



The Bulletin Riverdale Temple

מִמְזֶרַח שֶׁמֶשׁ עַד מְבֹאוֹ מִהַלֵּל שֵׁם יי

*From the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof,
the name of the Eternal One is to be praised.*

Worship Services (also see calendar on p. 2)

Fridays

- Dec. 6 7:00 p.m. Shabbat Evening Service
- Dec. 13 5:00 p.m. Pre-Chanukah Tot Shabbat
- 6:30 p.m. Pre-Chanukah Family Ruach Shabbat
- Dec. 20 7:00 p.m. Shabbat Evening Service
- Dec. 27 7:00 p.m. Shabbat Evening Service

Saturdays

- Dec. 7 10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service
- Dec. 14 10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service
- Fay Mendez Bat Mitzvah Celebration
- Dec. 21 10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service
- Dec. 28 10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service

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THE RABBI'S COLUMN

We say two blessings when we light our Chanukah menorahs. The first translates to, "Blessed are You, Eternal our Gd, who makes us holy with His commandments, and commands us to kindle the lights of Chanukah." The holiday of Chanukah was created after the Torah was written, so there is (obviously) no record of Gd commanding any such thing. The blessing was written by the rabbis and makes us wonder what we mean when we say Gd commanded us to do this or that.

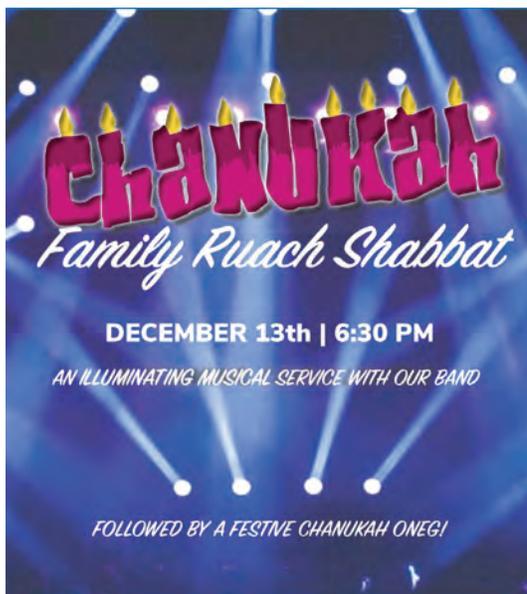
The second blessing means, "Blessed are You, Eternal our Gd, who did miracles for our ancestors in those days, at this season." Miracles? Do we believe in them? Do we even know what a miracle is? The miracle we most associate with Chanukah, the oil lasting eight days, may not be the miracle our ancestors were thinking of when they wrote this blessing. To them, the greater miracle was the defeat of the mighty Seleucid army by the puny Maccabean rebels. So, what is a miracle?

Is it necessarily something that is physically impossible? The Sea of Reeds splitting, darkness descending over Egypt for three days, one day of oil lasting eight days? Can it be something that is merely unlikely? The victory of the Maccabees, the creation of the modern State of Israel? Or can it be anything that Gd does, even if it is completely normal? On Saturday morning we say a series of prayers called *Nissim b'chol yom*, "Miracles that happen every day," which includes the fact that we are able to get out of bed, to open our eyes and see, to walk across the floor.

Sometimes we think that everything comes from Gd, and sometimes we don't. A "miracle" that is merely unlikely makes us wonder if everything is part of Gd's plan, even our ability to get up in the morning. A miracle that is impossible is proof of Gd's existence. Ramban considered the former a "hidden miracle," when Gd wants to affect the world but does not want to reveal His presence. Ramban called the latter an "open miracle," when something happens that can be attributed only to Gd. Perhaps a belief in Gd requires a belief in miracles, a belief that everything may yet be all right.

There is a story that took place in a concentration camp. A father saved his butter substitute ration so he could kindle a light in the barracks on Chanukah. His son reprimanded him for wasting food, and the father replied that he could live without food, but he could not live without hope.

