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The Rabbi's Column: GETTING TO KNOW YOU

by Rabbi Dr. Julie Hilton Danan

I'm really excited about the many opportunities New York has to offer, and as I write this I'm looking forward to seeing my first musical at Lincoln Center, *The King and I*. Which makes me think of the great Rodgers and Hammerstein classic, "Getting to Know You." In fact, it could be the theme song for my first months at Pleasantville Community Synagogue!

My number one priority as your new rabbi is building our community, and the number one thing I am doing in my first few months here is getting to know you, our members. You are our greatest resource, and I want to hear about your priorities, your Jewish journeys, what brought you to PCS and what keeps you here. I want to know what you enjoy about our congregation, what concerns or troubles you and what you need from our community. Please tell me about your personal passions and priorities, and let's consider together how you can share them with other members of our community.

Of course, I meet members because we are working together on projects or I am facilitating their family's life-cycle events, or visiting people who are ill or recuperating (**please call my home office: 914-495-3843 if you have any kind of pastoral emergency or need a visit**). But you don't have to be a board member, chairperson or have a special occasion or pastoral need to get together and just chat. I know that you are busy, and that's why there are so many different ways and times to connect.

I'm glad that our social events are continuing to grow! I met many members in my first few weeks at PCS at three different "meet and greets" hosted by members, and later at our Hanukkah party. I'm definitely looking forward to the Progressive Dinner on January 30 as an occasion to meet more people! Avraham and I have also hosted two very fun PCS events at our home, a Sukkot Open House, and a December 25 Chinese Shabbat Dinner. Thanks to everyone who came!

Thursday afternoons at PCS are all about you. Almost every Thursday, I "host" a Brown Bag Lunch at PCS so bring your lunch (vegetarian or dairy is great) and join me for casual conversation or a discussion of Jewish current events—whatever interests you. We supply cold and hot drinks and paper goods. Or stop by on Thursdays after

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lunch until 3 pm if you just want to pop by and chat during my open office hours. Parents, stop by during Hebrew School on Thursday afternoons and say hi. We are planning to have some tea-time supplies in the entranceway to the sanctuary during Hebrew School so that we can all just “hang out” together more at PCS. I hope that you will feel like PCS is your home away from home and a place you like to be, a sanctuary of Shalom in your busy world.

If you can't get away during the day, email me at rabbi@shalompcs.com or call PCS or my home office number above and we can make a time to get together at your convenience.

Members have dropped by for an evening meeting at my office, or we have gone out to lunch or coffee together; I welcome any way that I can hear you and get to know you better!

And, of course, don't forget that we can get to know one another at PCS Shabbat services (and Torah study, and doing mitzvot)! For Fridays, please check your emails or the website for our Shabbat schedule, as we now rotate through a monthly variety of times and formats to better meet your needs: An 8 pm “Prime Time” adult-oriented service, a monthly *Mishpachah* Shabbat (including dinner) focused on the younger families, a SNAP Shabbat for those with special needs, and our regular Community Shabbats many weeks at 7:30 pm. By the way, all of our Friday night services that I lead now have musical accompaniment.

If you are interested in spiritual growth, please join me at 9:15 am most Saturday mornings for meditation and spiritual teachings. If you love traditional, song-filled davening, our Shabbat morning 10 am to noon service is the place to be. Stick around at noon for a light Kiddush lunch and more time to chat.

If Torah study is your passion, join me and our growing Torah study group at 12:30-1:15 pm on Saturdays, and come to our new First Wednesday Adult Education Nights at 7:30-9 pm; on January 6, I'll be teaching about “The Greatest Book Never Written.”

If service to others is where you best express your Judaism, please contact our office or chairperson Michael Gold at michaelgold@aol.com to join our reinvigorated Tikkun Olam committee. Our two focuses this year are supporting the needy in our local community, and learning about and working on refugee and immigration issues.

“Getting to know you” is a great experience for me. The more I get to know you, the more I am impressed by the depth of knowledge, the kindness, caring and dedication of our community. I wish you all good health and happiness in the year ahead, and hope to get to meet all of our members in the course of 2016!

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A Very Special Mitzvah

To further strengthen our community and fulfill a top priority from our Vision Committee surveys, I am looking for one very special and dedicated member who would like to be my partner as our **Caring Committee Chair**, a.k.a. our number one PCS Mitzvah Mensch! That person will help to organize our members when we need people to visit the sick, bring meals or help our members during their times of crisis or need. We already have some people who will help you, but they need a leader. If you think that this could be your mitzvah, please contact me and let's talk about it: rabbi@shalompcs.com.

Rabbinic Learning and Professional Development

If you came to Professor Sarah Tauber's lecture this fall (on her book, *Open Minds, Devoted Hearts*), you heard her say that it is crucial for rabbis in the field to continue learning Torah, not just in preparation for sermons and classes, but for its own sake. This month I will be doing just that at the annual OHALAH Rabbinic Conference for Renewal Rabbis in Broomfield, Colorado, the week of January 10. The theme is Deep Ecumenism, and I will be presenting a session on Jewish-Christian Dialogue about the Holy Spirit, with my colleague from California, Pastor Peg Shultz-Akerson. I will also be co-facilitating a panel on Interfaith Dialogue. I always come back from my rabbinic conferences with fantastic ideas, songs and resources. The last week in January, I will use a couple of weekdays off to attend the Machon Hadar Rabbinic Intensive in Manhattan and do some serious Talmud study with my colleagues. I'm sure that both these events will help to inspire, educate and refresh me to be a better rabbi for you!



