

Hakol

The Voice of Congregation B'nai Jacob

Congregation B'nai Jacob of Phoenixville, PA

Adar I – Adar II 5784

March 2024

Our mission is to provide a place rooted in Jewish tradition where all people feel welcome, supported and enriched. We strive to foster connections to our past, to our future and to the divine in an intimate, accepting community.

Service Times

Friday Night-
(unless otherwise indicated) 7:30pm
Saturday Morning 9:30am

Candle Lighting

March 1 5:36pm
March 8 5:44pm
Daylight Savings Time in Effect
March 15 6:52pm
March 22 6:59pm
March 29 7:06pm

Events

CBJU– Fred Miller Lecture in Song– March 2	See p. 10
Bar Mitzvah Jonah Marcus– March 9	
Adult Education– March 10	See p. 11
Food Distribution– March 10	See p. 12
Community Shabbat– March 15	See p. 13
Purim– March 23	See p. 14

***Jacob and Kirstyn Marcus
Invite the Congregation to share our joy
as our son,
Jonah Daniel Marcus
Is called to the Torah as a
Bar Mitzvah
on Saturday, March 9th at 9:30 am.
Kiddush Luncheon to follow.***



CONGREGATION B'NAI JACOB
PLACE COMMUNITY CONNECTION
מקום קהילה קשר

Rabbi's Message	2
President's Message	3
Sisterhood	5
Religious School	6
Scrip Program	7
Meet Our Members	8
Learning for Life	11
In Our Community	9-15
Donations	16
Celebrations	17
Yahrzeit	18
Calendar	20

Something Shabbat Every Friday

- 1st Shabbat Across America– 7:30pm
- 8th Jonah Marcus Bar Mitzvah
Kabbalat Shabbat- 7:30pm
- 15th Community Shabbat– Potluck Dinner with
Family Friendly Service– 6:30pm
- 22nd Stand-Up Shabbat, to Prepare for Purim–
7:30pm
- 29th Birthday/Anniversary Shabbat with Ice
Cream Sundae Oneg– 7:30pm



Dear *Chaveirim*/Friends:

In *HaKol's* ongoing quest to remain competitive with other publications, we're featuring this silly month of *Adar* one of those occasional quizzes that seem to help other magazines to fly off of the shelves.

The answer key is below, as well as what action you should take based on your results:

1-Why is *Purim* one of the easiest holy days to observe completely?

- A-There aren't any *mitzvot*/commandments to fulfill.
- B-There's only 1 *mitzvah*/commandment to fulfill.
- C-There's only a total of 2 *mitzvot*/commandments to fulfill.
- D-There's only a total of 3 *mitzvot*/commandments to fulfill.
- E-There's only a total of 4 *mitzvot*/commandments to fulfill.
- F-There's only a total of 5 *mitzvot*/commandments to fulfill.

2-Which of the following are **not** included in the *mitzvot* of *Purim*?

- A-Wearing extra layers of clothing, in honor of Vashti's refusal to dance naked before the king.
- B-Hearing *Megillat Esther*/Scroll of Esther read.
- C-Blotting out the name of Hammond Candies.
- D-Giving *Mishloach Nerot*/Gifts of Light to friends.
- E-Having a merry old feast.
- F-Giving *Matanot L'Evyonim*/tzedakah to people in need.
- G-Eating poppyseeds out of three-cornered hats.
- H-Giving *Mishloach Manot*/Edible Gifts to friends.

3-Which political events happened to coincide with *Purim*?

- A-The beginning of the illness that killed Stalin in 1953, just as he planned to kill many Jews.
- B-The 1990 Gulf War (including Saddam Hussein firing SCUD missiles at Israel) ended.
- C-The fall of the Iron Curtain.
- D-The first protests of the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia in 1989.

4-Which character does **not** actually appear in the Book of Esther?

- A-Mordecai
- B-God
- C-Esther
- D-Haman
- E-King Ahashveros
- F-Memuchan
- G-Bigtan
- H-Zeresh

Answer Key: 1. E 2. A, C, D, G
 3. A, B 4. B

Add up the number of correct answers you got, and subtract the number of wrong answers. If your total falls anywhere in-between -2 and 0, or in-between 1-3, or 4-7, then that means you qualify to attend *Purim* festivities at CBJ on Saturday night, March 23 at 7:00 PM– see the flyer later in this newsletter for more details.

