

Our Mission: To foster a vibrant egalitarian Jewish community, founded in the religious customs and traditions of Conservative Judaism; offering excellent Jewish education and community activities for all ages, with commitment to Israel and Jewish communities throughout the world.



CBT monthly calendar

WEEK OF:

MARCH

3/1-3/8



- 2: JFCS, 11am-12pm
- 3: Religious School
JWL
CBT Bowling, 2pm at Knob Hill
Men's Club Monthly Program, 10am
- 4: CBT Board Meeting, 8pm
- 6: Rabbi Wolkoff's Lunch & Learn, 12pm
Religious School

3/9-3/15

- 9: Shabbat Lunch & Learn
CBT Gala, 7:30pm
- 10: Religious School
Better Together
Sisterhood Program
- 11: Sisterhood Board Meeting, 8pm
- 13: Rabbi Wolkoff's Lunch & Learn, 12pm
Religious School

3/16-3/22

- 17: CBT/PJ Library Purim Celebration
Religious School
- 19: Chaverim, 12-2pm
- 20: Rabbi Wolkoff's Lunch & Learn, 12pm
Religious School
- 21: CBT EC Meeting, 8pm
- 22: CBT Shabbat Dinner, 6pm

3/23-3/31



- 23: Adult Purim Karaoke Night, 8pm
- 24: Purim Megilla Reading
Religious School
Pub Crawl, 1pm
- 25: Ritual Committee Meeting, 8pm
- 27: Rabbi Wolkoff's Lunch & Learn, 12pm
NO Religious School
- 31: Teen Mitzvah Corp.
NO Religious School

details of all our events/programs/meetings can be found on our website www.bnaitikvah.org



From Rabbi Robert L. Wolkoff

Dear Friends,

We have watched for months as the war against Hamas has painfully unfolded. To say that we have mixed emotions would be a great understatement. On the one hand, the desperate need to rescue hostages and destroy Hamas. On the other hand, the crushing death of thousands of innocents.

I have commented often about the war and the moral and political issues involved. One of our congregants, Aaron Raphael Bierstein, a young man with thoughts deep beyond his years, has responded forcefully to my comments. His voice, I feel, needs to be heard, for its own value and also because I feel Aaron's view is shared in particular by many of our young people.

What follows is our most recent exchange:

Dear Rabbi,

I have read your recent lesson "Ad-nai is a man of war" and I have some thoughts about it. The first is your philosophical claim that "If we repress the legitimacy of hatred and war, and imagine ourselves to be "above it all," such repression will create a virtual volcano of violence that can erupt uncontrollably. On the other hand, our tradition tells us that if we do recognize the potential for violence within ourselves, and the danger of it spilling over into the outside world, we can attempt to set boundaries for it."

I find this to be a rather odd assertion for several reasons. If this statement is true and not, forgive me, mere sophistry we would expect that the great humanitarians of history, the famous messengers of peace would have eventually snapped and shown themselves to be the most violent. Is there anything more absurd than imagining, for example, Martin Luther King Jr. suddenly deciding "eh, to hell with all this nonviolent talk, let's go shoot some pigs!"

But perhaps you don't mean this principle to apply to individuals, but only to societies. If this is the case, then where does this "potential for violence" come from? Society is made up of individuals, some bellicose and others committed to peace. Should we, as individuals then listen to those voices in our society who preach war and reject peace? Perhaps there is a dark tendency towards violence in a society, but the very idea of government is that we should be led to better ways by the best of us. The ideal is that the wisest and most just are the ones who guide the way, not those who can be overcome by violent passions.

