Hakol

The Voice of Congregation B'nai Jacob

Congregation B'nai Jacob of Phoenixville, PA

Tishri- Cheshvan 5784

October 2023

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

Service Times will be contained in the weekly announcements

Candle Lighting

October 6– Shabbat/	
Shemini Atzeret	6:19pm
October 7– Simchat Torah	7:15pm
October 13	6:08pm
October 20	5:57pm
October 27	5:48pm

Events	
Dine and Donate-October 3	See p. 10
Community Shabbat– Oct 13	See p. 11
Food Distribution– October 15	See p. 12
Adult Education October 22	See p. 13
NYC Bus Trip- October 29	See p. 14
CBJU Personal Finance– Oct 29	See p. 15
Wine Tasting– November 11	See p. 16





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Doug and Mia Sigafoos

Invite the Congregation to share our joy as our daughter,

Samantha Leah Sigafoos

Is called to the Torah as a
Bat Mitzvah
on Saturday, October 28th at 9:30 am.
Kiddush to follow sponsored by Theodore &
Linda Isreal.

RABBI'S MESSAGE



Dear Chaveirim/Friends:

I took the Red Line of the "T" one stop down to Harvard Square. Climbing up into daylight once again, I was surrounded by what looked like impenetrable fortresses, tall red brick walls and iron gates rising up all around, with

no way to get inside. Then I crossed the street to the Smith Campus Center, took the elevator up to the 8th floor, walked up to the desk at the Campus Service Center, gave an access code (the one magical ingredient) sent in an email the day before, had a photo taken, and then sat on a bench until a ID card appeared 10 minutes later.

With ID in hand, I left the building and found myself in a different world. The high brick walls and iron gates were the same, but now I could cross over into the other side. I climbed the broad tall steps up to the Widener Memorial Library, flashed the still-warm-off-the-press ID, and gently pushed through the turnstile.

It felt nothing less than as if I'd discovered one of the five Golden Tickets in *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*. All I had to do was show the Golden Ticket and the doors to all of the campus buildings swung wide open. Same thing at the Museum of Fine Art in downtown Boston, and other institutions around town. When I had a problem with connectivity between my computer and printer, I just called tech support, and a friendly voice said, "Sure, no problem, just let me know what your ID number is."

When I realized that I'd forgotten two books back in Pennsylvania by scholar of mysticism Gershom Scholem, with key chapters on the golem that I needed, no problem; all I had to do was submit a request to the library staff and someone copied those chapters overnight and sent the electronic files to my new university email address.

Leaving the Widener that first time, I looked down at a map showing the 14 libraries spread throughout campus – over the course of the next 4½ months I'd use the specialized libraries at Tozzer Archeology, the Frances Loeb Graduate

School of Design, Yenching East Asian, and the Divinity School.

And that's when the realization hit: throughout thousands of years of human history, privilege and power hinged on access to just such libraries. For the vast majority of people, knowledge was mysterious and inaccessible.

What a revolutionary innovation then, for Benjamin Franklin to create the first free library system, open to all. And what a world-changing paradigm shift is represented by the internet, which literally brings more information to the fingertips of anyone with access to a computer than was available to the most privileged, educated and powerful person who lived before the computer age.

Of course, information only goes so far. It's crucial to know what to do with it, how to understand it, how to put it into context, how to sift through an overload of facts (and perhaps most important, *mis*information) for what you really need. Having access to limitless information only underscores the difference between knowing a lot and being wise.

Living in an age of information overload only clarifies how essential it is not just to have information but to learn how to *use* information. How important it is to have teachers to guide you. As Joshua ben Perahiah was accustomed to saying (as quoted in *Pirkei Avot* 1:6): "Find for yourself a teacher."

Judaism can be proud of its long history of widespread literacy, embracing of asking questions, of empowering people to think for themselves. It can be proud of its recognition of the crucial role of teachers, not so much to tell us what to think but rather to help guide us toward thinking for ourselves. And it can be proud that for all of its appreciation of information and education, it strives to constantly remind us that all of that knowledge must ultimately be in the service of something higher, of morality, of holiness.

