



Vassar Temple

Where You Belong

Congregation Brethren of Israel, Founded 1848—Bulletin Volume 172 No. 11 ~ June 2024

Civic Engagement: Meet our Local Elected Officials

In January, Vassar Temple launched a Civic Engagement Series to focus on and meet some of our local elected officials. We were delighted to host Town Hall style meetings for District Attorney Anthony Parisi, City of Poughkeepsie Mayor Yvonne Flowers, County Executive Sue Serino and US Congressman Pat Ryan. The meetings were very well attended, offering our congregation and community members the opportunity for our local elected officials at all levels of government to know us and for us to know them and not just in a crisis. We learned more about the specific responsibilities and priorities for each of these officials and their offices. Likewise, our elected officials learned more about Vassar Temple as a vibrant and focused faith-based community with deep community connections and commitment to social action and advocacy. This series will pause now and may begin again early next year. We thank our elected officials for taking the time to meet with us and learn more about the local Jewish Community.



Andi Ciminello, Bobbie Hulnick and US Congressman Pat Ryan

From the Rabbi's Desk:



On the Festival of Shavuot we celebrate the revelation of Torah, both as it is envisioned in the Torah as well as on-going revelation; how each generation interprets Torah anew. It is fitting that this year Shavuot and our installation of new officers and trustees should fall in the same week. As our outgoing president, Lisa-Sue

Quackenbush, will pass the literal Torah to our new president, she will also pass on the "Torah" of her presidency which the new president will then make her own, bringing her own vision to the leadership of this congregation.

The relationship between a rabbi and a Temple president is a unique partnership. It has been a true blessing to work with Lisa-Sue; I am grateful for her wise counsel and the style of leadership that she has brought to the congregation.

Lisa-Sue is collaborative, always encouraging others to take on leadership roles and seeking ways to broaden the circle of engagement. She has a generosity of spirit and a patient, listening ear; she is open to new ideas and different approaches to a task. Lisa-Sue manifests one of the most important traits for a leader, the one Moses is most admired for: humility. The musar teacher Alan Morinis defines humility as "limiting oneself to an appropriate space while leaving room for others." Lisa-Sue asserts herself and her views when needed, but she thrives on making room for others. She doesn't look for glory and will always step up to do what is needed. She started her presidency committed to making Vassar Temple an even more welcoming community and immediately established Pride Shabbat and ultimately a Task Force on

Accessibility and Inclusivity. And, thankfully, despite her work obligations at Planned Parenthood and the demands of the temple presidency, she still had time to bake those amazing brownies!!!

This is also a time to recognize those who are now completing their terms of service on the Board. Sandy Cornell joined the Board as a relatively new member. We thank her for the perspective that she brought to board deliberations and for her participation on the Jewish Connected Task Force.

Thank you is an understatement for all that we owe to Susan Karnes Hecht who completes her role as Immediate Past President and steps off the board after so many years of devoted service. Her presidency coincided with her retirement and, along with her environmental work, she has more than filled her time with the multitude of areas of temple life in which she has taken an instrumental role! Earlier this year, David Hecht stepped down from leadership of the Ritual and High Holy Day committees, two central activities of the temple to which he has devoted himself wholeheartedly for many years. It is most appropriate that Susan and David will be recipients of this year's Founders' Award in recognition of all that they contribute to the life of Vassar Temple.

In addition to voting on the budget at the annual meeting, the congregation will also vote on proposed changes to the By-Laws regarding membership and governance. These proposals were developed by the Jewish Connected Task Force and further amended by the Board, who approved them at the April meeting. Prior to the vote, I will speak to these amendments, providing context and background, and address any questions. I hope that you will be present to participate in this important vote, the first of two required to make any changes to the By-Laws, as we continue to support our mission as a welcoming Reform congregation.

Rabbi Renni Altman

President's Message:



It's hard to believe this is my last bulletin article as President of Vassar Temple. There were moments when I felt my two-year stint as President was looming ahead of me and moments like now when I think where did the time go?

