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## The Rabbi's Column: A HOLIDAY OF COMMUNITY

by Rabbi Dr. Julie Hilton Danan

Purim, which comes this month, is a holiday that focuses on community. The celebrations described in the biblical book of Esther became the model of how we continue to celebrate Purim today: not only by reading the Megillah and feasting, but by the caring actions of sending portions of food to our friends (*Mishloach Manot*) and giving charity to the needy. The heroes of Purim were seemingly assimilated Persian court Jews, Mordechai and Esther, who fulfilled their responsibility and identified themselves as Jews to save their people.

**Building community, as I've said in previous columns, is my number one priority at PCS this year.** Together with our lay leadership and staff, I am focusing on programs and experiences that build community, such as our many Shabbat experiences for all ages, and interactive educational programs for kids and adults—and soon, I aspire, for teens. We have exciting programs, such as our March 4 Shabbat Across America (see page 18) and our March 10-13 Artist in Residence, Gabriel Meyer (see page 3).

We also try to think of building community with everything we do, large or small, whether printing our first member directory, opening my home for gatherings, better Oneg Shabbats and Kiddush lunches to promote socializing, tea time for parents doing pick-up at Hebrew School or the open lunch and open office that I hold every Thursday. At our Hebrew School we are trying to focus even more on how to build connections among the students and the parents.

But community goes beyond having fun experiences. We are also doing inreach and outreach to help others. **In this newsletter (see page 11), you will hear from our new Caring (Chesed) Committee Chair, Steven Weiner.** President Amy Gutenplan and I are overjoyed that Steven has taken on this important leadership role and will help all of us to care for one another in our times of need. His committee—and with his leadership, all of us—will take a greater part in providing support to our members as we face life's challenges. This was a key priority identified in last year's PCS Vision initiative. Steven's vision for this committee far exceeds my expectations and I know will make a profound impact on our congregational future.

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A strong Jewish community is also focused outward, acting locally but thinking globally as informed by our Jewish values. Our Tikkun Olam/Social Action Committee, under the leadership of Michael Gold, has already led a service to highlight our social action focus of the year, supporting refugees. There are more refugees in the world today than at any time since WWII. We Jews know the heart of a refugee, because we were once refugees turned away by every country, including the United States. Our Torah values and mitzvot command us to welcome the stranger. **We are joining with a coalition of local faith communities to welcome a refugee family in the Stamford, Connecticut area.** PCS will furnish a room in their home and help to provide for their needs. Stay tuned for ways that you can help, or better yet, contact Michael or our office if you would like to join the Tikkun Olam/Social Action committee and take a leadership role. We are also collecting food and signing up volunteers for our local food pantry.

Our community is also part of a larger faith community in Pleasantville. As I wrote in my last column, our local clergy are initiating a “Family of Abraham” series this year to learn about one another’s faiths and get to know each other as neighbors. **I’m proud that PCS will host the first Family of Abraham program on Thursday, March 10, at 7:30 pm, with our guest, musician and peace activist, Gabriel Meyer.** Please come and invite your neighbors of all faiths!

When our ancestors celebrated the first Purim, and when they built the Mishkan, the first Jewish temple (as we recently read in the Torah), the important thing was that everyone took part. Each of us has a special talent or ability to share with our congregational community. I look forward to continuing to explore with you what that special place is for you and how together we can make our PCS community continue to grow stronger, with joyful Judaism!

*No act of kindness,*

*no matter how small,*

*is ever wasted.*

*—Aesop*

Pleasantville Community Synagogue  
Joyful Judaism

**Please join us at PCS for an amazing Artist in Residence  
program featuring  
Gabriel Meyer**



*Gabriel Meyer, born in Argentina, is an internationally renowned musician, vocalist and poet. His performances and workshops are interactive, and full of energy and wisdom.*

**Thursday, March 10, 7:30 pm**

An interfaith "Family of Abraham" program of song and stories from a broad spectrum of global faiths and cultures.

**Friday, March 11, 8 pm**

Gabriel will join Rabbi Julie Danan in leading a community Kabbalat Shabbat filled with beautiful renditions of traditional prayer, wisdom and stories. The program will feature guest musician Horacio Martinez and PCS son, Aydin Mayers.

**Sunday morning, March 13**

Gabriel will engage the Hebrew School students for an exciting interactive presentation with songs, stories and teachings.

***This Artist-in-Residence program was made possible  
through the generosity of PCS member, Peter Schaffer.***

~ ~ ~

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

# HEBREW SCHOOL HAPPENINGS



by Galit Sperling, Principal

Our Hebrew School spotlight this month is on Kitah Daled (fourth grade). The Daled class has been studying the lessons of the Torah and Hebrew words and phrases, as well as how to act as mensches in their lives. During their mensch studies, our students learn about mitzvot and their importance, and our responsibility to take care of the world, ourselves and others. They also learn the thoughts and sayings of many different rabbis, as well as Midrashim, stories that pertain to being a mensch. At their class Shabbaton on February 5, the Daled students were wonderful at leading practically the entire Mishpachah Shabbat service with Rabbi Julie. We are so proud of their *ruach* (spirit) and *koach* (strength)! Rabbi Julie so inspired them with her story about Elijah that night, that the class decided to make an Elijah's Club of their own in class, and follow in his footsteps of doing good deeds for others.

