



CoM newsletter

CONGREGATION OF MOSES • Kalamazoo, Michigan

December, 2025

Volume 18 Issue 12
11 Kislev - 11 Tevet 5786

OUR TREE RELATIVES, PART 2

This is the second part of Rabbi Goldman's Kol Nidre Sermon. Stay tuned in the coming months for the rest.

For days, in the rain, after our tree fell last May, neighbors were out in front of our house. Talking, discussing the dramatic events of the tree's falling, and saying goodbye. More than one neighbor talked of walking by our tree every



day. Of loving it. Of enjoying its beauty for years, decades even. On one such occasion, a neighbor who has lived in her house for 50 years recommended a book to me. She said that I must read *The Overstory* by Richard Powers, because the way that I was talking about the tree reminded her of the ways that the characters in the book loved trees, loved the earth.

I bought it that day and wept in the days to come as I read certain sections of the book. For it is about this moment in time, in the United States, witnessing the destruction of trees all around us. I learned from this book about the American Chestnut, a tree that used to rain down protein-filled nuts that could sustain people. I learned that the chestnuts grew all over our country but that a blight had killed nearly all of them off in the early 1900s. That the blight still exists in our soil, so that no new American Chestnuts can be planted as they will succumb too.

In late June, our family visited Kieran's brother's family on land that they recently purchased in the Hood River Valley, north of Mt. Hood, outside of Portland, Oregon. As he showed us around, Nyah kept referring to a patch of land as "the orchard," though it looked to me like a plot of land with irrigation strips feeding a few small plants, not even shrubs. But when he finally convinced us to take a tour, he revealed many different species of trees: figs, peaches and a new hybrid breed of chestnut. Scientists have been hard at work breeding the American Chestnut with the Chinese Chestnut with the hopes of creating a blight resistant tree, to replant and replace some of the Chestnuts that were lost more than a century ago.

From *The Overstory*, which included the Jewish teaching on trees and finishing planting before greeting the Messiah, I learned a Chinese proverb: When is the best time to plant a tree? Twenty years ago. When is the next best time to plant a tree? Right now.

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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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.

And this is where I'm at on this Yom Kippur of 5786. I'm living in the devastation of the world as it is and desperately trying to inspire myself to work towards the world as it should be.

From the Kabbalists we have the Jewish concept of Tikkun Olam, of repairing the world. This concept, originally about healing God, encouraging God to turn God's face back towards us, has come to be the operative concept in American Jewish life. We are called to repair the world, to Tikkun et HaOlam. Or as my mother taught me, to leave the campsite a little better than you found it.

Rabbi Goldman



RABBI SUCCESS TEAM

Do you have feedback for or about Rabbi Goldman? We want her to be successful at Congregation of Moses, so if you have specific comments or feedback, you may contact Rabbi Goldman directly with your feedback or get in touch with a member of the Rabbi Success Team to schedule a time to talk.

The team members are:

Jeff Haus - hausjeff@yahoo.com

Andrea Johnson - redhead5318@gmail.com

Shirley Wise - goldensmw@sbcglobal.net

Thank you!



