



# Vassar Temple

Where You Belong

Congregation Brethren of Israel, Founded 1848—Bulletin Volume 173 No. 8 ~ March 2025

**March 9**

**COMMUNITY  
PURIM CARNIVAL 2025**

**A PUPPET SHOW BY UP IN ARMS**



**COSTUME PARADE  
CARNIVAL GAMES & PRIZES  
LIGHT NOSH  
BOUNCE HOUSE  
CRAFTS & MORE**

**LOCATION: TEMPLE BETH-EL  
118 S GRAND AVE POUGHKEEPSIE  
DOORS OPEN AT 10:00 AM  
SHOW BEGINS AT 10:30 AM  
ADMISSION PAYABLE AT THE DOOR  
OR ONLINE AT  
[JEWISHDUTCHESS.ORG/EVENTS](http://JEWISHDUTCHESS.ORG/EVENTS)**

**\$8 PER PERSON  
\$18 PER FAMILY**

No one will be turned away for lack of funds.



Temple Beth-El  
POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK



CONGREGATION SCHOMRE ISRAEL  
*A Modern Orthodox Synagogue*



Vassar Temple  
Where You Belong




## From the Rabbi's Desk:



Five dollars doesn't buy you much these days—but with five dollars and just five minutes of your time, you can have a voice in shaping Israeli society and stand up for pluralism, equality, security, and a path to peace. All Diaspora Jews, 18 and older, are eligible to vote in elections for the World Zionist Congress which will take place March 10—May 4. The World

Zionist Congress, also known as the Parliament of the Jewish People, was established by Theodor Herzl in 1897 to strengthen the bonds between Israel and the Diaspora. The World Zionist Congress meets every five years and has a voice in Israeli society through policies it sets, its influence in the allocation of over \$1 billion annually, and its election of people to key leadership positions in important non-governmental agencies such as the World Zionist Organization, the Jewish Agency for Israel and *Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael* (the Israeli counterpart to the Jewish National Fund). The KKL controls 13% of privately owned property in Israel, so the leadership can determine whether funding goes to building West Bank settlements or in a path towards peace.

In WZC elections, Zionist organizations sponsor slates of delegates; the number of seats each organization gets depends upon how many votes they receive. Reform Jews are represented by ARZA (the Association of Reform Zionists of America). ARZA's success in past elections has ensured financial support for our movement in Israel, allowing it to significantly expand its reach, and enabled the appointment of key professionals within national institutions who have advanced Reform Jewish values emphasizing equality, pluralism and a commitment to a Two-State Solution.

Despite a good voter turnout for ARZA, our impact has been diminished in recent elections due to a growing number of slates. This year there are 22 slates competing for votes. Among them is *Eretz HaKodesh* ("The Holy Land") whose campaign specifically targets Reform Jews as being destructive

to Israel.

ARZA seeks 60,000 votes and has launched a very strong campaign within our 850 congregations. We have established a Vassar Temple WZC Team who will be reaching out to get your vote. Thanks to Alisha Albinder, Melissa Erlebacher, Vivian Garber, Eve Gendron, Marge Groten, Micah Modell and Howard Susser for stepping up.

Voting is very easy. You will be able to vote online or via mail-in ballot, at home or at temple. Team members will be available at temple programs from March 10—May 4 (starting with Purim on March 13) with laptops and ballots available.

A vote for ARZA supports:

- A strong, secure, democratic, and Jewish Israel, as envisioned in its Declaration of Independence.
- Israel's right to exist as a Jewish State and defend its people from terror. We oppose efforts to delegitimize this right.
- Religious equality where all Jewish traditions and forms of observance are respected, with full recognition of liberal movements and an end to the ultra-Orthodox monopoly as the recognized religious authority.
- Regional security through peace and stability for Israel, Palestinians, and neighbors.
- Full equality under the law for all Israelis, including minorities, women, and LGBTQ+ people.
- A secure Israel alongside a peaceful Palestinian state is vital for stability.

At this most precarious time for the State of Israel, as we continue to pray for the release of all hostages and a permanent peace built upon the ceasefire, you can take action that will help to shape an Israel that supports your values. VOTE for ARZA in the WZC. You can learn more about the WZC and ARZA at [arza.org/wzc](http://arza.org/wzc). Look to the weekly for more details about voting.

*Rabbi Renni Altman*

## President's Message:



It is always good to start with good news! As of this writing, some of the hostages from Gaza have been released and there is a ceasefire in place. The hostages come from several countries, not just the USA and Israel. One of the countries is Thailand; I did not know this was a country that was involved but hope for their return soon to their country. Many people worked to make this ceasefire and release happen. May it go as smoothly as possible!

On March 2, there will be a Save Our Scrolls cleaning day for our Torahs. The *sofer* will be here at Temple as well. Keep an eye out for the information regarding this day in your bulletin and weekly Temple emails. Hope to see you there!

