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Happy Purim March 2024



From the Bimah

CS Newsletter March 2024

Last month I wrote about the feeling of discomfort with politics in the USA and the world. This is especially uncomfortable to Jewish people, as we seem to be considered to be part of the problem. While this is unsettling to us, it is equally as interesting when we consider that so many of our community are involved in what we consider acts of Tikkun Olam. Just in our synagogue family, we have people who in their professional careers did pro bono work for years. Many still volunteer outside the Jewish community to serve others in various ways. Our synagogue family has always reached out to assist non Jewish folks who are in need. I am proud to represent Congregation Sinai in any way I can.

Often I write articles that encourage religious practice and I will certainly do so in the future. The Torah teaches us that Judaism is not about only religious practice, but about sharing with the world outside of the Jewish community a vision of a better world. It is not new information that Jewish physicians and inventors have discovered and created medicines and treatments that have benefited the entire world. It is well known that Israel, a very small country in terms of population has offered and continues to offer cutting edge technology for bettering societies to many countries free of any charge or obligation. This includes, but is not limited to medicine and agriculture. Israel trains some individuals in methods of rescue from earthquakes and other natural disasters and offers assistance to other nations immediately after these events occur elsewhere in the world.

All of this is an integral part of being Jewish whether on a global scale or in our home communities. Be proud to be part of the Jewish people. We have a most excellent heritage and deserve a reasonable amount of appreciation. May God bless us with good health and the opportunity to do greater things that honor Him and our people.

Joe & Robin



President's Message March 2024

March, already? Wow! It seems like we just had the High Holidays!

Let's do a quick recap of February. I started out by finally coming back to the temple after bouts with COVID for both Bev and me. I had given a couple of my Friday night announcements over the computer, but it just wasn't the same without hearing the response to my jokes.

We posted a flyer about the congregation on social media, and got a lot of views. This tells us that there are Jewish people out there. Hopefully, some will come by. I intend to re-post the flyer every couple of months. We need YOUR help with this. I can only post to Facebook and NextDoor to those groups that I'm subscribed to. Joyce and Bev helped since they belong to many more groups. But we need your help, posting to your groups and communities.

We started a GoFundMe intended to help bring down the cost of the Seder. As I write this, we've had \$1,014 donated to GoFundMe as well as a generous donation from one of our Congregants. This has allowed us to bring the cost down for EVERYONE. We have some generous people in our community!

I did have one comment that the GoFundMe made us look poor and that it makes us look "like we are 'Shnorring' from the community". Besides the reduction in price, these funds will pay for all the extras that we need to buy ourselves, such as Chopped Liver, Gefilte Fish, wine, horseradish, tablecloths, etc. We will also reimburse any temple members who make something for the seder for their ingredients. If anyone else objects, please let me know, and we will reconsider for the future.

Hopefully, the sound issues with our streaming have been resolved. I can stop my constant visits to the temple during the week, and it seems like we have more people joining the service on Friday nights.

We can't forget Alberto's Bar Mitzvah! He did a great job, and we are all proud of him!

Coming up in March is Purim. The actual date is Saturday evening, March 23rd, but we will have our celebration on Friday night, March 22nd. Keep a watch for a flyer!

Have a great March! Looking ahead, April 23rd will be our Passover Seder, so please join us. The registration will be out by the time you read this.

Lou





Esther and Mordechai Invite you to



Pizza for Purim Friday, March 22, 2024 6:00 pm Pizza, Salad. And Hamantashen

Adults _	\$5.00	\$ 12.00
	Coupon	
N ame	Check	
<i>p</i> izza <u>@</u> \$ 5.00_		
		mily

Pay online at Congregation Sinai Website

Mail checks to Congregation Sinai: 4327 S Us 27 Box315 Clermont, FI 34711

Deadline March 16. No reservations after March 16.

From Shalom Y'All

Hi Congregants

Our president, Lou Chern has graciously communicated to those who attend services, that Shalom Y'All has initiated s GoFundMe account to build a reserve to secure bigger venues for the events and activities planned for our Congregation and the public. To date, our craft shows and Joe's concert are two of our very successful events requiring bigger venues.