Furthermore, it is telling to me that you justify violence, not for its utility of external outcomes, but as a necessary kind of bloodletting, the expression of violence to prevent even more violence. What a cynical view of humanity. I am sorry that you have been hurt to the point where you could reach that view. I

also reject the notion that violence can truly be contained. After all, you are familiar with the Talmudic paraphrase that "whoever saves a single life is considered to have saved the whole world". The corollary to this must be that whoever takes a single life is considered to have destroyed the whole world. And we can see plainly that this is true. I don't know how many civilians Israel will kill in its bloodletting, but I do know that the violence will not stop here. Palestinians whose loved ones were killed by Israeli bombs are already planning the next act of violence against Israel. People who would have gone their whole lives without harming anybody will now turn to guns and bombs to avenge their families. And when there is another attack on Israel, the Israeli government will go in again and kill tens of thousands of innocent people again. And on, and on, and on. Violence can't be contained. It simply spirals out of control until somebody with good cause for revenge decides not to take it.



There is a sick irony in your final line, praying for peace, as though peace were some mystical force in the universe that just shows up in its time. Peace is made, it is built, and it is maintained by the will of humans, not of gods. This is the problem with the belief that there is some all-knowing and all-powerful god who will, at a time of his choosing, reach into human hearts and create peace. Where is the agency of human beings? It is absurd to pray for peace in an article that argues for war. Don't pray for peace, go out and make it!

Finally, Rabbi, it saddens me to read your argument that this is what Judaism stands for. In your very title you proclaim to the world that yours is a god of war. If that is so then I can have nothing to do with that. If that's what Judaism is about then there is no place for Judaism with me and I reject it. You "honor" my "purity" and then explain why your religion teaches something less than pure. If that is the case, then what do I need your god and your religion for? You can stand at your pulpit and tell your congregants that they should support the slaughter of thousands of people. You won't find me within those walls. I will be out in the streets as the voice for peace that you should have been.

Aaron Bierstein

(continued on page 26)

From Cantor Bruce Rockman

I Am Filled With Gratitude



I am filled with Gratitude-

I remember listening to my dad reflect on his life as he was about to celebrate his 50th birthday. My father was concerned. I do not really know what he was thinking, I know that he was worried and I, a 19 year old, with a vast array of life experiences, assured my very vibrant father that he was in fact NOT old and with so much to look forward to celebrate-he would eventually become a grandfather and great grandfather, a blessed life in anyone's book.

Twenty years later I helped my mother prepare a surprise 70th birthday party. He was so happy, those next 20 years were really good. Everyone was there, the food was great and the simcha band that we hired thrilled my dad- of course he delighted us with a few solos, he was the life of his party!

So here we are, now I am turning 70. First of all my fifties turned out really well. My life was super charged. A few years earlier, I finally meet my bashert-my intended, my partner-my love, my bride, Stacey. Then I received the call to serve the B'nai Tikvah family, providing me the purpose driven life that I craved. Then 4 days before my 50th birthday, I received the best birthday present ever, Bashe was born then soon after Rafi completed our family, the cherry on the cake. Like my dad, I've been hyper-aware of these two milestone birthdays.

The Torah tells us that we are commanded to honor the elderly. King David said the span of our life is 70 years, given the strength, 80 years. These days, though it is only an aspiration, it is

common for our generation to live productive lives beyond this expectation. G-d willing, these years are often years of exploration and even new beginnings.

I know that I can only play on the line for Metuchen High, wearing my number 70 jersey, in my dreams. Still, I am filled with gratitude, and I am hopeful as I pray to G-d for a productive, meaningful, healthy and inspired future.



As I encourage brides and grooms under the chuppah, I am looking forward to continuing the greatest adventure of my life.

I thank you, my B'nai Tikvah family for helping me to grow alongside you, planting seeds that we pray will blossom in our shul in another seventy years.

Worship the Lord with Gladness and Gratitude.

Cantor Bruce Rockman

March 2024 - 1 Adar 5784

From President Charlie Valan

Doers, Donors, and Daveners Charlie Valan



Recently I attended a discussion involving the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) and they had an interesting way to break down the membership of all synagogues. This was the first time I ever heard the phrase Doers, Donors, and Daveners.