To me, hope is bound up in the meaning of miracles. To believe in miracles is to always have hope, even if it is just a bit of hope. When I think of all of



**Chanukah
Candle Lighting
December 27,
7:00 p.m.**

continued on p. 3

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>3rd of Kislev 5780</i> 9:30 am Simcha Learning Center Noon Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah Class with Rabbi</p> <p style="text-align: right;">1</p>	<p><i>4th of Kislev 5780</i> Noon Lunch and Learn 4:00 pm Adult Ed with Rabbi: Reform Responsa</p> <p style="text-align: right;">2</p>	<p><i>5th of Kislev 5780</i> 4:00 pm Simcha Learning Center 7:30 pm Liturgical Hebrew Class with Cantor</p> <p style="text-align: right;">3</p>	<p><i>6th of Kislev 5780</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">4</p>	<p><i>7th of Kislev 5780</i> 7:30 pm WRJ Meeting, Book Club</p> <p style="text-align: right;">5</p>	<p><i>8th of Kislev 5780</i> 7:00 pm Shabbat Evening Service</p> <p style="text-align: right;">6</p>	<p><i>9th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Parashat Vayetzei</i> 10:30 am Shabbat Service with Torah discussion Extended Kiddush after service</p> <p style="text-align: right;">7</p>
<p><i>10th of Kislev 5780</i> 9:30 am Simcha Learning Center</p> <p style="text-align: right;">8</p>	<p><i>11th of Kislev 5780</i> Noon Lunch and Learn 4:00 pm Adult Ed with Rabbi: Reform Responsa</p> <p style="text-align: right;">9</p>	<p><i>12th of Kislev 5780</i> Noon and 6 pm Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah Class with Rabbi 4:00 pm Simcha Learning Center 7:30 pm Liturgical Hebrew Class with Cantor</p> <p style="text-align: right;">10</p>	<p><i>13th of Kislev 5780</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">11</p>	<p><i>14th of Kislev 5780</i> 7:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: right;">12</p>	<p><i>15th of Kislev 5780</i> 5:00 pm Pre-Chanukah Tot Shabbat 6:30 pm Pre-Chanukah Family Ruach Shabbat</p> <p style="text-align: right;">13</p>	<p><i>16th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Parashat Vayishlach</i> 10:30 am Shabbat Morning Service with Torah discussion Fay Mendez Bat Mitzvah celebration Extended Kiddush after service followed by Chavurah</p> <p style="text-align: right;">14</p>
<p><i>17th of Kislev 5780</i> 9:30 am Simcha Learning Center 11:30 KRMH Grocery Delivery</p> <p style="text-align: right;">15</p>	<p><i>18th of Kislev 5780</i> Noon Lunch and Learn 4:00 pm Adult Ed with Rabbi: Reform Responsa</p> <p style="text-align: right;">16</p>	<p><i>19th of Kislev 5780</i> 4:00 pm Simcha Learning Center 7:30 pm Liturgical Hebrew Class with Cantor</p> <p style="text-align: right;">17</p>	<p><i>20th of Kislev 5780</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">18</p>	<p><i>21st of Kislev 5780</i> 7:30 pm Board of Trustees Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: right;">19</p>	<p><i>22nd of Kislev 5780</i> 7:00 pm Shabbat Evening Service</p> <p style="text-align: right;">20</p>	<p><i>23rd of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Parashat Vayeshev</i> 10:30 am Shabbat Morning Service with Torah discussion Extended Kiddush after service</p> <p style="text-align: right;">21</p>
<p><i>24th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Chanukah: 1 Candle</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">22</p>	<p><i>25th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Chanukah: 2 Candles</i> Noon Lunch and Learn</p> <p style="text-align: right;">23</p>	<p><i>26th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Chanukah: 3 Candles</i> Noon Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah Class with Rabbi</p> <p style="text-align: right;">24</p>	<p><i>27th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Chanukah: 4 Candles</i> Building closed</p> <p style="text-align: right;">25</p>	<p><i>28th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Chanukah: 5 Candles</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">26</p>	<p><i>29th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Chanukah: 6 Candles</i> 7:00 pm Shabbat Evening Service Chanukah Candle Lighting</p> <p style="text-align: right;">27</p>	<p><i>30th of Kislev 5780</i> <i>Parashat Mitzet, Chanukah: 7 Candles</i> 10:30 am Shabbat Morning Service with Torah discussion Extended Kiddush after service</p> <p style="text-align: right;">28</p>
<p><i>1st of Tevet 5780</i> <i>Chanukah: 8 Candles</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">29</p>	<p><i>2nd of Tevet 5780</i> <i>Chanukah: 8th Day</i> Noon Lunch and Learn</p> <p style="text-align: right;">30</p>	<p><i>3rd of Tevet 5780</i></p> <p style="text-align: right;">31</p>				

DECEMBER

the people who work to make the world a better place, in the face of discouragement and despair, I think they must have some hope. That they must believe, in some corner of their hearts, in miracles.

