



Shir Notes

The Official Newsletter of Congregation Shir Ami Volume 23, Number 5,
May 2025. Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

Jenn Dollins is our Office Manager. Her email is shirami6353@gmail.com. Office phone: **(818) 818-6094**.

Events of the Month

Shabbat services at de Toledo and via Zoom and Livestream

Saturday, May 10 - 10:30 am

Birthday Shabbat

Saturday, May 24 - 10:30 am

Anniversary Shabbat

Around the Rabbi's Tisch via Zoom

Thursdays, May 1 and 8, 7:30 pm

See flyer for more information.

Shabbat Torah Study

Saturday, May 17, 10:30 am
at the Schroeders' and Zoom

Stan Schroeder leads our monthly study and discussion session. See flyer for more information.



Yom Ha'atzmaut
Israel's Independence Day
Thursday, May 1



Sunday
May 11



Friday, May 16 (starts Thursday night)
33rd day of the counting of the omer

Visit our website:
www.shirami.com

Rabbi's Column



Mother's Day, celebrated this month, is a time to honor and reflect on the immeasurable contributions of mothers in our lives. It is a day filled with gratitude, love, and recognition of the nurturing, strength, and dedication that mothers provide. For Jewish families, this celebration aligns deeply with traditional values, as the role of the mother is both spiritually and culturally significant. Whether preparing meals, offering comfort, or passing down family traditions, mothers are at the heart of the home — the *akeret habayit* — shaping not only their households but also the moral and spiritual character of the next generation.

In Jewish history, mothers have played pivotal roles in shaping the destiny of the Jewish people. From Sarah, who helped establish the covenantal family, to Miriam, whose bravery ensured Moses' survival and the Exodus, Jewish women have often served as protectors, leaders, and visionaries. Even in times of exile and adversity, Jewish mothers sustained communities by keeping traditions alive, teaching Torah values to their children, and nurturing a sense of identity. Their strength and resilience helped maintain Jewish continuity through centuries of change and challenge.

Jewish law also places immense value on the mother's role. In Halacha (Jewish law), Jewish identity is traditionally passed down through the mother, emphasizing her foundational role in shaping not only the body but also the soul of the next generation. The Torah repeatedly commands honor and reverence for one's parents, with the Talmud expanding on the particular sacrifices mothers make and the respect they are due. On Mother's Day, we can embrace this sacred tradition of honoring mothers — recognizing that their presence and guidance are not only a personal blessing, but also a vital thread in the fabric of Jewish life and continuity.

Happy Mother's Day!

Rabbi David Vorspan

World Zionist Congress
Deadline for Voting: May 4
Vote for Mercaz slate (17)
Mercaz represents Conservative Judaism.



Go to www.azm.org to vote.
\$5 to vote with credit card.



Yom Yerushalayim
Monday, May 26

Memorial Day
Monday, May 26



President's Report

Welcome to May. Only four more Shabbat services before our summer vacation, so get 'em before it gets hot.



Of course, there is always the **Shabbat Torah Study Session** led by our Ritual Vice-President, **Stan Schroeder**.

May also brings us **Mother's Day** and, in response, we bring \$10 Target Gift Cards for the mothers in the shelters. Please contact our Social Vice-President, **Becky Finlay**, for further details. Our Shir Ami family has always been supportive of this program and there is no reason to slack off now.

As the weather starts to warm up, we suggest everyone spend May getting in shape for our **Walk Around the Nachenbergs' Home** in June to support research and treatment of Parkinson's. We look forward to seeing you there.

As always, if you have any questions or want to provide your input, please feel free to email me at JDPistol@aol.com.

Shalom, **Jordan Pistol**, President



Walk Around the Nachenbergs'

by Leon Nachenberg

Each year our Social Action committee sponsors a fund-raising event to support some worthwhile charity. This year, the proceeds of the event will be donated to the **Michael J. Fox Foundation**. The Fox Foundation funds research for finding a cure for Parkinson's Disease. As we all get older, many of us sadly know a friend or relative who has or has been diagnosed with, Parkinson's disease.

Our event commencing at the Nachenbergs' home will be at **10 am on Sunday, June 8th**. We ask you to please try to arrive by 9:45am so our invited speakers can start on time. We will hear comments from our President, our Rabbi, a thriving Parkinson's diseased friend of the Schroeders, and a representative from the Fox foundation. The Fox Foundation speaker will be sharing with us the research and progress being made in finding a cure for this disease made possible by funding from individuals and organizations like ours.

Our event in the past has been called the "Walk Around Lake Balboa". The Social Action committee recently met to discuss this year's charity event and decided it was time to come up with a different venue to hold our event.