The very next day after the Daled Shabbaton was an equally wonderful evening at PCS, when Kitah Hey (fifth grade) led a Havdalah ceremony for family and friends. The Hey students had been practicing the Havdalah service prayers and had written legends based on the symbols of Havdalah: the multi-wicked candle, the *b'samim* (spice) box and the wine. Their creativity and passion (see pictures on the following pages of their wonderful recycling projects!) was inspiring to see, and we hope they will continue celebrating Havdalah at home with their families with their own *b'samim* boxes.

A reminder to all PCS congregants that this is your last chance to order Passover candy for our Hebrew School fundraiser! Contact a Hebrew School student or Galit Sperling for more information.

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## Important Upcoming Hebrew School Dates:

**Friday, March 4:** Aleph/Bet Shabbaton and Shabbat Across America! RSVP to the synagogue office or visit <https://pcs-shabbat-across-america.cheddarup.com> and join us for this wonderful event!

**Sunday, March 6:** Challah Making with Kitah Hey and Kitah Vav

**Sunday, March 20 – Sunday, March 27:** No Classes (School Spring Break)

**Wednesday evening, March 23:** Purim Megillah Reading

**Sunday, April 3:** Daled Heritage Day

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Kitah Hey (fifth grade) students show their recycling projects as part of their special Havdalah service



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Kitah Daled students with Madrich (Teen Helper) Ben Klingner (see next page), showing their Elijah's Club box, Mensch on a Bench and Kippah Cantor



Our students learn  
so much  
in Hebrew School!



# Ben Klingner's Mitzvah Project



For my Bar Mitzvah project, I worked at the Hebrew School. I helped Galit do some chores, but for most of the time I was helping Kitah Daled. I helped them with their workbook assignments, and to stay on track reading while practicing for their Shabbaton. I also pulled out the students two at a time to work on their Hebrew reading. I had a lot of fun working with the kids, and I plan to continue helping them on Thursdays through the rest of the year.





# ASK THE RABBI with KITAH HEY

by Rabbi Julie



As always, it is very interesting to see what subjects interest each grade in Hebrew School. Like other classes, Kitah Hey did have some questions about my personal life and favorite things! But they also had more mature questions about Jewish practices; for example, why do Jews do Brit Milah (circumcision of boys)? Why do kids become Bar or Bat Mitzvah at age 13? I talked to them about the origins of these practices in our Torah and Talmud. For example, originally Bar and Bat Mitzvah came with puberty; only later was an age assigned to these rites of passage. Personally, I did my Bat Mitzvah at age 16.

As I visit the classes, I'm finding that many of our PCS kids don't know their Hebrew names. I would be delighted to meet with any family to discuss Hebrew names and create a Hebrew naming ceremony if you didn't have one, and give you a name certificate.

This was the first class, as I've gone from younger to older grades, to ask about other religions and relations with other religious groups. One of the students wanted to know, as she put it, "why a camp would only accept Jewish children." I talked about how it's not a matter of only accepting Jewish children, but of offering a camp where kids can have great Jewish experiences in nature. I hope that more of our PCS kids will get to experience a Jewish summer camp. As I told the kids, going to Jewish summer camp was incredibly formative in my own Jewish identity.

The kids also asked harder questions. One student asked, although Jesus was Jewish, why don't we worship him? I told them how early Christians were actually Jews who believed that Jesus was the Messiah, meaning a leader chosen by G-d to bring Jewish freedom and peace on earth. However, after Jesus' death, Christianity split off and became a separate religion, and Jesus was viewed not just as the Messiah, but as G-d incarnate, which is something that Jews don't accept. Still, we share our Tanakh (Old Testament) and many values and teachings with Christians. Sadly, one of the kids said that her friend had told her that the Jews killed Jesus. I explained that the Romans killed Jesus (and many others), but some Christian groups used to blame the Jews for his death. Fortunately, the Catholic Church renounced this belief half a century ago, but apparently, and so sadly, some kids are still hearing it at home or at church. Madrichah (Teen Helper) Michele brought up a question about Islam, and I talked about studying our shared foundational stories with Muslims, who sometimes tell the stories in different ways in their Koran. All in all, interfaith relations and other religions were a core topic for Kitah Hey to start thinking about.

We will have a special "Family of Abraham" Interfaith Program with guest artist Gabriel Meyer Halevy on Thursday, March 10, at 7:30 pm at PCS. Consider bringing your student and inviting some friends of other religions to learn, enjoy music and dialogue together!



## THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What a wonderfully diverse community we are. Diverse in interests, opinions, strengths, talents and religious commitment. I always knew this, but it all became quite evident as I looked around the table at our last Rosh Chodesh event. I was lucky enough to host the women (and girls) in my kitchen, where we made hamentashen, in celebration of “little Purim” during the month of Adar I. We gathered around the kitchen island, measuring and mixing, gossiping about who said what to whom, and kvelling over a friend's latest accomplishment. I saw how some struggled to mix the fifth and sixth cups of flour into the mixture, while others just said, “Bring it on, I'm strong!” We debated which filling was the best; some were traditionalists, preferring poppyseed or prune, and gasped at the suggestion of chocolate chip, while others delighted in the introduction of chocolate chips. Some learned to bake from mothers or bubbies, while others had never learned at all.