Come visit me in my newly refurbished office.
Thank you to Evan Kingsley, Sheila Majors, Michael Mayers,
Leyla Nakisendi and everyone who has helped to fix it up and
make it more welcoming!

HEBREW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS



by Galit Sperling, Principal

In December in Hebrew School we enjoyed learning about all aspects of the holiday of Hanukkah and celebrating in a multitude of ways. As is our tradition, our Aleph, Bet and Gimmel students visited the residents of the Atria Senior Center in Briarcliff Manor to sing Hanukkah songs, practice the blessings and share cards and joy together. At PCS all of our students delved into the themes and relevance of the story of Hanukkah, and discussed ways we can bring light and hope into our community during this time of year. Students made hanukkiyot to take home to their families, played dreidel together and donated tzedakah.

During our weekly Sunday morning *tefillah* (prayer service), Rabbi Julie has encouraged our students to become comfortable on the bimah, with every class leading prayers each week. It is wonderful to see our students taking turns and singing along with traditional and new tunes, practicing community togetherness. Additionally, each b'nei mitzvah student will have a chance to lead prayers well in advance of his or her special day, both during Shabbat services, and on Sundays during Hebrew School. This involvement is very exciting for us to see and be a part of!

We look forward to the approaching winter months, as we get ready to celebrate the holiday of Tu B'Shevat, and schedule challah-making together with our Hebrew School families.

Important Upcoming Hebrew School Dates:

Thursday, January 7: Hebrew School classes resume

Sunday, January 17 (MLK Weekend): No classes

Friday, January 29 at 7:30 pm: Kabbalat Shabbat service led by Kitah Zayin (Grade 7 B'nei Mitzvah class)

Friday evening, February 5: Kitah Daled (Grade 4) Shabbaton service

Saturday evening, February 6: Kitah Hey (Grade 5) Havdalah service

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Celebrating Hanukkah



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Singing Hanukkah songs for residents of the Atria in Briarcliff Manor



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Making Hanukkiyot



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Eating yummy latkes



CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



Playing dreidel

...with intense concentration



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and last but not least...



Kitah Gimmel
Mock Shabbat



and proof that girls really do put on tefillin!

Maia Mayers' Mitzvah Project

Joseph was known for his “coat of many colors” given to him by his father. I have always loved clothes, shoes and shopping! My mitzvah project was collecting gently used winter coats for children for “Kids Kloset - Pass It On” (<http://www.wjcs.com/kids-kloset/>), which is part of Westchester Jewish Community Services (WJCS). My very generous neighbors and friends dropped used children’s coats on my front porch in April and through the fall. We have brought at least six large black garbage bags of coats to Kids Kloset plus some bags of used clothes and snow boots.



While we were there, my sister Aliya and I helped to sort clothes; that’s us in the picture; I’m wearing the shades. Aliya squeezed in an extra mitzvah project before college, as she was my driver. At one session, I packed a week’s worth of clothes for a girl my age so she could go to camp.

Sometimes Kids Kloset gets a call from a school that a child came to school on a freezing cold day without a coat.

Kids Kloset gets a coat to the school before the school day is out! This is just one example of over 8,000 bags of donations Kids Kloset has made to children in the Westchester area.

Aliya and I participated in the Kids Kloset annual fashion-show fundraiser, and my brother Aydin donated his photography services. I plan to continue volunteering with Kids Kloset as often as I am able; it’s a little tough during the school year because most of their hours are during the school day. My mother feels that mitzvah projects should last through high school (really forever, but moving away to college makes it hard to continue).

If you are interested in making a donation, Kids Kloset is always in need of new socks and underwear in all sizes, plus diapers and wipes. Money is always welcome too!

If anyone has coats or knows of anyone who wants to donate coats, I am collecting more this winter. I’d be happy to collect any donations at my house. We will take used clothes plus diapers (unused!) and wipes. Open packages are OK, too. Please email my mother at PCS (lnakisbendi@shalompcs.com), and we can arrange pickup/delivery of donations. Thank you in advance for all your help.

ASK THE RABBI



I had a great time visiting Kitah Gimmel and Morah Tammy on December 17! Kitah Gimmel members were bursting with questions and specially wanted to know about the Hebrew language: where it came from, why it is special and why we learn it. One of the things we talked about is that when you go to any synagogue in the world, you will be able to pray because you know the Hebrew prayers, and if you learn modern Hebrew (for example, in college), you will be able to converse with many Jews in Israel and other places around the world. Our students are way ahead of me, because I didn't go to Hebrew School and only started to learn Hebrew at age 15. My teacher handed me a chart of the Aleph-Bet and said, "Learn this for next week!"

We also talked about how everyone speaks Hebrew in Israel, that kids in Israel study Hebrew and Bible as part of their regular, everyday studies, and that they get a long vacation on Hanukkah! They also learn English in school and will now learn Arabic, and they sometimes learn French or other languages.