To be blunt, we need your help. We are asking you to donate what you can to show that we, as congregants, are contributing and working toward our goal. Remember. we are, The Little Temple that Could!

Your GoFundMe money is already at work. Your generous donations paid for the venue for Passover!

Thank you!

It is easy to donate. The steps to donate are below..

- 1. Google GoFundMe
- 2. In the rectangle that says 'results' type in.

The Little Engine that Could

- 3. Click on Congregation Sinai
- 4. Fill in information. Be sure to scroll down.

Shalom Y'All thanks everyone of you. With your help, bigger events and activities are in our future.

Bev, Joyce and Joan

Things You Didn't Know About Purim

BY MY JEWISH LEARNING

1. Esther was a vegetarian (or at least a flexitarian).

According to <u>midrash</u>, while Queen Esther lived in the court of King Ahasuerus, she followed a vegetarian diet consisting largely of legumes so that she would not break the laws of kashrut (dietary laws). For this reason, there is a <u>tradition of eating beans and peas</u> on Purim. (After all, you'll need something healthy after all the booze and <u>hamantaschen</u>.)

2. You're supposed to find a go-between to deliver your mishloach manot, the gift baskets traditionally exchanged with friends and family on Purim.

The verse in the <u>Book of Esther</u> about mishloach manot stipulates that we should <u>send gifts to one another</u>, not just give gifts to one another. As a result, it's better to send your packets of goodies to a friend via a messenger, than to just give them outright. Anyone can act as a gobetween, so feel free to recruit the postal service or even that nice guy in the elevator to help you deliver your gifts.

3. The Book of Esther is one of just two biblical books that do not include G-d's name.

The other is <u>Song of Songs</u>. The Book of Esther also <u>makes no reference</u> to the Temple, to prayer, or to Jewish practices such as *kashrut* [keeping kosher].

4. <u>Hamantaschen</u> might have been designed to symbolize Haman's hat — or his ears or pockets. Or something a little more womanly.

<u>Some say</u> these cookies represent Haman's ears (the Hebrew name for them, *oznei Haman*, means just this), and refer to a custom of cutting off a criminal's ears before his execution. Another theory is that the three corners represent the three patriarchs whose power weakened Haman and gave strength to Esther to save the Jews. Yet another theory: Because the German word *tasche* means "pouch" or "pocket," the cookies could signify Haman's pockets and the money he offered the king for permission to kill the Jews. Finally, in recent years, <u>some feminists</u> have suggested the cookies, which after all, are not dissimilar in appearance to female reproductive parts, were meant to be fertility symbols.

5. In 1945, a group of American GI's held belated Purim services inside Nazi propagandist Joseph Goebbels' confiscated castle.

According to <u>JTA coverage at the time</u>, the Jewish chaplain "carefully arranged the candles over a swastika-bedecked bookcase in Goebbels' main dining room," and Jewish soldiers explained to their Christian comrades in attendance "about Haman and why it was so fitting that Purim services should be held in a castle belonging to Goebbels."

6. The Book of Esther, which many scholars theorize is fictional, may be an adaptation of a Babylonian story.

7. The Jewish calendar has a regular leap year with two months of Adar (but only one Purim, which falls during the second Adar).

To ensure that the holidays remain in their mandated seasons, the Jewish calendar was ingeniously <u>adjusted</u> to accommodate the 11-day difference between the lunar and solar years. In the 4th century C.E., Hillel scheduled an extra month at the end of the biblical year, as necessary. The biblical year begins in spring with Nissan (<u>Exodus 12:1-2</u>) and ends with Adar . Hillel, in conjunction with the Sanhedrin (Jewish supreme court) chose to repeat Adar (Adar I and Adar II) every 3rd, 6th, 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th, and 19th year over a 19-year period.