Doers as they defined are those individuals that more aggressively get their hands into the creativity of the synagogue itself. They aren't necessarily restricted to Board Members, but can encompass anyone who works directly towards the greater good benefiting the entire organization.

The second group they referenced is donors. The folks who fortunately have the means to commit financially to the sustainment and growth of investing behind the beauty behold in the synagogue. Membership in the synagogue itself is already a tremendous commitment, so anyone who is "just a member" is not "just a member". They are a partner. In addition, we all recognize and should always appreciate anyone that can find an extra dollar to put towards support that can be used for infrastructure, outreach, program development, etc...

Lastly, they spoke of the Daveners. Those who have embraced the elements of the Jewish religious experience and more often than not, you find these individuals at many services and prayer opportunities that are the fabric of the elements of what Judaism's connection is with our belief in perseverance and spiritual meaning.

So if each of us steps back for a moment, the first thing that comes to mind is asking yourself, "Where do I fit in this?" Some of us might fit in multiple areas, but we should always ask ourselves are we fitting at this point into any of the three? As a member, we are all donors to some degree, but being a donor is also connected to opportunities outside the traditional investment of being a member. The most insensitive thing we can ever do is judge individuals simply on donor value. All of us in any function of our lives should always make commitments based on what we can, and never have to justify it to anyone else besides ourselves. But for those that can make a difference financially, your contributions should always be positioned for the love of the greater good.

If you can't be an aggressive donor, you most certainly can be a doer. Doers are 100% needed, especially when the majority of the value of an existence of an organization like a synagogue comes from the generosity of volunteers bringing their unique skills to the forefront, again for the greater good of the entire community. Our upcoming gala which is just one night was put together by an amazing committee where the participation level of volunteers has not only been plentiful, but diverse in the tasks that needed to be put together into a single unit. The gala is one example as you can find this in not only one night, but ongoing involvement as Sisterhood, Men's Club, and USY as well as committees.

And while this may be the last of the three words discussed, the Daveners are most certainly the significant connection to what is the most unique element of a synagogue we all share. The ability to pray and do so to fulfill many religious connections. Davening alone is just that; alone and lonely. Our learning and teachings tell us we have certain obligations to have the representation needed to make it spiritually fulfilling. A Minyan needs to be 10 individuals. Why we are often pulling to gather those willing and able to commit a moment of their time as a "donation" sometimes to help others. But also the value those have towards the commitment to being a more involved davener. At B'nai Tikvah, everyone does have the freedom to embrace their path. But within that too should be a desire to help someone as they'd like the same help back.

After reading about Doers, Donors and Daveners, I ask everyone to sit back and think, "Where do I fit?" Can you be all three? That is an incredible and appreciated space you as an individual or family are occupying. But the bigger question is are you actively serving one of them? If you're not, our community benefits by everyone participating and we really want to only and always give everyone something they feel they can participate in. Never feel that there is one size fits all. Can you spare a minute, hour, day, week.....? Can you contribute a little more financially? Can you come to one more Minyan or Service?

Bottom line, we are and should always look at our community as a place where everyone should find something, someday, some time, or some role. And if you are looking at the incredible breadth of options at B'nai Tikvah and don't feel like anything is speaking to you, call me because I would love to hear so we can ensure that, 'At B'nai Tikvah..... You Can'!



Men's Club News

March 2024



Craig Cohen & Brian Berness, Co-Presidents

CBT Men's Club hosted its annual World Wide Wrap on Sunday, February 11th.

We celebrated this global wrapping event, along with other members of our congregation, both young and old, and were happy to see new faces and excitement at the event.

Join us March 3rd for *Jewish Journeys: A Global Tapestry* (Speaker: Sarah Safeer) Breakfast at 10:00am, followed by Sarah's presentation at 10:45am.

CBT Men's Club *Green Initiative* has made positive changes in just a few short months:

- Aluminum tabs are being collected to be donated to the Ronald McDonald House Charity in New Brunswick, NJ. The tab bin is 60 % filled. Let's all pull together to help families.
- Recycling materials are being separated from the trash stream.
- Organic materials are being collected from events around CBT and will be composted.

