22-23
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Avner & Cahn/Grode/Siegel
Sunday, January 19	9:00 am	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, January 22	Noon	Lunch & Learn on Zoom, "Ease & Presence in a Climate-Changing World"	
Wednesday, January 22	4:30 pm	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Friday, January 24	5:28 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, January 25	9:30 am	Shabbat Services and Torah Study	Study beginning with Genesis 3:1
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Conlon/Goldenthal
Sunday, January 26	9:00 am	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Tuesday, January 28	6:00 pm	Movie at TBI - "The Conspiracy" - advance signup required, see pg 8	
Wednesday, January 29	4:30 pm	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Thursday, January 30	7:00 pm	Book Club meeting at TBI	
Friday, January 31	5:37 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	

Caring Circle

Caring Circle—compassionate volunteers for the Congregation of Moses family. **Caring Circle 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 members of **Caring Circle**, listed below, welcome your call. They have agreed to make their names and contact information available so that you can choose to connect with the person with whom you feel most comfortable.

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

Rae Lee Howard 269-217-2833, rhoward@ihsdist.com

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

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

Rachel Haus 412-719-4293, rachelhaus@yahoo.com

Patty Conlon 269-352-6324, conlonpn@yahoo.com



December Book Club to Meet in January

Tuesday, January 7, 7:00 pm at TBI

The December book is *The Beauty Queen of Jerusalem*, by Sarit Yishai-Levi, also a popular series on Netflix with 36 episodes. Since many people were not available in December, please join us at TBI on **Tuesday, January 7 at 7:00 pm** instead!

Summary from Amazon:

Set against the Golden Age of Hollywood, the dark days of World War II, and the swinging '70s, *The Beauty Queen of Jerusalem* follows generations of unforgettable women as they forge their own paths through times of dramatic change. With great humor and heart, Sarit Yishai-Levi has given us a powerful story of love and forgiveness—and the unexpected and enchanting places we find each.

Finalist for the Book Club category of the 2016 National Jewish Book Awards.



Family (Tot) Shabbat Services

Saturday, January 11, 11:30 am at Congregation of Moses

Rabbis Goldman and Schicker invite you and your little ones to join us for our relaunch of Tot Shabbat Services. All are invited - so bring some friends!

Please note that each month the location will alternate between CoM and TBI.



“The Wars in Israel's North and South: Exhaustion and Resilience”

February 9 at CoM, from 1:00 - 3:00 pm

The Jewish Federation of Southwest Michigan is sponsoring a talk by **Linda Gradstein, the Israel bureau chief for The Media Line news agency.**

Gradstein was the Israel correspondent for NPR News from 1990 until 2009. As a freelance reporter, she has reported for PRI's "The World."

Gradstein is a member of the team that received the Overseas Press Club Award for her coverage of the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, and the team that received the Alfred I. DuPont-Columbia University Award for Excellence in Broadcast Journalism for her coverage of the Persian Gulf War.

Refreshments will be served. Please watch for sign up information.



The Jewish Federation
OF KALAMAZOO AND SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN

AEDS HAVE BEEN INSTALLED AT COM

Been in the Congregation of Moses building recently? You may have noticed that, in addition to first-aid and stop-the-bleed kits, we now have two automatic external defibrillators (AEDs). One is located in the school wing, right outside the Sofen room, and the other is outside the main kitchen, off the corridor. Although these units are designed to require little training, as they audibly walk users through steps for their use, we will have trainings within the next few months. Stay tuned for updates!



THE CONSPIRACY

SPONSORED BY: TEMPLE B'NAI ISRAEL
& CONGREGATION OF MOSES

Registration Required



DOCUMENTARY. 90 MIN.
FREE COMMUNITY SHOWING.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 28TH
6:00 PM
TEMPLE B'NAI ISRAEL
4409 GRAND PRAIRIE
KALAMAZOO, MI

THE CONSPIRACY begins with a man in front of a wall of computers. As he descends down an internet rabbit hole, a chorus of voices coalesces around one idea: There is a secret group controlling the world, and that group is an international network of Jews. Featuring the voices of Jason Alexander, Mayim Bialik, and Liev Schreiber, **THE CONSPIRACY** is an animated documentary that shows how a centuries-old myth has moved from the fringe to the mainstream, becoming a pillar of modern antisemitism.

Advance sign up is required: tinyurl.com/conspiracydoc2025

Saturday morning Kiddush is an integral part of the celebration of Shabbat and hosting one is a great way for you to be involved in the CoM community. It is important that all members occasionally host Kiddush so that the responsibility is spread out over the entire congregation.

Each member of the CoM community is asked to host a Kiddush 2-3 times a year. Two member families are randomly assigned a date to co-host. Dennis Means or Wilma Kahn will be on hand to answer questions on your Shabbat morning. You will also receive an email about a month in advance with detailed instructions. You do not need to purchase food, though you may if you wish. Your assignment is purely to **set up and clean up our normal fare**.

Please find your date on the schedule below and confirm by email that you will be able to host on that Shabbat morning. We realize that some of the dates might not work for you. We only ask that you notify us immediately if this is the case. We will be able to find an alternative date for you, but we will need time to find a replacement host and reassign you.

