

SHAVUOT

KESHER ZION SYNAGOGUE

JUNE 2025
5785 SIVAN

OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF KESHER ZION

KESHER ZION MISSION

We are a Conservative synagogue serving Berks County, Pennsylvania since 1929. Keshar Zion is proud of our history as a kind, welcoming community, eager to share our love of Judaism throughout our area. We are affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism. We strive to bring a love of prayer, halakhah, and learning through our Shabbat & holiday services and adult & youth education programs. With knowledgeable clergy, lay leaders, and staff, our congregation shares our joys and sorrows through life cycle events, services and other special activities. Our congregation warmly welcomes Jewish and interfaith families, couples and singles into our community. We are egalitarian in all aspects. Together we strive to connect with our local Jewish community and those living in Israel.

TIKKUN LEIL SHAVUOT

PLEASE JOIN US ON
SUNDAY JUNE 1ST
7PM-9PM

FOR AN EVENING OF LEARNING

THIS ISSUE

CANTOR'S MESSAGE
PAGE 2-3

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT
PAGE 4

MAZAL TOV LEAH
PAGE 6

JUNE'S CALENDAR OF EVENTS
PAGE 7

A LITTLE LAUGHTER
PAGE 8



CANTOR PROSNITZ

Who Is Counting Now?

Starting on the second day of Passover, our Festival of Freedom, we counted 50 days. Sheva Shavuot, 7 weeks, brought us to the Feast of Weeks. On the 50th day we observed the Festival of Shavuot, when we celebrated matan Torateinu/the giving of Torah at Mt. Sinai. Now what?

Now, the cycle of reading Torah has brought us to the book of Numbers. The Hebrew name for this, the 4th of the 5 Books of Moses, is B'midbar/in the wilderness. No, the Israelites were not wandering in the wilderness; they followed God's guidance. (By the way, the term "wandering Jew" is actually an insulting appellation first developed in the 13th century.) Yes, God did direct the Israelites to move several times (42 stops in total between leaving Egypt and entering Canaan). But they spent 38 of the 40 years around Kadesh Barnea. The Israelites were encamped at Mt. Sinai for about 1 year.



What were they doing all this time? They were learning-what it meant to be free from slavery and a nation. A nation in covenant with the Creator of everything – taught how to live a holy life. Holiness is not performing rituals, but living in ways that sanctify God. “Be holy, for I am holy,” is an oft-repeated instruction. The attributes of the Divine that we can emulate are compassion, justice, mercy, and faithfulness. Moses did not learn all of Torah in 40 days atop Mt. Sinai, he continued to learn during the 40 years as we have received the Written Torah. Our sages continued to learn as embodied in the record of the Oral Torah. We did not learn everything at the age of Bar or Bat Mitzvah, at 12 or 13, or at graduation from one level of schooling or another. We are charge to engage in lifelong learning and continued, daily/tamid, efforts to observe the performative and prohibitive mitzvot.

graph text



Rabbi Akiva said, “Love your neighbor as yourself is the great teaching of the Torah.” Who can rejoice at the deaths of so many in Gaza? Where is the compassion and mercy? Are we not all created b’tzelem Elohim/in the image of God? How can these deaths end? The day Hamas returns all the hostages. Then we can stop counting the days our brethren have been in captivity. Today is day 600.

BETSY KATZ WOULD LIKE TO THANK
EVERYONE WHO SENT BIRTHDAY
LEAGRAMS TO ME. IT'S SO NICE
TO BE REMEMBERED BY MY KZ FAMILY.

SYLVIA WENGER
MADE A CONTRIBUTION
TO KESHER ZION
SYNAGOGUE IN MEMORY
OF HELEN FOX



Co-Presidents Jennifer Koosed and Susan Wilson

In an exciting chapter for Keshar Zion Synagogue, a new model of leadership has emerged – a co-presidency. As we embark on this fresh approach to governance, it brings with it the promise of collaboration, creativity, and a united vision for the future.

What does a co-presidency mean for Keshar Zion? The co-presidency is both a reflection of the synagogue's values and a forward-thinking response to the challenges and opportunities we have faced. By sharing the responsibilities of the presidency, we aim to bring together our strengths, expertise, and perspectives in an effort to strengthen our congregation for years to come.

We have big shoes to fill. Larry Fogelman has been a formidable leader these past two years. All the 'behind-the-scenes' efforts that no one sees, he did with ease and professionalism. Larry, we are forever grateful for everything you have done and continue to do.

