



# CoM newsletter

CONGREGATION OF MOSES • Kalamazoo, Michigan

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March 2025 | 1 Adar - 2 Nissan 5785

## Inner Strength Required

On Purim, we read the book of Esther. The story takes place entirely outside of the land of Israel. This story is about Jews living under threat.

One of the most famous lines of the book comes to us in Chapter four, verses 13 and 14. Mordecai has just asked Esther to “step up” and save the Jews from Haman by speaking directly to the king. Esther equivocates, reminding her uncle that if someone approaches the king without an invitation they might be sentenced to death.

Mordecai’s response is the stuff of legends and quests.

He says: "Do not imagine that you, of all the Jews, will escape with your life by being in the king’s palace. On the contrary, if you keep silent in this crisis, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another quarter, while you and your father’s house will perish. And who knows, **perhaps you have attained a royal position for just such a crisis!**"



*Rabbi Shelley Goldman*

This is one of the most impressive charges I have ever read. It is a call to action. A call to use your powers for good, even if your power pales in comparison to the power of your opponent.

Esther is a favored wife in a system that does not expect much of women, but with the right coaching and encouragement she becomes a hero for the ages. She bests Haman and beats back an existential threat. Would that we could all use our power to make such a difference!

In Jewish culture, the sentence “And who knows, perhaps you have attained a royal position for just such a crisis” has come to mean, “This is a job for you. This is your task. This will be your contribution to our unfolding story.”

It makes me think of the Marianne Williamson quote, often attributed to Nelson Mandela, “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, 'Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?' Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world.”

The Book of Esther does not contain the name of God, not even once. The Rabbis had to look for clues of God’s presence in this story. They found just such a clue in our verses. These sentences are about harnessing our inner strength.

Where does that inner strength come from? It comes from a curious mix of education, experience and good mentorship.

Inner strength requires the extra special spice of something intangible. Perhaps this spice comes from The Universe? Perhaps it comes from God?

# Rabbi Goldman

**The Oversight Board**

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

**Oversight Board Members**

**President**

Brad Hershbein,  
*bhershbein@congregationofmoses.org*

**Vice-President Operations**

Mike Tenenbaum,  
*tenemike1967@gmail.com*

**Vice-President Programming**

**Open Position**

**Vice-President Religious Activities**

Dennis Means,  
*dmeansmd@gmail.com*

**Treasurer** Neal Berke,  
*treasurer@congregationofmoses.org*

**Secretary** Rachel Haus,  
*rachel@congregationofmoses.org*

**Human Resources Administrator**

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**Member-at-Large** Patty Conlon,  
*conlonpn@yahoo.com*