The students were curious about how and why I became a rabbi, how I like my job and how my kids liked my job when they were growing up. I explained that everyone has a special mission and job in this world, and as you grow up you feel inside yourself that this is something you are here to do. Some of them might become a rabbi or a cantor, which is cool, but the important thing is that everyone has a special mission in this world, and they will enjoy discovering and fulfilling theirs.

The students also asked for me to share a special Midrash about the Torah stories that they are learning, so I told them about how young Avram broke the idols in his father's idol shop because he realized that there is only one G-d. Somehow he didn't get in trouble (phew!) but actually got his father Terach to believe in one G-d, too! Midrashim are explanations and stories that we tell about the stories in the Torah.

One of the girls asked me why "only boys have to wear kippot." I responded that, in fact, I think that boys and girls alike should cover their heads in synagogue when learning Torah or praying, since we are an egalitarian congregation. I showed them my kippah!

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Open any publication in the month of December and you will inevitably see a "Year in Review," "Top 10 list," "Top 100 list," "Best pictures, best stories, moments, proposals, breakups, books, movies, cat videos..." You name it, there is a list.

It is very easy to read through a review of 2015 and be discouraged, depressed even. It seems that all we read about is war, intolerance, bigotry, poverty and tragedy. And yet...when one looks carefully, there is a hope. There are moments that uplift us, that reinstate our faith.

2015 was a year of a tremendous increase in gun violence. We witnessed great tragedy with the shootings at the Charleston Emanuel AME church, and yet, the families of those killed were able to hold tight to their faith and preach forgiveness. States like Virginia have tightened the restrictions in their gun laws, and the NBA, with its high-profile players, have aired PSAs condemning gun violence. Much of the country is living below the poverty line, and yet, many cities and states have successfully moved to increase the minimum wage to \$15/hour. There was great celebration as the Supreme Court voted to legalize and recognize same-sex marriage. Sports figures used their public profiles while students learned to organize in order to stand up to racism. Although there are many in the U.S. who do not recognize the existence of climate change, the nations of the world gathered in Paris and agreed on a course of action to deal with it. We have presidential candidates (and many others) trying to return us to the 1940s, when fear had the U.S. imprisoning our own innocent citizens and turning refugees away only to face certain death. And yet, we have Angela Merkel, chosen as Time's Woman of the Year, in part for her courage and tolerance in standing up to xenophobia and fear by providing a safe haven for Syrian refugees.



Much closer to home, we have our own remarkable moment. Rabbi Julie Danan penned a letter, signed and published by the nine members of the Pleasantville Clergy Association, calling for tolerance and respect. You can read this letter on the following page of this newsletter.

And as we all know, our own community, PCS, faced a tumultuous year in 2015. The year began with news that many thought might mean the demise of our congregation. And yet, a majority of the member families turned out to the congregational meeting to discuss our future. We all wanted to continue as a community, and we were not willing to let a change in rabbinical leadership change our future. We continued to see a hopeful future with the packed pews for Rabbi Julie's Havdalah audition service. Although we did lose a handful of member families, our friends, we gained so many wonderful, dedicated new families. There is a renewed energy, a renewed commitment as many of our members, both old and new, have chosen to be involved and to be present. We have held on to many traditions, like musical, joyful Shabbat services. But we are also creating many new traditions, like the Rabbi-led Torah study each week, a community Hanukkah party, Prime Time Shabbats and the Danan family's Sukkot Open House, just to name a few. There has been a resurgence in once-dormant committees, like Rosh Chodesh and Tikkun Olam, and the creation of new committees, like the Vision, Transition and Caring committees.

All of these events, these new traditions, these new committees require tremendous organization and participation. It is with great gratitude and appreciation that I recognize all of our congregants who have stepped up and have shown up. We moved through a difficult 2015, and by embracing the transition, together, we found, and continue to find, our moments of hope.

December 11, 2015

An Open Letter from Clergy and Religious Leadership of Pleasantville, New York

At this holiday season of light, hope and peace, we express our gratitude for living in these United States of America. Ours is a nation built on concepts and principles that guarantee our right to freedom of worship, whatever our religion. The protection of our diversity, pluralism and equality under the law are not only core values, they are founding ideals that make our nation great.

While there have been times in our nation's history when we failed to uphold these ideals, we must learn from our history. We must remain vigilant, striving to indeed be one nation and to seek justice for all.

It is for this reason we find the current backlash against Muslim citizens of our nation so deeply troubling, both as Americans and as people of faith. The sacred Scriptures of all our religions affirm the golden rule, "Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you," as well as the injunctions to welcome the stranger and to love our neighbors. There is no place for hatred or exclusion based on race, religion or national origin in our local or national community.

In the coming year, The Pleasantville Clergy Association invites you to join us as we embark on community programming in an effort to learn about one another's religions and get to know one another as neighbors. We encourage all members of our community to support our neighbors of all faiths and to speak out against any expressions of prejudice and bigotry, whether public or private.

We invite and encourage you to not be influenced by rhetoric of fear, and to reach out with hospitality to those whose cultures and religions are different from your own.