You'll be hearing a lot about the World Jewish Congress for the next few months. Rabbi Altman will be filling you in more on this subject. Let me give you my perspective on why it is important to go over the information you'll be receiving. The WJC representatives that are voted in by Jews worldwide then work to establish policy. This is especially important in Israel. The Reform Jewish movement needs to be represented even more, so that our voice is heard loud and clear. The issues can be small or large, but the Reform movement should be heard along with others. For example, Reform synagogues in Israel still are not given the same support as other synagogues. To me, a voice in what happens in situations like this are not just a matter of fairness, but of a government hearing what all Jews are saying, not just some. There are other issues in Israel and around the world that will hopefully hear a stronger Reform voice. You can make more change when you are heard. So, when you receive information, please take the time to read it. If you are at Temple, you can talk to Rabbi Altman or the Temple committee helping people vote in this important election. As I have learned more about the reasons my vote counts so much as a Reform Jew, I have wholly supported encouraging people to vote in the WJC elections. I hope you will vote to make a difference.



March is also National Women's History month. So much to learn! And here comes Purim and the story of Esther. She eventually triumphs along with her people after a terrible, long and hard resistance to H\*\*\*\*. That story is an inspiration to so many. The custom of celebrating and making fun on the holiday is a way to remember the joyous outcome. I look forward to the Purim Pasta dinner hosted by Vassar Temple Brotherhood, and don't forget to bring your "pasta groggers" for the service afterwards. Then those boxes are then donated to the food bank. I am also ready for the Vassar Temple players version of this story of Esther! And if that wasn't enough, we get to have an Oneg with a variety of Hamantaschen! Thanks to Vassar Temple Sisterhood for wonderful, tasty treats. All good, and a great shared celebration. Come and share the joy!

As of this writing, hostages continue to be released, and the ceasefire is holding. May we hope for the release of all and may peace arrive.

*Roni Stein*

## Bimah Flowers for our Services March 2025

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.

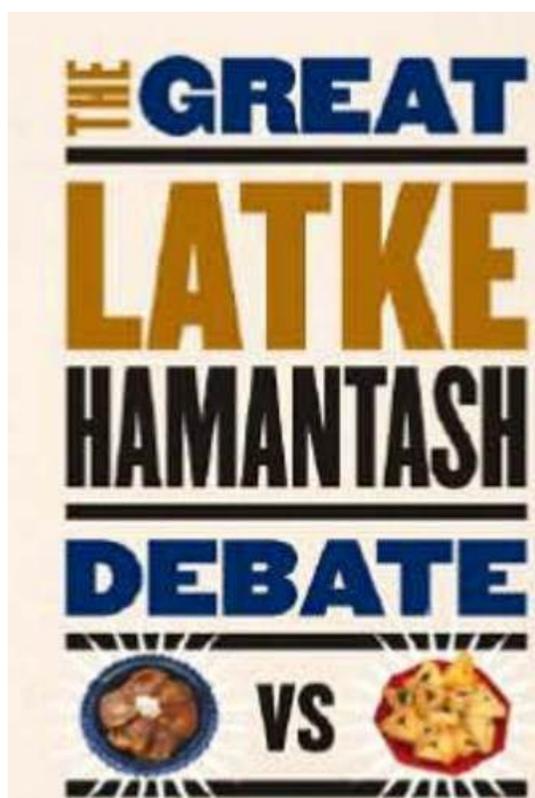
The donation to sponsor Bimah Flowers is \$60 and checks should be made out to Vassar Temple Sisterhood with Bimah Flowers written on the memo line. Should there be more than one sponsor for a Shabbat a larger flower arrangement will be provided. Sponsored flowers are fresh floral arrangements.



### March 2025 Bimah Flowers Sponsors:

- March 7: Vassar Temple Sisterhood Bimah Flower Fund (silk flowers)
- March 14: Michael and Laura Sperling in honor of their son Matthew's Bar Mitzvah
- March 21: Sandra Mamis in memory of Harry Mamis, Kurt Similes and Katherine Lerner Mamis
- March 28: Martin Noble in memory of Erica Robbins and Martin Noble, Sr.

## Religious School Update



On Purim in 1946, at the University of Chicago, prominent faculty members staged a mock debate that compared the relative merits of hamantaschen and latkes. This became an annual tradition, and the opposing teams were always comprised of academics holding at least a Ph.D. until last year, when one of them only had a master's degree in chemical engineering. The debaters have included Nobel Prize winners and MacArthur Grant fellows.

The rules of the debate: participants must wear full academic regalia, and use the language of their own scholarly discipline. At least one debater must be a non-Jew. The event, which has been copied at other universities, is consistent with the hilarious, upside-down nature of Purim, and reveals the hidden Jewish souls of the distinguished scholars. Videos of several latke-hamantaschen debates are on YouTube.