Our little microcosm of hamentashen bakers looked a lot like our greater PCS community (with the addition of men, of course); diverse in belief and experience. And something I thought particularly interesting; everyone needed help, in some way. Whether it was mixing, rolling or folding the dough to make perfect triangles, not one of us was completely successful. Yet, with our individual skills, we were quite complementary and, together, were able to create beautiful and delicious cookies.

Last year, the PCS Vision Committee completed a study to identify community priorities, one being a Caring (Chesed) Committee. The purpose of a caring committee is not simply to help those in need, but to create a system in which we are able to use each of our strengths to support another's weakness. Just as our Rosh Chodesh group of hamentashen bakers found that we needed one another, we recognize that members of our PCS community could greatly benefit from both receiving and providing support.

I am so thrilled that Steven Weiner has agreed to chair this committee. Steven's professional involvement in the health care industry makes him uniquely qualified to develop the scope of this committee. Yet, it is his dedication and his kind, thoughtful and giving nature that will make the greatest impact. Please read Steven's article on page XX and consider volunteering for this important committee.

— Amy Gutenplan

## *When Breath Becomes Air - A review*

Paul Kalanithi died in March 2015. He was 36 years old. Trained as a neurosurgeon at Stanford, he was just beginning what promised to be a brilliant career, when he was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer. Determined to leave a legacy, and gifted as a writer, he recorded his life story and his final months as he underwent a variety of treatments. He understood from the outset that his was an uphill battle, that sooner rather than later the disease would rob him of his breath, leaving just air. Thus the title of this important and moving book, taken from a poem by Baron Brooke Fulke Grindle entitled "Caelica 83."

One of the many pleasures in reading this medical biography is that Kalanithi was a literary aficionado, so that he intersperses his story with the writings and philosophical understandings of his favorites, ranging from Montaigne to Tolstoy to T.S. Eliot, whom he quotes extensively, and with a clear perception of the interface between poetry, life and death. Thus, as he nears the end, he writes: "The treatments this time around would be tougher to endure, the possibility of a long life more remote. Eliot again: 'But at my back in a cold blast I hear/the rattle of the bones, and chuckle spread from ear to ear.'"

The book is more than a biography. It is how Kalanithi learned the relationship between meaning, life and death. Neurosurgery was his teacher, especially after listening to another surgeon explain a child's brain tumor to the child's mother. Surgery was only the tool; being a caring doctor, listening deeply to the patient's story, was the journey he set out on. It brought him eventually to understand when medical intervention had to cease. "In these moments," he said, "I acted not, as I most often did, as death's enemy, but as its ambassador." Eventually, when he visits a friend dying of pancreatic cancer, he is able to reflect: "How little do doctors understand the hell through which we put patients." And finally: "The problem wasn't really a scientific one. The fact of death is unsettling. Yet there is no other way to live."

As his breath becomes more labored, and he realizes that there are no more interventions left, he races to complete the book he felt he had to write and to leave something for the infant daughter who, he knows, will have no memory of him. Thus this final paragraph, addressed to her:

"When you come to one of the many moments in life where you must give an account of yourself, provide a ledger of what you have been, and done, and meant to the world, do not, I pray, discount that you have filled a dying man's days with a sated joy, a joy unknown to me in all my prior years, a joy that does not hunger for more and more but rests, satisfied. In this time, right now, that is an enormous thing."

— Peter Schaffer

# A Caring Community

At PCS, we strive to make caring for and helping each other a part of building our congregation and our Jewish community. We know that we can help those of us with specific needs while building a strong community that values what each of us has to offer.

Helping each other does not mean that the more fortunate are giving charity to the less fortunate, the “needy” among us. Rather, we know that each of us has something to give to someone else, and each of us needs something. We need help in different ways, at different times, for different issues. We need to give help as well – this is a fundamental human necessity. Help can be practical: someone to watch the kids while we go to the doctor for treatment; someone to shop for a family too burdened to shop; the name of a good plumber. And help can be interpersonal and spiritual: someone to call, someone to listen or someone who’s been through something similar themselves. Help can be education: how to write out a health care proxy or power of attorney.

As we reach out to each other in need, and create a caring community, we also continuously work on building community, to be open to each other, to build everyday social connections. Building the caring community we have in mind means working across committees to include this inclusive mutual aid in all our activities. It also means building some kind of steering group, a **Caring (Chesed) Committee**, to coordinate the practical details with Rabbi Julie, when we learn of a community member in need.

We can work to weave these many threads into a growing fabric over the next months and years. We will meet, plan some educational events and build on existing practices of caring for those with immediate needs. If a member needs help, or knows of someone who might need help or can give help, they should contact the Caring (Chesed) Committee at [sweiner@shalompcs.com](mailto:sweiner@shalompcs.com) or Rabbi Julie, in confidence, and we will discuss with the person what we can do to help, and identify people who can reach out with the specific kinds of aid needed and wanted.

