

A New Haven Tradition since 1892



**BEKI** bulletin  
Congregation  
Beth El-Keser Israel

Kislev-Tevet 5781

Vol. 26 Issue 12

Message from Rabbi Tilsen: Page 14

# TWO HANUKA PARTIES & MORE!

## Wednesday, Dec. 2 at 8 pm

Corey Stone will discuss issues of debt, debt forgiveness, bankruptcy and finance through the lens of Jewish texts. Corey, a BEKI member, was part of the executive team at the federal Consumer Financial Protection Bureau.



Corey Stone

## Sunday, Dec. 6 at 11 am via Zoom

Author Daphne Geismar and her cousin Sharon Strauss will speak about Daphne's new book, *Invisible Years: A Family's Collected Account of Separation and Survival during the Holocaust in the Netherlands*. We'll learn how nine family members—Daphne's parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles—survived in hiding. The book can be purchased for \$29 via the BEKI Gift Shop.



Daphne Geismar

## Saturday, Dec. 12 at 5:30 pm via Zoom

To celebrate the Third Night of Hanuka, we'll make havdala and then light our Hanuka candles. If you can bring the menorah to your computer so we can see your candles, that would be great! We'll also sing songs and listen to a story.

## Thursday, Dec. 17 at 8:30 pm via livestream

On the Eighth Night, we'll join Masorti congregations across the country to light candles and watch a performance

by singer/songwriter Neshama Carlebach. She has released ten albums and sold over one million records, showcasing her unique blend of various genres, including classic Hebrew folk songs, contemporary pop music, jazz and gospel. The flyer for this event will include the link to join the party.



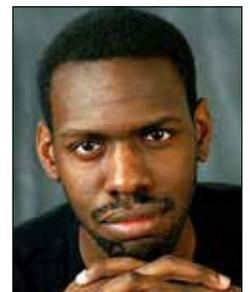
Neshama Carlebach

## Wednesday, Dec. 23 at 8 pm via Zoom

We'll watch the short film "Commandment 613" and discuss it with the film maker and its subject, Rabbi Kevin Hale, a sofer in Northampton, MA who restores Torah scrolls saved during the Holocaust.

## Wednesday, Dec. 30 at 8 pm via Zoom

Anthony Mordechai Tzvi Russell will return to add his voice to our ongoing exploration of issues of racial justice in America. He will demonstrate—through song and discussion—convergences of Ashkenazi and African American music. A classically trained operatic bass, Anthony now is an internationally acclaimed arranger and vocalist specializing in Yiddish art and folk songs, *chazones* and Hasidic *nigunim*.



Anthony Russell

All events except the Eighth Night Hanuka party are at [Tinyurl.com/bekischmooze](http://Tinyurl.com/bekischmooze).

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**BEKI Bulletin**

The newsletter is published monthly by Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel for the benefit of its members.

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership:

- Call the Synagogue office: 203.389.2108
- Write: 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724
- Email: [bulletin@beki.org](mailto:bulletin@beki.org)
- Visit our web page: [www.beki.org](http://www.beki.org)

For advertising information, call the synagogue office.

Deadline for submission of ads or articles is the first of the month preceding publication.

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# Try This Virtual Walk Through BEKI's Art Gallery

The exhibition of artwork by Leslie Klein in the BEKI Gallery is closing, but we have a video walk-through for those who were unable to see her work: <https://vimeo.com/476556504>

Watching the video allows you not only to see the art, but also to visit BEKI! As the filmmaker walks through the upstairs and downstairs lobbies, so do you as the viewer. Try it! This virtual visit to our synagogue is more powerful than you might expect.

Many of the works are available for purchase—with a significant donation to BEKI included in the sale price. Peggy has a price list in the BEKI office, or contact the artist via <http://www.leslieklein.com>.

Called “T’chiah: Spirit and Fire,” it’s a retrospective exhibit showing the range of Klein’s work: in pastels, oil pastels, graphite, mixed media, and fabric. She constructs garments and objects of hand-dyed, airbrushed, silk-screened, and embellished fabrics to address her perspective on Judaic themes. Objects, wire, beads, machine embroidery, photo-transfer and other complex cloth techniques conceptually allude to ideas, messages and symbols.