If you have any suggestions or comments about the Men's Club Green Initiatives, please reach out to Craig Cohen at (609) 651-1265.

CBT Men's Club Membership is only \$36 and you can be a part of our wonderful organization and receive all of our benefits throughout the year.

We have an exciting list of activities for the Spring. Join us and celebrate CBT Men's Club.

Men's Club



Teen Mitzvah Corp. Cooks and Composts





Cheryl Crick
President



Last month, members of Sisterhood had a great time participating in a DIY wood sign-making workshop at Board & Brush in South Brunswick. During the workshop, members built, sanded, distressed, stained, and painted their personalized projects from scratch. Sisterhood would like to thank Board & Brush for providing such a fantastic experience to its members!



What's Up With *WAM?*



WHAT'S UP WITH WAM?

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAR
03

BOWLING @ KNOB HILL
2PM

RSVP to: bnaitikvah.org/bowling

MAR
09

**ANNUAL GALA: HONORING
MARCI & MARTY ABSCHUTZ**
7PM

RSVP to: bnaitikvah.org/gala

MAR
17

PURIM PUB CRAWL
1PM

RSVP to: WAM@bnaitikvah.org

MAR
23

ADULTS ONLY PURIM KARAOKE NIGHT
8PM

RSVP to: WAM@bnaitikvah.org

QUESTIONS? WAM@bnaitikvah.org

B'nai Tikvah Bowling - March 3



B'nai Tikvah
BOWLING

NOB HILL COUNTRY LANES, 363 ROUTE 33, MANALAPAN

SUNDAY
03 MAR

02:00 PM

2 GAMES+
SHOES

\$18

LIMITED
CAPACITY

RSVP ON
 SYNAGOGUE
 WEBSITE

Purim Pub Crawl - March 17


 Come
Belong
to
Tikvah
בני
תקווה

At Congregation B'nai Tikvah...You Can!

PURIM PUB CRAWL 2024

JOIN US IN NEW BRUNSWICK FOR AN
AFTERNOON OF CAMARADERIE, FRIENDSHIP,
AND DRINKING TO CELEBRATE PURIM!

SUNDAY, MARCH 17

WE WILL MEET AT 1 PM AT FAT CACTUS CANTINA. OUR PLAN IS
TO SPEND ABOUT 30-45 MINUTES AT EACH BAR,
THEN MOVE ON TO THE NEXT ONE.

**YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN US AT
ANY POINT ON THE CRAWL.**

APPROXIMATE SCHEDULE

1:00 PM - FAT CACTUS CANTINA
 1:45 PM - TAVERN ON GEORGE
 2:30 PM - HARVEST MOON BREWERY
 3:15 PM - DESTINATION DOGS
 4:00 PM - BLACKTHORN PUB

Notes:

- No transportation is being offered by CBT, and designated drivers or ride services are strongly encouraged.
- Participants are responsible for their own purchases
- Signed waivers will be required for this event

Please let us know you're coming so we can plan appropriately.

Questions welcome.

WAM@bnaitikvah.org

CBT Gala - March 9



*Sweeter
than
Wine*
a gala event

*Honoring
Marcí and Marty Abschutz*

*Saturday, March 9, 2024
Congregation B'nai Tikvah*

Karaoke Night - Adults Only - March 23

Congregation B'nai Tikvah
proudly presents

Karaoke Night



Let's hear you sing! Our DJ has thousands of songs to choose from! State-of-the-art equipment will make you sound like a pro!

**RSVP TO
WAM@BNAITIKVAH.ORG**

**Saturday, March 23, 2024
8-11PM**

Refreshments will be served. BYOB.

Please note: this is an adults only evening.

