



JEWISH
COMMUNITY
CENTER
OF FORT LEE

THE MESSENGER

JANUARY 2019 • TEVET/SHEVAT • 5779



Tu B'Shevat Shabbat – Seder & Supper & Shabbat Together Musical Service

FRIDAY, JANUARY 18TH 2019

DINNER 6:00PM - MUSICAL SERVICE 7:15PM - ONEG FOLLOWS SERVICE

EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND THE SERVICE. RESERVATIONS FOR THE DINNER AND SEDER ARE A MUST!

Members: Adults: \$18 Children (12 & under): No Charge

Non-Members: Adults: \$20 Children (12 & under): No Charge

Our Torah Members

These generous individuals have voluntarily chosen to support our Synagogue at a higher level of dues than is required, in order to help other Jews who are less fortunate and in need of assistance.

ETERNAL LIGHT MEMBERS

These members provide financial assistance and synagogue membership for families who are enduring financial hardship, as well as a full religious education for their children.

Anonymous
David Korn
Stephen & Merilee Obstbaum

“Offerings of the Heart”

*The names of our
Torah Members
are inscribed on the
sculpture in our
Community Room.*

Joseph & Tikva Ofeck
Joni Rosen
Myrna Weissman

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These members provide financial assistance and membership for families who are enduring financial hardship.

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Mordechai & Suzanne Warshavsky
Charlotte Winter

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2018 *President's Council* 2019

The President's Council was established to recognize and honor our "**Leadership Donors**" who contribute \$1,250 or more to our *Kol Nidre Annual Fund*.
These generous individuals are the "**Financial Guardians**" of our synagogue.

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IN AN AGE OF PARTISANSHIP, AIPAC'S EVEN-HANDEDNESS MATTERS MORE THAN EVER



The foregoing Op Ed was penned by Rabbi Shmuley Boteach in the November 23rd issue of the Jewish Standard; I re-print it with his permission. This Op Ed is, first and foremost, honest; it does not pull any punches: it begins with an objective assessment of AIPAC's ups and downs and challenges, and then Rabbi

*Boteach makes a brilliant and strong case for why we need AIPAC, the **pre-eminent bipartisan Israel advocacy organization** before the Congress of the United States and the Executive Branch. In an age of division and political extremism, AIPAC deserves our vigorous support for its time-honored, non-partisan principles. So, won't you please consider joining me at AIPAC's annual Policy Conference on March 24th - 26th? (You can find more information on page 13 in this issue of *The Messenger*)*

In An Age of Partisanship, AIPAC's Even-Handedness Matters More Than Ever

By Rabbi Shmuley Boteach

The American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, best known by its catchy acronym AIPAC, is a modern Jewish-American miracle. Anyone who has wandered the jarringly packed halls of its annual policy conference – which recently drew almost 20,000 attendees, among them 4,000 students – can attest to the sheer power and majesty of America's pre-eminent pro-Israel lobbying organization. After being officially incorporated in 1963, the organization embarked upon a startlingly aggressive phase of growth, dispatching hundreds of field operatives to develop a vast and diverse network of grass-roots support throughout all of America's 50 states. By the 1970's, the organization had amassed the power to push for the State of Israel, even against the policies of the President of the United States.

During an apparent clash between Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, President Gerald Ford notoriously threatened to enact a "reassessment" of the American relationship with Israel, even noting in a letter to the Jewish state that "failure" to accede to specific negotiations would have a "far-reaching impact" on American "relations" in the region. The next day, the President received a letter of his own. This time it was signed by 76 senators – six more than the super-majority needed to override any decision of the executive branch – and it demanded that the President "make it clear that the United States, acting in its own national interests, stands firm with Israel." The House of Representatives followed suit, and the "reassessment" never happened.

Throughout the sprawling halls of the Capitol, the message was clear: AIPAC was in the building. Fast-forward to 2016, and AIPAC would be renting Washington's Verizon Center arena just to house the entirety of its policy conference keynote event, which featured Washington's most powerful names, including then-Vice President Joe Biden, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Governor John Kasich, Speaker Paul Ryan, and, of course, presidential candidate Donald Trump.

Today, AIPAC stands upon the sturdy support of 100,000 members and boasts a \$72 million annual budget, cushioned by a \$140 million endowment. Some 300 staffers populate 18 AIPAC offices spread across the country. Its army of lobbyists have laid deep, stable ties with State Department and Pentagon bureaucrats, and can instantly mobilize a vast network of political action committees and government heavyweights.