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RABBI'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

Continued from Page 2

For decades now, I've thought of adult Jewish education as "learning for life." On the surface, this means that we learn in order to know how to live better. It reminds us that we don't know everything, that there's always more to learn. It also means, on a deeper level, that the very act of learning itself is a crucial part of life.

I look forward to learning with you in the coming year. There are many opportunities: in a typical week, there are two different chances, at each *Shabbat* service. At all *Chag*/Festival services. At the beginning of Board meetings. And at monthly adult education classes.

Check out the full-page flyer in this issue of *HaKol* for details about this year's adult education offering, "Does a Golem Count in a Minyan? (And Other 21st Century Implications of an Ancient Legend)." I'll share much of what I've learned during my sabbatical, and look forward to studying texts together and hearing *your* thoughts.

My fellowship officially ended on May 31. The research continued, though, and a few days later I got a lead on a promising citation for a new aspect of the implications of the golem legend. When I had a hard time tracking down the article on the internet, it occurred to me to just sign into my University account and use the academic archive. So I went to the library website, put in my ID number and...denied. With the fellowship officially over, my Golden Ticket had been rescinded.

The learning, however, never ends. Please join me!

L'Shalom, Rabbi Jeff Sultar



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Enrich, Empower and Engage

La Shana Tovah. Welcome back to your Jewish Home – Congregation B'nai Jacob! We come to synagogue on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur so we can review the past year,

make ourselves right with the world, and have a fresh start for the new year. We think about how we could have done things better or differently; perhaps we think about things we didn't do but should have, or things we did do but should not have. We think back beyond the year, perhaps even doing a full life review. Our lives are so busy, and this is one of the few chances we have to stop, or at least slow down, and listen to what is in our hearts.

As most of you probably know, life's greatest rewards come from facing tough challenges and doing your best. It's well worth the effort.

Since this is likely the last opportunity I'll have to address the entire congregation, I want to publicly thank all of you for the opportunity you have given me, to serve as your president. I look around this room and see so many amazing, smart, talented, and wise people. I am deeply honored to serve you, and am very lucky to be working with a talented and committed Executive Committee and Board. But we are just stewards of this remarkable synagogue. The truth is that you are the heart and soul of Congregation B'nai Jacob. You are CBJ; You are CBJ and you, watching virtually at home, you are CBJ too.

It's all about you. Today, I want to talk about you along with your time and talents. My promise to you is we will continue to work to **enrich**, **empower and engage you** – our members!

For the past few years, we have stressed the themes of our Strategic Pillars - **Engage** (our next generation of members), Inspire (volunteerism and *Tzedakah*), **Plan** (CBJ's Financial Health) and **Grow** (Leadership) – to support our Mission and Vision.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

Continued from Page 3

CBJ is comprised of an incredibly diverse group of individuals. We are in every possible age bracket and in every possible family situation. Some are knowledgeable Jews who envelope our entire existence in living as a Jew while many find themselves on the opposite extreme. To some, everything we do here seems foreign. Many may not speak or understand Hebrew. Some struggle to read it, others read effortlessly. Maybe we don't always see how what we do here is relevant to us or to our lives. Some come to CBJ two times a day, others, two times a year, and others every week. That sums it up. The data tell us that all of you relate to your Judaism, in your own personal and unique way.

As synagogue leaders, we want to have a big enough tent for everyone. That's our goal. That's what we're trying to accomplish. We want everyone to feel and be comfortable here at CBJ. We want everyone to know you're important and a welcoming and valuable member of our CBJ family. The question is, how do we accomplish this objective? How do we engage, enrich and empower a Community experience that fosters connections given the diversity of our people? I hope that you can appreciate our challenge.

We often discuss the Jewish journey. In many respects, it's all about the connection, your connection to the Jewish People and your connection to a Jewish Community. Here at the synagogue, our job is to make the living Torah, alive for each one of you. It's also our job to make the wonderful CBJ Community, your Community, one where you are enriched, empowered and engaged — and inspired to resume your Jewish Journey. As you can imagine, this is a daunting, but worthy challenge.