**Member-at-Large** Phil Oretsky,  
*blueskyphil@msn.com*

**Trustee Representative**

Rae Lee Howard, *RHoward@ihdist.com*

**Synagogue Staff**

**Rabbi** Shelley Goldman  
*rabbi@congregationofmoses.org*

**Office Manager** Kristil Semrau  
*comofficemgr@congregationofmoses.org*

**Office hours:** Monday–Friday  
 8:30 am – 12:30 pm

**Building Manager** Rich Wojtas  
*buildingmanager@congregationofmoses.org*

**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).

# COM OFFICE HOURS

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

## 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@ihdist.com](mailto:rhoward@ihdist.com)

**Shirley Wise** 269-330-3103, [goldensmw@sbcglobal.net](mailto:goldensmw@sbcglobal.net)

**Larry Beer** 269-324-0777 home, [lbbkzoo@aol.com](mailto:lbbkzoo@aol.com)

**Rachel Haus** 412-719-4293, [rachelhaus@yahoo.com](mailto:rachelhaus@yahoo.com)

**Patty Conlon** 269-352-6324, [conlonpn@yahoo.com](mailto:conlonpn@yahoo.com)



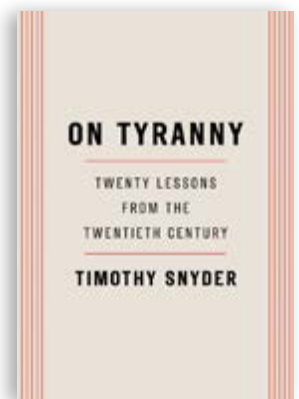
# Services and Events Calendar

Friday, February 28	6:14 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, March 1	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services at CoM	Torah: Exodus 26:31-27:19, Numbers 28:9-15 Maf: Exodus 30:11-16 Haftorah:: 2 Kings 12:1-17
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Strauss/Hirschfield
Sunday, March 2	9:00 am	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, March 5	4:30 pm	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, March 5	7:00 pm	Mussar class	
Friday, March 7	6:22 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, March 8	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services at CoM	Torah: Exodus 29:19-30:10 Maf: Deuteronomy 25:17-19 Haftorah: I Samuel 15:2-34
Saturday, March 8	12:30 pm	<b>On Tyranny</b> discussion with Rabbi Goldman	
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Angel/Kahn
Sunday, March 9	9:00 am	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, March 12	4:30 pm	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, March 12	7:00 pm	Oversight Board Meeting	
Thursday, March 13	7:00 pm	Purim Celebration: Megillah Reading in the Sofen Room	
Friday, March 14	6:00 pm	Shabbat services at TBI with Rabbis Schicker and Goldman, Purim festivities!	
Friday, March 14	7:30 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, March 15	9:30 am	Shabbat Shacharit Services at CoM	Torah: Exodus 33:12-34:35 Haftorah: I Kings 18:20-39
Saturday, March 15	2:00 pm	Trans Day of Visibility with Out Front Faith Alliance, at People's Church, with Rabbi Goldman and others	
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Grode/Siegel
Sunday, March 16	9:00 am	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Sunday, March 16	10:30 am	Purim Carnival at CoM	
Wednesday, March 19	4:30 pm	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Friday, March 21	7:38 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, March 22	9:30 am	Shabbat Services	Torah: Exodus 36:20-37:5 Maf: Numbers 19:1-22 Alt Haftorah: Ezekiel 36:30-38
		Kiddush set up and clean up	R. Howard/Haus
Sunday, March 23	9:00 am	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Wednesday, March 26	4:30 pm	Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School classes	
Thursday, March 27	7:00 pm	Book Club meeting at TBI	
Friday, March 28	7:46 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, March 29	9:30 am	Shabbat Services and Torah Study	Genesis 4
		Kiddush set up and clean up	Krefman/Koss-Weston

Be as courageous as you can.

## Spring Lunch and Learn Featuring "On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century," by Timothy Snyder

During the first session of the series, **beginning on Saturday, March 8 at 12:30 pm**, this book will provide the context for thoughtful and meaningful discussions that will lead to effective and practical action. The remaining two sessions will be devoted to a closer examination of the chapters in the book, as well as discussion of the results of the Evolve Symposium, "Practices for Defending Democracy."



In October 2024, 26 rabbis and lay leaders participated in this symposium by describing how they are able (or unable) to pursue the 20 practices that are outlined in Dr. Snyder's book as a response to tyranny and hate.

Participants in this series will gain a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of tyrannical movements and learn about strategies and techniques to not only cope with, but neutralize the power that has been granted to modern-day tyrants.

"On Tyranny" is a call to arms and a guide to resistance, with invaluable ideas for how we can preserve our freedoms in the uncertain years to come.

There are two copies of "On Tyranny" in the CoM Fisher Library. You can **[email Rachel to check on availability.](#)**

"On Tyranny" is also available at this is a bookstore, in Oakwood Plaza. You can check availability or purchase online **[using this link.](#)** Use the online discount code "MOSES" (without the quotes) at checkout to receive 15% off.

The book is slim, 125 small pages and/or a 2-hour audio book.

**Advance sign up is required. [Get all the dates and details and sign up online at congregationofmoses.org.](https://www.congregationofmoses.org)**

# Family (Tot) Shabbat Services

Saturday, March 1, 11:30 am at CoM

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.



