



# The Bulletin Riverdale Temple

מִמְזֶרַח שָׁמֶשׁ עַד מְבֹאוֹ מִהֶלֶל 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 (see calendar on p. 2 for details)

### Fridays

- March 5 7:00 p.m. Shabbat Evening Service  
 March 12 7:00 p.m. Shabbat Evening Service  
 March 19 5:00 p.m. Pre-Passover Tot Shabbat  
 6:30 p.m. Pre-Passover SLC/Ruach Shabbat  
 March 26 7:00 p.m. Shabbat Evening Service

### Saturdays

- March 6 10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service  
 March 13 10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service  
 March 20 10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service  
 March 27 10:30 a.m. Shabbat Morning Service

**All services and events at Riverdale Temple (see p. 2) are being offered remotely via Zoom. Please consult the e-blasts for the latest information on Zoom links. To subscribe to our e-blasts, email [administrator@riverdaletemple.org](mailto:administrator@riverdaletemple.org).**



## SAVE THE DATE! PASSOVER IS COMING!

Join us for Riverdale Temple's Virtual Second Night Passover Seder

Led by Rabbi Thomas Gardner  
 Sunday evening, **March 28**

We welcome our congregants and members of the community.

The Zoom link will be announced via e-blasts closer to the actual date.

**Save the Date!**  
**April 25, 2021**  
**Riverdale Temple**  
**Outdoor Mitzvah Day**

Vol. 74

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No. 7

## THE RABBI'S COLUMN

Each night, both of my children get to pick a "lights out book," the last book read to them before they go to sleep. For the past three weeks, Izzy's book has been the same every night. It is called *Under the Sabbath Lamp*, and it is about a couple who light an oil lamp every Friday night instead of Shabbat candles. In the book, the lamp was passed down in the husband's family. It was purchased in Europe by his great-great-grandfather 150 years before. The endpage includes a picture of the author's Shabbat lamp, although he purchased his in an antique store.

A few weeks ago, when we did kiddush after services on Friday night, I commented on the kiddush cup I was using. Some years ago, I had found it in a pile of silver that my mother was planning on donating to Housing Works, a philanthropic thrift shop in Manhattan. I was astonished. "How can you donate this? This was probably grandpa's kiddush cup! It may have been in his family for hundreds of years!"

My mother, who had no idea how she had acquired the cup, pointed out that the little stars on the cup were five-pointed, not six. "It is probably not a kiddush cup at all," she said. I was unconvinced, and took the cup home, determined to use it as a kiddush cup anyway.

Some years later, I happened to turn the cup over, and printed on the bottom I saw words I had never noticed before. Stamped on the cup was "Made in Israel." I was probably right that it was a kiddush cup, but I was certainly wrong that the cup was hundreds of years old, and wrong that it had been passed down in my grandfather's family.

How did my mother end up with that cup? It could not have been a gift for my father's bar mitzvah, which happened well before there was a State of Israel. I can't imagine anyone thinking that anyone in my family needed a kiddush cup. It is possible that it was a gift for my or my brother's bar mitzvah, but I think it most likely that the cup was purchased by my mother's parents on their one and only trip to Israel, sometime in the seventies.

At first, I was disappointed that the cup was not a family heirloom. When I thought about it, I changed my mind. I thought of my grandfather in a shop in an Israel that was only 25 or 30 years old, looking over menorahs and candlesticks, and finally picking up this cup. I could see him deciding that this would be his kiddush cup from now on, that this would be his gift to himself to remind him of his trip. If you asked him what he hoped would become of the cup after he was gone, of course he would have said that he hoped that one of his grandchildren would use it for kiddush.