Some of the work is from Klein’s touring exhibition, “All That Remains: A Holocaust Exhibition in Fiber,” a fiber arts exhibit on the theme of the Holocaust.



**Butterfly Jacket**



**Harvest**

# BEKI USY GOES APPLE PICKING



BY ANNIE NORMAN-SCHIFF,  
YOUTH AND FAMILY  
PROGRAMMING DIRECTOR

On Sunday, October 18, BEKI USY spent a spectacular fall morning apple picking at Lyman Orchards in Middlefield. We got an early start in the day since the orchards are especially popular this year. It was a beautiful place to get some fresh air and be safely outdoors together. The late Ida Red apples were delicious right off the tree! It took either climbing or a boost from a friend to reach the best specimens.



## How to Host a Virtual Game Night: Tips from BEKI USY

BEKI USY is being creative about both outdoor and indoor ways to gather. We have replaced our regular Lounge Nights with a virtual version that will remain a key way to stay connected through the winter.

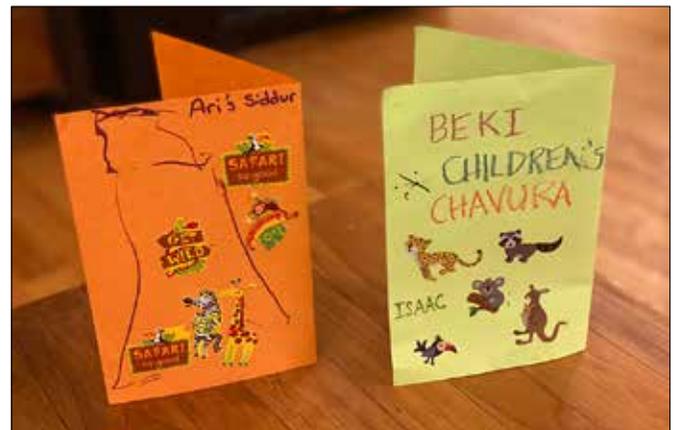
Here are some suggestions from BEKI teens for activities that work well over Zoom, based on our November 1 Virtual Lounge Night:

- **An ice breaker to get everybody talking** USY Board Member Aviva Wyner had us each share a “rose” (a highlight of the past week), a “thorn” (a low of the past week), and a “bud” (something we’re looking forward to).
- **Skribbl.io** This website lets you play a free Pictionary-like game where one person draws a picture on their screen and everyone else must guess what it is.
- **Kahoot.com** On this site, you can make your own multiple-choice quiz game, or play a game that others have made. We learned that the parsha quizzes by user Edelman7 are very tricky!

## Children’s Havura Siddur Gets a Refresh

Young artists in Children’s Havura are putting their talents to work, creating new covers for the Havura’s siddur. Their designs so far feature many animal stickers! Each cover will be laminated and will front a new edition of the siddur, featuring corrected Hebrew text and our new minhagim (customs) for socially-distanced services.

**The siddur covers made by Ari Shetler (age 3) and Isaac Levy (age 1, with some help) are ready to be laminated.**



# BEKI Recognized with Community Service Award

We are excited to announce that BEKI is a recipient of the John S. Martinez Community Service Award given by Columbus House. Since 2004, the award has been given annually in recognition of “those who have exemplified community leadership and outstanding support for Columbus House programs.” An organization, an individual, and a company are honored annually.

The honor usually is awarded at the shelter’s Annual Meeting, but because of the pandemic, there will be no in-person event this year. On December 1, Columbus House will launch its “Days of Inspiration,” a series of short videos highlighting its work to end homelessness. Some of the BEKI Tikun Olam team will be included in these videos, including acceptance of the award by Darryl Kuperstock. Also honored this year are Janice Hart and Medtronic in North Haven.

## The Men Whose Lives Touched Our Own

“BEKI’s commitment to Abraham’s Tent and ongoing devotion to the men who participate” were noted by Columbus House as among the reasons BEKI was selected for the award. After the virus cut short the program two weeks after the men’s stay at BEKI, we were able to provide some initial food assistance when they were moved into hotels, as well as two rounds of disposable face masks.