We look forward to growing and developing this Caring (Chesed) Committee. Please reach out to me at [sweiner@shalompcs.com](mailto:sweiner@shalompcs.com) with ideas and thoughts on how you would like to be involved.

*Chesed is a Hebrew word commonly translated as “loving-kindness.” In the tradition of Mussar, it is one of the primary traits for a person to work on in their spiritual life. It is a foundation of Jewish communities everywhere, and a key to the overall work of tikkun olam, repairing the world. It is also important in the Kabbalah. It is said, of course, in the Pirkei Avot, the Ethics of our Forebears, that “The world stands on three things: on Torah, on Avodah (service or worship) and on Chesed.” It is a fitting description of our work, and a guide for the spirit of our efforts, and so we will use it as part of our name.*

— Steven Weiner  
Chair, PCS Caring (Chesed) Committee

# PCS Progressive Dinner a Huge Success...Again!

On Saturday, January 30, a record number of PCS members participated in the annual PCS progressive dinner. We began the evening with appetizers at the home of Malcolm and Susan Netburn, separated into small groups for the main course (thanks again to hosts Mark Bertin and Elizabeth McGoldrick, Mark and Vivian Chang Freiheit, Evan and Dara Meyers Kingsley, Marlo and Eric Klein, Leyla Nakisbendi and Michael Mayers, and Jeff and Isabel Rachlin) and then gathered again at the home of Oren and Claire Cohen for dessert and a lovely Havdalah service conducted by Rabbi Julie. Special kudos to Marlo Klein, whose warmth, grace and attention to detail ensured a wonderful event. As you can tell from the photos below (courtesy of PCS Communications Chair Cristina Altieri-Martinez), a splendid time was had by all!



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## ***Rosh Chodesh Hamantaschen-Baking Party***

On Wednesday, February 13, the PCS Rosh Chodesh group gathered to bake hamantaschen in the home kitchen of PCS President Amy Gutenplan. This event, in acknowledgement of Rosh Chodesh Adar I, was to celebrate Purim Katan (“Little Purim”), the day in the month of Adar I on which Purim would have been celebrated if 5776 was not a leap year in the Hebrew calendar; during a leap year, Purim instead occurs on the same day of the month but during Adar II.

The group used the following recipe, which David Levy of *JewishBoston* calls “the easiest hamantaschen recipe on the Internet” (makes about three dozen pastries):

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup oil
- 1¼ cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- 3 teaspoons baking powder
- 5½ to 6 cups flour
- 1–2 small jars or cans of baked-goods filling (apricot, prune, cherry, poppyseed, etc.)

1. Preheat your oven to 350 degrees.
2. Mix together eggs, oil, sugar and vanilla.
3. Add baking powder and gradually add flour. The dough will become very stiff as more flour is added, but keep at it!
4. Knead until smooth.
5. Roll out very thin (1/8-inch if you can) on a floured surface.
6. Cut out circles with a drinking glass.
7. Put a dollop of filling in the center of each circle. (We also experimented with chocolate chips as a filling!)
8. Fold in three sides over the filling to make a triangle with filling showing in the center.
9. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes on a greased cookie sheet.

As you can see from the photos, the participants had a wonderful time, and everyone enjoyed eating the delicious hamantaschen and taking some home to share with family and friends.

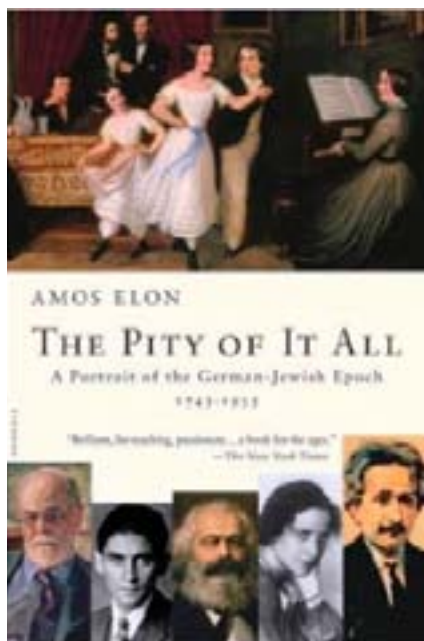
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## ***The Pity of It All: A Portrait of the German-Jewish Epoch 1743–1933***

by Amos Elon



This important historical work shows how a persecuted clan of cattle dealers and wandering peddlers was transformed into a successful community of writers, philosophers, scientists, tycoons and activists. Included are some brilliantly etched portraits of Mendelssohn, Heine, Marx, Warburg and Schoenberg, to name just a few of the [Bookworm's](#) favorites.