*continued on p. 3*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<i>17th of Adar 5781</i> <b>Noon Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Gardner: The Psalms (via Zoom)</b> <i>1</i>	<i>18th of Adar 5781</i> <b>4:00–5:30 pm Simcha Learning Center (via Zoom)</b> <i>2</i>	<i>19th of Adar 5781</i> <i>3</i>	<i>20th of Adar 5781</i> <b>4:00 pm Jewish Ethics with Rabbi Gardner (via Zoom)</b> <i>4</i>	<i>21st of Adar 5781</i> <b>7:00 pm Shabbat Evening Service (via Zoom)</b> <i>5</i>	<i>22nd of Adar 5781</i> <i>Parashat Ki Tisa</i> <b>10:30 am Shabbat Morning Service (via Zoom)</b> <i>6</i>
<i>23rd of Adar 5781</i> <b>9:30–11:00 am Simcha Learning Center In-person classes</b> <b>9:30–10:45 am Zoom classes</b> <i>7</i>	<i>24th of Adar 5781</i> <b>Noon Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Gardner: The Psalms (via Zoom)</b> <i>8</i>	<i>25th of Adar 5781</i> <b>4:00–5:30 pm Simcha Learning Center (via Zoom)</b> <i>9</i>	<i>26th of Adar 5781</i> <b>7:30 pm WRJ Book Club (via Zoom)</b> <i>10</i>	<i>27th of Adar 5781</i> <b>4:00 pm Jewish Ethics with Rabbi Gardner (via Zoom)</b> <b>7:30 pm Executive Committee Meeting (via Zoom)</b> <i>11</i>	<i>28th of Adar 5781</i> <b>7:00 pm Shabbat Evening Service (via Zoom)</b> <i>12</i>	<i>29th of Adar 5781</i> <i>Parashat Vayakhel-Pekudei</i> <b>10:30 am Shabbat Morning Service (via Zoom)</b> <i>13</i>
<i>1st of Nisan 5781</i> <b>9:30–11:00 am Simcha Learning Center In-person classes</b> <b>9:30–10:45 am Zoom classes</b> <i>14</i>	<i>2nd of Nisan 5781</i> <b>Noon Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Gardner: The Psalms (via Zoom)</b> <i>15</i>	<i>3rd of Nisan 5781</i> <b>4:00–5:30 pm Simcha Learning Center (via Zoom)</b> <i>16</i>	<i>4th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>17</i>	<i>5th of Nisan 5781</i> <b>4:00 pm Jewish Ethics with Rabbi Gardner (via Zoom)</b> <b>7:30 pm Board of Trustees Meeting (via Zoom)</b> <i>18</i>	<i>6th of Nisan 5781</i> <b>5:00 pm Pre-Passover Tot Shabbat (hybrid)</b> <b>6:30 pm Pre-Passover SLC/Ruach Shabbat (hybrid)</b> <i>19</i>	<i>7th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>Parashat Vayikra</i> <b>10:30 am Shabbat Morning Service (via Zoom)</b> <b>1:00 pm Chavurah after services (via Zoom)</b> <i>20</i>
<i>8th of Nisan 5781</i> <b>9:30–11:00 am Simcha Learning Center In-person classes</b> <b>9:30–10:45 am Zoom classes</b> <b>4:00 pm An Afternoon of Passover Songs with the Sharett-Singer Family (via Zoom)</b> <i>21</i>	<i>9th of Nisan 5781</i> <b>Noon Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Gardner: The Psalms (via Zoom)</b> <i>22</i>	<i>10th of Nisan 5781</i> <b>4:00–5:30 pm Simcha Learning Center (via Zoom)</b> <i>23</i>	<i>11th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>24</i>	<i>12th of Nisan 5781</i> <b>4:00 pm Jewish Ethics with Rabbi Gardner (via Zoom)</b> <i>25</i>	<i>13th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>Purim</i> <b>7:00 pm Shabbat Evening Service (via Zoom)</b> <i>26</i>	<i>14th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>Erev Pesach</i> <i>Parashat Tzav</i> <b>10:30 am Shabbat Morning Service (via Zoom)</b> <i>27</i>
<i>15th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>Pesach I</i> <b>9:30–11:00 am Simcha Learning Center In-person classes</b> <b>9:30–10:45 am Zoom classes</b> <b>ca. 6:30 pm Virtual Second Night Passover Seder (via Zoom)</b> <i>28</i>	<i>16th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>Pesach II</i> <b>No Noon Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Gardner</b> <i>29</i>	<i>17th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>Pesach III</i> <b>4:00–5:30 pm Simcha Learning Center (via Zoom)</b> <i>30</i>	<i>18th of Nisan 5781</i> <i>Pesach IV</i> <i>31</i>			