L'Shalom,
Rabbi Jeff Sultar





“And The Survey Says” – Attributes of Thriving Synagogues” Results

Thank you to all who participated in January to complete the “Thriving Congregations Assessment (TCA),” a program sponsored by USCJ offered to our synagogue at no cost. Seventy (70) members of our Community, which included our Board/Leadership Team (Executive Committee, Committee Chairs and Trustees), prior leadership and others were invited to participate, of which **41 responded**. According to USCJ, this is a great response for a synagogue of our size.

This collaborative exercise will support our shared Vision, help us further plan for our future and build upon our strengths.

The TCA asked us questions based on 7 Foundational Practices of Thriving Congregations (approx. 60 questions in total). The data is robust and provides a snapshot of what features are most important to you and how we are doing on each.

The Thriving Congregations Assessment process will help us:

- Identify Areas Where We Thrive
- Explore What is Driving Growth
- Identify Areas Where We Feel Stuck and Explore Why
- Consider Unexplored Areas Where We Could Potentially Thrive

Each survey statement offered a rating range of 5 (Strongly Agree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree). Areas of strength scored either 4 or 5 and areas of weakness scored either 1 or 2. With this data and information, we are able to see a comprehensive snapshot of our congregation and learn how people felt about synagogue leadership, sacred purpose, communications, engagement and other key areas. In short, it is this data that will help us set priorities for improvement and obtain the future to which we aspire.

We will be reviewing the results within the Seven Foundational Practices of Thriving Congregations.

Let's start with the first **Foundational Practice - Develop a Shared Compelling Vision of Jewish Community**, and their associated survey questions. Keep in mind this is the first of 7 Foundational Practices. More will be covered in future *Hakol* articles and at Board meetings and the June Annual Meeting

Where we scored 80% or higher (Strongly Agree - 5 or Moderately Agree - 4) – we celebrate Strengths to build upon; where we scored 20% or lower (Somewhat Disagree - 2, Strongly Disagree - 1), we have more work to be done

Q1. Our congregation has gone through a visioning process in the last five years.

Score 3.93 – 78.5%

Q2. I can articulate the values of our congregation and what makes it unique.

Score 4.2 – 84%

Q3. The lay and professional leadership seem to make decisions with the congregation's mission, vision, and values in mind.

Score 4.1 – 82%

Q4. Our programs are aligned with our mission and vision.

Score 4.07 – 81%

Q5. The clergy and professional staff have taken the time to build trust, and they have the support of the congregation.

Score 4.07 – 81%

Q6. We use a variety of communication strategies to tell compelling stories of how the congregation impacts people's lives.

Score 3.41 – 68%

Continued on Page 4

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONT)

Continued from Page 3

Q7. The congregation has a visible and effective social media presence.

Score 3.24 – 65%

Q8. We do a good job keeping congregants informed about programs and events.

Score 4.4 – 87%

Q9. People are easily able to navigate our website.

Score 3.5 – 71.2%

In future *Hakol* issues, we will delve deeper into each of these areas, sharing with you our successes, areas where more action is needed and set our future priorities.

L'Shalom,

Mark J. Snow
President

LIVESTREAM

Livestream All Services

We are excited to announce CBJ Livestream! Just follow these steps:

1. Go to www.congbj.org from your PC, Laptop, Tablet or Phone
2. Scroll down and click the button under Services – WATCH LIVESTREAM
3. Complete the very brief form and click SUBMIT
4. You will be taken to the CBJ Livestream page (BOXCAST) for the service

FROM THE RABBI

I Look Forward to Talking with You!

I look forward to meeting with you to talk about, well, just about anything that might be on your mind.

While you can always leave this to chance by just dropping by CBJ, it's best to call or e-mail to set a time for us to meet. While it's wonderful when people just stop by, sometimes people are frustrated that I'm not available when they do so. The problem is that much of the time I'm at CBJ is already scheduled with meetings; also, I frequently have meetings and Pastoral requirements that take me out of the building; and finally, I usually spend one day a week (typically Thursday) working at home.