Thank you in advance for playing an important part in this weekly ritual. Please feel free to contact us with any concerns or questions.

Rav Todot/Many Thanks,

Kristil Semrau, CoM Office Manager, comofficemgr@congregationofmoses.org

Dennis Means, Religious Activities Committee co-chair

Kiddush Hosting Assignments January - September 2025			
Date	Occasion	Host	Host
Saturday, Jan. 4	Shabbat	Kennedy	Ellison
Saturday, Jan. 11	Shabbat	Ruterbusch	Hoffman & Klingman
Saturday, Jan. 18	Shabbat	Avner & Cahn	Grode & Siegel
Saturday, Jan. 25	Shabbat	Conlon	Goldenthal
Saturday, Feb. 1	Shabbat	Berke	Badt
Saturday, Feb. 8	Shabbat	Means	Levene
Saturday, Feb. 15	Shabbat	Bowman	Fogel
Saturday, Feb. 22	Shabbat	Grode	Siegel
Saturday, March 1	Shabbat	Strauss	Hirschfield
Saturday, March 8	Shabbat	Angel	Kushner
Saturday, March 15	Shabbat	Grode	Siegel
Saturday, March 22	Shabbat	Howard	Haus
Saturday, March 29	Shabbat	Koss	Koss-Weston
Saturday, April 5	Shabbat	Johnson	Hyman
Saturday, April 12	Shabbat	Krefman	Ofstein

Saturday, April 19	Shabbat	Wise	Eisenberg
Friday, April 25	Volunteer Appreciation	Kennedy	Rubin
Saturday, April 26	Shabbat	Davidoff	Thommes
Saturday, May 3	Shabbat	Lando	Fisher
Saturday, May 10	Shabbat	Adelman	Weiner
Thursday, May 16	Retreat	Oretsky	Hershbein & Freed
Saturday, May 17	Shabbat	Brown	Verne
Saturday, May 24	Shabbat	Camhi	Stein
Saturday, May 31	Shabbat	Patrick	Bez
Saturday, June 7	Shabbat	Davidoff	Tenenbaum
Saturday, June 14	Shabbat	Weiner	Zukowski & Serlin
Friday, June 20	3rd Friday Services	Howard	Levene
Saturday, June 21	Shabbat	Beer	Schupan
Saturday, June 28	Shabbat	Eisenberg	Goldenthal
Saturday, July 5	Shabbat	Fisher	Rubin
Saturday, July 12	Shabbat	Fischell	Krefman
Friday, July 18	3rd Friday Services	Lando	Riley
Saturday, July 19	Shabbat	Davidoff	Green
Saturday, July 26	Shabbat	Fogel	Reck
Saturday, August 2	Shabbat	Tenenbaum	Kushner
Saturday, August 9	Shabbat	Greenwald	Verne
Friday, August 15	3rd Friday Services	Nimz	Oretsky
Saturday, August 16	Shabbat	Hirschfield	Ofstein
Saturday, August 23	Shabbat	Hoffman & Klingman	Weiner
Saturday, August 30	Shabbat	Ruterbusch	Levene
Saturday, Sept. 6	Shabbat	Koss	Koss-Weston
Friday, Sept. 12	Jonah Weiner's Bar Mitzvah	Means	Zukowski & Serlin
Saturday, Sept. 13	Jonah Weiner's Bar Mitzvah	Levene	Johnson
Saturday, Sept. 20	Shabbat	Brot	Minsley
Saturday, Sept. 27	Shabbat	Kimmel-Kurtz	Stein



Independence. Dignity. Self-determination.

Colef

The Samuel J. and Mary E. Colef Fund

The Colef Fund of the Congregation of Moses supports programs locally, nationally and globally that address hunger, poverty, homelessness, literacy, joblessness, health, education and building safe communities.

The Colef Fund will match your donations dollar-for-dollar, up to a yearly total of \$250 per family (minimum \$50) to any of the nonprofits listed below. Gifts made anytime from January 1 – December 31, 2024 will be matched!

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Boys Town Jerusalem

Community Healing Centers

Communities In Schools of Kalamazoo

Constance Brown Hearing Centers

Community Outreach, Prevention, and Education (COPE) Network

Disability Network

Ecumenical Senior Center

Farmerhood

Family and Children's Services

First Day Shoe Fund

Gryphon Place

HIAS

Innovation: Africa

The Irving S. Gilmore International Piano Festival

JDC

Jewish Agency for Israel

Jewish Federation of Southwest Michigan (*donations matched to Jewish Federations of North America*)

KC Ready 4s

Kalamazoo Covenant Academy

Kalamazoo Literacy Council

Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes

Meshi Children's Rehabilitation Center

Ministry with Community

Open Doors

Partners in Housing Transition

Planned Parenthood of Kalamazoo

Portage Community Center

Prevention Works

Read and Write Kalamazoo (RAWK)

Ready to Read/Kalamazoo Public Library

Ruach Dromit

St. Luke's Diaper Bank

Senior Services of Kalamazoo

Shalva

SLD Read

Southwest Michigan Miracle League

Trauma Recovery Associates (TRA)

Tzevet Mikey

United Way of Kalamazoo and Battle Creek

Urban Alliance

Water 4 Mercy

Wellspring/Cori Terry and Dancers

Yad LaKashish/Lifeline for the Old

Yad Ezra V'Shulamit

YWCA of Kalamazoo

The Colef Fund has previously supported each of the organizations listed.