# MARCH

Hybrid: in person and on Zoom

I have four kiddush cups. One was a gift from the brotherhood of Congregation Rodeph Sholom when I was a bar mitzvah, one I bought in Israel, one I inherited from my brother, and the other is the one that I think my grandfather bought in Israel. The one I got from my brother I will give to his daughter when she gets married. One of the others I will give to Runia when she gets married, and one to Izzy when he does (Gd willing they all do, and I am here to see it). The last I will take with me, perhaps, to the nursing home. What makes a family heirloom? You don't need 150 years. You only need a single generation.

No doubt the author of *Under the Sabbath Lamp* wishes that his lamp had been in his family for generations. He can still pass it down to his children, and it will be a family heirloom.

When we pass down a kiddush cup, or a seder plate, or a Shabbat lamp, what we are really passing down is Judaism. My grandfather

would have wanted me to own the cup, but what he really would have wanted was for me to *use* the cup. And so I do. I hope that one of my children will some day use the cup, and perhaps even some future grandchildren. In my imagination, I picture a grandchild showing the cup to a small child and saying, "Do you see this cup? It has been in our family for generations. It is a family heirloom." And so it will be.

I wish everyone a wonderful Passover! When you sit down at your seder, whether you are with others or online, look at your seder plate, your kiddush cup, your candlesticks. May you use them for many years, in good health! And when you can no longer use them, may they be passed down to people you love, along with your Judaism.

—Rabbi Tom Gardner

## THE CANTOR'S COLUMN

Shalom Chaveirim,

Simchah rabah, simchah rabah aviv higia' Pesach ba! Great joy, great joy, spring is upon us, and Passover is coming! Passover starts on Saturday evening, March 27, 2021.

Passover is a major holiday in Judaism, one of the *Shalosh Regalim*, the Three Festivals in which the Jews traveled by foot to Jerusalem thousands of years ago. The major holidays are Sukkot, Passover, and Shavuot. The best part about Passover for me is the Seder—the traditional ritual service with a festive meal for the first two nights of Passover.

To celebrate a Seder, you will need a few key items: wine, matzah, and a cup of wine for the prophet Elijah. You will also need a Seder plate, which can range from super fancy to a do-it-yourself one with a shank bone, egg, bitter herbs, charoset, karpas, and a piece of lettuce. These items symbolize different aspects of the Passover story. You will need a Haggadah, the book that guides you through the Seder. There are many versions of the Haggadah, and I invite you to choose one that you like and purchase it beforehand so you can be prepared.

The Hebrew word "Seder" means "order." And indeed, there is a very specific order to it: we start with blessing the wine, washing the hands, dipping vegetables into salt water, and breaking the middle matzah. Half of it is the afikomen that gets hidden. Then we tell the story of the Exodus from Egypt, which is really an interactive reading of a rabbinic discussion about how to remember the Exodus.

At many Seders, people around the table each read a section from the Haggadah. Learning the Passover songs is a great way to prepare for the Seder. After the storytelling there are a few other traditions, such as more hand washing, eating matzah, then maror, then a matzah with a maror sandwich, and then dinner! There are many unique traditions for Passover. For example, Sephardic Jews are allowed to eat legumes in their dinner, such as rice and beans. After dinner, there is a search for afikoman! And it concludes with the grace after meal, opening the door for Elijah, some more wine, and, of course, singing!

