“More than Jews have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews.”

— Ahad Ha’am

(Asher Ginsberg, poet, philosopher, 1856-1927)

by Rabbi Shawn Zevit

This winter affords us an extra Jewish month; every two or three years a Jewish calendar leap year adds the two months of Adar (I and II) to keep the Jewish lunar year cycle in tandem with the solar calendar. During this time, the absence of a Jewish calendrical event or holiday allows us to reflect on the unfolding year. We may even pull back and look at what is essential to our daily routines, especially when Winter challenges our mobility and on-line schedules. More than ever, the weekly touchstone of Shabbat has become an oasis in our 24/7 culture and non-stop inundation of disconcerting tweets and political postings. These winter months invite us to feel gratitude for basic shelter, warmth and connection and to reflect on where we are with our self-care, spiritual practice, relationships and intellectual growth.

On the Yamim Noraim/Days of Awe, I shared with you about a focus we were taking this year on learning, on movement towards our purpose as a community, and individually. I mentioned on Yom Kippur a variety of areas I was looking at individually and for us as a sacred community. Our communal commitment to keep exploring issues of race/white privilege and re-engaging with issues around Israel-Palestine has resulted in meaningful conversations and some action throughout the Fall. We have benefitted from our annual Human Rights and MLK Shabbat weekends, including the recent return of Rabbi Brian Walt. We’ll continue this February, designated nationally as Jewish Disabilities Awareness Month, to deepen our learning and living in issues around inclusion, at a Shabbat service February 9th that Rabbi Yael, Rabbi Joysa and Gabby will be designing, as well as additional programs in our Hebrew school that month.

Throughout it all, Shabbat remains at the core of our mission and Jewish life. The Talmud (Shabbat 10b) states that Shabbat was a precious treasure gifted to us. Two different words, Shamor v’Zachor (Keep and Remember), were used in relation to Shabbat the two times the Ten Commandments are written in the Torah. The Sages teach us that this directs us both in commitment and spiritual discipline (Shamor) as well as

(continued on the next page)
staying connected to Shabbat as a universal dynamic for balance and well-being (Zachor).

We know from B’reshit/Genesis 2:1, that Shabbat is the Day the “Generator of Creation” paused to re-ensoul and integrate all that had been created. Shabbat was dedicated to building a relationship with the Divine, and reconnecting and renewing our deepest selves after a week of laboring in the physical world. One of the greatest benefits of Shabbat has always been family and community, whether in tikkun hanefesh (renewing of the soul/self) or tikkun olam (renewing/repairing of the world). Even a portion of the 25 hours together, a meal, an unplugging--claiming some shabbat on Shabbat can aid our well-being and help us feel more connected to each other in gratitude, shared experience, mutual support and ongoing soul growth.

There are also a number of Shabbat policies we developed as a community over the years which are public on our website, and articulate the process and values-set behind our policies. The practices and customs of Shabbat in our communal setting, revised by our Spiritual Life Council this past year, are posted on the third floor outside and chapel and sanctuary.

I invite you all to engage with Rabbi Yael, Rabbi Joysa, myself and each other in exploring what Shabbat is for you in your life, your home, here at Mishkan Shalom and what Shabbat consciousness and contemporary Shabbat practice might be for you.

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Mishkan Building Security Update

by Stephanie Shell and Scott Barkan

Since the tragedy at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh on October 27, members of Mishkan Shalom, along with our rabbis and staff members, have been working to make our sacred space both safer and more welcoming.

A small work group is sorting through ideas, assigning tasks, and considering multiple perspectives on the impacts of a variety of strategies. The group is led by Board Members Stephanie Shell and Scott Barkan and includes: Rabbi Shawn, Rabbi Joysa, Congregation President Ellen Tichenor, Steve Jones and Bob Kaufman.

This taskforce has started to roll out changes to ensure our security and to ensure that we remain a welcoming and inclusive community. Examples of these changes include providing Hebrew School families with codes to access our building on Wednesday evenings and establishing a protocol of having greeters at all unlocked doors on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. We are coordinating with our tenants to ensure their safety and to align our strategies. Our congregation discussed how we can be both caring and concerned as we grapple with the broader issue of security at the December 5 community meeting.

We began planning for long term enhancements to our building and procedures with input from someone who has spent his career in building security and are now working to identify ways to improve our building’s security without significant costs and without diminishing our commitment to remaining welcoming and inclusive.