For these reasons, never hesitate during "normal" hours to call my cell phone, and please also call the cell number at *any* time for a life-cycle emergency or for any other truly pressing matter. I typically check e-mail at least a few times during the day, but please also know that I have a "dumb" phone and do *not* get e-mails instantly when away from the computer. I get texts just fine.

While I always prefer talking in person, one of e-mails' best features is that it's good for finding mutually-good times to meet.

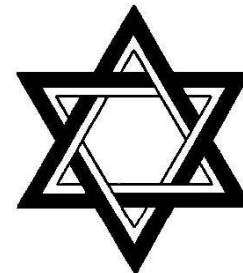
So be in touch, and let's figure out a good time to talk!

L'Shalom,

Rabbi Jeff Sultar

E-mail: rabbi@congbj.org

Cell Phone: (732) 606-5381





March 5 Regifting Bingo

Got gifts stuck in the back of that drawer? Take them along to Regifting Bingo night with dinner! See you 6:30pm in the CBJ library. Remember to RSVP – Linda Loux Linda@louxfamily.com

April 7 Abby Gilbert, Executive Director, Tikvah Organization will speak to our CBJ community about empowering those in the Jewish community who suffer with mental illness. She will also lead an activity with our religious school students, teaching us not to be afraid of differences and to cope with stress. Parents and other CBJ members are invited.

Ms. Gilbert will lead an activity with our students at **10am** and will follow with a presentation for our parents and members at **10:30am**.

RSVP for this truly fascinating event no later than March 31 to Linda Loux at linda@louxfamily.com or 610-960-4888.

April 19 Sisterhood Shabbat led by our own Jodi Rosenfeld. We are strong; we are funny; we are the women of CBJ. Share with us your voice this spring at Kabbalat Shabbat. Give Lori Snow your preference for English or Hebrew parts at lvsnow@comcast.net. More info is on the way.

June 9 Karen Real Torah Fund Luncheon to be held at Karen Real's tranquil and beautiful backyard. Save the date and stay tuned for more info.

SISTERHOOD CALENDAR 2024

March 5 – 6:30pm Re-gifting Bingo, CBJ Library

March 17 – Tour of Jaffa (Yafo, as it is now called) **CANCELED**

April 7 – Speaker Abby Gilbert, Exec. Director, Tikvah Organization

April 19 – Sisterhood Shabbat, led by Jodi Rosenfeld

June 9 – Torah Fund Luncheon at Karen Real's gorgeous home



<https://www.facebook.com/groups/CBJGroup>

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Students celebrated the birthday of trees by participating in a Tu B'shvat seder. Rabbi Sultar led our seder explaining the four cups of wine: white wine (to symbolize winter), white with some red (the coming of spring); red with some white (early spring) and finally all red (spring and summer) and the associated seven species of fruits and nuts. Tu B'shvat also carries an ecological message and students planted parsley seeds to nurture in the classrooms—hopefully maturing in time for their Passover seder celebrations.



SPONSOR AN ONEG

Have something to celebrate?

Come celebrate with your CBJ family by sponsoring an Oneg on Friday nights and/or a Kiddush snack on Saturdays after services. We make it easy - contact Adrienne at 484-318-3385 (cell) or burnsao@gmail.com for details.

Seeking all CBJ foodies!

Come schmooze, nosh and help out with Synagogue functions! I need helping hands to set up Onegs and kiddushes, as well as other occasions, throughout the year. If you can give a little time, contact Adrienne at 484-318-3385 (cell) or burnsao@gmail.com for details.

Use CBJ's Social Media (Facebook, CBJ website) to announce your events, special occasions etc.

Contact Seth Loux - seth@louxfamily.com
and Jerry Weiss - mijmweiss7@gmail.com
for the website and/or

Lorraine Schur - LSCHUR116@gmail.com
and Jerry Weiss - mijmweiss7@gmail.com
for Facebook.

Parents Of Our School Children:

Did you know CBJ offers a wonderful scholarship opportunity to our religious school families?

The **Louis and Sadie Liss Scholarship Fund** provides scholarships for the children of our members to enjoy enriching Jewish events including Jewish camps, USY on Wheels, USY Israel Pilgrimage, Maccabi Games, Passport to Israel Program and other wonderful experiences.

For more information or to apply for a scholarship, please contact Valerie in the office.

Welcome to our New CBJ Members!