How to get your donation matched by the Colef Fund

Send the following information along with a copy of your donation receipt from 2024 to:

Congregation of Moses, Attn Colef Fund, 2501 Stadium Dr, Kalamazoo, MI 49008

Or email: coleffund@congregationofmoses.org.

Include this information please:

- Your name, address, email address and phone number
- Amount to be matched
- Organization name, and a receipt or acknowledgement of your donation

Please **make your gifts by December 31, 2024** to have them matched. The maximum to be matched by the Colef Fund is \$250 per family per year.

Find us online at coleffund.org

Mishpacha

Donations have been made by the following individuals and families.

In Memory

In loving memory of my parents, Fred Arkush and Barbara Arkush, *Carolyn Kennedy*

In memory of my father, Andrew Levene, *Candi Levene*

In memory of my father, Edward Hegeman, *Nan Goldenthal*

In memory of my mother, Rose Patrick, *Bruce Patrick*

In memory of my mother, Jeanette Adelman, *Gary Adelman*

In memory of my dear husband, Michael Simon, *Joanne Simon*

In memory of my sister, Sue Levene, *Candi Levene*

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



"Ease and Presence in a Climate-Changing World" Lunch and Learn Series

Two more sessions, presented on Zoom by Rabbi Ora Nitkin-Kaner

How do I live with presence in a climate-changing world?
It's hard to think of a more contemporary spiritual question. And yet, our tradition is dotted with ancestors who wrestled with many of the same underlying issues: How do I grieve without losing myself to grief? How do I act from a place of hope? How do I imagine more than just loss? How do I trust in the future?

In this six-week Lunch and Learn series, we will attempt to answer these questions.

Fear Into Love

Wednesday, January 15, 12:00 PM

Disintegration Into Integration

Wednesday, January 22, 12:00 PM



Get more information and sign up here, congregationofmoses.org/event-signup-dev/?EID=99249.

January Celebrations

The Congregation of Moses wishes **mazel tov and yom huledet sameach** to our members and friends 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.

January Birthdays

January 2	Benjamin Barry
January 2	Stephen Koss
January 3	Rod Anderson
January 4	Gloria Besbris
January 5	Madeline Strauss - Special birthday!
January 6	Emily Green
January 6	Emily Hoffman
January 7	Sandra Rose
January 8	Leslie Bez
January 11	Richard Kirschner
January 14	S. David Stulberg
January 15	Beth Morrison
January 16	Fran Raffel
January 19	Gary Adelman
January 20	Hannah Estrin
January 22	Nan Goldenthal
January 22	Avery Nicole Howard
January 25	Jann Stulberg
January 26	Viola Fisher
January 28	Nancy Jane Diamond
January 30	Rae Lee Howard
January 31	Izaak Robert Weston



January Anniversaries

January 9	Diane and Bruce Minsley
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Yahrzeits

January 4-10 (4-10 Tevet)

Reuven Aglanov	Max Ernst	Samuel Rosenbaum*
Barbara M. Arkush*	Arnold Finn*	Louis Schechter
Dr. Herbert Barak*	Joseph Grekin	Raleigh Schechter
Edward Brody*	Molly King*	Sheine Schensul*
Jacob Cohen*	Muriel Krefman	Lena Spivak*
Uzetta Cohen*	Irving Kuklin*	Alfred Stenesh
Elizabeth Ellison	Susan Lapid	George Tenenbaum*

January 11-17 (11-17 Tevet)

Josephine Bovin	Samuel Kirsch	Sadye Levy Rubin
Ben Brot*	Joseph Klingman	Leo Salomon*
Bernard Deutsch*	Arlene Lando*	Charlette Schupan*
Haim Noah Feder	Harvey Lipsitt	Rebecca Schwartz
Jacob Gerber*	Nathan Marcus*	

January 18-24 (18-24 Tevet)

Dr. Ellis Avner	Dr. Seymour Levine*	Dr. Sam I. Stein*
Leah Budin*	Bessie Ellias London*	Ben Zimmerman*
Barbara Gross Finestone*	Rose Paull*	
Jay "Scott" Levene*	Vivian Pollack*	

January 25-31 (25 Tevet - 2 Shevat)

Dr. Morris Berkson	Chester Holstein	Bernice Roodin*
Samuel Colef*	Norma Jean Johnson	Sidney Schwartz*
Robert Davidoff	Joseph Kahn	Bertha Shinberg*
Nesha Gerber*	Ethel Kotzer*	Dr. Morris Sofen*
Sussman Gerber*	Annelise Loeser*	Jesse S. Zimmerman*
Isadore Halpert*	Louis Miller*	Joseph Strauss*

**Denotes a memorial plaque in the synagogue*

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