We will continue to look for ways to keep you informed through Ma Hadash and invite you to share your thoughts and concerns. If you’re available and interested in volunteering, please contact Steve Jones who is coordinating the greeters. Please contact us or any of the work group members to discuss your ideas or concerns.

B’shalom,
Scott and Stephanie
Dear Friends,

As we enter the month of February we welcome the Hebrew month of Adar. The traditional greeting that accompanies this month is Be Happy --- it’s Adar.

Hearing this greeting can create the impression that happiness is something we can and should turn on and off with a switch.

Our experiences teach us that happiness is much more complicated than that. Happiness comes and goes in a moment. Happiness changes into something else in a flash. Sometimes happiness is easily accessible and other times it remains completely out of reach.

The month of Adar calls us towards happiness by asking us to explore the deepest layers of our lives. It urges us to examine what we keep hidden and what we allow to be revealed, to wonder about what we hold onto because of fear and regret and to imagine what would happen if we allowed ourselves to change, to be transformed.

Using the letters that make up the word Adar — aleph, dalet, resh—we can hear the phrase:

ashrei derechk ratzon

Happy is the person whose path is aligned with the Highest Will.
Fulfilled is the person who is walking her true path.

Be Happy—Adar calls— because transformation is possible. Changing, growing, becoming, might cause us to swirl, to tumble, to feel lost AND transformation is possible. We can turn everything around and find ourselves connected and renewed—on the shores of our lives, our feet on new and solid ground.

This year we have two months of Adar. Seven times every 19 years an extra month is added to the Jewish calendar to keep the holidays and festivals in their appropriate seasons. Without the extra Adar, the holidays would circle around the year, with Chanukah arriving in summer, Pesach in autumn and Rosh Hashanah in spring. The extra Adar brings us back into alignment.

May these months of Adar reveal wisdom and guidance.

May we support and inspire each other in living what is true. And together may we open to moments of celebration and joy.

Much blessing to all.
Shalom, Rabbi Yael

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Next Weekend (there are still seats left)!

February 9, Saturday Dinner
February 10, Sunday Brunch

The most delectable fundraiser of the year!

Sign Up Here!
You’re invited to my monthly Torah study!

It’s hard to believe, but I just passed the 6-month mark at my new position of education director, and I’m genuinely loving every bit of it. The one wish that I still haven’t been able to bring to fruition, however, has been my hope to extend my teaching role, beyond the school, with some of our adult members.

On the first Saturday of every month, Eugene Fleischman Sotirescu (who coordinates our Torah study) leads from 9:00 a.m. to 9:55 a.m. in the Library, primarily from a Mussar approach. Rabbis Shawn, Yael and other Mishkan members take other Torah study or special year cycle teachings in other pre-Shabbat service morning slots. I will generally be signing up for the final Saturday of every month with the intention of bringing a particular approach that will focus either on the role of women in the parasha, or on what insights might be gleaned from modern biblical scholarship (such as the documentary hypothesis, or readings of comparative literature or mythology from other Ancient Near Eastern civilizations of that era.) Which approach I take any given week will be governed by the content of that week’s portion.

I am by no means am a biblical scholar; I don’t have a PhD in biblical criticism! But perhaps because of my prior life as a journalist, what most ignites my intellectual fire is learning (or imagining) the historical truths behind a piece of literature – how it might have come to be – what goals its writers might have had in crafting their tale – and how their audience might have understood the story in light of how they understood the world around them.

Sh’mot (Exodus) 2:1-10

Here is just one example of what might be gleaned from this kind of textual approach, based on the Torah study I led on Dec. 29, Parasha Sh’mot.

That Saturday, we looked at the birth story of Moses – the first 10 lines of chapter 2 – which scholars agree was likely a later addition to the story. One of the “clues” for this assumption is the fact those lines contain many details that are not found anywhere else in the Torah – such key details as Moses’s traverse down the river in a basket of reeds, and his rescue by a maiden of the ruling king.