In the summer, we celebrated with them as several of

the men found permanent housing. Through a combination of efforts, and thanks to Andy Hirshfield’s pick-up truck service, we helped each of them with donated furniture, cleaning supplies, groceries, TVs and even small dorm-size refrigerators for two who needed to store insulin away from shared kitchen space. As they have found new homes—and some of them jobs—we have stayed in touch, sharing stories of our lives during these strange times.

If you are interested in supporting the Christmas dinner we are coordinating for the Columbus House Main Shelter, please contact Darryl ASAP. [kuperst@gmail.com](mailto:kuperst@gmail.com)

## Abraham’s Tent Plans for 2020-21

Because of the virus, none of the churches and synagogues will be hosting. Nonetheless, each has pledged to help those experiencing homelessness. We are still discussing the best ways for the BEKI community to help with this joint effort and hope that the extraordinary outpouring of concern and engagement that you have always displayed can be counted on again.

For more information about our Columbus House and Abraham’s Tent programs, please contact Darryl Kuperstock [kuperst@gmail.com](mailto:kuperst@gmail.com) or Steve Werlin [shwerlin@gmail.com](mailto:shwerlin@gmail.com).



Darryl Kuperstock leads the prep for Abraham’s Tent



Buns and Roses



PHOTO COURTESY COURTNEY LUCIANA/THE NEW HAVEN INDEPENDENT

**BEKI members David and Darryl Kuperstock distribute Care Kits at a Chapel on the Green event May 31.**

## First Sunday Food Collection Dec. 6

The next drive-by food collection will be Sunday, December 6 from 10 to 11 am in the BEKI parking lot. Please provide a bag or box of non-perishable food, and share this information with your “friend group.” This month’s food will go to Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen; if you would like the list from DESK of what they need most, email [bulletin@beki.org](mailto:bulletin@beki.org). Call 203.671.4705 to arrange for Rob Lettck to be in the parking lot to receive your donation. The next food drive will be on the first Sunday of January. If you have any questions, please write to Rob at [robolettick@aol.com](mailto:robolettick@aol.com).

## Care Kits for Chapel on the Green Dec. 27

Please let Darryl know if you can help sponsor these kits or can procure care items, either donated or at a very deep discount (at least 75% of each item). We are hoping to add winter supplies (e.g., scarves, gloves, hats, blankets, chapstick). BEKI was the very first organization to provide Care Kits for distribution by DESK. Care Kits from BEKI, assembled by Darryl and David Kuperstock, were distributed at the end of May and mid-July.

## Refugee Resettlement Update

Good news: Our asylum-seeking family has been granted work permits. A GED degree has been awarded to the father of one of the refugee families, and a new baby was welcomed by them on Oct. 29.

For more information about how you can help, contact BEKI’s JCARR Liaison Madeleine Kleinman [madk117@gmail.com](mailto:madk117@gmail.com).

## BEKI Tikun Olam in Recent Months

Operation Isaiah, led by Lynn Brotman, yielded over \$3,000. Thank you for your generosity.

BEKI donated nitrile gloves, hand sanitizer, 100 face masks, and monthly large deliveries of bulk food supplies to the Columbus House shelter.

We’ve made 21 deliveries of non-perishables and donated baked goods to FISH, Orange Community Center, DESK, and the Community Soup Kitchen at Christ Church.

We conducted an immensely successful Blood Drive in August, exceeding all goals. Thank you to all who volunteered and donated.

**המקום ינחם**

*HaMaqom Yinahem*

With sorrow we note the passing of

**Lucy Kaminski,**

mother of Naftali (& Iris) Kaminski

*May the Almighty comfort those who mourn*



**Welcome New Members**

Bret Kupfer, Emily Rock & Milo

**Mazal Tov to**

Grandparents Stephen & Rachel Wizner on the birth of Miki to Ben Wizner & Mariko Hirose

**New members  
Bret Kupfer, Emily Rock & Milo**

**Torah for the Hungry Mind**



**Levi Brackman**

*Sundays*

**Parashat HaShavua**

From 10:00 to 11:00 am via Zoom, an opportunity to dive into the new week's Torah reading, with Rabbi Tilsen

& guest speakers. Not meeting Dec. 13.