**Future dates:**

**April 5 at TBI**

**May 3 at CoM**

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## HEBREW FREE LOAN

Hebrew Free Loan Detroit (HFL) has been offering interest-free loans to Jews across Michigan since 1895. HFL partners with borrowers to enhance lives in many ways.

Their interest-free loans help with paying bills, dental and medical costs, high-interest debt consolidation, transportation, legal fees, home repairs or the unexpected challenges that life throws at us—after a car accident or an illness, divorce or death.

If this is something you would like to know more about, there are flyers outside the office with information. More information at [hfldetroit.org](http://hfldetroit.org).





# Megillat Estér



## PURIM MEGILLAH READING & CELEBRATION

**Thursday, March 13, 7:00 pm in the Sofen Room at CoM**

Snacks! Drinks! Costumes and merry-making!

Megillah reading in Hebrew and English, featuring new booklets with translation.

Advance signup required, please. Sign up online at [congregationofmoses.org](http://congregationofmoses.org).

HAPPY  
**PURIM**  
6PM at TBI  
FRIDAY, MARCH 14TH

★  
MUSIC!  
HAMANTASCHEN!  
POTLUCK!  
BACKWARDS SERVICES!

PLEASE RSVP BY  
SIGNING UP  
FOR THE POTLUCK!  
TINYURL.COM/PURIMPOTLUCK314

**Sign up at this link: <https://tinyurl.com/purimpotluck314>**





OKCJS Presents

# PURIM CARNIVAL 5785

**Sunday, March 16th**

**Congregation of Moses  
10:30AM-12:30PM**

**\$10 per family for 10 Game  
Tickets/kid and Pizza Lunch -  
additional tickets=\$5/10 tickets  
Pay at door- cash or check**

Registration





**Saturday morning Kiddush** is an integral part of the celebration of Shabbat and hosting a Kiddush 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. **The request 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 a new date for 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](mailto:comofficemgr@congregationofmoses.org)

Dennis Means, Religious Activities Committee co-chair

<b>Kiddush Hosts March - May 2025</b>			
<b>Date</b>	<b>Occasion</b>	<b>Host</b>	<b>Host</b>
Saturday, March 1	Shabbat	Strauss	Hirschfield
Saturday, March 8	Shabbat	Angel	Kahn
Saturday, March 15	Shabbat	Grode	Siegel
Saturday, March 22	Shabbat	Howard	Haus
Saturday, March 29	Shabbat	Krefman	Koss-Weston
Saturday, April 5	Shabbat	Johnson	Hyman
Saturday, April 12	Shabbat	Barry	Ofstein
Saturday, April 19	Shabbat	Wise	Eisenberg
Friday, April 25	Yom Haatzmaut	Hershbein/Freed	Oretsky
Saturday, April 26	Shabbat	Davidoff	Thommes
Saturday, May 3	Shabbat	Lando	Fisher
Saturday, May 10	Shabbat	Badt	Weiner
Friday, May 16	Shabbat	Kennedy	J. Rubin
Saturday, May 17	Shabbat	Brown	Verne
Saturday, May 24	Shabbat	Camhi	Stein
Saturday, May 31	Shabbat	Beer	Bez



OKCJS students have been hard at work studying prayers since winter break and their dedication shone through during the student-led Shabbat service on February 21. Preparing our students requires teamwork and we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our teaching staff: Emily Warheit, Mazal Haus and Brenna Siskind for PreK/K/1st; Angie Saltzman for 2nd/3rd; Emily Kimmel-Kurtz (KK) for PreK-3rd; Cary Mannaberg for 4th; Laura Paul and Jen Rubin for 5th. A shout-out as well to Rabbi Goldman and Rabbi Schicker for 6th/7th grade and big thanks to our music teacher Naomi Morse.

The evening wrapped up with a delightful Baked Potato Bar potluck that was a hit! After dinner, a group of students gathered in the playroom for a cozy storytime led by Margot, a 4th-grade student.

