The SCOOP

The Happenings of Congregation Beth Israel

June 2024 | אייר-סיון תשפ"ד

Shavuot, also known as the Feast of Weeks and/or the Holiday of Reaping, beautifully intertwines two significant themes: the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai and the celebration of the first fruits of the harvest. This duality reflects the deep connection between Jewish spiritual and agricultural life.

On Shavuot, Jews commemorate the momentous occasion when Moses received the Torah from God on Mount Sinai. This event marks the foundation of Jewish law and ethics, shaping the spiritual identity and practices of the Jewish people. The Torah serves as a guide, infusing daily life with meaning, purpose, and a sense of communal belonging.

At the same time, Shavuot has ancient agricultural roots. It occurs at the peak of the spring harvest in Israel, when the first fruits, or Bikkurim, were brought to the Temple as an offering of gratitude. This tradition highlights a profound connection to the land and the cycles of nature. It reminds us of the sustenance and blessings that come from the earth, fostering a sense of appreciation and stewardship for our environment.

Together, these aspects of Shavuot remind us of the balance between spiritual and physical nourishment. Just as the Torah nurtures our souls with wisdom and guidance, the harvest sustains our bodies. Celebrating Shavuot encourages us to embrace both our spiritual heritage and our responsibility to care for the world around us.

We look forward to spending this spiritual and agricultural holiday with you on Thursday, June 13th. (See flyer below)

The CBI Scoop Editorial Team

A Word From the President

CBI Members,

The board of trustees recently met to discuss the financial status of our synagogue.

For the last several years, we have tried our best to keep our expenses down, resulting in no increase in dues.

However, as you all realize, our synagogue has expenses like any other business. This past year has resulted in high-cost increases across the board.

After careful consideration, the board has decided to raise the dues per member to $475, resulting in only a $75 increase. Also, please remember that your membership dues include one High Holiday ticket.

Thank you so much for your understanding. You will be receiving your dues statements and High Holiday information in the next few weeks.

Enjoy your summer!

Richard Krauss, President

TURN OFF YOUR DEVICE

DURING OUR SERVICES AND EVENTS

The Rabbi Speaks

Dear friends,

Every Jewish holiday has childhood memories attached to it, and Shavuot is no different. For some, it might be the cheesecake; for others, it might be the warm weather or the flowers that customarily adorn synagogues the world over during the holidays.

For me, Shavuot will always be associated with staying up all night reading and learning the Torah, a custom that probably started in the 15th century and that has been continued till the present day. Interestingly, some say that the advent of mass coffee consumption at that time allowed this custom to really take hold among the masses. After all, for some, barring a stimulant to keep them awake, it would be nearly impossible or improbable to keep their eyelids from shutting, allowing the body to do what it does each night—replenish its energies and clean up the cognitive gunk collected in the brain each day.

However the custom started out, it is a fun and interesting one. In today's modern world, th is special night is reserved for different types of learning programs depending on what type of community is celebrating and honoring it. For some, it means studying the traditional texts; for others, it runs the continuum all the way to watching Israeli films that night.

However one celebrates it, the most important thing is that we celebrate the intellectual part of our history coupled with the uniqueness of Revelation. In other words, we are celebrating the wisdom of our ages and the part of our history that has kept us going throughout the centuries.

I still remember the cool dawn breeze each year as I walked home with my father as a child upon finishing up in the synagogue at about 5 AM. It's a memory that will last a lifetime.

And, of course, this is all about celebrating the idea of learning in general. After all, we are the People of the Book and all about learning. Curiosity, inquisitiveness, inquiry, questioning, discussion, that's what we are all about as a people and as individuals.