Citing Supreme Court decisions, the laws of physics, and Sigmund Freud, among other sources, the debaters have argued that latkes increase U.S. dependence on oil, that hamantaschen imply gender bias, that latkes are asymmetrical and therefore chaotic, and that it was a hamantasch, not an apple, that fell on Isaac Newton's head when he theorized gravity.

I strongly encourage you to find this great debate online and watch. It will improve your day.

**No one has ever won the debate.**

*Rabbi Shoshana Hantman,  
Religious School Director*

## Scriptural Readings ~ March

### March 1

**T'rumah:** Exodus 25:1-27:19; II Kings 12:5-16 and Isaiah 66:1, 23

### March 8

**T'tzaveh:** Exodus 27:20-30:10; Esther 7:1-10; 8:15-17 or I Samuel 15:2-34

### March 15

**Ki Tasa:** Exodus 30:11-34:35; I Kings 18:1-39

### March 22

**Vayak'heil:** Exodus 35:1-38:20; Ezekiel 36:22-36

### March 29

**P'kudei:** Exodus 38:21-40:38; Ezekiel 45:16-25

## Study Groups at VT

**Torah Study** with Rabbi Renni Altman, DD, meets at 9am Saturday mornings (hybrid). No class March 15. Come join our lively discussions!

Contact us at [office@vassartemple.org](mailto:office@vassartemple.org) or 845-454-2570 to be placed on the Torah Study e-mail list.

**Talmud Study** with Senior Scholar Rabbi Paul Golomb, meets on Zoom from noon to 1:30pm two Tuesdays per month. To be placed on the Talmud Study e-mail list and receive the dates and study sheets, contact him at [pigolomb@verizon.net](mailto:pigolomb@verizon.net).

**All welcome no prior knowledge necessary ~ No charge to attend**

## New Paths

This month we'll gather for New Paths Sabbath morning services at 10:15am Saturday, March 1 (hybrid). 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 spiritually-oriented Shabbat morning experience. A brief informal kiddush follows. Contact [office@vassartemple.org](mailto:office@vassartemple.org) or 845-454-2570 to be put on the New Paths e-mail list, if you need the Zoom link, or to borrow our special prayer book if participating on Zoom.

## Healing Service ~ Saturday, March 22



A Healing Service, led by Rabbi Renni Altman and Cantor Elizabeth Goldmann of Vassar Temple, will be held Saturday March 22 at 10:15am. This beautiful service is designed for anyone praying for healing of the body, soul or spirit for themselves or others, for caregivers, and for anyone, for any reason, in need of spiritual strength. The service will include prayers, reflections and songs that focus on healing and on Shabbat. Everyone in the community is welcome to attend the service, which will be hybrid (both in person and on Zoom).

For the Zoom link, watch temple emails or contact [office@vassartemple.org](mailto:office@vassartemple.org).

## Experience Clean Heat!

Vassar Temple has been invited to participate in the *Experience Clean Heat* program, an initiative from NYSERDA (NYS Energy Research and Development Authority) to increase awareness of the benefits of heat pumps.

As a grantee in the first cohort of the Building Decarbonizer Grant, we are called upon to take leadership in and set an example for our community. In addition to the measures paid for by the Grant (mini-split heat pumps in the upstairs office/classroom wing, wi-fi thermostats, and hot water pipe insulation) we installed large heat pumps to replace the sanctuary air conditioning.

Participation in the program will take several forms including internal signage, promotion on social media campaigns, support with content for our own media, and support for community climate education events – all without cost to the synagogue. We will also be available to speak with organizations or individuals who have questions or want to see heat pumps in action. We hope to organize an event during April, Earth Month.

Sustainability efforts and climate leadership make a good impression in our community. I am grateful for the Trustees' support of this initiative.

*Susan Karnes Hecht*

## Make Merry with us on Purim!

**Thursday March 13**

VEGETARIAN PASTA DINNER 6pm

No charge ~ Donations Appreciated

Please RSVP and send special dietary requests to:

[office@vassartemple.org](mailto:office@vassartemple.org)

Sponsored by Vassar Temple Brotherhood

PURIM SERVICE & SPIEL 7:30pm (hybrid)

“All Together Now”

Featuring Beatles tunes

Dress in your best 60's outfit!

Bring a box of pasta to shake like a gragger

Afterward we'll donate it to a food pantry



## Sisterhood Chai Noon Luncheon ~ March 18, 2025

Vassar Temple Sisterhood's Chai Noon Luncheon, which meets at noon on the 18th of most months (when the date does not conflict with holidays or weekends), will meet on Tuesday, March 18. Specific details about the March 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.



