

The Current

“The VOICE over many waters ...” Psalm 29

MAYIM RABIM

 מַיִם רַבִּים

 CONGREGATION



Offering Support

As I write this prior to Pesach, I am reminded of the story of the person who approaches Rabbi Yosef Dov Soloveitchik before the Seder asking if it is permissible to have four cups of milk at the Seder instead of four cups of wine. The Rabbi asks if he is considering using milk because he is ill. No, he replies, it is because wine is more expensive.

The Rabbi responds by not only giving the poor person sufficient money for wine but enough funds for an entire Seder. The Rabbi's students question, "The person asks about milk and you send him away with more money than is necessary for wine?" The Rabbi responds, "If the person was asking about milk, then obviously he did not have enough money to buy meat and other necessities for the Seder either."

Was the question really about using milk instead of wine? No. When Rabbi Soloveitchik really listened and inquired, he was able to hear so much more of what was needed.

Part of my job as a rabbi is to listen and to ask insightful questions. My goal is to be able to help members in times of need. Sometimes people alert me to what is going on for them. Sometimes through conversation I learn about others' struggles. Yet there are times that I do not know of challenges faced until well after the fact. Often this makes me sad, because I would've wanted to offer my support.

If I don't know you are in the hospital, I can't visit or, if preferable, call to check in. (With HIPAA, the days of hospitals notifying congregations of members on the census are over.) If I don't know you've been laid off from your job, I can't call to be a sounding board or offer advice. If I don't know that you are facing some scary medical tests, I can't offer to assist you as you journey through the unknown days ahead.

I understand that some would prefer not to share, even with a rabbi. I can respect that desire for privacy. Please know however, that confidentiality is my highest priority and that what you tell me will not be shared with others in the congregation. On the other hand, some have let me know about their situation and welcome their name being voiced during the mi-shebeirach prayer of healing, or being offered a refuah shleimah, wishes of healing, in *The Current*, as a way of alerting congregants to the situation they are facing.

We are a small community. Many find the concerns expressed and prayers offered by others encouraging. We are also a very caring community. We hope to celebrate and acknowledge the happy occasions in our members' lives and to offer support during times of sadness, illness, and stress. I don't read minds. If you don't tell me, I will not know.

Please, alert me if you or someone you know is in need of my support.

Rabbi Sharon Stiefel



Ritual and Program Schedule



*All events are held at 4401 York Avenue South
in Minneapolis (Friends Meeting House)
unless otherwise specified.*

Thursday May 5 Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day)

Sunday May 8, 4:00 – 5:30 PM
Book Group

We are reading *All The Light We Cannot See*, by Anthony Doerr.
Where: Home of Elaine Frankowski, contact office@mayimrabim.org for
address or check your directory.

Wednesday May 11 Yom HaZikaron (Israel Memorial Day)

Thursday May 12 Yom HaAtzmaut (Israel Independence Day)

Friday May 13 6:15 – 7:30 PM
Kabbalat Shabbat Service

Services led by Rabbi Stiefel and congregants.
A dairy vegetarian potluck Shabbat dinner follows services.

Tuesday evenings: May 17 & 24, 7:00 – 8:30 PM

Technology and the Dance Between Jewish and World Civilizations,
an adult learning series taught by Rabbi Jeffrey Schein

This series is part of a national Covenant Foundation Project--*Text Me: Ancient Jewish Wisdom Meets Contemporary Technology*. The Foundation is helping to underwrite the program's cost. Registration is available at <https://ttsp.org/node/477> or by calling (651) 698-8807.

Sunday afternoon May 22 3:30 – 6:30 PM
Lag BaOmer Potluck Picnic and Jam Session

The 33rd day of counting the Omer, between Passover and Shavuot, is traditionally a day of parties, games and parades. Join us for a potluck picnic (dairy/vegetarian), jam session and sing-along. If you have a musical instrument, bring it along; we're counting on you to be the jam session. Members and non-members, Jews and non-Jews, and people of all ages are welcome. Come eat, sing, schmooze and enjoy yourself!

Where: (Location TBA - a lovely park somewhere!)



Ritual and Program Schedule



Saturday, May 28, 9:00 AM – noon Shabbat Morning Program

9:00 AM: Continental Breakfast

10:00 AM: Study the concept of *Ger Toshav*

11:00 AM: Brief Sabbath service

Come explore the concept of *Ger Toshav* mentioned in the Torah portion. A *Ger Toshav*, often translated as resident alien, is neither a Jew nor a convert.