My message to you is we have a vital and relevant *mission and vision*, for ourselves and for our broader Jewish community. There is much to learn and much to do. If you want to get back on your Jewish journey, we pledge to welcome you with open and enthusiastic arms — to enrich you, empower you and engage you. If we aren't offering what you're interested in, let us

know so we can empower you to make it happen. I'd like nothing more than to continue this dialogue with all of you – starting with our **Vision**:

-CBJ will be a thriving, active, accessible, warm, egalitarian community that is a focal point for prayer, study, connection, and social action.

-We will have a fully engaged generation of leaders that actively volunteer to support programs, create community, inspire philanthropy, and grow meaningful participation in CBJ.

-We will offer a meaningful experience that welcomes a diverse membership with options in services, learning opportunities and programs that balance innovation and tradition and inspire connections to Judaism, Jewish life, and Israel.

-Our creative outreach and membership options will attract people of all ages, abilities, types of families and individuals to intimate settings and virtual connections that are reminiscent of our roots.

-We will measure our success by our members' commitment to our community, to each other and to Judaism.

This is your synagogue and your community. There is no better way to integrate yourself into our community than by getting involved – enriched, empowered and engaged.

We have many volunteer opportunities throughout the year, and many diverse ways for you to get involved as well. Help us shape CBJ's programming and future direction. Do you have a skill for a class or program? Whether you have a lot of time to give, or just a little, we have a place in CBJ for you to thrive and use your gifts to enhance this holy community. CBJ is a dynamic place when energized with enriched, empowered and engaged people who want to make things happen. I encourage all of you to step forward to become more involved, even if you add just one more thing than you did last year.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONT.)

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Continued from Page 4

To help you get started, we know every congregation comes equipped with at least one member, an extremely important person, who is there to get things done. Everyone believes in this person and is counting on them and their name is "Someone Else." Thank G-d for Someone Else – because they will donate and volunteer. I know that Someone Else is here right now, sitting in the congregation - in person or online. You are the person who leaps into action every time there is an idea that starts with the words "Somebody Should." I am asking you to be "Someone Else." We need "you." We need your passion, your interest, your involvement, your energy, and your commitment. We need companions and community support to drive engagement, enrichment and empowerment. I challenge you to find that Jewish spark deep in your soul, to jump in, and get involved. Figure out what makes a difference in the long term and what is for the greater good. Figure out what is Jewishly meaningful to you and to your family.

Enrich, Empower and Engage – make a commitment now to CBJ – engage with others as partners who create with energy and purpose, the Community they wish to have. When we engage our voices, empower each other and have meaningful communications, we create and enrich lasting Connections.

Together we can realize our Vision and build the path to achieve our goals and support our Mission. Together, let us build a community where everyone's talents and skills are cherished, where collaboration and learning thrive, and where the potential for leadership and impact knows no bounds.

On behalf of the Trustees, the Executive Officers and the Board, may the year 5784 be a year of peace and security in Israel and the world over; a year of opportunity and blessing for CBJ and for all of us and our families, a very happy, healthy and sweet new year.

L'Shana Tovah Tikatavu, Mark J. Snow President Religious school families kicked off the new school year with an ice cream social on August 27th; more than 40 people came together to hear about school year programming and plans. We are happy to welcome back Shoshanna Moyer-Gabbert, Deb Morata, and Becca Laing as our teaching staff. In addition, Ben Shapiro and Phoebe Zavod will be classroom support. The synagogue community can look forward to a Hanukkah party, Purim carnival, and more activities throughout the year. Unfortunately, as I'm writing this, on September 10th, we had to cancel our opening day session. We look forward to a fresh start on October 15th. Pictures show ice cream social attendance.