Shabbat Dinner - March 22



Shabbat Dinner Series

Shushan Shabbat

*In honor of Purim, we will enjoy a fun & festive meal **IN COSTUME** (this part is optional) & cap off the meal with Humantashen!*



**NEW
UPDATE**

6pm Family Shabbat Service

6:30pm Dinner

7:30pm Kabbalat Shabbat Services

Friday, March 22, 2024

NEW TIME: 6:30 pm

Members: \$20/Adult

Non-Members: \$25/Adult

Children: \$10 (3-13) | Free Under 3

BNAITIKVAH.ORG/SHABBATDINNER



Save the Date!
April 19, 2024
Chametzfest!

Congregation B'nai Tikvah

1001 Finnegans Lane, North Brunswick, NJ 08902

Lesley | lesley@bnaitikvah.org | 732-297-0696

www.bnaitikvah.org

Shabbat Dinner Sponsors



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THANK YOU
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Shabbat Dinner Sponsors*

Sabbath Queen

Lauren & Andrew Cohen

Shabbat Blessings

Marci & Marty Abschutz

Gale & Marc Dillman

Meryl & Gordon Heit

Melissa & Scott Kessler

Norlyn & Dennis Kessler

Ruth Anne Koenick & Paul Herman

Adrienne & Andy Ross

Amanda & Harry Uniman

Diane & Howard Uniman

Shabbat Shalom

Jay Scheuer

New Hakol Feature!

NEW FEATURE IN HAKOL! CBT Funds

Each month, we will feature a different CBT Fund. We'll tell you about the fund and where your generous donations go to help CBT and our community.

This month, we are featuring the *Arnold (Arnie) Miller Youth Activity Fund*. By featuring our various funds, we hope to give you some insight into the tremendous difference your donations make to our CBT community, and beyond.

The Arnie Miller Youth Activities Fund is an essential part of allowing CBT to offer programs and events to our youth of all ages.

We are so grateful for this fund and appreciative of all who have made donations. This fund supports our youth, who are the future of CBT and conservative Judaism. The Arnie Miller Youth Activities Fund helps to support our PJ Library events, USY, family programs and more.

We thank you in advance for your continued contributions to the Arnie Miller Youth Activity Fund.

Sisterhood Mishloach Manot Fundraiser



Purim 2024 is coming soon - March 24th. Sisterhood is once again preparing baskets for CBT congregants.

One basket delivered to every household in the central New Jersey area.

A special card will be sent to any members who are not in the local area (please supply us with your out-of-town address below to guarantee a card,)

If you do not wish to receive a basket, let us know in advance, and we will make a donation on your behalf to a local food bank.

Included with each Mishloach Manot bag will be a card indicating who our Golden Groggers, Silver Groggers and Contributors are as well as hamantaschen and other treats*

We gratefully accept contributions to help with this project. The three levels of contributions are:

- Golden Grogger - Minimum Donation \$118.00
- Silver Grogger - Minimum Donation \$65.00
- Contributors - Minimum Donation \$5.00

To be included on the card, payment must be received by Thursday, March 7, 2024.

Please return the form below to Marci Abschutz, 18 Pullman Loop, Dayton, NJ 08810

Or visit bnaitikvah.org/purim-baskets to make a payment online. If you are mailing this form or paying by check, you must call or email Marci Abschutz at 732-735-1946 or marci.abschutz@gmail.com to confirm so we can track the orders and payments.

*Although we would like to accommodate everyone, we CANNOT offer sugar-free or nut-free baskets.

Please Print:

Name (as it will appear on the card): _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Please check here if you choose to not receive a Purim bag. A donation will be made to a local food bank:

Contribution Level: Golden Grogger: \$ _____ Silver Grogger: \$ _____

Contributor: \$ _____

Social Action

What's Happening ?