We considered several alternatives but did not like any of them.

That is when Andrea and I offered to use our home and back yard for this year's fund raiser. We live in a relatively nice neighborhood and we would replace the walk around Lake Balboa with a walk around the Nachenberg's neighborhood. The walk would be scheduled for about a half hour, and we would start by walking by a unique set of gardens, maintained by a small group of ladies, on a public median that divides Superior Street. We will share a fun story how this group of ladies started their "public" gardens. And I will share with you how I get some credit for the establishment of these gardens.

The walk will continue through a few more streets that contain large homes with beautiful landscapes. One home we will see seems to span across the width of two large lots. If the walk gets to be too much effort for some of you, you can peel off any time and return to our home easily.

Speaking of landscapes and gardens, I love to garden and get special pleasure out of propagating my own plants that you will see in my garden. If you like to garden too, and you donate \$25 or more to the Fox foundation, you can pick from one of the many succulents, bulbs (amaryllis) or flowering plants that I have and I like to share.

If you are not up for a walk, you can participate in our alternate mitzvah project which is writing thank-you letters to men and women who serve in our military. Or, if you would just like to sit and kibbitz with other members of our temple, that would be nice too.

When the walkers return from their walk, we will have a pot-luck lunch. If you would like to contribute one of your favorite dishes to the pot-luck selection, please call **Andrea** (818-885-6736) and let her know what you are going to bring so we can try to coordinate getting a variety of items. A vegetable lasagna will be provided as a main course for the lunch. Please fill out the attached flyer sign-up sheet and mail it, with your donation, to Shir Ami.

If you have any questions regarding this event, please call **Becky** (747-998-3804) or **Leon** (818-885-6736) or email at becky21922@outlook.com

Leon and Andrea Nachenberg
19533 Citronia St., Northridge
(Just a few blocks north of the Northridge Mall)





DONATIONS

Congregation Shir Ami wishes to acknowledge the following donations:

Yahrzeits

Judy Eisikowitz for Elsie Eisikowitz

Other

Phyllis and Stan Schroeder for sale of Hametz
Paula and Lou Loomis for sale of Hametz

Social Action Committee



We are collecting **\$10 Target gift cards** to the families in the Jewish Family Services **domestic violence shelters** for Mother's Day. This has been one of our Committee projects for many years. The mothers greatly appreciate your generosity. Either mail cards to

Rebecca Finlay, 17603 Miranda St., Encino CA 91335

or give them to a Committee member.

See **Leon Nachenberg's** article on page 2 and the flyer for our **Walk Around the Nachenbergs' Neighborhood Sunday**, June 8.

We thank our community for the support of our Mitzvah projects. We are the **Little Temple that does**.

Becky Finlay

Social Action Committee Vice President

Our Condolences

We regret to inform the congregational family of the passing of: our member **King Finlay**, father. of member **Gary Finlay**. May God comfort **Gary** and **Becky** during this time of their bereavement.



Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Debra Geffen..... 5/12
Linda Tapper..... 5/19
Jerry Kovar..... 5/21
Gladys Sturman..... 5/30

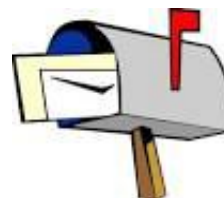
Anniversaries

Pat and Jerry Michaelson..... 5/15 37th

Change of address

Claire Silverman

17730 Lassen St. #330
Northridge, CA 91324



Change of email

Rebecca (Becky) Finlay

becky21922@outlook.com

Congregational News

Get well wishes **rafuah schleimah** to:

Phyllis Schroeder
Sheilah Hart
Richard Kirshbaum



May they be blessed with a complete recovery in body and spirit.

Congregation Shir Ami Tribute Cards

Our **Tribute Card Coordinator** will send your cards celebrating *simchas* and conveying your get-well and condolence messages.

Call **Helga Unkeless** at **(818) 340-5751** or (preferably). email **Helgaunkeless@yahoo.com**

Minimum donation of \$5 per card is appreciated.



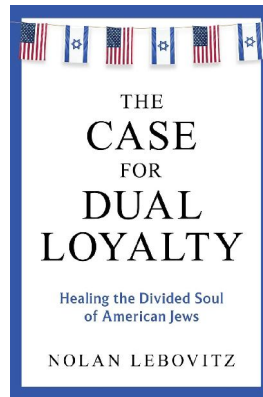
That was Elijah. He's stuck on the 405.