May peace be with you,
The Pleasantville Clergy Association

Rev. Dr. Debra J. K. Bronkema, Pleasantville Presbyterian Church
Father Hugh Burns, OP, Holy Innocents Parish
Rabbi Dr. Julie Hilton Danan, Pleasantville Community Synagogue
The Rev. Paul Egensteiner, Pastor, Emanuel Lutheran Church
The Rev. Mary B. Gregorius, Rector, St. John's Episcopal Church
Mahjabeen Hassan, MD, Chairperson American Muslim Women's Association
Rev. Colleen Holby
Rev. Suhee Kim, The United Methodist Church of Pleasantville
The Rev. Arlin Roy, LCSW, Foundation for Religion and Mental Health

On Aging and Dying: Grief

Sadly, we live today as a society of individuals rather than of community. For the most part, our homes are set apart from those of our neighbors, and we tend to value privacy above all else. And this carries over to the way we relate our deepest feelings, especially our grief. We grieve alone or perhaps in our tight-knit group but not communally. My experience even at funerals or shivas is that there is rarely a full expression of grief. The deepest feelings remain bottled up. In recent months I've attended two funerals and shiva minyanim where the deceased was past 90. What I heard is that they had a good long life. Of course that is true; but it doesn't negate the feeling of loss, the loss of a parent, for whom there was an unexpressed river of grief—unexpressed. I was merely a friend of the family, but I felt the lack keenly.

The poet Kahlil Gibran wrote, "The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain." We kid ourselves into thinking we can skip the journey downward and still rise to new heights. It can't be done. The loss, the sorrow, needs to have a voice. It holds the vital energy of life; so by not allowing grief, we deny joy. But there is much more to grief and its importance to us. Grief, deeply felt, brings with it compassion, compassion for all suffering. Otherwise, we anesthetize ourselves, so that we remain isolated in our walled-off self, separated from humanity and the oneness of all life. We reside in forgetting rather than remembering, and it is in remembering that we access our souls, our deepest being. The soul is the expansion, the reaching beyond ego and smallness to the edges of life, the source of true vitality.

Grief is also a way to deal with failure, with our shortcomings, our shadow. These remain hidden within us, consciously unknown, but sabotaging our relationship to others and ourselves. The full expression of grief is a release bringing these elements into consciousness. In the mystical Jewish tradition, the Kabbalah, we speak of the klippot, the shells that encase our divine aspects, our true inheritance. To make a tikkun, we need to reclaim and repair these shards. But we cannot repair what is unknown to us. That repair needs light, the light of awareness. And that is the ultimate gift of grief—it brings the hidden into the light. This is tikkun middot, the necessary counterpart and precursor to tikkun olam.

One final thought about grief. We all fear death, the demise of this body, this being, regardless of how we feel about an afterlife. That fear increases, binding us in psychic pain when we are unable to grieve, when we are unable to allow all our feelings to flow. And for me personally, I find it healing when I can grieve alongside others who are suffering or experiencing loss and who allow that pain to be expressed. In this way, the death becomes a part of life, which it is, rather than something not to be spoken of, not to be acknowledged.

—Peter Schaffer

Pleasantville Community Synagogue

Kashrut Policy

Kashrut, the Torah's laws of proper food consumption, connect us to Jewish communities everywhere and to our tradition. Kashrut is also a spiritual discipline that helps make eating our daily meals into an act of holiness. Therefore, PCS adheres to the following Kashrut guidelines:

1. The PCS Kitchen is reserved for dairy and non-meat (parve = kosher fish, eggs, fruits and vegetables). Therefore, Oneg Shabbats and kiddushes at PCS are generally kosher dairy/parve.
2. Kosher meat (including kosher poultry) meals may be served under the rabbi's supervision, without making use of the kitchen facilities (securely wrapped items may be stored in the refrigerator). Non-kosher meat and poultry and, of course, pork or shellfish products or byproducts are never allowed.
3. Kosher caterers are preferred for synagogue meals and kiddushes, to maximize the kashrut level and make it welcoming for the greatest number of participants. Packaged food items purchased for PCS should have a recognized kosher symbol. However, vegetarian and dairy/parve items prepared in any kitchen may be brought to PCS.
4. Synagogue-sponsored religious events held off-site must adhere to these policies.
5. Synagogue-sponsored social events held off-site will either adhere to these policies, or include a kosher and/or vegetarian option.

If you have any questions about serving certain foods at PCS, please consult with Rabbi Julie.

This Is My God

by Herman Wouk



First published in 1959, sometimes with the subtitle “The Jewish Way of Life,” and most recently updated in 1988 (with a “new” chapter entitled “Israel at Forty”), this non-fiction work, which explains Judaism from an Orthodox perspective, now seems a bit dated. It is, however, a book for every Jew: very religious, not so religious, non-believer, but curious to learn more; non-Jews, too, can learn much from this book. For those who wish to find out all about Judaism, this book is for you! Some wonderful topics covered are survival of the Jews, the importance of the Sabbath, symbols of food, shelter, and clothing, the High Holy days and many more fascinating topics. I found this book to be like a very sweet cake; it is so rich that you can only take a small bite of it at one time!