Singing is a large part of the Seder, and since I was a very young girl, singing at Passover was my favorite part. Now that spring is coming and the weather is getting warmer, I am overjoyed that we will be able to gather together safely in-person outside, keeping socially distant. On Friday, March 19, at 6:30 p.m., we will have our Pre-Passover Ruach Shabbat service outside on the plaza. The Ruach Band will be back, and we will be jamming to our favorite Shabbat and Passover tunes. I am hoping and looking forward to seeing you all at our hybrid service, when you can choose to join the service either in-person outside on the plaza or via Zoom, from the comfort of your home. Whatever you choose, please join us!

There will also be a Passover special musical treat on Sunday, March 21, at 4:00 p.m. called "An Afternoon of Passover Songs with the Sharett-Singer Family." This will be on Zoom only. I will be joined by my beloved sister, Gili Sharett, who is a professional bassoon player. Gili will play and sing and share some beloved memories from our Passover Seders. I am also happy to host my wonderful brother-in-law, Cantor Daniel Singer of the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue, who will also sing and play some Passover songs. And who knows, you might get a surprise performance by our three little children. Please join us to refresh yourselves with beautiful and fun Passover songs, and we will help you to be ready for your Seder!

Happy Pesach and have a great Seder!

L'hitraot,

—Cantor Inbal Sharett-Singer

**TOT SHABBAT**  
Pre-Passover Tot Shabbat  
Friday, March 19, 5:00 p.m.  
In person on Temple Plaza and via Zoom

## THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The rabbi's article in last month's bulletin got me thinking about our prayer book and prayers. Prayer is an institution in Judaism, and reciting prayers from our prayer book is something we take for granted as the major way we express ourselves in our communal worship. Judaism, like Catholicism and Islam, uses a set of fixed prayers, many of which can be recited on one's own, but most are recited commonly in a group, as a group. The oldest fixed prayer is the *Shema*, which was repeated twice a day in ancient times—old indeed.

The next major development in Jewish prayer occurred during the Babylonian Exile (586–538 BCE). People were unable to perform their sacrificial rites in the Temple, so they used prayer as a substitute. Jews would get together three times a day, corresponding to the three daily sacrifices: *Ma'ariv* (evening), *Shacharit* (morning), and *Minchah* (afternoon). After their return from exile, the Israelites continued this practice of three-times-a-day prayer, and the men of the Great Assembly composed a set of basic prayers that covered just about everything one would ever want to pray about. These prayers are called the *Shemoneh Esrei* (which means “18”), the *Amidah* (standing), or *Tefilah* (the prayer). Amazingly, we are still reciting them more than 2,500 years later.

The first printed prayer book was the *Mahzor Minhag Roma* (a prayer book of the Roman rite), printed in 1485 by Israel Nathan Soncino. In the Ashkenazi tradition, this prayer book contained only holiday prayers. (The Sephardic prayer book contained the entire liturgy—daily, Sabbath, and festivals.) The destruction of these books during the Inquisition was almost total, resulting in very few extant copies. But printing prayer books has continued apace.

This very brief history of Jewish prayers and prayer books brings us to today, as we still use books of fixed prayer and recite very old prayers in a fixed order. Most of us who attend Shabbat services do not give much thought to this practice regularly, but in modern times, there has been some pushback around this. Some modern Americans have a problem with praying from a prayer

book because they have a problem with formulaic prayer, that is, prayer that has to take place at set times and has a one-size-fits-all set of words. In America, there has been a bias toward spontaneous prayer, and most American-grown religions opt for prayers that are motivated by one's individual relationship with the Deity. There is an assumption that if prayer is to be truly meaningful, it must be spontaneous and deeply personal. This view of prayer as free, uncompelled, and individual comes from Protestantism.

So why have fixed prayers? I am grateful to a class I took with Professor Benjamin D. Sommer at JTS for helping me to understand the meanings behind this practice. Judaism believes that one must recite the prayers, even if one cannot pray the prayers. A fixed prayer whose wording is given to us expresses two values: the value of humility and the value of self-discipline. The point of these prayers is not to change Gd, but to change ourselves. These prayers tell us what we ought to want. We ask for *parnasah*, a basic livelihood, not wealth. We are not asking that our desires be fulfilled. We know what we want; the prayers tell us what we need.