I want to take this space to say thank you. It was both a privilege and honor to take my turn to serve as Vassar Temple President. Having grown up here, raised our children here, and having served on, and led many committees over the years, I thought I knew most of you. In my capacity as President, I certainly got to know a great deal more of you, and in so many productive and meaningful ways. Being on the Board and certainly being a leader on the Board, permits us to not only have lively and productive debates and discussions pertaining to Temple life, but it tasks us with responsibility to make the best decisions for Vassar Temple. That has always been my guiding light. Whenever I struggled with an issue, an argument, a sticky situation, a Temple member with a vastly different view than I had, I found if I stopped, took a breath and asked myself, "What is best for Vassar Temple?" the answer (and not always my personal feeling) became clear.

I have always thought the Temple board should be a reflection of our congregation. The closer we get to mirroring our congregation within our Board, the more relevant and meaningful our decision-making process becomes. My sincere thanks to this wonderful Board. Thank you for always speaking your mind, even if it wasn't a popular view. I like to think our meetings provided a safe space for you to express yourselves and patiently and receptively listen to others. It isn't always easy, but the end result is worth it.

And a huge thank you to all of our auxiliaries and committees. You are truly what keeps this temple running! I had made a commitment at the beginning of my term to try to either pop into as many committee meetings as I could - just to check in or to have a committee representative come to a Board meeting to share what you were up to. This did happen, with many committees, but not all. I'm hoping you will allow me in my time on the Board as Immediate Past President to try to continue to make these connections. I know that the Board, Vassar Temple, and certainly the committees will benefit from this process.

Again, to the entire Congregation, thank you all for reaching out to both compliment and complain to me. I may not have said it at the time, but I truly appreciate any and all of your feedback. I am hoping you will offer Roni some time and grace as she takes the helm of this fabulous Board. She has some wonderful, fresh ideas. But It does take a hot minute or two to acclimate to the job. Your well wishes and support will go a long way in the transition. Again, thank you all for allowing me to serve Vassar Temple in this leadership role. Have a great summer.

Lisa-Sue Quackenbush

Bimah Flowers for our Services ~ June 2024

Just as Shabbat Services help brighten our weeks, so do the Bimah flowers which brighten our Sanctuary. Please let the office know if you would like to sponsor a flower arrangement in honor of a special occasion or in memory of a loved one.

The donation to sponsor Bimah Flowers is \$60 and checks should be made out to Vassar Temple Sisterhood with Bimah Flowers written on the memo line. Should there be more than one sponsor for a Shabbat a larger flower arrangement will be provided. Sponsored flowers are fresh floral arrangements.

June 2024 Bimah Flowers Sponsors:

June 7: Ken and Amy Horn Oclatis in memory of Beatrice and David Horn

June 14: Susan Karnes Hecht and David Hecht in celebration of their 43rd anniversary and in honor of our officers and trustees

June 21: Randi, Pam and Al Scope in memory of Perle Scope

June 28: Vassar Temple Sisterhood Bimah Flowers Fund (silk flowers)

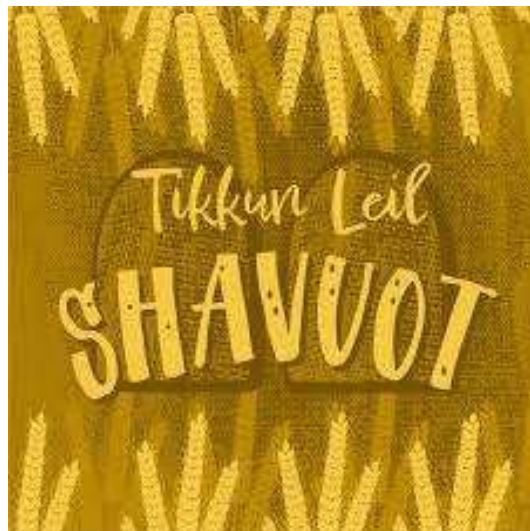


New Paths ~ June

Everyone is invited to join us at Vassar Temple for a New Paths Sabbath morning service Saturdays June 1 & June 15 at 10:15am. The moving liturgy includes both traditional and contemporary writings, mostly in English, and participants may bring supplemental materials to share. "We take the time to let the service get through us, rather than getting through the service." Each New Paths service, whether lay-led or rabbi-led, provides a unique and thoughtful Shabbat morning experience. A brief informal kiddush follows. Service is hybrid (both in person and on Zoom). Contact office@vassartemple.org or 845-454-2570 to be put on the New Paths e-mail list, if you need a Zoom link, or to borrow our special prayer book if participating on Zoom.