VBS Rabbi Nolan Lebovitz to Speak to Shir Ami (via Zoom) on June 6, 7:30 pm

by Stan Schroeder

I am pleased to announce that I have arranged for **Rabbi Nolan Lebovitz** to speak about his new book ***The Case for Dual Loyalty*** and his views of American and Israeli Jews in today's world during one of our Thursday *tisch* sessions on June.6

This is from the Amazon website:



The Case for Dual Loyalty: Healing the Divided Soul of American Jews (Paperback)

by [Nolan Lebovitz](#) (Author)

It is high time for Jews to set aside their age-old qualms about the charge of dual loyalty and proudly embrace their commitment to both America and the Jewish homeland.

"Written with passion and grace, *The Case for Dual Loyalty* deserves a space on the short shelf of indispensable books on contemporary American Jewry."—**Yossi Klein Halevi**, Senior Fellow, Shalom Hartman Institute, Jerusalem

"Anyone whose Judaism was startled awake on the morning of October 7, 2023, would do well to grapple with Rabbi Lebovitz's call to radically rethink the ways in which our commitment to living Jewishly informs and deepens our love for America, and vice versa."
— **Liel Leibovitz**, Editor at Large, *Tablet Magazine*

"At this critical moment in history – and Jewish history – how lucky we are to have Rabbi Nolan Lebovitz's courageous, unapologetic, cry for American Jews to develop a "proud dual loyalty." He justifies this timely, compelling call by taking us on a fascinating, learned journey into Jewish history, American values, and Zionist thought."

— **Gil Troy**, author of *To Resist the Academic Intifada: Letters to My Students on Defending the Zionist Dream*

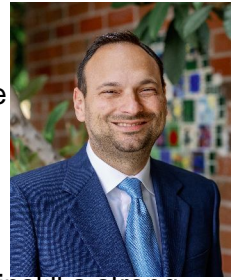
From the Valley Beth Shalom website:



VALLEY BETH SHALOM

Rabbi Nolan Lebovitz, PhD, has ushered in a period of robust energy and membership growth during his tenure at Valley Beth Shalom. He continues the proud tradition of rabbinic excellence established in this community by previous senior rabbis, **Rabbi Harold Schulweis** and **Rabbi Ed Feinstein**.

Teacher, speaker, writer, and filmmaker, Rabbi Lebovitz conveys the significance of the Jewish tradition in every form, especially through personal coffee meetings.



Shaped by a proud Zionist upbringing, he has endeavored to instill a strong relationship with Israel in all of his congregants. He enjoys leading and participating in synagogue missions to Israel. The horrific massacre of October 7 and its aftermath around the world prompted Lebovitz to begin speaking out about the next chapter of Jewish life. His first book, *The Case for Dual Loyalty: Healing the Divided Soul of American Jews*, was published by Wicked Son in January 2025. The book challenges the oldest taboo in the long history of the Jewish diaspora. It argues that proudly declaring Jewish loyalty forges a new path forward imbued with pride of peoplehood and collective destiny. "Dual loyalty" is not just about supporting Israel — as so many synagogues already proudly wave the flag of the Jewish state — it's about loyalty to Jewish peoplehood as a foundational principle of our identity, no less than our loyalty to America. In addition, he is a regular contributor to *The Jewish Journal* and *The Jerusalem Post*.

In 2024, Rabbi Lebovitz accepted a position as an adjunct fellow at the Z3 Institute, which is part of the Palo Alto-based Z3 Project that is helping develop the next stage of Jewish life. Earlier that same year, he received his doctorate degree from Claremont Graduate University's Department of Religion, focusing his study on the Hebrew Bible. A recipient of the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship, Rabbi Lebovitz spent time studying at Bar Ilan University in Israel furthering his research on the Book of Esther and the period of the Second Temple. He enjoys teaching the sacred texts of our tradition, incorporating new pop culture that always includes many, many movie references.

Currently, Rabbi Lebovitz sits on the Executive Board of the Zionist Rabbinic Coalition. He also serves as a national board member of MERCAZ. In 2015, he was seated as a delegate at the World Zionist Conference in Jerusalem. He volunteers as the Rabbi in Residence for Café Europa, a Los Angeles Community of Shoah Survivors. For many years, he also volunteered as a chaplain for the Santa Monica Police Department.

Mother's Day - My Yiddishe Momme

by Stan Schroeder

The Jewish religion and tradition honor mothers in many ways. The fifth commandment from Exodus 20:12 requires us to honor our father and mother that our days may be long upon the land that God gave us. We have four biblical matriarchs: **Sarah** (wife of Abraham, mother of Isaac), **Rebecca** (wife of Isaac, mother of Jacob and Esau), **Rachel** (wife of Jacob, mother of Joseph and Benjamin), and **Leah** (wife of Jacob, mother of Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, and Dinah). Apparently the mothers of Jacob's other four sons, **Zilpah** and **Bilhah**, handmaidens of Rachel and Leah, are not considered matriarchs. Other prominent biblical mothers include **Hannah**, **Bathsheba**, **Naomi**, and **Ruth**.