A *Ger Toshav* lives among Jews and is supportive of Judaism. Some in today's Jewish community are calling for the renewal of this ancient category of affiliation integral to the continuity of the Jewish people.

There will **not** be a lunch following services.

...and in June

Friday June 3, 6:15 – 7:30 PM Kabbalat Shabbat Evening Service

Services led by Rabbi Stiefel and congregants. Rabbi Jeffrey and Deborah Schein will report on the Reconstructionist "*Wrestling with Jewish Peoplehood*" conference..

A dairy vegetarian potluck Shabbat dinner follows services.

Saturday evening June 11 – Monday June 13, Shavuot; there will be no services at Mayim Rabim.

Saturday June 11, 7:30 – 9:30 PM Tikkun Leil Shavuot

An evening of study led by Rabbi Stiefel. We will observe the tradition of spending the first evening of Shavuot in study and discussion, in preparation for the holiday. Refreshments will be served.

Friday June 17

Shabbat Night Out - Home hospitality potluck dinners

Please email Isaac_kaufman@yahoo.com if you would like to host a dinner and tell him how many guests you can have.

Saturday June 25, 9:30 AM – noon Shabbat Morning Service

Services led by Rabbi Stiefel and congregants followed by Kiddush and dairy vegetarian potluck lunch.



If you would like to make a contribution, send it to Mayim Rabim Congregation, 2751 Hennepin Ave S, Suite 236, Minneapolis, MN 55408. You may also donate online through PayPal on our website: www.mayimrabim.org

We acknowledge with gratitude this donor to the general fund:

- Jerri Pumroy – in honor of Claire Diamond-Wheeler's Bat Mitzvah

... and these prayer book donations by

- Patty Diamond and John Wheeler in honor of Claire becoming a Bat Mitzvah, in honor of Don Masler for his excellent and effective tutoring for Claire



We thank

Howard Goldberg, Jeremy Fisher, and Isaac Kaufman for helping to organize the Purim celebration.

...wish

Barbara Sarapas a refuah shleimah/speedy recovery.





Lag BaOmer Potluck Picnic And Jam Session

Sunday, May 22, 3:30 – 6:30 pm

(Location TBA - a lovely park somewhere!)



The 33rd day of counting the Omer, between Passover and Shavuot, is traditionally a day of parties, games and parades. Join us for a potluck picnic (dairy/vegetarian), jam session and sing-along. If you have a musical instrument, bring it along; we're counting on you to be the jam session. Members and non-members, Jews and non-Jews, and people of all ages are welcome. Come eat, sing, schmooze and enjoy yourself!



Shabbat Night Out - Home hospitality potluck dinners

On **Friday June 17** our congregants will hold home hospitality Shabbat dinners. Please email Isaac_kaufman@yahoo.com if you would like to host a dinner and how many guests you can invite.



Mayim Rabim Book Club

will meet on Sunday, May 8, at 4:00 pm to discuss Anthony Doerr's *All The Light We Cannot See*.

Our host is Elaine Frankowski.

Our next book selection: *The Museum of Extraordinary Things* by Alice Hoffman. The date and location have not yet been selected.

Keep reading and questioning.





Mayim Rabim Board Meeting Summary – March 2, 2016

Board Members attending: Celia Gershenson, Larry Gravitz, Marc Lamm, Sandra Levine, and Helen Romanishan

Guests attending: Ina Gravitz

Committee updates:

Ritual: Ad Hoc Shabbat Committee has already received responses from the discussion at the Annual Meeting.

Tikkun Olam: Larry Gravitz was appointed chair.

Finance: The Board officially accepted the restricted donation from Deborah and Jeffrey Schein to purchase a white High Holiday Torah cover.

Elections: Ron Giteck and Jeffrey Schein will run for Board members-at-large seats and Ina Gravitz for secretary. Sandra Levine will run for Treasurer, Larry Gravitz for Tikkun Olam Chair, and Celia Gershenson will remain on the Board for year 2 of her term.

Rabbi Stiefel will be asked to attend Board Meetings instead of meeting with the liaison. She has indicated her wish to do so.

The Board analyzed the Annual Meeting procedure and decided that items for discussion, e.g., bylaws, should precede committee reports and that a tasks list should be developed to serve as a template before the next Annual Meeting.

The next meeting will be on April 12, 2016.

Engaging With The Minneapolis Friends

The Minneapolis Friends (Quakers) have graciously shared their beautiful meeting house with our congregation for many years. On March 20, the Friends invited Rabbi Stiefel and Isaac Kaufman to attend their Sunday meeting and talk about the history and values of Mayim Rabim and Reconstructionist Judaism in general. The Friends were (not surprisingly) great listeners, but also had some very interesting questions. And we got to lead them in a sing-along of "Gesher Tzar Meod," a song with a truly universal message.