8. Purim is celebrated one day later inside walled cities than it is everywhere else. The Book of Esther differentiates between Jews who lived and fought their enemies for two days within the walled, capital city of Shushan and those who lived in unwalled towns, where only

within the walled, capital city of Shushan and those who lived in unwalled towns, where only one day was needed to subdue the enemy. The Rabbis determined we should <u>make that same distinction</u> when memorializing the event. Accordingly, if a person lives in a city that has been walled since the days of Joshua (circa 1250 B.C.E.), as Shushan was, Purim is celebrated on the fifteenth of the month of Adar, a day referred to as "Shushan Purim."

9. Just after the 1991 Gulf War, Israel's most popular Purim costume was of the Israel Defense Forces spokesman whose face appeared on TV every time a Scud missile alert sounded — and people snacked on "Saddamtaschen" instead of hamantaschen.

Spokesman Nachman Shai's "reassuring tones earned him the sobriquet 'National Valium," while Israel was being pelted with Iraqi missiles, according to a <u>JTA report at the time</u>. That year, while many costume-makers avoided the temptation to make Saddam Hussein costumes (it would be like a Hitler costume, one vendor told JTA), bakeries hawked "Saddamtashen," which "look and taste exactly like Hamantashen."

Gragger: A Purim Story

By Nissan Mindel

Published and copyrighted by Kehot Publication Society

Since this is a story about a *gragger*, it is of course a Purim story.

One Purim many, many years ago, in the little town of Vardik, in far-off Russia, everyone was very sad and worried. Instead of looking forward to the gaiety of the holiday, they were afraid that their entire Jewish community would be destroyed. It almost seemed like the times of the first Purim—that's how great the danger was.

The son of the great powerful Czar had gone hunting in the woods with a group of friends. They had lost their way and by chance arrived in the town of Vardik. All the people were excited to have this distinguished visitor in their midst. They gave him the finest room in the local inn, the finest food, and delicious cakes.

The next day, the prince suddenly became very ill and was unable to return home. Messengers were sent to the Czar to report the bad news. In a very short time, the Czar and several important ministers arrived in Vardik.

They had brought several doctors with them who immediately began to examine the prince. Each one tried to cure him, but none was successful. The prince was moaning in pain. His face was flushed, and he was burning with fever. Most of the time he slept. He refused all food and drink. His very life was in danger.

And then one of the ministers said that it was the fault of the Jews that the prince was sick, because they gave him bad food. This was of course ridiculous and untrue, but everyone was so worried about the sickness of the prince that they believed him. Unfortunately, many times in history, when there was any kind of trouble, evil men placed the blame on innocent Jews.

And so the Jews of Vardik were very frightened, for they knew that their lives might be in danger.

On the day before Purim, two notices were put on trees. They said that if the prince did not recover by the end of the next day, all the Jews in Vardik would be held responsible. Also, since the prince was very weak, everyone had to be very quiet.

But the Megillah had to be read. The Jews gathered silently in the little *shul* on the main street, right near the inn where the prince lay gravely ill. Everyone in *shul* was told to sit absolutely still, for the Rabbi would read in a soft, low voice. The children had been told to leave their graggers home, for the notice had requested silence. (A gragger is a noisemaker that is used during the reading of the Megillah: whenever the name of the wicked Haman is mentioned, children swing their graggers and make a lot of noise to show their contempt and hate for him.)

The fathers looked very serious and sad. The mothers in the women's section were crying. There was no feeling of Purim in the air, that's for sure.

Suddenly, there was an awful noise. The name of Haman had been read, and little Yaakov was swinging his gragger with all his might. Happily, with a big smile on his face, he was swinging that gragger.

Everyone became very frightened. The Rabbi continued reading. People were shaking their heads. They made signs to Yaakov that he must be quiet. One man wanted to take the gragger away from him, but Yaakov would not even let him touch it. Everyone was afraid that Yaakov would scream and make a lot of noise if forced to give up his gragger. So he was allowed to keep it. No one could tell him to stop using the gragger, for during the reading of the Megillah it is forbidden to speak. They were hoping that Yaakov would understand and put the gragger away.

The windows to the prince's room were open to let in some fresh air. Gathered around his bed were the ministers, the doctors and the Czar. There was total silence in the room. The prince was pale and weak. He had no strength left. His eyes were closed and he seemed not even to be breathing.