Moses Mendelssohn arrived, penniless and uneducated, at the Rosenthaler gate of Berlin, the only gate of the city through which Jews and cattle could enter. He was self-taught, originally knowing only Hebrew and no German, having had, until he came to Berlin, only a religious education. Amazingly, only two decades later, Mendelssohn had become a renowned German philosopher and the first Jew to achieve prominence as a man of letters. Entire books have been devoted to Mendelssohn's achievements. He advocated the revival of classical Hebrew and the use of High German as the secular day-to-day language of the Jewish community, as many Jews of the period who spoke German could not read or write it. He was also the grandfather of composers Fanny and Felix Mendelssohn.

Salomon Maimon, from Polish Lithuania, lived during the same era. Today, Maimon is remembered mostly for his remarkable autobiography, the first widely distributed autobiography written by a Jew.

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The prominence of German Jews and the contributions they made became fully apparent only after they were gone.

Before Hitler rose to power, other Europeans often feared, admired, envied and even ridiculed the Germans. But Jews largely loved and admired them. Heinrich Heine was one of the first to hail Jews and Germans as Europe's two "ethical peoples." At the same time, he was very ambivalent about his own Jewishness.

Other notable 19th-century Jews are profiled in this book. These include Ludwig Bamberger, a law and philosophy student; barred from practicing law because he was a Jew, Bamberger became an influential economist, politician and writer. Karl Marx, a scion of rabbis, took off with other young Jewish students for the revolution in 1848 Paris. Stefan Born, the son of a Jewish surgeon, was also involved in labor movements.

For the first time in Jewish history, the passivity of Jews was giving way to active political involvement and street action.

As Jews gained prominence in society, they also made gains in banking and commerce. Even as the 20th century loomed on the horizon, most banks were still in the hands of Jews and much admired even by Kaiser Wilhelm II. In this group, we must remember the Warburg family, famous in banking, commerce and art. Aby Warburg was an important German art historian and cultural theorist. The wonderful Jewish Museum on Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, was originally the home of Felix M. Warburg, a German-born American banker and Aby's brother, whose wife donated the mansion to the City of New York upon his death.

*Amos Elon has written eight highly acclaimed books about Jews and their history.*



Moses Mendelssohn



Heinrich Heine\*



Ludwig Bamberger

*\*This portrait of Heine was painted by Moritz Daniel Oppenheim, whose painting, The Return of the Jewish Volunteer from the Wars of Liberation to His Family Still Living According to Old Customs, was featured in the [PCS Bookworm's](#) column last month.*

Pleasantville Community Synagogue participates in

# Shabbat Across America!



Friday, March 4, 2016

Services 6:30-7:15 pm

With PCS 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> graders helping to lead

Hot Kosher Dinner Follows

At the Pleasantville Cottage School dining room at the JCCA facility,  
1075 Broadway in Pleasantville (visit [www.shalompcs.com](http://www.shalompcs.com) for directions).

Join in as the Pleasantville Community Synagogue  
joyfully celebrates Shabbat along with *thousands of*  
Jews across the nation.

Adults \$20 ▪ Children 6-13 \$10 ▪ 5 and under are free

If you want to RSVP and pay on-line, go to <https://pcs-shabbat-across-america.cheddarup.com>. It's so easy!

Or RSVP by calling PCS at 769-2672 or e-mailing  
[mgray@shalompcs.com](mailto:mgray@shalompcs.com).

Co-chaired by Roberta Korus and Ed Sperling



Come celebrate

# **ROSH CHODESH\* and Jewish Heroines!**

***Who's your favorite?***

**Wednesday, March 9, 7:30 pm**

**at Pleasantville Community Synagogue**

***A good time with good women. All are welcome.***



**To RSVP or for more information  
call Marcy Gray at PCS at 769-2672 or  
e-mail Robin Berman at [awake.robin@gmail.com](mailto: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!*

# It's Purim! Let's Celebrate!

Come to PCS  
Wednesday night, March 23,  
6 pm - 8 pm  
**SO MUCH FUN!**

**6 pm: Pizza and the Purim story for the  
little ones! Come in costume!**

Donations welcome.

RSVP to [mgray@shalompcs.com](mailto:mgray@shalompcs.com).

**7 pm: Megillah Reading and  
Community Party for everyone!**

**Come in costume (it's not just for the little ones...)**  
Rabbi Julie does stand-up comedy (*who knew??*) and a teen  
Purim play - written by Rabbi Daughter Shira Danan and  
directed by PCS' own Galit Sperling - will be performed. And  
of course hamantaschen, hamantaschen, hamantaschen!



Pleasantville Community Synagogue  
219 Bedford Road, Pleasantville, NY  
(914) 769-2672, [info@shalomPCS.com](mailto:info@shalomPCS.com)



Pleasantville Community Synagogue  
Joyful Judaism

***Please join us at PCS for an evening of  
sharing the music and poetry of the  
incomparable***

# **Leonard Cohen**



**Wednesday, March 30,  
7:30 pm**

*Refreshments, along with music and poetry, will be served.*

*Thanks to Peter Schaffer for facilitating this special evening.*

~ ~ ~

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

Pleasantville Community Synagogue  
219 Bedford Road, Pleasantville, NY  
[www.shalompcs.com](http://www.shalompcs.com) ~ 914-769-2672 ~ [info@shalompcs.com](mailto:info@shalompcs.com)