Many thanks to the Friends for this opportunity to deepen the understanding between our two communities. We should absolutely return the gesture by inviting some of the Friends to a Shabbat service, so we can learn more about them.



Sunday, May 1, 2016, 2:00 PM Scrap Stories – Panel Discussion

The Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest will hold a panel discussion about Jews in the scrap business in the Upper Midwest. Five people who were formerly in this business will talk about their experiences. Linda Schloff, a former Director of the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest will moderate the discussion.

Where: Sabes JCC

Cost: Free

Produced by the Jewish Historical Society of the Upper Midwest

Scrap Stories is currently on display in the Tychman Shapiro Gallery & Shared Walls Exhibition Areas at the Sabes JCC through May 26th.



Wednesday May 4, 7:00 PM Yom Hashoah Commemoration

YOM HASHOAH



COMMÉMORATION

Don Burris, co-counsel on the Nazi looted art case that inspired the recent film *Woman in Gold*, will speak. Holocaust survivor Eva Gross and third generation Judi Shink will relate family stories about Holocaust artifacts.

Where: Beth Jacob Congregation, 1179 Victoria Curve, Mendota Heights, 55118.

Admission: Free and open to the public.

For more information email susie@minndakjcrc.org

The Yom HaShoah Commemoration is co-sponsored by the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas, Children of Holocaust Survivors Association in Minnesota (CHAIM), Beth Jacob Congregation, the Minneapolis Jewish Federation, the Jewish Federation of Greater St. Generations After MN.

continued on next page



Thursday, May 5, 7:00 PM The Twin Cities Jewish Book Series Presents Rowan Pope

On *Yom Hashoah*, Holocaust Remembrance Day Rowan Pope will discuss his book, *Six Chairs: A Holocaust Survivor's Story*.

As a boy growing up in Poland, Joe Grosnacht and his brothers would line up six chairs to make a pretend train to ride. Years later, Grosnacht recreated that scene in a picture, drawing himself seated in the front chair, the other five empty; he is the only member of his family to have survived the Holocaust.

Award-winning Minnesota artist Rowan Pope collaborated with students from Breck School to capture Joe Grosnacht's life through short stories and illustrations. The result is *Six Chairs: A Holocaust Survivor's Story*.

Where: Sabes JCC, 4330 Cedar Lake Rd S., Minneapolis

Registration: None required; free event

Presented in partnership with Sabes JCC and generous support from The Friends of the St. Paul Public Library and the George Kaplan Memorial Foundation.



Sunday, May 8, 4 PM Artist Salon series

Rimon concludes this year's Artist Salon series with a world premiere, *Copyright or Birthright: Performing the Music of Ofer Ben-Amots*. Revel in the music and join Ora Itkin and Ofer Ben-Amots as they discuss the perils and possibilities when a composer sends his music into the world.

Where: Bedlam Lowertown, 213 4th St E., St. Paul. **Cost:**
\$12



Tuesday May 10 & Sunday, May 15

★ SUNDAY, MAY 15 @ THE SABES JCC ★

YOM HA'ATZMAUT

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY FESTIVITIES FREE FOR ALL AGES

4:00 – 6:00 PM

- Family activities including arts & crafts, games, face painting and more!
- Israeli LEGO® activities by jbrick
- Petting Zoo & Bounce House
- Ultimate Frisbee
- Live Klezmer music
- Great food available for purchase

5:30 PM • MUSIC BY LOCAL CHOIRS

6:30 PM • HALEHAKA

Sure to inspire and delight, join us for a live performance by popular Israeli band, Halehaka, formerly a part of the Israel Defense Forces Military Band.



**Yom Ha'zikaron
Twin Cities Commemorations**
Remember Israel's Fallen Soldiers
TUESDAY, MAY 10 • 7:00 PM
Sabes JCC Minneapolis & St. Paul JCC
Please join us for an evening of remembering Israeli's fallen soldiers and victims of terrorism.

For more information, please contact
Shay Elam: selam@sabesjcc.org

Proudly presented by: Sabes JCC, St. Paul JCC and the Jewish Federations of Minneapolis & Greater St. Paul.
Sponsored by: IAC Beyachad, Genesis Philanthropy Group, RAJMN, Zerkalo and Jewish National Fund.