My favorite text for studying Torah portions is the Jewish Study Bible – a truly magical compilation first published in 2004 by the Jewish Publication Society and Oxford University Press. That book’s commentators in Sh’mot gave us two tantalizing tidbits: That several key elements in this miraculous Moses birth story have striking parallels to two other texts from the ANE: One being the birth story of Sargon of Assad in 2300 BCE (but not written down until the 7th century BCE); and the second being the birth story of Horus of Egypt, the famed Egyptian Falcon God, whose birth story is recorded in Le Papyrus Jumilac of the Ptolemaic period, in 305 BCE.

If anything about these dates jumped out at you – then by all means, give yourself a pat on the back! Most biblical scholars believe the five books of the Torah, as we have them today, were compiled, redacted in their current form during the Babylonian exile, circa 560 BCE. This is not too far off from the dates of those two other birth stories is it? Those stories that also contain striking parallels of an abandoned baby in a basket of reeds; of an infant whose life is saved by a series of women, some with kingly associations; of an infant who miraculously survives trials of water and grows up into a savior of people!

Indeed, one anthropologist in the 1970s, Brian Lewis, counted 72 infant-exposure motifs in traditional societies ranging from Assyria to Greece to Persia to Albania. Of those, 32

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On the Sundays after each Saturday Torah study that I lead, I will offer the same session during Sunday school for whichever parents or members may wish to attend. If you are unable to attend my Saturday Torah study, but can make the Sunday one instead, you are warmly invited to join us. We will probably begin at 10:00 a.m., but please check with me or your weekly Ma Hadash to be sure.

Here’s to many wonderful months of study together ahead!

Rabbi Joysa
Abby Berkowitz
February 2 (minha)

It’s all about the gifts.

By “gifts,” Abby doesn’t mean the presents she may receive from relatives and friends at her bat mitzvah. She means t’rumah, gifts of the heart—and the title of her Torah portion, Ex. 25:1-27:19—that the Israelites offered in order to construct the first mishkan.

“The main idea of my Torah portion is that God told Moses to tell the Israelites to bring God t’rumah, gifts of the heart, in order to build a mishkan, a sanctuary that would be holy to everyone. God wanted everybody to give the gifts with kindness and compassion and not because they felt that they had to,” Abby wrote in a draft of her d’var Torah.

The Israelites gave items including animal skins, gold, silver, copper and threads of all colors. In the course of writing her d’var, Abby asked her grandparents what gifts they would give to build a sanctuary that was safe and holy. Then she answered the question for herself: “I’d give my compassion at any time.”

She asked her grandparents other questions, too—what does the word “holy” mean to you, and what are the times and places where you have found holiness?—and will pose those queries to congregants on the day of her bat mitzvah.

Abby belonged to two other synagogues before joining Mishkan about a year and a half ago; she liked seeing familiar faces at Hebrew School, and she loved exploring Jewish culture in a project that called for students to study the life of a Holocaust survivor and make a poster about that person.

“I wanted a bat mitzvah all my life. Everybody else in my family had one,” she says. When she first began preparing, she planned on reading Torah from a tikkun, a book that includes vowels and trop marks as part of the text. “Then I decided I wanted to read from the mini-Torah without vowels. Then just last week we started reading from the regular Torah. I wanted a challenge.”

Abby plays piano and viola; she credits her musical exposure, along with her memory, in helping her learn to chant. “A fun thing is reading from the Torah, being able to actually understand it more than I used to. And the prayers and songs are easy, because I had Hebrew School.”

Her tikkun olam project involves more giving: she’ll donate money to PAWS (Philadelphia Animal Welfare Society) and to help immigrant kids living in sanctuary in Philadelphia. “Especially at this point in our lives, with Donald Trump and everything, I think it’s helpful. It’s a good thing if I help them and tell them that everything’s going to be okay.”

At AMY Northwest Middle School, not far from Mishkan, Abby likes music, art and language arts; she loves to read comic books and plays. She met her best friend on the first day of school, in second period. And she values Mishkan’s community, though she wishes it were more racially diverse. “I’d say it’s a good place if you want to go to pray…it’s one of the places I can be myself.”
Members of the Refugee Collective, along with their colleagues of the Northwest Immigration Action Coalition and the New Sanctuary Movement, have continued to support the three refugee families living in Northwest Philadelphia. Two of the families, the Thompsons, from Jamaican, and the Reyes, from Honduras, are living in sanctuary in First United Methodist Church of Germantown (FUMCOG). The Ramirez family is living in a rented house in Mt. Airy having been supported by the Coalition, St. Vincent’s Church, Mishkan Shalom and the Sisters of St Joseph.