What was that? Who dared to break the rule of silence? All the people in the room ran to the window to see who the guilty one was. The next moment they jumped in fright, for they heard a voice behind them asking for some water.

There was the prince, sitting up in bed, wide awake. "What a jolly noise I hear! What is it? Please bring me some water. I have never been so thirsty in my whole life. Hurry, please. I feel so dry." The noise of the gragger had awakened the prince.

In a few days he was well, and the whole company returned in peace to the palace. The Jews in the town were saved, and they had the happiest Purim day you could ever imagine.

Yaakov was the hero of the day. People hugged him and kissed him. They gave him so much *nasherei* that he had enough to eat till Passover



Yum Yum.. Sisterhood is on the Rocks!

I believe the saying is "March comes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb". Well our Congregation Sinai Sisterhood is very busy the month of March.

On March 10th we will be going to the Winter Garden Theater to see "All Shook Up", the story and music of Elvis Presley. Many of us will be getting "All Shook Up" with our awesome Sisterhood.

March 21st will be our annual Outreach Program where we invite other churches to join our sisters learning about Purim and of course, having food.

April 18th we will be donating baby items to the South Lake Pregnancy Center in Clermont by having a baby shower, followed by bingo.

December $1 - 6^{th}$ is our Sisterhood Cruise on Virgin Voyages. I hope you will join us on this unique cruise.

You can see we have a very active Sisterhood. We are always contributing to Neighborhood Center of South Lake (non perishable foods); children living in the woods (hoodies and toiletries) and a dog shelter (blankets, sheets, towels, pillows). We will have boxes marked in our temple for all your donations: non-perishable food, toiletries and hoodies, baby items, and items for the dog shelter. Thank you for helping us perform Mitzvot to our community for those less fortunate than us.

Please contact Karen Miller to send out Tribute Cards for birthdays, get well, congratulations, happy anniversaries, thinking of you, sympathy or anything else you can think of. It's only \$6.50 each and you don't even have to leave the comfort of your house. You can even pay for it online or pay Marsha.

Purchasing Scrip (gift cards) from Raise Right is another way of helping us raise money for our Sisterhood. With over 700 name brands, I'm sure you can find some stores that you use. Please try it. Contact Bev for our code and instructions.

Thank you everyone for your continued support.

Bev Chern

Sisterhood President



Please join Congregation Sinai for our Annual

Passover Seder

The 2nd night of Passover
Tuesday Evening, April 23rd, 2024
5:30 PM

Heritage Hills Clubhouse, Clermont, FL Seder conducted by Joe Goldovitz

Menu:	
Chopped Liver	Herb Roasted Potatoes
Gefilte Fish	Green Beans Almondine
Matzo Ball Soup	Matzah
Brisket or Roasted Chicken	Dessert
	Iced Tea or Lemonade

Adults - \$40 Children 12 and under \$18

Pay Online with Check or

Pay with Credit Card at: Pay Here



Men's Club

Pierre Haskelson, President

Men's Club activities.

We are starting to prepare for the 3d. Al Rosen mini golf outing. It is scheduled for Sunday May 6 at the Tree top mini Golf Further information will be published at a later date.

Rick Vincent has volunteered a service to our members.

He States: Help our synagogue!

If you like a picture that Rick Vincent has taken, he can get you a framed 8x10 of it for \$ 25 and \$ 5 will go to the temple.

We are getting ready to sell the Yellow Candles to commemorate the Holocaust.

Ferran HVAC just completed the quarterly inspection of our A.C. and reported everything is OK.

The next **Share the Night** restaurant is Akina scheduled for March 5.

Shalom.

Pierre

Renting Space at the Synagogue for a Special Occasion

Did you know that you can rent our synagogue for a special occasion? Below is the section of our Policies and Procedures document that discussed it, and the prices.

