

Israel: Through Our Eyes



Hatikvah

As long as within our hearts
The Jewish soul sings,
As long as forward to the East
To Zion, looks the eye –
Our hope is not yet lost,
It is two thousand years old,
To be a free people in our land
The land of Zion and Jerusalem.

כל עוד בלֵבב פְּנִימָה
נִפְשׁ יְהוּדִי הוֹמָה,
וּלְפָאֵתִי מִזְרַח קֹדִימָה,
עֵין לְצִיּוֹן צוֹפֶינָה;
עוֹד לֹא אֶבְדָּה תְּקוּנָתוֹ,
הַתְּקוּהָ בֵּת שְׁנוֹת אֲלָפִים,
לִהְיוֹת עִם חֻפְשֵׁי בְּאֶרֶצֵנוּ,
אֶרֶץ צִיּוֹן וִירוּשָׁלַיִם.

Introduction by Rabbi Goldsmith

Amidst all the complexity of Israel, amidst the headlines and memes and debates, it is helpful to remember the purity and simplicity of Israel's *raison d'être*: to be a free people in our land. This summer bulletin seeks to bring our attention to this core of Israel's being. With articles and reflections from staff, faculty, clergy, and congregants, you will find and rediscover the many ways that Israel touches our hearts, inspires our Jewish connection, and gives us hope. Inevitably, these articles also touch on the many challenges facing Israel. They touch on the challenges because they are very real and we need to wrestle with them, to face them. But challenges do not negate a country, do not end a love or a longing. Indeed, challenges can give us a meaningful way to engage with the country that counts half the world's Jews as its citizens.

I hope that you find this bulletin as inspiring as I do. I hope that it gives you a sense of *Tikvah*, of hope.

Israel - A Challenge. Jane Dubro, Youth Activities & Program Director

What do you think of when you hear the word "Israel"? Is it the Israeli-Palestinian conflict? Hamas? The Iron Dome? Or perhaps, a family vacation? Bar Mitzvah trip? Great falafel?



Whatever Israel means for you, I would like to challenge you to learn more over the coming year as we turn our focus at CEW to the Land of Israel, the State of Israel, and the People of Israel - past, present, and future.

Whatever your knowledge is and whatever your perceptions are, there is no time like the present to become more informed and learn new things about Israel. Discover new cities or tourist sites, in person or virtually. Learn more about Israel's history, follow current events or investigate Israel's high-tech industry.

Taste new foods - have you ever had *shakshuka*? Watch Israeli movies or television series, or study Hebrew. The possibilities are endless!

This coming year, CEW will explore a wide range of these Israel-related themes. We will also delve into the intricacies of the political situation in Israel and learn to distinguish between myth and fact when it comes to the rhetoric and propaganda that swirls around Israel and the Middle East. There are so many catch phrases and clichés that we hear every day. What is correct?

(Continued on pg. 3)

Emanu-El Family Trip to Israel!

August 2022

See page 13 for details.



It's Not Just About the Falafel. Naomi Fabes, Director of Education

People are often shocked to hear my answer to the question, "How many times have you been to Israel?" I pause briefly and look up to the sky while my fingers quickly extend upright, counting each unique set of circumstances that brought me halfway across the world to a place that most people will never visit in their lifetime.



Naomi (left), 5 years old, first trip.

Seventeen times. That's 375 hours on an airplane, approximately 192,000 miles, hundreds of photographs, and even more memories that I carry with me each day. I've stood atop the Golan Heights learning about her strategic military importance; I've welcomed in Shabbat in the mystical city of Tzfat; I've marvelled at the breathtaking array of flowers in the Bahai Gardens in Haifa; I've satiated my appetite in the burgeoning culinary scene that is Tel Aviv; I've gone scuba-diving alongside dolphins in the Red Sea; I've stuffed a note filled with my hopes and dreams into the crevices of the Western Wall; I've confronted the horror and pain of the Jewish people in the halls of Yad VaShem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center; I've harvested kumquats at a kibbutz; I've admired the lanterns in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, Christianity's holiest site; I've climbed Masada in the early hours of the morning to watch the sun rise over the Dead Sea.



Naomi's father in the IDF.

There are a handful of reasons as to why I continue to choose Israel as my travel destination. I grew up with an Israeli father who nurtured a strong sense of Zionism within our home through music, food, and cinema, along with countless family vacations to his homeland.

I became very involved in Jewish life in college, affording me the opportunity to travel as a participant on a variety of organized trips, from Birthright to the AJC's Project Interchange Student Leader Seminar. I chose to spend a summer studying Hebrew at the University of Haifa in an effort to learn the language of my people.

I've visited my sister in Tel Aviv who chose to raise her three beautiful children in the Jewish peoples' ancestral homeland. And right before the pandemic, I celebrated my mom's Israeli citizenship as we welcomed my parents into their new home just a few minutes away from the sandy beaches of Tel Aviv. Israel is the backdrop for some of the most cherished moments in my life, and not just because they serve a mean falafel. My connection to her goes deeper than any of these memories can fully express, but we have to go back almost ninety years to fully understand why.

My grandmother, Zahava, was born in the Polish town of Rovno in the early 20th Century. In 1933, at the very young age of 17, she sensed that her Jewish community was in serious peril. Guided by her dream of a Jewish state, she left her family to move to Palestine where she served as one of the *chalutzim* (pioneers) who built the state of Israel. My grandfather, Joseph, felt compelled to follow the woman he loved, and inspired by her courage and conviction, chose to leave his family behind and join Zahava on an adventure of a lifetime. Their friends and family thought they were crazy, but in the end, it was their dream and love that saved them. Their parents and their combined ten siblings wouldn't survive Nazi Europe. Because of Israel, my grandparents were given a second chance at life. They chose to dedicate that life to cultivating the desolate deserts of Tel Aviv into an oasis of culture, art, technology, and democracy. Soon after, my father was born and like every Israeli, he served in the IDF where he defended Israel in the Yom Kippur War.



Zahava & Joseph built a new life together in Israel.



Naomi & Sherman at the aquarium in Eilat.

I never met Zahava or Joseph, as they both passed away before I was born, but I feel them from the moment that airplane touches ground at Ben Gurion Airport. My eyes fill with tears every time I gaze at the skyline of Tel Aviv, the rich, cosmopolitan city that my grandparents helped build from nothing. My heart fills with pride every time I see an IDF soldier, knowing that my father risked his life to protect the people of Israel and her right to exist. My soul fills with comfort every time I breathe in the Israeli air that breathed life into my grandparents, my father, my sister and her children, and now my mother. Because without this air, without this land, without this dream, I simply would not be here today.



