



CONGREGATION AGUDAS ACHIM *NEWS*



Issue # 131
Monthly

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Michael Arsers – Rabbi

LaDona Fishkin – President

Sheldon Katz - Executive Vice President Financial

Linda Schwabacher – Treasurer

Edwin Kach – Secretary

Candle Lighting Times

December

December 4 – 4:13 p.m.

December 11 – 4:13 p.m.

December 18 – 4:15 p.m.

December 25 – 4:19 p.m.



Candle Lighting Times

January

January 1 – 4:24 p.m.

January 8 – 4:30 p.m.

January 15 – 4:38 p.m.

January 22 – 4:46 p.m.

January 29 – 4:55 p.m.



December

David Michelson
Linda Schwabacher
Naomi Fishman
Annette Heller
Raquel Huberman
Carl Inselberg



December

Evelyn and Steve Vogel
Raquel and Jeff Huberman

Calendar of Events

Saturday, December 5

10:30 a.m. – Service
Parsha: Vayishlach

Sunday, December 6

10 a.m. – AA Board Meeting

Saturday, December 12

10:30 a.m. – Service
Parsha: Vayeshev

Saturday, December 19

10:30 a.m. – Service
Parsha: Miketz

Saturday, December 26

10:30 a.m. – Service
Parsha: Vayigash

The Board of Directors and members of Congregation Agudas Achim wish to express their sympathy to The family of Rochelle Berko (Ben Dolin's sister)

Speedy Recovery to:
Charlene Steinberg



From our Rabbi, Michael Arsers

Over the years, I have frequently quoted Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, the former Chief Rabbi of the British Commonwealth, in my sermons and article. It is with great sadness and a profound sense of the loss of one of the greatest modern Jewish thinkers and teachers that I write these words in memory of Rabbi Sacks who passed away on November 7.

I was attracted to the writings of Rabbi Sacks because he was a shining example of an orthodox rabbi who was also an extremely well-educated, highly literate person. In his writings and speeches, he discussed, practically in the same breadth, the commentaries of Rashi and the philosophy of Plato. He frequently cited the work of contemporary anthropologists and psychologists in his commentaries on the weekly Torah portion. His was not a superficial acquaintance with Western intellectual life. He held degrees from Cambridge and Oxford Universities and a PhD from the University of London.

What made Rabbi Sacks such an important figure in modern Judaism was not just the breadth of his education, but the depth of his humanity. He was a person who was motivated by a deep concern for all of humankind. One of the most influential books I have read in recent years was Rabbi Sacks' Not in G-d's Name. In this work, Rabbi Sacks provides profound and insightful interpretations of the stories of the patriarchs in the Book of Genesis. But his main theme in this volume (one of more than twenty-five books which he wrote) was a call for tolerance amongst the three Abrahamic religions. He argues that the episodes of sibling rivalry in Genesis are a profound lesson for us about the dangers of the rivalries between the religions that all claim Abraham as their spiritual progenitor. All the claims that God favors one sibling to the exclusion of another are a misunderstanding that falsely attributes an inability on the part of God to love all of humanity at the same time without exclusion.

I also remember a *derasha* I heard Rabbi Sacks give on the Exodus story. He talked about the five women who were the heroes of the

Exodus. They were Yocheved, Moses' mother, Miriam, his sister, Shifrah and Puah, the two mid-wives who rebelled against Pharaoh's command and did not kill the Israelite male infants, and Pharaoh's daughter who rescued Moses from the water. Besides, of course, emphasizing the role of women in the Exodus, he also pointed out that three of these women were probably non-Jews. Although some commentaries claim that Shifrah and Puah were really Yocheved and Miriam, others maintain the more literal view that they were Egyptians. If we follow this view then the two of them plus Pharaoh's daughter were three non-Jewish women who played instrumental roles in the salvation of the Jewish People. Emphasizing the universal aspect of the biblical story was typical of Rabbi Sack's approach.

Rabbi Sacks was also an advocate for morality in society. He saw Judaism and Christianity engaged in a common effort to reaffirm core values. He was quoted as having said in a meeting with the Pope, "In the face of a deeply individualistic culture, we offer community, Against consumerism, we talk about the things that have value but not a price. Against cynicism, we dare to admire and respect. In the face of fragmenting families, we believe in consecrating relationships." He was also a great advocate for personal responsibility. Our ability to choose and hence our responsibility for our own actions and inactions was a central tenet of his thought. "There is one respect in which each of us has precisely the same strength as Moses. Namely the strength to choose. There is no hand of heaven – no physiological, genetic, psychological, or Providential compulsion – that forces us to act one way rather than another." (Tradition in an Untraditional Age)

Illustrative of Rabbi Sack's impact on all of society, I will conclude with a quotation from a statement issued by Charles, Prince of Wales, describing his "profound personal sorrow" and stating, "With his passing, the Jewish Community, the nation, and the entire world have lost a leader whose wisdom, scholarship and humanity were without equal."