G. RENTAL OF CONGREGATION SINAL

POLICY: Congregation Sinai may be rented to both members and non-members for a variety of functions. Those functions include Celebration of Life Memorial Services, Funerals, Weddings, and B'nai Mitzvot. Use of the Sanctuary would be available if the Synagogue calendar is open on the requested day.

The Social Hall may be rented for a small reception following a Celebration of Life Memorial Service. The reception will take the place of a Shiva reception in the home and can be for no more than 100 guests. Menu for the reception will be determined by the Committee and mourning family and with the permission of the Ritual Chairperson.

PROCEDURE: The following charges will be in effect for the use of Congregation Sinai:

Rental by a Member of Congregation Sinai	\$150.00
Rental by a Non-Member	\$250.00
Set up Fee	\$100.00
Clean up Fee	\$ 75.00
Refundable Security Deposit	\$100.00



The Riviera Maya is a dreamer's gateway to Cozumel,
Playa del Carmen and Tulum. Arriving early and
departing late from Mexico—and with a day and sunset
spent at The Beach Club at Bimini—you'll have plenty of
time to ramp up the adventure and wind down to chill
while seeing each port from every sun and moonlit angle.



Day 1 Miami, Florida, USA
Day 2 Sailing Day
Day 3 Common Player del Common Mexic

Day 3 Cozumel - Playa del Carmen, Mexico (

Day 4 Sailing Day

Day 5 The Beach Club at Bimini, Bahamas

Day 6 Miami, Florida, USA

Itinerary details, including arrival/departure time and days of port calls, are subject to change.

Late Night 😞 Overnight Stay

Always Included Luxury

Luxury inclusions on every adults-only voyage. Brilliant perks that put you at the helm of VIP treatment. Dining at 20+ unique eateries, tips, WiFi, essential drinks, group fitness classes.













Come join us for an awesome cruise on this very unique cruise line. This special offer must be deposited by November 26th to take advantage of:

30% off the cabin price; \$600 on board credit; and a \$300 bar tab.

The price of only \$1,040 per person is based on a double occupancy for 5 nights in a Sea Terrace Balcony Cabin. This price also includes your specialty dining, WiFi, Gratuities, Essential Drinks such as soda, juices, water (non alcoholic beverages), Shows, Exercise WorkOuts and much more.

Special is good for other sailings also if deposited by November 26th. You have 2 years to take advantage of it.



Itinerary details, including arrival/departure times and days of port calls, are subject to change. Prices are per person, cruise only, based on double occupancy, specified stateroom category, in USD and are subject to availability. Governmental departure taxes and fees are additional. Prices and promotions are for new individual bookings, are subject to availability, may change without notice, are capacity-controlled, and may be changed or withdrawn at any time. Ask your Travel Advisor for the most up to date pricing and promotions.



Yahrzeit Donations

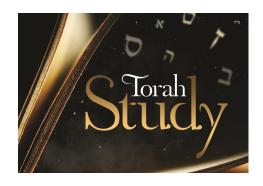
In Memory Of	By
Dr.George J. Stryker	Stephanie and Alan Morgenstern
Rosaline Tepper	Basha Schlazer
Abbott Erwin Wolf	Connie Lawrason
Morris Skrobacky	Russell and Tobie Koskie
Anita Resnick	Janet and Phil Bloom
Leila Kertzner	
Esther Raiffe	Steven and Rosalind Silpe
Benjamin Donow	Richard Donow
Harry Davison	Barbara and Evan Cronson
Birdie Levy	Gwen Levy
Melvyn R. Levy	Susan and Ronen Avinir

March Yarzheits Hebrew Dates

Hornstein	Darlene & Larry	Linda Greenfield	Adar I 22	Mar
Borsky	Ruth	Jack Oskin	Adar I 23	Mar
Lovitz	Harold and Carole	Alfred Lovitz	Adar I 26	Mar
Silpe	Steven & Rosalind	Flora Cagan	Adar II 17	Mar
Miller	Karen	Benjamin Miller	Adar II 4	Mar