We also know, however, that no one is an island. Even though we are working together, the success of Keshar Zion will be determined not just by our leadership, but by the strength of the community that supports us. Keshar Zion Synagogue's future is bright, built on the foundation of teamwork, shared vision, and mutual respect. Together, we can all build an even stronger, more vibrant, and more inclusive community for all who call Keshar Zion home.

If anyone would like to volunteer for committees, fundraising, events, or if you have ideas you feel would enhance any aspect of Keshar Zion, please do not hesitate to reach out to either of us.

Here's to a bright future!

Jennifer Koosed and Susan Wilson

Kesher Zion in the News

On two Mondays in May, Cantor Prosnitz engaged with the general public at the Wyomissing Public Library. Together, they opened the Book of Psalms, and explored how many ways it could be read. Jews and Christians, using various translations saw how the Book could be interpreted many different ways. Not just how the Book was assembled, but how each psalm could be structured was examined. Everyone saw how Psalms can be used as part of public worship as well as private devotion, and as a source of solace and strength. Kesher Zion was appreciated in this interfaith experience.



מזל
טוב
לאה!



Leah C. Leisawitz, daughter of Michele and Benjamin Leisawitz, will be called to the torah as a Bat Mitzvah on June 7, 2025 at Keshar Zion Synagogue. Leah is a seventh grader at Wyomissing Area Junior/Senior High School where she is a member of the cross country team. Leah also participates in figure skating, skiing and tennis. Leah's Mitzvah project was, and continues to be, spreading awareness about the Holocaust by presenting her great-grandparents' (Sid and Esther Bratt) stories of survival to schools, libraries, colleges as well as the Pennsylvania State Capital building.

JUNE 2025

SUN

MON

SAT

1

Tikkun Leil
Shavuot
7:00pm -
9:00 PM

2

Shavuot
Service
9:30AM

3

Shavuot
Service
9:30AM
Yizkor
11:00am

4

5

Minyan
7:00PM

6

7

Leah Leisawitz's
Bat Mitzvah
Shabbat
Service
9:30AM

8

9

10

11

12

14

Birthday
Anniversary
Shabbat
9:30AM

15

16

17

18

19

Minyan
7:00PM

20

Kabbalat
Shabbat
6:30PM

21

Shabbat
Service
9:30AM

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

Shabbat
Service
9:30AM

29

30

A LITTLE *laughter*

A rabbi was once known to take daily walks by the canal, musing over theological issues. One day, he saw a dog struggling in the water. A compassionate man and lover of animals, the rabbi stripped off to the waist and dove into the freezing water.

By the time he had wrangled the panicking animal to a ladder at the wall, a small crowd had formed, in awe of the act of heroism. A man rushed up to get the story.

"You must love animals, are you a vet?", he asked?

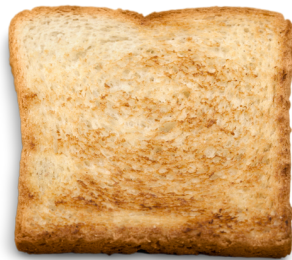
"Vet and cold!"



Moshe was talking to his psychiatrist.

"I had a weird dream recently," he says. "I saw my mother but then I noticed she had your face. I found this so worrying that I immediately awoke and couldn't get back to sleep. I just stayed there thinking about it until 7am. I got up, made myself a slice of toast and some coffee and came straight here. Can you please help me explain the meaning of my dream?"

The psychiatrist kept silent for some time, then said, "One slice of toast and coffee? Do you call that a breakfast?"



The Rabbi's son is a real hellion, and manages to get himself kicked out of 3 yeshivas. The Rabbi is distraught and as a last resort puts his son in a Catholic school. Months go by and the Rabbi is called in for a parent teacher conference. The teachers gush over how great a student his son is and show him examples of his work. The Rabbi is confused and says to his son "Moishe, what is going on? You got kicked out of 3 yeshivas and now this?" Moishe takes his father's hand and walks him into the church and points up at the life size crucifix with Jesus hanging from it, and says "That's the last Jewish kid who acted up"



TORAH FUND 2024-2025



..... Yisroel Chai

If you can translate this title (The People of Israel Live) you can thank a Hebrew school teacher, rabbi or lay leader.

I know we have been asked to donate to Israel in her hour of great need since the horrific attack by Hamas on October 7, 2023. We have seen protests world-wide against the state of Israel. And most unfortunately, some of our own Jewish people have rallied against Israel. Why? They are ignorant of history and the true struggles of the Jewish people. The Torah Fund of Conservative Judaism is also asking for your financial donations to help educate our future Jewish teachers and clergy. We must insure that future generations learn our history in order to work for Israel's survival!