Services and Events Calendar

Wednesday, December 3	4:30 pm	OKCJS classes	
Wednesday, December 3	7:00 pm	Mussar Group	
Friday, December 5	4:52 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, December 6	9:30 am	Shabbat Services	Torah: Genesis 32:4-33:20 Haftorah: Obadiah 1:1-21
		Kiddush hosts	Berke/Greenwald
Sunday, December 7	9:00 am	Hanukkah Market opens	
Sunday, December 7	9:00 am	OKCJS classes	
Tuesday, December 9	7:00 pm	Janet Heller Memorial at TBI	
Wednesday, December 10	4:30 pm	OKCJS classes at TBI	
Thursday, December 11	7:00 pm	Movie Screening: Sabbath Queen at KP Cinemas, downtown	
Friday, December 12	4:52 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, December 13	9:30 am	Shabbat Services and Torah Study	
		Kiddush hosts	Oretzky/Means
Sunday, December 14	9:00 am	OKCJS classes	
Sunday, December 14	3:00 pm	Jewish Federation of Kalamazoo Hannukah Celebration at CoM	
Sunday, December 14	6:00 pm	Hanukkah Candle Lighting in Bronson Park	
Monday, December 15	6:00 pm	Hanukkah Candle Lighting in Bronson Park	
Tuesday, December 16	6:00 pm	Hanukkah Candle Lighting in Bronson Park	
Wednesday, December 17	4:30 pm	OKCJS classes at TBI	
Wednesday, December 17	7:00 pm	Oversight Board Meeting	
Wednesday, December 17	6:00 pm	Hanukkah Candle Lighting in Bronson Park	
Thursday, December 18	6:00 pm	Hanukkah Candle Lighting in Bronson Park	
Friday, December 19	4:30 pm	Hanukkah Candle Lighting in Bronson Park	
Friday, December 19	4:54 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Friday, December 19	6:00 pm	Eat, Pray, Sing Hanukkah Potluck Dinner and Services	
		Oneg Hosts	Tregerman/Angel
Saturday, December 20	9:30 am	Shabbat Services and Torah Study	Torah: Genesis 41:4-52 Haftorah: Zechariah 2:14-4:7
		Kiddush hosts	Whitney, Rob, Allison & Adam Weiner
Saturday, December 20	6:00 pm	Hanukkah Candle Lighting in Bronson Park	
Sunday, December 21	6:00 pm	Hanukkah Candle Lighting in Bronson Park	
December 24 - January 1		CoM office closed - Call Rabbi's cell phone in case of emergency	
Friday, December 26	4:58 pm	Shabbat candle lighting time	
Saturday, December 27	9:30 am	Shabbat Services	Torah: Genesis 44:18-45:27 Haftorah: Ezekiel 37:15-28
		Kiddush hosts	Riley/Verne

Memorial Service to Remember Janet Heller

Temple B'nai Israel will hold a memorial service for Janet Heller on **Tuesday, December 9 at 7:00 pm.**

The service will also be livestreamed through the TBI channels, which will be announced in advance.

Condolence cards and/or memorial donations may be sent to Janet's husband:

Michael Krischer
2719 Pfitzer Avenue
Portage, MI 49024



Jewish Federation of SW Michigan's

Hanukkah

**Menorah Lighting
in Bronson Park**

Dec 14th (after the concert) with Rabbi Goldman
Dec 15th at 6PM with Jewish Federation
Dec 16th at 6PM with Rabbi Schicker
Dec 17th at 6PM with OKCJS
Dec 18th at 6PM with Rabbi Haller
Dec 19th at 4:30 PM with Rabbi Goldman
Dec 20th at 6PM with Rabbi Schicker
Dec 21st at 6PM with Rabbi Haller



Hanukkah

23 Kislev 5774

November 23, 2013

Submitted by Rae Lee Howard



Members of the Jewish community install a 12-foot Hanukkah menorah at the corner of Rose and South Street in Bronson Park on Sunday. The community will light the menorah at 5 p.m. Wednesday, the first night of Hanukkah. (Erin Gignac/MLive.com)

KALAMAZOO

Jewish community displays menorah in Bronson Park

By Erin Gignac
egignac@mlive.com

For the first time, the Jewish community in Kalamazoo will have a display in Bronson Park's holiday decorations.

Members of the Jewish community on Sunday installed a 12-foot Hanukkah menorah at the corner of Rose and South Street in Bronson Park.

The menorah was purchased by the Jewish Federation of Kalamazoo and Southwest Michigan, with donations from the Congregation of Moses, Temple B'nai Israel and Kalamazoo Chabad.

"It's nice that the Jewish community has a presence here," said Beth Grode, president of The Jewish Federation of Kalamazoo and Southwest Michigan. "I'm very happy and excited."

The menorah is traditionally a symbol of miracles, but the menorah in Bronson Park also serves as a symbol of collaboration for the 500 practicing members of the Jewish community in Kalamazoo.

The Kalamazoo community is invited to celebrate the "festival of lights" at 5 p.m. each day for a menorah lighting in Bronson Park. The first lighting will take place Wednesday, the first night of



Chanaya Haller, 7, screws a light bulb into a 12-foot Hanukkah menorah. The community will light the menorah at 5 p.m. on Wednesday, the first night of Hanukkah.

Hanukkah.

On Sunday, the fifth night of Hanukkah, Grammy-nominated singer/songwriter Matisyahu will join the community and lead those assembled in song for the candle lighting before his performance at Kalamazoo State Theatre at 8 p.m.

On Dec. 4, the last night of Hanukkah, children and parents from local religious schools will celebrate around the display with traditional Jewish food and treats.

Kalamazoo city officials approved display of the menorah in Bronson Park, Grode said.

Rabbi Mordechai Haller and his wife, Dobrushe Haller,

said there wasn't any opposition to a menorah being placed in Bronson Park.