Chanukah is the season of miracles. We need miracles most when the night is longest, as we need the lights of Chanukah most when things are darkest. Children love Chanukah, mostly because they get presents. In a way, a present is a small miracle. Something that the child couldn't obtain on her own, something he might not have known he wanted, suddenly appears. The cold, dark kitchen is brightly lit and filled with the sizzling of latkes. The children are on the floor, spinning their dreidels. And on the sides of the dreidels we see the letters *nun, gimel, hay, shin. Nes gadol haya sham*. A great miracle happened there.

It does not matter to which miracle we are referring when we light the menorah. It only matters that there was some miracle. I will go even further and say that it does not even matter whether there was a miracle or not. It matters only that we believe there *might* have been a miracle. There is an old saying that a man who believes in every story of a miracle is a fool, but someone who does not believe in the *possibility* of miracles is an *apikores*, an unbeliever.

When things seem at their lowest point, sometimes it seems it will take a miracle for us to get through. Don't worry. Miracles happen.

—Rabbi Tom Gardner

THE CANTOR'S COLUMN

Shalom Chaveirim,

Chanukah is upon us! A holiday that helps to illuminate the darkness and bring more light into lives, and into our hearts. That beautiful image of our menorah being lit on our windowsill, a symbol of hope and courage, brings much comfort and hope. We are grateful to Judah and the Maccabees, who fought courageously to keep Judaism alive. They refused to accept the Greek emperor Antiochus's forced conversions and stood for their right to religious freedom. And after they rededicated the Temple, the miracle of oil occurred. Such a fantastic story of strength and miracles!

But even though Chanukah is illuminating and bright, winter is also upon us; darkness arrives earlier, cold air makes us shiver, and we may feel more lonely and depressed. This is the time when we should pay better attention to ourselves and practice self-care. There are many issues that contribute to our neglect of our *neshamah*, soul, our *ruach*, spirit, and our *guf*, body—these beautiful God-given resources that we have. It may be work, a relationship or the lack of one, health problems, trauma, or old wounds. It is hard to count your blessings when all is dark around. Our tradition tells us, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a constant spirit inside me" (Psalm 51:12). It is time to check in with ourselves—how can we be better to ourselves, so that we can be happier and healthier?

I invite you to be courageous: to give yourself permission to take healthy steps into self-care, such as going for that important checkup, starting a new healthful diet, going to therapy, starting exercising. Meet new friends, practice gratitude, meditate, end harmful relationships, and find a fun hobby. This is our time to take care!

Judaism urges us to take care of ourselves so that we can serve God, and be God's messengers in the world by performing acts of Tikkun Olam, the repair of the world. And it starts with us feeling happier and more fulfilled with ourselves. To stop thinking about the problems and the wrongs that exist, and understand what it is that really hurts us, and to make peace with it. Remember, the Israelites wandered in the desert for forty years! Sometimes it takes a transition period to finally reach out deep into ourselves, and find ourselves again.

May the light of our beautiful menorahs help us grow spiritually and physically into embracing a better self-care system, so that we can then be good to ourselves, to others, and to the world. May we be blessed to sing God's song!

L'hitraot,

—Cantor Inbal Sharett-Singer

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

With Thanksgiving only a few days away as I write this column, I want to give thanks to a number of congregants who are serving as committee chairs, affiliate heads, officers, Executive Committee members, or Board members of Riverdale Temple. Without their painstaking work and enormous dedication to our synagogue, we would not be able to achieve any of the things that we do. These unpaid volunteers do so much for Riverdale Temple that there is no adequate way to repay them other than to say a heartfelt THANK YOU!

I. First, I will list our active standing committees and their chairs:

Adult Education: Yvette Marrin

Budget and Finance: Helen Krim

Building and Grounds: David Greenfield and Cristin Messinger

Caring: Beth Fertig Friedman

Fundraising: Dorothy Kay

Law: Lisa Fischel-Wolovick

Membership: Jean Daniels

Pulpit and Ritual: Ronna Weber

Schools (Nursery): Judith Zucker

Schools (Simcha Learning Center): Sherry Kassel

Social Action: Frances Segan

II. Our affiliate heads are:

Men of Reform Judaism: Steven Rosenfeld

Women of Reform Judaism: Joanne Heyman

III. The temple's officers are:

Presidents: L. Michael Griffel, Rachel Radna

Vice Presidents: Cristin Messinger, Steven Rosenfeld, Ronna Weber

Treasurer: Helen Krim

Financial Secretaries: Susan Birnbaum, Dorothy Kay

Associate Financial Secretary: Rochelle Greenfield

Recording Secretary: Sherry Kassel

IV. The Executive Committee of Riverdale Temple consists of its ten officers and two ad hoc members elected to it by the Board of Trustees. Our two ad hoc members are Lisa Fischel-Wolovick and Joanne Heyman.