However, the most well known Jewish mother, your mother and mine, every Jewish person's mother, although created for **Sophie Tucker**, is **My Yiddishe Momme**. **Jack Yellen** and **Lou Pollack** wrote this iconic song for Sophie in 1925 following the death of her mother. Sophie was already a U.S. and European renowned singer. After her mother's death, she was so depressed she stopped performing. This sentimental ballad was seen both as a song of grief as well as the triumph of her immigrant, but courageous and powerful mother.



Here are a few excerpts about Sophie and her classic signature song.

The song was mostly played in large American cities where there were sizable Jewish audiences. Tucker explained, "Even though I loved the song and it was a sensational hit every time I sang it, I was always careful to use it only when I knew the majority of the house would understand Yiddish. However, you didn't have to be a Jew to be moved by *My Yiddishe Momme*. 'Mother' in any language means the same thing."

Tucker never forgot her Jewishness, even as she performed for broader, gentile audiences. On her 1922 tour of England, Tucker was welcomed by a London audience with a sign reading "welcome Sophie Tucker, America's Foremost Jewish Actress." Tucker noted, "I was prouder of that than of anything."

During the tour, she got to know many Jewish actors in London, and took pleasure, at a Palladium benefit for the Lying-in Hospital, in singing *Bluebird, Where Are You*, in her words, "as a *hazan* would." Tucker was immensely popular in England, amusing eager crowds with songs like *When They Start to Ration My Passion*, *It's Gonna Be Tough on Me*, and *I'm The Last of the Red-Hot Mamas*.

Hanan Swaffer of London's *Daily Express* described her as "a big fat blond genius, with a dynamic personality and amazing vitality." Tucker's reminiscences of several tours provide unique insights into pre- and postwar European culture.

Tucker described the terrible tension of playing for a 1932 French audience that included many Jews. Throughout her performance, they sent notes and called out requests for her to sing *My Yiddishe Momme*. She was wary but finally decided to sing the song, feeling that its emotion would touch everyone.

Tucker then began the song in English to a fairly receptive house. However, when she reached verse two, which is in Yiddish, anti-Semites began to boo and other audience members responded with shouts, begging for quiet. Tucker remembered, "The noise was so great I couldn't hear my own voice, nor could I hear **Teddy** [Shapiro, her accompanist and manager] at the piano. I thought: in a minute there'll be a riot. Quick as a flash I turned to Teddy and said 'Switch!' Before the audience knew what the hell was happening I was singing *Happy Days Are Here Again*. My God, I only hoped they were!"

By contrast, the song was generally well received in Vienna. Tucker was recognized at a record store and asked to sing *My Yiddishe Momme* to an audience that seemed hungry for the images the song evokes. She reflected, "It is a commentary on Berlin in 1931 that... it was *My Yiddishe Momme* that the Berlin Broadcasting Company asked for!"

Several years after Hitler came into power, Tucker's recordings of *My Yiddishe Momme* were ordered smashed and the sale of them banned by the Reich. The song had the power to evoke a reverence for Jewish culture and a cultural memory of more peaceful times and was thus threatening to Hitler's regime. Shortly after the war broke out, Tucker talked with actor **Elizabeth Bergner**, a German in London exile, who informed Tucker, "There isn't one of us in Germany who hasn't this record of yours."

Tucker was known for her reverence of the Hebrew principle of *zedaka*, charity and acts of good will toward others. In 1945, she established the **Sophie Tucker Foundation**, donating time, energy, and resources to an ecumenical assortment of causes. Tucker's financial independence was important to her and as a philanthropist she included personal, as well as, institutional contributions to actor's guilds, Jewish and Zionist causes, synagogues, and hospitals.

In 1959, on the first of several trips to Israel, Tucker dedicated the **Sophie Tucker Youth Center** at Beit Shemesh in the Judean Hills, and later the nearby **Sophie Tucker Forest**. She sponsored another youth center at Kibbutz Be'eri near Gaza.

0.2 % by Lou Loomis

Jews are only 0.2% of the world's population, but the impact of Jewish culture is massively greater than the numbers would suggest. Many of us are aware of the Jews in the arts and sciences, and that despite our small numbers, we are highly visible and influential. So, it would seem ironic that so much antisemitism implies that Jews are far more numerous than just 0.2%. Furthermore, the antisemitism is not just mere jealousy, but something deeper and far more menacing.