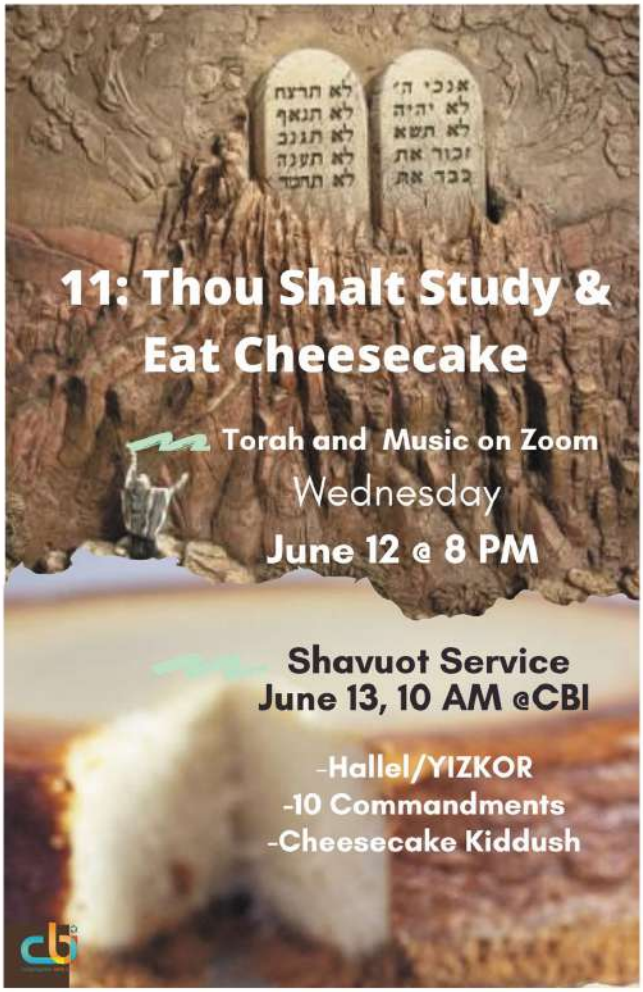
We try to do that each week at our Jewish Heritage Wednesdays and as individuals as we go about our lives. To that end, never refrain from asking me questions.

We are a Jewish community of prayer, learning, and congregation (PrayLearCong, for short). Let's keep doing that—and more.

With blessings of peace and harmony in Israel,

Warmly,
Rabbi Abe

Upcoming Events



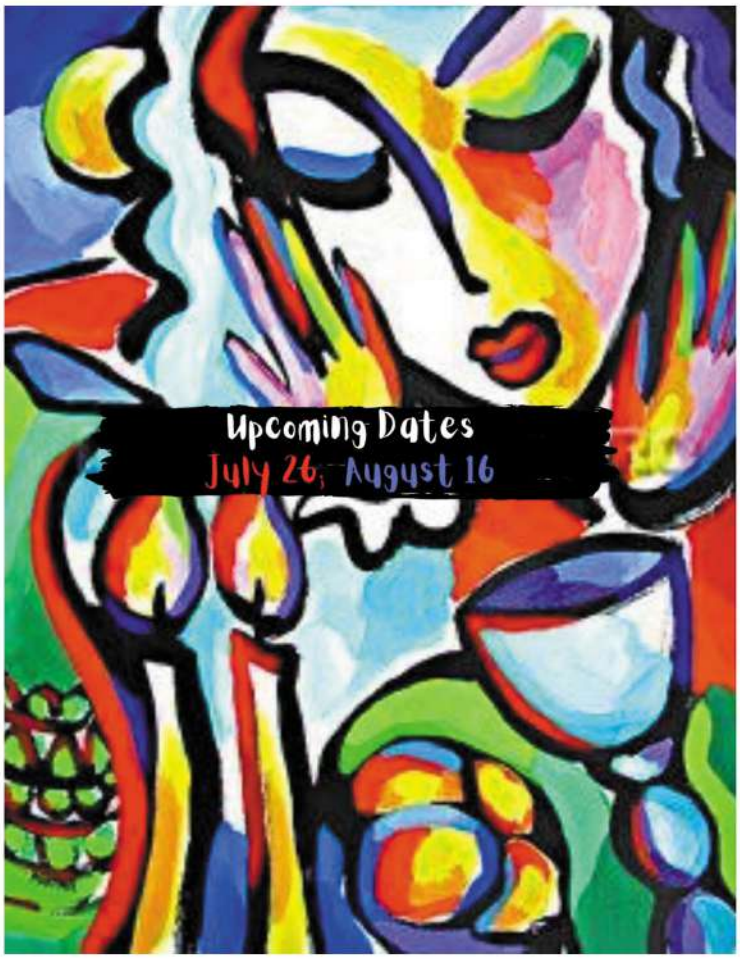
cbi Presents

congregation beth israel

JEWISH HERITAGE WEDNESDAYS

WITH RABBI ABE

@8 PM On Zoom



Musical Kabbalat Shabbat @CBI

Join us these Friday nights

June 7

July 26

August 16

@7:30 PM

Oneg to follow services

Bring your friends and family

SPONSOR A **KIDDUSH** OR
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OR A **YAHRTZEIT**

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A BIG thank you to

Debbie & Richie Krauss
for sponsoring the May 11 Kiddush
in honor of Debbie's twin grandsons' 1st birthday

Tilda Lovinger
for sponsoring the May 18 Kiddush
to honor her late husband, Dave's memory

4 Ways Hamas Has Conned Americans and Spread Hatred of Jews

As Israel continues to defend itself against the terrorist group Hamas, a war of information is unfolding around the world.