The Thompson and Reyes families are facing deportation orders and so far, have not had legal success trying to reverse these orders. They continue to fight on political and legal fronts to not be deported. Both sets of parents have been in the country for a number of years and have children who are American citizens.

Here are some concrete steps you can do to help immigrants in our community:

1. **Monthly Fundraising Dinners:** The families have been hosting fundraising dinners the last Friday of every month to help pay their ongoing expenses. The dinners have been incredibly well attended with folks from all over the Northwest, with delicious Jamaican and Honduran food. The families request donations of $10 to attend—a bargain for the food and a chance to really support people who are simply trying to have a decent life in this country.

2. **Help Finding Employment:** The Ramirez family is not facing a deportation order presently. But they still can use our help. The mother, Maria Elena, does have work papers and is currently looking for work. She does not speak English but is a hard worker and really would like to earn money. If you know of any work such as cleaning, cooking, serving or childcare which she could do, please contact Sharon Barr at sharonpbarr@gmail.com or Judi Bernstein-Baker at jbernsteinbaker@gmail.com

3. **New Sanctuary Movement:** Mishkan is a founding member of the New Sanctuary Movement. You can read in more detail about its mission and work [here](#). One of the most important things you can do with NSM is sign up to be an accompaniment volunteer. These volunteers accompany immigrants to court dates and ICE check-ins and similar activities. You only agree to get notices of actions and to go when it is convenient for you.

And finally, a brief report from the border. Both Judi Bernstein-Baker and Sharon Barr took time to head to the southern border to volunteer as attorneys, Sharon in December, to a detention center in Dilley, Texas and Judi in January, to Tijuana, Mexico. Sharon published an account of her experience in Medium [here](#). Judi’s account of her time in Tijuana follows.

![Photo courtesy of the Atlanta Constitution Journal](#)
Reflections from the Border

By Judi Bernstein-Baker

Every morning beginning at 7:00 a.m., regardless of rain or wind, migrants begin gathering at Chaparral, the port of entry in Tijuana, Mexico, that leads to the United States. There are people in wheel chairs, indigenous faces from Mexico and Central America, more sophisticated travelers from Venezuela carrying high end multiple bags of luggage, and children. Many children. The children are generally oblivious to the journey and possible detention they face. They play ball, run around and act silly as children do, and tell their parents they are hungry. There are newborns and teens; many are under 10 years old. I watch knowing that their innocence and trust will surely be changed in detention. Those that work with families exiting detention observe trauma, fear, and sickness even if they remain with parents. It was an honor to witness this human exodus in search of safety and a better life. It was a struggle to provide legal information to the individuals knowing that eventually, many may be deported after months of detention or uncertainty.

I volunteered with Al Otro Lado (AOL), an organization on both sides of the border than provides legal advice. It was a long day. In the morning we head down to the border and encourage people who aren’t crossing that day to come to a “Charla”—an information session about the asylum process, preparing them to explain their story and fear in a way that does not result in immediate deportation. We hand out a map on how to get to Al Otro Lado available in Spanish, English, French, and Haitian Creole. After the Charla, we provide each individual with an individual consultation and reinforce, in simple terms, the concept that to get asylum, a person must show they have a fear of persecution on account of race, religion, national origin, political opinion, nationality or membership in a social group. Most are fleeing cartel or domestic violence and we stress the need to provide details and show how their governments will not or cannot protect them. In the course of my 8 day stay, we provided Charlas to Central Americans, Mexicans, Yemenis, Venezuelans, Haitians, Iranians, Nicaraguans, Eastern Europeans, Cameroonians, Eritreans and others. Some are professionals and after attending a Charla, volunteer their services while they wait; a doctor, an interpreter, an organizer. Others cannot read or write, and speak an indigenous language. But everyone is a migrant who cannot get a visa and whose only manner of escape is to present themselves to immigration officials.

If a person is going to cross the border that day and has not participated in the Charla preparation, we go to the line and ask if they have questions. Sometimes we urge people not to cross that day because of the risk they face. This is true for unaccompanied minors who are barred from entry, sent back to Mexico and face immediate deportation, or families with U.S. citizen children. The children will be taken away from their parents because citizens can’t be detained and placed in the custody of child protective services. We counsel individuals about this and some take our counsel, but others, in disbelief they will be turned away or separated, decide to take their chances.