V. In addition to the congregants named above, the members of

the Riverdale Temple Board of Trustees are Shelley Ast, Phil Clarke, Arline Davis, Craig Katz, and Scott Sirkin.

Some of our committees are in great need of additional members. If anyone is willing and able to join one of these committees, please let me and/or Rachel Radna know. Furthermore, in consideration of the fact that, come June 30, 2020, the terms of most of the current officers and the terms of a number of the current Board members will expire, I invite all congregants who may be interested in assuming some position in the running of the temple as of July 1, 2020, to notify me and/or Rachel Radna at your earliest convenience so that we can discuss what these positions entail with you and you can decide if a given position feels right for you. Many THANKS to all of you, and I wish you a wonderful Chanukah, which is fast approaching, and hope that you will spend many happy hours at Riverdale Temple in the weeks ahead.

—L. Michael Griffel, Co-president

BAT MITZVAH CELEBRATION



Fay Mendez

Fay Mendez, daughter of Hillary Bell and Luis Mendez and sister to Zachary Mendez, has been a member of Riverdale Temple and attending the Simcha Learning Center since September 2018. Having started her Jewish studies at a later age, she has worked incredibly hard to prepare for her Bat Mitzvah celebration on **December 14, 2019**. She has studied very closely with Cantor Sharett-Singer and Rabbi Gardner to prepare for this special day.

Fay is in the eighth grade at the Riverdale Kingsbridge Academy. Her favorite subjects are science and English language arts. When not in school or at the temple, Fay participates in the Riverdale Children's Theater. She aspires to one day perform on Broadway in musical theater productions.

SIMCHA LEARNING CENTER

Every month our school has a highlighted event in which the children participate in an activity to enforce their learning experience. This could include music, an art project, a game, or a unique story. Most often, these events revolve around a holiday. In the months of September and October, we were blessed with four Jewish holidays starting with Rosh Hashanah and a project focusing on how we can be active participants in making the upcoming year be not only a happy year but also a good one, based on our actions and perspective.

Following Yom Kippur and Sukkot, we concluded by celebrating Simchat Torah, during which the majority of our school body attended services and participated in unrolling the entire Torah around the perimeter of the Sanctuary, an experience that I believe will be engraved in their minds for many years to come.

This past month was also the Jewish month Cheshvan, which is frequently referred to as *Mar Cheshvan*, the "bitter" month of Cheshvan, because it has no Jewish holidays to celebrate. At the SLC we took advantage of this opportunity to learn and celebrate the joy of Israeli dancing and the hora dance. Judaism focuses on the importance of community and rejoicing together, and dancing the hora does just that. The school divided into two groups. Each learned two dances, one in a circle and the other a pair and line dance involving all. Before I taught the dances, I shared my own personal experience of Israeli dancing in Israel and how this is a cultural experience that men and women of all ages take part in. After this all the kids were willing to hold hands and learn to dance. From the photos (see below), shrills of laughter, and joy, it was clear a great time was had by all.

—Judith Weinberg, Education and Engagement Specialist



Bulletin Board

Upcoming in December

WRJ Book Club Meeting	Dec. 5
KRMH Food Delivery	Dec. 15
Social Action Coat Drive	until Dec. 26
Chanukah Candle Lighting	Dec. 27

Dates subject to change. Check www.riverdaletemple.org and e-blasts for updates.

It is time for the review of the By-Laws. Anyone interested in volunteering for the By-Laws Committee, please contact the main office.

Congratulations!

The Gerber family for the baby namings of **Max** and **Samuel Gerber**

Copy for the next issue of the *Bulletin* is due by **December 16**. You can email it directly to rivotemple@aol.com (put "Bulletin" in subject line).



**Visit our website: <https://riverdaletemple.org>
Join Us on Facebook!**

Did you know that Riverdale Temple has a Facebook page? Find us by searching for "Riverdale Temple Bronx, NY" on Facebook and join this page by clicking on "like." This is a space where we can exchange ideas, blog, discuss events, share photos, etc., and strengthen our bonds as a community. Join and make our numbers grow.