Joint Tikkun Leil Shavuot ~ June 11

On Tuesday evening, June 11, Congregation Shir Chadash, Temple Beth El and Vassar Temple are co-sponsoring a Tikkun Leil Shavuot, where everyone can come together to spiritually prepare to receive the Torah on Shavuot. The event will be hosted at Temple Beth El, with clergy from the three synagogues presenting the program. A *Ma'ariv* service will be held at 8pm, followed by desserts and study at 8:30pm. The theme to be discussed will be "How We Gather: Exploring the Nature of Community in Jewish Life." And the desserts are sure to feature the holiday favorite, scrumptious cheesecake. The study session will be presented hybrid (both in-person and on Zoom). For further information or for the Zoom link, watch temple e-mails, or contact either office@vassartemple.org or Temple Beth El at adminassist@tbeny.org.



Scriptural Readings ~ June

June 1

B'chukotai:

Leviticus 26:3-27:34; Jeremiah 16:19-17:14

June 8

Midbar:

Numbers 1:1-4:20; Hosea 2:1-22

June 15

Naso:

Numbers 4:21-7:89; Judges 13:2-25

June 22

B'haalot'cha:

Numbers 8:1-12:16; Zechariah 2:14-4:7

June 29

Sh'lach L'cha:

Numbers 13:1-15:41; Joshua 2:1-24

Study Groups at Vassar Temple

Torah Study with Rabbi Renni Altman, DD, meets at 9am on Saturday mornings (hybrid). Come join our lively discussions. Contact office@vassartemple.org or 845-454-2570 for details and to be placed on the Torah Study e-mail list.

Talmud Study with Senior Scholar Rabbi Paul Golomb will meet on Zoom from noon to 1:30pm on Monday, June 3. Then Talmud Study will be on hiatus until the fall. For details, study sheets, and to be placed on the Talmud Study e-mail list, contact him at pgolomb@verizon.net.

All Welcome
No prior knowledge necessary
No charge to attend

PLEASE RSVP: Picnic Shabbat ~ June 7



Join us at our annual Vassar Temple Picnic Shabbat on Friday, June 7 at 6pm. You will receive your own curated picnic dinner of wraps and salads.

Dinner is \$15 per person for adults and \$10 per person for children under 12 years old. Advance payment is appreciated.

Dinner will be dairy or pareve. **Special dietary needs may be honored for RSVPs no later than May 31.**

Other RSVPs are welcomed until June 3. RSVP to Ritual@vassartemple.org

Our picnic and service will be outdoors, weather permitting. Bring your own chair or picnic blanket. Services will begin at 7:15pm led by Rabbi Altman.

Temple Pursues Federal Security Grant

With continued transparency regarding our increased efforts to secure outside funding, this is to advise that the Temple has applied for the 2024 federal Non-profit Security Grant Program (NSGP).

The NSGP application is far more complex and challenging than the local grants that we have sought in the past. Preparation started a few years ago, when it became clear that our administrative and financial protocols needed significant upgrades. The efforts to improve our financial processes, to establish a digital archive, and to obtain needed government documents such as our formal 501(c)3 statement, have readied us for this and future opportunities.

The purpose of the NSGP is to harden our building in a time of greatly increased threats. Beginning with a vulnerability assessment, reviewed with law enforcement, priority projects were identified and vendors brought in to price proposals. I want to express my extreme gratitude to Marcia Tanzman, who stepped up to partner with me on this difficult project. Marcia has taken responsibility for these aspects, while I have focused on the required federal and state registrations, incident documentation, and related organizational tasks. Along the way, we have attended countless webinars and learned an incredible amount.

As first-time applicants, we will receive “bonus” points on this competitive, scored application; therefore, we are attempting to maximize our potential first grant. Federal funds are divided into “pots” for urban and non-urban regions; being in the latter group, we may benefit from less competition. Completing our NYS registrations (the federal grant is administered state by state) enabled us to receive a stipend for grant writer assistance for the home stretch from Community Security Initiatives, which is ours regardless of the success of our application. We interviewed and referenced NSGP-experienced professionals and contracted with a fantastic individual who knows the ropes. Approximately 42% of applications were granted last year, so every advantage helps.