A Mexican migrant stands with her daughter as names are read off a list of people who will cross into the US to begin the process of applying for asylum. July, 2018. Tijuana, Mexico.

Some migrants are so vulnerable, AOL staff provides intense advocacy. There was a woman from Haiti, pregnant 8 ½ months, losing blood. AOL managed, through delicate negotiations with the migrant list managers, the Mexican government and CBP to accompany her to the border before her number was called so she could get medical attention.

The hardest part of the work is to explain what may happen next. You will be sent to the “icebox”, known in Spanish as the “hielera,” a cold detention center run by Customs and Border Protection. After three to 10 days (the law says it must be only three days, (continued on page 14)
Shoah Torah Service
March 2

Mishkan Shalom’s Holocaust Torah -- and the martyred Jews of the Czech-Moravian city of Uherske Hradiste from which it was rescued -- will be honored at Shabbat services on Saturday, March 2, at 10:00 a.m.

The Torah was Mishkan’s first, arriving shortly before the congregation’s first Yamim Noraim services in September of 1988. It came from London, where in 1964 the Memorial Scrolls Trust had taken custody of almost 2,000 abandoned Shoah Torahs from the Czech Republic, repairing and loaning 1,564 of them to synagogues and other Jewish institutions around the world.

At this annual service, the week’s parasha, Vayakhel will be read from this scroll. Carol Towarnicky will deliver the d’var torah, and Ron Goldwyn will describe the history of the Moravian city, its Jewish population, and the international Torah rescue effort.

At the conclusion of the service, all in attendance will read the names of more than 200 Jewish residents of Uherske Hradiste who perished in the Shoah, and say kaddish for them, perhaps the only time or place where these men, women and children are remembered.

A special invitation to attend the service will be extended to Mishkan’s 6th grade students and their teacher Morah Amy Goldman. The Vav class spent the first half of the year studying pre-Holocaust Eastern Europe and this semester is studying the Holocaust itself.

In February the students will attend a play on Anne Frank. They also have a field trip planned before the end of the year to meet with a survivor and visit the Holocaust museum in Northeast Philadelphia.

The tortuous journey of this Holocaust Torah from Uherske Hradiste to Mishkan began in summer 1942 with a directive sent out by Nazi authorities in Prague to destroy Jewish communities across what is now the Czech Republic.

The summons was crafted by the Central Jewish Museum in Prague, disguised in rhetoric acceptable to the Nazis. It called for 136 Jewish communities in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia to send every item – ritual items, books, archives and Torahs -- to the museum. The museum, founded in 1906, held fewer than 800 items in 1939. But once the call for collection went out in 1942, over the next two and a

(Continued on next page)
Shoah Torah Service

(Continued from previous page)

half years, the staff of dedicated and heroic Jewish scholars handled over 200,000 items. The collection was carefully catalogued on 101,000 index cards, a file that amazingly survived the war.

We don’t know exactly when or how our scroll made that 200-mile journey across the war-torn Czech countryside, nor why the Nazi authorities in Prague okayed the collection and then pretty much ignored it. (The much-recited story that the Nazis wanted to construct a “museum to a vanished race” has been discredited by recent research).

The Jewish staff’s motives were clear: return the Torahs and other items to congregations to be re-established after the war. But most of the museum’s scholars and scribes perished in the Shoah, and the few synagogues re-established in the Czech countryside were wiped out in the wave of anti-Semitism that followed the Communist takeover in 1948.

The Torahs, meanwhile, mouldered in an abandoned synagogue outside Prague, many in tatters, stacked carelessly and deteriorating. By the 1960s, the cash-starved Communist government sought to monetize the Torahs.

Having failed to find a willing buyer in Israel, the communist authorities turned to an English gallery owner, on an art buying trip to Prague. The art dealer lined up London philanthropist Ralph Yablon who paid a reported 30,000 pounds for the whole lot.

In winter of 1964, the Torahs were shipped to Yablon’s Westminster Synagogue where the work of sorting, assessing and repairing the Torahs began. The rules, then as now, were that Torahs would be offered to synagogues and other institutions on permanent loan but none would be sold. 1,564 Torahs were ultimately restored for distribution.