To give a contribution to Riverdale Temple, send your donation to Riverdale Temple, 4545 Independence Avenue, Bronx, NY 10471. Please make your check payable to Riverdale Temple. Give the name/category/event to which your donation applies. We now accept payment by credit card; call the office (718-548-3800, ext. 0) or go to www.riverdaletemple.org. You can support Riverdale Temple by buying a mug with our logo for just \$10.

Riverdale Temple House Committee

Our mission is to ensure that the building and grounds of our synagogue best respond to the spiritual, educational, cultural, and social needs and activities of our congregation. We are concerned about safety, cleanliness, comfort, and appearance and maximizing the functionality of our facilities. The committee works closely with the maintenance staff to ensure that the facilities are well managed and meet the needs of our community efficiently and economically. The committee benefits from members with varied experience in facilities management, engineering, construction, and related fields.

Please volunteer to serve on this committee by writing to rivotemple@aol.com or president@riverdaletemple.org

Riverdale Temple	Rabbi	4
Telephone Extensions (718-548-3800)	Cantor	5
Temple Office	0 or 1	6
Bookkeeper	2	7
Nursery School	3	8
	Simcha Learning Center	9
	Emergencies	
	General Information	
	Other	

Registry of Holocaust Survivors

If you are a Holocaust survivor or a family member of a survivor, you can register to be included in the Benjamin and Vladka Meed Registry of Holocaust Survivors, at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. For more information and to download the Survivors' Registry Form, go to ushmm.org/resourcecenter and click on Holocaust Survivors and Victims Resource Center to complete the form. Contact information: Holocaust Survivors and Victims Resource Center, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, 100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW, Washington, DC 20024-2126; tel: 202-488-6112; fax: 202-314-7820; email: resource-center@ushmm.org.

If you need transportation to and/or from services at the temple, please call the office at 718-548-3800, ext. 0 or 1, to make arrangements.



Riverdale Temple is now part of the organics/compost pilot program in the Bronx. We can now recycle our food scraps. Please observe the different signs on the garbage receptacles and put throwaways in the proper container. We are pioneers in a wonderful program—please join the effort in caring for our environment. Thank you!



Recapture the joy of reading through the JBI Library for visually impaired, blind, and reading-disabled individuals,

all provided free of charge and delivered to your doorstep. Call toll free at 1-800-433-1531 or visit JBI's website at www.jbilibrary.org

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NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS



It has been truly amazing at Riverdale Temple Nursery School. When I walk through the classrooms, children are singing, building, painting, cooking, and reading. Each day when I greet the children, they greet me with hugs and excitement about playing with their friends and learning and growing. We are blessed to be a part of this community!

This year we are so fortunate to have three new members of our community. Rachel Goldner is our new administrative assistant. She is also the mother of Joshua in the Blue Room Threes and the wife of Jonathan. Please look at and “like” the Riverdale Temple Nursery School Facebook page. Rachel has been updating it with pictures of the children and their work. She will also be updating our website! Yeah!!

Anna Walko is our new Twos teacher in the Pink Room, and Mendije Haxhija is the assistant teacher in the Twos Pink Room. Please peek into Room 201—it is magical in there! The Twos children joyfully come in and work and explore.

We just celebrated Thanksgiving with all the children and teachers. Each class sang its own Thanksgiving songs. All their friends listened with respect and love! And, of course, clapped! We then sang songs together. We all ate muffins and fruit and drank juice. It was truly wonderful. We have so much to be grateful for with these incredible children.

This year we have a Playground Committee, which has met twice. We are working on improving our playground. We would love to have the sand removed from the playground and a rubber matting put there in its place. We will be working on fundraisers to achieve our goal.

Last month at a staff meeting, we opened it listening to the song “Flowers Are Red” by Harry Chapin. I feel strongly, as a director, that I want children to be able to have their own ideas, think out of the box, make magical mistakes, and be excited about learning and exploring. Here is a link to the song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7qrbNygL0YU>

Tours

We have already had many tours for the 2019–2020 school year. If you have friends who are interested, please tell them to call the school at 718-796-0335 or email: nsdirector.rtns@gmail.com

Next year we will have two Two-Year-Old Classes, three Three-Year-Old Classes, and three UPK Classes. Our school keeps growing!

Book Fair

We had a wonderful Book Fair the week of November 3, in the ballroom. There were crafts and snacks for children and an amazing selection of books. We were raising money for new bicycles and basketball hoops.

Holiday Celebration

On Thursday, December 19, the Twos will have their Chanukah celebration. They have been practicing songs and reading stories and are ready to entertain their families.

The Threes and Fours will be having their Chanukah/Christmas/Kwanzaa celebration on Friday, December 20, in the ballroom. It will be a wonderful celebration, and all are welcome.