- Dec. 6 with Rabbi Levi Brackman



**Corinne Blackmer**

*Tuesdays*

**Tehilim in Times of Trouble**

From 8:00 to 9:00 pm via Zoom, the group explores the ancient poetry of the Biblical Psalms with Professor Corinne Blackmer.

*Thursdays*

**Mini Morning Learning Service**

From 8:15 to 9:15 am, this later morning service via Zoom usually includes a d'var Torah by Captain Becky May or another volunteer.



**Jon-Jay Tilsen**

*Mondays*

**Rashi Study Group: II Kings**

From 8:00 to 8:30 am adults meet via Zoom to read Rashi's commentary.

**Talmud Berakhot Study Group**

From 10:00 to 11:00 am, a weekly online study of Talmud B. Masekhet Berakhot with Rabbi Tilsen. Not meeting Dec. 24 and 31.

**Facebook Digest Available**

Everyone is encouraged to join the [BEKI Facebook group](#). You'll enjoy the humor, community information, and links to cultural opportunities.

For those members who do not have a Facebook account but want to see the information, conversations, and humor posted there, just email [bulletin@beki.org](mailto:bulletin@beki.org) to request the weekly Facebook digest, sent each Friday.

**Wanted: Bulletin Editor**

BEKI is looking for an editor for our monthly bulletin. (Rachel Bashevkin is serving only as Interim Editor.) Would you be willing to step into this volunteer position? The job includes gathering, editing, and writing content for BEKI's monthly newsletter. Please reply to [president@beki.org](mailto:president@beki.org)

# Local Delivery for All Your Hanuka Needs

Light up the festival of lights with Sefad Hanuka candles. New items in stock include the Emanuel hammered metal pomegranate hanukia and the hammered silver concentric arcs design.

At the BEKI Gift Shop, we have a lovely selection of gifts for children: plush menorahs, soft teddies, Hanuka baking kits, Hanuka picture books, and sticker activity books. We also have new kippot, mezzuzot, and jewelry.

Look for photos and posts on the BEKI Facebook page.

While weather permits, we will be “open” and outdoors on Sunday Mornings and Monday evenings during the minyanim.

Personalized shopping is provided by Karen or Harriet. No contact shopping and free local delivery: Karen 203-430-2182 [kekassap@gmail.com](mailto:kekassap@gmail.com); Harriet 203-675-8607 [hfriedman@gmail.com](mailto:hfriedman@gmail.com).



Emanuel pomegranate hanukia.



BEKI's entryway windows display some of what the Gift Shop offers.

## HANUKA GREETINGS FROM SISTERHOOD

BY MIMI GLENN, PRESIDENT

The Board of Sisterhood wishes you a happy and healthy Hanuka. Thank you to all who have renewed their Sisterhood membership. It is not too late to become a new or renewed Sisterhood member. Dues are still only \$25 (which includes a \$15 donation to Women's League for Conservative Judaism, to help perpetuate the Conservative movement). For more information, please contact me at 203-397-3851.

### A few Hanuka facts

- The Greeks were a threat to Jewish survival because of their pervasive culture, but the Jews were able to survive.
- The story of Hanuka commemorates the victory of monotheism over paganism.
- The story of Hanuka precedes the story of Christmas



Emanuel silver concentric arcs hanukia.

by over a century.

- If Judaism had been destroyed, Islam and Christianity might not have come into being.
- Some of the most important traditions of Hanuka are telling the story of Judah and the Maccabees, lighting the menorah for eight nights, eating jelly donuts and/or potato pancakes fried in oil, and playing the dreidel (in Hebrew, *sevivon*) game.
- On the second night this year—which is Friday, December 11—the menorah

is lit *before* the Shabbat candles, and on the third night—which is Saturday, December 12—*after* havdala.

- Light the shamash, the service candle. Recite the blessings, then light the candles beginning from the left.