Prayer is also a form of self-limitation. By being required to recite specific prayers at specific times, we are surrendering some of our freedom. When we say prayers in unison, we are reminded that it is not the speaker who is important, but, rather, what is spoken. This is a gesture of submission to Gd. Our culture does not respect submission, so Jewish prayer will always be a challenge. But let us continue to pray, despite this, and understand that there are times when it is good to subordinate our egos to something greater.

—Dr. Ronna Weber, President

## SIMCHA LEARNING CENTER

As the sun began to shine earlier each day and our days began to feel longer, we ushered in at the end of the month the festive holiday of Purim. Although traditionally at the Simcha Learning Center the school sets out to create a human-size megillah from scratch that each grade participates in painting, this year we utilized a megillah made by the children last year from our school megillah reading.

The remote students narrated the megillah via Zoom, while the children who attended in person at Riverdale Temple put their faces in the place holes of the characters. The children, both remote and in person, cheered Esther and Mordechai and booed Haman. We all enjoyed a song session led by the cantor, and the kids watched a Purim-themed magic show over Zoom by Joshy the Magician.

Although we were not able to have a typical carnival this year, the in-person children enjoyed social-distancing carnival games that included fill the hamantaschen with jam (colorful individualized balls the kids had to paddle into a barrel), arranged the pictures of the story of Purim in order, tossed bean bags into Haman's “mouth” (each child got and kept the bouncy balls they used throughout the games), and found Mordechai in Shushan based on Where's Waldo.

Prizes and fun were had by all. As we move into the month of March, we will focus on the importance of Passover and exploring the road from slavery to freedom.

—Judy Weinberg, Education and Engagement Specialist

## Bulletin Board

Temple activities will take place via Zoom or Facebook Live unless noted otherwise. Please consult the calendar on p. 2 and the temple website at <https://riverdaletemple.org>, and also check e-blasts for updates.



Go to <https://urj.org> for announcements, news and press releases, a calendar of virtual programs and events, and general information.

Copy for the next issue of *The Bulletin* is due by **March 15**. You can email it directly to [administrator@riverdaletemple.org](mailto:administrator@riverdaletemple.org) (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](http://www.riverdaletemple.org). You can support Riverdale Temple by buying a mug with our logo for just \$10.

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Bookkeeper	0 or 1	6
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### 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](http://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: [resourcecenter@ushmm.org](mailto:resourcecenter@ushmm.org).

### The temple needs a volunteer accountant!

If you are a qualified accountant, please contact Joanne Heyman, treasurer of Riverdale Temple, at 718-548-3800.

### 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: [administrator@riverdaletemple.org](mailto:administrator@riverdaletemple.org) or [president@riverdaletemple.org](mailto:president@riverdaletemple.org)**

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](http://www.jbilibrary.org)

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## **NURSERY SCHOOL NEWS**

This past month was a short but busy one. We have been enjoying all of the snow around the building, built snowmen, and had snowball throwing contests—we even painted the snow with watercolors. Some teachers even brought snow into their classrooms to play with in their sensory tables.

The Twos have been exploring colors. They are creating their very own color books. They also learned about the Purim story, making silly hats and singing fun songs. They made groggers to use during the Megillah reading, when they heard Haman's name. Each also made their very own Mishloach Manot bags to take home and dress up on Purim day in their best costumes.

The Three-Year-Olds also learned about the Purim holiday. The children have been learning the story through puppet shows, and soon they will be able to do their own puppet show for their teachers and parents. Some of the teachers baked hamantaschen for the children to take home to their families, and everyone made noisy groggers, too. They dressed up on Purim and enjoyed a special Purim snack together.