Myla Kaplan and Gideon Schreiber
from Phoenixville

SCRIP PROGRAM

Support CBJ with our New Easy to Use CBJ RaiseRight Scrip Program

Support the new CBJ RaiseRight (formerly Shopwithscrip) by purchasing gift cards to your favorite stores and restaurants!

You purchase cards at face value and CBJ receives 2-20% on every purchase. Enjoy the convenience of having access to over 750 top brands from the comfort of your home or the ease of your phone!

ACME, Giant, Amazon, Target, Walmart, Home Depot, GrubHub and many more! Birthdays, Mother's Day, Father's Day, graduations, donate to people in need...

Instructions are below but you may always contact Lisa Anton, Scrip Coordinator, at lanton109@yahoo.com help you through the process.

Easy Enrollment on either your computer or phone:

1. Go to www.raiseright.com
2. Click "Join a Program" (desktop) or "Register" (cell)
3. Enter enrollment code: **97999E3432453**
4. Follow the prompts to create your account and start shopping!
5. Your cart will show your total cost and CBJ's profit.
6. Pay directly from your bank account (with a \$.15 ACH fee) or use a credit card.

If you participated in our previous scrip program, shopwithscrip.com:

1. Go to raiseright.com on your computer, tablet or download the mobile app on your phone.
2. Use your shopwithscrip.com sign in information to login.
3. Your gift cards and payment information will be automatically transferred to your RaiseRight account.
4. Buy your gift cards and support CBJ!

E-GIFT cards can be sent directly (and, in most cases, instantly) to your computer or phone or to a loved one. For a processing fee, you can also purchase **PHYSICAL gift cards** and have them shipped directly to your home, friends or family. **In this new program, we will not keep gift cards in the office for purchase.**

Pay directly from your bank account or with a credit card. For any questions or if you would like to pay with a check, please contact Lisa Anton, Scrip Coordinator, at lanton109@yahoo.com

MEET OUR MEMBERS

As an initiative of Team Engage, we are sharing interviews with CBJ members to promote engagement within the congregation.

Meet Ellie Cantor

For the past several months, Team Engage has been bringing you short articles about various people at CBJ – leaders, long-time members, new members, etc. This month I thought it might be good to share a bit about myself since a lot of you may now know me.

I was raised in a fairly traditional Jewish home, first in West Philadelphia then in the Northeast, where I attended our local “conservadox” (close to orthodox, but with mixed seating) synagogue, Adath Zion, for many years. I went to their religious school through their Hebrew High school, after which I attended Gratz Hebrew High and two additional years at Gratz College. My secular education included the neighborhood Philly schools, then Penn as an undergraduate and University of the Sciences (now part of St. Joe’s) and Medical College of PA (now Drexel Med) for grad school, ending up with a PhD in pharmacology (the study of how drugs work and the development of new medications). My father was a pharmacist, and I got my love of science from him.

I moved to northern NJ for a postdoctoral fellowship at the Roche Institute of Molecular Biology where I met another postdoc who is now my husband, Barry Jones. I continued to work in pharma for several years, collecting an MBA in management at Montclair State along the way. When Barry took a position at a pharmaceutical company in Philly’s western suburbs, we moved back to the area, settling in our current home in Upper Providence, Montco.

My job hunting process during this move introduced me to the world of executive search, which I found more to my liking than lab work. After a few years working for another firm, and after Barry’s employer sold off their local facility leaving him unemployed, we opened CJ Resources as a consulting and search firm working for biopharmaceutical clients. When we reached the age of Medicare eligibility, we closed the company and retired.

I have since filled my time serving on various boards and committees for organizations such as the local chapter of the Association for Women in Science and the Drexel Med Alumni Association, U Sciences and Drexel Boards of Visitors and now CBJ. I also facilitated case-based learning for first and second year medical students at Drexel for a few years. On a personal level, we enjoyed traveling until health issues made that difficult, and we love food and wine experiences and spending time at our house in the Poconos.

I didn’t opt to join a synagogue when I first moved back to this area, instead observing holidays and worshipping with family members and friends at their shuls. In 2008, I decided I needed to integrate into the local Jewish community, and CBJ was nearby. I attended Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services as a guest for a few years and liked the experience, the congregants, the leaders, and the “vibe.” I became a member in 2020. True to form, I jumped in with both feet, soon accepting the role of co-treasurer for Sisterhood, and corresponding secretary on the CBJ board.