*Source: The Complete Idiot's Guide to Jewish History and Culture by Rabbi Benjamin Blech*

**Chai Fund** (minimum \$18) to support synagogue operations

- To BEKI in appreciation for the online High Holiday services by Mark Malkin
- To Chris Mordecai with sympathy on the passing of Barbara Mordecai by Rayna & David Belowsky
- To Yaron Lew with sympathy on the passing of Liora Lew by Roz Bokoff

**Synagogue Fund** (minimum \$10) to support synagogue operations

- To Shari Hoffman with sympathy on the passing of Lawrence H. Hoffman by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To Harold Birn with Refu' a Shlema for his mother by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To Yaron Lew with sympathy on the passing of his brother-in-law by David & Darryl Kuperstock

**BEKI Religious School**

- To Shari Hoffman with sympathy on the passing of Lawrence H. Hoffman by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow

**Harold & Arthur Ratner Memorial Fund**

- In memory of Miriam Lubov Kahn by Richard & Zlatka Kahn
- To Harriet Carchman & Family with sympathy on the passing of Cindy Carchman Fruchtman by the Ratner family
- To Mikki Ratner in honor of her birthday by Richard & Zlatka Kahn

**Yahrzeit Fund** (\$5 minimum) to support synagogue operations

- In memory of her aunt Martha Kantrowitz by Sherry Kent
- In memory of Herman Goldstein by Shirley Goldstein Frumento

- In memory of Jacob Sokoloff by Shirley Goldstein Frumento
- In memory of Solomon (Shlomo) Kolodny by Herb Kolodny
- In memory of Lester P. Isenberg by Janis Isenberg
- In memory of Esther Kabakoff by Marvin Kabakoff
- In memory of Sylvia Feldman by Sara Salomon
- In memory of Louis Donner by Lillian Donner-Jacobson
- In memory of her father Reuben "Rubie" Vine by Roberta Vine
- In memory of Robert Zlotoff by Ronald Zlotoff and Donna Kemper
- In memory of her mother Rose Goldring Brunswick by Barbara Cushen & family
- In memory of his wife Ellen Slopak Schwartz by David Schwartz
- In memory of Irving Rudof by Steve & Joanne Rudof
- In memory of Mildred Lidsky by Sandi Lidsky
- In memory of Barbara Belcher by Sandi Lidsky
- In memory of Almo Alter by Diana Firestone
- In memory of Florence Senna Kaufman by Ann Cassarino
- In memory of Norma Granoff by Jeff Granoff
- In memory of Sam Granoff by Jeff Granoff
- In memory of Simon Frank by Lauren & Phillip Brown
- In memory of Jack Frankel by Stewart Frankel & Joy Kaufman
- In memory of her mother Esther Melnick by Margie & Jay Hirshfield
- In memory of her dear grandpa Morris Gray by Toby & Alan Ignal
- In memory of her wonderful dad Irving Greenberg by Toby & Alan Ignal
- In memory of Arlene Chirgwin by Roberta Atteson
- In memory of Susan Gell by John & Marcia Gell
- In memory of Evelyn Cohen by Cliff & Donna Cohen
- In memory of Harry Goldberg by Eileen Schuman
- In memory of Samuel L. Snyder by Robert J. Snyder
- In memory of her beloved father Ben Kugell by Harriet Pearlman
- In memory of Bernice Auerbach by Hillel & Sara-Ann Auerbach
- In memory of Jacob Ripkin by Jeri Ripkin
- In memory of Edith Sokoloff Goldstein by Shirley Goldstein Frumento
- In memory of David Sagerman by Robert Sagerman
- In memory of William Seth Deitch by Teddy Deitch
- In memory of Samuel Goldblatt by Janet Chernikoff
- In memory of Herman Pintell by Janet Chernikoff
- In memory of Harold Chernikoff by Janet Chernikoff
- In memory of his father Jack Nankin by David Nankin
- In memory of Jackson Wilcox by David Nankin
- In memory of her beloved grandfather Louis Brunswick by Barbara Cushen
- In memory of her dear brother Max Brunswick by Barbara Cushen
- In memory of her beloved father George Brunswick by Barbara Cushen
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- In memory of her beloved daughter Donna Wright by Barbara Cushen
- In memory of Gloria Goldberg by Arlene Thrope
- In memory of Shirley Cohen by James & Susan Cohen
- In memory of her father Samuel Levine by Bernice Margolis & family