From our President, LaDona Fishkin

Dear Members and Friends of Agudas Achim,

Kislev, our month to honor the victory of the Macabees. A time when we hope that the lighting of the menorah continues to bring light into a world where we are fortunate to have religious freedom. If anyone in our community is in need of candles for the holiday, please call Gladys at 692-4848 and we can arrange for you to have curbside pickup or delivery.

We had a lovely, in person shabbat on the 12 of Kislev, Vahyetzei, but sadly because of the increase risk during the Thanksgiving holiday, we had to limit it to a minyan of ten men. We hope to open attendance up to more as community risk goes down.

Last year we had an amazing community Chanukkah with over 120 people enjoying candle lighting, a kosher brisket meal and the excitement of seeing so many visiting grandchildren. Unfortunately because of Covid precautions, we will not have this gathering, but Congregation Agudas Achim and the Jewish Federation of Peoria are teaming up to provide kosher brisket, green beans, potato kugel and brownie meal to the Senior Community Program. We are also considering a curbside event in February call SOUPer Bowl. Watch for details in January.

I want to thank our community for practicing safety through social distancing, temperature checks and masks. I'm also cautiously happy for the final month of 2020 and the hopes of vaccine distribution.

Shalom,
LaDona Fishkin, President Agudas Achim



Charity Donations

Memory of Paul Tamkin
Joan and Tom Halperin



Peoria Hebrew Day School News

Our students are really enjoying the all day STEAM days that we are having once a month. We have been giving the students several options during the day to explore a STEAM project that they are interested in based on an overall theme. Our last STEAM day theme was flight. Several of the students were excited to make paper airplanes and test different designs. By the end of the day, some of the older students had tested about ten different designs. We loved seeing how their eyes were lit up after they had tried to fly one of their creations, and they learned what did and did not work to increase its flight distance. Their brains were working and they quickly went back to work to improve their next one. We also had students who worked on making kites. The younger students even worked on making some model planes, and then tested how throwing the plane different affected the distance. One of our older students worked on putting a model engine together that would be used to fly a real plane.

Peoria Hebrew Day School is now enrolling students for Pre-Kindergarten through 8th grade for the 2020-2021 school year! Please contact Dina Lunken 815-353-4313 or e-mail peoriadayschool@sbcglobal.net for more information.



Kiddush Fund Donations

In honor and appreciation of our dear friends, Joan and Tom Halperin

CHAI+ – Bonnie and Richard Rowe

Memory of Rochelle Berko (Ben Dolin's sister)

Debbie and Harry Morgenstern

Memory of the yahrzeit of our dear, beloved father, Gene Schinles

CHAI+ – Marie and Bruce Schindles

Memory of the yahrzeit of our dear, beloved mother, Rhetta Schinles

CHAI+ – Marie and Bruce Schindles

Memory of the yahrzeits of our dear, beloved parents and grand-parents, Morris and Frances Cohen

CHAI+ – Carl Cohen, Bonnie and Richard Rowe and family, Ashara and Marc Shapiro and family

Memory of the yahrzeits of our dear, beloved grandparents and great grand-parents, Lewis and Rose Feldman

CHAI+ – Carl Cohen, Bonnie and Richard Rowe and family, Ashara and Marc Shapiro and family



Freyda Fredman Hospitality Fund

Honor of the recovery of Charlene Steinberg

2 X CHAI – Diane and Ed Kach

Memory of Rochelle Berko (Ben Dolin's sister)

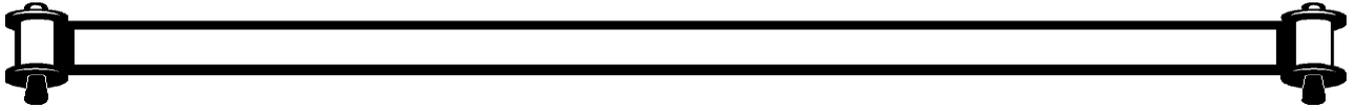
Doris Shasah

Memory of the yahrzeit of my dear, beloved wife, Freyda Fredman

2 X CHAI – Yos Fredman

December

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4 Candles @ 4:13	5 10:30 am – Service Parsha: Vayishlach
6 10 am – AA Board Mtg.	7	8	9	10 Erev Hanukkah	11 Candles @ 4:13 Hanukkah	12 10:30 am – Service Parsha: Vayeshev Hanukkah
13 Hanukkah	14 Hanukkah	15 Hanukkah	16 Rosh Chodesh Hanukkah	17 Hanukkah	18 Candles @ 4:15 Hanukkah	19 10:30 am – Service Parsha: Miketz
20	21	22	23	24	25 Candles @ 4:19 Office Closed	26 10:30 am – Service Parsha: Vayigash
27	28	29	30	31	1 Candles @ 4:24	2 10:30 am – Service Parsha: Vayechi



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ACHIM

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