All of our Four-Year-Olds are learning about water. They are doing many experiments to explore this subject: What is ice? And how does it melt? What is rain? They are learning about the water cycle and the different types of bodies of water. They are also learning about animals that live in the Arctic, and how they keep warm in the cold water. Our Fours had Wacky Tacky day on February 26, so we looked forward to seeing the children in their craziest outfits.

### **Enrollment for 2021–2022 School Year**

We have been having many virtual tours for the 2021–2022 school year. We are currently enrolling Twos and Threes. If you have friends who are interested, please tell them to call the school at 718-796-0335 or email me at [nsdirector.rtns@gmail.com](mailto:nsdirector.rtns@gmail.com).

We have been getting many applications for next year, and we do have very limited space.

### **Afterschool**

We currently have two afterschool enrichment classes, Young Explorers on Wednesdays and Super Soccer Stars Monday through Thursday. Each class is done by pod, and we are very excited to offer these specials to our children.

### **Camp 2021**

We are very excited to have camp again this summer. It will be five weeks long for children ages 2 to 5. It will begin on June 28 and run through July 30. This year there will be three groups, one for each age. There will be lots of projects, water play, and many more fun activities. Each week we will have a different theme, and many “surprise” specials. If you are interested, please contact me at [nsdirector.rtns@gmail.com](mailto:nsdirector.rtns@gmail.com).

### **Playground Fundraiser Update**

We are excited to announce that we have almost reached our goal to begin work on phase 1 of our playground project. Over Super Bowl weekend we raised \$2,500 playing Super Bowl Squares, and our winners won some great prizes. We will be having a parent cocktail night the first week in March, and we have many more fundraisers to come. If you would like to donate to our playground fundraiser, you can do that on our website: [www.riverdaletemplens.org](http://www.riverdaletemplens.org) through the pay/donate tab (in the notes, write “playground fundraiser”).

—Alexandra Abikzer, Director



## WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM (SISTERHOOD)

Dear Friends,

March is starting to turn normal. The snow is melting. It is starting to get warmer and families are starting to discuss Passover plans. I understand life is still far from normal, but I am trying to remain optimistic. It saddens me that WRJ will not be able to hold its Annual Women's Seder. I have to remind myself that WRJ has to rely on "baby steps" or small steps forward that show our determination to embrace 2021 on a positive note.

Every month I ask for help from our members. I know that everyone is busy, but, please, I cannot do it alone. WRJ would like to thank the following members for their help with Mishloach Manot: Susan Birnbaum, Shelley Ast, Sherrill Spatz, Rochelle Greenfield, Fay Statsky, Helen Krim, Ronna Weber, Arline Davis, and Linda Eisenkraft—we can always count on you! A very special Thank-You to Rachel Radna, who once again made this event happen. I hope by now that you have enjoyed your "Goodie Bag." WRJ wanted to acknowledge the following congregants who helped bring these gifts to the congregation

(see below). Please let us know if we omitted anyone's name in error.

Locally, our Book Club will be meeting on Wednesday, March 10, at 7:30 pm. The book selection, brought to our attention by Susan Cooper, is *The Third Daughter* by Talia Carner (see box below). If you are interested in knowing more (or receiving the link), please contact Ronni Stolzenberg at [rstoelzenberg@optimum.net](mailto:rstoelzenberg@optimum.net).

The National Chapter of WRJ is sponsoring a Jewish studies program on infertility in the ancient world. If you are interested in attending, please register at the following link:

[https://huc-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_6gfTLHkoRRqgHCobNkyO5A](https://huc-edu.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6gfTLHkoRRqgHCobNkyO5A)

Happy spring, and should you have any questions or suggestions for events, please contact me.