In 1988, with virtually all Shoah Torahs distributed, our founding Rabbi Brian Walt wrote the Trust and secured Scroll number 463. A certificate from the Memorial Scrolls Trust, attesting to the Torah’s community of origin and its authenticity, is displayed in our sanctuary (in the shelf area to the left of the ark).

It has been the project of Carol and Ron to learn what they could about the Torah and the Reform-style synagogue that served the community’s 300-plus Jews as the storm of war built over central Europe. That included a visit to Uherske Hradiste in 2001, and Carol’s collection of the names of its Jews who were killed by the Nazis from the testimonies at Yad Vashem and from an organization called Beit Terezin, which has catalogued the Nazi records from that Czech concentration camp.

For more information, see Mishkan’s website, under Spiritual Life, and the Memorial Scrolls Trust http://www.memorialscrollstrust.org/.

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Email articles by the 15th of each month to levinson@yahoo.com
ONE BOOK MISHKAN’S Shabbos Matinee

**Yidl Mitn Fidl** (1936 musical starring Molly Picon)

Saturday, March 2, 1:45 p.m.

An Old Movie, A New Print

The Library Committee’s original selection for our annual Movie Night – **The Dybbuk** (1937) – is generally considered to be one of the finest films of Yiddish cinema. Unfortunately, over time, existing prints deteriorated, the sound became muddy and subtitles became difficult to read. Fortunately, the National Jewish Film Center is about to issue a restored version. So, we’ll watch for this new edition of a classic film.

As it turns out, our new selection is an even better choice to pair with this year’s One Book, **Born to Kvetch: Yiddish Language and Culture in All of its Moods**, by Michael Wex.

“Genuine Entertainment:”

Join us for **A Gliklech Tseit** (“A Happy Time”)

**Yidl Mitn Fidl** (“Yiddle with his Fiddle”), the 1936 Yiddish language musical (with subtitles) features an effervescent Molly Picon in the story of a young woman who dresses as a man to join her father’s klezmer band. A worldwide hit among Jewish audiences, it was the most successful Yiddish film of all time. When it debuted, the *New York Times* wrote:

*It must be set down to her credit that, despite the fact that there is not a single new thing in the whole bag of tricks emptied on the screen, Miss Picon puts so much infectious gayety, not forgetting the proper modicum of sadness, into the action that the result is genuine entertainment.*

One of the first Yiddish films to move out of the studio, the first part of the movie was filmed in Kazimierz Dolny, a Polish shtetl little changed in several centuries, with local inhabitants as extras.

And, so, the film is also a window into the world of Polish Jewry that would, in a short time, virtually disappear. During **Shabbat** services in the morning, we’ll remember the Jews of the small Czech city of Uherske Hradiste who perished in the **Shoah**, and chant the week’s **parasha** from the 300-year-old **Torah** scroll rescued from its synagogue, which we are privileged to guard.

While screening this light-hearted musical comedy may seem to contrast with that somber memorial, we see the real Jews of the town and their vibrant life, an astonishing view into the Yiddish-speaking world of many of our ancestors.

We hope you’ll join us for all, or any part of, this special **Shabbat**.

One Book Mishkan’s Arts Afternoon:

**Yiddish in Story & Song**

Sunday, May 19, 2019: 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Reception to follow

A springtime favorite returns, bringing the rich world of Yiddish stories to life with staged readings, in English, of stories written in Yiddish by different authors. The highly evocative world of Yiddish song and klezmer will be highlighted in musical interludes between the readings. We’re delighted to feature our choir, whose repertoire of Yiddish songs is deep and varied.

**Arts Afternoon: We Welcome Your Participation!**

Calling all actors, readers, klezmorim, tech folk (costumes, props, staging), etc. to join in our Arts Afternoon: Yiddish in Story and Song. Contact Eilen Levinson at levinsons@yahoo.com
Recently, the Library Committee’s email discussion about our change of movie prompted Natalie Gorvine to write: “Did you ever expect so much kup d’reyinish over scheduling a movie??” To which Eilen Levinson replied: “I always said fadreyte kup (“A head not screwed on right. Messed up.”)

Never having heard either expression, I did just a bissel web-sleuthing and learned drey means “turn, twist,” (dreydl, anyone?) and ferdrayt means “dizzy, confused.” Which we are, no longer! Now, we can add ferdrayt to fertummelt ferblunjt unt fermisht! which we discussed in December’s Schmooze.