5784/2023 FALL HOLY DAYS

CANDLE LIGHTING TIMES:

Sukkot: Second night, Saturday, September 30, after 6:46 pm

Festival ends Sunday, October 1, after 7:14 pm

Shmini Atzeret/Simchat Torah: Shemini Atzeret, Friday, October 6, 6:18 pm

Simchat Torah, Saturday, October 7, 6:34 pm Festival ends Sunday, October 8, after 7:03 pm

5784/2023 FALL HOLY DAYS SERVICE TIMES:

Sukkot Day 1/Shabbat:Saturday, September 30, 9:30 amSukkot Day 2:Sunday, October 1, 9:30 amPizza in the Hut:Sunday, October 1, during school

Erev Shemini Atzeret/Shabbat:Friday, October 6, 7:30 pmShemini Atzeret/Yizkor:Saturday, October 7, 9:30 amErev Simchat Torah:Saturday, October 7, 6:30 pmSimchat Torah:Sunday, October 8, 9:30 am

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* gete-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

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.

CBJ Social Media

Use CBJ's Social Media (Facebook, CBJ website) to announce your events, special occasions etc. Contact Seth Loux - seth@louxfamily.com and Jerry Weiss - mjjmweiss7@gmail.com for the website

and/or Lorraine Schur - LSCHUR116@gmail.com and Jerry Weiss - mjjmweiss7@gmail.com for Facebook.

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...

I 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 <u>raiseright.com</u> 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



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

SISTERHOOD



Women of Congregation B'nai Jacob: all are welcome to join Sisterhood. Be part of the backbone of CBJ! Watch for your Sisterhood membership letter and be sure to send in your membership form.

Leagrams – Our biggest fundraiser is back for the New Year. This is a great way to remember your CBJ women friends' birthdays and anniversaries. Be sure to see your recent mailing for more information.

October 4 – Seeking Succor? Have a sukkulent nosh in our sukkah. Take along your favorite fruit, vegetable, cheese, or cracker! I think I'll make sukkotash. Nosh and enjoy our first Re-gifting BINGO. Got gifts stuck in the back of that drawer? Take them along. I promise it'll be a sukkcess! Remember to RSVP – Linda Loux Linda@louxfamily.com

December 3 and 9 – Sisterhood Gift Shop sale dates, and I've had my eye on that VW Bus menorah for years! Could this be the year I treat myself to it? Splurge – for your friends or for yourself!

Hear from Women in High Places Catherine Aucella, Executive Director of the NSA, will speak to us in November.

We're Pondering some Possibilities:

- -Bowling for Yentas
- -Philadelphia Jewish walking or trolley tour
- -One or two more Re-gifting Bingo nights

It's going to be a great year for CBJ Sisterhood, and all of us look forward to seeing all of you!

SISTERHOOD CALENDAR 2023-2024

2023

October 4 Sukkah Nosh and Re-gifting Bingo November 5 Sisterhood Speaker December 3 and 9 Holiday Gift Shop Sale 9am – 1pm

2024

March 17 Tour of Jaffa (Yafo, as it is now called) March 19 Social Event

April 5 Sisterhood Shabbat, led by Jodi Rosenfeld June (TBD) Karen Real Torah Fund Luncheon

THANKS

CBJ thanks the CBJ Sisterhood for providing the wine for Kiddush

HOUSE AND GROUNDS

Help wanted...House and Grounds

The House and Grounds committee (of 1) is looking for volunteers to help from time to time.

Duties include setting up tables and chairs for High Holidays and other events, setting up and taking down the Sukkah and Hanukah Menorah, changing light bulbs and batteries in fire and burglar alarm systems and small handyman tasks.

There is also some outside clean up and maintenance, as well as needing help from time to time opening and closing the building for contractors.

Timing is generally very flexible.

If you can help, please contact Chuck Epstein at <u>CLEpstein@gmail.com</u> or 610-212-7744 (leave a message). Thank you!