Herman Wouk celebrated his 100th birthday in 2015 and, by all accounts, is still writing every day. He is particularly well known for his novels, including The Caine Mutiny, Marjorie Morningstar, The Winds of War and War and Remembrance. As The Caine Mutiny Court Martial, Wouk’s novel became a Broadway play and, later, a motion picture starring Humphrey Bogart. The film version of Marjorie Morningstar featured Natalie Wood and Gene Kelly, while the two TV miniseries of Wouk’s World War II novels starred Robert Mitchum.

Calling all bibliophiles!

Are you interested in participating in a PCS book group?

**If so, please contact Robin at awake.robin@gmail.com
and share your ideas!**

“First Wednesday”
Part Two of ADULT EDUCATION SERIES
WITH RABBI JULIE

Wednesday, Jan. 6, 7:30 pm

All are welcome, and no previous knowledge is necessary.



The Greatest Book *Never* Written

January 6, 7:30 pm

The Babylonian Talmud is the foundational text of Rabbinic Judaism, the crown of Jewish study. Once the province of the learned elite, with modern translations, tools and digital resources, the Talmud is now more accessible than ever to everyone. With 63 tractates (volumes) and over 6,200 pages, **the Talmud covers every topic under the sun, not just what we think of as "religion."** What's even more interesting is that this book isn't really a book and by law it was not written down for centuries. It's more like a conversation that never ends, and you can be part of it! **Come for an overview of the Talmud and experience a bit of classic Talmudic learning in a language you can understand.**

~ ~ ~



Come to PCS to celebrate Tu B'Shvat and

ROSH CHODESH!*

Wednesday, January 13, 7:30 pm

at Pleasantville Community Synagogue

**We'll have a mini-seder in honor of Tu B'Shvat,
the New Year of Trees, when we celebrate
the environment and appreciate
the fruits of the Land of Israel.**

**Lots of fun, lots of good food and wine,
and lots of good women!**

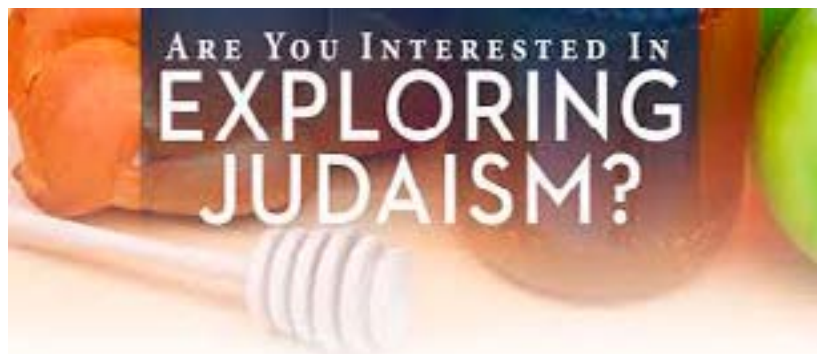


**To RSVP or for more information,
call Marcy Gray at PCS at 769-2672 or
e-mail Robin Berman at awake.robin@gmail.com.**

**Why do we celebrate the new moon every month?*

The Jewish nation is often compared to the moon.

Throughout history our light has waxed and waned but even in the darkest times it has never been extinguished. This is one reason why, when the head of the new moon - the Rosh Chodesh - appears for the first time in the night sky, we celebrate. Come join us!



In response to parent interest, Rabbi Julie has begun a monthly (or more often, if participants desire) adult class on "Exploring Judaism" during Hebrew school on one Thursday per month, from 5 - 6 pm, on the following dates:

January 21

February 11

March 10

April 7

Hebrew School parents *and interested others* are welcome in this friendly, relaxed mini-course, which is designed for:

- * **Parents who want to know more about their Jewish heritage**
- * **Non-Jewish parents of Jewish children who want to learn along with their kids**
- * **Individuals considering conversion to Judaism**
- * ***And anyone who wants to learn!***

No prior knowledge is needed and there will be plenty of opportunity for questions and discussion. If you have any questions or to RSVP, please contact Rabbi Julie at rabbi@shalompcs.com.

PCS Progressive Dinner Saturday, January 30 at 6:15 pm

Delicious Hors D'oeuvres
Dinner at Members' Homes
Fabulous Dessert Reception

Volunteer as a Host
or
Come as a Guest

(*couvert* for guests – \$20)

Plan to have an exciting evening progressing from one home to the next. Meet new people, have fun and enjoy great food in a relaxed, warm atmosphere.

We all start together at the same home for appetizers. We then draw names for dinner assignments and proceed to our host homes for the entrée. At the end of the evening we gather together once again for dessert at another member's home.

**If you did not get your invitation in
the mail, please call or e-mail:**

Marlo 914-213-7337

pcsprogressivedinner15@gmail.com

Did You Know...?

...that right outside Marcy Gray's office - on the right side when you come in the front doors of PCS - is a metal bin for collecting food donations to distribute to local food pantries and shelters.

Please bring in your boxes and cans (no glass!) of non-perishable food items.

**DONATE
FOOD
HERE**



Thank you!

ON THE HORIZON AT PLEASANTVILLE COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE...