Grants will be announced in the summer. Should we receive funding, we will have another complicated process to manage (we’d have three years to complete the projects), and there will be additional support. We will keep you posted!

Susan Karnes Hecht

Climate Corner ~ an update from our Dayenu Circle

Advocacy, direct action, education. We are pursuing climate action on all these fronts.

We completed our first round of **Environmental Voter Project** postcards for the Nevada primary this month. Many thanks to all postcard volunteers! We expect to have additional campaigns through election season.

Save the date! We’ll partner with Riverkeeper to sponsor a Hudson River cleanup site on September 29 as part of the global **Reverse Tashlich** day of action through Repair the Sea, a Jewish organization focused on protecting our waterways.

We expect to host a speaker from **Climate Reality Project** with information on approaches and incentives for saving money, improving health, and increasing comfort at home. Learn about the benefits, challenges, and resources available to reduce carbon emissions.

Please contact dayenudutchess@gmail.com to be added to our email list or to get involved in any of our activities.



SISTERHOOD RECIPE OF THE MONTH:

Blueberry Crisp ~ (from Secor Farms) submitted by Judy Rosenfeld

Ingredients (makes 1 loaf)

- 4 cups blueberries
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 1 cup sugar plus 2 tablespoons, divided
- 1 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 cup rolled oats
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon



Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- Gently stir together berries, lemon juice and 2 tablespoons of sugar. Pour into an 8-inch square pan lightly sprayed with cooking spray.
- Mix flour, remaining 1 cup sugar, baking powder, salt, rolled oats and beaten egg with a fork until crumbly, sprinkle over fruit.
- Pour melted butter over top. Sprinkle with cinnamon.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 50 minutes.

Sisterhood Chai Noon Luncheon ~ Tuesday, June 18



Vassar Temple Sisterhood's Chai Noon Luncheon, which meets on the 18th of the month (when the date does not conflict with holidays or weekends) will have its next meeting on Tuesday, June 18 at noon. Specific details about the restaurant will be mailed to you in Vassar Temple's weekly newsletter a few days prior to the meeting. Members are asked to RSVP to the link in the newsletter so we can let the restaurant know approximately how many guests to expect. As always, guests get separate checks, and the restaurant is wheelchair accessible.

Our Annual Protein Plenty Drive: A Vassar Temple Tradition, Jun 1-Jul 15

At this time of year when donations to food pantries always dwindle, let's stock local food pantries with protein rich foods, which they can distribute to children, families and adults of all ages in need! A special focus is children who may be missing their free school lunch over the summer.

How to help? Through July 15, you're invited to send a tax-deductible donation of any amount to Vassar Temple, 140 Hooker Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601. Please write "Protein Plenty" on the memo line of your check. If donating by credit card through the Temple's Community Tzedakah Fund, please designate the donation for "Protein Plenty." 100% of these donations will be used to purchase supermarket scrip from the temple, so the temple benefits, too! Questions? Please contact socialaction@vassartemple.org.

"Vassar Temple Cares About Hunger"

thank you

SUSTAINING FUND

In Memory of:

Alvin Kaskowitz, Joseph Wrobel & Fred Wolf
Mary Louise Goldfarb
Emily Z. Himmelstein
Jack Quackenbush, Maurice Margolin &
Gayle Margolin
Samuel & Estelle Cohen
Perle Scope
Samuel Karnes, Shirley Karnes, Jaime Hecht,
Suzanne Hecht & Ted Hecht
Phillip Mardon, MD & Edward Moffitt
Pearl Goldstein

In Honor of: David Steinberg, congratulating
him for receiving the 2024 Gartland Award for
Community Service

LUNCH BOX FUND In Memory of: Fred Wolf

MUSIC FUND Cantor Sponsorship:

VASSAR TEMPLE ENDOWMENT FUND

CEMETERY FUND

In Memory of: Patricia Schaffel, Adeline Lesk

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In Memory of: Adeline Lesk, Fred Wolf &
Patricia Schaffel

Hilary & Lewis Wrobel
Michael G. Goldfarb
Howard C. Himmelstein

The Quackenbush Family
Marcia & Glenn Tanzman
Alfred Scope

Susan & David Hecht
Kathy & Kent Mardon
The Friedman Family

McCabe Coleman Ventosa & Patterson PLLC
Susan & David Hecht
Vassar Temple-Rabbi Fund on behalf
of the Timmerman Family