2125 Westchester Ave East
Rye, New York 10580
www.c-e-w.org
Phone: 914-967-4382

Staff Directory

Howard J. Goldsmith Rabbi	ext. 1013 hgoldsmith@c-e-w.org
Meredith Stone Cantor	ext. 1019 mstone@c-e-w.org
Naomi Fabes Director of Education	ext. 1015 nfabes@c-e-w.org
Jane Dubro Youth Activities & Program Director	ext. 1021 jdubro@c-e-w.org
Abbie Levitt Temple Administrator	ext. 1018 alevitt@c-e-w.org
Denise Eisler Senior Accountant	ext. 1014 deisler@c-e-w.org
Jamie Villarie Director of Technology, Facilities & Events	ext. 1026 jvillarie@c-e-w.org
Tal Drori Religious School Administrator & Rental Coordinator	ext. 1012 tdrori@c-e-w.org
Dan O'Connor Administrative Assistant	ext. 1011 doconnor@c-e-w.org

Emeriti Directory

Daniel S. Wolk Rabbi Emeritus	ext. 1011 dswolk@gmail.com
Marcie Aiuvalasit Religious Educator Emerita	ext. 1012 maiuvalasit@c-e-w.org

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Did you know?

Israel is the only country in the world that uses kosher glue for its postage stamps.

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What isn't? How can we gain a deep and accurate understanding of these complex issues and how can we support Israel to the best of our ability?

As a graduate of the Qushiyot Israel Education Fellowship program, a year-long program that introduces educators to new and innovative ways to teach about Israel, I look forward to sharing my passion for Israel with you. We will focus on the importance of education and engagement, without shying away from issues we consider difficult or uncomfortable. Together we will dig deep, leave no stone unturned and, ultimately, learn how to advocate for Israel in any setting, whether among friends or adversaries.

As Dr. Donniel Hartman of the Shalom Hartman Institute said, "We need to listen. We need to hear people's criticism and concerns. We need to believe that they are worthy of a response and then respond both through the power of our ideas but also with the courage to admit when we are wrong. We need to reclaim the moral high ground, not through self-congratulation but through policies that are worthy of us. When we do so, I believe that our moral arguments will be heard."

I hope you will join us for this journey of education and exploration. I look forward to sharing my love of Israel and my desire to know and experience more as we learn about Israel in a way that allows us to be proud of and support our Jewish homeland.



The Best Security is Peace. Howard Goldsmith, Rabbi

Two experiences shaped my understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. They both happened on my second trip to Israel, a trip that I took after college with a backpack and bus pass.

I was staying at a youth hostel in the (VERY HOT) city of Tiberias. These days, Tiberias has numerous big hotels and is filled with tourists. Back in 2000, there was only one or two big hotels and so the city felt more provincial and less touristy. One morning, after a breakfast of pastry and coffee, I headed out on a tour of the northern Galilee and the Golan Heights. There were about eight of us on this tour, one other solo traveler, a few couples, and one family. The guide was a classic Israeli tough-guy. He had served in the Six Day War and in the Yom Kippur War. He had lots of kids who were grown and had done their military service. He was a guide because he loved Israel. He was a guide because he helped to build Israel.



But I also know that the best security, the most lasting security, would come with peace, real peace. So, I suppose that I would support an exchange of the Golan for peace.”

A few months later the second intifada broke out and the talks with Syria ended. Then the Syrian civil war broke out. Now no one is talking about giving Syria the Golan. But his voice still rings in my head “the best security... would come with peace.”

A few days later I was again in a hot hostel, this one in the old city of Akko. The old city is the Arab part of this mixed town – a beautiful mixture of Arab bazaar, Crusader remains, and Mediterranean breezes. That afternoon, some street food I had eaten in Tiberias caught up with me and I got sick. The Arab owner of the hostel told me that he had an air conditioned room in the hotel he owned next door and that I should move there. I thanked him profusely and by the morning I was feeling much better. I found him at the front desk of the hostel in the morning and took out a credit card to pay for the room. He wouldn't hear of it – I was his guest and he was happy to take care of me. The humanity of that kindness was overwhelming.



The view from Mt. Bental.

We stopped first at Capernaum, a site on the northern shores of the Galilee with two ancient synagogues. It is an important Christian site as the gospels tell of Jesus' ministry in that city. We

then continued up to the Golan Heights. Part way up we stopped at an abandoned Syrian bunker and the guide told us his story of fighting on the Golan during the Six Day War. Then, at the top of Mount Bental we looked down into the abandoned Syrian city of Quneitra and watched Israeli Druze selling their apples over the border to Syrian Druze. We toured some more before concluding at a lookout over the Lebanese border. What had been an open crossing called The Good Fence was now closed due to Hezbollah activity but the guide told us how, for years, Lebanese locals had crossed the fence into Israel for daily work.

On the drive back to Tiberias I asked the guide if he thought Israel should give the Golan to Syria for peace – the year 2000 was a time of negotiations between the Assad regime and Israel. All Israelis had staked out passionate positions on the issue. This grizzled old warrior instinctively gazed on the hills to our east, gazed at the road and said, “I worry about returning them because they have been so vital for our security.” I live on a kibbutz near the base of the Golan and I fear Syrian soldiers back in those abandoned bunkers.



The Old City of Akko.

I've had countless experiences in Israel since that solo trip in 2000. Some of them were heartwarming and hopeful. Others were distressing and discouraging. It is a complicated land filled with paradox, beauty and ugliness, spirituality and secularism, impiety, cooperation, and conflict. But for all of my experiences, these two remain formative: a hope for peace and the utter humanity of those who live between the Jordan and the Mediterranean. When I get discouraged, these are my touchstones.

When I see glimmers of hope, these touchstones shine ever more brightly.

The Imposter Bride. Meredith Stone, Cantor

In my last bulletin article, I wrote about the first *yahrzeit* of a family member who died last year, my Israeli brother-in-law, Arnon. As we shared stories and memories of Arnon at a small ceremony, it occurred to me that because of the antiquated and *meshugenah* marriage laws in Israel, Arnon was actually MY husband. Sort of. Well, not exactly.



Let me explain: The story took place many years ago when I was 20 years old and studying Hebrew all summer in an intensive Hebrew course (*ulpan*) in Jerusalem. One fine August morning, I made my way by bus to Haifa for a much anticipated family event: my sister's wedding weekend. My sister Leslie (this event occurred years before she changed her name to the less Anglican "Teva") had made *aliyah* and was now getting hitched. Cell phones and the internet had yet to be invented, so I had no way of knowing what had transpired prior to my arrival on Mt. Carmel, at the designated street corner where we were to meet.