"Hanukkah celebrates religious freedom," he said. "This emphasizes the idea that we can express publicly without fear."

The idea came from a community member who had mentioned having some sort of display in the park during Hanukkah.

In a rarity on the calendar, Hanukkah intersects with Thanksgiving this year. This has never happened since Thanksgiving has been an official holiday, according to Grode, who said it won't happen again for another 70,000 years.



Hanukkah

MARKET

to benefit
the Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School

**Food + Hanukkah Gifts +
Hanukkah Supplies + Art**

Sunday, December 7
9:00 am - 12:30 pm at the Congregation of Moses

Jointly sponsored by Temple B'nai Israel and Congregation of Moses

Marvin & Rosalie Okun
KALAMAZOO COMMUNITY
Jewish School

Shop the Hanukkah Market!

**Sunday, December 7, 9:00 am - 12:30 pm
at Congregation of Moses**

Shop for local, handmade, homemade, unique gift items and support fellow congregants.

We'll have more than 15 vendors selling a variety of hand-crafted items including:

- Multi-media paintings
 - Colorful jewelry
 - Gift baskets
 - 3-D printed items
 - Wooden Judaica
 - Handmade soaps
 - Bookmarks and other hand-painted items
 - Whimsical pottery and art
 - Beaded accessories and shoe laces
 - Sewn kippot and gifts
 - Hand-made greeting cards
 - Challah and sufganiyot
 - Afghan treats
 - Syrian goodies
 - Hanukkah cookies and other baked goods
- And even more!

Basic Hanukkah supplies (dreidels, candles, and gelt) will be available for purchase. We'll also have a gift-wrapping station so you can have your gift items wrapped on site. If you work up an appetite while shopping or need an energy boost, we'll have refreshments – bagels, coffee and juice for sale.

Money raised from vendor table fees, gift wrapping and sales of Hanukkah supplies and refreshments all goes to the OKCJS (religious school).

Everyone from the TBI/CoM community is encouraged to come to this one-stop shopping, festive event. Bring your family and friends!

Contact Rebecca Pollens, srpollens@yahoo.com for more information.



Get Ready to Sing!

Community Hanukkah Celebration

Featuring Chicago A Capella Group, Listen Up!

Sunday, December 14

3:00 - 5:00 pm at CoM

**Hanukkah Activities, Dessert Bar
and Concert**

You haven't heard anything quite like this.

Powerful harmonies and percussion that you can feel in your kishkes. When you close your eyes, you'll hear the whole band, from soaring lead vocals to the thundering bass.

The repertoire is drawn from a dizzying array of Jewish and secular genres from Yiddish Swing to the Beatles to Israeli pop. There's something for everyone - like a good kiddush!

Don't expect to sit back and simply watch the show. Listen Up performances are highly interactive with audience involvement and singing, bringing Jewish music to life.

Thank you to the Ravitz Foundation Initiative for Small Michigan Jewish Communities for its funding of this celebration!

Sign up to attend online at congregationofmoses.org.



THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF GRAND RAPIDS PRESENTS:

A HAVDALAH CONCERT

FEATURING:
RICK RECHT

LOCATION:
TEMPLE EMANUEL
1715 FULTON ST E | GRAND RAPIDS, MI
6 DECEMBER 2025
7:00 PM
TICKETS: **\$18.00**

Rick Recht is one of the most influential and celebrated Jewish artists and leaders of our time. His innovations in Jewish music, media, and leadership training have had a profound impact on the fabric of Jewish life. Recht is the national celebrity spokesman for PJ Library and the founder and Executive Director of Songleader Boot Camp - a premiere national leadership training conference. Recht is the founder and Executive Director of Jewish Rock Radio and JKids Radio, the first high-caliber, 24/7 international Jewish music radio networks. He also serves as Artist in Residence at United Hebrew Congregation in St. Louis, Missouri.

When Recht is not on the road rocking Jewish communities from coast to coast, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Elisa, and sons, Kobi and Tal.

Dessert Reception catered by Marla Tulett

RSVP TO NICOLE@JFGR.ORG

Sponsored by:
Ravitz Foundation

Join the Jewish Federation of Grand Rapids for A Havdalah Concert, featuring internationally celebrated Jewish artist Rick Recht!

Rick Recht is one of the most influential voices in Jewish music today. His innovative blend of music, media and leadership training has inspired audiences and leaders around the world. Recht is the founder of Jewish Rock Radio, JKids Radio and the Songleader Boot Camp — a premier national leadership training conference.

