

Torah Thoughts-Eikev
Deuteronomy 7.12-11.25

“Counting Down to High Holy Days”

When addressing a group of rabbis several years back, a colleague of mine quipped, “this week we begin the Book of Leviticus, the moment rabbis begin worrying about High Holy Days.” It was March. Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur were still more than six months away.

Last week we officially began the seven week journey toward the Jewish New Year. The Fast of Av or Tisha B’Av (July 23) was the nadir of Jewish existence, a reminder of the desolation that followed the destruction of both the first and second Temples. It is as low as we get as a Jewish people. Afterward we rebuild our spirit, preparing ourselves fully for the rebirth we will experience on Yom Kippur. This period is marked by seven Haftarah readings called the Haftarat of Consolation where we read from the end of Isaiah, the most inspirational of all the books of the prophets.

This week’s reading takes us from the end of chapter 49 to the beginning of chapter 51, a section that tells us that God “shall comfort Zion; he will comfort all her ruins; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found in there, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody” (Isaiah 51:3).

Getting in the proper mind set for our most important Jewish holidays takes time and hard work. We are supposed to use this time to do Cheshbon Hanefesh, an accounting of our soul. This means asking for forgiveness from those we have hurt, and even more importantly to forgive ourselves. This process is supposed to be not only cathartic but joyous. And the closer we get the more filled with anticipation we feel. Seven weeks, seven rungs on a ladder leading ourselves back to ourselves. Teshuvah, repentance, also means return.

Unless you are a rabbi, March is probably a little too early to think about the High Holy Days. But August is the perfect time. Elul, the month before Rosh Hashanah, is only a few weeks away. May you use this time wisely, to make yourself the best you can be.

Shabbat Shalom, Rabbi Alex

In Memoriam

Shiva

Michael Harris
Babette “Babs” Hirschorn
Dr. Thomas Langan
Louise Levine-Rosenthal

Sheloshim

Alice Dobozin
Betty Smith

Yahrzeits

Minnie Becker
Morris Berman
Jack Brody
Lillian Brody
Philip Brogadir
Nicholas Carosella
Irwin Cropp
Ellen R. Davis
Estelle Etelson
Irving Faden
Rose Faucette
Maynard Feldman
Elizabeth Felstein
Max Philip Finkelstein
Beatrice Friedman
Jack Garson
Marcel Gutman
Stephen Ira Haber
Mildred Gordon Haniford
Robert Horwitz
Abraham Kaiser
Jack Kuritzky

Sheldon Kurtzman
Jack Landau
Suzanna Lin
Aaron Lipman
Bessie Mednick
Blanche Meister
Michael Organek
Saul Ostroff
Simon Perell
Gary Phillips
David Pohl
Evelyn Rabin
Gerald Rosen
Dr. Harold P. Rubin
William Segal
Bernard Silverman
Patricia M. Snyder
David L. Stein
David Wakoff
Rebecca Weber
Sophie Z. Weinstein
Boris Zhebrak

Erev Shabbat Service Under the Tent

Friday, July 31, 2026 /18 Av, 5786
6:30pm



Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein
Cantor Arlene Frank
Executive Director Joanne Marquisee
B'COL Religious School Director Rabbi Einav Symons
President Joseph Glickman

CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM
In Person Events & Virtual Services

*A special thank you to tonight's
accompanist, Sean Polen, and our
soloists, Leah Finkelstein, Susan Fischer,
Sarah Leberman and Liz Sanderson*

Saturday, August 1st

9:00am Torah Study offsite and via [Zoom](#)
11:00am Shabbat Morning Service at Canterbury
Woods

Sunday, August 2nd

10:30am JFS Mah Jong & Mimosas -reservations
required

Monday, August 3rd

Office closed

Tuesday, August 4th

7:00pm Executive Committee Meeting via [Zoom](#)

Wednesday, August 5th

12:00pm Mah Jongg Class-registration is closed

Thursday, August 6th

8:00pm Talmud Study via [Zoom](#)

Friday, August 7th

6:30pm Erev Shabbat Service Under the Tent and
via Boxcast, Facebook & YouTube
7:30pm Oneg Shabbat

UPCOMING EVENTS

NEW SERVICE TIMES ANNOUNCEMENT

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES APPROVED SERVICE TIME
CHANGES BEGINNING ON 7/1/26. ALL EREV SHABBAT SERVICES WILL
BEGIN AT 6:30PM YEAROUND EXCEPT THE FIRST FRIDAY OF THE
MONTH FROM SEPTEMBER THROUGH JUNE WILL BE AN EREV SHABBAT
FAMILY SERVICE AT 6:00PM. HIGH HOLY DAYS WILL FOLLOW A
SEPARATE SERVICE TIME SCHEDULE

If you have any questions, please call Joanne Marquisee, Executive
Director, at 716-432-2995.

Coming in August:

Chiavetta's Chicken BBQ will be Tuesday, August 11th from 4:00pm
until sold out. Preorder online and save \$1.00. See you in the drive
thru line! Thank you to everyone who supports this important
fundraiser, especially our volunteers.

Star Spangled Shabbat Under the Tent will be Friday, August 14th at
6:30pm. International singer and guest artist, Jay Dref, will help us
celebrate America's 250th Birthday. Following the service, there will
be a guest speaker, Dr. Janette Silverman, from Ancestry.com. The
event is sponsored by the Stuart and Caren Shapiro Jewish
Genealogy Center of Buffalo. RSVP to
joanne.marquisee@gmail.com.

The Women of Shir Shalom Planning Meeting will be a Potluck
Picnic on Sunday, August 16th. Amy O'Donnell will host the
gathering. Guests are asked to bring an appetizer, side dish, salad or
dessert. Please RSVP to Amy at 716-308-9554 or odnn825@aol.com.

The last outdoor Erev Shabbat Service will be Friday, August 28th at
6:30pm. A closing summer cookout will follow the service. Please
make a reservation at joanne.marquisee@gmail.com.



**Our Mission Statement, as a congregation, is to be a welcoming
community and to enhance all aspects of Jewish Life.**

The Board of Trustees of Congregation Shir Shalom
COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We, the Board of Trustees, pledge to unite and
to enrich the lives of our congregation.

We will proceed in our commitment to Congregation Shir Shalom,
to create an inclusive and open environment for the entire congregation.

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Executive Director-Joanne Marquisee
Religious School Director-Rabbi Einav Symons
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Immediate Past President- Todd Sugarman

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Prayer for those who lead our congregation

O God, this congregation has honored us with the task of leading them
and of serving You with them.
May we lead well and may we serve well.
May we hear the quiet as well as the active voices,
and may we heed the call and follow the paths of what we,
after honest searching, feel to be the right things to do.
May we listen to each other, and may we listen to You,
as all of us together make this synagogue a *kehillah kedusha*, a Holy place.

**Congregation Shir Shalom is Affiliated with the Union for Reform
Judaism and Reconstructing Judaism**