PCS's Annual Fundraiser

*Texas*  
**BAR {BQ}**  
**MITZVAH!**

*Save the Date*

Saturday May 7 | 7PM  
Captain Lawrence Brewing Company  
444 Saw Mill River Road, Elmsford

**More details to follow**

# ***The Continuing Shabbat Renaissance at PCS***

## ***KABBALAT SHABBAT IN MARCH***

On **Friday, March 4**, PCS joins hundreds of synagogues throughout North America for **Shabbat Across America!** Bring your friends to experience the joy of Shabbat, beginning at **6:30 pm at the Pleasantville Cottage School**, when we will offer a **lively Shabbat service** conducted, in part, by Kitah Aleph/Bet, our first and second graders. This will be followed by a **delicious, hot kosher Shabbat dinner for all ages (RSVP required)**. You can RSVP online by clicking [here](#), or you can call the PCS office at 769-2672 or email [mgray@shalompcs.com](mailto:mgray@shalompcs.com).

On **Friday, March 11**, PCS will host a special **Prime Time Shabbat, beginning at 8 pm, with guest musician and peace activist Gabriel Meyer Halevy**. Gabriel, who was born in Argentina and lives in the Galilee in Israel, will join Rabbi Julie in leading a Kabbalat Shabbat filled with beautiful renditions of traditional prayer, wisdom and stories. The program will feature guest musicians Horacio Martinez and PCS son, Aydin Mayers. A special Oneg Shabbat will follow.

Please join us on **Friday, March 18, at 7:30 pm** as **Ben Klingner** helps to lead the Kabbalat Shabbat service on the Shabbat he becomes a bar mitzvah; an Oneg Shabbat will follow. Let's make it our **NEW** PCS custom to come out and support our young people as they lead their Friday night service with Rabb Julie.

On **Friday, March 25, at 7:30 pm**, please join **Cantor Isabel Kopstein** as she leads our Kabbalat Shabbat with her beautiful singing.

## ***SHABBAT MORNING (Come for some or come for the whole thing!)***

**9:15 am:** Jewish spiritual teachings and meditation with Rabbi Julie

**10 am (or 9:30 for B'nei Mitzvah):** Shabbat morning service with Torah reading and Devar Torah

**Noon:** Kiddush lunch with varied menu

**12:30-1:15 pm:** Interactive Torah study led by Rabbi Julie

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## ***...and then there's Purim!***

### **Wednesday, March 23**

#### **6 pm - PJ Pizza and Purim**

Young kids and their families are invited to come in costume for Pizza and the Purim story. It's the one time that we encourage the kids to make lots of noise in shul as they wave their graggers (noisemakers)! We will also make Mishloach Manot (goody baskets) to give to a friend.

Please RSVP to the PCS office.

#### **7 pm - Megillah Reading and Purim Party for All Ages (Rabbi Julie's *other* favorite holiday)**

Are you ready for some stand-up comedy by Rabbi Julie? A hilarious Purim Play written by comedy-writer Shira Danan and performed by PCS teens under the direction of Galit Sperling? Lots of yummy hamantaschen, noshes and making a *le-chayim* (or two)? All ages are encouraged to come in costume to hear the Megillah chanted (selections in Hebrew and English) and to celebrate as a community! *Tzedakah* will be collected and donated to our Tikkun Olam projects.



## ***ON THE HORIZON AT PLEASANTVILLE COMMUNITY SYNAGOGUE...***

The **PCS Tikkun Olam/Social Action Committee** has decided to join the **Westchester Refugee Task Force**, an interfaith committee committed to helping refugees and other displaced people establish new lives, regain hope and contribute to our society in a meaningful way. According to committee member Leslie Mack, the Westchester Refugee Task Force has joined forces with a refugee settlement program in Stamford, Connecticut, because Westchester County has not yet passed legislation that allows any refugee settlement programs. Each member of the Task Force is responsible for collecting furniture and other essential items to furnish an apartment for each individual refugee family. It looks like the PCS Tikkun Olam/Social Action Committee will be collecting and donating gently used furniture for a master bedroom.

The committee is also an active member of the **Interfaith Emergency Food Pantry**, 70 Bedford Road. There is a bin by Marcy Gray's office to collect food items, especially canned meats, cereals, canned beans, rice and pasta in addition to much needed baby supplies.

Rabbi Julie is **recording and uploading PCS Shabbat songs and prayers onto Soundcloud**, for use by B'nei Mitzvah students and anyone who wants to learn the prayers. The songs can be downloaded or you can listen on any device. You can find them at <https://soundcloud.com/julie-danan>

The **Rosh Chodesh Group** will be busy this April! On **Friday, April 8**, the group will lead Kabbalat Shabbat services with readings related to freedom, Passover, spring and more. And on **Wednesday, April 13**, Rabbi Julie will lead our first "coed" Rosh Chodesh event about the spiritual preparation for Passover. For more information, please contact Committee Chair Robin Berman at [awake.robin@gmail.com](mailto:awake.robin@gmail.com).

In our April issue, **the PCS Bookworm**, Eileen Jagoda, will review ***The Family* by David Laskin**.