In celebration of Tu B'shvat, the Upper El students teamed up with the Kalamazoo Jewish community to raise funds for planting a Mangrove Thicket. The students researched facts about Mangrove trees and made flyers in support of the nonprofit, Repair the Seas. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the \$360 goal, making it possible to purchase a thicket. A certificate and the students' flyers are posted on both the CoM and TBI bulletin boards. To learn more about Tikkun HaYam - Repair the Sea Inc., [visit www.repairthesea.org/plant-a-mangrove](http://www.repairthesea.org/plant-a-mangrove).



Meanwhile, the PreK-1st grade classroom has been having a wonderful time bringing Torah stories to life through imaginative play. In their recent exploration, the students engaged with the story of Moses ascending Mount Sinai, where he stayed for forty days and forty nights.

The Okun School's Purim celebration is just around the corner and it promises to be an unforgettable event! We look forward to seeing you there on Sunday, March 16th!

Looking ahead to summer, Camp Keshet is scheduled for August 4-8 and August 11-15, welcoming students entering grades 1 through 7. If your child is enrolled at OKCJS during the school year, they can attend Camp Keshet at no cost thanks to a grant from The Marvin and Rosalie Okun Foundation. Stay tuned for more details about Camp Keshet and the special offers from Camp Tavor!



**Angie Saltzman, Director**

# Mishpacha

Donations have been made by the following individuals and families.

## In Memory

In loving memory of my parents, Ziporah and Haim Noah Feder, *Pnina Ari-Gur*

In loving memory of my father, Reuven Aglanov, *Judah Ari-Gur*

In loving memory of my sister, Naomi Yehudit Polatov, *Judah Ari-Gur*

In loving memory of our grandson, Eliyahu Shor, *Pnina & Judah Ari-Gur*

In loving memory of my father, Sidney Schwartz, *Paul Schwartz*

In loving memory of my mother, Betty Levene, *Lori Putman*

In loving memory of my sister, Caryn Levene, *Lori Putman*

In loving memory of my father, Joseph A. Kahn, *Wilma J. Kahn*

In loving memory of my mother, Betty Levene, *Rae Lee Howard and family*

In loving memory of my sister, Caryn Levene, *Rae Lee Howard and family*

In loving memory of my mother, Norma Miller, *David Bowman*

In loving memory of my father, Norman Bowman, *David Bowman*

In loving memory of Barbara Kleinman, *David Bowman*

## 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



The CoM Camp Endowment Committee believes that Jewish summer camp participation is an important and influential part of a well-rounded Jewish education. Therefore, the committee is proud to support our youth by continuing to provide scholarship opportunities for attending Jewish camps and activities during the summer months.

Participation by the student and family in congregation life and community, as well as financial need, are all considered factors in determining scholarship awards. If you have questions or would like an application, **please contact Joyce Camhi by email, or call (269) 267-4253. The deadline to apply is March 15.**



# Money, Goods and Time Needed to Help Our Local Refugee Families

As you are probably aware, the federal government has illegally halted Congressionally-approved funding for refugee services, leaving many families with no funds for housing, food or other needs, and no caseworkers to help them navigate the systems.

## How can you help?

- Donations are still very much needed and welcomed at the Friends Free Store. Please choose items thoughtfully, particularly things useful for winter or for setting up a new apartment. The store continues to need blankets, warm winter outerwear and boots of all sizes. Adult men's and teen boys winter clothes are especially in demand.
- A resettlement fund was set up three years ago for members of People's Church, the Congregation of Moses and Temple B'nai Israel. This fund has been restarted to aid the 14 local families that need financial assistance. You can donate to that fund at <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z8YK/campaign/C-15BWM>.
- Trinity Lutheran Church is also raising funds for our local Refugee Support Agencies to continue to provide vital housing, transportation and financial support for families. You can make an on-line donation to the fund at <https://secure.myvanco.com/YJMT/campaign/C-15BXR>. To give via check, write the check payable to "Trinity Lutheran Church" with the memo "Refugee Relief Fund" and send to: 504 South Westnedge, Kalamazoo, 49007.
- If you'd like to volunteer, Ann Feldmeier at People's Church (major organizer for refugee services) has identified the most pressing need as drivers to take people to job interviews, the Secretary of State's office for state IDs, or to the grocery store. Contributing your time is a wonderful way to help. Contact Ann at: [annfeldmeier2018@gmail.com](mailto:annfeldmeier2018@gmail.com), or call 269-720-1649.