Storytime

Storytime is every Monday in the library on the third floor. Please know all are welcome. We read stories and have cookies! It is such fun!

School Closings

December 4 (Wednesday): **Parent Teacher Conferences** For Two-Year-Olds and Three-Year-Olds: **No school** For UPK Children: **School ends at noon.**

December 19 (Thursday): **Chanukah Party for Twos:** Twos dismissed after party.

December 20 (Friday): **Family Winter Party**—Threes and Pre-K. It will begin at 9:30 a.m. in the ballroom. All are welcome! School ends after the winter celebration.

School reopens on January 2, 2020.

Just a lovely quote: “When I was a boy and I would see scary things in the news, my mother would say to me, ‘Look for the helpers. You will always find people who are helping.’” —Fred Rogers

—Linda Herman, Director

Tot Shabbat Services

These services, held during the school year on certain Fridays at 5:00 p.m., are led by Rabbi Gardner and Cantor Sharett-Singer. They include singing and guitar playing. For potluck dinners, we try to make every possible accommodation for food allergies and kashrut observance (all dishes are labeled). This month’s service is on **December 13.**



WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM (SISTERHOOD)

November was AWESOME!

What a wonderful month at WRJ. On November 24, we had our annual Artisan and Crafts Fair. There was a variety of local area artisans and fair trade (third world) crafters providing wonderful opportunities and great gifts. The ballroom was rocking with more than 40 vendors (see photos, upper right)! The Girl Scouts also participated, and, once again, our community came together for a wonderful event.

A special thank-you to Susan Birnbaum and Ronni Stolzenberg for putting this amazing event together. We also want to thank Cristin Messinger, Rachel Radna, Dorothy Kay, Helen Silber, Scott Sirkin, Fay Statsky, Jean Daniels, Sherrill Spatz, Judy Zucker, Dorothy Feldman, Robin Segal, Linda Eisenkraft, and, especially, Eurides Osorio and his AMAZING staff for all of their help and dedication. We are already thinking about next year, so start saving!

Our next meeting is Thursday, December 5. We will be having another Book Club event, hosted by Arline Davis, and will discuss *The Women in the Castle* by Jessica Shatluck. I want to thank Dorothy Feldman for hosting *A Woman of No Importance* by Sonia Purcell in November.

We hope to see you at any of our exciting events, and if we don't.... Wishing you a very happy Chanukah!

Best Wishes as Always,

—Joanne Heyman, President



Scenes from the Artisan and Crafts Fair at the temple on November 24. Photos by Margaret Ross Griffel.



From the Action Corps Annual Community Meal, held at Riverdale Temple on October 27, which included speaker Rep. Eliot Engel. Photos by Ethan Casey.

Members of Riverdale Temple!

The temple needs a volunteer accountant!

If you are a qualified accountant, please contact Helen Krim, temporary treasurer of Riverdale Temple, at 718-548-3800. Our most urgent need is a person who can reconcile the temple's bank accounts with our general ledger.

—Helen Krim

MEN OF REFORM JUDAISM (MEN'S CLUB)

Is Riverdale Temple thriving or not?

With the High Holidays now well behind us and having resumed our daily routines, I can't help but retain the strong feelings that remain from the wonderful holiday experience. The clergy were superb and the services were very well attended. It seemed as though we all experienced a spiritual high and there was positive energy all around. Furthermore, our educational programs are nearly filled to capacity and the adult programs continue to draw more attendees as well. Temple membership is growing and there is a jump in interest in the Men's Club. Life at RT seems to be thriving.

This gives me a reason to take a closer look at things. And when I do, I begin to feel some concern about our future. I see a leadership group that is working hard and is overextended. I also see attendance at religious services represented by pretty much the same basic group of congregants every week. Too

many members seem to show up only on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur from year to year. We need more members of the RT community to participate in leading this temple and also in finding time for organized prayer in their lives. We need more human interaction, more spirituality, and more involvement by all the members in our community. Without more membership participation in the daily activities of this temple, we will be unable to sustain the effort it takes to maintain a fully functioning synagogue as we presently know it to be. Our clergy are doing some very wonderful work but their efforts alone will not be enough.

Let's ensure that RT continues to thrive. Please consider increasing your participation in any of the many events, activities, and committees that RT offers.

Shalom,

—Steven Rosenfeld, President

SOCIAL ACTION

Riverdale Temple can be proud of the latest good works that its members have done for others. We collected more than 50 new pajamas that were sent to California through the **Pajama Program** for the recent fire victims. One box went to a birth to 6 years center and another to a foster care center in the affected towns.