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## CONTRIBUTIONS

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**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.**

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### **General Fund/Fair Share**

Sheila and Martin Major

Jonathan Gaines in memory of his beloved mother, Marion Gaines

Marlo and Eric Klein

Nancy Mayers in memory of her beloved husband, Les Mayers, and her beloved mother, Rose Schwartz, on the occasion of their yahrzeits

Roberta Korus

Anonymous

### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

Julie Martinez, in memory of Leonard Silverman, "honorable and hardworking"

Leyla Nakisbendi and Michael Mayers in honor of the occasion of their daughter Maia becoming a Bat Mitzvah

### **PCS Taxi Fund**

To John Ehrlich for starting the first PCS Taxi Fund for those in need of a ride

**Special thanks** to Peter Schaffer for providing the funds to host Artist-in-Residence Gabriel Meyer Halevy at PCS, March 11-13.



# MARCH YAHRZEITS

Pearl Sheinkopf, mother of David Sheinkopf	March 1
Morris Fuchs, father of Audrey Lenoff	March 4
Charlie Sandbank, husband of Janice Sandbank	March 8
Marvin Wachnin, uncle of Mark Silberblatt	March 8
Milton Perlmutter, father of David Perlmutter	March 16
Ida Cohen, mother of Hirsh Cohen	March 19
Sidney Dulberg, grandfather of Lisa Lipkin	March 20
Ruth Weiner, mother of Steven Weiner	March 20
Charles Lubelsky, father of Janice Sandbank	March 28

**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 Steven Weiner at (914) 232-8166 or (646) 369-9167. You can also email them at [Rabbi@ShalomPCS.com](mailto:Rabbi@ShalomPCS.com) or [SWeiner@ShalomPCS.com](mailto:SWeiner@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](http://www.hebcal.com), or contact Marcy Gray at 769-2672, [mgray@shalompcs.com](mailto: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

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Credit Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Circle One:      VISA      MasterCard

Name as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_

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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](mailto: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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***You've Got a Ticket to Ride...to PCS!***

***Desperate*** to get to PCS but don't have a ride?  
Look no further than the brand-new PCS Taxi Fund!

Thanks to the generosity of John Ehrlich, we now have a start-up account with the Pleasantville Taxi Service. Call 236-3314, tell the dispatcher you're from PCS and your ride is taken care of, including the tip.

**All future donations to this fund are welcome (and necessary)!**

# 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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[cmartinez@ShalomPCS.com](mailto:cmartinez@ShalomPCS.com)

Mark Freiheit  
[info@ShalomPCS.com](mailto:info@ShalomPCS.com)

Gary Greenwald  
[ggreenwald@ShalomPCS.com](mailto:ggreenwald@ShalomPCS.com)

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Kiersten Zweibaum  
[kzweibaum@ShalomPCS.com](mailto:kzweibaum@ShalomPCS.com)

Rabbi Julie Danan  
[rabbi@ShalomPCS.com](mailto: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](mailto:bdoctor670@gmail.com)

### B'nei Mitzvah

Ed Sperling  
[edsperling@gmail.com](mailto:edsperling@gmail.com)

### Building

Richard Levine  
[rlevine@shalomPCS.com](mailto:rlevine@shalomPCS.com)

### Jewish Education

Kiersten Zweibaum  
[info@shalomPCS.com](mailto:info@shalomPCS.com)

### Communications

Cristina Altieri-Martinez  
[cmartinez@shalomPCS.com](mailto:cmartinez@shalomPCS.com)

### Religious Practices

Eric Klein  
[info@shalomPCS.com](mailto:info@shalomPCS.com)

### Finance

Mark Freiheit  
[info@shalomPCS.com](mailto:info@shalomPCS.com)

### Fundraising

Kenneth Furst  
[kfurst@shalomPCS.com](mailto:kfurst@shalomPCS.com)

### High Holidays

Richard Solomon  
[info@shalomPCS.com](mailto:info@shalomPCS.com)

### Human Resources

Karen Neuburger  
[info@shalomPCS.com](mailto:info@shalomPCS.com)

### Caring (Chesed)

Steven Weiner  
[sweiner@shalomPCS.com](mailto:sweiner@shalomPCS.com)

### Membership Engagement

Laurie Hirsch Schulz  
[lhirschschulz@shalomPCS.com](mailto:lhirschschulz@shalomPCS.com)

### Membership Outreach

Leyla Nakisbendi  
[leyla@shalomPCS.com](mailto:leyla@shalomPCS.com)

### Israel Action

[Vacant]

### Rosh Chodesh

Robin Berman  
[info@shalomPCS.com](mailto:info@shalomPCS.com)

### Tikkun Olam

Michael Gold  
[mgold@shalomPCS.com](mailto:mgold@shalomPCS.com)

### Youth

Laurie Hirsch Schulz  
[info@shalomPCS.com](mailto:info@shalomPCS.com)

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

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

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

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



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## ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

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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 [rkorus@ShalomPCS.com](mailto:rkorus@ShalomPCS.com), or dropped off at the newsletter box in the synagogue office.