I wonder if so much of today's hatred would be directed to Jews if we weren't so successful? I've even heard that Jews would be hated less, and even loved, if we would just fail more often!!! Our history proves that no matter how successful (or not), Jews always seem to be targeted by the haters. In my opinion, the only antidote to antisemitism is for us to strengthen our unity and take pride in our accomplishments. We will be targeted anyway, but united, Jews can prevail, both in Israel and elsewhere.

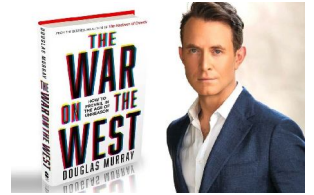
Jews dominate not just in the cultural and scientific arenas, but also in today's popular media. It is with great curiosity that I notice how antisemitic these sources have become, most especially since October 7th. Yes, much antisemitism has surfaced since that heinous event occurred, but it was always there, mostly invisible, but just beneath the surface.

I want to direct the *Shir Notes* readers to a small sampling of some brilliant, insightful, and mostly centrist writers who can help illuminate what we have become today, and what we can do about the seemingly endless hatred now present since that fateful October date. And I want to add that with these writers you may find that the hatred is not endless but mostly loud; yes ominous, and very frightening, **unless we stay united.**

One additional thought I'd like to point out. While most of these writers are politically centrist (as am I), their columns often appear in the more conservative journals or web sites. It is their ideas and take on current events that I find interesting and illuminating. Further, we can all disagree on ideas, but in order to discuss or debate ideas, we need to understand each other. These writers' opinions are a good starting point to try to grasp today's events.



I want to start with a **British** non-Jewish journalist, **Douglas Murray**, who is one of the most thorough reporters documenting the issues of the



Middle East, and most particularly the wars between Israel and the Palestinians. As a non-Jew, Douglas Murray has been allowed to visit and report in Arab-Palestinian areas formerly closed to Jewish and American writers. He was also on the scene in Gaza immediately following October 7. He has published several books and is in my opinion one of today's finest writers regarding Israel's perseverance in the face of so many near-holocausts. Murray has an online presence on X (formerly known as Twitter) as well as regular columns in the British press.

Mr. Murray is a bold defender of Israel, and has most famously publicly debated several high profile anti-Israel (and antisemitic) scholars and celebrities. His stand on Israel is a "master class" of debate and refutation of Jew-hatred.

Melanie Phillips

Ms. Phillips is a rarity: a Jewish columnist for the London Guardian, New Statesman, London Times, the BBC, and now the Jerusalem Post. Over the years, as she has admitted, her political positions have moved from Liberal/socialist to centrist and Tory. Her middle east commentaries have also made her a target for antisemites throughout the English-speaking world. She is a regular contributor on X. Along with Douglas Murray, the two offer intelligent commentaries that clearly explain the whats and whys of the conflict.

(I also want to point out that X does not have to be a wild west of political opinions or name-calling. Following these writers I have mentioned will easily scratch your itch for calm, well-informed information.)

American Journalists

David Brooks writes a regular column for the New York Times. He represents a liberal/centrist commentary on the latest events both in Israel and Jewish America. His writings are balanced and informative. His takes on the issues of the middle east are also valuable for one to grasp the inside workings of the meat grinder of politics that most of us chose to ignore. Also a presence on X.

Bari Weiss

A former *New York Times* columnist, her history as a writer will someday make a great book. She walked away from her coveted position as a *Times* columnist because she refused to tote the editorial line set by the paper. She is famous for her defense of Israel and free speech. (continued on page 8)



The May Yom Holidays 5785

by Stan Schroeder

Yom Ha'atzmaut (Independence Day, May 1 this year). At April 30 (when three stars are visible in the sky) following *Yom Hazikaron*, the mood changes from solemn to joyous as Israelis celebrate their anniversary of independence. The journey we have followed: from slavery to redemption, from the ovens of the *Shoah* with the murder of six million Jews to the ultimate sacrifice of Israel's brave men and women in gaining a State and preserving it, to the celebration of the only Jewish State in the world.



And it is in our lifetime that we can see these events in context. So as we tell the story around our seder tables, we appreciate what we have, because the freedom from slavery in Egypt has led inevitably to the freedom we enjoy in America. And on *Yom Hashoah* as we remembered our people murdered in Europe, and recognize their suffering brought the attention of the world to our plight. And the opportunity to have a Jewish State was created. On *Yom Hazikaron* let us pause to recognize the terrible price already paid, and Israel's men and women are continuing to pay, so that a Jewish State guarantees us a safe home if we need it. And finally on *Yom Ha'atzma'ut* let us celebrate Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, and their achievements of which we can all be proud.

Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day, May 26 this year) The liberation of Jerusalem in 1967 marked the first time in thousands of years that the entire city of Jerusalem, the holiest city in Judaism, was under Jewish sovereignty. The destruction of Jerusalem was a watershed event in Jewish history that began thousands of years of mourning for Jerusalem, so, it follows, that the reunification of Jerusalem should be a joyous celebration that begins the process of reversing thousands of years of destruction and exile. Jerusalem is central to the Jewish tradition. Jews face in the direction of Jerusalem and all of the prayer services are filled with references to Jerusalem.



The observance of *Yom Yerushalayim* outside of the city cannot compare to its celebration in reunited Jerusalem. There, thousands of people march around the city and walk through the liberated Old City, where Jews were denied access from 1948 to 1967 while it was under Jordanian control. The march ends at the *Kotel* (Western Wall), one of the ancient retaining walls surrounding the Temple Mount, Judaism's holiest site. Once everyone gets to the Kotel, there are speeches and concerts and celebratory dancing.

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Rare in the Jewish liturgy, a festive Hallel is recited during the evening prayers. This practice is only done on the first night (and, outside of Israel, on the second night) of Passover and Yom Ha'atzmaut. The Chief Rabbinate of Israel declared that the holiday version of Pseuki d'Zimra and Hallel should be recited. According to the major religious Zionist halakhists (decisors of Jewish law), even those who do not recite the blessing over Hallel (psalms of praise) on Yom Ha'atzmaut should recite it on Yom Yerushalayim because the liberation and reunification over the entire city of Jerusalem is said to be of an even greater miracle than Jewish political sovereignty over part of the land of Israel.

Many religious leaders also hold that the mourning restrictions of 33 days of the omer are lifted on Yom Yerushalayim for those who observe them after Lag B'omer. In the Progressive (Reform) community in Israel, the prayerbook notes that Hallel should be recited on Yom Yerushalayim but the Masorti (Conservative) prayerbook does not. The American Conservative siddur *Sim Shalom* mentions that Hallel is recited "in some congregations" on Yom Yerushalayim. When it is celebrated in liberal Jewish communities the commemoration tends to include special programs on Jerusalem and festive celebration.

Despite the fact that the religious Zionist community in Israel holds that Yom Yerushalayim is even more important than Yom Ha'atzmaut, the non-Orthodox diaspora Jewish community generally does not observe Yom Yerushalayim. This may be because the holiday makes politically liberal Jews uncomfortable as the status of Jerusalem in the international community is debated, and the international community does not recognize the liberation and restoration of Jewish sovereignty over Jerusalem as valid.

The Israeli government decreed in 2004 that each year on Jerusalem day a national memorial ceremony would be held to commemorate and acknowledge the desires and contributions of the Ethiopian Jewish community.

We cannot underestimate the importance and value of reunifying Jerusalem in the 1967 Six Day War. Israeli control of the Old (walled) City and surrounding areas unites the land of Israel (*eretz Yisrael*) and the Jerusalem of our prayers of 2000 years. This iconic picture, taken by **David Rubinger** of three paratroopers at the Western Wall June 7, 1967, captures the essence of the moment and meaning of this historic event.



9.2 % (continued)

She writes of her last days at the Times as she received death threats from antisemites and other fascists. She self-identifies as a "liberal Jewish lesbian defender of Jews and Israel." [-she is a real pistol-]. She has a regular column in the Wall Street Journal and X, as well as her own publication The Free Press.

Always interesting, often witty, Ms. Weiss is a "force to be reckoned with."

Gil Troy

Professor Troy (McGill University) is a presidential historian, author and a columnist for the Jerusalem Post, and the on-line Daily Beast. Of course, he too has a regular column on X. He is well-known in Zionist circles and has a brilliant mind regarding international affairs, especially those concerning Israel.

Hillel Fuld

New to the scene is Hillel Fuld. I found him on X right after the October 7 massacre. His audience on X has grown to enormous proportions to the point that now he is quoted by many authors and intellectuals regarding mid-east and Israeli issues. He has dual citizenship with Israel and the US. Mr. Fuld is a writer/reporter who also works in the Israel high tech industry. His war reports on the daily events on the ground are as up-to-date as any news reports from the IDF or any other news sources.

As you can see, none of the names I have mentioned write for media that charge. How they manage their finances is beyond me, but to stay well-informed you don't have to have a paid subscription, just a healthy curiosity and maybe some stamina to keep reading.

And for those of you who do not have internet access, either by choice or by finances, keep reading the Shir Notes. Both **Rabbi Vorspan** and Shir Notes Editor **Stan Schroeder** will keep you well-informed.