Hakarat Hatov: recognizing the good; not simply gratitude, but attitude. Todah Rabah to all those who have donated to the Jewish Family Services of Middlesex County Kosher Food Pantry by dropping off food in our wicker trunk just down the hall a bit from the office, or by bringing food directly to them at 219C Blackhorse Lane, North Brunswick. The response has been tremendous. Keep it coming, please. A huge thank you to Carol Eisenberg and Jay Scheuer for bringing the food over to JFS. It is a lot of work! Many thanks to Andrea and Steve Katz for helping a fellow member with an errand. Shelly Wistreich is a steady volunteer at our 10 time a year Chaverim lunch program for our members 60 plus. Thank you, Shelly, for your friendly smile, your energy, and for helping to serve the lunches and clean up! Thanks to Steve Chernela for taking photographs at each Chaverim meeting. Last but not least, todah rabah to all those who have donated to the Jodi Marcou Social Action Fund.

Chaverim 60 plus lunch group - Save The Dates:
 March 19th 12-2PM: Larry Wolfert returns and presents From Sinai to Seinfeld: Jewish comedians through the decades with a focus on Jewish life.
 April 16th 12-2PM: presenter to be announced.

Idea: Check out Interfaithrise.org for their various volunteer opportunities including the new woodshop in Highland Park. No experience necessary. They also have an updated donations need list.

B'yachad: Together, let's make a difference,
Laura



Diana Schimmel Avena, Esq. Martine, Katz Scanlon & Schimmel

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Sponsor a community Seder in Israel



Who will be at your seder table this year?

We are approaching that time of year when Jews around the world begin to think about Passover. The grocery stores will soon be stocked with Kosher for Passover aisles. We will ask ourselves, "How many will be at our Seder table this year?" What will we serve? Do I need to borrow chairs? This year, as a result of the horrific attacks on October 7th, we have another question,

unfortunately, "where and how can our brethren in Israel who have been displaced celebrate the ancient tradition of celebrating the Festival of Freedom?" Never since the Holocaust have nearly 200,000 Jews been displaced and are now refugees in their own homeland!

MAKOM, a Jewish National Fund (JNF) Affiliate organization, is working to create community seders for those that have been living in one room for months, scattered in hotels throughout the country. There is no indication or time frame for their return to their homes or communities. Surely, they will not sit at their own tables. For many, they will not have the privilege of sitting with husbands, daughters, sons and children as has been the usual practice. Some will be in the army, some displaced to other shelters and still others might be hostages in Gaza. This year, as we read the Haggadah, the words of "LET MY PEOPLE GO!" has even more meaning.

WE, members of CBT, have the opportunity to make an enormous, impactful difference by sponsoring a community seder through MAKOM and adding a virtual seat(s) at your seder. Members of both CBT and the JNF Central NJ committee have set a goal to sponsor a community seder for 200 people in one of these temporary enclaves. We are asking each member to sponsor "a seat (or more) at the table" at a cost of \$50 per seat.

Please help us reach our goal by returning a check in the enclosed envelope or going to bnaitikvah.org/makom. All funds should be payable to Congregation B'nai Tikvah and write MAKOM in the subject line. Funds are to be received by Monday, April 1st, 2024. Let's make Passover a little sweeter this year!

Mitch & Arlene Frumkin
Ruth Anne Koenick
Adrienne & Andy Ross

Barbra & Bruce London Anne & Adrian Kroll
Allison & David Nagelberg
Rabbi Robert Wolkoff

Women's Passover Seder with Hadassah and ORT



ORT and Hadassah Jointly
Invite You to our Special



Women's Passover Seder

Celebrating the Women of the Exodus and in Our Lives



Monday, April 15, 2024 12:00 Noon

Congregation B'nai Tikvah

Catered by Classical Caterers

Bring Your Family and Friends

\$72 per person RSVP: Deadline April 8th

Please mail your reservation form and check, paid to ORT, to:
Ann Gold, 64 Chichester Road, Monroe Township, NJ 08831.
Questions? Call CBT Congregant Ann Gold at 609-409-0668.

All proceeds will be shared with ORT's and Hadassah's Humanitarian Programs
in Israel and Ukraine.