April 30th – May 22nd, 2016 Minnesota Jewish Theatre Company *Bad Jews* by Joshua Harmon, directed by Hayley Finn

Joshua Harmon's *Bad Jews*, directed by Hayley Finn explores conflicts over family, faith and identity in this edgy, new comedy. Crammed in a Manhattan apartment the night after their grandfather's funeral, two cousins face off in a battle to inherit a family heirloom. First in the ring – college senior Daphna, who oozes "Super Jew" from her upcoming rabbinical studies to her Israeli boyfriend. Her opponent is Liam, a secular and entitled grad student who arrives with shiksa girlfriend Melody in tow. With Liam's younger brother Jonah thrust into the impossible position of peacemaker, the rivals argue, insult and try to outwit each other to the bitter, hilarious end.

Where: Highland Park Community Center Theater, 1978 Ford Parkway, St. Paul, MN 55116.

Cost: Individual tickets range in price from \$20 - \$32. Student and group discounts are available.

Reservations: call **(651) 647-4315** or visit www.mnjewishtheatre.org.

Doorways Program for *Bad Jews* Sunday, May 1 following the 1:00 p.m. performance CLE: Rules of Inheritance

In this continuing legal education seminar, a featured panel of experts will discuss issues around inheritance, interweaving the perspectives of civil law, Jewish law and tradition, and the impact on families themselves. Moderated by attorney Phil Goldman (1 CLE credit applied for).

Tuesday May 3, 7:00 PM –Family Slam! A FREE Story Slam Event featuring *Bad Jews* cast members and other special guests

Got family drama? Tell your story of family rivalry and strife to our judges in 5 minutes or less and win fun prizes. Stories can be funny or tearjerking, "über" Jewish or not at all.

Sign-up at 6:30 PM, story slam at 7:00 PM. There are only 10 slots for slammers so arrive early!



Thursday, May 12 20s & 30s Night

Young and Jewish? Call for your discounted ticket to Bad Jews—just \$15— and stay after the show to mingle with the cast.



Tuesday May 17, 6:00 PM

Minnesota Jewish Theater Company 25th Anniversary Benefit

An evening with underwater archaeologist and explorer Barry Clifford, best know for discovering the remains of the wrecked pirate ship Whydah. He will talk about shipwrecks and Jewish pirates. Hospitality will include plentiful hors d'oeuvres and drinks.

Where: The Women's Club of Minneapolis, 410 Oak Grove St. Minneapolis

Reservations: \$125, call 651-647-4315 or visit mnjewishtheatre.org.



From Your Editor

Why do we Jews open so many events, from a Board of Directors meeting at Mayim Rabim to a Jews for Bernie gathering in New York City, with a d'var torah rather than a prayer? Surely it's not just habit. I believe it's to remind ourselves that Judaism is a way of life and that what we do should be done in the light of our foundational document and its interpretations. We choose to support a cause or a candidate, to open doors or close them, to attend a gathering or sponsor one, with attention to how Judaism tells us to think or act in that particular situation. So let the next d'var torah you hear influence the thoughts and behavior that comes next. And when you give a d'var torah, pick one that is relevant to what comes next.



MAYIM RABIM CONGREGATION is affiliated with the Jewish Reconstructionist movement (www.jewishrecon.org). We are an urban Jewish community that comprises people of diverse ages, abilities, sexual orientations, cultural backgrounds, and financial resources. It is our mission to create and sustain spaces that enhance the practice of Judaism in the contemporary world; to that end, we are a house of prayer, of study, and tikkun olam (the repair of the world). As Reconstructionists, we view Judaism as an evolving religious civilization and claim a shared heritage with all Jews. Our synagogue is governed by an elected board of directors:

Marc Lamm, President
Sandra Levine, Treasurer and Finance Co-Chair
Helen Romanishan, Secretary
Celia Gershenson, Member At-Large
Larry Gravitz, Member At-Large
Jeremy Fisher, President Emeritus
Sharon Stiefel, Rabbi
Dana Fox, Congregational Administrator
Isaac Kaufman, Membership; Barbara Nordstrom-Loeb, Ritual; Dana Fox, Finance Co-Chair
Ron Giteck, Isaac Kaufman, Adult Programs
Larry Gravitz, Tikkun Olam

Need information about Mayim Rabim?
Want to know times and places of events?

Website: www.mayimrabim.org

Email: office@mayimrabim.org

Phone: 612-247-5490

Unless otherwise noted, events are held at the
Friends Meeting House,

4401 York Ave. S, Minneapolis

Mailing Address:

2751 Hennepin Ave. S, #236, Mpls, MN 55408



The Current is a monthly newsletter of Mayim Rabim Congregation. Submission deadline is the 15th of each month for the month following.

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