Saturday, December 6, at 7:00 pm

Location: Temple Emanuel, 1715 Fulton St E, Grand Rapids

Tickets: \$18.00 each

Dessert Reception catered by Marla Tulett

Don't miss this incredible evening of music, connection and celebration as we mark the close of Shabbat together.

RSVP to nicole@jfgr.org

Sponsored by the Ravitz Foundation

Watch a clip of one of Rick's performances here, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V3LgJtiB2Oo>



Hanukkah on
BROADWAY

Presents

THE 8th **CRAZY** NIGHT

Featuring

- Soup, Greek Salad & Latkes
 - The Great Debate: Latke vs Hamantaschen
 - Illusion or Delusion Magic Show
 - Crazy Holiday Wear Parade
 - Community Menorot Lighting
 - Hanukkah Music Sing-A-Long
- 

Sunday, December 21, 2025
12:30 pm - 2:30 pm

First Hebrew Congregation of South Haven
249 Broadway St. South Haven, MI 49090

Reserve your tickets by visiting

www.firsthebrewcongregation.org

\$18 per adult

\$15 per child under 13 years

Reservations required

Come light the menorah!



For more info, contact Sharona Shapiro
shapirolearner@gmail.com

Tzedakah Drive

Gently used coats,
pet supplies,
and canned foods

What is a Chevrah Kadisha?

By Cary Mannaberg

Traditionally, the preparation of the deceased for burial has been undertaken by members of our Jewish community in a group called a Chevrah Kadisha, which means “Holy Society.”

Why do we do this? We desire to honor the deceased—the *meit* (man) or *meitah* (woman)—with respect and dignity, and to ease the grief of the bereaved family and friends.

Jewish custom includes a specific traditional ritual to prepare a body for burial. This ritual is called Taharah and is performed by members of the Chevrah Kadisha. Volunteering to do Taharah is a very special mitzvah, because the ritual is done for all Jews—observant or not, affiliated or not.

When there is a death, the Chevrah Kadisha is notified and we assemble a team, often within hours. This is all done anonymously and with deep respect. We are midwives of a kind, accompanying the soul as it moves from this world to the next.

Next month, I will continue this series by writing about the Taharah ritual. If you have questions about the Chevrah Kadisha, I welcome them for future columns. [Please contact me at cmannaberg@gmail.com.](mailto:cmannaberg@gmail.com)

Hello everyone-

Beginning with this issue, I plan to write a monthly column about the Chevrah Kadisha in Kalamazoo. I have a variety of themes to explore with the purpose being educational and spiritual. I will never write about individual people or their funerals, in keeping with the Chevrah Kadisha tradition of anonymity and privacy. I will stay away from rabbinical questions, like views on cremation.

Here are some topics I plan to cover:

- Aron (the casket)
- Tachrichim (burial shrouds)
- Taharah (the purification ritual)
- Shmirah (watching over the deceased)

Please note that our Chevrah is a fully open and affirming group regarding gender identity. What does this mean? As explained in *“To Midwife A Soul: Guidelines for Performing Taharah”* by Richard A Light, “For over 500 years, Jews around the world have used liturgy based on *Ma’avar Yabbok*, with the male/female binary of the Hebrew language. In today’s changing world, we now deal with a more complex mix of gender understandings, including non-binary, transgender, gender-fluid and any number of points on the continuum of gender identities.”

One of our guidelines for the Kalamazoo Chevra Kadisha is *Kavod v’Nichum*, honor and respect for all.

Many progressive Chevrot Kadisha in the USA were founded in the past 15 years based on these principles. We have seen historically that some people had been denied a proper Jewish funeral and/or denied burial in a Jewish cemetery for a variety of reasons. Many rabbis have reviewed the Torah and explain that everyone should be honored appropriately, in death as in life, no matter what their gender identity.

SABBATH QUEEN



SABBATH QUEEN,

a feature documentary filmed over 21 years, follows Rabbi Amichai Lau-Lavie's epic journey as the dynastic heir of 38 generations of Orthodox rabbis including the Chief Rabbis of Israel. He is torn between rejecting and embracing his destiny and becomes a drag-queen rebel, a queer bio-dad and the founder of Lab/Shul—an everybody-friendly, God-optional, artist-driven, pop-up experimental congregation.

SABBATH QUEEN joins Amichai on a lifelong quest to creatively and radically reinvent religion and ritual, challenge patriarchy and supremacy, champion interfaith love, and stand up for peace, ceasefire and an end to the Occupation in Israel/Palestine. The film interrogates what Jewish survival means in a difficult, rapidly changing 21st century.