## SISTERHOOD RECIPE OF THE MONTH: Submitted by Polly Lewis Spaghetti Squash Nests with Sausage, Mushrooms & Tomatoes

### Ingredients

- 1 large spaghetti squash (2 1/2 to 3 pounds)
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- 2 links sausage or small meatballs
- 4 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- 4 teaspoons chopped basil

### Instructions

- Preheat oven to 425 degrees.
- Trim squash ends and cut the squash crosswise into four equal rounds. Scoop with 2 tablespoons oil and sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon pepper and 1/8 teaspoon salt.
- Combine mushrooms, tomatoes, sausage or meatballs, 1 tablespoon oil, 1/4 teaspoon pepper and 1/8 teaspoon salt in a medium bowl. Spread in an even layer around the squash.
- Roast until squash is tender, 30-40 minutes.
- With a fork, shred the squash in the center of the rings into long strands. Divide the mushrooms, tomatoes, and sausage or meatballs among nests. Drizzle with vinegar and sprinkle with basil.



## Matthew Sperling's Mitzvah Project

Matthew Sperling, son of Michael and Laura, will become a Bar Mitzvah at Vassar Temple on March 15. For his Mitzvah Project, you may have noticed that Matthew has been replacing and widening the old wooden walkway around the back of the Temple, to create better access to the rear of the building and to the social hall level of the Temple. Thank you to Matthew for this lasting improvement to the Temple, from which we can all benefit for years to come! Matthew is currently in 7th grade at Wappingers Junior High School, where he takes honors classes and plays clarinet in both regular and jazz band.



## JWV—March Meeting

The JWV Herman Siegal Post 625 will hold its March 9 meeting at Shomre Israel. Future meetings will be held April 13, May 11 and June 8. As Shomre Israel is strictly kosher, Post 625 will provide the nosh. The meeting will begin at 9:30am and the nosh at 9:00am. We hope to see you.

*Ralph Schwartz, Sr. Post Commander*

# CONTRIBUTIONS

## SUSTAINING FUND

### In Memory of:

Simon Riechman  
 Elaine Mayer  
 Irving M. Rosenthal  
 Annemarie Teutsch  
 Joan Plotsky & Cynthia Blumenthal  
 Anna Cairo  
 Edward B. Goldstein  
 Zoey Rachel Gillman  
 Gertrude Silverman  
 Jacqueline Sydney Colodner  
 Chris Brown  
 Esther G. Rheingold & Herman Jacobs  
 Sylvia Mednick, Max Solomon, Molly Solomon,  
 Mary Sparks Solomon, Chanie Solomon, Mary B. Sparks,  
 Joseph W. Sparks, John Sparks, Joseph Sparks Sr. &  
 Toby Solomon  
 Jack Cooper  
 Eli Mamis  
 Louis Rosen and Louise Rosen  
 Anne Lacher and Philip Lacher  
 Erica Robbins

### In Appreciation of:

Sandra Mamis

### In Thanks to:

Sisterhood

## COMMUNITY TZEDAKAH FUND

### In Memory of:

Elaine Lipschutz & Dr. Leon Krakower  
 Gloria Schwartz

### *CORRECTION FOR AN ERROR IN THE FEB BULLETIN*

*We apologize and thank Charlene & Loren Rosenthal for their contribution to the Community Tzedakah Fund.*

## MEMORIAL PLAQUE FUND

## ENDOWMENT FUND

## ETERNAL TORAH FUND

### In Appreciation of:

The Tanzmans' generosity

Vivian & Ed Garber  
 Gloria & Thomas Mayer  
 Charlene & Loren Rosenthal  
 Doi Cohen  
 Beth Plotsky & Family  
 Lynn & Marty Revitz  
 The Friedman Family  
 Barbara & Eric Gillman  
 Linda & Richard Cantor  
 Susan Colodner  
 Andi & Paul Ciminello  
 Irma Jacobs



Murray Solomon  
 Rosalyn & Stanley Cooper  
 Sandra Mamis  
 Marilyn & Ron Rosen  
 Maury Lacher  
 Martin Noble

Andi & Paul Ciminello

Roni Stein

Sandra Mamis  
 Murial Lampell  
 Irma Jacobs  
 Polly Lewis  
 Marian & Ralph Schwartz  
 Rabbi Renni Altman & Richard Wender  
 Marge & Art Groten

The Kelson Family  
 Ralph Schwartz

Linda & Richard Cantor

Amy Horn Oclatis & Kenneth Oclatis

Arlene & Gil Seligman

The Hecht Family

# MARCH YAHRZEITS

## March 7

Herman Rosenberg  
 Harry Lashinsky  
 Celia Frank  
 Rose Kahn  
 Morris Levine  
 Cynthia Blumenthal  
 Hinda Lessin  
 Saul Marks  
 Frank Devan  
 Irving M. Rosenthal  
 Irving Schechtman  
 Lila Matlin  
 Rose Landau  
 Gilbert Feinman  
 Geraldine N. Leeds  
 Howard Perry  
 Norman Steinberg  
 Rae Jacobs Rauh Brown  
 Miriam Genshaft  
 Rabbi Robert Rozenberg  
 Gertrude Silverman  
 Esther G. Rheingold  
 Edward B. Goldstein  
 Phyllis Marilyn Ritter  
 Tessie Turk  
 Morris Lessin  
 Gertrude M. Plimack  
 A. Alfred Podell, MD  
 Bee Plimack  
 Ralph Partridge