Major influencers on social media, as well as elected officials and mainstream media news and pundits, have amplified Hamas' messages and presented those messages as "pro-Palestinian." This mix of slogans and threats has infiltrated college campuses and even the halls of government.

Here are four hateful and harmful slogans that Hamas and its supporters have unleashed, and many of those supporting Palestinians in America have spread.

1. "From the River to the Sea"

Here's what it means: "From the River to the Sea, Palestine Will Be Free" is the catch-all phrase symbolizing Palestinian control over the entire territory of Israel's borders, from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea. That means it is a call for erasing the State of Israel and the Jewish people who live there. It is also a rallying cry for terrorist groups and their sympathizers to do the same.

There is of course nothing antisemitic about advocating for Palestinians to have their own state. AJC itself is an organization that believes in a two-state solution to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. However, calling for the elimination of the Jewish state, praising Hamas or other entities who call for Israel's destruction, or suggesting that the Jews alone do not have the right to self-determination, is antisemitic.

Here's how it is being used: The hateful slogan has frequently appeared on protest signs nationwide during rallies in support of Palestinians, often used on social media by Palestinian supporters including government officials and members of Congress, and even on T-shirts for sale on Amazon. It has also become a far too common call-to-arms for anti-Israel activists on campuses across the country.

2. "Colonialist Enterprise"

By charging Israel with colonizing Palestinians, Hamas and its supporters are manipulating the cause of racial justice to advance their terrorist goals—all while hoping no one notices Israel has been the homeland of the Jewish people for more than 3,000 years.

Hamas wants Americans and Europeans to think the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians is a racial one, in which Israelis are seen as European and white oppressors and colonizers and Palestinians are seen as people of color who are oppressed and colonized. But the conflict is not a racial one. It's a conflict between two nationalities.

What it means: The term "settler colonialist" refers to a system of oppression in which a colonizing nation displaces and dispossesses a native or pre-existing population. It suggests the intention to replace or even eliminate an indigenous people.

Why it's a false charge: When you are indigenous, it's impossible to colonize yourself. And yet that's what Hamas is contending about Israelis. The Jewish people have a 3,000-year connection to the land of Israel. The Roman Empire destroyed the Jewish state of Judea in 70 CE and expelled many of the Jews living there, but even in exile, the Jewish people always longed to return to their homeland. Still, Jews continued to live in the land of Israel. The Zionist movement of the late 19th century gave Jews outside of Israel the hope and ability to begin to return to live there.

Far from colonizers, Jews returning to their ancestral homeland fled persecution. This includes not only Jews from Europe, but also Jews from the Middle East and North Africa (Sephardic/Mizrahi Jews) who make up over half of Israel's population today. These Jewish communities fled or were expelled from Arab countries and Iran due to antisemitism and persecution in the mid-20th century.

AJC American Jewish Committee

3. "Genocide of the Palestinians"

By definition, the Palestinians are not experiencing genocide. Claiming that Jews are perpetuating such genocide is gaslighting a community whose population numbers have still not exceeded pre-Holocaust levels. Furthermore, the Palestinian population, both in the West Bank and Gaza, has increased exponentially since the UN voted to establish a state for the Jewish people in the land of Israel.

If there is any genocidal intent in this conflict, the aforementioned slogan and threat "From the River to the Sea" exposes it on the Hamas side. The goal of Hamas is to wipe Israel and Jews off the map.

After launching a military operation to defend itself after Hamas' October 7 atrocities, Israel has been accused by thousands of artists, activists, and politicians of carrying out genocide against the Palestinians. The accusations of genocide pervade the scholarly discourse, social media, and the vitriol of anti-Israel protesters.

What is genocide: The use of the term "genocide" is subject to legal definitions and should be used carefully and judiciously. Genocides aim to wipe out targeted religious, ethnic, or other groups.