NAME_____ TEL.#_____
ADDRESS_____ EMAIL:_____
Please seat me with (maximum 12/table)_____

Classical Caterers Kosher Menu:

Seder Plate, Wine

Homemade Gefilte Fish, Salad

Entree (choose one):

- ___Lemon Pepper Grilled Salmon, Lemon Wine Sauce
___Grilled Cauliflower Steak, Sauteed Spinach, Black Lentils (GF, VEG)
___French-Cut Chicken, Farfel Stuffing, Apricot Sauce

Asparagus, Butternut Squash Souffle

Family-Style Dessert Tray, Coffee or Tea

Member News

The congregation congratulates:

*Diane and Howard Uniman, on the birth of their granddaughter,
Rowan Elizabeth Uniman.*

The congregation extends condolences to:

*Wayne and Meryl Gonchar, on the loss of Wayne's mother,
Blanche Gonchar*

*Barry and Marcia Nathanson, on the loss of Barry's mother,
Vickie Nathanson*

Scott and Debbi Rekant, on the loss of Scott's mother, Ina Kaplan

*Leslie and Steven Dickert, on the loss of Leslie's mother,
Marion Margulies*

Mark Rosen, and Patricia Rosen, on the loss of Mark's father, Hillel Rosen

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732.521.3020



Gift Cards / Scrip Available for Purchase

Scrip/Gift Cards are available for purchase at the CBT office every day, at Board meetings, and during religious school hours on Sunday mornings. Cash and check are preferred methods of payment, but we do also take credit cards. We have ShopRite, Stop & Shop and Home Depot cards in stock, and can order others, upon request.

PLEASE consider purchasing gift cards/scrip. We do our best to make them as accessible as possible.

Call the CBT office to make arrangements to pick them up, or have them delivered to you. THANK YOU!



CBT Book Club

Our next meeting is Tuesday, April 9, 7:30pm.
We will be discussing *The Vanishing Half*, by Brit Bennett.

This is an in-person meeting only, no Zoom.

Happy reading,
Lynn Biderman, CBT Book Club Chair

2024 Dates:

June 18: *Valley of Amazement*, by Amy Tan
August 20: *The Kitchen House*, by Kathleen Grissom

For information contact Lynn Biderman: 732-439-9999 or
r.lynn.biderman@gmail.com.



PICKLEBALL at CBT

Tuesdays & Thursdays 6:30-9pm

If you are interested in playing, please let us know through the CBT Pickleball WhatsApp group. Not a member of the WhatsApp group? TEXT Barry Safer (732-407-8429) with your name, to be added to the group.

If you'd like to make a donation to help offset costs, please reach out to Barry.



FOR APPOINTMENTS,
PLEASE VISIT:

www.StressAndAnxiety.com
or call 732-390-6694 x0

- ✓ IN-PERSON THERAPY & TELE THERAPY
- ✓ CONVENIENT APPOINTMENTS (LUNCH HOUR, EVENING & WEEKEND)

Stress and Anxiety Services of New Jersey specializes in the evidence-based treatment of:



- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Specific Phobias
- Social Anxiety Disorder (Social Phobia)
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
- Body Focused Repetitive Behaviors (BFRBs) like Trichotillomania & Excoriation Disorder

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As a Morgan Stanley Financial Advisor, I can work with you to develop a strategy and then help you manage your investments and assets through life's changes. Call today to arrange an appointment. We'll work together to plan for what may come.

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at Morgan Stanley

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The Mission of the Bikur Cholim committee is to provide comfort and support to the members of the CBT community who are ill, homebound, isolated and/or otherwise in distress. We take this very seriously.

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Rabbi Wolkoff's Article (continued from page 2)

Dear Aaron,

Once again I must thank you for your heartfelt comments. I so appreciate your clear burning desire for peace, and what could be a higher aspiration! That being said, I would like to clarify a few points that I think you have misunderstood, and move our discussion forward.