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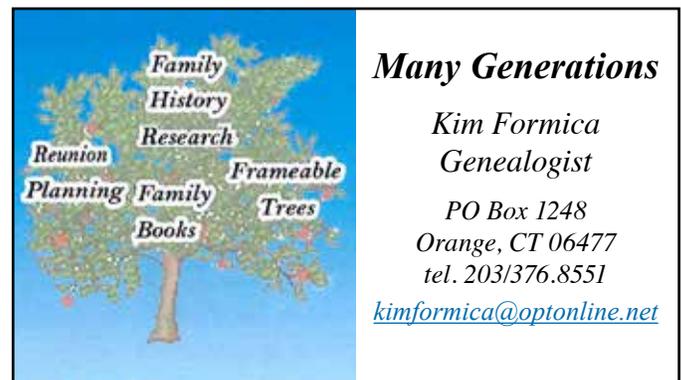


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# LONGING FOR HUMAN INTERACTION



Yaron Lew

*This is adapted from his message on October 28*

Last week I had the pleasure of conducting a BEKI schmooze. I was struck by the number of people attending. We had 51 participating “screens” with many of them having two family members. I was so delighted to be able to do something to reach out and virtually touch our community. It showed me both the importance of our online programs and how incredibly satisfying it can be to contribute to them. So, if you’ve never joined our online programs, I strongly recommend you give it a try. If you can’t join due to conflicts of timing, many of our programs are also recorded and are available on our website to be viewed at your leisure.

## BEKI Service Schedule

- **Sunday 9:00 to 9:30 am** (outdoors\* & via Zoom)
- Sunday 5:45 pm (via Zoom)
- Monday 7:00 am (via Zoom)
- **Monday 5:45 to 6:00 pm** (outdoors\* & via Zoom)
- Tuesday 7:00 am (via Zoom)
- Tuesday 5:45 pm (via Zoom)
- Wednesday 7:00 am (via Zoom)
- Wednesday 5:45 pm (via Zoom)
- Thursday 8:15 am (via Zoom)
- Thursday 5:45 pm (via Zoom)
- Friday 7:00 am (via Zoom)
- **Friday 6:00 to 6:40 pm** (inside: sanctuary)
- **Saturday 9:30 to 11:00 am** (outdoors\*)

Potential in-person service opportunities are **boldface**

\* Weather permitting (in sanctuary in inclement weather)

Please wear face masks and keep six feet distancing. Out of town guests are welcome if they have adhered to State policies on quarantine. Prayer books and chairs are provided, or bring your own. Weekday outdoor services are in the courtyard, Saturdays in the parking lot.

So that we can anticipate the size of the group and keep records for possible contact tracing, RSVP to [jjtilsen@beki.org](mailto:jjtilsen@beki.org), [bekitefilla@gmail.com](mailto:bekitefilla@gmail.com), or the minyan captain. Please be aware that there might be changes to the in-person service plans in response to public health conditions or other circumstances. For the latest information, please check the weekly BEKI Happenings or email us about the specific date you are interested in.

**Since any group gathering has inherent risks, participants need to make their own informed choices as to what is best for them.**

## Easy Fundraiser

The BEKI office sells Stop & Shop gift cards, which are debit cards for groceries or gasoline. This is an ongoing fundraiser that costs you nothing. Contact Peggy [office@beki.org](mailto:office@beki.org) to arrange safe pickup.

## Donate

Fast and easy at [www.beki.org/give](http://www.beki.org/give)

# NOW WHAT?

**A**t last, Americans are unified in a shared political belief, a proposition felt deeply by an overwhelming majority of adults.

The belief is that half of the voters in this country made a big mistake and voted for the wrong guy.