December 11 • 7:00 pm • KP Cinemas
180 Portage St, downtown Kalamazoo

Please note: You must be registered to attend. Sign up at congregationofmoses.org



TODAH RABAH!

Thank you to everyone who helped in a myriad of ways to bring so many members together for a beautiful service and delicious Shabbat dinner, fully prepared in our renovated kitchen.

A huge thank you to Robyn Levene for taking the lead, shopping, planning and cooking a wonderful meal!

She experimented with recipes at home weeks before, bringing samples for me to try. Then the rest of us jumped in to help make a warm evening together.

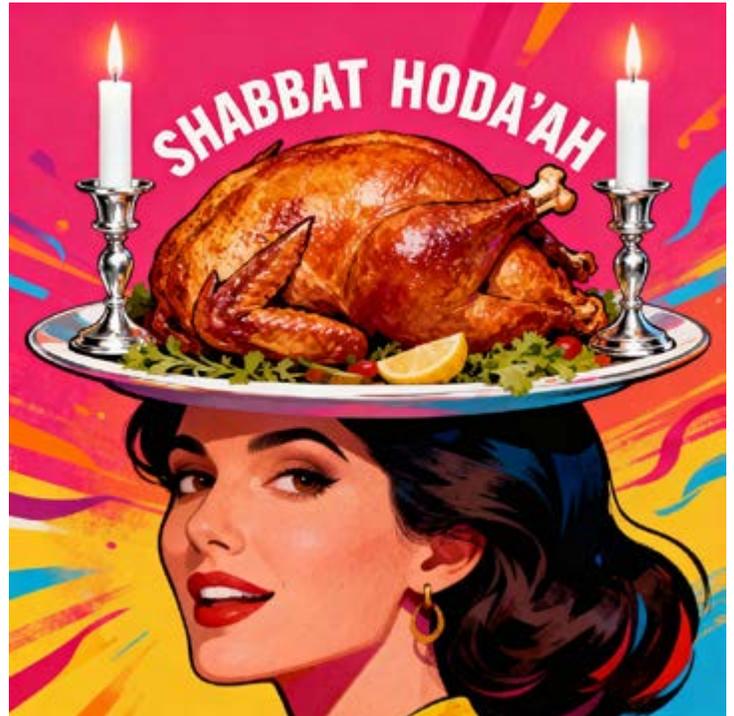
Rabbi led a beautiful service and we heard many words of heartfelt gratitude that were shared by so many throughout dinner.

A special thank you to:

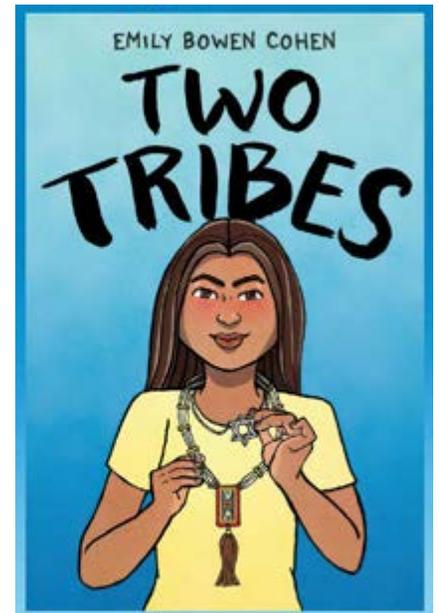
- Gary Adelman
- Cindy Beer
- Maxine Berke
- Marcie Brown
- Valerie Eisenberg
- Marian Fisher
- Diane Fogel
- Phil Horwich and Wilma Kahn
- Carolyn and Brad Kennedy
- Bruce Patrick
- Fran Raffel
- Gillian Thommes
- Sandra Beaty
- Shirley Wise
- Angie Saltzman
- Asher Saltzman
- Aaliyah Smith
- And anyone else whom I may have inadvertently overlooked.

And thank you to all who attended!

Rae Lee Howard



Amesmerized crowd listened to **Emily Bowen Cohen** as she explained how her unusual background inspired her to write and illustrate her graphic novel *Two Tribes*. The charismatic author shared how her father, a Native American from Muscogee, OK, met her mother, a Jewish girl from New Jersey, at an event in Boston. Dr. Adoniram Van Bowen completed his medical training at Harvard where he had been recruited from pharmacy school in Oklahoma to diversify the student body. The newly minted physician and his wife moved to Okemah, OK, where he served as chief of staff at the Creek National Community Hospital.