## March 14

Mildred Gould  
 Victor Fein  
 David Blanksteen  
 Dr. Simon Riechman  
 June Heiser Shub  
 Morris Abraskin  
 Silvia Domes  
 Meyer Harold Bagun  
 Dr. Louis Shub (Shoob)  
 Kaye Roth  
 Lewis Acker  
 Anna Frankel  
 Howard Smith  
 Gloria Schwartz  
 Svetlana Beckerman  
 Ethel Graves  
 Bettina DeVescovo  
 Belle Weiss  
 Fred Lehman  
 Reuben Temlock  
 Sara Leslie Goldman Fite  
 Joseph Feuer  
 Meyer A. Wolfson  
 Judith Newman  
 Esther Temlock

## March 21

Samuel Karnes  
 Bessie Kaplan  
 Sonya Markovitch  
 Lillian Schwarz  
 Lena Baskin  
 Scott Buxbaum  
 Harry Mamis  
 Elaine Mayer  
 Ann R. Margolin  
 Bruce Weber  
 Pearl Bettigole Goldberg  
 Eli Gellert  
 Mary Ann Robinowitz  
 Kurt Similes  
 Sarah Singer  
 Gary Feder  
 Michael Feder  
 Gary Schischa  
 Erwin Schischa  
 Katherine Lerner Mamis  
 Claire Sherwin  
 Gwendolyn Harlam  
 Ruth Kovacs  
 Matalie Hamburg  
 Mae Miller Klampert  
 Annemarie Teutsch  
 Etta Simon Podret  
 Benjamin Clarfeld  
 Herman Jacobs  
 Fannie Berlin  
 Lee Rosenthal  
 Charles Frankel  
 Martin Lowenthal

## March 28

Max Solomon  
 Idane Evan Salenger  
 Vawn Jennifer Salenger  
 Louis D. Dampf  
 Harold Rosen  
 David Jordan  
 Kathi Winchock  
 Harvey Kafowitz  
 Erica Robbins  
 Chris Brown  
 Patricia Adler  
 Esta Feder  
 Chanie Solomon  
 Betty Mead  
 Thelie Selzer  
 Zoey Rachel Gillman  
 Rose Baum Kraut  
 William M. Rothstein  
 Pearl Teperman  
 Martin Turk  
 Cora Frances Solomon  
 Dorothy Esner



## Our Condolences To:

The family of Paul Wolf, uncle of Beth Plotsky

The family of Arnold Cohen, father of Steven Cohen & Adrienne Shiff

## A Note from the Treasurer

Year to date has been challenging for Vassar Temple's finances. For the first six months of the fiscal year, our expenses have been higher and our income lower than during the comparable period last year. We have had several significant unplanned expenditures arise that were not budgeted but necessary, and we have had fewer fundraising events. Managing our cash flow will continue to be a challenge through the remainder of the fiscal year.

Nevertheless, the Finance Committee, with the help of others, has been busy. We have efforts underway to examine our expenses to determine possible opportunities for efficiencies and savings: reviewing our fee structure to better align charges with costs incurred; forming a new Development Committee to plan for outreach and fundraising events; assessing the building's capital needs to better plan for necessary investment; and exploring ways to improve the tools we use to both reach out to members and facilitate donations and collections.

One very positive achievement of this past year has been the receipt of two significant grant awards for the purpose of building improvements for environmental efficiencies and security. Looking for new grant opportunities will be an on-going effort. Kudos to the members who dedicated time and energy to the grant application and management process.

As we enter the final quarter of this fiscal year, we will be planning for the next. The results of these ongoing efforts will be implemented in our next Budget for FY 2026. In the context of the budget discussion, members will have an opportunity to review proposed changes, contribute ideas and volunteer their time to help Vassar Temple raise funds, operate more efficiently and improve its fiscal outlook.

*Maxine Finkelstein*



*Fight for Democracy  
in Israel*

**JOIN OUR  
WORLD  
ZIONIST  
CONGRESS  
CAMPAIGN**

The US Reform Movement is running a powerful campaign for the WZC election. Join our congregation's team.