We are very pleased and proud to announce that PCS Congregant **Vivian Chang Freiheit** will be presented with the Westchester Jewish Council's **Julian Y. Bernstein Distinguished Service Award**. The WJC solicited nominations of extraordinary community volunteers from its 150 member organizations. **The honorees, including Vivian, will be recognized at a county-wide reception on March 2, 2016.**

Vivian was nominated and recognized for her dedication and commitment to PCS. Vivian created, developed and leads the SNAP services at PCS (SNAP being an acronym for Special Needs at Pleasantville), in which families—members and non-members—with special-needs children are encouraged to attend Friday night services and programs specifically tailored to them. In addition, not only has Vivian made sure that the tradition of music is continued at PCS by chairing the committee that interviewed and coordinated the hiring of musical accompanists, but she also transcribed and notated all piano music to be performed, and she herself will be assisting and performing at a total of 23 services this year. We are most grateful for the personal commitment Vivian has made to helping PCS further embrace special-needs community, revitalizing the musical component at PCS and leading the way for music's renewed place in the joyful worship of our community.

For Rosh Chodesh Adar I in February, the **Rosh Chodesh Group** will meet on **Wednesday, February 10, from 7:30 pm to 9 pm**. There will be more information about this event in our February issue, but whatever the focus of the celebration, participants will pray, study, share, chat, and nosh.

For more information, please contact Committee Chair Robin Berman at awake.robin@gmail.com.

In our February issue, **the PCS Bookworm**, Eileen Jagoda, will review ***Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza*** by **Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole**.

KABBALAT SHABBAT IN JANUARY

On **Friday, January 8**, there will be a **Meditative Winter Kabbalat Shabbat** with music by **Lisa Lipkin at 8 pm**. Please join Lisa and Rabbi Julie for this adult-oriented Prime Time Shabbat, with a concurrent children's service led by Cantor Isabel. A special Oneg Shabbat will follow.

Friday, January 22, begins **Shabbat Shira, the Sabbath of Song**. Services, which start at **7:30 pm**, will feature the **PCS Band**. This is a community Shabbat for ALL ages. Come sing and dance for joy with all your friends at PCS! An Oneg Shabbat celebration will follow.

On **Friday, January 29**, please join us for **Shabbat for Tu B'Shvat: Honoring the Earth and Trees** with services beginning at **7:30 pm**. Rabbi Julie and the B'nei Mitzvah students will lead a service for the New Year of the Trees. The Oneg Shabbat will feature fruit and nuts in honor of Tu B'Shvat.

And please join **Cantor Isabel Kopstein** when she leads **Kabbalat Shabbat services on Friday, January 1, and Friday, , January 15, at 7:30 pm**, with much beautiful singing!

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SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES IN JANUARY

We have **Shabbat morning services each week from 10 am until noon**, followed by a Kiddush lunch. On those Shabbat mornings when Rabbi Julie is leading services, she will also facilitate **meditation at 9:15 am and Torah study at 12:30 pm**.

Shabbat morning on January 9 will be a **Family Education Shabbat for all ages**, with an emphasis on inter-generational discussion of the Torah.

Cantor Isabel Kopstein will lead **Shabbat morning services on January 2 and January 16 at 10 am**.

The **PCS Newsletter** would love to publish **photos taken in Israel** that include you and your family, from either past or current travels. Please send as an attachment via email to:

Roberta Korus - robertakorus@gmail.com



CONTRIBUTIONS

**We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who support
the Pleasantville Community Synagogue by remembering and honoring
their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.**

General Fund/Fair Share

Douglas Wehrle in memory of his beloved father, Walther Wehlre, on the occasion of his yahrzeit

Eileen Jagoda

Nancy Mayers, in memory of her beloved husband, Les Mayers

Leyla Nakisbendi and Michael Mayers

Carren Kleinman and Gerald Kaufman

Joanna Rizoulis and Seth Rutman, on the occasion of their daughter, Sophia, becoming a Bat Mitzvah

Bernard Gordon, in memory of his beloved parents, Alex and Dyna Gordon

Erica Murkofsky and Michael Rhodes

Claire and Oren Cohen

Barbara and Joe Bruno, in memory of Barbara's beloved mother, Alice Jacobs

Karen and Jeffrey Neuburger

Marilyn and Stephen Schultz

Ed Sperling Fund

Joanna Rizoulis and Seth Rutman, on the occasion of their daughter, Sophia, becoming a Bat Mitzvah

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Rhea Wolfthal, in memory of former PCS congregant, Ralph Harrison, and in memory of her beloved uncle, Louis Etkin, and her beloved mother, Syd Gitelson

Elizabeth Feigelson and Bennett, Maya and Matthew Solnick

PCS Wish List

Office supplies: Emma and Dave Reisman

Hebrew school supplies: Elizabeth Feigelson and Bennett, Maya and Matthew Solnick

Shabbat flowers: Jan Gordon, who created another gorgeous flower arrangement for the Shabbat/Hanukkah dinner, and with thanks again to Deb Spanierman for donating to "Shabbat flowers" on the PCS Wish List

Thank you to new PCS congregant, Robert Marshak, who donated a computer to the rabbi's office and is in the process of donating many, many hours of time and effort into upgrading PCS' phone and computer systems. *Yasher koach!*