Leslie and Arnon

There she stood, supported by crutches (and her soon- to-be mother- in-law, Anita) with a cast up to her knee. This can't possibly be - my accident prone sibling had ALREADY broken both legs some years before! Wait - is this a practical joke? My sister has never done anything in a particularly

conventional way. My mind reeled: The day before her wedding! How would she dance at the celebration? How would she go on her honeymoon? To Africa! How would she, how could she immerse herself in the *mikvah*, the ritual bath required in order to get married?

The *mikvah*?! Though our family was raised in a kosher home and Conservative synagogue, my sister was as relaxed in her religious observance as her soon to be Israeli husband, in-laws, and the majority of Israelis who eschew religious tyranny. In Israel, all Jewish weddings must be carried out strictly according to Orthodox *halacha*, Jewish law, which specifies various requirements and prohibitions regarding marriage. There are no options for a non-Orthodox ceremony. Nor does Israel permit civil marriage, same sex marriage, or intermarriage. If you don't like it, then you have to travel to Cyprus or another country for your wedding. (Civil marriages performed outside of Israel

are recognized for purposes of national statistics, but not personal status. Similarly, "common law" marriages afford couples some marriage-related rights and protections, but not full recognition.)

Though the story I am telling is one that my family has laughed about for decades, marriage and gender inequality are among the difficult challenges of Israeli life.

Leslie and Arnon, like other crafty Israeli couples, worked around the restriction: They planned for an evening ceremony in a lovely grove (casual hippie style) presided over by a (legally unrecognized) Reform rabbi only after appearing earlier in the day at the office of the Chief Rabbinate for the legal wedding, at which papers were signed by a bearded elder. As creative as this dodge-the-Orthodoxy plan was, my sister couldn't weasel out of the classes on the Jewish laws of family purity, and needed the requisite certificate stating that she had immersed in the *mikvah* the night before the wedding. I had arrived in Haifa just in time to accompany my sister to the *mikvah*.

Now back to the story: I asked what they planned to do about the *mikvah*?! Leslie and Anita smiled calmly and assured me they had it all figured out: You're going. Oh no, no thanks, no, no, no, no, no, I replied, but they were already hustling me into the VW bug so we wouldn't be late. I'm only 20 and too young to be married, my Hebrew isn't fluent, they'll ask me personal questions, I have always been a terrible liar. In short, I was sure they'd divine the truth that I was not, in fact, Leslie Stone.



A traditional mikvah.

I don't know if you've ever been to a *mikvah*, but this one wasn't particularly spa-like. It was small, damp, and musty. The mikvah lady in house dress and *babushka* motioned for me to take everything off and shower. Butt-naked and with nowhere to flee, I descended the steps into a small, square, deep, (and hardly

scrupulously clean) tub of lukewarm water, then 1-2-3 immersions followed by mumbo jumbo blessings. Moments later, out in the waiting room my sister and her mother in law were beaming, and all the old ladies were wishing me *Mazel Tov*. I forged my sister's name on the certificate and then couldn't beat it out of there fast enough.

To this day, as far as I know, the authorities have never found out that I was the Imposter Bride.

Israel is Hard...and Worth It! Howard Goldsmith, Rabbi

The latest round of fighting between Israel and Hamas unleashed a wave of anti-Semitism here in U.S. like never before. Many college and high school students from Emanu-El faced hate filled social media streams. There was seemingly willful ignorance as otherwise smart, sophisticated people asserted authority on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with the use of memes and trite slogans. The media in this country and around the world presented one inaccurate or misleading story after another. They fell into a “false balance” fallacy in which they tried to draw an equivalence between the actions (and casualties) of Israel and Hamas. The problem: the evidence and facts did not support such a balance or moral equivalence. They somehow lost sight of the fact that Israel is a democracy (albeit an imperfect one) and that Hamas is a terrorist group that succeeded in using a few days of conflict to further burnish their credentials as the voice of the Palestinians.



As an *Ohev Yisrael*, a lover of Israel, this caused me immense pain. I was pained to receive the calls and emails from our students who felt singled out and ill prepared to face the onslaught on social media. I was pained to see my Israeli friends and colleagues posting pictures from bomb shelters. I was pained when those same Israeli friends and colleagues were painted as blood-thirsty oppressors when, more often than not, they want peace and a two-state solution. I was pained to see Hamas painted as under dogs and freedom fighters when their charter calls for the destruction of Israel and for the death or ejection of all its Jewish citizens. I was pained when government officials faced pressure to qualify Israel's right to defend itself against an onslaught of rockets.

And I was pained by the blatant anti-Semitism of it all. Why anti-Semitism? Anti-semitism because of the vast disparity in the way Israel is judged compared to the judgements of every other nation. Anti-Semitism because of the lazy way that people mapped the racial justice issues of America onto the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Anti-Semitism because when naïve celebrities and college students chant “Palestine from river to sea” they are calling for the destruction of our ancient homeland and the death or ejection of the Jews who have lived their for

generations. No other country faces that scrutiny – especially when caught in an onslaught of rocket fire. And so, there is nothing to conclude except anti-Semitism. These casual anti-Semites find it easier to blame the Jews for the problems in the region rather than blame any other group. Why? Because Jews make good scapegoats. Because of the millennia old trope about Jews being all-powerful. If that were true it would mean that the Jews could fix it and therefore any problem must be because the Jews choose not to fix it. That is straight out of the “Protocols of the Elders of Zion!”

A blood thirsty, racist, power-hungry, reactionary Israel is not the Israel I know. It is not the Israel for which my Israeli friends and colleagues strive. Does it represent some segment of the Israeli public? Sure, but the U.S. has plenty of power hungry reactionaries too and no one is calling for the dissolution of these United States – whatever our sins. If we pause for just a moment, we see an Israel that is embracing all sorts of diversity, that is working hard for democratic change, that is seeking to lift up minorities. The new government has representatives from the left, right, and center, and Islamist party; Arabs in several key cabinet posts, a female Ethiopian cabinet member, an openly gay cabinet member, and a Reform rabbi in a key position. Israel was able to rise above the deep partisanship and polarization to save Israel from another round of elections and move the country forward. That is pragmatic Israel and idealistic Israel all wrapped up in one.