**uj** | **ARZA**  
אֶרְצָה

Keep fighting for democracy in another important election campaign that needs your voice and your vote!  
#VoteReformWZC2025

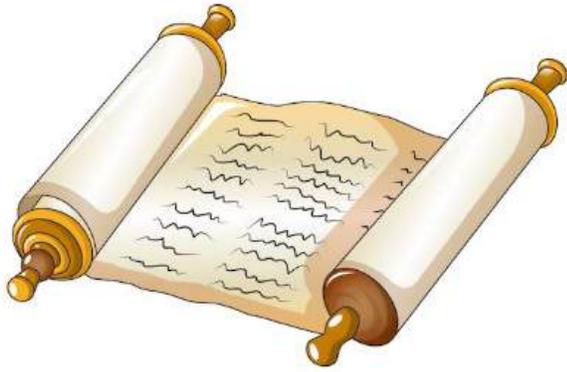
**The World Zionist Congress (WZC)** is the representative body for Diaspora Jewish communities. It meets every five years and controls a \$1 billion budget that impacts religious pluralism, democracy, and more in Israel. Our congregation is building a campaign team to fight for our Reform values in Israel. Vote from March 10 through May 4, 2025.

To get more information or volunteer for our campaign, contact Rabbi Altman at [rabbi@vassartemple.org](mailto:rabbi@vassartemple.org).

To learn more about the WZC, visit [www.zrza.org/wzc](http://www.zrza.org/wzc).

# SOS: Support Our Scrolls!

## Torah Scroll Cleaning Day March 2



Torah scrolls are living, breathing embodiments of the tenets of Judaism. They require ongoing nurturing and maintenance. Healthy scrolls are at the existential heart of our congregation, and we are fortunate to be caretakers of historic parchments, some predating our 1848 founding. They require professional evaluation every few years and, without repair, may be deemed unfit for use in accordance with Jewish ritual.

Climate change and extreme humidity have impacted scrolls in numerous synagogues. The loss of air conditioning in our sanctuary last year exacerbated mold on the parchment and flaking of letters or entire sections. We monitor humidity in the ark and use desiccants to help reduce it, but this is not enough. We also need to air out the scrolls by routinely rolling them from end to end. Our *sofer* (scribe) has begun restoration, but our current repairs will exhaust the Eternal Torah Fund.

You can help! On **Sunday, March 2**, we will hold a Torah scroll cleaning day to not only reduce our cost but also provide an opportunity for hands-on, intergenerational engagement. Religious school students, teachers, parents and congregants will help clean a scroll at our *sofer's* direction. The *sofer* will also supervise congregants in repairing lettering. Please consider a donation to the Fund in honor of participating in the mitzvah of writing in the scroll. Information about donation levels will be listed in weekly email newsletters.

The students in our pre-b'nai mitzvah class (Kitah Zayin) and members of the Ritual Committee rolled three of our four scrolls to ventilate and move the parchment. Doing so frequently is one of the ways in which we can keep our scrolls healthy. Temple committees will be asked to participate on other dates. If not on a committee, individuals are welcome to volunteer for this unique and gratifying experience.

Donations of any amount to the Eternal Torah Fund to support this essential need are greatly appreciated. We have established a goal of \$10,000 with suggested contribution levels to cover the current repairs and establish a buffer for future Torah repairs.

*David Hecht and the Ritual Committee*

### **FAMILY CAREGIVERS MAY RECEIVE UP TO \$600**

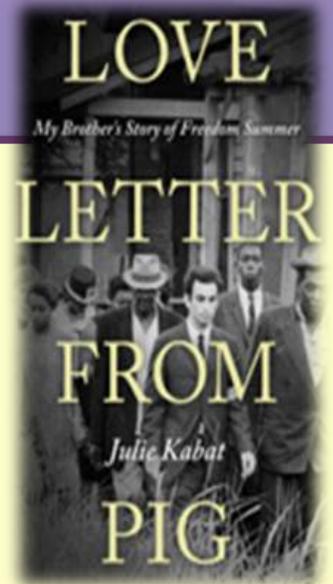
Dutchess, Putnam and Westchester County residents: Are you a caregiver for a relative or friend who has a disability or chronic condition and is over the age of 60? Learn how to apply for up to \$600 in reimbursement for respite services. Contact the temple office for more information.

# A Journey Through Freedom Summer: *The Story Behind "Love Letter from Pig"*



Meet the author!

*Julie Kabat*



During Mississippi Freedom Summer in 1964, Luke Kabat taught biology and citizenship at the Freedom School in Meridian. Author Julie Kabat, Luke's sister and renowned writer, musician, and teacher, pored over his letters, written daily, and countless journals and articles to document his experiences as an activist, finally telling his account of that remarkable summer. *Love Letter from Pig* is the story of Luke's extraordinary impact as an activist, his idealism and courage in the face of adversity, and the author's love for her brother.

Join us for a discussion of Freedom Summer, readings from the book, songs from the Civil Rights Movement and firsthand memories and reflections that will be shared by Andreesa Coleman who was a teenager in Luke's 1964 science class.