Much appreciation to everyone in the congregation who donated/bought new pajamas as well as small/medium children's jackets and vests for **refugee children at the U.S. southern border**. We also thank parents and staff from the Riverdale Temple Nursery School who donated many items in small sizes.

Special thanks to Ruth Loebmann and Helen Krim, who helped to pack the new pajamas; Helen also coordinated with volunteers to send off several boxes of donated children's jackets, vests, and snowsuits.

KRMH Grocery Collection: It is getting colder, and the pantry is in need of healthful soups, oatmeal, fish, stews, rice, vegetables, beans, canned fruit, peanut butter and jelly, and evaporated milk to give recipients needing food. Please continue to donate groceries that have not expired. The next delivery date is December 15, at 11:30 a.m.

DECEMBER COAT DRIVE: Clean, gently used winter coats and jackets for adults are being collected until December 26 for our annual contribution to NYCARES Coat Drive. Phil Clarke

is spearheading the collection and will bring all donations to the 50th precinct. Please note the end date so as not to miss the deadline. People in shelters and on the street will be most appreciative of your donations.

KRMH HOLIDAY TREAT BAG PACKING: Please come and help fill bags of treats (kosher cookies, clementines, raisins, and chocolates) for needy children, adults in shelters, and homebound seniors. Date: December 15 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Riverdale Presbyterian Church. Recipients include the men's shelter at HIR, women's shelter at Society for Ethical Culture, homebound seniors at the Riverdale Y, children at the Women's Concourse Shelter, and children in the community of the Church of the Mediator. Come and enjoy working with others. Golden Glow Cookie Factory usually donates cookies for the volunteers.

Next SAC meeting: Jan. 5, 2020, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., in the conference room.

Note: Please contact Cristin Messinger, Joanne Heyman, David Greenfield, or Phil Clarke to be part of the Mitzvah Day Subcommittee group.

MITZVAH DAY 2020 IS APRIL 26, 2020.

Wishing everyone a Happy Chanukah and good health in 2020!

—Frances Segan, Ph.D., Chair, Social Action Committee

ADULT EDUCATION



The courses available for the month of December are as follows (see the calendar on p. 2 for specific dates and times):

Study with Rabbi Gardner

Lunch and Learn: 613 Mitzvot, Mondays, noon–1:00 p.m.

Reform Responsa—takes a fascinating look at how the top Reform rabbis harmonize Jewish law and the modern world, Mondays, 4:00–5:00 p.m.

Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah, alternating days: Sundays, noon–1:00 p.m.; Tuesdays, noon and 6:00 p.m.

Study with Cantor Sharett-Singer

Liturgical Hebrew: Designed to enable our congregants to read the prayers and blessings of our services and rituals. It is very individualized, and Cantor Sharett-Singer can teach students who are reading at a beginner's level. Each class also provides opportunities to practice speaking modern Hebrew. The first cycle, on Tuesdays from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m., concludes on December 3. The second cycle is on Dec. 10, 17; Jan. 7, 14, 21, 28. Tuition is \$125.00 for each six-week cycle, the last of which concludes in May. To register, email cantorsharett@singer@riverdaletemple.org

The Art of Torah Cantillation: Learn step by step the knowledge of the Torah trope cantillation system, as well as the skills of being a Gabbai, the one who assists the Torah reader during the service. This class is intended for those who possess a basic level of Hebrew-reading fluency, as well as those who wish to fine-tune their cantillation skills. Highly recommended for the Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah class. Free, open to temple members. Ten sessions on Wednesdays, 8:00–9:15 p.m.: March 4, 11, 18; April 1, 22, 29; May 6, 13, 20, 27. Contact the cantor to learn more.

—Dr. Yvette Marrin, Chair, Adult Education Committee

The Chavurah will meet on **December 14**, following the Shabbat service and communal kiddush. The Torah portion for that week is *Vayishlach*, which follows the story of Jacob. Many expectations are not realized, for good and for ill. This reading continues to challenge us with understanding our patriarchs in light of our modern values. If you want to deepen your knowledge of Torah and like lively conversation, join us.