But, then I noticed how many expressions included kop, often with drey/drai. The perfect pairing? Draikop, a “scatterbrain.” But, enough of drey, let’s look at kop:

Imagine your friend yammering away, as in: “Oy vey,” this and “Have I got tsuris,” that. You may find yourself thinking: “I need this like a lokh in kopf!” (“a hole in the head!”). You feel der kopveytik (a headache) coming on.


And, maybe you need to kvetch a bit, with all that listening. Go ahead, you’re entitled. A sympathetic listener would even understand if you said: “Er zol vaksen vi a tsibeleh, mit dem kop in drerd.” (“He should grow like an onion, with his head in the ground!”)

But, since you have a kop oif di plaitses (“good, common sense” – lit. “a head on the shoulders”), you’ll realize that you, too, may need a sympathetic ear someday, and so you’ll listen, patiently. Then, eventually, all kvetched-out, surely your friend will say: “A gezunt on dein keppele!” (“A blessing on your head!”)

— Sharon Rhode

The Schmooze: We Welcome Your Stories!
Share your experiences of Yiddish with the community! Send stories, reflections, favorite words, expressions, etc.
Mazel Tov
We offer a hearty mazel tov to Abby Berkowitz and her family, as she becomes bat mitzvah this month and to Sharon Gornstein and Jeff Gelles who celebrated the marriage of their daughter Sarah Gornstein Gelles to Jonathan Thrope on January 26, 2019.

Condolences
We send condolences to Mark and Kris Soffa on the loss Mark’s mother Harriet Soffa and to Caren and Leo Brenman and the Mishkan community on the loss of beloved Joe Brenman. May Harriet’s and Joe’s memories be for a blessing and may Mark, Kris, Caren Leo and their families be comforted among all who mourn.

Love and Support
This month we send our ongoing love, support, and prayers for healing to Mishkan Steve Jones, Mindy Maslin, Lisa Auerbach, Alan Tuttle, Gene Bishop, Abby Ruder, Gena Lopata, Eilen Levinson, Ray Kaplan, Erica Eisenberg, Jane Lipton, Adam Tuttle, Claire Needleman, Robin Berenholz, Bernice Bricklin, Mark Goodman, Denise Kulp, Robin Leidner, George Kaplan-Meyer, Nathan Horwitz, Lior Feldman, Miriam Samuelson, and Natalie Gorvine.

We also send ongoing love, support, and prayers for healing to all those Mishkan members in need of healing but who seek to remain private.

We are keeping Carol Dombroski (mother of Brian Dombroski), Natalie Caplin (mother of Wendy Caplin), Eleazar Shimon Hakohen ben Shoshana v’Ahron Yosai’f (father of Rabbi Shawn Zevit), Sarah Rivka bat Elizabeth (mother of Rabbi Shawn Zevit), Sarah Bradley (mother of David Bradley), Debra Singer (sister of Karen Singer), Patrick Windle (brother of Susan Windle), Sal Berenholz (father of Robin Berenholz), Jackie Berman-Gorvine (daughter-in-law of Natalie & Harold Gorvine), Lorna Michaelson (mother-in-law of Joe Brenman), Edgar Galson (father of Wendy Galson and father-in-law of Susan Windle), Don Levinson, brother of Eilen Levinson, and Julie Post and Joseph Post (sister and father of Nancy Post) and in our prayers as well. May they all experience a refuah sheleimah (full healing).

Please notify us if you want a name added to, or removed from, our “Ongoing love, support, and prayers of healing…” list.

Are you receiving Acts of Caring via email?
Acts of Caring now goes out to all Mishkan members. It is our communication central for sharing life cycle events and community needs for help. If you are not receiving Acts of Caring, please check your spam, or if you have gmail, your solicitations folder (Acts of Caring is distributed by Constant Contact). If you unsubscribe from Ma Hadash, intentionally or accidentally, you will also be unsubscribed from Acts of Caring. Please contact the office for clarification.

Acts of Caring
Acts of Caring lets the Mishkan Shalom community learn about significant events in the lives of our members. In this way, we can reach out to one another in times of grief, illness, and joy. To reach us simply email: actsofcaring@mishkan.org.