March Yarzheits English Dates

Ralph and Bill Block	Gloria Kolikof	March 29
Walter and Bunnie Friedman	Samuel Morrison	March 23
Walter and Bunnie Friedman	Mollie Faskowitz	March 29
Roslyn Goldwich	Esther Katz/Laone	March 08
Pierre and Rosalyn Haskelson	Jenny Berger	March 22
Richard (Stewart) Kahn	Joseph Kahn	March 12
Susan Levy	Marilyn Schacter	March 28
Basha Schlazer	Albert Schlazer	March 08
Linda Simontacchi	James Simontacchi	March 12
Linda Simontacchi	Gussie Weindrug	March 15
Linda Simontacchi	Meyer Gomer	March 16
Linda Simontacchi	Charlotte Gomer	March 23
Roger and Gail Steinberg	George Buxbaum	March 18



We will be reading the following sidras this month:

1.	3/2	Ki tisa, Ex.30:11 34:35
2.	3/9	Vayakhel, Ex. 35:1 38:20
3.	3/16	Pekudei, Ex.38:21 40:38
4.	3/23	Vayikra, Lev.1:1 5:28
5.	3/30	Tzav, Lev.6:1 8:36

Please join us each Sat. at 10 AM as we delve into our ancient history and traditions.

Remember -- loud noise -- duck down

It could save your life PETER B. SOBEL, D.D.S. RET.



Birthdays and Anniversaries

February 2024

Name	Birthday	
Roberta Gapin	March 03	
Bob Simontacchi	March 17	
Gail Steinberg	March 25	

Thank you to all at Congregation Sinai for providing 360 pounds of food to the Neighborhood Center of South Lake.



Birthday Tributes

То:	From:
Eitan Aharoni	Gwen Levy
Marvin Cohen	Ava and David McKean
	Janet and Phil Bloom
Stuart Milchman	Gwen Levy
Stephanie Morgenstern	Gwen Levy
	Janet and Phil Bloom
	Karen Miller
Lynn Vincent	Karen Miller
	Janet and Phil Bloom
	Gwen Levy

Anniversary Tributes

То:	From:
David and Susan Mandell	Gwen Levy

Get Well Tributes

То:	From:
Gwen Levy	Karen and Joel Mandel
Sandy Gartner	Liz Perez
	Karen and Joel Mandel
Susan and David Mandell	Men's Club
Robert Mandell	Men's Club

Mazel Tov Tributes

To:	From:
Rick Vincent	Gwen Levy
	Karen Miller
Alberto Behar	Ava and David McKean
	Gwen Levy
	Karen Miller
	Sue and John Levy

Thank You Tributes

Alan Payne A very large Thank You from

Joel Mandel Sisterhood

Rick Vincent

Lee Norden

Ken Weiss

David McKean

Thank you to Basha Schlazer from Karen Miller

CALENDAR

March 2024						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
	7PM – Adv. Hebrew	27 7PM – Prayer Class	28 7PM – Beg/Int Hebrew	29	1 Healing Service 6:30 PM 7PM – Shabbat Service	2 10AM – Torah Study
3 Religious School 10:00 AM	4 7PM – Adv. Hebrew	5 7PM – Prayer Class Share Night Akina	6 7PM – Beg/Int Hebrew	7	8 7PM – Shabbat Service	9 10AM – Torah Study
10 NO Religious School	11 7PM – Adv. Hebrew	12 7PM – Prayer Class Share Night Akina	1 3 7PM – Beg/Int Hebrew Sisterhood Board MTG	14 Sinai Board Meeting 7:00 PM	15 7PM – Shabbat Service	16 10AM – Torah Study
17 Religious School 10-12 am	18 7:00 PM Advanced Hebrew	19 7:00 PM Prayers	20 Beg/Int Hebrew	21 Sisterhood Lunch and Outreach program	22 Pizza for Purim 6:00 PM Services for Shabbat 7:00 PM	23 10AM – Torah Study
School 10:00 AM	25 7:00 PM Advanced Hebrew translation	26 7:00 PM Prayers	27 Beg/int Hebrew	28	29 7:00 Pm Shabbat Service	30 Torah Study 10:00 AM
31 Religious School 10:00 AM						