Thank you!

# March 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](mailto:comofficemgr@congregationofmoses.org).

## March Birthdays

March 3	Valerie Eisenberg
March 5	Rob Campbell
March 6	Alice Koss
March 9	Carolyn Kennedy
March 12	Diane Fogel
March 12	Efrat Gelman
March 14	Elissa Cahn
March 16	Adam Weiner
March 18	Ken Satir
March 19	Julia Zukowski
March 20	Kieran Kiley
March 20	Matthew Paul Ruterbusch
March 24	Kristil Semrau
March 24	Joshua Weiner
March 25	Tim Howard - Special birthday!
March 26	Rachel Richman
March 27	Lee Klingman
March 28	Wendy Hyman
March 30	Jon Reck



## March Anniversaries

March 2	Michael & Elizabeth Siegel
March 20	Harvey & Natalie Spivak



# Yahrzeits

## March 1-7 (1-7 Adar)

Charles Berman	Sarah Forman*	Barry W. Kirschner*
Adela Blum-Auerback*	Theodore Forman*	Michele Arkush Schaff*
Aaron Columpus*	James H. Goldman*	Morris Schensul*
Sallie L. Cushner*	Rachel Goldstein*	Sol W. Schwartz
Anna P. Davidoff*	William Greiner*	Eliyahu Shor
Jean Rosenblatt Davis	Benjamin Gubin*	Harriet Swartz*
Archie Feinberg	Rosalie Halpert*	Laure Tuitou*
Herman Fisher*	Marianne Mimi Katz*	

## March 8-14 (8-14 Adar)

Helen Rose Aronoff*	Alexander Fried*	Bess L. Peven*
Benjamin Bennison*	Sylvia Taubman Golde	Abraham Schensul*
Nuchim Buchman*	Marion Halpert*	Mary Schpok*
Mary Colef*	Laura Hoffman	Minerva Slosberg*
Ethel Duchon-Wachtel*	Martin Kalb*	Jack Stein*
Isaac Escourt*	Arthur Katz	George Ulrich
Gershon (George) Fisher*	Richard D. Meinert	

## March 15-21 (15-21 Adar)

Ernest J. Badt*	Marty Fitzhugh	Louis Slavin*
Ely Behrend*	Faye Hageman	Bertram Stein*
Edythe E. Berman	Rose Harris*	Samuel Edgar Stulberg*
Regina Blum	Edythe Palmer Leder*	Norbert Tuitou*
Max Breslow*	Selma Price*	Kate Weisman*
Ken Eisenberg*	Jack Rubel*	
Ethel Finn*	Harry Schechter*	

## March 22-28 (22-28 Adar)

Clara Finman*	Richard Hoffman*	Emanuel Isaac Solomon
Blanch Friedman*	Willis Mac Howard	Eddelene Marcia Statfield*
Nathan Friedman*	Francine Klingman	Roberta Stein*
Hattie Gerber*	David Laventure*	Eva Tuchman*
Jack Getz*	Harry Libin*	Betty Weintraub*
Alex Halpert*	Ruth Liepman*	Max Weisman
Anna Heckman*	Daniel Rosenberg*	Ethel Rose Ziv*
Hillel Hirschfield*	Lilly Sichel*	

## March 29-April 4 (29 Adar-6 Nissan)

Celia H. Besbris*	Harold Green*	Irving E. Schechter
Shirley Cane	Richard Harris*	Rachel Seyburn
Daniel Eisenberg	Howard J. Karp*	Norman Slavin*
Edward Ellis*	Harry Lieberman*	Aaron Spivak
Ernestine Ernst	Max Lerman	Ina Thall*
Lily Felberg	Belle Rifkin	
Marion Frank	Abraham A. Rocklin*	

\*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.  
Search your yahrzeit name and date anytime by visiting this page: [congregationofmoses.org/yahrzeits](http://congregationofmoses.org/yahrzeits)