Lisa Rubenstein & Richard DuVall
Carol Strauss
Miriam Cohen

Susan Fink

Andi & Paul Ciminello

JWV June Meeting ~ Sunday, June 9, 2024

Our JWV Herman Siegal Post 625 will hold its June meeting on Sunday, June 9 at Shomre Israel. The meeting format will follow that which we used before the pandemic. The meeting will begin at 9:30am and there will be a half hour schmooze at 9am. Shomre Israel is strictly kosher. The Post will supply nosh stuff and coffee. The use of masks is optional. We look forward to seeing you.

Ralph Schwartz,
Senior Vice Commander

**Wednesday, June 19 at 5:30pm
Sisterhood Closing Salad Supper Dinner**

- In honor of Juneteenth, National Independence Day commemorating the end of slavery
- Bring a salad and meet friends

RSVP:
Sisterhood@vassartemple.org or
SaladSupper@vassartemple.org

June 7

Abraham J. Salit
 Eugenia Pearlstein
 Shirley K. Loeb
 Irma Manheim
 Sandra LoGiudice
 Gertrude Tavss
 Charles Simon Steinbuck
 Dr. Albert A. Rosenberg
 Samuel Berlin
 Irene Weiner
 Anna Dunn
 Jack Quackenbush
 Moe Scheer
 Irving J. Richman
 Robert Rosenthal
 Frank Silverstein
 Joseph B. Weisman
 Gilda Charwat
 Joseph Wrobel
 Raymond Ross

June 14

Else Willner
 Edward Plimack
 Jack Turk
 Harriet Lipson
 Lillian Kozik
 Bertie S. Levy
 Alfred Geber
 Morton B. Lehman, DDS
 Paul Kraut
 Emily Himmelstein
 Harry Kaltwasser
 Beatrice Gross
 Miriam Gellert
 Samuel Cohen
 Terry Teich
 Carol Casiero
 Lillian Freda Gross
 Estelle Cohen
 Arthur Richter
 Rose Swatlo Budson
 Alan Scot Colodner
 Henry Sylvester

June 21

George Plotsky
 Dr. Kurt Holzer
 Sylvia Arnold
 Sylvia K. Weisman
 Benjamin Budson
 Sylvia Decovnick
 Perle Scope
 Nathan Weiss
 Joseph W. Scherrer
 Paul Douglas Fa'gut
 Freida Kazachin
 Pauline Rosenson Slotte
 Joseph Gross
 Joseph Kofman
 Albert J. Eisenberg
 David Menken
 Betty Mee
 Jacob Lass
 Ethel Saul
 Shirley B. Love
 Selma Goldsmith

**JUNE YAHRZEITS****June 28**

Gertrude Lashinsky Ginsberg
 Maurice Albert Margolin
 Muriel Landesman
 Lucile Erdreich
 Rose Feuerstein
 Annie Blaweiss
 Pearl Goldstein
 Joseph Dunn
 George Luttinger
 Jean F. Goldman
 Dorothy Burrows
 Betty Garber Lyons
 Joseph Berlin
 Joseph J. Kleiner
 Isador Dreishpoon
 Sandor D. Strauss
 Dolores Weisman
 Jonathan Muehl
 Frank Sorbello
 Fred Weiss
 Rosalind Gellert
 Fay Menken
 Audrey S. Morgenstern
 Blanche Weber
 Matthew Lampell
 Alice Weinstein
 Ronald Jacobs
 Cornelius Saperstein
 Dr. Camilla Reznikoff Wygan
 Mary Lou Goldfarb
 Barbara Jean Wojcik
 Eva Tofel
 Nay Wisdom

Condolences to:

The family of Fred Wolf, father of Dave Wolf

The family of Patricia Schaffel, mother of Jo Schaffel

The family of Adeline Lesk, mother of Margery Groten

Mitzvah Day & Lunch Box Photos



Update on the Windows Project

After a slight delay....the Window Project is moving forward. One window was installed in early May and the remainder of the installation is scheduled for May into June. While there might be some disruption to our facility during this process, the result will be fantastic with energy-saving windows in the sanctuary, east chapel and balcony. There are still naming opportunities for these new windows. For giving and donation information, contact windows@vassartemple.org.