JANUARY YAHRZEITS

Odon Vesei, father of Ann Vesei	January 2
Ruth Kloogman, mother of Helen Kloogman	January 4
Betty Greene, mother of George Teitel-Greene	January 7
Philip Wolfthal, husband of Rhea Wolfthal	January 7
Regina Fisher, grandmother of Dorian Goldman	January 8
Kenneth Wolf, father of Michael Wolf	January 15
Lillian Levine, wife of Richard Levine	January 15
Louis Etkin, uncle of Rhea Wolfthal	January 16
Helen Arenwald, mother of Elaine Barella	January 16
Joel Serebin, father of Ben Serebin	January 18
Aaron Netburn, father of Malcolm Netburn	January 18
Celia Lubelsky, mother of Janice Sandbank	January 19
Leslie Ogrin, father of Mara Cohen	January 22
Syd Gitelson, mother of Rhea Wolfthal	January 22
Marion Gaines, mother of Jonathan Church	January 22
Irving Steinhauer, grandfather of Peter Grekin	January 25
Rose Schwartz, mother of Nancy Mayers	January 29
Patricia Fineman, sister of Roberta Berman	January 29

To All PCS Members:

If you or another member suffer personal tragedy or loss or are otherwise in need of help, please immediately call Rabbi Julie at (914) 769-2672, or email her at rabbi@ShalomPCS.com.





Pleasantville Community Synagogue

Yahrzeit Memorial Board

The PCS Yahrzeit Memorial Board is a beautiful and symbolic place to honor your loved ones while helping to support your synagogue. The anniversary of their passing will be commemorated with a light by their nameplate.

Please provide the following information and payment (\$360) for each plate. If you need assistance with the Hebrew date, you can find date conversions at www.hebcal.com, or contact Marcy Gray at 769-2672, mgray@shalompcs.com. If there is no Hebrew name, the name in English will be centered at the top. Delivery of nameplates will take 4-6 weeks. *Please print very neatly.*

Name in English: _____ Name in Hebrew: _____

English date of passing: _____ Hebrew date of passing: _____

Requested by: _____ Relationship to person being honored: _____

Phone Number/E-mail address: _____

Check enclosed payable to *Pleasantville Community Synagogue*

Bill my credit card

Credit Card # _____ Exp. Date: ____/____

Circle One: VISA MasterCard

Name as it appears on card: _____

Phone number in case verification is needed: _____

Your Signature _____ Amount to charge: _____

Print Name _____

Mail checks to: PCS, P.O. Box 148, Pleasantville, NY 10570.

If paying by credit card, please mail this form to PCS, email to Accounts@shalomPCS.com, fax it to (914) 769-1795, or call Barbara Doctor at (914) 747-3017 to provide your credit card information.

Please make your donation by check if at all possible.



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Introducing to Briarcliff the new owner of Zokkoz Salon, Jillian Sherman. Ever since she discovered Aveda a few years ago, she has tried to live by their mission. The combination of her love for hair and making people's true beauty come out with Aveda's products has proven to give her the ability to deliver healthy, sexy hair that is safe for her guests as well as the environment. Her next quest is to share her knowledge and passion with her staff at Zokkoz. Briarcliff has been so friendly and has made her feel so welcomed. She would like to pass that feeling on to you. Please come in and mention this ad and save 40% off your first appointment and we guarantee you'll love the results!!!



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**Would you like to share your family simchas and other joys
with your community?**

Your PCS family would love to celebrate with you!

If you will let us know your good news,
we would be delighted to offer in these pages mazal tovs for the
births, graduations, engagements, weddings, b'nei mitzvahs
and other occasions and accomplishments
that are bringing you *naches*.

Just email the information to newsletter editor Roberta Korus
at Robertakorus@gmail.com
or call Marcy Gray in the PCS office
at 914-769-2672.

We look forward to hearing from and kvelling with you!

Pleasantville Community Synagogue Mission Statement

Pleasantville Community Synagogue is a welcoming Jewish community connecting people of diverse traditions and backgrounds who want to share a joyous spiritual and cultural home.

PLEASANTVILLE COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

Officers

President: Amy Gutenplan
Secretary: Laurie Hirsch Schulz
Treasurer: Mark Freiheit
Vice President: Kiersten Zweibaum
Vice President: Richard Solomon

Board of Trustees

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Rabbi Julie Danan
rabbi@ShalomPCS.com

PCS COMMITTEE CHAIRS

All the committees of the Pleasantville Community Synagogue are eager for your participation and suggestions. If you'd like to get more involved in the life of the PCS community, this is the way to begin! Below are the names of the committees, their chairs, and contact information.