Yet even as the organization glimpses the very height of its own success, it's also beginning to face its most serious threats. Like any centrist element of American political life, AIPAC has been besieged by the ever-intensifying political extremes. And amid this bitterly sectarian political climate, bipartisan, behemoths like AIPAC have found themselves grasping in the dark for allies.

More recently, AIPAC has hit snags in its relationship with the Trump administration. When presidential candidate Donald Trump was invited to speak at AIPAC's 2016 Policy Conference, he chose to punctuate an otherwise remarkably eloquent and comprehensive speech with a claim that Barack Obama "may be the worst thing to happen to Israel." This, just after noting that at least the sitting President was "in his final year," he gave a clear and simple "Yay!" Much of the audience, clearly frustrated at Obama's often turbulent relationship with the Jewish state, rose in mass applause. ***I was in the room at the time. The response to the comment was electrifying.*

The very next day, AIPAC president Lillian Pinkus, choking back her tears, took to the stage to announce that "last evening, something occurred which has the potential to drive us apart, to divide us." She went on to say that she and AIPAC's leadership took "great offense" at the "ad hominem attacks... leveled against the President of the United States of America from our stage."

Perhaps unexpectedly for Pinkus, Trump would go on to win the presidency that November. Though Trump agreed to send his vice president and UN ambassador to address AIPAC's conference that year, the love lost over the affair was lost on no one there.

Since then, AIPAC has taken a hit from the Israeli right, too. During the recent gala held by the Zionist Organization of America, Israel's ambassador to the UN, Danny Danon, was reported by the Daily Beast to have "implicitly needled the mainline [AIPAC]... by saying that the ZOA was now the go-to organization in the US for the Israeli government."

The growing political roadblocks facing AIPAC in Washington are by no means limited to its relationship with the right. On the contrary, AIPAC's alienation from American political extremism began years before the rise of Trump during the rocky years of the Obama administration. Back then, the pro-Israel body found itself being excoriated by elements of the far left. Senator Bernie Sanders, for one, represented the anti-Israel sentiments of the far left by refusing to so much as attend the mega-conference AIPAC held in 2016.

On the center left, too, AIPAC would ensure increasing isolation. During the President's pursuit of a disastrous nuclear agreement in Iran, AIPAC valiantly took the administration head on, swarming the capital with agents tasked with explaining the dangers of the agreement. In these moments, AIPAC proved not only its fierce commitment to ensuring Israel security, but, more importantly, its willingness to risk its most precious relationships on Israel's behalf. Though the effort failed to prevent Obama from signing an embarrassing agreement with the Iranian regime, it still represented AIPAC at its best: totally bipartisan, yet willing to take on a side when Israel's security concerns demanded that it do so.

Indeed, AIPAC's efforts harmed some of the lifeblood of its axis and influence. Democratic leaders openly condemned AIPAC for abandoning its bipartisan principles in its fierce opposition to Obama's principal foreign policy objective. The Obama administration would offer significant advantage to AIPAC's chief competitor on the left Jeremy Ben-Ami's J Street, which seemed founded on a singular policy of criticizing Israel.

In March 2015, at the height of his campaign to sign a deal with Iran, President Obama sent his Chief of Staff, Dennis McDonough, to headline J Street's annual conference. Just a few years prior, in 2008, J Street operated as a four-man team that had only recently

graduated from Ben-Ami's basement. By 2015, due in no small part to increasing support from the Obama administration, J Street had grown to encompass more than 60 employees, with 160,000 paying members, 3,000 of whom were there to hear the top staffer at the lobby's annual congress.

All of this influence, however, would be used to advance not a pro-Israel agenda but a pro-Obama one. During the push for the Iran deal, J Street would receive an astounding \$576,500 from the Plowshares Fund – the equivalent of nearly one-third of the lobby's entire 2014 budget – to help the Obama Administration sow the seeds of a deal that almost every Israeli political figure warned would permanently undermine their state's security.

Following numerous meetings between Ben-Ami and White House officials, the organization created a website, IranDealFacts.com, a digital echo-chamber of the administration's Iran-deal talking points. Ultimately, all of these developments represented a tragic turn for the American pro-Israel community. Unlike J Street and the ZOA, which have in no uncertain terms, cast their political allegiances with a single side, AIPAC is a distinctly bipartisan organization. Every single bill the lobby supports must have both Republican and Democratic co-signers, and at all of AIPAC's various forums, both arch-rivals and ardent supporters of the current administration will receive equal time to speak their minds from the podium. Even as some see bipartisanship as a relic, the fact is that it has never been more critical.