—Joanne Heyman, President

The next meeting of the Book Club will take place on Wednesday, March 10, at 7:30 pm. The book selection, brought to our attention by Susan Cooper, is *The Third Daughter* by Talia Carner. It is available from Amazon in all formats, including audio, at:

[www.amazon.com/dp/B07H4XHFQ2/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?\\_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1](http://www.amazon.com/dp/B07H4XHFQ2/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1)

According to Pam Jenoff, *New York Times* bestselling author, "Talia Carner ably illuminates a little-known piece of history: the sex trafficking of young women from Russia to South America in the late 19th century. Thoroughly researched and vividly rendered, this is an important and unforgettable story of exploitation and empowerment that will leave you both shaken and inspired."

## MEN OF REFORM JUDAISM (MEN'S CLUB)

As I was thinking of the Purim holiday this year, I had many different feelings about it. First of all, I was reminded that it was around the time of Purim last year that our world was beginning to change dramatically.

We were experiencing a global pandemic, which was affecting millions of people—friends, neighbors, relatives, colleagues of all ages—and the impact of this was terribly frightening. Our country seemed powerless to combat the challenge of protecting its citizens from doom. In fact, our chosen leader was making light of the situation, saying that one day it would magically disappear and be over. As the virus began to spread and hospitals filled up with patients who could not be saved, each day felt like a nightmare.

In fact, it felt a bit like an attack on humanity from an unknown foe seeking our destruction.

And then, my thoughts turned to Purim. We had just celebrated a victory of the Jewish people over the wicked Haman and how Mordechai galvanized the Jewish people, convincing them to fast, repent, and pray. Mordechai inspired his people to be strong and unafraid. He led them and prepared them for the task that lay ahead. My thoughts then turned to what we were experiencing

here and how we needed someone like Mordechai to lead this nation as deaths were piling up.

Fast forward to November as our nation faced an election that was likely to be the most important in modern history. Against every effort to defeat a modern hero, he emerged victorious. Now, as we celebrate the second Purim during the great pandemic, we have cause for celebration of this victory. Each day we are bearing witness to new leadership that is transformational. May it bring us a full recovery!

Chag Sameach.

—Steven Rosenfeld, President

## SOCIAL ACTION

THANK YOU! To everyone who donated canned/boxed groceries for the special Purim Food Drive, we extend appreciation for your kindness and caring about others in our community. The Kingsbridge Heights Community Center Pantry was the beneficiary of your donations.

**Help for People in Texas:** Across all of Texas, people need water and food. Here are some suggested charities: The Bridge Homeless Recovery Center, Family Eldercare, ECHO (Ending Community Homelessness Coalition), Feeding Texas, Houston Food Bank, Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley, Central Texas Food Bank, North Texas Food Bank South Texas Food Bank, Food Bank of West Central Texas, and Southeast Texas Food Bank.

**Mitzvah Day:** On April 25, Riverdale Temple will sponsor an Outdoor Mitzvah Day. In looking ahead, here are some ways to prepare for the event:

1. Sort, bag, and label men's, women's, and children's clothing for Big Brothers Big Sisters collection.
2. Purchase and donate baby diapers and wipes for The Women's Shelter on the Concourse.

3. Purchase new white men's socks or donate very clean, slightly used men's socks for the Midnight Run. In addition, if you have extra travel-size soap, shampoo, toothpaste, toothbrushes, combs, etc., we shall also collect them to help the homeless, also through The Midnight Run.

4. Donate healthful canned and boxed food for Refugees (Hearts and Homes).

5. Donate funds to help Religious School students make little plants as gifts for women at the Shelter and for Refugees.

6. There will be a special Religious School activity outdoors for Mitzvah Day.

7. Making flower plant gifts.

8. Please contact Cristin Messinger or Frances Segan to volunteer to help at the Outdoor Mitzvah Day.

NOTE: COLLECTIONS to be made after Passover. Please see the April bulletin for specific dates and times.

The committee and I wish everyone a healthy and sweet Passover!  
—Frances Segan, Ph.D., Chair, Social Action Committee

### **Riverdale Temple Cares**

Are you lonely or feeling isolated during the pandemic? Are you or a family member ill? Riverdale Temple is here to help.