Israel is hard. Democracy is hard. The Middle East is hard. All of it contains complexity that boggles the mind. The death of children and civilians in Israel or Gaza is tragic and heartbreaking. Any solutions to the areas many challenges will also be incredibly complex. They will take a long time. They will not make anyone happy. And their durability will be questionable and challenged time and again. And so, anyone who tells you that they have a simple answer the to challenges of Israel does not know what they are talking about. Anyone who tries to sum it up in a meme or a slogan is pushing ideology or an agenda, not making a real attempt at understanding or truth. But I can tell you that the drive for understanding, for truth, for co-existence, for peace – the drive for all of those things is worth it as we seek to sustain the miraculous rebirth of a Jewish state, a state for which our people hoped and prayed for 2,000 years.

A Trip Home. Daniel S. Wolk, Rabbi Emeritus

Israel. 1959. Not only was this my first trip to Israel, I was also a novice in the art of travel - never having left the United States. Settling into my room at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, I contemplated the year I would devote to learning Hebrew. A strange long year. A strange land.



"Excuse me," he said, "Can I walk with you?" I nodded. With long strides he set off and then asked, "If you don't mind, why are you walking at this hour when Jerusalem sleeps?"

"Well," I answered, hesitantly, "this is my first morning in Israel and I miss my home. I am going to visit a family friend referred to me. They own the Doron Book Store." Then I ceased speaking, wondering why I had revealed the information to an unknown person.

He laughed. "It is only 6:00am. Stores open at 9:00am. Come, sit down with me," and he led me to a large boulder with ample room for two people. "You are homesick? *Mitgabhayah* in Hebrew. Impossible." And with those words he unzipped an olive colored worn backpack and removed a leather bible, the pages stained from fingermarks and heavy use.

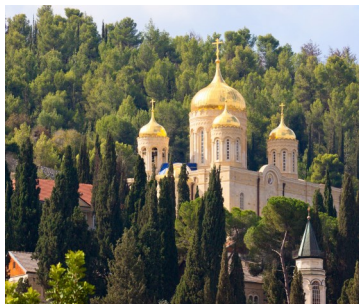
"You know the stories of the bible," he began. "The history of kings. Saul. David. Solomon. All of them lived in Jerusalem." And, well acquainted with the bible, my companion turned to the book of Chronicles, "Now David built houses for himself in the city of David... Then Solomon began to build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem."

"Imagine," my new friend enthused, "We are probably walking where David and Solomon walked. They may even have sat on this boulder. They are your family. So tell me, with the kings of Israel beside you, how can you ever be lonely?"

And together we went on our way.

For a young man remembering my immigrant descendants, history had brought me home.

The view from the patio overlooked Ein Karem, home of John the Baptist. Hillsides, not yet cluttered with the urban sprawl that would someday erase spaces untouched since biblical times, burgeoned with massive cedars of Lebanon, fir and fig trees. Small geckos, disturbed from their sunny repose on stone walls, disappeared into the cracks. And I was homesick.



Ein Karem today.

At 6:00am the following morning, I set off for the center of Jerusalem, my destination a bookstore owned by relatives of family friends in Albany. Although I had never met the Shalgis they might offer respite from being set adrift.

The path from the university followed well-trodden paths through the Valley of the Cross, a way marked by almond trees and purple thistles. Off to one side sheep grazed while a young Arab shepherd played a folk tune on a reed recorder. Suddenly I felt a gentle tap on the shoulder and I faced a tall Israeli, long hair carefully groomed, his head covered with a black skull cap. I estimated his age to be in the mid-thirties.



Tami Stalbow, Religious School Teacher



Tami and Meir.

My cousin, Tamar, and her husband Meir, made the city of Akko their home about six years ago. They began to fulfill a lifelong dream of opening a bed and breakfast (*Akotika*) in the Old City of Akko. They painstakingly undertook the renovation of homes, some

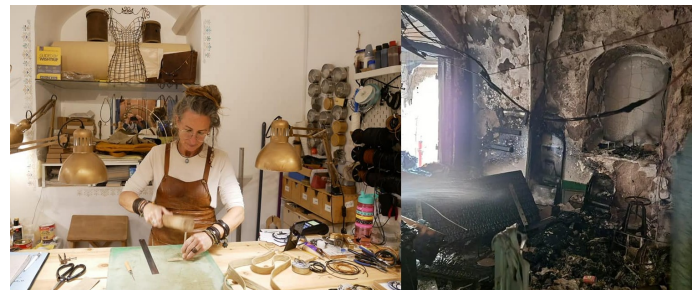
of which date back to the time of the Crusaders and turned them into beautiful suites and rooms. They created a lobby and rooftop dining area at one of these locations overlooking the sea wall and the Mediterranean. They renovated one of the homes and made it their own home. They lived (and live) in the Old City of Akko.

My husband and I lived in Israel for seven years and since we returned to the U.S., we visit Israel regularly, at least once a year (with the exception of 2020). We spend most of our time up north, staying with family in Haifa. We always find new places to explore and intersperse that with family visits - cousins in Atlit, Ra'anana and yes, Akko.

The first few times we visited with Tamar and Meir, I would be lying if I didn't admit that I was uneasy. The Old City of Akko has a predominantly Arab population and that was a little unsettling to me. But Tamar and Meir were perfectly comfortable in their surrounding and their confidence bolstered mine. Each year I felt a little more comfortable visiting with them. In 2019, we walked around the Old City, met many of their neighbors, browsed in shops owned by both Jews and Arabs and had lunch in a restaurant in the Turkish Bazaar. Tamar took us to her leather working shop in the Bazaar, which was under construction. She designed the shop, did much of the construction work herself and was preparing to open for business. Not only was her handiwork beautiful, but the

shop was as well - everything from the flooring to the display cases. Of course, we all had drinks at their bar, sat on the rooftop lounge and took in the beautiful views of the Mediterranean while catching up on family goings-on. It was a great visit and we truly felt at home.

Fast forward to May 2021. Rioters in the Old City of Akko burnt Tamar's workshop to the ground. Nothing survived. Many of the rooms in their B&B were vandalized and destroyed. The Mezuzahs were ripped from the doorposts. The furniture was torn apart and cracked, mattress were lit on fire, destruction was everywhere. Thankfully, neighbors, mostly Arab, came to the rescue - they put out fires, brought guests to safety and tried to fend off the vandals.



Tamar's workshop, before and after the riots.

I am not talking politics, not getting into who is right and who is wrong, though I am not sure that I can find justification for the actions of the vandals. But what gives me a glimmer of hope is that there were people who came to the rescue, people who condemned the actions, and people who are offering to help rebuild. And, of course, the optimism and determination of Tamar and Meir - they are returning to Akko, they will rebuild and to paraphrase Meir, "Israel is our home and birthright. No one and no thing will move us."



Did you know?

The Israel Postal Service has a special Letters to God department, for all the letters arriving in Jerusalem from around the world addressed to God.