After all, once a lobby retreats to one side of the political aisle, its allegiances lie less in policy objectives, than in towing political lines. J Street, therefore, will flatter those in Obama's State Department despite overwhelming opposition from the Israeli people they're claiming to protect. Differently, the ZOA found itself mired earlier this year, in a scandal involving the nation of Qatar, something a strictly bipartisan and democratically led organization like AIPAC would never have gotten involved with.

There are, thank God, many pro-Israel organizations. And as active as they may be, they all need AIPAC because of its across-the-board legitimacy as a lobby group defined only by its commitment to Israel, without any allegiances to either side of the political spectrum. As an activist who spent his formative years as a Rabbi to the students of Oxford University, I can see how tragic it is when one party – the Conservatives – become

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY CONTINUED

the pro-Israel party while Labour is run by an out-and-out anti-Semite. Such partisan support for Israel by only one side of the aisle would be an American tragedy.

AIPAC is helping to ensure that never happens, and I salute them.

***I was in the room at the time, too. Trump's intonation was mischievous and it caught everyone off-guard. You almost had to laugh. Yes, it got a standing ovation, but that was abetted by the technician in the control room who turned up the house lights, a signal to the audience to rise and applaud.*

I have no idea whether Lillian Pinkus, AIPAC's newly installed president, was an Obama supporter or not. She was tearful and devastated because the anti-Obama reaction to Trump's "Yay" deeply offended AIPAC's African American and Latino supporters. Those are two groups whose crucial support AIPAC has been carefully cultivating for decades; their support for Israel will become only more important with each passing year. (I know all this because I was at a meeting much later that night, in which this and more was discussed).

- Rabbi Stern

On the Road with the Rabbi to Valley Cottage Library

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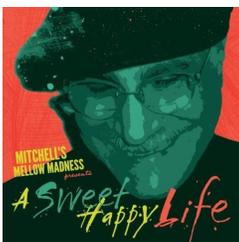
Blowing a very different horn



"Mitchell's Mellow Madness" Band

January 20th — 1:30 pm

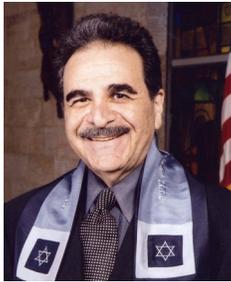
Space limited - priority given to Synagogue Members



Mitchell Shedlarz, with the uber talented, world class musicians of "Mitchell's Mellow Madness" Band, loves to perform sophisticated and beautiful, but always familiar, jazz music in an upbeat, fun and happy style.



THE SABBATH OF SONG!



Here we are! Its 2019! My first suggestion of a “must do” for you is to make every effort to attend our Shabbat services. Perhaps, not necessarily on a weekly basis, but to increase your current attendance. You may be pleasantly

surprised...

For instance on **Shabbat morning**, January 19th we will celebrate **Shabbat Shirah, the Sabbath of Song**. It is part of the Torah reading for Parshat B’shalach. Come hear the experience of the splitting of the sea with its unique **trope**. It’s a melody that has been chanted for thousands of years.

Once again, we will rise and listen to the reading of the “*Az Yashir Moshe...*” “**Moses and the children of Israel sang with great joy; who is like you God among the mighty? At the shore of the Red Sea, the redeemed offered praise unto God’s name.**” When our **Ba’al Korei** Torah Reader begins to chant the “*Az Yashir Moshe,*” the congregation feels a connection with the joy and jubilation the people must have felt when they experienced this event in our history. The melody of this text is unique and not heard anywhere else in the Bible.

The year 2018 was an unusually sad year for the Jewish people. With terrorism and hate crimes on the rise, it is almost certain to have catastrophic effects. Our world is a complicated one in which our pace seems to intensify all the time. My teacher and Rabbi, the renowned Theologian **Abraham Joshua**

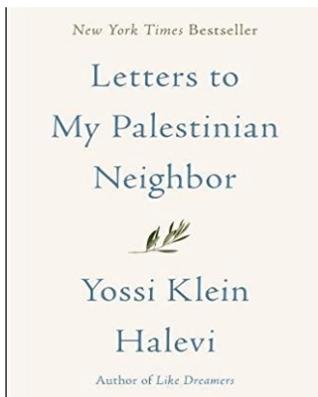
Heschel, of blessed memory, tells us that “**the meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space.**”



Shabbat is an oasis in time which allows us to see the world as it should be! We all need that. Your oasis, my congregants, is right here on Anderson Avenue at **the JCC of Fort Lee/ Congregation**

Gesher Shalom, where you get peace of mind that gives renewal and strength.