First, as regards the return of the repressed, this is a commonly recognized psychological pattern, found in both individuals and societies. It is a kind of superiority complex where our most negative sides are masked and then "justified." Think of the Reign of Terror that followed the French Revolution, or the totalitarian repression that followed the Russian Revolution. This superiority complex also masks America's many disastrous failures, both foreign and domestic (eg., Vietnam and our gun policy). The same can be said for Christianity and Islam, when seen from an historical perspective. Medieval Christians were murdering Jews while proudly proclaiming that theirs was a G-d of love, as opposed to the Jewish G-d of cruelty and wrath. At the same time Islam was priding itself on being a religion of peace while waging war everywhere from Indonesia to Iceland.

You are correct in saying that through good governance "we should be led to better ways by the best of us." (Would that it were so!) I think of Lincoln's "better angels of our nature." So yes, we should very definitely train ourselves in restraint of our violent tendencies. And one job of government is precisely to prevent unnecessary violence stemming from our anger and indignation.

But that does not answer the question of what we should do when violence is thrust upon us. Consider the Nazis (and note, I am not trying to make a direct link between Nazis and Palestinians). We can speculate about what drove the Germans to such a fever swamp. Was it hyperinflation during the Weimar Republic? The draconian terms of the Treaty of Versailles? The identity crisis facing the various German principalities going through a painful unification process? Better men than I can argue about that question. But this I know: at a certain point, (roughly the moment the Holocaust began) there was nothing to do but fight the Nazis to the death.

This was not a "bloodletting," the term you use to describe the current war in Gaza—which is not a "bloodletting" either. The war in Gaza is not intended as an emotional release, akin to a temper tantrum. It is intended to rescue hostages, and to destroy the ability of Hamas to ever repeat Oct. 7 (as they have pledged to do repeatedly).

It is certainly true that the innocent victims of the Israeli war effort may "grow up to be terrorists." But note that the children of Nazis, who lived through apocalyptic devastation at the end of

WW 2 did not themselves grow up to be Nazis. This is where your good governance comes into the picture.

As regards praying for peace, I do not at all suggest that we can simply ask G-d to make peace for us. Peace is indeed made by human beings—as our tradition teaches, "Seek peace and pursue it." But what it will take to get the humans in this war to make peace is as yet unknown. It's not for lack of trying, Aaron. You should know that I've spent a large part of my career involved with interfaith activities, at a pretty high international level. And I continue to support any number of "bridge building" organizations. You invite me to "the street," Aaron. But I have been in the street for a very long time, seeking to make peace.

That our efforts (and when I say "our" I mean my whole generation) have not been successful does not mean that I "support the slaughter of thousands of people." It means that I have yet to see a solution that frees our hostages, removes the threat of Hamas, and prevents released terrorists from starting the war all over again, as they have pledged to do. Peace is not merely a temporary cessation of violence. It involves powerful emotional dynamics and self-reflection, and I see no indication—truly, sadly, no indication—that the Palestinian leadership is prepared to address this. Until Oct. 7, I was absolutely confident that the Israelis were prepared to address this. Now, not so much. I've never seen Israelis so traumatized.

Where do we go from here? I don't really know. But I am confident that simply calling for a ceasefire is not the right thing to do. Not, I want to emphasize, because I feel some bloodlust demanding a sacrifice of innocents to a god of war. That is decidedly not what Judaism stands for, and certainly not a reason for you to disengage from Judaism. No, it is because I feel that Hamas is a genocidal terrorist cancer that must be extirpated if there is ever going to be peace.

I know you think that violence inevitably leads to an ongoing spiral of more violence. But that is not true, or at least not always true. Consider Germany and Japan, whose horrendous violence was met by equally horrendous violence. They are, today, among our closest allies. I pray—and am prepared to work for the goal—that the same will happen with our Palestinian neighbors. Let us continue corresponding, Aaron, and find a way together.

Rabbi Robert L. Wolkoff

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