Extra! Extra! Sylvia Hockmeyer turns 100!

by **Judy Eisikowitz**

Long-time Shir Ami member **Sylvia Hockmeyer** turned 100 on April 5th. Mazal Tov, Sylvia!

When I spoke to Sylvia earlier this week, she told me that she celebrated her milestone birthday by being the happy recipient of "a lot of special birthday balloons and many lovely cards." Sylvia sounds strong and vigorous on the phone and tells me that she still gets out to run errands and take care of business with the "help of a younger friend" - our very own **Helga Unkeless**, who is no slouch herself at 94 years of age! You should both live and be well for a long time to come!

and by **Helga Unkeless**

Our amazing **Tibby** who unbelievably just turned 100 years old. I pick her up about twice every week to take her to her doctor, grocery shopping, the drugstore, and then we have lunch together.

You can guess how many years she has not been driving, BUT, she sits beside me and reminds me - turn R at the next corner, then straight for 2 blocks get in the L lane and turn L. Amazing recall! In the market she takes a shopping cart and does all her own shopping and checks herself out by the cashier. I have never had to help her figure out her credit card or cash. At the restaurant she reads the menu, orders her lunch and pays for it.

I know her from Beth Kodesh, but our friendship bloomed here.



Editor's note: Thanks to Judy and Helga for calling this to my attention and providing the information and the picture. Stan Schroeder

TREE OF LIFE

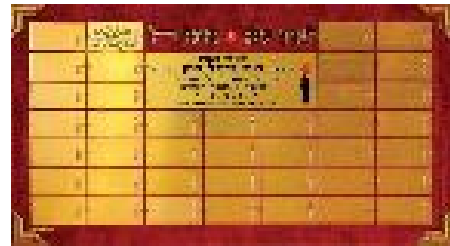


This beautiful Tree of Life, with leaves priced at \$100 and rocks at \$250 (one remaining), makes a perfect way to celebrate family occasions and support Congregation Shir Ami.

The Tree is on a rosewood background and consists of gold-colored leaves and rocks. It is displayed at all Congregation Shir Ami services and events.

For more information or to place an order, call Helga Unkeless at (818) 340-5751.

Congregation Shir Ami Memorial Board



If you would like to honor the memory of your loved ones by dedicating plaques on our new Memorial Board, please call Helga Unkeless at (818) 340-5751 so she may mail you an order form. The cost of each plaque is \$36.

Each plaque may contain up to three lines of engraving: English name, Hebrew name, and the years of birth and death. Both of our Memorial Boards are displayed at all our services.

TWO HOLIDAYS – ONE ISRAEL

by Stan Schroeder

Many have fought, too many have died;
We commemorate their sacrifice with pride.
That we are here proves they've not died in vain -
And we must share their sorrow and pain.

It is up to us on *Yom Hazikaron*
To remember that we are not alone.
The legacy of the fallen in war after war
Is carried by Jews from every shore.

This day of remembrance and sorrow
Is followed each year by a glorious tomorrow.
The day we proclaim a Jewish State
Where our people know freedom instead of hate.

A State where our values to our children are
passed,
And they can be sure their children won't be
gassed.

On *Yom Haatzmaut* all our voices must cry:
The people of Israel live, *Am Yisrael Chai* !!!



Now we celebrate sixty years
Of hard fought victories and many tears.
Six decades of our people on our land
Working to sustain the place where we stand.

Six decades a source of inspiration,
Young and old, our Jewish nation.
Let us all pray from our heart
That sixty years is only a start!

Started in Israel during the March of the Living
Yom Ha'atznaut May 2, 2006 4 Iyar 5766

Concluded in Israel with Hadassah 60th
Anniversary Mission
Yom Ha'atzmaut May 8, 2008 3 Iyar 5768

Shop at Ralphs - Earn Money for Shir Ami

Here is an easy way to earn money for our Temple. We

are now officially a **Ralphs' community agency**. All you have to do is follow these simple instructions to help earn money for Congregation Shir Ami.



1. If you don't have a Ralphs' rewards card already, go to the store or go to website **www.ralphs.com** and select **Order a Ralphs reward card**.
2. Once you have your card, go to the website: **www.ralphs.com** and select **Create an account**
3. If you have an account, your email address is your account ID. If you forgot your password, select **Forgot your password?** and you will receive an email with instructions to reset it. Follow the instructions to enter your email address and create a new password.
4. If you already have a Ralphs' reward card and an account, you will see Account Summary when you login. You can change to our Temple by clicking on **Edit** within **Community Rewards**.

You can do a search for Congregation Shir Ami by putting in the number **92785**. Our congregation will pop up and click on the button next to the name. Click on the button that saves the changes.