"Am Yisroel Chai" is an expression of Jewish solidarity for the Jewish nation and the continuity of the Jewish people.

All contributions to the Torah Fund are welcome; a special donation of \$180 will be thanked with a pin saying, "Am Yisroel Chai". Please include a Torah Fund donation with your Keshet Zion dues payment.

Remember Torah Fund all year with the purchase of cards for all occasions: Simchas, births, condolences and congratulation. The cost of a card is only \$5 and this includes the postage and mailing.

Call Arlene Ehrlich: 610-373-6648

YAHREIT MESSAGES

Because of our recent upgrade to Shalom Cloud software, we will be sending the Yahrzeit notices as letters rather than post cards, starting with the Adar (and Adar 1 and Adar 2) notices. The information will be the same, it will look slightly different and will be on a full page letter. You can still send the donation (\$5.00 minimum) to Cynthia at her address, writing a check to Keshet Zion Synagogue. And you can continue to pay in advance so that your notice will be marked "PAID".

We will also have the option now of sending the notices by email. If you prefer to receive your notices by email (saving trees and also money for KZ) please let Cynthia know at crbalchunas@comcast.net

Sincerely,
Cynthia Balchunas

LET'S STAY CONNECTED



People Making You Look Good

6 Convenient Locations

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WYOMISSING OPTOMETRIC CENTER

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Perry C. Umlauf, OD
Jeffrey Stefanick, OD

Kerry J. Burrell, OD
Amanda S. Legge, OD
Leslie B. Miller, OD



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MYERSTOWN
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DOUGLASSVILLE
610-385-4333

WYOMISSING
610-374-3134



Keshher Zion Synagogue



Affiliated with the United Synagogue
of Conservative Judaism

Cantor Ted Prosnitz.....Clergy
Larry Fogelman.....President
Susan Weiss.....Editor

Call the office for advertising
information.

The deadline for submissions
of articles for the
April Bulletin is Wednesday,
April 16, 2025

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visit us on the web at
www.keshherzion.org

Office hours:
Mon-Wed-Fri
9:00am-2:00pm

To advertise your business or services
Contact KZ Office : 610-374-1763
Email: keshherzionoffice@gmail.com



Tzedakah

צדקה



CONTRIBUTE TO THE WEEKLY SHABBAT KIDDUSH FUND AND YOUR NAME WILL BE LISTED IN THE SHABBAT BULLETIN. THERE WILL ALSO BE A FRAMED ACKNOWLEDGMENT AT THE KIDDUSH IN THE SOCIAL HALL

**KESHER ZION GENERAL FUND.....\$10 MIN
DR. ROBERT N. GREENBERG SCHOLAR-IN-
RESIDENCE PROGRAM FUND.....\$18 MIN
KIDDUSH FUND.....\$36**

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUPPORT OUR SYNAGOGUE ARE DEEPLY APPRECIATED. WHENEVER YOU WISH TO REMEMBER FRIENDS AND LOVED ONES, IN JOY OR IN SORROW, PLEASE THINK OF THE FOLLOWING FUNDS. AN APPROPRIATE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IS SENT. MAKE YOUR CHECKS PAYABLE TO THE APPROPRIATE FUND AND SEND/BRING TO; KESHER ZION SYNAGOGUE
555 WARWICK DRIVE
WYOMISSING, PA 19610**

YARZEIT FUND EACH WEEK, KZ SENDS OUT REMINDER CARDS CONCERNING THE YAHRZEITS OF OUR BELOVED DEPARTED FAMILY MEMBERS AND ACCEPTS DONATIONS IN THEIR MEMORY.

ALL DONATIONS ARE ANNOUNCED AT SHABBAT SERVICES. SOME MEMBERS FIND IT CONVENIENT TO PAY FOR ALL OF THEIR YAHRZEITS(\$5 MINIMUM PER NAME) AT ONE TIME, ONLY ONCE PER YEAR. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS CONVENIENT WAY TO REMEMBER LOVED ONES AND TO DONATE TO KZ.....

TORAH FUND

Cards available for all occasions. Funds are used to support the Jewish Theological Seminaries Programs and Scholarship Funds. Call Arlene Ehrlich at (610) 373-6648 to have cards sent for \$5 each.

SIMCHA FUND Cards

available for all occasions call Sylvia Wenger at (610) 375-3422 to have cards sent for \$1.50 each or for purchase for personal use for \$1 each