They are opened and placed into the cracks of the Western Wall.

Josh Cooper, Congregant



After deciding to defer my freshman year of college because of COVID restrictions, I spent this past year in Israel on a gap year program. It was a life-changing experience and I am extremely grateful for the opportunity to go to Israel. While I could talk for hours about the things I did and the amazing people I met, I want to focus on two specific parts of my experience: my strengthened connection to Israel, my Israeli family, and my time volunteering for Peace Players, a basketball program in Jerusalem.

As an American Jew, I always felt a connection to Israel; however, it wasn't strong given that I had not spent an extended period of time there. I loved living in Israel, experiencing the culture, traveling around the country, and interacting with the local Israelis. It is an experience I will never forget. I feel that my personal connection to Israel became much stronger each day. I also really enjoyed spending meaningful time with my Israeli family, a side of the family I had only met a few times throughout my life. I spent time with the families of my grandparents...from picnics at Hayarkon Park in Tel Aviv, birthday celebrations, Passover seder and soccer matches, I got to know my family on a deeper level and made memories that I will forever cherish.



Peace Players in the Middle East.

While I worked at two really interesting internships while living in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, I also volunteered for Peace Players. It is a Jerusalem-based program that strives to unite Arab and Jewish youth - and empower girls (who make up 75% of the program) - through basketball. Arabs and Jews play together on the same team, shaping our future generation by teaching the importance of acceptance and unity. I had a blast coaching the girls at practices two to three times each week and sharing with them my passion for basketball.

As I start yet another new chapter and head off to college this fall, I am appreciative of the experience I had in Israel and know that it will impact the rest of my life.

Abby Meron, Congregant



Israel is a beautiful place. Although I have only been there once, the memories I made will be in my heart forever. One of my favorite memories was going to the town my great grandfather founded (Kfar Aviv).

I had always heard the stories and history about my family's past but it was so amazing to actually see it in person. We went to many places in Israel but a few really stood out. To be able to visit The Dead Sea, Masada, the Western Wall, Jerusalem, the Holocaust Museum, and so many more places was truly an amazing experience. I had a lot of fun and learned so much about Israel. After the trip I felt very connected to Judaism and was very grateful I had the chance to go. Since I was young when I visited I knew there was so much more I could see and experience. I hope I will be able to go back in the future and learn even more about my Jewish heritage.



An aerial shot of Masada.

Did you know?

The widely used mobile mapping program, Waze, was developed in Israel.



Marcy Modica, Congregant



I knew when we signed up to join the family mission to Israel in February of 2019 it was going to be special, but I had no idea *how* special it would be. It is hard to put into words how meaningful it was for my family. I was the only one who had

visited Israel prior to this trip, so I was especially excited to see the impact on my husband and kids.

The itinerary was created by Rabbi Goldsmith, and with the help of his fabulous tour guide and friend Muki, we ate, drank, and toured our way through the historical sights of Jerusalem, explored an abandoned military complex in the Golan Heights, dug for ancient artifacts in the Brit Guvrin Caves, and enjoyed a fabulous dinner in Tel Aviv. And this is just the beginning! We can't forget about Masada, participating in Luke Miller's Bar Mitzvah at Ein Geidi, the graffiti tour in Tel Aviv. We also had the opportunity to celebrate Shabbat with the congregants of a "sister" synagogue in Modi'in, and were hosted to a wonderful dinner with some of their families; definitely a highlight of the trip.

Traveling as a family, and with other CEW families, helped my kids learn their connection to this beautiful country, more so than reading any book ever could. To date this family mission is the most meaningful vacation we have ever been on, and my kids ask all the time when can we go back.

Thank you Goldsmith family and the entire CEW community.

Did you know?

The town of Beersheba, in Israel's Negev Desert, has the largest number of chess grandmasters per capita than any other city in the world.



Did you know?

Israelis eat 24 million sufganiyot (donuts) during Chanukah.

Sarah Birnbaum, Congregant



I am very grateful for my Birthright experience. I traveled to Israel in December of 2019 with a cohort of students from Dartmouth and Union College. The trip to the Dead Sea, wine tasting, and Jeep tours in the Golan were all classic touristy fun,

but what I remember most are the fascinating conversations I had with my peers. With my American peers, we engaged in important dialogue about how we wanted to be Jewish in today's world and deconstructed the myth that Jews in diaspora have something to prove to be "Jewish enough" to be a "good Jew." I was struck by how well I connected with the IDF soldiers who joined our cohort as part of our *Mifgash*; I'm still friends with two of them. Our IDF soldiers made Shabbat in Israel a special experience. With the whole city shut down, the soldiers organized a series of outdoor team games ranging from human pyramids to capture the flag. I hadn't felt the joy of playing outside like that in years, and I carry that joy with me as I continue celebrating Shabbat with a newfound appreciation for its value.

Ten days is only able to accomplish so much, and the purpose of this trip was to introduce us to Israel and celebrate our connection to our ancestors, the land, and the country. That said, I do wish we could have heard from Palestinian voices so that the conversation about the conflict didn't feel so one-sided. Our tour guide and leaders were, despite this limitation, able to facilitate productive open dialogue. Near the border to Gaza in Ashkelon we spent a day learning and asking questions.

During my Birthright trip I experienced outrage at the gendered division of the Western Wall, wonder at the Roman architecture on Masada, and teared up at the beauty of the sunsets in the Galilee. We giggled through a lesson about Kabbalistic numerology in Tzfat, giggled on camel backs in the Negev, and giggled at our tour guide's bad jokes with mouths full of hummus. I made friends I'll have for a lifetime, and I'm excited to return to Israel and continue to explore my complex relationship with Israel and my Jewish identity.

Matthew Cooper, Congregant



As COVID-19 placed a stranglehold on the world during the spring and summer of 2020, I had a lot on my mind. As a senior in high school, I missed out on a “normal” prom, graduation, and the other festivities which mark the end of one journey and the beginning of another. Of course, I was excited to head off to Duke in the fall, but even that prospect wasn’t what it once seemed. Each week, I’d receive emails about the different restrictions and protocols which would be in place on campus. My college freshman experience, typically marked by widespread face-to-face interaction, would seem to be completely different to those of students past. So, a gap year became an option. I was hesitant to take a year off of school, but it seemed like a great way to preserve my four precious years at college. As my mom would tell me, “Even if you don’t love your gap year, you can still have a more normal time at school.” Logically, this was the right choice for me, and Israel the right place to spend the year, on a program called Aardvark Israel. I had only ever been to Israel once, a 10-day sightseeing trip with my parents and brothers a year prior. My grandmother had grown up in Israel after escaping from Iraq at age 11, and I have many distant cousins there. Israel always represented a beacon of hope in my life for peace and safety for the Jewish people. Despite this, before heading off for my gap year, I had no real connection with the land nor the people of Israel.