May 2019 be a year of blessing, hope and peace!



The next meeting of the Great Synagogue Read-In will feature Chapter four of “**Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor**” by Yossi Klein Halevi on Wednesday, January 9th at 10:30 am. Discussion will begin that day at 6:30 pm

SAVE THE DATES:
Upcoming Shabbat Dinners

February 22nd
March 15th

Sisterhood's Mishlo'ach Manot Project

Your Purim gift lists will be mailed soon, please fill them out and return them to the Center office with your check. Help us surpass our fundraising goal.



*Will you help deliver our gifts on Sunday, March 17th ?
Call Debbie 201-947-1735 ext 312
or Ethel 201-224-7215 to volunteer.*

It is once again time for our "ALL CHARITY" project that supports our Synagogue and those in need, both near and far (most especially Israel) because of this we hope that all of you will participate in Mishlo'ach Manot this year.

Needless to say we need volunteers to help assemble the packages and most especially to make deliveries on Sunday, March 17th. So watch your mail for further details, return your contribution forms and help us 'go over the top' once again this year. It's fun and rewarding! Todah!!

REMINDER

As always Sisterhood goes on hiatus during January and February. There will be no general membership meetings or Book Club meetings. **Our next general membership meeting is Tuesday, March 12th at 1:00pm.**

Sisterhood Book Club resumes in the spring

Tuesday, March 19th - 1:00pm

Next title will be announced in the February Messenger.

Refreshments served

Chairpersons

Kathy Grazian & Naomi Altschul



SEVEN WAYS TO MAKE THIS YOUR BEST WEEK EVER

No matter how old we are, the weekend is everyone's favorite time of the week. Whether it is Shabbat on Saturday, or a Sunday with few responsibilities, the mention of the weekend elicits a positive response. To Jews everywhere, Shabbat is the most important and most revered day of the week; a weekly holiday that enables us to renew our spirits and recharge our bodies. However, ignoring the other days of the week as merely stepping stones to the weekend prevents us from living our best lives.

Why not try to give each day a special significance?

Day 1: Be Kind—Why not practice a random act of kindness? Whether buying the coffee for the person behind you in the Starbucks line, or sitting by the new kid in the cafeteria, there is no end to the kindnesses we can do.

Day 2: Be Confident—Don't be afraid to be yourself. We are all different, and that's a good thing. Spend some time in your day figuring out what makes you special—share that with everyone!

Day 3: Be Adventurous—Expand your horizons

once in a while. Use this day to try something you've never done before.

Day 4: Be Creative—As adults, we sometimes get so busy we don't take the time to be creative. Go buy some art supplies, cook a new recipe, and whatever you do enjoy it!

Day 5: Be Independent—Take the initiative to do something yourself. Have you ever felt compelled to take part in a charitable drive or collection? Don't wait to donate, find a cause you believe in and create the forum for it.

Day 6: Be A Dreamer—You can achieve great things if you dream big. Is there something you've always wanted to do? Set some time aside today to plan something big: a once in a lifetime trip, a new job? You don't have to make the change now, but having a plan sets you up for future success!

Day 7: Be Brave—Be confident in doing the right thing. Have you ever hesitated to jump into a situation because no one else was and you knew you could be the one who would make a difference? It's hard to go out on a limb and speak up, but once you've done it, you can be confident that you have done your best.

Live every day to its fullest and make each day count.



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SUPPORT CONGREGATION GESHER SHALOM'S DAILY MINYAN



Morning:

Mon - Fri at 7:00 am

Evening:

Sun - Thurs at 7:45 pm



Hebrew School Students showing their support for the Pittsburgh Tree of Life Synagogue shooting victims and their families. The shirts were generously donated by Fort Lee Mayor Mark Sokolich

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 Bara Batra 9a

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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