The temple's Caring Committee offers support during difficult times by calling members and their families to talk—about your concerns or just to have a friendly chat. Good news, such as a milestone birthday or a birth in the family or other simcha? We'd like to share in your joy!

If you or someone you know would welcome a caring call, please reach out to Muriel (917-353-6843) or Beth ([bethfertig@gmail.com](mailto:bethfertig@gmail.com)). If you prefer, you may contact Rabbi Gardner (718-548-3800).

## ADULT EDUCATION

It is hard to believe that, after a full year of dealing with the constraints of COVID-19, this amount of time has passed. With the coming of March 2021, we take note of the fact that our lives have been supported by online conversations and events. Hopefully by June, three months from now, we will find ourselves with new freedoms in our lives because of the COVID-19 vaccinations.



At Adult Education, we continue to plan online events, and we note that such online options will be added to how we can communicate when learning. So, what are we looking forward to present for you this spring? Some events are still in the planning stages, including a possible program in March.

What has been confirmed is a talk on April 7 at 4:00 p.m. by Rabbi Bill Tepper entitled "Ordeal of the Deaf and Disabled during the Holocaust," in commemoration of Yom Hashoah, which is on April 8. Confirmed for May 12 at 7:30 p.m. is a YIVO lecture by Alex Weiser, the director of public programs

at the YIVO. Alex, who is a talented contemporary composer (he was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize), will speak on the topic "Three Jewish Composers: Mahler, Schoenberg, and Bernstein." He will be examining each composer's work through the lens of their Jewish identity.

More is in the works. Stay tuned via the weekly temple e-blasts and the temple bulletin.

### **Study with the Rabbi**

Mondays, noon–1:00 p.m.

Lunch and Learn: The Psalms

Thursdays, 4:00–5:00 p.m.

Jewish Ethics

Check the weekly email for the Zoom link to the classes.

—Dr. Yvette Marrin, Chair, Adult Education Committee

The **Chavurah** will meet on **Saturday, March 20**, at 1:00 p.m., to read and discuss the Torah portion *Vayikra*, the first reading in the book of Leviticus. This portion describes, in detail, the laws of animal sacrifice and explains the different types of ritual sacrifice.

This is the type of reading that leads modern Jews to scratch their heads. Why is Adonai so specific about what kinds of offerings

Jews can give more than 2,000 years later and have no interest in returning to? Let's talk about it. We will also discuss Passover, which begins at sundown on March 27. All are free to join in the discussion. Just use the link in the upcoming e-blast.

—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 Fund, Soviet Émigré Fund, Charles Tenenbaum Fund, Torah Repair Fund, Youth Activities Fund.

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**The Mishloach Manot donors are listed on p. 11.**

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*The Departed Whom We Now Remember: March Yahrzeit Observances*

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5 Benjamin H. Patek	15 Mary Hollander	25 Roy Leslie
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6 George J. Harren	16 Clara Wechsler	27 Bertha Feit
6 Lillian Jaffe	17 Alvin Fein	27 Lawrence Gardner
6 Rose Kaminer	17 James R. Geldert	27 Ronald Rubinstein
6 Joseph Kay	17 Philip Rabinowitz	28 Victoria Adler
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## KOL NIDRE APPEAL

Dear Congregants and Friends,

We are reaching out to you today to continue Riverdale Temple's Kol Nidre Appeal, our major fundraiser for the year. We are committed to strengthening the bonds of our congregation and moving forward with spiritual, educational, and fun programming. Your donations to the Kol Nidre Appeal are vital to our mission.

Support the future of Riverdale Temple. Please contribute today if you have not yet done so.

You can make payments easily and safely online:

<https://ybillc.isecuresites.com/quickpay/rivtem>

or you can print and then mail the completed form to Riverdale Temple, 4545 Independence Ave., Bronx, NY 10471.

Thank you for your spirit and your generosity.

—Dr. Ronna Weber, President



r-Kive is a new social media platform dedicated to exploring music from the past in a safe, online environment (coming soon to r-kive.com)

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