Upon arriving with my Aardvark peers, I felt an almost immediate connection with the country I would call home for the next nine months. Living in Tel Aviv’s Florentin neighborhood, I felt a sense of community and comfort that made my adjustment to living in a foreign country much easier. For four months, my friends and I interacted with the same shopkeepers, took the same buses, and ate the same foods as the locals. While other programs were holed up on a campus and unable to leave due to COVID-19 restrictions, the city of Tel Aviv was my campus. Despite lockdowns which meant that restaurants and other gatherings were not open for the majority of my semester in Tel Aviv, I managed to spend hours at parks playing basketball, strolling along the beach and swimming in the Mediterranean Sea, and visiting various attractions such as art museums and Dizengoff Square. Through Aardvark’s programming, I expanded my horizons and gained valuable life experience. I (attempted to) learn Hebrew and took intellectually stimulating classes. One was about the history of Zionism, and another called “Faces of Israel” about the many

population groups which make up Israel’s diverse society today. Every week, Aardvark took us on trips to different parts of the country. Each time, we interacted with different members of Israeli society, from falafel vendors in Haifa to a Bedouin woman living in the Negev. We also experienced the beautiful nature Israel has to offer, such as Ein Prat Nature Reserve, and explored its archeological sites, including Beit She’an (Roman ruins). While living in Tel Aviv, I also worked four days per week at an internship with Veloquant, a high-frequency trading firm. I gained valuable lessons about how to interact with coworkers and supervisors, as well as using the computer language Python for the first time in order to help the company scrape data from the internet and use it to inform its trading algorithms.

In January, I bid farewell to Tel Aviv and moved to Jerusalem. From then until May, I lived in an apartment right next to the famous Shuk Machane Yehuda. I loved walking through the stalls, stopping to try new dishes like knafe or vegan shawarma. Other times, I would stroll down the busy Jaffa and Ben Yehuda streets to shop or grab a quick bite. As the country opened up more due to the rolling out of vaccines, I took the opportunity to travel with friends outside of the Aardvark trips; we spent time in the southern beach city of Eilat during my spring break, and slept in a massive tent at a campsite by Ein Gedi and the Dead Sea. I traveled back to Tel Aviv many times to experience the nightlife, which I missed out on due to lockdowns. I visited museums to supplement my in-class learning, and experienced holidays, both happy and sad. One memory I will never forget is how quickly the entire country shifts from a day of mourning and remembrance on Yom HaZikaron (Israel’s Memorial Day) to one of unbridled jubilation on Yom Ha’atzmaut (Independence Day), which fall on consecutive days. I did a different internship in Jerusalem, this time working for MassChallenge, a startup accelerator. I loved every minute at MassChallenge, not only because of the exposure to Israel’s impressive innovation ecosystem, but also because of the warmth and friendliness I was shown by the amazing team during the tenure of my internship.

Overall, my time in Israel was life-changing. I met amazing friends, experienced a culture that at times was both foreign yet familiar, and gained an entire nation which I can now call home. I plan to use my newfound understanding of Israeli society to be an advocate for Israel in college and beyond, and I know Israel will remain a part of my life for a long time.

The Miller Family, Congregants

In 2019 on a CEW family trip to Israel, we started our morning with a very early (6:30am) and delicious breakfast at our hotel. We then departed for our ride to the ancient 3rd century synagogue at Ein Gedi, 11/16th of a mile below Jerusalem. Excavated in the 1970s, the beautiful mosaic floor of the ancient synagogue is covered by a tent and overlooks the Dead Sea.



Luke's bar mitzvah service.

There is stone seating, and it was a very intimate and comfortable setting. The last of our family's three b'nei mitzvah, the ceremony began with singing and prayer. Luke did a fabulous job and he gave a very thoughtful d'var Torah about how everyone has something to contribute to society, even children.

We also had a first year cantorial student from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion's Jerusalem campus lend her voice to the service. After some family photos, a group photo, and delicious challah, off we went to Masada.



The Bar Mitzvah parents taking a hike.

When we arrived at Masada, we split up between the hikers and the non-hikers. The hikers took the Snake Path and the non-hikers took a cable car to the top. Within minutes at the

top, it started to rain, then hail! In the desert. At Masada! Where it never rains because it's the desert! We continued touring Herod's mountain place and learning, until we all returned to the bottom via cable car.



A celebratory lunch in honor of Luke.

We hosted a lunch for everyone in honor of Luke's bar mitzvah ceremony at the Masada Guest House, after which we departed for the Dead Sea.

Still raining, we changed into bathing suits and went into the sea. The salt content is 11 times the ocean salt content. Most of us went in and some of us were more covered with mud than others but a great time floating was enjoyed by all. Possibly a once in a lifetime experience.

Upon returning to the hotel, a former Lone Soldier from Australia met us to pick up the care packages for the IDF soldiers that our synagogue prepared during Mitzvah Shabbat. After a short Q & A and some photos, we said our good-byes and went to freshen up.

After a quick dinner on our own, we went on a tunnel tour at the Western Wall. A perfect end to an exhilarating day as we learned more about the history of the Temple Mount.

Another fabulous, action packed day.



Bar Mitzvah Boy in the middle after a wonderful service.

Travel to Israel with Emanu-El

Friday, August 19 - Sunday, August 28, 2022



Did you know that 26 of the 613 commandments can only be fulfilled in the land of Israel?

The reason is simple: Israel is special. It holds a unique place in our people's history, religious traditions, mythology, present and future. And, there is no better way to experience Israel than on a congregational trip with Rabbi Goldsmith.

Rabbis Howard and Jennifer Goldsmith will lead a family trip to Israel. We will, of course, visit all the major sites. But it will be so much more than a tourist trip because, with the help of our rabbis, we will discover what Israel means to us as Jews from Westchester.