1	Marcia Orange	11	Ana Erlichman	23	Eran Gensler
1	Michael Seymour	13	Allan Ginsburg	23	Sara Rak
1	Reva Strasfeld	13	Janet Chertkoff	24	Samuel Wasserman
2	Kenneth Rak	14	Lore Benario	24	Livia Kraut
2	Luba Veiland-Ciardello	14	Anne Hall	25	Reggie Feuerstein
3	Laurie Smilovitz	14	Yakov Kishinevsky	25	Michael Glantz
3	Valerie Maier	15	Marjorie Berger	26	Irwin Berger
3	Aviv Gensler	17	Hilde Straus	26	Gloria Deutsch
4	Sally Seymour	17	Karen Halpern	27	Charlene Stern
4	Neil Benjamin Dasgupta	17	Beth Schefflan	29	Randy Karpman
7	Susan Ginsburg	20	Eve Kohut	30	Charles Shatz
8	Selma Spielman	21	Greta Flam	31	Stuart Kimberly
10	Sheila Scherl	22	Rita Berliner	31	Howard Schefflan
11	James Rosenberg	22	Elai Kindler	31	Brooke London

*Happy
Birthday !*

2	Hilda & Jack Reisner	26	Florence & Norman Silverberg
14	Rose & Alex Jakoby	27	Trudi & Robert Mohl
17	Suzette & Marvin Josif		

*Happy
Anniversary*

If your birthday/anniversary is not listed, please call the Synagogue office and we will update our records. 201-947-1735



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December 20th

The Origins of Jewish Settlement
in Germany

~

Highlights of Medieval Ashkenazic
History

December 27th

Moses Mendelssohn: The First
Modern Jew

~

The Berlin Haskalah (or The Jewish
Enlightenment)

January 3rd

The Struggle over Civic
Emancipation

~

The Struggle over Religious
Reform

January 10th

Integration and Antisemitism
in Imperial Germany

~

The Jews and World War I

January 17th

Jews in the Weimar Republic

~

Understanding the Holocaust

January 24th

German Responses to the
Holocaust

~

The Rebirth of Jewish Life in
Germany



Rabbi Fine returns, this time to lecture on his area of specialty, the story of the Jews in Germany. Rabbi Fine's doctoral dissertation was published as Jewish Integration in the German Army in the First World War in 2012. Rabbi Fine teaches adjunct at the Abraham Geiger and Zacharias Frankel rabbinical schools in Berlin. He has been visiting Germany at least once each year for the past twenty years. He graduated from Wesleyan University with honors in history received his rabbinic ordination from the JTS, and his PhD in modern European history from CUNY. Rabbi Fine has authored two books on Jewish History and thought.

There is no charge for this lecture series

All are welcome to attend, RSVP not required.



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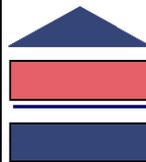
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JANUARY 2019

Tevet/Shevat - 5779

Daily Service Times

Mon -Thur 7:00am & 7:45pm
 Friday 7:00am & 6:30pm
 Saturday 9:30am & Minchah
 Sunday 9:00am & 7:45pm

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1 24 Tevet Office Closed	2 25 Tevet	3 26 Tevet Rabbi's Class 10:30 am CSI Lecture 12:30 pm	4 27 Tevet  4:23PM	5 28 Tevet Service 9:30 am MINCHAH 4:00PM VAERA
		NEW YEAR'S DAY				
6 29 Tevet	7 1 Shevat	8 2 Shevat Sisterhood Board Meeting 1:00 pm	9 3 Shevat The Great Synagogue Read In 10:30 am Read In discussion 6:30 pm	10 4 Shevat Rabbi's Class 10:30 am CSI Lecture 12:30 pm	11 5 Shevat Bible Study 11:30am  4:30PM	12 6 Shevat Service 9:00 am MINCHAH 4:00PM Bo
13 7 Shevat	14 8 Shevat	15 9 Shevat	16 10 Shevat	17 11 Shevat Rabbi's Class 10:30 am CSI Lecture 12:30 pm	18 12 Shevat Bible Study 11:30am Shabbat Dinner 6:00 pm Service 7:15 pm  4:38PM	19 13 Shevat Service 9:30 am MINCHAH 4:15PM BESHALACH
20 14 Shevat On the Road with the Rabbi to Valley Cottage Library 1:30 pm	21 15 Shevat Office Closed	22 16 Shevat	23 17 Shevat	24 18 Shevat Rabbi's Class 10:30 am CSI Lecture 12:30 pm	25 19 Shevat Bible Study 11:30am  4:47PM	26 20 Shevat Birthday & Anniversary Service 9:30 am MINCHAH 4:30PM YITRO
	TU B'SHEVAT					
27 21 Shevat	28 22 Shevat	29 23 Shevat	30 24 Shevat	31 25 Shevat Rabbi's Class 10:30 am CSI Lecture 1:00 pm		

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