The Christian bible classes at the local elementary school motivated her parents to purchase a house in Tulsa, where the family would spend Shabbat at a local synagogue and Emily and her siblings could attend religious school. This routine was suddenly upended when Emily lost her father at age nine due to a brain aneurysm and the family then relocated to be near her maternal grandparents in New Jersey. There, Emily felt “other” in Jewish environments as her darker skin caused peers to question her right to be there. As she grew up, she began to explore her Native American roots and visited her father’s extended family in her former home town and at tribal events where she was warmly welcomed.

Emily intuited that both sides of her family shared many similarities as she immersed herself in Muscogee culture and met more of those relatives who happily shared their history and customs. This was the inspiration for her groundbreaking book, which she has found resonates with so many people from diverse backgrounds who feel “other” in milieus where they should be included and valued. Whether it’s sexual orientation, religion, politics, spouse or addictions, a difference can cause a chasm in a family or community. It is truly a universal book and one need not be Jewish or Native American to appreciate its lessons. One of Emily’s daughters has darker skin and is often questioned about her heritage—and so it goes.

Emily and her husband, both Harvard graduates, live in the Los Angeles area with their children and are shomer shabbat. She is working on her next book and we look forward to it!

Maxine Berke



November Was All About Gratitude But Now December Has Arrived!

We kicked off November with an inspiring author visit. Rachel Haus arranged for Emily Bowen Cohen, the talented author and illustrator of the graphic novel *Two Tribes*, to enrich our students' understanding of the Jewish-Native American experience. She also shared valuable insights into graphic illustration and the life of a writer.

We received wonderful news from the Okun Foundation, which granted our request for a multi-year security grant. This funding will enable us to hire security officers for our school activities and events in the years ahead. We are truly thankful for this support. Special thanks to Hayley Wasser for her help in crafting the grant application.

The first snowfall arrived just in time for students to enjoy during a Sunday morning snack recess. The conditions were perfect for creating snowballs and snowpeople.

In the classroom, Lower Elementary students engaged with the Torah story of the Tower of Babel. They then took on the challenge of building their own Migdal Bavel, learning firsthand how difficult it can be to construct a tall tower and keep it standing.

We extend our gratitude to Lee McClure for providing music support during our first student-led service of the year. Special thanks to Rabbi Schicker and Rabbi Goldman for their contributions to the planning and leading of the service. Students from PreK through 7th grade participated in various parts of the Friday night Shabbat service. Our next student-led service is scheduled for **Friday, March 13**, at CoM. We also want to express our gratitude to the JRSC for hosting a delightful Potato Bar Potluck and to everyone who contributed dishes to make the meal special!

Mark your calendars for **Wednesday, December 17**, the fourth night of Hanukkah. OKCJS will host a Menorah lighting at Bronson Park at 6:00 pm, featuring a special guest, Mr. Roboto LED Robot.

It's not too late to join us! Here's the registration link for the OKCJS 5786 school year:

<https://forms.gle/VEi3BHUqIinDyYEZ8>

Second semester begins on January 7!

Shalom,
Angie Saltzman





OKCJS



Family Hanukkah

GLOW PART



**BRING THE WHOLE FAMILY
FOR A NIGHT FULL OF LIGHT!**

MENORAH LIGHTING | | MUSIC | MR. ROBOTO THE LED ROBOT

**WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 17TH, 2025
STARTS AT 6:00 PM**

**DOWNTOWN BRONSON PARK MENORAH
200 S ROSE STREET, KALAMAZOO 49007**

Make Your Gifts by December 31 and Get Your Donation Matched!

Your gifts to our community are needed more than ever in these times of diminishing services to needy individuals and families. As you plan your tzedakah giving, the Colef Fund is ready to match your donations, dollar-for-dollar up to \$250 per year, making **your gift worth twice as much**.

In Kalamazoo for example, **Loaves and Fishes** collects and distributes food so that hundreds of struggling families can have nutritious meals. The **YWCA** provides safe and nurturing daycare, early childhood education and emergency shelter for women escaping abuse. **Community Homeworks** teaches skills to homeowners, lends the necessary tools and helps make repairs that keep families safe and in their homes. In Israel, **The Jewish Agency for Israel** is giving immediate and long-term support to victims of terror—helping them heal, rebuild and find hope again.