HINENI--HERE I AM
If you could use a little help because of illness, or joy (new baby!) or you know of a Mishkan member too shy to ask, please email actsofcaring@mishkan.org and we will reach out. Hineni offers concrete support to members in need of short term help, including meals, visits, transportation, etc. If you would like some help, but do not wish a public solicitation, please contact the rabbis, or actsofcaring@mishkan.org and we will speak with you privately and seek to arrange help. Our Hineni coordinators are Lisa Mervis and Chris Taranta.

Got Nachas? Sharing your good news is a marvelous way to connect our community! Please don’t be shy - send all lifecycle events you would like to be posted to our email address: actsofcaring@mishkan.org.
Reflections from the Border  
(continued from page 7)

but that is not respected by CBP). Your phone will be confiscated so send important documents to relatives and delete sensitive matters. Write down important numbers on your hand. AOL runs a documentation program and scans migrants documents; each person gets a PIN number so they can access them when they are able to connect to the internet. Put on your warmest piece of clothing first, as jackets and other layers will probably be removed. Your remarks are recorded; tell the truth, and remember what you said so you don’t contradict yourself later. If you are not married, and have children in common, you may want to get married. AOL has performed “weddings” on the line by getting couples to sign a declaration announcing their intent to be recognized as living in a “free union.” Identify a sponsor who will receive you; they should be legal. Change foreign money, if you have any, into dollars. It should be returned to you when you are released, but you will not have money in detention. After staying in the hielera, you may be sent to another detention center. Women and children could be sent to Dilley Texas. Fathers will be separated from their families, unless they are single dads. There are now many dads and children at Berks Family Detention Center.

The Department of Homeland Security has decided to arbitrarily limit the number of those who enter in the hopes migrants will get frustrated or starve and go away. The Trump administration invests in jails, enforcement and walls and not in adhering to international human rights. But the process is as orderly as it can be, and a total contrast to the lawlessness of limiting admissions and holding people in the hielera longer than the law requires. This is the “border emergency” crisis portrayed by Trump.

New volunteers come and go to AOL; there may be 20-40 at any one time. Trainings of volunteers are conducted every morning, and by the second day you are considered a veteran and may be asked to lead a training. It is a multi-generational effort, and several mother-daughter teams participated.

They are volunteers from other organizations as well, particularly the New Sanctuary Coalition, which provides emotional and basic need support and works on finding sponsors for those who have none. One of the rabbis from New Sanctuary held a small Shabbat service, which I attended. And there are the wonderful people of Tijuana, such as Hermana Adelia Contini, who have organized shelters which house and feed people or my Airbnb hostess, a human rights attorney who sued the Mayor of Tijuana, getting an injunction to stop his hate speech against migrants.

Tijuana represents the worst of times and the best of times. Our government has decided to demonize asylum seekers, most of whom are women and children. But while the migrants are suffering, they are also determined. Parents are nurturing and protecting their children. The numbers of volunteers and those who come to bear witness and help is overwhelming. It is absolutely necessary to connect with a specific group, and not arrive on your own with the intention of “saving” the migrants.

I am exhausted and angry, but hope I am as resolute as the migrants I met to resist the deportation machine. It was a privilege that some of migrants trusted me and other AOL members enough to share their suffering and fears. I was struck by the innocence and yearning that the U.S. will understand and take them in. I know I only did tiny bit, but perhaps demonstrated there is a generous and welcoming side to America.
Please join us for Torah Study each Saturday from 9:00 a.m. – 9:55 a.m.

**Saturday, February 2, 10:00 a.m.** – *Shabbat Service*, with Rabbi Shawn; **4:00 p.m.** – Abby Berkowitz will be called to the *Torah* as a *Bat Mitzvah*, with Rabbi Yael.

**Friday, February 8, 7:30 p.m.** – *Kabbalat Shabbat*, with Rabbi Shawn

**Saturday, February 9, 10:00 a.m.** – *Shabbat Service*, with Rabbi Yael

**Saturday, February 16, 10:00 a.m.** – A Way In Mindfulness Service, with Rabbi Yael

**Friday, February 22, 7:30 p.m.** – *Kabbalat Shabbat*, with Rabbi Shawn

**Saturday, February 23, 10:00 a.m.** – *Shabbat Service*, with Rabbi Shawn

FOR ALL SHABBAT AND WEEKEND PROGRAMMING

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