Check out all the information & register at <https://tinyurl.com/IsraelCEW>

Have questions or want to discuss? Give Rabbi Goldsmith a call at 914-967-4382 x1013.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our community offers condolences to

The family of Rena Blackman

The family of Arlene Cole

Elizabeth Grill on the death of her mother Joan Vida

Jonathan Ostrau on the death of his sister Lauren Meren-Kaufman

Michelle Wallach on the death of her father Steven Wallach

Yahrzeit Remembrances for the Memorial Fund

In memory of:

Irving Appel

Albert Cohen Arthur

Gladys Lampert Beenstock

Janice Lee Cohen & Jerome Cohen

Louis D. Colish

Philip Duncan

Sidney Edwards

Isaac Friedman

Lee Gaynor

Ernest Gladstone

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Eric Masinter

Bernice Miller

Lillian Neimark

Temmy Patel

Pearl Schwartz

Bernard Polakoff

Remembered by:

Bonnie Shyer

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JoAnn Terdiman

Sheila & Stuart Steiner

Estelle & Stanley Berg and Family

Robert & Melissa Gaynor and Family

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Jack & Melissa Heinberg

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Fran & Mark Lerner

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Evelyn & Stan Lobel

Jeanne Keller and Family

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Eugene Lumelskiy & Mira Lumelsky

Margery & Edgar Masinter

Reed & Karen Miller

Robin Neimark Seegal

Andrew & Marcia Patel

Ilene Schwartz

Arleen & Michael Cohen and Family

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Yahrzeit Remembrances for the Memorial Fund

In memory of:

Lillian Robinson
Ruth Roseman
Grace Rosenblut
Gertrude Rosenzweig
David Rowen
Meridith Rowen
Lotte Schwarz
David Shenk
Herbert J. Stotter
Allen M. Terdiman
W. Anthony Ullman
Elizabeth & Hans Weinberger
William W. Weinstein
Nathan Witkin

Remembered by:

Fran & Roger Lefft
Shelly Benerofe and Family
Michael N. Rosenblut & Hedy R. Cardozo and Family
Wendy Rowden & John Carton
Ginny Rowen
Ginny Rowen
John & Terry Schwarz
Andrew & Marcia Patel
Sandra & William Ettelson
JoAnn Terdiman
Nancy Ullman
Lilian Sicular
Ruth Weinstein
Eric Witkin & Regina Bilotta

Memorial Donations

Marcie Aiuvalasit in memory of Arlene Cole
Marcie Aiuvalasit in memory of Dorothy Chaslon
Anonymous in memory of Arlene Cole
Beit Midrash Students in memory of Arlene Cole
Toni Bonifacio in memory of Arlene Cole
Carla Bowman in memory of Arlene Cole
John Carton & Wendy Rowden
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Richard & Emily Cohen in memory of Arlene Cole
Richard & Emily Cohen in memory of Dorothy Chaslon
Denise & Nathan Eisler in memory of Arlene Cole
Naomi & Sherman Fabes in memory of Arlene Cole
Lawrence & Harriet Feldman in memory of Arlene Cole
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of Dorothy Chaslon
Ilene Schwartz in memory of Dorothy Chaslon
John & Terry Schwarz in memory of Arlene Cole
Sam & Jill Sheppard in memory of Dorothy Chaslon
Lilian Sicular in memory of Arlene Cole
Paul & Ann Spindel in memory of Arlene Cole
Paul & Ann Spindel in memory of Dorothy Chaslon
Meredith Stone & Martin Rutishauser
in memory of Dorothy Chaslon
JoAnn Terdiman in memory of Arlene Cole
Maj Wickstrom in memory of Arlene Cole
Maj Wickstrom in memory of Dorothy Chaslon
Martin & Pamela Winter in memory of Arlene Cole
Jill Wolf Abel in memory of Arlene Cole

All donations processed after June 24, 2021 will appear in the next bulletin. If you have any questions, please call Abbie at 914-967-4382 x1018.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Silver Linings Spring Benefit

Marcie Aiuvalasit	Robin Goldstein	Michael & Leslie Mook
Anonymous	Sandy & Brianne Goldstein	Brian & Jaime Morris
Melissa Ashley	Anne Gottlieb	Bruce & Audrey Nathanson
Shari & Jonathan Austrian	David & Kyra Grann	Elyse Nathanson
Pauline Baber	Michael Granoff	Neuberger Berman
Backyard Bodies	Greenwich Cosmetic Dentistry	Laura Newman
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Ballet Muscle	Liz Grill	Donald Rappaport
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Shelly Benerofe	Gruppuso Plumbing Corp.	Jason & Jessica Riesel
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John & Patty Bottomley	Invitations and More by Bonnie	Stephen & Nancy Sahlein
John Carton & Wendy Rowden	James Jond	Jason Schechter & Michelle Wallach
Cemar Landscaping	Rich & Arline Josephberg	Robert Scheibe
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Barrie & Joan Damson	Gerry & Jeannie Kligman	Sam & Jill Sheppard
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Michael & Victoria Dubin	Lindsay & Matthew Kraut	Lilian Sicular
Denise & Nathan Eisler	Stephen & Doreen Kushel	Silver Trident Winery
Naomi & Sherman Fabes	Stacy & Brian Lerch	George & Barbara Sommerfeld
Lois Falberg & Brian Sinder	Mark & Fran Lerner	Jim & Jane Stern
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Darren & Jeanne Fogel	Leonard Levin	Stuart & Lisa Sternberg
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Jim & Elaine Glover	Steve & Margie McCabe	Maj Wickstrom
Howard & Jennifer Goldsmith	Yuval & Jana Meron	Martin & Pamela Winter
Rachel Goldsmith	Jane Meryll	Rick & MJ Wolff
Aaron & Kathryn Goldstein	Marcelo & Marcy Modica	Michael & Lynne Wolitzer
		Dan Wolk & Ann Carmel

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Annual Fund: 2021-22 Community Support

Steven & Jeanne Barnett
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Daniel & Rhonda Chestler
Richard & Emily Cohen
Barrie & Joan Damson
Terry & Herb Feldman
Richard & Susan Hecht
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Lawrence & Julie Kirshner
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L'Dor V'Dor Capital Campaign

Mark & Nina Rubin

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Music Fund

Bill & Hinda Bodinger in memory of Arlene Cole
David Fried & Kathy Marks in memory of Myrna Marks
Richard & Arline Josephberg in honor of Aunt Estelle Blumenthal's 98th birthday
Ronald & Caitlin Saladino in thanks to Cantor Stone
Richard & MJ Wolff in honor of the birth of their grandson, Judah Julius Bensimon

Rabbi Goldsmith's Discretionary Fund

Shelly Benerofe in memory of Dorothy Chaslon
The Blackman Family
Richard & Meredith Canter
Jana & Jeremy Cohen in honor of Emory Cohen becoming Bat Mitzvah
Marion Cohen in memory of Arlene Cole
Lawrence & Harriet Feldman
Jerry Marks in memory of Myrna Marks
Elizabeth Grill in memory of her mother Joan Vida Grill
Richard & Arline Josephberg in honor of their granddaughters Alexis and Morgan becoming B'not Mitzvah
Ronald & Caitlin Saladino in honor of Alexa Saladino becoming Bat Mitzvah
Susan Sekulow in memory of her husband Gene Sekulow
Arlene Weinberg in memory of Jack Miller
Evelyn Winick in memory of Arlene Cole
Richard & MJ Wolff in gratitude for MJ's birthday blessing
Richard & MJ Wolff in memory of Dorothy Chaslon