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**Pleasantville Community Synagogue**

**FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

**Building Fund**

To preserve the beauty and functionality of our physical plant, and to build reserves for future expansion.

**General Fund/Fair Share**

Helps to finance any need of the synagogue considered necessary by the Board of Trustees. All unspecified gifts are credited to the General Fund.

**Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

Supports various individuals, organizations, and/or programs at the discretion of the rabbi.

**Hebrew School Scholarship Fund**

Provides scholarships to children who would like to attend our Hebrew School and may not currently have the financial resources to do so.

**Yahrzeit Memorial Board Nameplate (\$360)**

A nameplate with the name and date of departed loved ones will be lit in their honor on the anniversary of their passing. Please contact the office for appropriate form.

\*\*\*\*\*

Name and fund selected: \_\_\_\_\_

Donation in honor/memorial of (please specify which): \_\_\_\_\_

Donor contact information (if not a PCS member): \_\_\_\_\_




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**PLEASE NOTE: Checks preferred.** To help our bookkeeper, please issue separate checks for dues or other special events. Checks should be made payable to "Pleasantville Community Synagogue." Please indicate the fund to which you are donating in the memo section of your check and **mail your check to PCS, PO Box 148, Pleasantville, NY 10570.**  
If paying by credit card, please email this form to [Accounts@ShalomPCS.com](mailto:Accounts@ShalomPCS.com), fax it to (914) 769-1795, or call Barbara Doctor at (914) 747-3017, or PCS, (914) 769-2672 to provide your credit card information.

# ADAR I - ADAR II 5776

## March 2016 - PCS Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>28</b> 4:00pm Spiritual Direction group, led by Rabbi David Markus</p> <p>Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>29</b> 7:15pm Yoga at PCS</p>	<p><b>1</b> 7:30pm Religious Practices Committee meeting</p>	<p><b>2</b> 7:30pm Julian Bernstein Service Award event, honoring PCS congregant Vivian Chang Freiheit</p>	<p><b>3</b> 7:30pm Tikkun Olam/Social Action committee meeting</p> <p>Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>4</b> 5:32pm Candle lighting Shabbat Across America with PCS, at the Pleasantville Cottage School</p>	<p><b>5</b> 9:15am Morning meditation, Shabbat morning service, 10 am 7:03pm Havdalah Parashat Vayakhel</p>
<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>7</b> 7:15pm Yoga at PCS</p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>9</b> 7:30pm Rosh Chodesh event  Rosh Chodesh Adar II - The new Hebrew month of Adar</p>	<p><b>10</b> 7:30pm Interfaith "Family of Abraham" event with world musician and peace activist Gabriel Mayer Halevy Rosh Chodesh Adar II</p> <p>Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>11</b> 5:40pm Candle lighting 8:00pm Prime Time Services with special guest Gabriel Meyer Halevy 8:00pm Children's service Rosh Chodesh Adar II</p>	<p><b>12</b> 9:15am Morning meditation, Family Education Shabbat, 10 am 7:11pm Havdalah Parashat Pekudei</p>
<p><b>13</b> 4:00pm PCS Congregational Meeting Guest Gabriel Meyer Halevy at Hebrew School</p> <p>Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>14</b> 7:15pm Yoga at PCS</p>	<p><b>15</b> 7:30pm Board Meeting</p>	<p><b>16</b> 7:30pm PCS Fundraising Committee meeting</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>18</b> 6:47pm Candle lighting 7:30pm Services</p>	<p><b>19</b> 9:15am Morning meditation, Shabbat morning service, including Bar Mitzvah of Ben Klingner, 9:30 am 8:19pm Havdalah Parashat Vayikra Shabbat Zachor Shabbat before Purim</p>
<p><b>20</b> 4:00pm Spiritual Direction group, led by Rabbi David Markus Executive Committee Meeting</p> <p>...</p>	<p><b>21</b> 7:15pm Yoga at PCS</p>	<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>23</b> 6:00pm Pizza and Purim for the little ones! Come in costume! Followed at 7 pm with Megillah reading, Rabbi Stand-up Comedy, teen Purim play and so much more!  Erev Purim</p>	<p><b>24</b>  Purim</p> <p>No Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>25</b> 6:55pm Candle lighting 7:30pm Services Shushan Purim - Purim celebrated in Jerusalem and walled cities</p>	<p><b>26</b> 9:15am Morning meditation, Shabbat morning service, 10 am 8:26pm Havdalah Parashat Tzav</p>
<p><b>27</b></p> <p>No Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>28</b> 7:15pm Yoga at PCS</p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b> 7:30pm An Evening of Sharing the Music and Poetry of Leonard Cohen</p>	<p><b>31</b> Ask the Rabbi with Kita Vav</p> <p>Hebrew School</p>	<p><b>1</b> 7:03pm Candle lighting 7:30pm Services, including Children's Service</p>	<p><b>2</b> 9:15am Morning Meditation; Shabbat Service including Bar Mitzvah of Caleb Freiheit, 9:30 am 8:34pm Havdalah Shabbat Parah Shabbat after Purim Parashat Shmini</p>

**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](http://www.ShalomPCS.com). Calendars for future months are also on the website.