—Dr. Ronna Weber

CONTRIBUTIONS

The following funds are represented in the entries below: Bible and Prayer Book Fund, Jean P. and Francis J. Bloustein Camp Scholarship Fund, Cantor's Special Fund, Decorating Fund, Jacob-Fogel Program Fund, Rabbi Stephen D. Franklin Music Fund, General Fund, Dorothy and Joseph Kay Prayer Book Fund, Leon and Beatrice Bereano Pulpit Flowers Fund, Rabbi's Special Fund, Religious School and Nursery School Parents Associations, Soviet Émigré Fund, Charles Tenenbaum Fund, Torah Repair Fund, Youth Activities Fund.

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Kol Nidre Appeal

Thank you for your Kol Nidre donations. To those of you who haven't responded yet, please do your share to be part of the whole! We would love to have 100 percent participation!

Kol Nidre donations will be listed in the January issue of the *Bulletin*.

Condolences



To
Dora Mejicovsky

On the loss of
Rosa Waldoks, beloved sister

If you have borrowed a copy of our prayerbook,
Mishkan T'fillah,
please return it to the sanctuary. Thank you!



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Go to: <https://urj.org> for more information.

The Departed Whom We Now Remember: December Yahrzeit Observances

1 Stella Greenblatt	8 Anna Ripps	15 Leonard Selk	25 Belle Caplan
1 David Hartman	9 George E. Katz	15 Esther Slade	25 Ruth Halprin
1 Sol Liebowitz	10 Ariadne (Ari) Bloustein	15 Zena L. Winston	25 Rosalyn Meisler
1 William Parker	10 Channah Brenner	16 Sol Dubrov	25 Sarah Silverstein
1 Henri Polak	10 Anna Halpern	16 Ali Levi	25 Gary Zucker
1 Emma Weiner	10 Jennie Kronman	17 Murray Dauber	26 Ben Lipton
2 Dinah Avrach	10 Freida Landesman	17 Aaron Dorfman	26 Esther Lubarsky
2 Ruth Kay	10 Sidney Maskit	17 Leon Schenker	26 Osias S. Majerczyk
2 Hy Papierman	11 Bertha Arrow	18 Edith Pargh	26 Sidney Meyer
3 Frances Capon	11 Sigmund Lipshultz	18 Eric J. Schmertz	26 Ilene Nevins
4 Alan Cohen	12 Sydney Gevertz	18 Samuel Silver	26 Riga Perlin
4 Henry G. Koppell	12 Esther Michaels	12 Lillian Feiler	27 Adolph Frankl
4 Rebecca Mandel	12 Louis Michaels	19 William Friedman	27 Alan Ira Sternstein
4 Avis Shulman	12 Debabrata Mukherjee	19 Irving Geller	27 Samuel W. Stolzenberg
5 Rose Kantor	12 Edna H. Senderoff	19 Israel Jacobs	27 Molly Sumner
5 Cilli Majerczyk	13 Leo Bloch	19 Rose Stranger Weiss	28 Rose Katz
5 Milton J. Molsky	13 David Gefter	20 Samuel H. Regan	28 Marilyn Lazarus
5 Phyllis Sandler	14 Brigitta Thea-Dora Andrews	20 Rebecca Evelyn Schenker	28 Dick Martin
5 Emanuel Saxe	14 Jeanne Aronson	20 Margaret Sternberg	28 Claire Morse
5 Freda Warshaw	14 Leon P. Bereano	21 Amir Landsman	29 Anna Haas
5 Jack Weintraub	14 Phoebe Nalitt	21 Abraham Rappaport	29 Abraham Kleinberg
6 Josef H. Griesheimer	14 Eleonor Lola Zeller	21 Benjamin Reinhart	30 David E. Lakritz
6 Milton Richman	15 Bernard Baron	22 Phyllis Rogofsky	31 Miriam Eisen
7 Anne Biegen	15 Himansu Chakrabarti	22 Bernard Statsky	31 Alan Gally
7 Irving Schneider	15 Sarah Hartman	23 Giza Hirsch	31 Morris Newman
7 Ethel Weasen	15 Gertrud Hirschmann	23 Dr. Oscar Richter	31 Myrtha Rosello
8 Fannie Bialek	15 Rose Hutter	23 Ruth L. Saxe	31 Rose Weintraub
8 William Mallin	15 Robert Morse	24 Bill Greenblatt	
8 Max Oppenheimer		24 Albert Spatz	



Family-Friendly Shabbat Service & Dinner!
Friday, December 13

5:00–5:30 p.m.: Tot Shabbat, Sanctuary

Take part in a spirited Shabbat service led by our clergy

5:30–6:00 p.m.: Dinner, Crafts & Free-Play
Kosher, nut-free, dairy dinner



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Do you like schmoozing
with your friends at RT?

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