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Chuck Epstein

MEET OUR MEMBERS

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

Meet Andrea Zavod by Wanda Siller for Team Engage

Andrea Zavod is a member of CBJ and the Director of CBJ's Macy B. Solomon Religious School. Although she does not have a formal background in education (her bachelor's degree is in written communications), Andrea always enjoyed teaching as a "hobby" – something she does for pleasure – and did such things as serving as a coach for swimming, basketball and softball for various entities (e.g., Upper Merion Township and Friends Select School). In 2006, upon hearing that CBJ needed a teacher, she stepped up. In 2016, after 10 years as a teacher, she was hired as the Education Director and has held that position ever since.

Our religious school may be small in size, but it is a tight-knit group of parents, students, and teachers. Andrea sees to it that the curriculum and programming is constantly evaluated and updated to provide a solid educational experience for our students. Although there is no longer a Hebrew High School at CBJ, some of the school's graduates stay involved by volunteering and assisting with the students. The school's small size also allowed for flexibility, for example when dealing with the COVID pandemic all the students were able to continue learning during that time. She is supported in her work by Jennifer Ford-Bey, who chairs CBJ's Education Committee and assists in organizing volunteers and planning activities.

Andrea grew up in King of Prussia where her parents were co-founders of the reform synagogue, Brith Achim. When it was time for her to begin her bat mitzvah training, the family changed synagogues as the one they founded had no rabbi. Andrea had her bat mitzvah at this new shul. The knowledge she brings to her position as Director is primarily self-taught.

For her "day job," Andrea is employed by ECRI where she has worked for 28 years. The firm works with various care providers (hospitals, long-term care institutions, and physician practices). As Managing Editor, Andrea researches, writes, and edits educational materials on topics such as patient safety and risk assessment.

When she decided that she wanted to create a family, Andrea began the process of adopting a child from China. The adoption took five years to complete, but she eventually went to China to pick up her daughter, Phoebe, who was eight months old at the time. Phoebe is now 13 and joyfully celebrated her bat mitzvah at CBJ last year. As a single mother by choice, Andrea has support from her mother, Diane, who still lives close by in King of Prussia and is also a member of CBJ. Diane often participates in our Sisterhood activities and adult education opportunities.

When asked the existential question of her favorite Jewish food, Andrea said she loves potato knishes. While she has made them, this busy lady prefers to buy them these days to save time.

Andrea commented that she is well able to balance her day job, her position at CBJ, and childcare for her daughter, and a social life with friends because she feels fulfilled by these things that she does. We, at CBJ, salute her and appreciate all her efforts and the fact that she is able to do it all with equanimity!

IN OUR COMMUNITY

Livestream All Services

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

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

Welcome to our New CBJ Members!

Michael and Rachel Kane and children, Teddy, Adin & Drew from Schwenksville

Michael and Janice Wagman (welcome back) from Schwenksville



CBJ COVID POLICY

UPDATED

Covid vaccination and up-to-date booster status is strongly encouraged for all who are eligible.

NOTE: Covid vaccination is no longer required.

Masking is encouraged, especially for those who are unvaccinated or otherwise high risk. CBJ is a mask friendly community, and everyone who chooses to should feel comfortable masking.

NOTE: Masking is not required.

If you have an illness (e.g., fever, cough, flu-like symptoms, sore throat, etc.), then please stay home.

Food and drink are allowed (as per pre-Covid CBJ policy).

Live streaming will continue.

CBJ at the Fightin Philies

On Sunday, August 20th approximately 40 CBJ members and their friends enjoyed a sunny day at the Reading Fightin Phils at FirstEnergy Stadium in Reading, PA. Folks of all ages had a chance to mingle in a relaxed setting between home plate and 3rd base. This fun and engaging event also doubled as an opportunity to raise approx. \$500.00 for CBJ. Based on the very positive feedback, look for the 2nd Annual CBJ at the Fightin Philies in the summer of 2024. - Jerry Weiss



COMMUNITY SHABBAT IS COMING!



Friday, October 13th 6:30 pm

Community Shabbat:

Please Join us for at 6:30 pm for Pot Luck Dinner Followed by a 7:30 pm Family-friendly Service