5. You should also check the bottom of your receipt when you shop. It should say "**At your request, Ralph's is donating to CONGREGATION SHIR AMI**".
6. Start Shopping!

Make sure that the clerk swipes your card each time you shop. Verify that your receipt shows a contribution to Congregation Shir Ami at the bottom.

Important Note: All participants must confirm their selection annually starting in September. On or after September 1, sign into your account and reconfirm Community Rewards selection.

Congregation Shir Ami
P.O. Box 6353
Woodland Hills, CA 91365

Let's go for a walk around the Nachenberg's neighborhood (or Northridge Mall if it is too hot)

Join Congregation Shir Ami's Social Action Committee
Sunday, June 8th at 10:00 am.

**All Proceeds go to Michael J. Fox
Foundation for Parkinson's Research
A speaker from the Foundation and a
thriving Parkinson's diseased man will speak.**

Minimum donation: \$10 per person, NO

MAXIMUM! Following the walk, a

brunch will be served by our Social Action Committee at the Nachenbergs'. A vegetable lasagna main dish will be provided by the Committee. Please bring a vegetarian salad, side dish, or dessert to share,. Call **Andrea Nachenberg** at (818) 885-6736 to let her know what you are bringing. And remember to wear your Mitzvah Patrol shirt.

Also please bring non-perishable and non-breakable food for SOVA.

Andrea & Leon Nachenberg
19533 Citronia St.
Northridge, CA 91324



Sit-down activities are available for those who don't walk. Call **Leon Nachenberg** at (818) 885-6736 or **Becky Finlay** at (747) 998-3804. Sign up by returning this tear-off with your check for \$10 (or more) per person to Congregation Shir Ami, P.O. Box 6353, Woodland Hills, CA 91365. Make check payable to **Congregation Shir Ami**.

Total Donation \$ _____

Walker Names: Brunch (y/n)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Donation Amount: \$10 [☐] \$18 [☐] \$36 [☐]

\$72 [☐] Other [☐]

Phone no. _____

Number of participants _____

“Around the Rabbi’s Tisch” on Zoom

May 1 and 8 at 7:30 pm



This popular Shir Ami educational continues its Spring semester. Come join us for our weekly discussion of Rabbi Vorspan’s selected topics of Jewish interest.

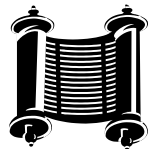
We discuss Jewish texts and current events as they relate to Jewish values and our lives as Jews. This is a unique opportunity to learn and share in an informal format.

This semester we will again hold our sessions on Zoom. The link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86440082040?pwd=bG4venRKTW9lVzhwVWVSRGgraEFJdz09>

Meeting ID: 864 4008 2040 Password: 677588

Saturday May 17, 10:30 am

Torah/Shabbat Study at Schroeder home



Stan Schroeder in his 11th season of Shabbat study sessions one Saturday morning a month at 10:30. We discuss the weekly Torah portion, the Shabbat prayers that are included in our Contemporary service, and various subjects relevant to Conservative Judaism.



The parsha includes *Achrei Mot* Leviticus 16.1 - 18.30 and *Kedoshim* Leviticus 19:1 - 20:27. We will also discuss *Lag Ba’Omer*, holiday that occurred the previous day.

This session will be at the Schroeder home, 8450 Winnetka Ave. #14. It will also be on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86440082040?pwd=bG4venRKTW9lVzhwVWVSRGgraEFJdz09>

Meeting ID: 864 4008 2040 Password: 677588

Call Stan at (818) 718-7466 or email stanpacbell@gmail.com for more information.

**Congregation Shir Ami Schedule of Shabbat Services 2025
at de Toledo High School, Zoom, and Livestream www.shirami.com**

If you want to be added to our email list, please send an email to stanpacbell@gmail.com and you will receive ongoing information.

Saturday 10:30 am unless otherwise noted

January 2025

Saturday, January 4 - Birthday, Consecration of Officers
Saturday, January 25 - Anniversary, Linen Shabbat

February 2025

Saturday, February 1 - Birthday
Saturday, February 15 - Anniversary

March 2025

Saturday, March 1 - Birthday
Saturday, March 15 - Anniversary

April 2025

Saturday, April 5 - Birthday
Saturday, April 26 - Anniversary

May 2025

Saturday, May 10 - Birthday
Saturday, May 24 - Anniversary

June 2025

Saturday, June 7 - Birthday
Saturday, June 21 - Anniversary



David Vorspan
Rabbi



Jordan Pistol
President

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86440082040?pwd=bG4venRKTW9lVzhwVWVSRGgraEFJdz09>

Meeting ID: 864 4008 2040 Password: 677588

If you would like more information about our congregation please visit our website at www.shirami.com