Free and open to all.

Sunday, March 30, 2025 ~ 3 PM (snow date April 6th, same time & place)

Vassar Temple ~ 140 Hooker Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY 12601

RSVP: [office@vassartemple.org](mailto:office@vassartemple.org)

## Evelyn Kahn Spirit of Sisterhood Award

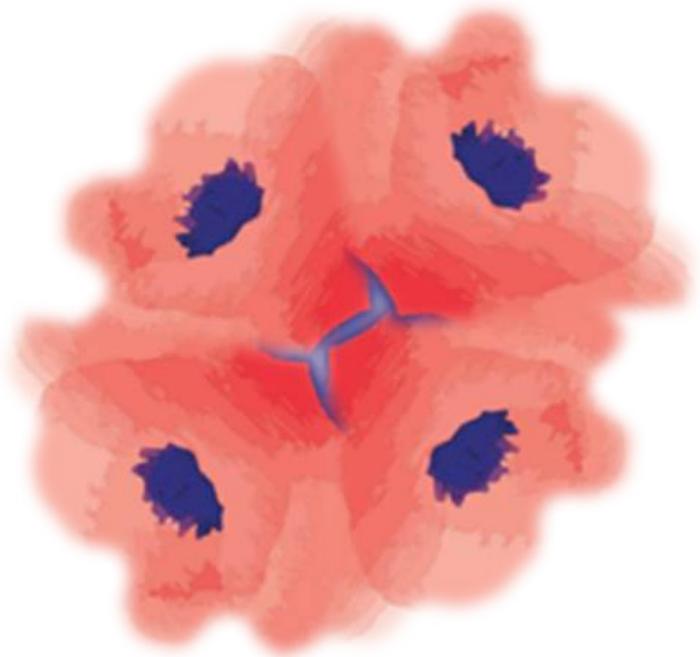
Help us choose the 2025 awardee for the Evelyn Kahn Award. The award is almost 32 years old and recognizes a member of the Sisterhood who goes above and beyond. The person must be a Sisterhood member. Please submit your entry by the end of April to [sisterhood@vassartemple.org](mailto:sisterhood@vassartemple.org).

### Include the following:

- Name of person
- What the person has done in past year

### Previous Winners

1993	Elaine Lipschutz
1994	Anne Kahn
1995	Marjorie Katz
1996	Lila Matlin
1997	Naomi Goldberg
1998	Mildred Gould
1999	Bea Gross
2000	Rose Weigert
2001	Muriel Lampell
2002	Helen Klein
2003	Susan Sommerfield
2004	Joan Reifler
2005	Doi Cohen
2006	Perla Kaufman
2007	Evelyn Partridge
2008	Sharon Zant
2009	Emily Himelstein
2010	Sandra Mamis & Gayle Margolin
2011	Roni Stein
2012	Susan Karnes Hecht
2013	Marian Schwartz
2014	Laura Brundage
2015	Judy Rosenfeld & Nadine Zaritsky
2016	Amy Horn Oclatis & Danah Moore
2017	Lisa-Sue Quackenbush
2018	Melissa Erlebacher
2019	Fern Wolf
2022	Linda Babas
2023	Polly Lewis
2024	Susan Budson Fink
2025	TBA



## Purim Pasta “Plus” ~ Food and Hygiene Drive for March

It is Jewish tradition to give gifts of food and to donate to charity on Purim, and it is Vassar Temple tradition always to help our neighbors. In that spirit, please bring a box of pasta to the Purim Spiel on March 13 to shake like a gragger, and then drop it in the collection box to be donated to Dutchess Outreach's food pantry.

Given the increased needs this year, during the month of March we also invite you to bring to the temple Can Jam bin any of the following personal hygiene items which were specially requested by Dutchess Outreach, in addition to your boxes of Purim pasta:

- full size, unopened containers of toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, & body wash
- feminine hygiene products, disposable razors, toilet paper, disposable diapers, baby wipes, & body lotion

You can drop items off in the temple Can Jam bin any time the temple is open.

If you must drop off at a different day or time, you can drop off at Marian's home near the Temple—just contact her at [socialaction@vassartemple.org](mailto:socialaction@vassartemple.org). If you would like to donate to Purim Pasta “Plus” but cannot shop, you may make a financial donation to Vassar Temple, designated for the Community Tzedakah Fund, and we will shop for you. Thank you for helping any way you can!

*Marian Schwartz*, Social Action Chair  
*Joel Kelson*, Can Jam Project Coordinator

## Climate Corner – an update from our Dayenu Circle ~ 2025 Legislative Action

Dayenu and the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (RAC) are partnering in NYS to increase our impact. The 2025 agenda is focused on ensuring that the State meets its climate goals, given its impact on warming as the 10th largest economy in the world. Over the next four years, climate efforts are likely to stall at the national level. New York and other large states can keep US climate commitments moving forward.