These organizations are on the front lines, changing lives every single day. And these are just a few of many, many dedicated nonprofits working to make life better for people in need.

Want your donation doubled? Here are the three simple steps.

1. Choose the organization(s) you want to help from the list on the Colef Fund website, coleffund.org
2. Make your gift.
3. Tell the Colef Fund about your gift and we'll match it.

It's so easy. You give, then we give.

Since 2019, the Colef Fund has matched nearly \$55,000 of donations from our Jewish community to nonprofit organizations in Kalamazoo and beyond. We want to give more!

Make a gift to your favorite nonprofit from the list on our website, send us a copy or photo of your check, or your online donor confirmation, and we will match your gift (up to \$250) to that same organization! It's that simple.

Email the Colef Fund at coleffund@congregationofmoses.org

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.

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.**

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/Shabbat Hosts, December 2025 - January 2026

Date	Occasion	Host	Host
Saturday, December 6	Shabbat Kiddush	Cindy & David Greenwald	Maxine & Neal Berke
Saturday, December 13	Shabbat Kiddush	Phil Oretsky	Linda & Dennis Means
Friday, December 19	Shabbat Dinner	Gerry & Lee Tregerman	Michelle Angel
Saturday, December 20	Shabbat Kiddush	Allison & Adam Weiner	Whitney & Rob Weiner
Saturday, December 27	Shabbat Kiddush	Shane Riley	Jenna & Richard Verne
Saturday, January 3	Shabbat Kiddush	Tamis & Gary Kushner	Susan & Jeff Scheinker
Saturday, January 10	Shabbat Kiddush	Candi Levene	Robyn Levene
Friday, January 16	Oneg Shabbat	Carolyn & Brad Kennedy	
Saturday, January 17	Shabbat Kiddush	Elissa Cahn & Benjamin Avner	Joyce & Steve Camhi
Saturday, January 24	Shabbat Kiddush	Rebecca & Adam Strauss	Robin & David Bowman
Saturday, January 31	Shabbat Kiddush	Emily & David Green	Michelle & Troy Serlin-Zukowski

Etz Chaim Endowment Fund Sustains Our Synagogue Into the Future

Thirty years ago, the Congregation of Moses established its **Etz Chaim Endowment Fund** to support the current and future needs of the Congregation of Moses. Endowed funds provide significant support to the synagogue year-after-year.

We are forever grateful to the 46 generous and thoughtful families, listed below, who have made gifts. Our congregation benefits yearly from their support as we meet today's financial challenges.

This coming year, please consider joining in this long-term, continuing support of our Jewish community. These gifts secure religious, educational and social needs – now and beyond our lifetimes.

For more information on how gifts can be made, please call or email the synagogue office at 342-5463 or comofficemgr@congregationofmoses.org. Thanks for considering this opportunity to ensure our synagogue's future.



LEADING GIFTS

Rosalie and Marvin Okun
Celia and David Davidoff
Shirley and Robert Grekin
Beatrice and Werner Sichel
Annelise and Louis Loeser
RaeLee and Mac Howard

Irving Schensul
Marian and Ken Fisher
Dorothy and Jack Levene
Joshua Weiner
Ben Gubin
Tema and Rob Lando

MAJOR GIFTS

Gloria and Stanley Besbris
Nan and Ed Goldenthal
Rosalie and Sam Halpert
Rachel and Edgar Inselberg
Marcia F. and Martin H. Kalb
Robyn and Scott Levene
Tamara and Earl Norman
Kim and Arlen Rubin
Elizabeth and Donald Thall
Ida and Sadie Zimmerman
Naomi and Norman Marshall

Anne Arbetter Fischell
Sallie and Ken Goodman
Dona Satir
Margaret and Jehiel Israelson
Patricia and Richard Kirschner
Helen Levy
Judy Davis and Al Rosenthal
Sue and Morris Stulberg
Shirley Wise and Frank Szopo
Sylvia and Fred Blum

ADDITIONAL GIFTS

Leslie Davis
Ruby and Eugene Field
Mollie and Haym Kruglak
Marcia and Michael Liepman
Sandra and Lawrence Rose
Christy and Bruce Stein
Susan and Patrick Welbourne

Marilyn and Arthur Feinberg
Betty and Joe Hirschfield
Fred Libin
Joy and Irving Rappaport
Natalie and Harvey Spivak
Esther Stulberg

A Memorable Afternoon of Music

by Maxine Berke

Sarah Aroeste, a dynamic international Sephardic chanteuse and promoter of the Ladino language, entertained an enthralled audience at CoM on November 16 as part of the Connecting Chords concert series.