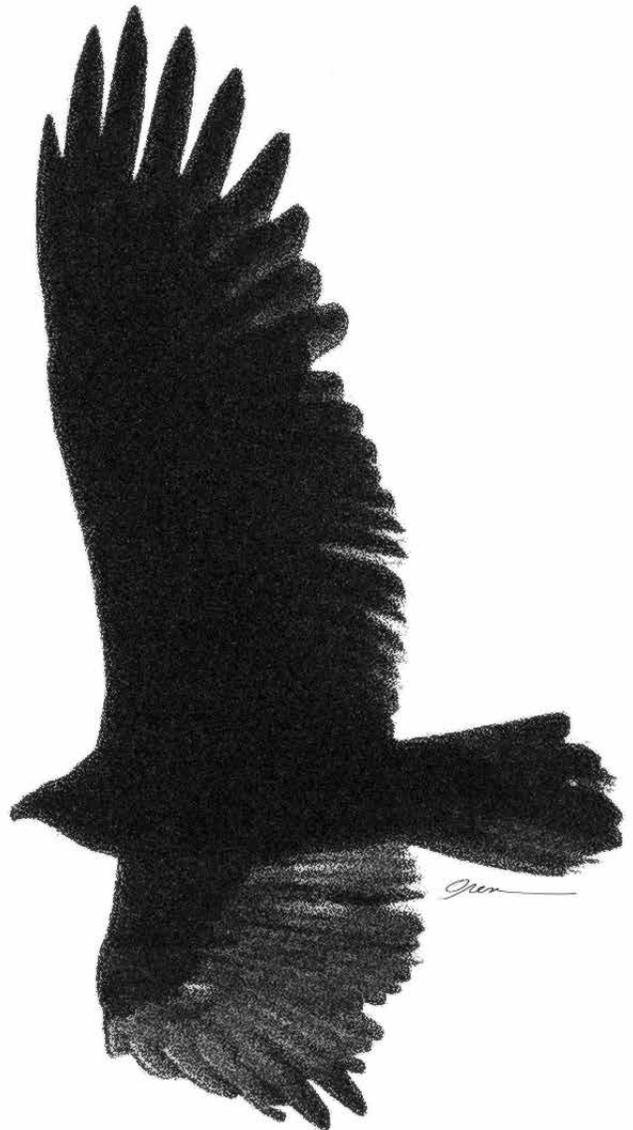
The words and policies coming out of Washington and the statehouses do have life-and-death global impact. But so do actions determined in corporate headquarters and at your kitchen table.

Election results may affect your mood and impel you to update your priorities, but the essence of what we must do has not changed. Our platform and agenda remain before us.

Core beliefs and a mission unify the Jewish People. Our mission is to support families and to build and manage schools, synagogues and public service agencies. Self-support, self-management, self-reliance, self-defense are as important as deep connections with our neighbors and civil society. The strength and success of our synagogue community and associated schools is part of what provides for the future of the Jewish People as well as for the free and democratic civil society that many of us aspire to build.

At the core of our Jewish project is study of the classical sources, particularly Scripture, Mishna, Talmud, Law and Midrash. Reading these directly in pairs or groups is the driving force creating a shared heritage, developing critical thinking skills, and practicing open inquiry. The values of our sages expressed in the classical works address the underlying concerns of contemporary issues. In those sources we find a spectrum of opinions, some forward-looking and progressive, some atavistic and reactionary. We find the most eloquent statements about the unity and equality of humanity alongside occasional crude racism. The distance of the centuries eases the emotional response and permits us to master rejected ideas without shutting down discourse. Just as often, those texts inspire us and humble us when we realize that we have not yet lived up to ideals articulated long ago.

The study of our shared Hebrew heritage provides global and temporal synergy that seems hard to match. It brings together people who might not otherwise interact, creating a forum for those with competing interests or alternative



analyses to communicate respectfully, bridging the gaps.

The issues on the civic agenda have not changed: Medical care, immigration, climate change, racial harmony, economic and educational opportunity, faltering institutions, to name a few. While strategies in the halls of Congress will be adjusted, the work of helping people locally, study, learning, and advocating will have to proceed in any case. Whether the election results make all of this harder or easier remains to be seen, but it is clear that the work remains before us.

The election is over; it is time to get back to work.



Shimon the Righteous used to say: The World stands on three things: Torah, Service, and Acts of Kindness. (*Avot 1:2*)





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