Sisterhood

Daniel & Debra Alpert
John & Patricia Bottomley
Daniel & Rhonda Chestler
Michael & Arleen Cohen
Richard & Emily Cohen
Terry & Herb Feldman
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Jan & Ellen Linhart
Brian & Jaime Morris
Michael N. Rosenblut & Hedy R. Cardozo
Steven Shapiro & Susan Amkraut
Sam & Jill Sheppard
Lilian Sicular

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

General Contributions

James & Elaine Glover in honor of Emily Cohen
Carrie, Gary, Lanie and Harlan Ratner in honor
of Emory Cohen becoming Bat Mitzvah
Gary & Carrie Ratner in honor
of Charlie Zelman becoming Bar Mitzvah
Ronald & Caitlin Saladino in honor of Cantor Anesi
Steven Shapiro & Susan Amkraut in honor of
the birth of MJ and Rick Wolf's grandson Judah Julius
Richard & Carole Tunick
Judith & Ronald Wilkins

Jared Dubro Legacy Fund

James & Elaine Glover in memory of Arlene Cole
Ryan & Lorri Goldstein in memory of Joan Vida Grill
I.D. & Herbert Luckower in memory of Robin Herko
Ronald & Caitlin Saladino in honor of Jane Dubro

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Michael N. Rosenblut & Hedy R. Cardozo
Axel & Sara Schupf
Peter Schweitzer & Anne McBride
Steven Shapiro & Susan Amkraut
Sam & Jill Sheppard
Lilian Sicular

STEP-UP & GIVE BACK

Volunteer at the Kosher Food Pantry in New Rochelle



This spring, UJA-Federation of New York, in partnership with HOPE Community Services, Feeding Westchester, and Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, opened the first Kosher food pantry in the county.

The pantry, located in New Rochelle, is currently looking for volunteers to help pack, hand out or deliver food on Thursdays between 9:00am - 12:00pm. Children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult. High school students are welcome to come on their own! These volunteer opportunities are one-time even so there is no long-term commitment.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Social Action Committee Chair Hedy Cardozo at hedozo@aol.com.

2021 Westchester Jewish Community Services Back-to-School Drive Now through Friday, July 30



The 2021 WJCS Back-to-School drive is off to a great start! The WJCS Back-to-School Drive has helped hundreds of children in under-resourced communities each year start the school year prepared for academic success.

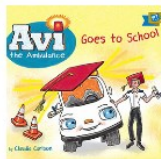
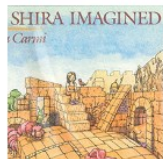
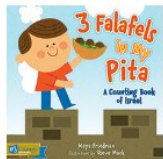
Donations to the drive will provide backpacks filled with supplies plus an Amazon gift card and a new 2021 school year planner generously donated by Order Out of Chaos.

To donate, visit <https://tinyurl.com/BTSCEW>

For more information about the Back-to-School Drive, please contact Alexandra Luciano at aluciano@wjcs.com or 914-761-0600 x2239.

Learn More About Israel Online!

Check out these wonderful online resources about Israel. Visit our website for more at <https://tinyurl.com/CEWLearnIsrael>



Children: PJ Library (tinyurl.com/pjcewisrael)

When they're young, kids can explore the culture, sites, and sounds of Israel through story books, recipes, and activities with local PJ Library programs. While some children learn about Israel directly through phone calls, video chats, and visits with family who live there, many other children experience Israel as a special, far-away, place depicted in stories and their PJ Library books.



Middle School/Tweens: (reframingisrael.org)

Reframing Israel inspires Jewish children and teenagers to learn about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, ask challenging questions, develop a strong commitment to social justice, and discover their unique voices.



Adults/Teens: Israel Story (www.israelstory.org)

An award-winning podcast that tells extraordinary tales about ordinary Israelis. Often called "the Israeli 'This American Life,'" Israel Story brings you quirky, unpredictable, interesting and moving stories about a place we all think we know a lot about, but really don't.



Welcome, Judah!

Mazel tov to Rick and MJ Wolff on the birth of their grandson Judah Julius Bensimon, son of Adam and Sarah Bensimon, on May 2.



Let's make Music, together! We've been apart too long!

Do you play an instrument and read music?
Did you (or your spouse/partner) play in your college band or sing in your high school chorus?

Here's a reason to dust off your voice or instrument: Cantor Stone would love to give you the opportunity to play or sing (a meditation, a solo or duet, an accompaniment) at a Shabbat service.

Interested? Want to hear more?
Contact Cantor Stone at mstone@c-e-w.org

Did you know?

The most popular fast food in Israel is falafel, followed by hummus, shwarma, burekas, and schnitzel.



Name
Street Address
City, State Zip Code

JULY - AUGUST SHABBAT SERVICES

July 9 (Zoom)
6:00pm **Shabbat Service with Cantor Stone**

July 16 (Zoom)
6:00pm **Lay Led Shabbat Service**

July 23 (Zoom)
6:00pm **Lay Led Shabbat Service**

July 30 (Zoom)
6:00pm **Lay Led Shabbat Service**

August 6 (in person)
6:00pm **Pre-neg**
6:30pm **Shabbat on the Beach**

August 13 (Zoom)
6:00pm **Lay Led Shabbat Service**

August 20 (Zoom)
6:00pm **Lay Led Shabbat Service**

August 27 (Zoom)
6:00pm **Lay Led Shabbat Service**

Unless otherwise noted, the Zoom address for services is:
<https://tinyurl.com/CEWservices>

The audio only dial-in is: 1-646-558-8656
(use Meeting ID 914 967 4382).

Shabbat on the Beach (in person)

Friday, August 6

6:00pm Pre-neg/6:30pm Service

Surround yourself with the sights and sounds of nature as Congregation Emanu-El celebrates Shabbat on the Beach at the Edith G. Read Wildlife Sanctuary at Playland Park in Rye..

Our annual Shabbat on the Beach service is a relaxing way to bring a close to your week, and appropriate for all ages. We welcome you to bring beach chairs and blankets to sit on during the service.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Dan at doconnor@c-e-w.org or 914-967-4382 x1011. In the event of cancellation due to bad weather, an email will be sent to the congregation.



Selichot at the JCCH (in person)

Saturday, August 28, 7:30pm

More information to follow.