So here I am today building connections, making new friends, and contributing my time, skills, and resources to CBJ!

IN OUR COMMUNITY

MURDER MYSTERY EVENT

Over 60 members of our Community along with guests and friends enjoyed an evening of great food, fun, entertainment and laughter. Without A Cue Productions delivered a wonderful performance of Murder on the Moulin in a dinner theatre atmosphere at CBJ! Our own Amy Siegel won the prize for solving the murder mystery! Additional Photos at: www.congbj.org/photos



CBJU COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Thank you to everyone who donated and helped with CBJUniversity's Community Outreach Nonprofit Expo. It's exciting to see the students taking ownership of the event and sort, check expiration dates and pack up the items. Madelyn Anton (Phoenixville Health Care Access) and Karin Williams (Ann's Heart) were speakers at our event and they helped sort and pack up as well.

We donated 3 shopping bags worth of items to Ann's Heart as well as a LOT of clothes that Karin could use with other non profits. We brought about 6 bags of groceries to PACS. There were items and blankets for MLAR. We have 5 bags of clothes for Mitzvah Circle.

It was a positive mitzvah filled day!

Ruth Groves



Congregation B'nai Jacob Presents:

Fred Miller's Lecture in Song

Saturday, March 2 7:30 PM

A LAND THAT'S FREE FOR YOU AND ME:

**Jewish Songwriters Give Universal Voice To
The American Dream**



Fred Miller combines his voice, keyboard skills, and encyclopedic musical knowledge to present a fascinating look at how the Jewish immigrant experience gave rise to the "Golden Age of American Popular Music."

Legendary composers such as Rodgers and Hammerstein, George and Ira Gershwin, Jerome Kern, Harold Arlen, and Irving Berlin were all sons of Jewish immigrants, and they infused their songs with the hopes and dreams of their ancestors, creating such enduring classics as Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?, Oh, What a Beautiful Mornin', I Got Rhythm, Summertime, Someone to Watch Over Me, Ol' Man River, It's Only a Paper Moon, Some Enchanted Evening, You'll Never Walk Alone, Blue Skies, What'll I Do?, Cheek to Cheek, Puttin' On the Ritz, There's No Business Like Show Business, God Bless America, and Over the Rainbow.

*"Somewhere over the rainbow,
Way up high,
There's a land that I heard of
Once in a lullaby..."*

Open to the Public

Tickets: Adults \$10

Children Under 18-Free!

**Congregation B'nai Jacob
Starr and Manavon Streets
Phoenixville, PA**

Tickets: call (610) 933-5550 or visit <https://www.congbj.org/>

Tickets must be purchased by February 28, 2024



Our goal is to offer rich lifelong learning experiences to all within CBJ and the greater community through programs informed by Jewish values and presented in an atmosphere of fairness, balance, and respect.

Does a Golem Count in a Minyan?

(And Other 21st Century Implications of an Ancient Legend)

Adult Education with Rabbi Sultar

"Who can say he knows anything about the Golem? ...Always they treat it as a legend, till somethings happens and turns it into actuality again. After which it's talked of for many a day."

- Gustav Meyrink, in his 1915 novel *The Golem*

The golem – an artificial person created by mystical and magical means – has taken many different forms throughout Jewish history. In the coming year, we'll explore together the earliest recorded citings/sightings of the golem, and how the legend(s) evolved right up into the 20th century. We'll consider how the golem has served as an ever-changing metaphor for the most pressing issues of each generation. And because the Rabbis of old *believed* the golem existed – whether it actually did or not – they asked halachic/Jewish legal questions that now provide us with a Jewish perspective on today's and tomorrow's headlines, as we stand on the verge of possibly creating the first-ever actual golems in the history of the world.

Sundays at 10:00 – 11:00 AM

In-Person in the CBJ Library (and via Zoom)

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 6. March 10: | Starring & Supporting Roles – The Golem in Movies, TV Shows & Novels |
| 7. April 14: | Building Golems Today, Part 1 – Getting Real about 'Artificial Persons' |
| 8. May 5: | Building Golems Today, Part 2 – Getting Real about Artificial Intelligence |