Adult Education

Barbara Doctor
bdoctor670@gmail.com

B'nei Mitzvah

Ed Sperling
edsperling@gmail.com

Building

Richard Levine
rlevine@shalomPCS.com

Jewish Education

Kiersten Zweibaum
info@shalomPCS.com

Communications

Cristina Altieri-Martinez
cmartinez@shalomPCS.com

Religious Practices

Eric Klein
info@shalomPCS.com

Finance

Mark Freiheit
info@shalomPCS.com

Fundraising

Kenneth Fuiirst
kfuiirst@shalomPCS.com

High Holidays

Richard Solomon
info@shalomPCS.com

Human Resources

Karen Neuburger
info@shalomPCS.com

Membership Engagement

Laurie Hirsch Schulz
lhirschschulz@shalomPCS.com

Membership Outreach

Leyla Nakisbendi
leyla@shalomPCS.com

Israel Action

[Vacant]

Rosh Chodesh

Robin Berman
info@shalomPCS.com

Tikkun Olam

Michael Gold
mgold@shalomPCS.com

Youth

Laurie Hirsch Schulz
info@shalomPCS.com

To contact PCS: Phone (914) 769-2672; Fax (914) 769-1795; Website: www.ShalomPCS.com

Marcy Gray, Synagogue Administrator: (914) 769-2672; mgray@ShalomPCS.com

Galit Sperling, Religious School: (914) 773-0043; principal@ShalomPCS.com

Barbara Doctor, Member Accounts: (914) 747-3017; Accounts@ShalomPCS.com

THE PCS NEWSLETTER ACCEPTS ADS!

The PCS newsletter is published monthly, online, from September through June, and it is emailed to every member family as well as to prospective members and some Jewish organizations.

If you provide professional or business services in the area, the PCS newsletter might provide some extra, valuable visibility. To arrange for your ad to appear in the newsletter, here's what you need to know:

*** Deadlines:**

Ads should be submitted by the 15th of the month by emailing them to mgray@shalompcs.com.

*** Ad Specifications:**

Ads will be published in one size only: one-quarter page, which is approximately 3½ x 4¾ inches. The entire ad (both text and artwork) should be provided by the advertiser in GIF, JPEG, PDF or TIFF format ONLY. Please proofread your ad before sending.

*** Advertising Rates:**

The cost per ad (for 10 issues - no bulletin is published in July and August) is \$125 for ¼ page. **Note:** Checks preferred; please mail checks to Pleasantville Community Synagogue, PO Box 148, Pleasantville, NY 10570 with "newsletter ad" in the memo section. To pay by credit card, please call the synagogue office at (914) 769-2672.



ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

The PCS Newsletter is published monthly, online, from September through June. Articles and photos should be submitted by the 24th of the month. They can be e-mailed to Roberta Korus, Editor, at robertakorus@gmail.com, or dropped off at the newsletter box in the synagogue office.

Pleasantville Community Synagogue * 219 Bedford Road * Pleasantville, NY 10570
phone (914) 769 - 2672 fax (914) 769 - 1795

TEVET - SH'VAT 5776

January 2016 - PCS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 No Hebrew School	28 7:15pm Yoga at PCS	29	30	31 No Hebrew School	1 4:19pm - Candle lighting 7:30pm Services	2 9:15am Morning meditation, Shabbat morning service, 10 am 5:50pm - Havdalah Parashat Shemot
3 No Hebrew School	4 7:15pm Yoga at PCS	5 7:30pm Religious Practices Committee meeting	6 7:30pm "The Greatest Book NEVER Written" Adult Ed with Rabbi Julie	7 Hebrew School	8 4:25pm - Candle lighting 8:00pm Prime-Time Shabbat Services:"A Meditative Winter Kabbalat Shabbat" with music	9 9:15am Morning meditation, Family Education Shabbat, 10 am 5:56pm - Havdalah Parashat Vaera
10  Rosh Chodesh Sh'vat - The new Hebrew month of Sh'vat Hebrew School	11 7:15pm Yoga at PCS Rosh Chodesh Sh'vat	12	13 7:30pm Rosh Chodesh event	14 Hebrew School	15 4:33pm - Candle lighting 7:30pm Services	16 9:15am Morning meditation, Shabbat morning service, 10 am 6:04pm - Havdalah Parashat Bo
17 7:30pm Executive Committee Meeting No Hebrew School	18 7:15pm Yoga at PCS Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	19	20	21 Ask the Rabbi with Kita Daled Hebrew School	22 4:41pm - Candle lighting 7:30pm Shabbat Shira Services	23 9:15am Morning meditation, Shabbat morning service, 10 am 6:12pm Havdalah Parashat Beshalach
24 Hebrew School	25 7:15pm Yoga at PCS  Tu B'Shvat - New Year for Trees	26 7:30pm Board of Trustees meeting	27	28 Hebrew School	29 4:49pm Candle lighting 7:30pm Services, to be led by 7th graders in honor of Tu B'Shvat, and including Children's Service	30 9:15am Morning meditation, Shabbat morning service, 10 am 6:21pm - Havdalah Progressive Dinner Parashat Yitro
31 Hebrew School	1 7:15pm Yoga at PCS	2 7:30pm Religious Practices Committee meeting	3	4 Hebrew School	5 4:58pm - Candle lighting 6:45pm Services Dalet Shabbaton Mishpacha (Family) Shabbat and Dinner	6 9:15am Morning meditation, Family Education Shabbat, 10 am 6:29pm Havdalah Kita Hey (5th grade) Havdallah Parashat Mishpatim

Note: Times and dates of events may change after the Newsletter has come out. To get the latest information on any possible changes, please check the calendar on our website: www.ShalomPCS.com. Calendars for future months are also on the website.