In 2019 NYS's Climate Law adopted robust goals to reduce emissions by 85% by 2050, hitting benchmarks along the way. Unfortunately, political leaders are waffling on this commitment. Funding is inadequate; key rules and laws have not been passed; the goals and timeline are in danger.

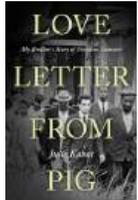
The Reform community can be a powerful force in ensuring that NYS moves forward. Because we are not a traditional environmental group, our collective voice has added weight. Because we live across the State, we can reach a range of legislators.

We will prioritize specific legislation that must be passed to move forward: the HEAT Act and the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act. We will advocate for funding, potentially focusing on a cap-trade-invest policy which could provide huge resources. And we will be prepared to react if and when leaders attempt to roll back goals. You can help by:

1. Emailing your legislators at strategic moments in the legislative calendar. Sign up for the rapid response team at <https://urj.tfaforms.net/1629>
2. Attending the Lobby Day in Albany on Monday, March 10. If you're interested in being part of a group, contact [dayenudutchess@gmail.com](mailto:dayenudutchess@gmail.com) for registration info and so that we can organize a carpool.

Finally, we are writing Environmental Voter Project postcards to Louisiana ahead of the May 3rd State Supreme Court election. This election includes important positions on the Louisiana Supreme Court as well as a number of municipal races. **Local elections are crucially important to climate.** The written messages will be short, and the cards will be mailed on April 17. Please contact [dayenudutchess@gmail.com](mailto:dayenudutchess@gmail.com) to help, and watch for news of a “postcard party” at Vassar Temple. This is a great opportunity to experience mutual support in challenging times while making a real contribution to changing the future for the better.

# Calendar of Events—March 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b> 9am Torah Study  10:15am New Paths
<b>2</b> 9am Religious School  9:30am Torah Cleaning  10:30am Lunch Box  12:30pm Writing Crowns	<b>3</b> 7pm Sisterhood Monthly Meeting	<b>4</b> 12pm Talmud Study	<b>5</b> 4:30pm Hebrew School	<b>6</b> 7pm Ritual CMTE	<b>7</b> 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal w/ Cantor Goldmann  7:30pm Shabbat Service	<b>8</b> 9am Torah Study  10:15am Shabbat Morning Service
<b>9</b> Community Purim Carnival 10am ~ Temple Beth-El  	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> 4:30pm Hebrew School	<b>13</b> PURIM EVE  5:30pm Purim Pasta Dinner  7:30pm Purim Service & Spiel  	<b>14</b> PURIM  7:30pm Shabbat Service	<b>15</b> 10am Matthew Sperling Bar Mitzvah
<b>16</b> No Religious School  9:45am Judaism 101	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 12pm VTS Chai Noon Luncheon  	<b>19</b> 4:30pm Hebrew School  7pm Finance CMTE	<b>20</b> 7:30pm Cemetery CMTE	<b>21</b> 6:45pm Choir Rehearsal w/ Cantor Goldmann  7:30pm Dorothy & Charles Wender Music Shabbat Service	<b>22</b> 9am Torah Study  10:15am Healing Service
<b>23</b> 9am Religious School	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> 4:30pm Hebrew School	<b>27</b> 6:30pm Shelter Meal  7pm VT Board	<b>28</b> 6pm Simchat Shabbat Service	<b>29</b> 9am Torah Study
<b>30</b> 9am Religious School  9:45am Judaism 101  3pm Adult Ed, Author Julie Kabat	<b>31</b>  					

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

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**Rabbi:** Rabbi Renni 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:** Roni Stein

**1st Vice President:** Susan Fink

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reserve the right to edit articles for style,

accuracy and length.

## Dorothy and Charles Wender Music Shabbat Celebrating the Music of Kol B'Seder Friday, March 21 at 7:30pm



Our Cantor Elizabeth Goldmann has planned a special service featuring the music of Kol B'Seder (the duo of Rabbi Dan Frelander and Cantor Jeff Klepper, pictured left). The two met in college in 1971, and are now celebrating their 50th anniversary of writing and performing ancient Jewish texts in the manner of contemporary pop styling. Their music has gained great popularity in Jewish camps, schools, and synagogues, and you will recognize their *Shalom Rav* as a favorite at Vassar Temple. They have now influenced successive generations of cantors and have impacted synagogue practice, especially in Reform congregations. Come and see why Kol B'Seder has been called the Beatles of contemporary Jewish music!

Anyone who would like to join Cantor Goldmann in singing a few songs at the service is most warmly invited to contact her at [cantoreg@yahoo.com](mailto:cantoreg@yahoo.com). Rehearsals will be held March 7 and 21 at 6:45pm.