Calendar of Events—June 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 9am Torah Study 10:15am New Paths
2 10:30am Lunch Box 	3 12pm Torah Study 7pm Vassar Temple Sisterhood Meeting	4 7pm Annual Congregational Meeting	5 5:30pm Federation Gala	6 7pm Ritual CMTE	7 6pm Annual VT Picnic 7:15pm Picnic Shabbat Service 	8 9am Torah Study 10:15am Shabbat Morning Service
9 9:45am Judaism 101	10	11 Shavuot Eve 8pm Tikkun Leil Shavuot at Temple Beth-EL 	12 Office Closed Shavuot 10:30am Shavuot Festival & Yizkor Morning Service	13 7:30pm Cemetery CMTE	14 7:30pm Installation Shabbat Service	15 9am Torah Study 10:15am New Paths
16	17	18 12pm Chai Noon Sisterhood Luncheon	19 2pm VTS Book Club 5:30pm Sisterhood Salad Dinner 7pm Finance CMTE	20	21 7:30pm Shabbat Service	22 9am Torah Study (tentative)
23	24	25	26	27 6:30pm Shelter Meal 7pm VT Board	28 7:30pm Shabbat Service	29 9am Torah Study (tentative)
30						

Please see weekly emails for the most up-to-date information regarding changes to in-person events

Vassar Temple Bulletin
140 Hooker Avenue
Poughkeepsie, NY 12601
845.454.2570



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Rabbi: Rabbi Renn S. Altman, DD

Religious School Dir: Rabbi Shoshana Hantman

Cantor: Elizabeth Goldmann

Rabbi Emeritus: Rabbi Stephen A. Arnold

Senior Scholar: Rabbi Paul Golomb

Temple Musician: Joseph Bertolozzi

President: Lisa-Sue Quackenbush

1st Vice President: Roni Stein

2nd Vice President: Banna Rubinow

Secretary: Marcia Tanzman

Treasurer: Maxine Finkelstein

Sisterhood President: Polly Lewis

Brotherhood President: Glenn Tanzman

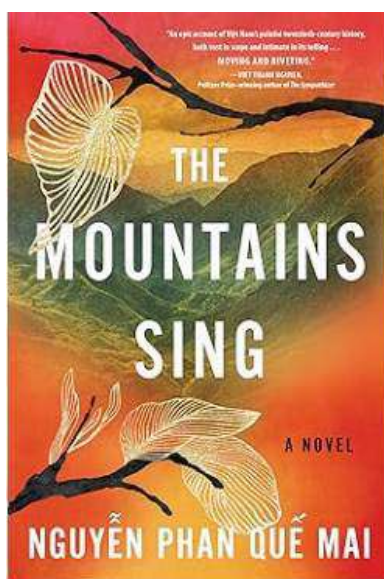
Immediate Past President: Susan Karnes Hecht

Bulletin Editor: Jo Schaffel



Vassar Temple Bulletin is published monthly. Articles for the September Bulletin must be submitted by August 1 sent via email to publicity@vassartemple.org. The editors reserve the right to edit articles for style, accuracy and length.

VTS Book Club to Read *The Mountains Sing* by Nguyen Phan Que Mai June 19



The Mountains Sing is an enveloping, multigenerational tale of the Trần family, set against the backdrop of the Việt Nam War. Trần Diệu Lan, who was born in 1920, was forced to flee her family farm with her six children during the Land Reform as the Communist government rose in the North. Years later in Hà Nội, her young granddaughter, Hương, comes of age as her parents and uncles head off down the Hồ Chí Minh Trail to fight in a conflict that tore apart not just her beloved country, but also her family. Vivid, gripping, and steeped in the language and traditions of Việt Nam, *The Mountains Sing* brings to life the human costs of this conflict from the point of view of the Vietnamese people themselves, while showing us the true power of kindness and hope.

Discussion of this book will be on Wednesday, June 19, at 2:00pm, in-person at the Collegeview Tower meeting room, 141 Fulton Avenue, Poughkeepsie. All are welcome. For questions, please contact bookclub@vassartemple.org.