While recognizing that the displacement of Palestinians in 1948 was a deeply painful moment in Palestinian history and identity, it also must be viewed from the prism of the war of Arab nations that attempted to destroy the Jewish population upon the acceptance of the UN's 1947 Partition Plan.

Israel goes to unprecedented and extraordinary lengths to prevent civilian casualties: Since October 7, Israel has taken, and is continuously taking, several important steps to prevent harm to Palestinian civilians. Hamas, on the other hand, has not only deliberately killed and kidnapped civilians in Israel, but has also deliberately put Palestinian civilians in harm's way, making it extremely difficult for Israel to effectively protect innocent lives.

For example, the Israeli military sends warnings to Gazans before targeting terrorist infrastructure in the coastal enclave. Meanwhile, Hamas typically places Palestinian civilians directly in the path of the IDF's targets—not only aiming to protect terrorist leaders and their property but also to drive up death counts of Palestinians as they vie for leverage in the public opinion war.

Despite this, for over 75 years, Israeli leaders have tried time and time again to make the dream of peace a reality.

4. "Globalize the Intifada"

How it's being used: Around the world, anti-Israel activists have gathered for demonstrations and have called to "Globalize the Intifada," a common chant at protests in support of the Palestinian people.

Here's what it means: This is a call for widespread violence against both Israelis and Jews worldwide. The term "intifada" is an Arabic word that translates to "uprising" or "shaking off." It has been used to describe a series of Palestinian violent uprisings against Israel and policies in the West Bank and Gaza. There have been two intifadas—the First Intifada from 1987-90 and the Second Intifada from 2000-05.

It was during the First Intifada that the Palestinian terrorist group Hamas was born and issued its charter to eradicate the Jewish state. The Second Intifada was characterized by widespread protests, demonstrations, suicide bombings, and armed confrontations between Israeli security forces and Palestinian terrorists.

The Second Intifada resulted in a high number of casualties on both sides, with close to 1,000 Israelis killed or injured by Palestinian terror attacks. Infamous suicide bombings by Hamas during the Second Intifada include the Passover Massacre, which killed 30 civilians at a hotel, and the Dolphinarium Discotheque attack at a nightclub, leaving 21 Israelis dead, including 16 teenagers.

With the dramatic spike in antisemitic attacks on Jews around the world since the October 7 attacks by Hamas, calls for a global intifada are a call for further violence against Jews.

Stay informed, share the facts, and rally your networks to take action in support of Israel and against antisemitism.
Visit: AJC.org/IsraelHamasWar

"It means that when you order the cheesecake, the guilt comes free."

"I COLLECT EXERCISE VIDEOS... EVERY EVENING I HAVE CHEESE CAKE AND HOT CHOCOLATE WHILE I WATCH THEM."

Come on, laugh a bit. It will do you good-- and then some.

June Yahrzeits

- **Abraham Chisell** 6-2
- **Marta Goldman** 6-2
- **Rose Glasser** 6-5
- **Benjamin Brodsky** 6-8
- **Mollie Zucker** 6-8
- **Julius Weinstein** 6-11
- **Joseph Goldman** 6-17
- **Gail T. Schwartz** 6-17
- **Isaac Janvey** 6-18
- **Joseph Dolgow** 6-22
- **Fannie Mandell** 6-22
- **Nathan Zaum** 6-25
- **Edith Dolgow** 6-26

In Memoriam & Yahrzeit Donations

Muriel Levine (at the Yahrtzeits of sister-in-law, Claire Parvin);
Muriel Levine (in memory of David Sabbas)
Tilda Lovinger (at the Yahrtzeit of my husband, Dave Lovinger)
Marsha Mandell (at the Yahrtzeit of my father, Isaac Rosenkranz
Muriel Levine and Marianne Baker (condolences to Barry Agulnick at the passing of his wife, Suellen Agulnick)
Ellen Zimel (in memory of Tilda (in memory of Tilda's husband, David)
Gail Broder Katz (in memory of David Sabbas)
Gail Broder Katz (in memory of Suellen Agulnick)

Donations

Roberta Bouer (In Honor of Eren Saul & Blaze Forest on their 1st Birthday! Mazel Tov to proud grandparents, Debbie & Richie Krauss)
Aileen & Lenny Goldberg (donation to Kiddush Fund)

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