The audience got a crash course in the history of the Ladino language, a Judeo-Spanish dialect which originated during the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492, as well as of the lives of those Jews who escaped under traumatic circumstances and settled in different countries. The language was influenced by words from Spanish, Arabic, Hebrew, Italian and Turkish cultures as the expelled Jews traveled eastward towards Northern Africa, Greece and Turkey, with the culture flourishing in the Ottoman Empire. She estimated that there are about 60,000 Ladino speakers remaining.

Sarah sang traditional and original tunes, many in the Balkan 9/8 rhythm, and related the poignant history of her family through song and photos. Her maternal family migrated to Monastir, one of the oldest cities in Macedonia which lost more Jews in the Holocaust by percentage than any other country in Europe. Some of the songs we heard were poetic such as "Gracias por los Arboles" about the trees marrying and then the flowers starting to appear and "La Ketubah de la Ley" about being married to the Torah.

Her style, whether with her own music or interpretations of Ladino folk repertoire, combines traditional Mediterranean Sephardic sounds with contemporary influences such as rock, pop, electronica and jazz. It was an amazing and memorable afternoon.



Mishpacha

Donations have been made by the following individuals and families.

Condolences to Jochanan Stenesh and family on the death of Mabel Stenesh

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

In Memory

In memory of my father-in-law, Morris Rose, *Sandy Rose*

In memory of my mother, Frieda Levene, *Candi Levene*

In memory of my father, James Strauss, *Adam Strauss*

In memory of my sister, Harriet Ginsberg, *Steve Koss*

In memory of my nephew, Jerry Ginsberg, *Steve Koss*

In memory of my beloved aunt, Bernice Selcow, *Gary Adelman*

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

Condolences

Condolences to Jochanan Stenesh, husband of Mabel Stenesh, *Nan Goldenthal*

Condolences to the family of Janet Heller, *Arlen & Kim Rubin*

Condolences to the family of Janet Heller, *Marlene Haus*

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

December Celebrations

The Congregation of Moses wishes **mazal 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.

December Birthdays

December 1	Lowell Seyburn
December 2	Moritz Angel
December 2	David Bowman
December 3	Rachel Snyder
December 11	Hannah Barry
December 16	Rebecca Strauss
December 17	Sylvia Blum
December 17	Laurel Ofstein
December 18	Davida Birnbaum
December 21	Lucas Carl Ofstein
December 22	Rebecca Tregerman-Campbell
December 27	Brett Snyder



December Anniversaries

None this month!



Happy Hanukkah and New Year!



Yahrzeits

December 6-12 (16-22 Kislev)

Jeanette Adelman	Max Konigsberg	Michael Simon
Carl Brot*	Naomi Kuperberg*	Rae Sklansky*
David Davidoff*	Rose Patrick	Greg Tapfar
Harold Goldsmith*	Herman Pollack*	Victor Paul Tuchman*
David Graff*	Joy Rappaport*	
Herbert Kaiser*	Seth Nelson Schupan*	

December 13-19 (23-29 Kislev)

Sam Becker*	Jill Greenberg*	Jack Rubin*
Renay Berkowitz*	Raquel Israelson*	Joseph Strauss*
Gertrude Boris*	Rose Kleiman*	Jackie Strauss*
Jeanette Buchman*	Richard Kurlandsky*	Jean Tregerman*
Zipora Feder*	Helen Levy*	Rosalie Zimmerman*
Doris Field*	Tuba Poger*	
Blanche G. Friedman*	Zalmon Roodin*	

December 20-26 (30 Kislev - 6 Tevet)

Reuven Aglanov	Irving Kuklin*	Alfred Stenesh
Fred Arkush*	Samuel Rosenbaum*	George Tenenbaum*
Max Ernst	Sheine Schensul*	Molly Zimmerman*
Edward Finman*	Lena Spivak*	

December 27-January 2 (7-13 Tevet)

Barbara M. Arkush*	Arnold Finn*	Nathan Marcus*
Herbert Barak*	Jacob Gerber*	Libby Rose*
Edward Brody*	Joseph Grekin*	Sadye Levy Rubin*
Ben Brot*	Molly King*	Louis Schechter*
Jacob Cohen*	Muriel Krefman*	Raleigh Schechter*
Uzetta Cohen*	Arlene Lando*	Rebecca Schwartz*
Elizabeth Ellison*	Susan Lapid*	

**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*